

President's Newsletter

January 2015

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Georgia Southern University

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President's Newsletter

Georgia Southern University

Happy New Year!

It is the start of a new calendar year and I'm excited to say that January 2015 marks my five-year anniversary at Georgia Southern – the Greatest University in America. During my time here I have had the honor of watching the University grow and evolve. We continue to create a strong and loyal student body, offer exceptional academic programs, increase research activities, expand much-needed building projects and improve public awareness about all that Georgia Southern has to offer. Of course, I couldn't have led this transformation without the unwavering support and contributions of our wonderful faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends. Thank you for welcoming me into The Eagle Nation five years ago. I am honored to be on this journey with each of you. Together, we have achieved major milestones.

You have probably heard me talk about many of these accomplishments before, but they are worth repeating. After all, you should take great pride in our accreditations – from the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health to our most recent Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Information Technology and our Doctor of Psychology program. In addition, our School of Nursing is ranked in the top 20 in the country for its Family Nurse Practitioner Program, the College of Education earned a top 75 ranking among schools offering online graduate education programs in the 2015 *U.S. News & World Report* "Best Online Graduate Education Programs," and our programs in the College of Business Administration, and others, continue to be nationally ranked.

Our renowned Athletics programs have grown as well. In 2014, we moved to the Sun Belt Conference, completed construction of the new Ted Smith Family Football Center and added additional seating at Allen E. Paulson Stadium. We also approved the first Women's Golf program and Women's Rifle program. The All-Girls Cheer Team won their fourth National title and the Men's Football team (with a win-loss record of 9-3 overall) won the Sun Belt Championship (a perfect 8-0) in their first year in the conference.

These and many other achievements have not gone unnoticed. Last year, the state approved the construction of a \$9.5 million Military Science Building, and we broke ground on a \$10 million health facility, as well as the \$5.8 million Shooting Sports Education Center, in partnership with the Georgia Departments of Natural Resources.

The recognition and reach of the Georgia Southern name has been unprecedented. Students and faculty have been recognized across Georgia as well as nationally. In the past year alone, there have been more than 37 stories about Georgia Southern in national publications. Personally, I was honored to be listed among the top most influential Georgians in 2015 by *Georgia Trend Magazine*. In addition, Dr. Charles Patterson, vice president for Research and Economic Development, was asked by Chancellor Hank Huckaby to be interim president at Georgia Southwestern State University.

But no accomplishment is significant if it doesn't benefit our students. During the last five years, we established more needs-based scholarships, became the first public University in the state to double-match the Governor's REACH scholarship initiative, signed an historic partnership with Coca-Cola to increase scholarship dollars and raised scholarship endowments 56 percent.

With an 81 percent graduation and retention rate for first-time freshmen, we take great pride in preparing Eagles for the real world. To that effort, we have expanded undergraduate research, designed to engage students in experiential learning across the institution. This hands-on, practical experience, combined with the theoretical discipline they receive, prepares our students for significant job opportunities immediately after graduation. In fact, employers are boasting about our students – saying that Georgia Southern graduates are among the most knowledgeable, well trained and prepared in their given industries.

Stay tuned for more great stories to come in 2015. Georgia Southern University is well positioned to provide the highest quality educational experience for our students and to serve as a catalyst for academic, research, social and cultural growth within our region, state and the nation.

Go Eagles!



Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D.
President

Twitter: @PresKeel

News

Georgia Southern Magazine Fall 2014

If you haven't received your copy of the Georgia Southern Fall 2014 magazine, read it [online](#).
[Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art Announces \\$500,000 Gift from Gov. Carl Sanders Estate](#)

On the Calendar

Jan. 12 – Feb. 21

Continuum: Alumni Biennial Exhibition

Contemporary and University galleries of the Center for Art & Theatre

Continuum is the biennial exhibition of new and recent art works showcasing the ongoing creative journey of our alumni artists.

Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.

[2015 Martin Luther King Jr. Speaker Michelle Norris](#)

Performing Arts Center (PAC)

Georgia Southern University campus

February is Black History Month.

Tuesday, Feb. 3

Georgia Southern University Day at the Capitol

Atlanta, GA

Evening with the President

5:30 p.m.: Cocktails and Heavy Hors d'oeuvres

6:30 p.m.: President's Remarks

Piedmont Room, Park Tavern

Atlanta, GA