

3-13-2019

Communications from the Office of the President

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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Communications from the Office of the President" (2019). *Messages from the President (2016-present)*. 43.
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From: **GS President**

Date: Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 11:02 AM

Subject: [GSNEWS] Announcement from the President

To: GS-FacStaff , GS-Students

Colleagues and Students,

I am very proud to pass along the news (below) that Dr. Georj Lewis, Georgia Southern University's Vice President for Student Affairs, has been named interim president at Atlanta Metropolitan State College. Georj is a tireless advocate for students and an innovative administrator who can now use his experience to help advance the University System of Georgia. It is a testament to his expertise, and to Georgia Southern's talent, that he was selected for this opportunity. He is well suited for this new opportunity and I am happy for him, but saddened that we will be losing his energy and expertise.

An interim Vice President for Student Affairs will be named soon. In the meantime, please join me in congratulating Dr. Lewis for this exciting assignment.

Sincerely,

Shelley C. Nickel

President

Georgia Southern University

Atlanta Metropolitan State College President McGaha Announces Plans to Retire

Atlanta — March 13, 2019

Atlanta Metropolitan State College (AMSC) President Gary McGaha today announced he will retire June 30, a position he's held since 2007. University System of Georgia (USG) Chancellor Steve Wrigley tapped Georgia Southern Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Georj Lewis as interim president effective July 1.

“My teaching and administrative activities at Atlanta Metropolitan State College have been the most rewarding and gratifying experiences of my professional career,” said McGaha.

McGaha has worked in the University System of Georgia for more than 25 years. He became president of Atlanta Metropolitan College in 2007 after serving as interim president. During his tenure at AMSC, he also served as chair of the college’s Social Sciences Division. McGaha’s career within USG also includes serving as academic dean for the Dunwoody campus and the Alpharetta site of Georgia Perimeter College, now Perimeter College at Georgia State University

“President McGaha has led Atlanta Metropolitan State College with passion and distinction,” said Wrigley. “During his tenure, he oversaw an expansion of degree programs and an increase in associate degree graduation rates. His constant presence and unwavering devotion to AMSC’s students, faculty and staff has made him a beloved figure to students, faculty and staff, alumni and within the metro Atlanta community. On behalf of the Board of Regents and the University System of Georgia, I wish his family and him all the best on his well-deserved retirement. I’m also confident Dr. Lewis will provide strong and capable leadership to AMSC as interim president. I look forward to the continued success of this important Atlanta institution and its students.”

Prior to his work with USG, McGaha served as executive assistant to the president at Kentucky State University and at Morehouse School of Medicine. McGaha holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Mississippi, a master’s degree in political science from Bowling Green State University and a bachelor’s degree in social science from Mississippi Valley State University.

Accomplishments during McGaha’s presidency include:

- Earning approval by USG Board of Regents to offer bachelor’s degrees in 2011 and in 2012
- Overseeing the institution’s name change from Atlanta Metropolitan College to Atlanta Metropolitan State College
- Increasing baccalaureate degree programs offered; enrollment increased by 30 percent
- Improving associate degree graduation rate to become best in its sector within USG
- Enhancing the campus with the addition of the Elridge W. McMillan Academic Sciences Building, renovating the Science Lecture Building, expanding the Edwin A. Thompson Sr. Student Center and constructing a Student Services and Success Center
- Improving campus infrastructure and adding new parking lots
- Establishing relationships with Atlanta community stakeholders and educational, corporate, governmental, bridge programs, faith-based and private partnerships

A national search for McGaha’s replacement will be launched at a later date.

About Dr. Georj Lewis

Lewis has more than 25 years of experience in higher education and 16 years of experience within USG. He is currently Vice President of Student Affairs at Georgia Southern University, a position he's held since January 2018. He moved to Georgia in 2002 to lead student diversity programming efforts at Georgia Southern and went on to serve as the institution's dean of students for most of his initial ten years within USG. Lewis has served in leadership and cabinet-level positions since 2012, including vice chancellor for student affairs at Indiana University Northwest before relocating back to Georgia to serve as vice president for Student Affairs at Armstrong State University.

During his tenure at USG, Lewis completed the Millennium Leadership Institute (MLI) through AACSB, completed the Executive Leadership Institute and the Advanced Leadership Academy. Lewis's early higher education experiences include admissions and multicultural affairs at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. He has earned a BS in Business/Accounting, an MA in Counseling/Student Personnel, both from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, and Ed.D. in Leadership from Georgia Southern University.