

# Eagle Insider

January 22, 2019

Georgia Southern University

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# EAGLE INSIDER

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY ATHLETIC FOUNDATION



*A Look Inside of Georgia Southern Athletics*

January 22, 2019



## From the Desk of Tom Kleinlein

Dear Steph,

As we turn the calendar to 2019, I want to take an opportunity to talk to you about the power of athletics, both from a marketing standpoint and from the emotional impact it can have on teams, programs and communities.

The power of athletics was on full display last month in Montgomery as over 8,000 members of Eagle Nation took over the city for the Raycom Media Camellia Bowl. The city reported a \$16.6 million economic impact from the week. We see this same impact during home football and basketball weekends in Statesboro. I've heard countless stories of friendships made through sitting together at sporting events over the years. How many people at the bowl game ran into Eagles or were reunited with friends they had lost touch with? Athletics provides a unique avenue to spark conversation and make lifetime friends over mutual interests.

According to tracking metrics, over 1 million people viewed Tyler Bass' game-winning kick and Coach Chad Lunsford's emotional post-game interview live on ESPN. The ad value of the three-hour, Saturday night prime time ESPN broadcast was estimated at \$34 million. The print ad value from the month of December in terms of Georgia Southern Athletics was estimated at \$26.4 million. Also, there were over 220 national broadcast mentions of Georgia Southern within seven days of the bowl game. That's the power of athletics.

Quan Jackson's game-winning shot to beat ULM on Jan. 10 led the 11 p.m. SportsCenter on ESPN and came in at No. 2 on the night's top plays. That spot was viewed live by 959,209 people for a 30-second ad value of \$72,372.

Articles that were written either about Georgia Southern or mentioning Georgia Southern had reaches of 38 million (Forbes), 32 million (Washington Post) and 27 million (Associated Press).

Even the University web page sees a spike in traffic when athletics is in the national spotlight. During the bowl game on Dec. 15, several subpages off the GeorgiaSouthern.edu site saw significant traffic increases over the exact time a week earlier, including the /about (+307%), /campuses/statesboro-campus (+176%), /traditions (+153%) and /campuses (+143%).

It is impossible to put a true value on the media exposure the Eagles can earn when big things happen but the effects are tangible. Georgia Southern experienced "The Flutie Effect" - which is the increase in exposure and prominence of a university after having a successful college sports team - after the GoDaddy Bowl exposure and I certainly expect it to happen again with the positive exposure we earned nationally from the Camellia Bowl.

But the power of athletics can be traced to more than just dollar signs, metrics, exposure and analytics. Look at what Tyler Trent did not only for the Purdue football family, but the college football world in general. Many will say that Tyler being a part of the Boilermaker season helped ease his pain, which it very well may have, but the way he lived his final months was inspirational to a whole sporting community.

Look at what Nevaeh Williams is doing for and with our softball team. Neveah, who attends Ebenezer Elementary School in Effingham County, was diagnosed with cancer in 2017 and through Team IMPACT's program at Georgia Southern and she is an official member of our softball team. Our players and staff have bonded with this young lady and taken her in as one of their own as a team member. It's been an awesome experience to have her around our team. She's done way more for our program than our program has done for her in this difficult time.

Athletics is a place where many of the leaders of our country have received their training. It is a real-life laboratory that teaches us the values of teamwork, commitment and sacrifice for others and your investment in athletics allows us to continue to develop our student-athletes for success in competition at Georgia Southern and for life after sport. It is also an investment in Bulloch County and Statesboro from an economic standpoint.

As I wrap this up, I want to thank anyone who purchased a ticket to the bowl game, anyone who purchases tickets to home sporting events and anyone who supports us financially. Your support matters and it's noticed. It's noticed by the conference, the bowl partners, the cities that host the bowls, and our University officials. But most of all, your investment supports our athletic program which impacts our world in tremendous ways.

I look forward to seeing you at our events this winter and spring.

As always, #HailSouthern



Tom Kleinlein  
Director of Athletics, Georgia Southern University



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