FOOTBALL TEAM WINS SUN BELT CONFERENCE IN FIRST SEASON

5 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP UNDER PRESIDENT KEEL

FIRST 40 UNDER 40 NAMED BY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
It’s already been five years since Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D., returned to his home state of Georgia and arrived on campus to become the 12th president of Georgia Southern University. Since then, the University has experienced tremendous accomplishments and growth. President Keel invites you to celebrate them all with him.

12 FIRST CLASS
Meet the first-ever Georgia Southern University Alumni Association’s 40 Under 40 and find out how these Eagles have excelled since graduation. Engineers, educators and artists, the 40 Under 40 honorees were chosen for their commitment to integrity, civility, kindness, learning, wellness, and social responsibility.

16 DOUBLE MAJOR
The College of Engineering and Information Technology recently received two accolades that stand to benefit the College for years to come. ABET accreditation reinforces overall educational quality, while having the first undergraduate manufacturing engineering degree program in Georgia will only solidify the College’s reputation.

18 THE RIDE
Cory Wilson was a junior business major when he collapsed during class and died of fatal cardiac arrhythmia. Learn the Wilson Family story, their struggle to find a new normal amid the tragedy and their passionate cause to promote AED awareness.
UNIFORM CARE

School of Nursing students don white coats during the University’s inaugural White Coat Ceremony on Friday, Sept. 19 at the Performing Arts Center. Chosen as one of only 100 colleges to participate, the White Coat Ceremony was initially designed by The Arnold P. Gold Foundation to emphasize the commitment of patient-centered care for those entering medical school. More than 20 years later, nurses are now part of the tradition.
We mark them. We celebrate them. We commemorate them. Sometimes we must even fight for them. These are “firsts.” Whether it’s being the first, coming in first, or establishing a first, that single, solitary number is often a symbol of strength, success, history and triumph.

When I was young, any time my family bought a new VCR or stereo equipment, I would be the first to press every button just to see what everything did. With time, I learned how it all worked. Like many Millennials today, my mother would be the first to press every button—and see what happens. Eventually, you made me the Second Coming of Tesla. They say, “But why?” Then I remember, it’s as simple as doing it, pushing the right buttons—being the first to try.

Google the word “first” and you’ll find everything from a definition to nonprofit organizations to a list of banks and credit unions. Again, firsts can mean many things to many people.

Here at Georgia Southern, we mark firsts as milestones. In this issue, there happen to be a number of firsts, which lead to what our next “first” will be. As you continue reading, I hope it inspires you to set out on a journey to be the first or become a first. After all, as pages in Georgia Southern University history, we all have a unique role in trying to find the right buttons—technology or otherwise—that lead to what our next “first” will be.

Go Eagles!

Michael J. Soloway
Editor

PERFECT MARRIAGE OF BLUE AND WHITE

Georgia Southern University holds a special place in the hearts of alumni Marc Snyder (’07) and his wife Erin (’08). That’s why, on May 24, the newlyweds used their first moment as husband and wife to show off their True Blue spirit at Dunnottar Castle in Stonehaven, Scotland! The couple met in 2006.

“I will forever bleed blue and white,” said Erin. “Georgia Southern was the best college experience that I never knew I had. I am so glad I was able to get such a great education and make so many lifelong friends.”

Marc agrees, saying attending Georgia Southern “was by far the best experience... I wouldn’t trade it to go to any other school.” Both Marc and Erin credit their experiences at the University with not only aiding their education, but also their careers. “I think my education from Georgia Southern was top notch, I still use what I learned in my current job,” said Erin, who is a student nurse extern at WellStar Kennestone Hospital in Marietta, Georgia. Some of Erin’s best memories were during her time as a SOAR leader. “SOAR taught me so much about Georgia Southern history, present and future. That was when I really fell in love with Georgia Southern.”

Memories are truly what the newlyweds will cherish forever. “Georgia Southern means walking on Sweetheart Circle in the summer with Marc,” said Erin. “I love the beautiful campus and small classrooms to the fun and huge football game days. Georgia Southern is an incredible place to be,” Marc added. “GATA EAGLES!”

2014 This year, “Our House” opened with a brand new look for the Eagles’ inaugural season in the Sun Belt Conference. The most visible change is the privately funded $10 million Ted Smith Family Football Center, located between the east end zone and Lanier Drive. The state-of-the-art 57,000-square-foot facility features a central operations area for the football team, and includes coaching offices, locker rooms, workout facilities, a video production suite and a Hall of Fame exhibit highlighting outstanding players and historic football team accomplishments. An expansion project at the Stadium was also completed in time for the season home opener. In all, the ambitious construction project added 6,200 seats to Paulson Stadium, increasing total capacity to 25,000. Two years ago, students voted in favor of a $25 per semester fee to pay for the additional seating.
BLINK OF AN EYE

ON JANUARY 4, 2010, GEORGIA NATIVE BROOKS KEEL CAME HOME.

He remembers arriving on campus. He remembers his first walk around Sweetheart Circle, where so many memories had been made and friendships forged—the winding paths and tree-lined street. “In the faces of our faculty, staff and students, I could see where Georgia Southern University had come,” said Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D., the University’s twelfth president. “And I had a vision of where we were headed. Deep-rooted in history, I could see the passage of time.”

Five years since his arrival, President Keel has watched his own time tick by and is proud of what’s been accomplished. “Of course, I always want to make a difference, but I like to think that it’s the people around me who are the ones making a real difference,” said Keel. “I wanted to be at a place that makes a difference and I feel like Georgia Southern students, faculty and staff have.”

Every day, Keel told me he hears about what a special place Georgia Southern University truly is. From faculty who have taught at the school for 30 years to new students who are taking their first tour of campus, there’s a certain magic at Georgia Southern. “You can feel it,” said Keel. “You can’t pick it up from a website. You can’t read it in a pamphlet. You have to be here to feel it. Everybody will tell you about that magic and it’s real, and it’s allowed us to grow.” Traditions remain a large part of that magic. “There’s just something special here,” he said. “It’s not just Athletics. It’s our annual watermelon cutting. The Pedestrium. Lighting around Sweetheart Circle. Sweetheart Circle itself. So many people will tell you that. When you hear about all those traditions people say, ‘don’t change it; don’t mess with it.’ And I’ve heard loud and clear.”

MILESTONES

During President Keel’s current, five-year tenure, he helped establish the first Bachelor of General Studies major offered completely online. The University launched the Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology (CEIT), and a new asphalt research lab within CEIT (the only one of its kind at a university in Georgia). There is also the Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Education (i2STEMe) that supports thematic grant writing, research and outreach in K-20 teaching and learning, with a focus on rural, diverse, low socioeconomic status and underrepresented populations.

In addition, the state of Georgia also transferred management of the Herty Advanced Materials Development Center—a world leader in materials research and product development—to Georgia Southern.

Some of the other planned and/or completed building projects under President Keel’s leadership include the following:

- Biological Sciences building
- Dining Commons and Lakeside Dining Commons
- Sanford Hall renovation
- Ted Smith Family Football Center and additional seating at Allen E. Paulson Stadium
- University Golf Course
- Military Science building*
- Health facility*
- Shooting Sports Education Center*

* Future projects underway.
Keel believes being born, raised and educated in Augusta, Georgia, has made it easier for him to know what the role, scope and mission of Georgia Southern should be throughout the state and beyond. He is a product of the entire Georgia education system, from elementary through graduate school. "I speak southern-English very fluently," Keel joked. "I think it makes a difference in interacting with students as well as people in the community. To have that perspective puts me in a unique position to see where we can go from here."

If you look at what the University has accomplished under Keel over the past five years, you’ll find an unprecedented list that encompasses Academics, Athletics, research activities and campus expansion—some of which are 30 years in the making. For example, Keel said, "offering engineering degrees is a huge accomplishment and one that has taken decades to realize. Our new manufacturing engineering degree is going to have far-reaching implications for years down the road."

Another key to Keel’s success is completion of several desperately needed building projects. "We’re not trying to build a dynasty or Taj Mahal, but you have to have the right facilities to educate the students and so faculty have a place to do the wonderful things they do," said Keel. "We’ve got a fantastic group here who promote Georgia Southern in Atlanta, where many of the decisions are made. They’ve done a great job telling the Georgia Southern story and expressing what we need to be even better. We don’t have to convince them of who we are, but more of what we need. To look at Sanford Hall and see how we managed to maintain the wonder of Sweetheart Circle but completely convert the inside of the building into a state-of-the-art communication arts program is absolutely fantastic."

But President Keel is quick to remind me that it’s students, and the faculty who mentor them, who will put Georgia Southern on the map with regards to national distinction. He acknowledged balance is key as Georgia Southern continues to grow in quality and scope. "It means keeping the right number of faculty in place to give our students the kind of personal attention they need, deserve and came here for," said Keel. "We can grow this university in many types of ways and still maintain the ‘small-feel’ culture... that the magical Georgia Southern atmosphere stays true to its past. I have every expectation we’ll meet that challenge. It’s my goal and our obligation."

Like engineering, the recent Athletics move to the Sun Belt Conference has been more than 30 years in the making. "Athletics is something I’ve been proud of but also how we’ve been able to marry Athletics to Academics in order to move the whole University forward. I recognized early on that we could use Athletics as a vehicle to put Georgia Southern on a national stage."

Keel often calls Athletics the ‘front porch’ of the University. "If you can get people up on the front porch using Athletics and get people to look in through the picture window," Keel said, “then they can see all the wonderful other things you have going on inside the house. If you’re looking for a house the first thing you might notice is how well the yard is kept up. Well, we’ve got a pretty nice front yard I hear. We just have to get people when they drive by, or find us on the Web, to stop and notice what we offer. We have to continue to increase our curb appeal."
President Keel mentions the numerous commercials aired this past football season during ESPN-broadcast games as an example. The 30-second spots touted Eagle research and academic programs, and focused on student and faculty achievements. “He’s confident high schoolers sitting in their living rooms and the nation watching the Thursday night contests will see those ads, get on their iPads and check us out. “The national exposure it provides is tremendous,” said Keel. “We’ve had south Georgia distinction for 100-plus years. What we want now is that national distinction.”

Over the past five years, Georgia Southern has done exceptionally well in differentiating itself. One of President Keel’s main goals is to blur the demarcations between the old Vo-Tech school and the liberal arts university. "I get criticized sometimes by folks that think university presidents are supposed to lead institutions to provide high quality liberal arts education and that’s all that we should be doing. …That’s not our responsibility to get our kids jobs when they graduate," he said. "I just think that is an inappropriate way of doing things. If our students are not graduating and getting a job or going on to graduate or professional school then we’re not doing our job.”

Keel is proud that when Eagles graduate they have not only graduate or professional school then we’re not doing our job." Our students understand the theory of business but they also understand the art of business," said Keel. "We can differentiate ourselves by blurring the lines. We are a workforce University. We train and educate so that students have everything they need to get a job quickly. We’re not lowering our standards. In fact, it’s a strength. As more businesses understand what we do here at Georgia Southern, more and more of our graduates will be able to compete with anybody across the country.”

When asked if he’d had any disappointments over the past five years, President Keel said he’d hoped research would be even further along. Keel added that a lot of it had to do with the economy. "To move this University from one of primarily teaching to one of teaching and research is heavy lifting. It takes a tremendous amount of resources to provide the faculty with the appropriate amount of money and lab space necessary and we just haven’t been able to come up with the resources to do everything I want yet. The research we are doing here is phenomenal, so I do want to emphasize that."

Even after five years, President Keel calls every day a “surprise.” But he calls all the surprises pleasant ones. "I never realized how special a place the South is, but especially the state of Georgia," said Keel. "Coming back, I was surprised at how much it meant to me. When Tammie (the first lady) and I came here we knew we could make a difference. …the University could make a difference. I felt that all the building blocks had been put in place for Georgia Southern to reach the national stage.”

Keel admits he never truly realized the University’s potential until he arrived on campus that first day. "Now, having been here for five years," said Keel, "the opportunities we have to become leaders in every arena are absolutely spectacular." Five years seems like a long time on the one hand and a blink of an eye on another, added Keel. "I’ve seen from afar Georgia Southern progress from a school that people had as their second or third choice to a University of first choice for so many," said Keel. "What you will find is that when you travel across this country more people will notice that Eagle lapel pin or tie and won’t ask where we are and what we’re doing, but already know instead. I think you’ll see us move from trying to tell other people about Georgia Southern University to a place where people will begin to tell others about us. And that’s where we want to be.”

For Web extras of Dr. Keel, including a behind the scenes video, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/magazine.

HOW TWEET IT IS!

President Keel discovered the benefits of social media recently, albeit reluctantly. For those who don’t know, Keel’s Twitter handle is @PresKeel, which he uses daily. "I resisted Twitter for a long time," said Keel. "I fought kicking and screaming, I said I didn’t have time, or asked myself why people would care. Then I started doing it.”

What I realized is that it’s a tremendous way to maintain contact and interact with students… and alumni, too. I can highlight faculty and staff accomplishments, talk about Athletics, post selfies, or tell people what the next five years will look like… it makes a president a little more personable and personal, but it makes the office a little more personal as well. Another reason Tammie (the first lady) and I wanted to come here was because we saw a place that was interested in being more outwardly focused and tweeting allows that. It’s also a heck of a lot of fun.”
First Class

First-Ever 40 Under 40 Named

Given out by the Georgia Southern University Alumni Association, the 40 Under 40 designation recognizes young alumni that are leading the way in business, leadership, community, educational and/or philanthropic endeavors. The 40 were chosen by a selection committee based on their professional expertise and achievements, as well as dedication to charitable and community initiatives.

Out of our roughly 75,000 living alumni, more than 30,000 are under 40-years-old. Honorees not only represent the excellence of the University’s young alumni, but also demonstrate the positive contributions and remarkable achievements for which Georgia Southern graduates are known.

They also aspire to uphold the core values of Georgia Southern University: integrity, civility, kindness, collaboration, and a commitment to lifelong learning, wellness, and social responsibility.
JORDAN CHESTER (‘98)

George Burks was the first student to graduate from Georgia Southern with an International Studies major. He is currently working as an account executive for a Swedish clothing company, Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics.

KATE CHANELL (‘10, ’15)

She is the founder of marketing and media for the College of Business Administration at Georgia Southern. She previously served as director of Development for the School of Dentistry at MCG, where she raised over $50,000 for a special fundraising campaign.

JORDAN CHATER (‘08)

After graduating from law school in New Orleans in 2011, Jordan Chater worked as an assistant state attorney in Jacksonville, Florida. He is now the fourth member of the legal team at the Coastal Corporate Development for MedBank.

JEMELLEH COES (‘10)

Jemelleh Coes is the 2004 Georgia Teacher of the Year and is currently working on her doctorate in special education.

MARIO CRUZ (‘05)

In 2013, Mario Cruz achieved the honor of becoming a Board Certified Sports Specialist. He is currently the physical therapist for Tennessee Tech University.

AMY DIETRICH (‘11)

In 2012, Amy Dietrich launched the Alumni Association Network, “Bagge Outwash,” alongside other Atlanta-based Georgia Southern alumni who have volunteered more than 600 hours. She is currently the director of communications and continuing education at the Georgia Psychological Association.

REBECCA ELLIOTT (‘97, ’03)

Rebecca Elliott is currently the director of the Final Phase Operations at the Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation. While attending Georgia Southern, she was awarded a Master of Technology in Industrial Management.

JASON EPPS (‘99)

At the start of 2014, Jason Epps was appointed to the Kraft Foods Powerhouse Leadership Program. He is currently the senior customer business leader for the Division calling on Walmart.

RYAN FOLEY (‘03, ’05)

Ryan Foley is vice president of student affairs at Oglethorpe Technical College (OTC). He began his OTC career as an intern in 2010, as he was completing his undergraduate degree at Georgia Southern.

LEANNE FOSTER (‘96)

Lea Ann Foster is vice president for communications at the National Association of Manufacturers. She formerly served as the federal affairs director for the State of Georgia.

JOHN FULFORD (‘07)

John Fulfrod is the program manager for Bradford & Gorrie. He has helped complete two successful construction projects on the Georgia Southern University campus—new library building and Paulson Stadium expansion.

SHANNON HALSTED (‘98)

Shannon Halsted is a sergeant for the Street Crimes Unit at the St. Petersburg Police Department—Uniformed Services Bureau. She is a 2012 graduate of Leadership St. Petersburg, and was honored with the National Heroism Award.

JIM HARTSOCK (‘91, ’01)

In 2013, Jim Hartsock became a partner at Warren, Avent, LLC, becoming one of the youngest partners in the firm at the time. During the same year, he became president of Susan S. Romain of Greater Atlanta.

SUSAN HERRING (‘03, ’01)

Susan Herring is the director of initial phase operations finance for Gulfstream Aerospace. For the past eight years, she has been a mentor for aspiring leaders at Gulfstream.

TORRI JACKSON (‘99, ’02)

Torri Jackson is the senior counselor, and the counseling and guidance department head at Bradwell Institute in Hinesville, Georgia. She has developed a comprehensive counseling program for county students, and was acknowledged as a Recognized American School Counseling Association Model Program in 2013.

RUSSELL KEEN (‘98, ’14)

Russell Keen is the vice president for governmental relations and community engagement at Georgia Southern. He has previously secured support for local community affairs projects and Georgia Southern building projects.

JAMES KICKLERT (‘01)

James Kicklert is a vice director of JamesWorks Entertainment. He is currently working on the film “Erik” based on the life of legendary football coach Erik Russell.

JOHN KILE (‘10)

Currently a Captain in the United States Army, John Kile was the lead of the first Afghan Uniform Police Mission in Afghanistan.

MYCHAELE KÖNIG (‘02)

Mychael König was a finalist and “Fan Favorite” winner on Season 3 of “Project Runway,” a reality TV show on Lifetime. Previously on the Bravo Network, focused on fashion design, König is currently fashion designer and owner of her own fashion company, MychaelKönig Inc.

JASON LAWRENCE (‘06, ’07)

Jason Lawrence is the deputy chief for Campus Recreation on the Georgia Southern Campus. In 2011, he was a U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee Staff Representative.

MALCOLM LEE (‘99)

In 2012, Malcolm Lee started his own nonprofit, the JB Sports Football Program “Jalil’s Flight.” He is currently the organization’s head coach as well as a music executive with the UMG Music Group.

TERESA MACCARTNEY (‘99, ’01)

Since starting at the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) in 2001, Teresa Maccartney has been the state leader for the Federal Stabilization and Education Jobs program, and is currently Georgia’s Chief Financial Officer and director of the OPB.

KAMEELAH MARTIN (‘10)

Kameelah Martin is an assistant professor of African American Literature at Savannah State University. She was a member of the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program while attending Georgia Southern and was the first McNair scholar to earn a PhD.

ROBERT MIKELL (‘07)

Robert Mikell is currently an attorney at Brown Rutledge PC and serves on several boards, including the Board of Directors of the Georgia Southern University Alumni Association, the Statesboro Kiwanis Club and the Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce.

JENNIFER MOOK (‘04)

Jennifer Mook is an officer in the State Bar of Georgia’s Young Lawyer Division and has volunteered with Georgia Legal Services and the Georgia High School Mock Trial Program. She is currently an attorney and partner for the Mock Law Firm, LLC.

THOMAS MULLIS (‘99)

Thomas Mullis, Ph.D. is currently a physician at Dublin ENT Associates. He was a member of the Bell Honors Program while attending Georgia Southern and graduated summa cum laude in chemistry in 1995.

BECKY OWEN (‘99)

Becky Owen was a member of the Bell Honors Program while attending Georgia Southern. She is currently a supervisory chemist at the FDA.

PIERSON (‘10)

Nick Pearson is the director of federal relations for the Tennessee Valley Authority. He also served a two-week stint to mentor student teachers and help improve their reading skills.

MATT RAMSEY (‘94)

Matt Ramsey was first elected to the Georgia House of Representatives in 2007 and was elected in 2010 to serve as the Majority Party Whip in the State House. Ramsey is currently an attorney at Warren, Hooper and Ramsey. Attorney General Camilla Bennett is his wife and daughter.

BLAIN RHODES (‘10)

Blain Rhodes began his career in the music business working as the merchandise manager for country singer and songwriter Luke Bryan. Rhodes is currently the manager for Adir for Warner Chappell Music.

BRAD SHEFFIELD (‘03, ’03)

Brad Sheffield is the senior vice president and retail lead for Sea Island Bank. In 2013, he was awarded the Sea Island Bank CEO Award, which is one of those that have ever been given.

LIZ STEPHENS (‘99)

Liz Stephens is executive director of MedBank Foundation, Inc. Under her leadership, the organization has been able to amplify the amount of medication provided from $250,000 to $50,000 in just two years.

DENNETTE THORNTON (‘01)

Dennette Thornton is senior manager of the Atlanta Braves Group and Premium Sales Department. In 2013, she was no. 1 in the department in all of Major League Baseball. She is also the Atlanta Football Alumni Association board member.

JACOB WARNER (‘03)

Jacob Warren was the first Georgia Southern University Honors College student to graduate with a PhD. He has received more than $56 million in funding to improve health within rural communities. He is currently an associate professor of Community Medicine at Mercer University.

JUSTIN WRIGHT (‘02, ’03)

After two years working at Great Southern Wood Preserving, Justin Wright became the youngest general manager at one of 15 years. He is currently the company’s director of independent sales.
If accreditation is value, then the Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology (CEIT) has recently become invaluable, as it celebrates ABET accreditation for its civil, electrical and mechanical engineering programs. The ABET accreditation is a remarkable milestone for the University’s engineering Bachelor of Science programs instituted in 2011 that prepare students for challenging and rewarding opportunities in a variety of industries or government agencies locally, regionally and nationally.

"Engineering drives innovation, which in turn drives the economy," said Mohammad Davoud, dean of the College of Engineering and Information Technology.

According to Davoud, earning a degree from an ABET-accredited program verifies that the quality of the educational experience meets the international standards of the profession.

"We have great engineering programs—small classes taught by faculty who hold doctoral degrees in their field and have substantial industrial experience," Davoud said. "Georgia Southern has invested in establishing excellent teaching and research labs, and each course includes plenty of laboratory experience. Our students are very successful in going to graduate schools and landing very good jobs."

The University’s Manufacturing Engineering is a good choice for students who have strong mathematics and science backgrounds and a deep interest in building things. "Our graduates, while theoretically inclined, will be applied problem solvers," Davoud said. "They will have knowledge of design, materials, processing, facility layout, safety, quality and automation. The curriculum will be practice-oriented, laboratory intensive and application-based."

CEIT has double reason to celebrate the strides it has made since its formation in 2012. In August, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia authorized the University to offer the first undergraduate manufacturing engineering degree program in the state of Georgia, and the only one in the Southeast.

During much of the 80s and 90s, thousands of American jobs were lost when U.S. companies moved production to China and other low-wage countries; however, companies are beginning to return production to the U.S., especially to Georgia and the Southeast. Most industries need manufacturing engineers who focus on "designing facilities, equipment, processes and methods necessary for the efficient, economical and safe production of a product."

Davoud acknowledged there is a shortage of manufacturing engineers and noted the current educational infrastructure is inadequate to meet the demands and challenges of 21st-century manufacturing. The new Manufacturing Engineering program will address those issues, and will enable Georgia Southern to prepare practice-ready engineers to meet the growing demand for highly skilled professionals and industrialists.

The University’s Manufacturing Engineering is a good choice for students who have strong mathematics and science backgrounds and a deep interest in building things. "Our graduates, while theoretically inclined, will be applied problem solvers," Davoud said. "They will have knowledge of design, materials, processing, facility layout, safety, quality and automation. The curriculum will be practice-oriented, laboratory intensive and application-based."

CEIT also plans to establish a state-of-the-art Southeastern Applied Materials, Manufacturing, and Engineering Research Center to enhance both the academic and scholastic experiences associated with the program, as well as to promote outreach and support to regional manufacturers.

In addition to basic engineering and manufacturing courses, the core curriculum includes five technical tracks for elective courses: SAP Certificate track, Lean and Six Sigma Green Belt Certificate track, Materials Processing track, Occupational Health and Safety track, and Automation track.

During much of the 80s and 90s, thousands of American jobs were lost when U.S. companies moved production to China and other low-wage countries; however, companies are beginning to return production to the U.S., especially to Georgia and the Southeast. Most industries need manufacturing engineers who focus on "designing facilities, equipment, processes and methods necessary for the efficient, economical and safe production of a product."

Davoud acknowledged there is a shortage of manufacturing engineers and noted the current educational infrastructure is inadequate to meet the demands and challenges of 21st-century manufacturing. The new Manufacturing Engineering program will address those issues, and will enable Georgia Southern to prepare practice-ready engineers to meet the growing demand for highly skilled professionals and industrialists.

The University’s Manufacturing Engineering is a good choice for students who have strong mathematics and science backgrounds and a deep interest in building things. "Our graduates, while theoretically inclined, will be applied problem solvers," Davoud said. "They will have knowledge of design, materials, processing, facility layout, safety, quality and automation. The curriculum will be practice-oriented, laboratory intensive and application-based."

CEIT also plans to establish a state-of-the-art Southeastern Applied Materials, Manufacturing, and Engineering Research Center to enhance both the academic and scholastic experiences associated with the program, as well as to promote outreach and support to regional manufacturers.

In addition to basic engineering and manufacturing courses, the core curriculum includes five technical tracks for elective courses: SAP Certificate track, Lean and Six Sigma Green Belt Certificate track, Materials Processing track, Occupational Health and Safety track, and Automation track.

Graduates will leave Georgia Southern with a solid foundation for careers in product and process design, industrial automation, sales, safety and quality management and be ready to work in a team environment with other engineers and technicians. The Manufacturing Engineering program will accept its first students in Fall 2015. - Sandra Bennett

College of Engineering and Information Technology Achieves Two Milestones

College of Engineering and Information Technology, "Georgia Southern is trying to address the needs and support the economic development of South Georgia and beyond."

According to Davoud, earning a degree from an ABET-accredited program verifies that the quality of the educational experience meets the international standards of the profession.

"We have great engineering programs—small classes taught by faculty who hold doctoral degrees in their field and have substantial industrial experience," Davoud said. "Georgia Southern has invested in establishing excellent teaching and research labs, and each course includes plenty of laboratory experience. Our students are very successful in going to graduate schools and landing very good jobs."

CEIT has double reason to celebrate the strides it has made since its formation in 2012. In August, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia authorized the University to offer the first undergraduate manufacturing engineering degree program in the state of Georgia, and the only one in the Southeast.

During much of the 80s and 90s, thousands of American jobs were lost when U.S. companies moved production to China and other low-wage countries; however, companies are beginning to return production to the U.S., especially to Georgia and the Southeast. Most industries need manufacturing engineers who focus on "designing facilities, equipment, processes and methods necessary for the efficient, economical and safe production of a product."

Davoud acknowledged there is a shortage of manufacturing engineers and noted the current educational infrastructure is inadequate to meet the demands and challenges of 21st-century manufacturing. The new Manufacturing Engineering program will address those issues, and will enable Georgia Southern to prepare practice-ready engineers to meet the growing demand for highly skilled professionals and industrialists.

The University’s Manufacturing Engineering is a good choice for students who have strong mathematics and science backgrounds and a deep interest in building things. "Our graduates, while theoretically inclined, will be applied problem solvers," Davoud said. "They will have knowledge of design, materials, processing, facility layout, safety, quality and automation. The curriculum will be practice-oriented, laboratory intensive and application-based."

CEIT also plans to establish a state-of-the-art Southeastern Applied Materials, Manufacturing, and Engineering Research Center to enhance both the academic and scholastic experiences associated with the program, as well as to promote outreach and support to regional manufacturers.

In addition to basic engineering and manufacturing courses, the core curriculum includes five technical tracks for elective courses: SAP Certificate track, Lean and Six Sigma Green Belt Certificate track, Materials Processing track, Occupational Health and Safety track, and Automation track.

Graduates will leave Georgia Southern with a solid foundation for careers in product and process design, industrial automation, sales, safety and quality management and be ready to work in a team environment with other engineers and technicians. The Manufacturing Engineering program will accept its first students in Fall 2015. - Sandra Bennett

Manufacturing Centered: Two Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology students receive hands-on training in a real-world manufacturing setting. Learning in one of Georgia Southern’s many working facilities is crucial to Eagle education, skills-building and preparing practice-ready engineers.

Manufacturing Centered: Two Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology students receive hands-on training in a real-world manufacturing setting. Learning in one of Georgia Southern’s many working facilities is crucial to Eagle education, skills-building and preparing practice-ready engineers.

Manufacturing Centered: Two Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology students receive hands-on training in a real-world manufacturing setting. Learning in one of Georgia Southern’s many working facilities is crucial to Eagle education, skills-building and preparing practice-ready engineers.

Manufacturing Centered: Two Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology students receive hands-on training in a real-world manufacturing setting. Learning in one of Georgia Southern’s many working facilities is crucial to Eagle education, skills-building and preparing practice-ready engineers.

Manufacturing Centered: Two Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology students receive hands-on training in a real-world manufacturing setting. Learning in one of Georgia Southern’s many working facilities is crucial to Eagle education, skills-building and preparing practice-ready engineers.

Manufacturing Centered: Two Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology students receive hands-on training in a real-world manufacturing setting. Learning in one of Georgia Southern’s many working facilities is crucial to Eagle education, skills-building and preparing practice-ready engineers.
I met the Wilson Family in print before I met them in person. Their news was tragic. Cory Wilson, a 21-year-old Georgia Southern business major, seemingly healthy and fit, collapsed in class without warning, without reason. He never regained consciousness. “There’s no way to describe him,” said Cory’s little sister, Morgan, a junior business management major at Georgia Southern. “He was a character. He was just so goofy.” Morgan admitted in high school she didn’t want to be known as “Cory’s little sister.” “I was Morgan. That’s my name. Then, as we got older, it actually became an honor. Everybody loved Cory so much.” She’s never talked about “that day” until now, but wanted to share Cory’s story to help raise AED awareness, hoping it can save lives and spare other families the grief they’ve endured. “I never want anyone to experience this again,” Morgan said.

Cory died of fatal cardiac arrhythmia. Although a courageous classmate, Edwin Garcia, performed CPR on Cory until professional help arrived, use of an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) would have offered Cory his only chance of survival. “An AED is the only effective treatment for restoring normal heart rhythm during a sudden cardiac arrest,” said Dr. Brian DeLoach, medical director, staff physician and AED Committee member at Georgia Southern. “For each minute that passes during this abnormal rhythm, damage occurs, and the likelihood of recovery decreases.” According to the American Red Cross, for each minute use of an AED is delayed, the chance of survival decreases by 10 percent.

Ironically, Cory’s mom, Lisa Wilson, is a registered nurse with the Chatham County Board of Education and a 1986 Georgia Southern nursing graduate. She also is a CPR instructor with the American Heart Association. Lisa was even one of many who worked on Cory in the ER, stepping in line to perform CPR on her own son. “He’s just somewhere… he’s still alive but they can’t reach him because they don’t know him,” Lisa remembers thinking. “If I do CPR, he’s going to know it’s his mom. He’s going to come back because I’m his mom.”

But Cory’s condition didn’t change. Lisa went around again. And again. It had been more than an hour since Cory collapsed and he was still unresponsive. When she was told it was time to stop, Lisa remembers saying, “But I’m not tired. I don’t want to stop.” Even during our interview, she asked herself, “Should I have just done one more round?”

LESSONS FROM A LIFE CUT SHORT

I never want anyone to experience this again.” - Morgan Wilson

Morgan admitted that before that day—January 17, 2013—she felt AEDs were “for somebody else.” “Now that I see how it affected my family, it becomes an important cause to us,” said Morgan. “You don’t really think too much about something until it happens to you.” Today, she urges everyone to take note of nearby AEDs and to take them seriously. After all, AEDs are easy to use, and safe for both user and victim. “The units will not deliver a shock unless it detects an abnormal rhythm,” added DeLoach. “Our units on campus are designed so that even a person with no training can open them, power them on, and then follow the prompts to use them correctly.”

That day was a Thursday. Morgan was in history class—only her second day of classes after the winter break. “I had my phone tucked away in my book bag,” said Morgan. “When class was over, I noticed I had around 20 texts and more than that in missed calls. I knew something was wrong.” When she learned Cory had “fainted” in class, Morgan thought, “He’s probably fine. You all can deal with it. I have to go to class.” But before she knew it, Morgan was in the East Georgia Regional Medical Center waiting room, and a nurse was whisking her away to the back of the hospital to a small room with a single chair. “I thought I was going to get to see Cory,” Morgan said. “I was so confused. I made some jokes. Tried to laugh it off.” Morgan said her perception of time was warped that day—every moment feeling like a split second or forever. She remembers her
mom coming into the room and the words, “Morgan, your brother didn’t make it.” She remembers screaming, “I couldn’t stop screaming in that little room. My mom started crying. The nurse started crying. I wondered what we were having for dinner. Random stuff. It hadn’t hit me yet. I thought, ‘Cory will walk through the door. It’ll be okay.”

After that, Morgan never returned to the waiting room. She remembers: a hallway, her friend Ashley holding her hand, her dad crying. She’d never seen her dad cry before, ever. Morgan knew this would change the life she knew—vacations, holidays. “I don’t have any siblings now,” she said. “I’m an only child.” Mother and daughter had to drive Cory’s truck back to the family home in Savannah. “The longest car trip ever,” Morgan said. “That’s when I became the person whose brother passed away. That was the longest car trip ever.”

Lisa’s mom still hasn’t returned to the waiting room. She remembers: a hallway, her friend Ashley holding her hand, her mother crying. “I didn’t know how to handle a mourning mother or mourning sister. Nobody knew how to handle each other. Making jokes. I didn’t really know how to act. I guess everybody’s hurt was different. Nobody knew how to handle each other. I didn’t know how to handle a mourning mother or mourning father, just as they didn’t know how to handle a mourning sister. We dealt with it in the best way we could.”

Cory’s dad, Kenny Wilson, owns Coastal Truck Parts Center in Garden City, Georgia. He met Lisa at Georgia Southern in Dr. Alexander’s biology class. “You could say we found chemistry in biology,” said Kenny. When Cory was born on Nov. 11, 1991, he recalls walking into the hospital hallway and shouting: “I got a boy! I got a boy!” He told me the two of them loved to hunt and fish together. “We did that a lot,” he said fighting back tears. “I taught him how to ride a motorcycle, too.” Lisa added. “Cory wasn’t just a son but was Kenny’s best friend. After high school graduation we told Cory he could do anything he wanted. Cory chose to spend time with his dad. They packed up the bikes and rode into the mountains, camping along the Blue Ridge Parkway into North Carolina.” Cory wrote a poem about it as part of a class project:

THE RIDE
It is the ride with my dad in the fall
Gliming along the highway
with the warm breeze against my body
With no intended destination in mind
Away from the ramrunctious city
and into the peaceful country
Only miles and miles of highway
with no traffic or stoplights
We stop at a lonely fuel station
to get gas and a refreshing Yoo-hoo
Then back on the outstretched highway
and continue on our journey to nowhere
The occasional glance over his shoulder
to make sure I’m still behind him
Nothing else seems to be there
except his bike and mine
Living in the moment on my perfect day.
- Cory Wilson
February 17, 2009

The entire Wilson Family is still trying to find a new normal. “We buried our child,” said Lisa. “It still seems like a bad dream. We go to the grave every week. We’ve had all kinds of things left—baseball, tennis bat, pennies, oyster shells and bandanas.

Cory loved red bandanas. When he rode in the mountains he always tied a red bandana around his head before putting on his helmet. “I think it made him feel tough, like he was unstoppable. But red was his favorite color and it suited him. Cory was so passionate about everything.”

The Wilsons said Cory was so happy to be at Georgia Southern. “He was everybody’s ‘buddy,’ lover of life and all things good. It’s hard to understand, except that in his death others have found peace.”

The Wilsons remember Cory through symbols, gestures and messages. “Red was his favorite color and it suited him. Cory was so passionate about everything.” - Lisa Wilson

“Red was his favorite color and it suited him. Cory was so passionate about everything.” - Lisa Wilson

We’ll continue that trend until we get one in every building.” Today, there are about 144 AEDs on campus. Chief Russell encourages everyone to take CPR, familiarize themselves with AEDs, and share stories like Cory’s, as well as successful saves. “When they were building the biology building there was a successful save during construction,” said Russell. “One of the company’s workers collapsed and was saved using an AED.” Donations always help. The Wilsons donated one to the KA fraternity house. Even the construction company donated one to the biology department when they discovered one of their own workers was saved with an AED. “We’re funding them however we can,” said Russell.

Georgia Southern President Brooks Keel said the Wilson’s donation indicates that the University is a family. “When tragedy strikes a family, we come together to support each other,” Keel said. “We have come together to take action to hopefully prevent this from ever happening again.”

The Wilsons remember Cory through symbols, gestures and messages. “Red was his favorite color and it suited him. Cory was so passionate about everything.” - Lisa Wilson

And AED numbers have gone up on the Georgia Southern campus because of the Cory Wilson tragedy. The University had a handful of AEDs, even in the 1990s. Some were in Campus Police patrol cars. A few were placed at the RAC and one at the Union, but there was no joint effort yet. “Until recently, it had been an individual department effort,” said University Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police Mike Russell. “Since Cory’s death, we formed an AED Committee. We went through campus and did an inventory of where they should go. The first phase was purchased with year-end money. We bought as many as we could buy. Last year, we completed the second phase purchase.

The Williams’ donation indicates that the University is a family. “When tragedy strikes a family, we come together to support each other,” Keel said. “We have come together to take action to hopefully prevent this from ever happening again.”

The Wilsons remember Cory through symbols, gestures and messages. “Red was his favorite color and it suited him. Cory was so passionate about everything.” - Lisa Wilson
I think things should be. There are four of us again. He’s goofy an only child at all… When he’s with us it evens out to the way I hope you're prepared to have 30 kids because I don’t like being We did go on a trip after Cory died, but instead of it being the think my parents are still struggling with family vacations, too. Morgan. “Christmas morning has just been so hard to deal with. I’m Morgan wants to follow her dreams of becoming a wedding planner, although when everything happened she admitted she just wanted to get away. I live in the same neighborhood where Cory lived, across from the hospital where he died. And I’m a business major, so I’m constantly across from the classroom that he died in, I see the AED on the wall.* For a while I was walking campus almost a celebrity, but one nobody wanted to run into. I felt like everyone knew who I was. I thought about transferring, I thought about dropping out.” Morgan credited her boyfriend Andrew with keeping her going. She found enormous comfort in RUH (Reformed University Fellowship) as well and said her parents were very supportive. Morgan said they told her, ‘you’re still living. Life is about the living. You still need to experience life.” Gradually, I realized I was looking for ways to escape what happened but I didn’t want to escape Cory,” she said. “After a while, running into people became a comforting thing…” I saw little bits of Cory in them—in the way they talked and dressed. Georgia Southern still felt like home.” The most difficult time of year Morgan has had to deal with is Christmas because of the family traditions. “On Christmas Eve, me and Cory would play Mario Cart on Nintendo 64,” said Morgan. “That was one of the first times I asked myself, ‘how do you not have an AED?’ I’m so used to looking for them now. You don’t even have to be certified. It hurts to know I didn’t know this before… I guess I would tell readers that it’s simple. An AED is so simple to use.” To say the Wilsons were flat-footed and stunted by Cory’s death would be an understatement. “You just never saw this coming,” said Lisa. “There’s no words anybody can tell you that’s going to make you feel like it’s all better.” And their entire support system was in shock. Grandparents were grieving for their children who were in turn grieving for their child. “I prayed for healthy children. Everything else was extra,” said Lisa. “If I could have been given a paper to write down the things I wanted in a son or daughter, I wouldn’t have chosen anything different for either of them. Cory’s dream was to be like his dad. He admired Kenny so much. And he was well on his way. For me, being his mother made me a better person, just as being Morgan’s mom makes me a better person. Live, laugh, love, Mom,” Cory always said. He taught us so much about living. How is it that a mother holds her baby’s birth certificate and death certificate in the same hand? I suppose there’s peace in knowing he lived life to the fullest and he was where he wanted to be, with the people he wanted to be with, on the day he died.” An athlete growing up, Cory loved going to Georgia Southern football games, but especially watching “Freedom.” When the bald eagle flew, everything stopped. During Commencement, in which Lisa and Kenny accepted Cory’s degree posthumously, his red bandana was attached to one of Freedom’s wings. “What an honor and tribute to Cory,” said Lisa. Georgia Southern held a candlelight vigil for Cory and students organized a balloon lift in Cory’s memory. And when musician Darius Rucker was in town, KA and Phi Mu recorded a video singing “Wagon Wheel,” which was to be Cory and his girlfriend Olivia’s wedding song. “Everyone has been wonderful to all of us,” said Lisa. “The University also wants to do something in the spring to spotlight cardiac awareness. We’re so grateful.” The Wilson family wants Cory’s story shared so people understand the importance of CPR and using an AED. “It’s like a fire extinguisher,” said Lisa. “It doesn’t do any good if it stays on a shelf.” From the time with Morgan, Lisa and Kenny, I know I have been. To Cory, who I only know through the words of others, I wish you a safe ride ‘gliding along the highway.’ Thank you for taking us all along for the ride.

For more information about AEDs, The Cory Joseph Wilson Memorial Fund or Fireball 40 Memorial Baseball Tournament in his honor, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/magazine.

---

*AED was donated by Cardiac Science and hangs beside a plaque in Cory’s memory.
Georgia Southern welcomed new students to the Eagle Nation this fall with its annual “Weeks of Welcome” (WOW). Held over the first six weeks of class, WOW helps prepare students for success during their time on campus, empowers them with a variety of events and activities, and assists first-year, transfer and returning students in forming friendships, connecting with University resources, and getting involved in campus life. Whether it’s attending an athletics event, joining classmates at Eagles Night Out or attending a show in the Russell Union, the idea behind WOW is to connect new Eagles to the campus and neighboring community. Through WOW, students can identify resources and services provided; make strong connections with faculty, staff and other students; embrace diversity by broadening cultural views; learn and understand the values and expectations of the University; and build pride and passion for all of the Eagle Nation.

OFFICIAL WELCOME
At the RAC (Recreation Activity Center), President Brooks Keel and first lady Tammie Schalue, Ph.D. (at right) were on hand to welcome this year’s freshmen.
Georgia Southern Embraces Tobacco-Free Policy

Lighting up a cigarette on campus, or any other Georgia Southern property, has been banned in order to comply with the Tobacco-Free Policy mandated by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG). Smoking is now prohibited both indoors and outside. This includes all University buildings, facilities, stadiums, arenas, packing lots, greenways, the golf course, and even inside personal vehicles located on campus.

“Georgia Southern University is one of the most beautiful campuses in all of higher education. We pride ourselves on being a progressive institution that’s rich in tradition and welcoming and comfortable for our students, faculty, staff and guests,” said University President Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D. “After careful consideration, and consultation with the University System of Georgia, as of August 1, 2014, Georgia Southern University is a tobacco-free campus. The commitment to a tobacco-free campus is in one we all share together, whether you are a tobacco user or not.”

Why go tobacco-free?
The purpose of the policy (University System of Georgia’s policy 9.1.7) is to create a health-supporting community for everyone, tobacco-users and non-users alike. The new policy also supports the right of all students, faculty, staff and visitors to breathe smoke-free air. The simple reason for our policy is respect for each other and the environment. We hope that smokers who choose to continue smoking will respect our smoke-free environment out of concern for their fellow campus community members.

“It is well documented that tobacco use is directly associated with multiple significant medical problems leading to increased risk of illness and death, not only for the tobacco user, but also for those exposed to second-hand smoke,” says Brian M. DeLoach, medical director, Georgia Southern University Student Health Services. “Tobacco use is considered a public health problem because it is directly related to increased incidence of respiratory illness, cancer, and cardiovascular disease. Second-hand smoke is a significant cause of respiratory illness and cardiovascular disease.”

“Tobacco use is also a major health concern for Georgia Southern students, faculty and staff,” said DeLoach. “Smoking and other tobacco-related products include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, hookahs, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, chewing tobacco, and any and all forms of smokeless tobacco. As of August 1, 2014, anyone on the Georgia Southern campus—students, faculty, staff, alumni, contractors and their subcontractors, miscellaneous employees, event spectators, concertgoers, and any other visitors or guests—must abide by the statewide-mandated USG policy. Anyone caught violating the new rule will be asked to discard the tobacco product immediately or be required to leave the campus grounds.

As medical professionals, the staff at Health Services recognizes that nicotine is a highly addictive substance for most people, which makes quitting smoking or other forms of tobacco very difficult,” says DeLoach. “We want students who have trouble quitting to know that we are available to provide medical assistance with quitting, if desired.”

What areas of campus are prohibited?
The use of tobacco is prohibited in any area of the campus including the following:

• All Georgia Southern Campus Buildings and Grounds
• All Georgia Southern Parking Lots
• Administration Building
• All Georgia Southern Residence Halls and Apartments
• Campus Pedestrian
• Campus Bus Stops
• Allen E. Paulson Stadium and Surrounding Grounds
• Georgia Southern Golf Course
• Coastal Georgia Center (Savannah)
• Herty (Savannah)

“As medical professionals, the staff at Health Services recognizes that nicotine is a highly addictive substance for most people, which makes quitting smoking or other forms of tobacco very difficult,” says DeLoach. “We want students who have trouble quitting to know that we are available to provide medical assistance with quitting, if desired.”

What are considered “Tobacco Products”?
Besides cigarettes, the USG policy also prohibits all other tobacco-related products including pipes, hookahs, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, chewing tobacco, and any and all forms of smokeless tobacco. As of August 1, 2014, anyone on the Georgia Southern campus—students, faculty, staff, alumni, contractors and their subcontractors, miscellaneous employees, event spectators, concertgoers, and any other visitors or guests—must abide by the statewide-mandated USG policy. Anyone caught violating the new rule will be asked to discard the tobacco product immediately or be required to leave the campus grounds.

As medical professionals, the staff at Health Services recognizes that nicotine is a highly addictive substance for most people, which makes quitting smoking or other forms of tobacco very difficult,” says DeLoach. “We want students who have trouble quitting to know that we are available to provide medical assistance with quitting, if desired.”

What is being done to support students who wish to quit smoking?
According to Dr. DeLoach, “We all know that change is not always easy,” said Keel. “But this change in policy at Georgia Southern reinforces our commitment to preserving and improving the health and comfort of our student, faculty, staff, and visitors. The health of the group or organization. On the surface these acts are just a ‘big deal,’ but there are often long-term effects that run much deeper and can have lasting negative consequences.

Although the University has always been staunchly against hazing, this was the first year Hazing Prevention Week was conducted on such a large scale. Tracy Maxwell, founder of HazingPrevention.org, and one of the most well-known and important voices in the hazing prevention movement came to Georgia Southern for Hazing Prevention Week to share her own hazing experience. During her speech, Maxwell told a story about being a camp counselor and how she was hazed the first week as a new member of the staff.

Everyone’s perception of an activity varies depending on his or her background. The psychological damage of hazing is often downplayed as “traditions” or customs. Quite often alcohol is used as a tool to “initiate” freshman or new members of Greek organizations and also sports clubs. A common misconception is that Greeks are the leading group who use such tactics, when this distinction actually belongs to athletes, teams and other sports organizations. In fact, theater and band groups are the second most likely to haze new members of Greek organizations and sports clubs. A common misconception is that Greeks are the leading group who use such tactics, when this distinction actually belongs to athletes, teams and other sports organizations. In fact, theater and band groups are the second most likely to haze new members of Greek organizations and sports clubs.
**STEMFEST SUCCESS** Georgia Southern hosted its 2nd Annual STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Festival on Saturday, Sept. 20. Featuring presentations by the Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM Education, NASA and the U.S. Army, more than 2,000 guests were able to design tabletop hovercraft, learn about solar cell robotics, create liquid nitrogen ice cream, and have their photo taken as astronauts during a “virtual” rocket launch. STEM Fest is the result of the increased interest from the National Science Foundation and the Department of Education to fund efforts to improve the number of students going into STEM fields.

For the fourth year in a row, Georgia Southern University has been named a Military Friendly School® by G.I. Jobs magazine for its efforts to provide educational opportunities to America’s veterans, active-duty troops and their families. The complete 2014 Military Friendly Schools list can be found at militaryfriendlyschool.com.

“We are reaching out to veterans, active-duty military and their dependents to give them the service and attention they deserve so they succeed in earning their degrees online or on campus.”

Georgia Southern takes great pride in being ranked among the top 15 percent of schools nationwide in a survey conducted by Victory Media, a veteran-owned business and publisher of G.I. Jobs and “The Guide to Military Friendly Schools.” In a survey of more than 12,000 schools, researchers examined policies to recruit and retain military and veteran students—students such as business major and Marine Corps veteran Staff Sergeant John L. Kitchens. (To read his full story in our online summer edition, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/magazine.)

**For the fourth year in a row, Georgia Southern University has been named a Military Friendly School® by G.I. Jobs magazine for its efforts to provide educational opportunities to America’s veterans, active-duty troops and their families.**

**University Named ‘Military Friendly’ Fourth Year in a Row**

There is a proud tradition on campus to welcome the military and their families. Last year, Military Times named the College of Business Administration (COBA) one of the best business schools for veterans in the United States for its online and part-time MBA program and for having staff dedicated to veterans issues.

In 2011, Georgia Southern established the Military Resource Center in the Nessmith-Lane Conference Center. It is a one-stop location providing services to help military service members achieve academic success. While at the Center, military students can relax, study and talk with other service members and veterans. In addition, a brand new multi-million dollar HOITC Military Science Building is being constructed on campus.

**“To be productive and spend quality time that benefits the growth of my mind is always a necessity in a situation like mine... I dread the day this ends.”**

- Ron, Smith State Prison inmate

**REMARKABLE STUDIES**

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE 4639**

Each Friday morning they ride. The bus makes its way some 50 miles to Smith State Prison in Glennville, Georgia. The trip allows Eagle students time to share ideas and opinions about crime, criminals, the criminal justice system, and the effects incarceration has on families and communities.

“When Georgia Southern students drive up and see the high fences and sharp-edged wire, it really hits them that this is something different,” said Chad Posick, Ph.D., who teaches the Inside-Out Prison Exchange class to Georgia Southern students. On Fridays, students actually go behind the walls of a maximum-security correctional facility to attend class with incarcerated residents. “They go in scared because they do not know what to expect,” said Posick. “However, once they meet the inmates and start talking to them, they realize the incarcerated students are smart, and they can’t wait for Fridays because this experience is so different for them.”

Every now and then, students need to take a break from classes like English 101 and General Biology to enroll in a course that is a bit, well, unusual. The criminal justice class called “Incarceration, Family and Communities,” has 15 ‘outside’ students and 15 ‘inside’ students. It counts as an upper-level elective and Georgia Southern students earn three credits for the semester-long course. Inmates who pass the class receive a letter to share with the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles, to show that they have successfully completed a college-level course.

“Many are looking to turn their lives around, and it is interesting to hear their stories because you gain a better understanding of their background,” said Posick. “The course gives them work to do so that they are ‘doing their time’ productively and challenging their minds, which are often subjected to the redundancy of prison life. The prisoners don’t see many people from the ‘outside,’ so this is a refreshing change for them.”

The course also provides University students with invaluable lessons as they gain a deeper understanding of how the criminal justice system works. “Their view of prison life, which they usually get from movies and television shows, is drastically changed and more realistic,” added Posick. “Many say it has changed what they want to do when they graduate or had given them new tools for the jobs they still intend to pursue.”

“Had no idea what to expect, I just had crazy thoughts running through my head of how horrible these men were going to be... But once I was into the classroom and began interacting with the other classmates all my butterflies went away.”

- Janna Galbreath, Junior criminal justice major Cumming, Ga.
Most of the buildings on Georgia Southern's campus are named in honor of a man or woman who had a direct association with the University, but the Rosenwald building is one of the rare exceptions.

Originally built as a library in 1938, when the school was still called South Georgia Teachers College, the building is a tribute to the illustrious retailer and philanthropist—Julius Rosenwald. The college library was located in Rosenwald Building until 1975, but today is home to the University Museum and the Offices of the Registrar and Financial Aid, among others.

Director of Georgia Southern University Museum Brent Tharp said the Rosenwald name is integral to understanding the extraordinary story of Georgia Southern. “It is a testament to the progressive vision for the role of education in the community shared by the school and Julius Rosenwald. It represents, too, the perseverance that has been a hallmark of this institution.”

“The mission of the crushing effects of the Great Depression, Marvin Pittman and the faculty and staff of Georgia Teachers College not only kept the school going, but actually expanded the campus and operations, including a new library thanks in part to the Rosenwald Fund.”

According to Shurbutt, the original building was constructed for $31,466. Even today, the Rosenwald building is still one of the most eye-catching buildings on campus—an architectural landmark that admirably connects our glorious past and present, and reminds us all of what the hope of Georgia Southern University’s future can be, when just one person takes the time to care. - SANDRA BENNETT

Moving Up
New SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND KINESIOLOGY Takes Shape

Georgia Southern's Department of Kinesiology has been elevated to the status of School. The move represents the dramatic increase in the number of undergraduates and faculty interested in the academic unit and its focus on the interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Professor of Exercise Science Jim McMillan, the School's interim chair, says the change also indicates that the School has become more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs. "Our School has experienced much growth over the last several years," said McMillan. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, and employ more than 50 graduate students and have more than 1,500 majors."

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.

Although students are unlikely to notice any differences due to the name change, McMillan says the improved status will give Georgia Southern University one of the safest campuses in the region. "We now have 46 faculty and four staff, more competitive with other regional kinesiology programs."

Interdisciplinary study of athletics training, coaching, exercise science, nutrition and food science, pedagogy, physical activity, healthful living and sport psychology.
MEET AZELL FRANCIS (’13)
Georgia Southern’s SGA President

Student Government Association (SGA) President and Master of Science in Applied Engineering student Azell Francis (’13) recently spoke about the importance of providing scholarship opportunities through a press conference to celebrate the University’s renewed partnership with The Coca-Cola Company. As an international student from Trinidad and Tobago, Azell is fulfilling her college aspirations because of the generosity of donors and the monies earmarked for those who need it most.

“I think scholarships allow recipients to think bigger,” said Azell. “For most, we think ‘how can I make whatever dream I have a reality?’ Unfortunately, financial barriers oftentimes make you think within a particular box. But when someone who doesn’t even know you, or your story, is willing to invest in you through scholarships, then that box expands and your dream can become a reality. You can tell yourself, ‘I no longer think within this box because I don’t have to worry as much… instead you’re thinking, ‘what do I really want? What is my definition of success?’ And when you have that clarity, you’re thinking that way, you make the correct steps to achieving it.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

Like so many of our exemplary students, Azell wants to be exposed to new cultures, different ways of thinking and push her own boundaries, obstacles and perceived limitations. Azell says we challenged her to think about where she fit in, not just as a resident of Georgia and citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, but on a global scale and as a global citizen. We challenged her, as we do all of our 20,000 plus students, to think bigger, and she has done just that.

Azell is the first international student to serve as SGA president and the first female president since 2009. She ran on the idea of “We the Eagles,” which encompassed Eagles being elected by Eagles to better serve Eagles. “It’s amazing that students here care so much about other students. Time and time again, we have an amazing team of students who volunteer their time and energy into putting on great events to help raise money for students in times of need.”

Azell is one of five children. Most of her family is still in Trinidad, but she has one sister in Atlanta and another sister in London. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become a United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become a United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat. Her ultimate goal is to one day become an United Nations diplomat.

Azell was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations. One of the initiatives Azell supports and has made a priority since becoming SGA president is the University’s Eagles for Eagles program. “Eagles for Eagles is an initiative to raise funds for students in extreme financial hardships,” says Francis. “As we are the Student Government Association represent all of the students, so we need to make sure we reach out to them in any way or capacity. Yes, we’re SGA. Yes, we’re government, but we are Eagles first.”

The idea of giving back is near and dear to Azell’s heart. As an undergraduate engineering major at Georgia Southern University, she was awarded an International Diversity Scholarship, which enabled her to pay in-state tuition. Even today, Azell talks about the “big, big role” scholarships played in her not only attending Georgia Southern, but also thriving beyond even her own expectations.
GENERAL CONFIRMATION

Alumna Sandra Alvey (‘89) Named Brigadier General

GSM: You are the first female Army medical entomologist to be nominated and confirmed by the U.S. Senate for promotion to Brigadier General. What does that mean to you?

B.G. AL VEY: There has never been a male or female active duty active or Reserve component medical entomologist selected for Brigadier General. Being selected after only two promotions to Brigadier General. What does that mean to me?

GSM: As Brigadier General, what are your main responsibilities?

B.G. AL VEY: As a Brigadier General, I am now Deputy Commanding General for Operations for the 807th Medical Command (Deployment Support), which is headquartered at Fort Douglas, Utah. The Command manages all the Army Reserve deployable field medical units in the upper Midwest to Ohio and now participates in the Army’s Active-Duty units that comprise over 100 subordinate units in the Command and is separated into five brigades in California, Texas, Illinois, Missouri and Ohio. Units of the 807th provide general, surgical, dental, emergency, behavioral, preventive, and veterinary support to Army units and civilian populations. The 807th also conducts military and humanitarian operations in Africa, South and Central America, Asia and Europe.

GSM: What are the greatest challenges you face?

B.G. AL VEY: The greatest challenge I face is balancing the civilian and military careers without losing focus on family and friends. Most people don’t realize the personal sacrifice that Reservists make to serve their country on a “part-time” basis, knowing that their duty is never part time. “One weekend a month” is never one weekend a month—it’s evening and weekend work outside the normal battle assembly.

GSM: You’ve lived and/or been stationed in multiple locations all across the world. Is it difficult?

B.G. AL VEY: My family has moved several times while I’ve been on active duty. With small children we’ve lived in Georgia, Arizona and Maryland, as well as in foreign countries such as Honduras, Germany and Japan. My husband was enlisted and an officer in the U.S. Army and my son Dougus is now a LIT in the U.S. Marine Corps. That said, we’ve also traveled the world on family vacations because I value the cultural exposure and experiences gained from traveling and living overseas. The most positive aspect is providing my children with an education and understanding of other cultures, their unique customs and courtesies, as well as their economic, political, and public issues.

GSM: How does an entomologist become a Brigadier General?

B.G. AL VEY: I earned my Master of Science in Medical Entomology from Georgia Southern University under Dr. Dan Hagar, who introduced me to the military entomology community in 1989. In 1990, I transferred from the Ordnance Corps to the Medical Service Corps. Since there has never been an entomologist selected for Brigadier General, I created my own path by diversifying my assignments and education. Before, in my rotations during my military and civilian careers, I learned entomology, public and environmental health, preventive medicine, military ordnance and transportation, and the intelligence and acquisition fields. I have always challenged myself by stepping out of the normal government entomology positions to take assignments that expanded my knowledge of military structure, capabilities and strategy.

GSM: How did Georgia Southern prepare you for the future and the person you have become today?

B.G. AL VEY: Georgia Southern University prepared me with the advanced education in medical entomology at the graduate level to conduct the required disease vector surveillance, identification and control operations for insect borne diseases. The coursework I received gave me the tools to assess any medically important insect that I worked with in operations around the world, as well as an understanding of chemical, biological, mechanical, environmental and cultural control methods that reduce pest populations as well as protect those exposed. I couldn’t do my job in the Army without Georgia Southern.

GSM: What one word comes to mind when you think about your time at Georgia Southern?

B.G. ALVEY: Football always comes to mind as my husband and I thoroughly enjoyed attending the GSU football games under the coaching of Erik Russell.

GSM: To alumnae reading this, what would be your advice to them as they pursue their passions and careers, especially in traditionally male-dominated fields?

B.G. ALVEY: When I advise young officers and civilians I always emphasize the need to diversify your career potential. After you master the basics of your career field, reach outside of your comfort zone and take on more challenging, unpredictable assignments. This can be uncomfortable, intimidating or even risky but doing so provides the catalyst that is essential to grow, learn and become more confident at higher levels of responsibility and leadership. As far as I’m concerned, I have always been in male-dominated fields, and while organizations are getting better at tempering the issues we all hear about, like pay gaps, determination, perseverance, and fairness are the key to overcoming the perceptions in the workplace.

GSM: To alumnae reading this, what would be your advice to them as they pursue their passions and careers, especially in traditionally male-dominated fields?

B.G. ALVEY: When I advise young officers and civilians I always emphasize the need to diversify your career potential. After you master the basics of your career field, reach outside of your comfort zone and take on more challenging, unpredictable assignments. This can be uncomfortable, intimidating or even risky but doing so provides the catalyst that is essential to grow, learn and become more confident at higher levels of responsibility and leadership. As far as I’m concerned, I have always been in male-dominated fields, and while organizations are getting better at tempering the issues we all hear about, like pay gaps, determination, perseverance, and fairness are the key to overcoming the perceptions in the workplace.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN.EDU/MAGAZINE

NEWS, CONT.
A FEW MILES OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS OF PORTAL, GEORGIA, HIDDEN JUST OFF THE MAIN ROAD, SITS AN UNASSUMING SCHOOL WITH A HISTORY THAT SPANS NEARLY A CENTURY AND A HALF.
For generations, Willow Hill School was at the heart of education for many African-American elementary and middle school children in the rural community of Bulloch County. Founded by former slaves in 1874, and integrated in 1971, the school closed its doors in 1999, yet its historic educational mission survives.

Today, alumni, faculty, staff and students are engaged in several research projects aimed at preserving the school's vital role in the community's history by assisting efforts to transform Willow Hill into a lasting cultural treasure. Georgia Southern and Willow Hill alumni Lummie Lashay Allen Harris ('98) and Patricia Harden Willis ('72) are two of the founding board members of the Willow Hill Heritage and Renaissance Center (WHHRC). Harris, Willis and other descendants of the school's founders organized efforts to secure the building when it went on the auction block in 2005.

Harris, a third-generation educator who teaches in Dekalb County, Georgia, said she grew up hearing stories about how integral Willow Hill was to the community. "Knowing that this school was not only a part of my history, but a part of my family's history was enough motivation for me to get involved," she explained. "It is important that we honor the legacy of countless community figures who impacted this small, close-knit, religious community. It is our desire to provide a place that continues to honor our ancestors and educate future generations."

The Colleges of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Education, Public Health, and Health and Human Sciences are all working with the WHHRC to do exactly that, in a community where ties still run deep. Public History Professor Michael Van Wagenen, Ph.D., said the Center provides a unique opportunity for Georgia Southern faculty and students to participate in efforts to preserve its legacy. Both Van Wagenen and Brent Tharp, Ph.D., director of the Georgia Southern Museum, have collaborated with Dr. Alvin Jackson, president of the WHHRC, and his wife, Gayle Jackson, Ph.D., the Center's development director, on exhibits and collections.

For alumna Patricia Willis, her involvement in the Willow Hill story is a way of giving back to the school that was her first taste in formal education, and where she met her first playmates and friends, many of them lifelong.

"I find the story of the Willow Hill community so compelling because of their inspiring perseverance and dedication to education in general," said Tharp. "Prior to and just after the Civil War, Georgia gave little to no value to the idea of public education. Yet, in 1874, the recently freed slaves of the Willow Hill community were determined to see their children in school, creating the longest-serving school in Bulloch County, black or white. Their story is an example for us all and deserves to be preserved and celebrated."

Van Wagenen is spearheading the initiative to transcribe and digitize dozens of interviews with former Willow Hill students and teachers that Jackson has conducted over the past 30 years. "Dr. Jackson's oral history collection represents a priceless cultural and historical resource that needs to be preserved and shared," said Van Wagenen. "Local histories are the building blocks of our larger national narrative. The experiences of the people living in Willow Hill are a perfect example of this. Through their lives, we can better understand the history of race, class and gender in the United States."

With the help of a graduate student, some of the interviews are available online as both audio and text files, and the oral histories will be a part of the special collections in the Zach S. Henderson Library.

For alumna Patricia Willis, her involvement in the Willow Hill project is a way of giving back to the school that was her first experience in formal education, and where she met her first playmates and friends, many of them lifelong.

"I am so proud of this institution and wanted to participate in ensuring that its legacy lasts forever."

Although the current building was constructed in 1954, the school is celebrating the 140th anniversary of its founding this year. Board members are hopeful this historic milestone will be a significant moment within the community and helps engage people of all ages. Donations, grants and sponsorships are crucial if the WHHRC is to become a fully functioning museum and community center. Each Labor Day weekend, a fundraiser attracts hundreds of alumni to the school.

"It is our goal to create a network of alumni, friends, volunteers, researchers and corporations to support and sustain the long-term efforts of the Willow Hill Heritage and Renaissance Center," said Jackson.

Arlene Daughtry Hendrix ('71), one of the first black undergraduates at Georgia Southern University, serves on the Willow Hill advisory board. "Someone once said, 'There is something in the water at Portal that makes those who come out of there very different in an excellent kind of way,'" said Hendrix, who entered into a law enforcement career in New York after she graduated from Georgia Southern. "The legacy and impact of Willow Hill should be preserved, not only on the walls of the school, but in the hearts, ideas and dreams of any school, for this makes us eternal."

The work of the WHHRC has captured the interest of faculty and students alike, and spawned partnerships with the organization on at least eight different projects, including saving Bennett Grove School. Details are at GeorgiaSouthern.edu/magazine.
Three faculty members in the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health were featured in Pediatrics, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics for a collaborative study that studied parents’ perceptions of their children’s weight. Andrew Hansen, Dr.P.H., Olena Tarsanski, Dr.P.H., and Jian Zhang, M.D., Dr.P.H., examined height and weight data of about 3,000 children, ages six to 11, between 1988 and 1994, and a similar cohort from 2005 to 2010. In the 2005-10 survey, 78 percent of parents perceived their overweight daughter as “about the right weight” and 89 percent of parents said the same about their overweight boys. Earlier, in the 1988-94 survey, 61 percent of parents perceived their overweight girl to be “about the right weight,” while 78 percent of parents said the same for their overweight boys. The surveys’ results signal a generational shift of parental perceptions about children’s weight. The researchers noted that parents’ failure to recognize their child as overweight might account for the poor results of pediatric obesity prevention and control.

Department of Biology Professor Subhrajit Saha presented his agroecological research before an international symposium hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in September. He was among more than 50 experts from around the globe who made presentations at the forum in Rome, Italy. With the threat of global warming, agroecology is being recognized more and more as a climate-smart method of producing high quality food. Saha’s participation in the symposium also exposed Georgia Southern’s research initiatives to a global community of researchers, policymakers and international agencies and organizations.

Biology Professor Presents at United Nations Meeting

Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health

College of Science and Mathematics

Shifting Parental Perceptions of Children’s Weight

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Professor Honored

Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health

Professor Awarded NSF Research Grant

Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology

Associate Professor for Quantitative Analysis Xinfang Wang, Ph.D., recently received confirmation that her paper, “Efficiency and Equity Tradeoffs in Voting Machine Allocation Problems,” has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Operational Research Society. This subject was particularly timely during the recent election season. Efficiency and equity are the two crucial factors to be considered when allocating public resources such as voting machines. Currently, voting machine allocations look at either efficiency (ease of assignment) or equity (number of voting machines for a given precinct). The study examines the tradeoff between the two competing objectives. The new model quantifies the sacrifice in efficiency in order to achieve a certain improvement in equity and vice versa. Using data from the 2008 United States Presidential election in Franklin County, Ohio, the research demonstrates that our model is capable of producing significantly more balanced allocation plans, in terms of efficiency and equity, than current practice or other competing methods.

$2.2 Million in Grant Funding

College of Health and Human Sciences

The School of Nursing recently received more than $2.2 million in grant funding, which will help establish a Center for Nursing Scholarship and Research, introduce a new graduate-level Chronic Illness Certificate Program and provide scholarships to students pursuing a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) degree. The University System of Georgia awarded one grant and two came from the Health Resources Services Administration.

College of Business Administration

Elections

Associate Professor’s Paper Accepted in Prestigious Journal

College of Business Administration

College of Engineering and Information Technology

Research networks (ROAR). The grant will allow Rawat to develop a testbed to design and evaluate projects that use the Cloud to address the challenges of providing wireless spectrum access over large geographic areas. The project could influence the implementation, evaluation and development of future wireless systems.

Department of Electrical Engineering Professor Danda Rawat, Ph.D., has been awarded a $528,000, three-year grant from the National Science Foundation to support his research of “Real-Time Opportunistic Spectrum Access in Cloud-Based Cognitive Radio Networks (ROAR).” The grant will allow Rawat to
Head Coach Emily Kuhfeld Driving New Women’s Golf Team

You are Georgia Southern University’s first woman golf coach. What does that mean to you?

When I got the call and they offered me the job, I felt like it was the opportunity of a lifetime. I’ve always wanted that challenge to be the very first somewhere and to able to create my vision from scratch. Georgia Southern has everything in place for this program to take off. So, it was just the right fit on so many levels. The opportunity to be the first women’s golf coach made it stand out from other job offers I’d had. Not many coaches in their career have the opportunity to say they were the first somewhere. I really like that about this opportunity.

How do you think being female will help you lead the team?

All my coaching experiences have been with females. I’ve never had that other side. My college coach was a female and I worked for a female in my last job. It might be a little easier for the players to relate to me on a personal level. I know there are great male coaches at this level, too, but I definitely look at it as an advantage when recruiting. Maybe initially the players will feel a little bit more comfortable with me and my smaller stature. I hope they feel more comfortable with me off the mat. At five-foot-two, I was usually the shortest one on the team.

What would you say the biggest difference is in the way guys and girls play the game?

Both can learn a lot from each other. Typically, men are more creative around the green than women—from 100 yards and in. They have more shots. I think when guys practice, they’re more open to trying new shots, whereas girls sometimes just want to learn that one shot and know that it’s going to work. Obviously, our men’s team is really strong here. I want my girls to learn from them.

What are you looking for in players as you recruit the girls to learn from them.

I want the best talent that I can possibly get, girls who take this seriously, that want to be part of something special—a competitive, great program. That’s regardless isn’t for everybody, but that’s okay. I want the girls who want to be pushed, who push themselves and each other with a competitive, fun spirit.

You have an impressive background in the golf world both as a player and a coach. What drives your passion for the sport?

I always wanted to be a professional golfer growing up. It’s very competitive and a lot of work. I set off of the dream for a while and that was tough, but then I got into teaching and coaching. I knew that I’d found something I really loved. I had such a great college experience myself, and it’s really fun to try my best to give back to student-athletes.

What are your goals for the 2015-16 season?

I want the best team I can possibly get. I want to start a great program here. I think every coach would say, “We want to go to conference, we want to go to Nationals, etc.” but my greatest goal is to start something really special here that new recruits want to be a part of, to start a successful program and establish the building blocks for that. Then, I want to help my players get better every single day. If I can do those two things, everything else will definitely follow.

What do you enjoy most about coaching?

The relationships are great. The competition is a lot of fun for me. I enjoy watching the players grow and get better. Not just when they have a great round, but as people, it’s really fun to watch them grow and mature over the four years. I have really great relationships with my players that I’ve coached in the past. It’s very rewarding.

Were you interested in golf as a child? What turned you on to the game?

I was an athletic kid. I wanted to play every sport. My dad was actually a tennis pro. For me, golf and tennis were neck and neck for a while and my dad told me I needed to pick one. I really loved golf. The solitary aspect of it, being out in nature. Once I picked golf that night as a twelve-year-old, it was about working toward that goal.

Who are your golf heroes?

Definitely Jack Nicklaus. I met him once at Ohio State. That was awesome. Bobby Jones is definitely from a different era, but I really admire his career. His golf swing was really beautiful. On the women’s side, Juli Inkster. She’s raised a family of three kids and has a successful marriage, and is still on tour competing. How she’s done that and still been able to play for 20 odd years, that’s pretty impressive.

What’s the most famous golf tournament you’ve attended or played in?

I played in the U.S. Girls Junior Championship in Maryland when I was 17. I’ve also been to the U.S. Open at Pinehurst in North Carolina, and I’ve attended the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, Georgia before.

What do you think of Statesboro and the Georgia Southern family so far?

I really like it here already. When I’m recruiting out in California somewhere, I find myself thinking, ‘I’m ready to get back there!’ I’m looking forward to getting a team together. Once that happens, I can slow down a little bit and really enjoy the area.

“‘My greatest goal is to start something really special here that new recruits want to be a part of... then, help my players get better every single day.”’

—Coach Emily Kuhfeld
BEST UNDER THE SUN

Eagles Win Sun Belt Championship First Year in Conference

28-6 / @ SOUTH ALABAMA 9.20

36-28 / @ NEW MEXICO STATE 10.4

22-16 / vs. UL MONROE 11.29

47-24 / vs. IDAHO 10.11

69-31 / @ GEORGIA STATE 10.25

28-25 / @ TEXAS STATE 11.6

34-14 / vs. APPALACHIAN STATE 9.29

42-10 / vs. TROY 10.30

For more photos of the Eagles’ championship season, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/magazine.

WILLIE FRITZ NAMED SUN BELT COACH OF THE YEAR

Georgia Southern’s Willie Fritz was voted the Sun Belt Conference Coach of the Year by his coaching peers and members of the media as the Eagle Football team claimed the 2014 conference crown, going a perfect 8-0 in its first year in the league.

“Everyone contributed to our success in this championship season and... what we accomplished as a team,” said Head Coach Fritz. “I couldn’t be prouder of our players and our coaching staff for their commitment and effort as we started our journey this year.”

For Fritz, it is his second conference Coach of the Year honor after his 2011 Sam Houston State team went undefeated in Southland Conference play with a 7-0 record and advanced to the national championship game. With the nine wins against only three losses in 2014, his career record improves to 185-70.

The Sun Belt Conference also announced selections for its all-conference team with 11 Eagle student-athletes recognized for honors following this historic inaugural year.

For a full list of Georgia Southern All-Sun Belt Conference player honors, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/magazine.

SIX FOR FRITZ

Catching Up with Head Football Coach Willie Fritz

In honor of Georgia Southern’s six FCS national championships (and the number of points awarded for scoring a touchdown), the editors of Georgia Southern Magazine caught up with Coach Willie Fritz to ask him six post-season questions.

1. What was your biggest surprise this season? How well our team gelled and how quickly it came together.

2. What was your greatest teaching moment? I think it might have happened before the season began. When we talked about what kind of team we were going to be and the effort we had to give in order to be successful at the FBS level—we going to be the team that went 4 and 4 in the Southern Conference last year or the team that beat Florida. I told them that was the kind of effort that we were going to have to give week in and week out.

3. What was your biggest disappointment? Probably the Navy game. I felt like we had a good plan but they had a better one. We didn’t play as well as we were capable of playing. A lot of the credit for that goes to Navy.

4. You win the Sun Belt in your first season. How do you top that? Win it in our second season, go to a bowl game and finish in the top 25.

5. Who gets this season’s game ball? I think that would be split evenly amongst the seniors.

6. In one word, sum up this season. Fantastic.
Whatever happened to:

TIM WILLIS
Cross Country and Track & Field

Now that Tim Willis (’94) has accomplished so many of his personal and professional life goals, he wants to make sure other people receive the same chance to live their dreams and experience the satisfaction of attaining goals that sometimes feel just out of reach.

Although Willis lost his eyesight at age 10, he gradually gained a quiet confidence that helped him improve in cross country and track and field. “When I got involved in cross country and track and field, I continued to improve,” Willis said. “That gave me the motivation and drive to continue down those roads with those two sports.”

And down those roads he ran, winning five Paralympic medals, as well as setting 12 national and two world records during his career as a competitive runner. But before reaching such lofty heights, Willis was the first blind athlete to compete in NCAA Division I cross country, and he did it all here at Georgia Southern. In addition, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Political Science in 1994.

Since graduating, Willis has helped aid others across several different career tracks. Since he was 8 or 9 years old, he’d always wanted to be an attorney. So Willis enrolled in law school at Mercer University, while he continued to train for the 2000 Paralympics. Willis won the bronze medal in the 10,000 meters and later found out that he had passed the Georgia Bar Exam on his first try. “Being a runner in cross country and track and field takes a lot of self discipline,” he said. “It’s the same for law school.”

Law degree in hand, Willis started his own law practice that focused on four branches of law: personal injury cases, disability work rights, wills and estates, and small business litigation. Being a relatively new attorney, Willis reached the opportunity to gain advice and ideas from his peers. In addition to managing the time and rigor of running his own private practice, Willis served as a contract attorney for Disability Law and Policy Center of Georgia, Inc., where he would eventually become interim director.

Meanwhile, Willis maintained his tie to athletics even after he had retired as a competitive runner. He represented athletes’ interests as a member of the United States Olympic Committee’s (USOC) Media,Television, Committee and as a representative, Georgia provided Willis with the opportunity to help athletes achieve the goals he had attained. Willis moved to Colorado six years ago to take a position as a U.S. Olympic Committee management development trainee. It was starting at square one, Willis admitted, as an administrator instead of an athlete. “It was great to be a part of the Olympic and Paralympic movement in that way,” he said. “I have been an athlete, which I enjoyed, but it was great to have an opportunity as an administrator.” Willis’ path to becoming an administrator included time as a trainee before he became a manager of grants and contracts for the USOC in 2009. “I was in charge of managing grants that the USOC gave to other organizations,” Willis said. “I was in charge of those grantees. It was rewarding because I knew the work we did was important to athletes around the country. We got a lot of thank you notes and emails and that kind of stuff.”

Before the records and medals, Willis was a high school student in Tucker, Georgia, who took a stab at cross country, track and field and wrestling. One of his guide tethers was put on display at Planet Hollywood. He even had the opportunity to jog with President Bill Clinton and appear in advertisements for a handful of various corporations. His 1996 Paralympic medals and racing spikes are in the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, and the Georgia Southern University Athletics Hall of Fame inducts Willis as a member in 2006. Willis also served as the athlete ombudsman for the 2008 U.S. Paralympic Team.

Today, he lives in Colorado Springs and still runs regularly, just for fun and to stay in shape. A big part of Willis’ journey from Georgia to Colorado took shape in Statesboro, where Willis was a Southern Conference All-Academic athlete, and won the Georgia Southern Outstanding Political Science Student Award and received the University President’s Award. In addition to the efforts of his family and friends, Georgia Southern has played a part in helping Willis share his successes with school kids, law clients and up-and-coming athletes. “My academic and athletic background from GSU... those opportunities have helped me throughout my life and career,” he said. Willis says the communication skills he learned at Georgia Southern have served him well when he’s been invited to speak at school graduations, conferences and other events. - brian hudgins

Reach the Eagle Nation.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN M A G A Z I N E

Your business can reach Georgia Southern alumni and friends throughout the state, region and nation. Advertise in our Spring 2015 issue by contacting us at:
marketing@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-6397

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

Your message
BASKETBALL
Two Named to Preseason All-Sun Belt Team

Georgia Southern senior Anna Claire Knight and junior Briana Jones have been named second-team Preseason All-Sun Belt by College Sports Madness.

Knight was a 2014 All-Southern Conference selection and earned second-team all-tournament honors. The guard ranked third in the league in scoring with 15.5 points per game to go along with 4.6 rebounds and 1.9 assists. She became just the third Eagle to score 400 points in a season since 1998-99 and the sixth player in school history to top the 1,000-point mark. Knight tallied the first triple-double in program history with 16 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists at Samford on Jan. 6, 2014.

Jones averaged 7.7 points and 6.8 rebounds a game and was one of five Eagles to play in all 31 contests. The forward/center posted five double-doubles and scored in double figures in 12 contests, and her 20 blocked shots were the most for an Eagle since 2009-09.

GOLF
Well Tested, Well Traveled

Three Georgia Southern Eagles were named to the All-Sun Belt Teams during the Women’s Soccer Conference Championship Banquet. Nora El-Shami and Katie Merson were selected as First-Team members, while Melinda Lukas was chosen as a Second-Team member.

The Eagles leading goal scorer with seven on the year, El-Shami also leads the team in assists (6) and is ranked seventh in the Sun Belt Conference in points with 20. “Over the course of her career, Nora has proven that she is one of the most talented players to ever come through our program,” said Head Coach Brian Dunleavy. Teammate Merson joins El-Shami on the First Team, as decided by the league’s coaches and sports information directors. The fifth-year senior set the career shutout record this season, tallying 18 total as an Eagle. All told, she collected 91 saves in her senior campaign, while playing every minute of every match.

Lukas, in just her sophomore season, has been tabbed to the Second-Team All-Sun Belt. The second leading scorer on the team overall, Lukas leads the team in game-winning goals with four. The Eagles finished the 2014 season with an overall record of 11-6-2 (5-3-1), after falling to the No. 1 seed of 11-6-2 (5-3-1) in the Sun Belt Conference Tournament. It is their best regular season mark since 2002.

The Georgia Southern women’s rifle team competed in the small bore discipline for the first time in program history and shot a 4316 at SEARC #2. The Eagles finished in sixth place ahead of The Citadel women’s team. The team shot a score of 2211 in air rifle and 1975 in small bore. In small bore, Kathryn Youngblood led the team with a score of 512, while Tori Lewis finished second with a score of 497. Emmie Johnson and Ali Shortridge also shot 484 and 479, respectively.

HALL OF FAME
Georgia Southern Athletics Welcomes Six New Members

“it was an immense honor and privilege to induct this year’s impressive Hall of Fame class,” said Director of Athletics Tom Kinlein. “They should be recognized for their athletic accomplishments but also for the tremendous impact they had on Georgia Southern University through their lives as student-athletes, coaches and supporters.”

SIDELINES

ATHLETICS

HALL OF FAME
Georgia Southern Athletics Welcomes Six New Members

“it was an immense honor and privilege to induct this year’s impressive Hall of Fame class,” said Director of Athletics Tom Kinlein. “They should be recognized for their athletic accomplishments but also for the tremendous impact they had on Georgia Southern University through their lives as student-athletes, coaches and supporters.”

RIFLE
Small Bore Debut

The Georgia Southern women’s rifle team competed in the small bore discipline for the first time in program history and shot a 4316 at SEARC #2. The Eagles finished in sixth place ahead of The Citadel women’s team. The team shot a score of 2211 in air rifle and 1975 in small bore. In small bore, Kathryn Youngblood led the team with a score of 512, while Tori Lewis finished second with a score of 497. Emmie Johnson and Ali Shortridge also shot 484 and 479, respectively.

TRACK AND FIELD
New Assistants Named

Franz Holmes has joined the Georgia Southern Track and Field and Cross Country program after spending five years as an assistant at Tennessee State and this past year at Middle Tennessee State (MTSU). Holmes, a former sprinter at Tennessee State, will coach the Eagles in distance events. “Coach Holmes brings considerable knowledge to our distance program as a USA Track and Field Level II certified endurance coach,” said Head Coach Carter. “Franz understands the approach it takes to build a team atmosphere.”

Brittany Cox, an NCAA All-American in the Shot Put and Sun Belt Conference champion in both the Shot Put and Weight Throw, will coach the Georgia Southern Throwers. She became MTSU’s first female thrower to earn All-American accolades and still owns two indoor and two outdoor MTSU records. “Coach Cox will infuse energy and enthusiasm into our throw program,” said Carter. “With her experience as an NCAA All-American, she has firsthand knowledge of what it takes to compete at the highest levels of our sport.”

Cox joins Georgia Southern after serving the last three years as a recreational leader at Haper Community Center and Hadley Regional Center, both in Nashville, Tennessee.
GOING HOLLYWOOD FOR HOMECOMING

When cool autumn breezes are brushed aside by warm Eagle spirit, it can only mean one thing: Homecoming! This week-long celebration plays host to thousands of Georgia Southern alumni, current students and area community members. Homecoming includes a variety of special activities, events, live music, reunions and an annual parade. This year’s theme was, “Welcome to Hollywood: Southern Walk of Fame.” The week culminated with the Eagles Homecoming game at Paulson Stadium, a 47-24 victory over the Idaho Vandals, and the announcement of the Homecoming King and Queen, Errol Spence and Brooklyn Smith (at left).
Hala Moddelmog and I have something in common. Neither of us has watched a single episode of "The Walking Dead." But Georgia Southern alumna Moddelmog ('79) is familiar with the popular AMC TV show based on the zombie apocalypse comic book series of the same name. "People will literally stop me," says Moddelmog, "and say, 'oh, you live where 'The Walking Dead' is shot.'" Known for Coke, CNN, Gone with the Wind, and now, "The Walking Dead," Moddelmog is attempting to change many of these common perceptions, and misperceptions, about Atlanta. Moddelmog is President & CEO of the Metro Atlanta Chamber (MAC) and the first female leader in the Chamber's 154-year history. "We have to disrupt the way Atlanta is viewed by the outside world," says Moddelmog. "But we also have to disrupt the way we see Atlanta."

The concept of change, or disruption, has never been foreign to Moddelmog. After all, she attended Georgia Southern at a time when it wasn’t exactly the “popular” choice. Moddelmog grew up Hartwell, Georgia, a small town located about an hour and a half northeast of Atlanta. It's a place that helped shape and mold her early personal values and interests. "My father had exceedingly high expectations," says Moddelmog. "There was no difference between what he expected of me versus my brother. I learned how to change the oil in the cars at 14 and cut grass as soon as I weighed 97 pounds. He also thought I should know how to bake pound cake because in the south that was ‘important.’ I made maybe one or two and that was the end of my cooking career. And it hasn’t started back yet," jokes Moddelmog. She says her father believed that if you had the energy and brains it was your responsibility to be engaged in life and really live. The Moddelmogs didn’t have a TV for many years. Her father thought kids needed to be reading, playing, and being involved in the world. "When I was young I used to think I’d like to be the president of something, but I didn’t know what," says Moddelmog.

At 17, Moddelmog faced a personal disruption. A senior in high school, her mother died. "My mother had unconditional love for me," says Moddelmog. "Growing up in Hartwell, Moddelmog was about 45 minutes from UGA (University of Georgia). She had friends going to school there and visited the campus often. But with Georgia Southern being three hours away, it really seemed like "I would be going away." Moddelmog recalls her older brother trying to convince her to reconsider her decision to become an Eagle and go to a university, not a college. "I was very stubborn," she says. "I was like 'my mother just died. I’m just going to go down there by myself.' It was almost a rebellious act to go to Georgia Southern. I really just wanted to be independent, but I’m so happy I did.”

At Georgia Southern, Moddelmog majored in English because she “loved it.” She calls the Georgia Southern English department “top-notch” and “energizing.” "I would put my English professors at Georgia Southern up against anyone," says Moddelmog. "They opened up a whole new world for me in terms of literature and studying human behavior." In addition, she appreciated the diverse student population. "You might think back in the 70s, small college in the south, that there was only one type of student but I really didn’t find that," she says. "I was surprised at some of the diversity of thought and interests.”

Once Moddelmog left Statesboro, mentors became a larger part of her life. She decided to go to journalism school because she still loved the written word. Her goal at the time was to just get through the program and get a job so she could eat. Within the first few weeks, Moddelmog’s major professor had her start her thesis. Ironically, her research paper would be on cable TV, a luxury she never had growing up. It examined consumer behavior. Afterward, Moddelmog went to Atlanta to interview at Arby’s for a sales analysis job. "Here I was an English and journalism major but the guy in the marketing department who hired me knew that if I’d done a research paper then I could do the math. Moddelmog remembers the man asking, “do you know why I’m hiring you for this job?” I said no,” Moddelmog laughs now. "He said that so many people they hire can’t write, so if I was an English major then he knew I could. At the end of the day,
we need people who can communicate and who can write.

In 1995, Moddelmog became the first woman to lead an international Quick- Service Restaurant brand when she was named president of Church’s Chicken. Since then she has led the Arby’s Restaurant Group as well as Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and now the Chamber. “I think it’s an important milestone for the organization (MAC) because Atlanta has been a little like a lot of other cities, with primarily male leaders. Nineteen ninety-five doesn’t sound long ago, but it certainly has come. I hope you’ve come. But I think for this organization to put its trusting, forward-looking leader is a good symbol for the region.”

Moddelmog wants to inspire other women to dream, overcome fears and reach their own goals. “I feel I have an obligation to make sure that women are taking the risk that they need to take in order to set higher goals,” she says. “It’s not part of the job description, but if Atlanta is going to be all it can be then we should include everyone in the mix and that certainly means giving women opportunities.” As a CEO in 1995’s other advice: “Try to find something you love to do and do something that you love; feel very passionate about it and be engaged in your role. Be eager, enthusiastic and passionate about what you do. Those are the people others want to hang out with. And just be authentic. Also, don’t forget that if you’re not disrupting yourself or disrupting something in your business, then you’re not in the right business. That’s the bottom line. That you or your business or nonprofit will become irrelevant. I truly want to disrupt myself so the learning is fun and not stop learning.”

In fact, one of the aspects that Moddelmog enjoys about MAC is their commitment to community. “You feel you’re going to be engaged in your role. Be eager, enthusiastic and passionate about what you do. Those are the people others want to hang out with. And just be authentic. Also, don’t forget that if you’re not disrupting yourself or disrupting something in your business, then you’re not in the right business. That’s the bottom line. That you or your business or nonprofit will become irrelevant. I truly want to disrupt myself so the learning is fun and not stop learning.”

The University strives for this mission as well. In 2001, Moddelmog was selected to oversee the University’s own “Campaign for National Distinction,” which went on to surpass its fundraising goal by $13 million. “When I went to Georgia Southern it was a sleepy little college. Maybe 6,000 people. No football team. … Then I went out into the world, got married, had kids and got to be president of Church’s. When I got involved in the Campaign, I had a chance to look back at what the College had done… I was awed by the progress and growth. I was really interested in helping the students. It was important to me that Georgia Southern be involved on a global level and not isolated. It could have stayed a sleepy little college if somebody hadn’t had the foresight and get up and go to make it a University and make it what it is today.”

This is what makes being a part of the Eagle Nation unique. The University is focused not only on superior education, but securing jobs for graduates as they enter today’s real world. Georgia Southern is spearheading workforce development, along with organizations such as the Metro Atlanta Chamber. “We talk to companies, find out what they need, share that with colleges and try to do some pairing up,” says Moddelmog. Georgia Southern then makes sure the degrees that they’re turning out match. Moddelmog believes that “getting great professors that fill specific jobs will help raise our national distinction.” She says the University is positioned to fulfill particular skill sets—the construction management piece is very strong. “We’ve learned that a great professor will attract the great students,” says Moddelmog.

In the midst of years of professional success, came another personal disruption with the potential to take the life she loved—her own—when Moddelmog was diagnosed with breast cancer. “I was very fortunate because I discovered it early,” recalls Moddelmog. “I was already loving my life. It was so full. So it (cancer) didn’t make me want to change my life at all. But it makes you want to really be present every day. You realize every day is precious.” Moddelmog says being at Komen and in the chemo room and seeing what other people experienced, that was the hard part. “I had the means and power to make sure I got the best care. But I realized that there are many people who didn’t have an advocate in the fight… and there’s something about the term breast cancer survivor I don’t like. We’re really all breast cancer survivors.”

Through it all, her family has been alongside her every step of the way. “I’m extraordinarily fortunate,” says Moddelmog. “I’ve been married for 29 years and my husband is very loving, giving and just so accepting of all the things I want to do and try to get done in the world. And he’s an incredible father.” As far as their children, her son is 28 and her daughter is now 26. She says kids keep you grounded. “So much to do. I think if you’re not disrupting yourself or disrupting something in your business, then you’re not in the right business. That’s the bottom line. That you or your business or nonprofit will become irrelevant.”

Moddelmog credits Georgia Southern for giving her her start. She remains proud of having a hand in the University’s growth and admires the special place it’s become in higher education throughout Georgia and beyond. “I have a friend in a nearby state whose daughter wants to go to Georgia Southern,” says Moddelmog. “It’s her number-one choice and that was refreshing to hear.”

Without a doubt, Moddelmog wants to have an impact, not only on the people of Atlanta but within the entire region and beyond, and knows she can do it in her role as MAC president. “I believe wholeheartedly in that diversity of thought I first experienced at Georgia Southern,” she says. “I always want to be engaged. Speaking to young people, I tell them to just do what they want at the time and do it the best way they can and other doors will open… that’s the business model everyone should aspire to.”

“I have an obligation to make sure that women are taking the risk that they need to take in order to set higher goals.”

-Hala Moddelmog
"GIVE ME ONE REASON TO WHY ONE SHOULD BECOME A GROWN-UP?"  - PETER PAN

Emily Bargeron ('06) grew up on a dirt road in south Georgia. Her family didn’t have cable or air, or play video games. Emily was encouraged to find more “classic” ways of having fun, being a kid, and exploring her own creative mind. Creativity is the ability to manifest ideas into something tangible,” says Emily. “I think that creativity has always been a huge part of my life.”

Although she majored in fashion design at Georgia Southern, Emily didn’t leap into her career. She describes it more as “a wading process,” where she eventually found herself in the deep end. “As a kid I created games and toys, and as an adult I am wading process,” where she eventually found herself in the design world. Emily Bargeron describes her own Mamie Ruth.

She taught me that I could do anything if I believed in myself," says Emily. “She was an entrepreneur when women primarily stayed at home with the kids. She had her own flower shop and worked non-stop, while being a mother, a wife, and an amazing southern lady. She set the bar high and continues to inspire me to reach for the stars.”

“Mamie” means practical, courageous, and an intellect at heart. And that is exactly how Emily describes her own Mamie Ruth.

Emily started her own business as a high schooler, making and selling jewelry at local craft shows and festivals. She continued as a student at Georgia Southern. After graduation, Emily began selling her wares to boutiques, while working as a graphic designer at a local newspaper. She received an overwhelming response from stores who also wanted to carry the line. She eventually added clothing into the mix, making each garment by hand,” says Emily. "I didn’t take long before I had to hire additional sewing help and find local manufacturers to assist in the growth.”

Inspired by the 60s and 70s music scene, the Wild West, Native American culture, and various art, and desert life of the fashion industry. "When you are in a real-world setting," says Emily, “everything you learned in school is put into action.” Emily recalls Georgia Southern being an “intimate school,” where her design classmates were more like family. Smaller classes gave her the ability to work one-on-one with professors and faculty. “I was inspired by my professors because they saw success in me and pushed me to accomplish my dreams.”

Admittedly, it’s been a slow but rewarding process establishing the Mamie Ruth brand. But that’s because Mamie Ruth is more than just clothing and jewelry, it’s the carefree feeling that you get when you are genuinely happy,” says Emily. “Every day is an opportunity to learn from it. I try to look at the bright side of things all the time. There are always days when you wish you sold more… but I am healthy and live in a country where I can shop for just living doing what I love. That’s pretty cool.”

Emily Bargeron was selected as the designer for Beatrice Colby’s line in Savannah, who taught her how to interact with potential customers, the chance to meet Emily and shop designs from the latest or even past collections. “I had an awesome couple of days vending at the B divisible Music Festival in Tennessee,” says Emily. “We were surrounded by smiles and music and thousands of girls who just loved our clothes. That’s the feeling I’m talking about.”

To date, Mamie Ruth has been featured in national magazines, such as Lucky and Cosmopolitan, and dressed celebrities for award shows including Britton Cole Kelley, wife of Georgia League’s Brian Kelley. Mamie Ruth products are being sold in more than 50 stores across the country and Emily just opened a retail store in Savannah this past fall. "I feel so fortunate to be doing what I love for a living every day," says Emily. "The fashion business is a hard one, but I love what I do. Every day I like having fun with my work. Even my day is a costume party… Some days I feel like a gypsy queen traveling through time and other days I am a cowgirl wandering the Wild West. I don’t take fashion too seriously. I just wear what I like."
Lewis V. Johnson Sr. (59) of Lawrenceville, Georgia, died on April 24 at age 92. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and fought in the attack on Pearl Harbor. Before his death, he was a life member of the Garden Club, a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club, a 40-year member of the Masons and a member of American Legion. He was a member of American Government at Georgia Perimeter College. While attending Georgia Southern, Johnson earned three higher education degrees and had a long career as a teacher and principal. He grew up as an Army Brat away in April at his home in Hinesville, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. In Statesboro, he practiced psychiatry for more than 30 years, as he fought as an Eagle. His family says he was a great athlete and was a winner of the Georgia Senior Olympics, winning first place in the 100-meter race twice. During his 25 years of military service in the U.S. Army, he served as a member of the Dorval County Public School Board.

Jean Warnock Odum Jean Warnock Odum (56), d. July 2 in Statesboro, Georgia. She was an educator and completed as the assistant principal of Claxton High School. Odum attended Georgia Southern.

Luis Fuentes Luis Fuentes, an Alumnus of Georgia Southern's Abbott Professor Lorraine Fuentes (58) of Bogart, Georgia. The retired professor and director emeritus of the School of Communication at Kennesaw State University for 30 years, Fuentes also served as president of Dorsey Hall. She was graduated in 1951 from Statesboro High School. He was a member of the Varsity football team, the 73 year old retired from the Georgia Southern University, on June 30, 2014.

John Hammond John Hammond (59), d. April 14 in Statesboro, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. Before his death, he was a life member of the Garden Club, a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club, a 40-year member of the Masons and a member of American Legion. He was a member of American Government at Georgia Perimeter College. While attending Georgia Southern, Johnson earned three higher education degrees and had a long career as a teacher and principal. He grew up as an Army Brat away in April at his home in Hinesville, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. In Statesboro, he practiced psychiatry for more than 30 years, as he fought as an Eagle. His family says he was a great athlete and was a winner of the Georgia Senior Olympics, winning first place in the 100-meter race twice. During his 25 years of military service in the U.S. Army, he served as a member of the Dorval County Public School Board.

Jean Warnock Odum Jean Warnock Odum (56), d. July 2 in Statesboro, Georgia. She was an educator and completed as the assistant principal of Claxton High School. Odum attended Georgia Southern.

Luis Fuentes Luis Fuentes, an Alumnus of Georgia Southern's Abbott Professor Lorraine Fuentes (58) of Bogart, Georgia. The retired professor and director emeritus of the School of Communication at Kennesaw State University for 30 years, Fuentes also served as president of Dorsey Hall. She was graduated in 1951 from Statesboro High School. He was a member of the Varsity football team, the 73 year old retired from the Georgia Southern University, on June 30, 2014.

John Hammond John Hammond (59), d. April 14 in Statesboro, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. Before his death, he was a life member of the Garden Club, a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club, a 40-year member of the Masons and a member of American Legion. He was a member of American Government at Georgia Perimeter College. While attending Georgia Southern, Johnson earned three higher education degrees and had a long career as a teacher and principal. He grew up as an Army Brat away in April at his home in Hinesville, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. In Statesboro, he practiced psychiatry for more than 30 years, as he fought as an Eagle. His family says he was a great athlete and was a winner of the Georgia Senior Olympics, winning first place in the 100-meter race twice. During his 25 years of military service in the U.S. Army, he served as a member of the Dorval County Public School Board.

Jean Warnock Odum Jean Warnock Odum (56), d. July 2 in Statesboro, Georgia. She was an educator and completed as the assistant principal of Claxton High School. Odum attended Georgia Southern.

Luis Fuentes Luis Fuentes, an Alumnus of Georgia Southern's Abbott Professor Lorraine Fuentes (58) of Bogart, Georgia. The retired professor and director emeritus of the School of Communication at Kennesaw State University for 30 years, Fuentes also served as president of Dorsey Hall. She was graduated in 1951 from Statesboro High School. He was a member of the Varsity football team, the 73 year old retired from the Georgia Southern University, on June 30, 2014.

John Hammond John Hammond (59), d. April 14 in Statesboro, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. Before his death, he was a life member of the Garden Club, a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club, a 40-year member of the Masons and a member of American Legion. He was a member of American Government at Georgia Perimeter College. While attending Georgia Southern, Johnson earned three higher education degrees and had a long career as a teacher and principal. He grew up as an Army Brat away in April at his home in Hinesville, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. In Statesboro, he practiced psychiatry for more than 30 years, as he fought as an Eagle. His family says he was a great athlete and was a winner of the Georgia Senior Olympics, winning first place in the 100-meter race twice. During his 25 years of military service in the U.S. Army, he served as a member of the Dorval County Public School Board.

Jean Warnock Odum Jean Warnock Odum (56), d. July 2 in Statesboro, Georgia. She was an educator and completed as the assistant principal of Claxton High School. Odum attended Georgia Southern.

Luis Fuentes Luis Fuentes, an Alumnus of Georgia Southern's Abbott Professor Lorraine Fuentes (58) of Bogart, Georgia. The retired professor and director emeritus of the School of Communication at Kennesaw State University for 30 years, Fuentes also served as president of Dorsey Hall. She was graduated in 1951 from Statesboro High School. He was a member of the Varsity football team, the 73 year old retired from the Georgia Southern University, on June 30, 2014.

John Hammond John Hammond (59), d. April 14 in Statesboro, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. Before his death, he was a life member of the Garden Club, a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club, a 40-year member of the Masons and a member of American Legion. He was a member of American Government at Georgia Perimeter College. While attending Georgia Southern, Johnson earned three higher education degrees and had a long career as a teacher and principal. He grew up as an Army Brat away in April at his home in Hinesville, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. In Statesboro, he practiced psychiatry for more than 30 years, as he fought as an Eagle. His family says he was a great athlete and was a winner of the Georgia Senior Olympics, winning first place in the 100-meter race twice. During his 25 years of military service in the U.S. Army, he served as a member of the Dorval County Public School Board.

Jean Warnock Odum Jean Warnock Odum (56), d. July 2 in Statesboro, Georgia. She was an educator and completed as the assistant principal of Claxton High School. Odum attended Georgia Southern.

Luis Fuentes Luis Fuentes, an Alumnus of Georgia Southern's Abbott Professor Lorraine Fuentes (58) of Bogart, Georgia. The retired professor and director emeritus of the School of Communication at Kennesaw State University for 30 years, Fuentes also served as president of Dorsey Hall. She was graduated in 1951 from Statesboro High School. He was a member of the Varsity football team, the 73 year old retired from the Georgia Southern University, on June 30, 2014.

John Hammond John Hammond (59), d. April 14 in Statesboro, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. Before his death, he was a life member of the Garden Club, a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club, a 40-year member of the Masons and a member of American Legion. He was a member of American Government at Georgia Perimeter College. While attending Georgia Southern, Johnson earned three higher education degrees and had a long career as a teacher and principal. He grew up as an Army Brat away in April at his home in Hinesville, Georgia. He retired as the chair of the Department of Political Science in 1986. In Statesboro, he practiced psychiatry for more than 30 years, as he fought as an Eagle. His family says he was a great athlete and was a winner of the Georgia Senior Olympics, winning first place in the 100-meter race twice. During his 25 years of military service in the U.S. Army, he served as a member of the Dorval County Public School Board.
REFRESHING DEAL

Historic Partnership with Coca-Cola Largest in School History

Georgia Southern University and The Coca-Cola Company sealed a multi-year deal allowing the world’s number one beverage company to continue to be the exclusive beverage provider for the University and Georgia Southern Athletics. In addition to keeping Georgia Southern students, faculty and staff refreshed, Coca-Cola will also fund new scholarships ranging from $500 to $6,000, support academic and athletics programs and collaborate with the University on sustainability initiatives.

“Providing students the ability to receive a solid education at Georgia Southern University is of the utmost importance for our University,” said President Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D. “Coca-Cola also has a strong commitment to education. The company’s support of scholarships at Georgia Southern will make a critical impact on current and future Eagles.”

“In addition to merit and leadership scholarships, this funding will allow Georgia Southern to provide a double-match for the Governor’s REACH scholarship program. Providing expanded scholarship opportunities is extremely important to Georgia Southern,” said Keel. “With this support from Coca-Cola, we’re building a stronger academic future for our students.” The REACH scholarship program is a needs-based mentoring and scholarship program developed by Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, to ensure Georgia’s low-income students have the academic, social and financial support needed to access college and achieve post-secondary success.

“Georgia Southern has more than 20,500 students on campus purchasing products at athletic events, in vending machines and dining services, and the campus continues to grow,” said Robert Whitaker, vice president for Business and Finance. “This, among other attributes, has opened the door for this partnership with Coca-Cola, allowing the University to sign the largest sponsorship deal in the University’s history.”

“Georgia Southern has gained increased national exposure for its academic and athletics achievements, including the move to the Football Bowl Subdivision and Sun Belt Conference,” said Keel. “As a result, the value of our brand has increased exponentially. The deal with Coca-Cola is an example of the strength of Georgia Southern.”

Coca-Cola will also work with Georgia Southern on sustainability and green initiatives by providing environmentally sensitive programming, including recycling options. Georgia Southern students recently voted to increase student fees by $10 to cover sustainability efforts across campus, which makes Coca-Cola’s support even more timely.

“The Coca-Cola Company has an unwavering commitment to education—a key element for socioeconomic development,” said Pamela Stewart, vice president, East Region Sales Foodservice & On Premise, Coca-Cola Refreshments. “Coca-Cola joins Georgia Southern University to further opportunities for students while on campus and in their futures. We also will collaborate on implementing sustainability initiatives at Georgia Southern that will benefit us all.”

Additionally, Coca-Cola will develop customized marketing initiatives to further expand the University’s brand recognition in the Savannah and Atlanta markets as part of Coca-Cola’s regional football marketing campaign.
Every year, the Georgia Southern University Foundation welcomes alumni and friends to its annual 1906 Society Event to recognize the men and women who help make the University a success. In addition to honoring annual supporters, this year’s gathering on Sept. 26, at the Eugene M. Bishop Alumni Center, recognized the honorees in the 40 Under 40 Class of 2014. Throughout the evening, guests enjoyed tasty hors d’oeuvres and a rousing night of dueling pianos, which provided opportunities to sing and dance along to favorite songs. Membership in the 1906 Society is extended to contributors who make annual gifts of $1,200 or more to support the University. The donations may be designated to specific funds or used for scholarships or initiatives that enhance teaching, research, cultural activities and economic development.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER
President Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D., welcomes guests to the annual 1906 Society Event, which included food, friends, photo booths and laughter. The feather "chandeliers" below, were a gorgeous touch inspired by the Roaring 20s and our own Assistant Director of Donor Relations Samantha Nesmith.

1906 SOCIETY EVENT
University Foundation Thanks Annual Donors at Special Event

Abby Lynes' first memory of Georgia Southern is of cardboard. She remembers using it to slide down the hills at Paulson Stadium during football games when she was just 4 years old. Years later, Abby ('06, '10) would make new memories at Georgia Southern as a business major and honors student. "The scholarships I received as a freshman had qualifications that centered around service and I have fond memories of that," Abby says. The main reason she gives back is because she hopes to help other Eagles, "be in the same position I was in… I knew it'd be the right fit for me. Honestly, I don't believe I would have had the same college experience or felt as comfortable as I did if not for Georgia Southern."

For Abby, who received her B.B.A. in Management in 2006 and an MBA four years later, being a Georgia Southern alum is a family affair. Both of her parents graduated from Georgia Southern in the early 70s, while her sister earned her degree right before she did. Abby estimates they have 10 Georgia Southern degrees just within her immediate family alone. As a result, Abby’s parents have been strong University supporters over the years. Her dad was even on the Alumni Board of Directors and in the meeting when they all got the call announcing Erk Russell as football coach.

Today, Abby is a technical assistant at Trinity Underwriting Managers, Inc. in her hometown of Savannah and participates on the Southern Women Advisory Board and in the local Eagle Outreach by volunteering for the Second Harvest Food Bank alongside other Eagle alumni. "It's great to give back in some way. The University keeps growing and getting better, which makes our degrees even more valuable." - MICHAEL J. SOLOWAY

To make your annual gift visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/donate

1906 SOCIETY
University Foundation Thanks Annual Donors at Special Event
WINNING THE BELT!

Of the schools that began their first year of FBS play with a conference affiliation, Georgia Southern became just the third to earn a league title in its inaugural season, joining Nevada (1992) and Marshall (1997). And only one other team posted a better record in its first year in the FBS, with Marshall going 10-3 in 1997. Coach Willie Fritz became the third coach in Georgia Southern history to record nine wins in the regular season in their first year as head coach. Georgia Southern also improved to 26-4 in Senior Day games.
WIN FOR GSU — AND SAVE WITH GNG

Together, we’re a winning team.

After you catch the excitement on the field, let Georgia Natural Gas® tackle the competition with an exclusive offer for Eagles fans.

Visit gngsavings.com/EAGLES or call 888.211.8322

PROMO CODE: EAGLES