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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2006). *Newsroom*. 38.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/38>

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Sport psychology builds life skills, mental well-being

NOVEMBER 6, 2006

Athletic success is built on speed, strength, and skill, but preparing for sport in today's world involves one more part of the puzzle: the mental aspect of athletic success.

'There are two approaches to viewing sport psychology,'" said Daniel R. Czech, associate professor at Georgia Southern University. 'Our students not only examine the mental aspects of optimally consistent sport and exercise performances, but also look at how sport and exercise performances can affect mental well-being. Our lab is set up to work with anyone who wants to improve performance, not only athletes, but also actors, musicians, military officers, we really want to try to help as many people's performances as possible from a mental perspective.'" Czech, who is certified by the Association for Applied Sport Psychology, directs Georgia Southern's graduate program in sport psychology, a part of the Health and Kinesiology department in the College of Health and Human Sciences.

When you step into the sport psychology laboratory at Georgia Southern, it feels like a large comfortable living room, until you see the scientific equipment: a stabilometer, anticipation timer, dexterity stars, reaction timer, and accompanying computer systems. One adjacent room has a 'relaxation egg' a comfortable egg-shaped cocoon with a sound system that offers quiet relaxation. A second adjacent room is equipped with video capability and a 42-inch plasma screen for one-on-one performance enhancement counseling.

'We use a variety of psychological techniques for both team education and one-on-one consultations,'" said Czech. 'For teams, we offer workshops and interventions that build team chemistry and increase psychological skills to improve consistency. For individuals, we teach exercises that improve mental wellbeing, and we use one-on-one counseling to help with performance issues. Learning these psychological skills can make a tremendous difference for student athletes not only on the field, but in their lives.'

'Our vision is to offer supervised, applied experiences that are unparalleled at the master's level,'" said Jonathan Metzler, an assistant professor who is Czech's sport psychology partner and program co-coordinator. Together they oversee the work of graduate students pursuing a master's degree in kinesiology with a specialization in sport psychology.

The program is a two-year immersion in the field and requires each student to work with one of Georgia Southern's athletic teams on psychological skill development or with any team member one-

on-one. First-year students shadow the more experienced second-year students, and in the second year, students are assigned responsibilities for their own team.

‘To get applied experience at the NCAA Division I level as a master’s degree student makes this program a very unique and highly desirable graduate environment,’ said Sam Whalen, who is currently a graduate student associate director of the sport psychology lab.

The graduate program in sport psychology includes three important professional opportunities: a trip to New York City to train athletes for the NFL Combine; a summer course in Key West, Fla., that teaches health behavior change to incorporate a healthy lifestyle into everyday activities; and an international trip (England in 2007), where the students will view sport psychology from a transcultural perspective.

‘The experience of New York City, Key West, and GSU women’s soccer was amazing and very helpful in my development as a sport psychology consultant,’ said graduate student Lacey Sorenson ‘Not only did I enjoy the different cultural environments, but the applied experiences of working with elite and collegiate athletes from a performance enhancement perspective, and with sedentary individuals who wanted to change their behavior, were opportunities that have shaped my approach to sport psychology.’

Because graduate students are working on research projects, they often attend and present at conferences. This year Metzler and Czech took 12 graduate students to the International AASP conference in Miami Sept. 27-Oct. 1, where Metzler and Czech gave four different research presentations. All second year graduate students recently presented their research at the Georgia State Conference on Health and Physical Education in Jekyll Island, Georgia.

Career opportunities in sport psychology can be found locally in community sports and youth groups such as the YMCA, CHAMPS Life Skill Program, The First Tee Golf Program for Youth and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Some graduates move into careers with professional and amateur sports teams, while some choose to go on for a doctorate in sport psychology. Certification, which is available through the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP), can lead graduates to consulting work with professional and collegiate sports teams and with individual athletes. With appropriate training and direction, sport psychology consultants can also become life skills directors at major universities.

‘We are finding that life skills such as communication, time management, study skills, and conflict resolution skills are often neglected in the athletic university setting,’ said Czech. ‘We are trying to incorporate this side of life development as well to all of the students who come to the laboratory.’

Students interested in graduate study in sport psychology can learn more about the program at http://chhs.georgiasouthern.edu/health/m_sport_psych.html or by calling Dr. Dan Czech at 912-681-5267.

"A Viennese Christmas" at Performing Arts Center on Nov. 25

NOVEMBER 6, 2006

The Performing Arts Center (PAC) at Georgia Southern University is hosting a joyous celebration of the holiday season.

The New Sigmund Romberg Orchestra and Soloists will present 'A Viennese Christmas' at the PAC on Saturday, Nov. 25, at 7:30 p.m.

The show will feature a mixture of traditional Christmas songs and classic Viennese tunes.

Tickets for 'A Viennese Christmas' are \$30 plus tax per person for the general public. Georgia Southern faculty, staff and students will receive a 10 percent discount. Groups of 15 or more people from outside the University community are also eligible for a 10 percent discount.

In addition, if any tickets are available 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the performance, any Georgia Southern student with a valid University I.D. can purchase one ticket for \$10 plus tax.

The New Sigmund Romberg Orchestra and Soloists continue the tradition of their namesake, who lived from 1887 until 1951. A native of Hungary, Romberg moved to the U.S., where he became a well-known and popular composer of operettas. More than a half-dozen of his works became motion pictures, most notably the original 'Viennese Nights.'

Romberg collaborated with Al Jolson, Oscar Hammerstein II, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Gus Kahn and Irving Berlin. In 1940, Romberg put together the first concert tour by the orchestra that bears his name.

More than six decades later, the New Sigmund Romberg Orchestra and Soloists is billed as 'America's first touring pops orchestra' and remains a popular attraction throughout the country.

The PAC is located on the Georgia Southern campus at the corner of Chandler Road and Plant Drive. The box office is open every Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. The box office is also open one hour prior to the start of each performance.

To purchase tickets or obtain additional information, call (912) 486-7999 or toll free (866) PAC-ARTS, or visit the PAC Web site at <http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/pac> .

Omicron Delta Kappa induction ceremony set for Nov. 12

NOVEMBER 6, 2006

The Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) Leadership Honor Society at Georgia Southern University will induct 110 new members on Sunday, Nov. 12.

University alumnus Darryl Hopkins (Class of 1992) will be the keynote speaker at the seventh annual induction ceremony, which will be held at 2 p.m. in the College of Information Technology Building auditorium.

Induction into OKD is the highest leadership honor awarded to undergraduate juniors and seniors; graduate students; faculty, staff, administration and alumni; and people who qualify for membership 'honoris causa.'

Students candidates must rank in the top 35 percent of their class, have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, and show leadership in at least one of five areas: scholarship; athletics; campus or community service; social and religious activities and campus government; journalism, speech and mass media; and creative and performing arts.

The ODK Circle at Georgia Southern received several national and regional honors in 2006. It was one of only eight circles in the entire country to receive the Superior Circle Award for outstanding service to the community and outstanding leadership within the society.

Theresa Beebe Novotny received the Robert W. Bishop National Faculty Advisor of the Year Award and Barbara Price was named Faculty Secretary of the Year for Province VII.

In addition, Kristen Barnard was one of 40 students from around the country who were selected to attend the 'Campus Leaders Today, Community Leaders Tomorrow' workshop held in New York during the summer.

The ODK Circle at Georgia Southern will induct seven outstanding leaders who have made significant contributions to the community and to the University. Hopkins, who is the athletic superintendent for the Statesboro-Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Department, will be inducted as a University alumnus.

The faculty and staff inductees are: Olivia Carr Edenfield, the associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS); Kathleen Gruben, an associate professor in the College of Business Administration; Alice Hall, an associate professor in the College of Health and Human Sciences; Georj Lewis, the dean of students; Ben Thompson, an associate professor in the College of Business Administration; and Sharon Tracy, a professor in CLASS.

The 24 graduate student inductees are: Kelley Gonnella Chester, Linda R. Clarkson, Susan Lee Harmon, Marquita T. Holmes, Mitch Jones, Thomas Duane Kelley, Shannon Muller Knight, Kendria Monique Lee, Peter N. Mastopoulos, Rebecca Shurley Noel, Hope Anne Jordan Oliver, Philip Edward Patisaul, Tifani Landing Pool, Christina M. Rapp, Rebecca Anne Rule , Meryem Sebnem Sevinc, Lacey Marie Sorenson, Lisa Christine Spence, Adrien Charmaine Stallings, Janine Michelle Weaver-Douglas, Allison Kristina Yancey, and Jin Jennifer Zhang.

The 28 senior inductees are: Ansley A. Booker, Bridget Caroline Bowman, Christopher D'neil Brown, Angela Sherrell Byrd, Jennifer Nicole Cook, Brittany D. Evans, Amber L. Fennell, Amanda Michelle Fischer, Otto Antonio Graham, Taramis M. High, Jaycie Holland , Serrenyun Nicole Hopkins, Kylie Lynn Isaacs, Lynsey Amanda Johnson, Joanna Eileen Kimes , Mikko Juhani Lindberg, Jennifer Lyn Miller, Monica Rachael O'Connor, Chukwuemeka Samuel Ohuabunwa, Tamia Yvette Powell, Lorraine Elizabeth Rath, Jacqueline Alaina Rieger, Pamela Rivera, Stephanie Olivia Samuels, Kathryn Elizabeth Sharbrough, Tiffany Nadine Cadogan, Daphne Lelora Tobin, Meagan Lynn Van Buren, Jamie Brooke Ward, and Jeremiah Adam Wilson.

The 51 junior inductees are: Hauwa Daniwa Balami, Brittiny Dawn Barber, Jacquelyn Scott Beckman, Donny Alan Benton, Danielle Elizabeth Binion, Josie Lynn Blankenship, Sheridan Michelle Bushey, Brooke Ann Carpenter, Donald Peitro Chapman, Jordan Barrett Chester, Shannon Larissa Cox, Charity Echols, Stephanie Lynne Findley, Emanuel C. Fuller, Blaine Jacob Geiger, Lakisha Gray, Anna Elisabeth Henson, Keyonda Johnson, Frenchi Nichol Jones, Kelly Elyse Jones, Brandon Keenan, Bryan Glenn Keenan, Aaronly Denise Lackey, Kimberly Michelle Lee, Anna Colette Lipsey, Rachelle S. Lipshy, Joseph Wilmar Lumansoc, Jessika Brandi Massengale, Jessica Miles, Vincent Alexander Nicholson, Jemelleh Rebecca Nurse, Martin Obiajulu, Shannon Marie O'Sullivan, Ashlee Dominic Perry, Katherine Kendall Perry, Brian James Prevatt, Sarah Elizabeth Prochaska, Tianna Lenae Ross, Breanna Pauline Rotell, Megan Beth Russell, Ali Sabzevari, Kathryn Joan Secrist, Stephen Michael Smith, Jessica Suarez, Laura Ann Turner, April Elizabeth Ulm, Jennifer Lauren Williamson, and Emilie Beth Wilson.

For more information on the ODK Circle at Georgia Southern, contact Price at (912) 681-5775 or Novotny at (912) 681-5415.

Georgia Southern Opera presents "Amahl and the Night Visitors" Nov. 17-18

NOVEMBER 6, 2006

Georgia Southern Opera will once again present a spectacular Madrigale Feast on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 17 and 18. In addition to a tasteful feast, this year's production will feature the timeless operatic classic, 'Amahl and the Night Visitors,' written by Gian Carlo Menotti.

Only an hour in length, 'Amahl' is sung in English. With its beautiful score and touching libretto, it is appealing to all ages and musical backgrounds. It was written specifically for young imaginations and tells an inspiring story of how faith, charity, unselfish love and good deeds can work miracles.

Because the character of Amahl is a young boy, two boys from the Statesboro Youth Chorale will be joining the cast of Georgia Southern students for this event.

The feast will take place in the dramatic atrium of the Information Technology Building at Georgia Southern beginning at 6:30 p.m. each night. Tickets for dinner and the opera are \$35 for adults and \$27 for students, and they will go on sale Nov. 1 at the Performing Arts Center. For tickets call the Box Office at 912-486-7999 or toll free at 866-PAC-ARTS.