Taking Flight – April 2018

Message From the Dean

The venerable Yogi Berra once said, “You don’t have to swing hard to hit a home run. If your timing is right, it’ll go.” Of course, many of Berra’s quotes are amusing, and some are a bit convoluted, but this one is actually straightforward and sobering. To me at least, it suggests two things. First, it suggests that timing is everything. Good ideas can produce poor outcomes if the timing isn’t right. By the same token, some moments are just ripe with opportunity, and, in such cases, the greatest danger is failing to act and, so, missing the moment. Of course, in both cases, the key is timing and learning to adapt to it. The second lesson is that we can sometimes thwart our own success by working hard when we should be working smart. Yogi Berra hit a lot of home runs, probably because he understood that the key to success was swinging well, not swinging hard.

I think about this often. In the College of Business, there are always things to do – programs to grow and update, initiatives to promote, dollars to raise, etc. We want to be the absolute best in the world, known and respected for our innovativeness and impact. But, we can’t simply go to bat each day and swing hard. We have to be smart and swing well; we have to think carefully about timing and opportunities. Thankfully, I believe we are entering a season in which timing and opportunity are on our side and with the winds behind us blowing stronger than those we face. If I’m right, then the costs of inaction will be significant. Moreover, if I am right, then we need to be prepared, and we’ll need to seize the opportunity when the moment arises. How will we do that, and what sorts of opportunities will we face? I’m glad you asked.

Consolidating with Armstrong gives us the opportunity to welcome new faculty and students into the College. We have the opportunity to create a new and different type of MBA program, designed to serve working professionals. We have the opportunity to build on our reputations in economics and logistics as we raise our flag in the Savannah market. Leveraging our new assets, we’re creating the Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research (CBAER) to drive economic development across the region. And, we’ll be engaging our network like never before as our shadow lengthens and our alumni grow in prominence and influence. I believe we are approaching a singular moment of opportunity, a moment for which we are prepared and ready. I look forward to partnering with you all in the effort to swing well and to build lasting value for the future.

Alumni Spotlight – Kimberly Owens

Kimberly Owens (IS, ’04; MBA, ’05) came to Georgia Southern already knowing that she wanted a career in technology while not becoming a “tech person.” She wanted to understand both the business and technical aspects of a company, making the information systems degree a perfect fit. Kimberly remembers dreading the JAVA programming class taught by Camille Rogers, Ph.D., associate professor of information systems, fearing it would be boring and hard. After Rogers taught her how to use technology to have fun during JAVA programming, it became one of Kimberly’s favorite classes. She eagerly completed extra-credit assignments and sometimes lost track of time working on them, because she enjoyed it so much. This positive experience led to Rogers becoming Kimberly’s mentor.

As a member of the Georgia Southern Track & Field team, Kimberly found a second family among her teammates and the members of the football team who became surrogate sisters and brothers. Being away from home for the first time was lonely, and Kimberly found her second family alleviated her loneliness. They supported each other in academics and
during sporting events. She and her husband, a former Georgia Southern football player, remain close to many of their former teammates, especially two track teammates whom Kimberly still counts among her best friends.

Currently, Kimberly serves as an IT business partner, mobility lead and IT business analyst, who has worked at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics for nearly 13 years. As an IT business partner, she is the direct interface to the IT organization, responsible for supporting IT requirements and implementing cost-effective solutions to meet those requirements. In the mobility lead position, Kimberly collaborates with other business partners across multiple site locations and serves as a subject-matter expert in the integration of mobile technology in the environment. Finally, as an IT business analyst, she works on multiple projects across site locations to replace legacy systems with newer technology.

Each of these roles is slightly different, yet each requires interaction with different people across multiple generations, which is the most challenging part of Kimberly’s career. By focusing on the end goal and accepting the disparate strengths of her colleagues, she is able to maintain healthy work relationships with both peers and customers. Kimberly is especially proud of the first time she served as team lead as mobility project lead. She and her virtual team of five peers successfully created and implemented new mobility processes, deploying hardware and mobile solutions throughout the business area. Kimberly was able to grow in a leadership role, experience the successes, learn from the failures and see results that she had directly impacted as mobility took root in the company’s environment.

“It is difficult”, says Kimberly, “for an ambitious person to maintain a healthy work-life balance.” Kimberly wants her career to continue to develop, while not sacrificing too much of the quality time spent with her husband and kids. To achieve both, Kimberly works hard to maintain a balance between work and her personal life.

Kimberly lives with her family in Atlanta, Georgia. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, reading for pleasure and working out with her husband. In the future, Kimberly plans to continue growing in her development and learning new technologies and skill sets that will allow her to advance in her career, while balancing her commitment to her family.

Georgia Southern University Online MBA Ranked in Top 20 by Poets&Quants

In its inaugural ranking of online MBA programs, Poets&Quants, a leading resource for complete coverage of graduate business education, has ranked the Georgia Southern online MBA No. 18 in its list of 25 schools across the country.

To determine the MBA rankings, Poets&Quants adheres to three core facets in measuring the value of any educational undertaking: the quality of the incoming students, an assessment by graduates of the MBA experience, both academically and the extracurricular activities, and the career outcomes of a program’s graduates. Equal weight was placed on these three features in addition to gathering data from school and alumni surveys.

According to Poets&Quants, the school survey asked for a variety of statistics from admission standards to global immersion trips, while the alumni survey was sent to MBA graduates, who were asked about their impressions on a wide range of topics, from whether the program fulfilled their expectations to whether they would recommend the program to others.

Many graduates of the online MBA program recognize the benefits of its flexibility for working professionals to continue their education. One of those students, MBA graduate Antonio Gonzalez (’15), worked as a field service engineer for five years and reached the point where his technical knowledge and experience were simply not enough to advance his career.

Gonzalez was impressed with Georgia Southern’s online MBA, which allowed him to excel in his coursework while working full-time.
“The MBA [program] has given me a better understanding of corporate business practices and procedures,” Gonzalez said. “It has provided me the tools to deal with a variety of real-world business situations.”

The Georgia Southern online MBA is an AACSB-accredited, 30-credit hour program that allows students to take two courses per semester for five consecutive semesters. The program, which takes approximately 21 months, offers working professionals the opportunity to advance their careers with little interruption to their personal and professional lives. To learn more about the Georgia Southern online MBA, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/onlinemba.

Studies Show Potential for Spaceport Camden

from the Brunswick News, by Gordon Jackson

Analysis of a proposed spaceport in Camden County shows the project has potential to create new jobs, increase tourism, boost the local economy and position the region to take advantage of a growing commercial space industry.

That was the message given Tuesday by industry experts who spoke about the project during a Camden Roundtable meeting.

Ben McKay, assistant research director for Georgia Southern University’s Center for Business Analysis and Economic Research, was among those who discussed potential impacts of the project.

McKay said the university study looked at the impacts of both construction of a spaceport and operations once launches are conducted at the site.

The 15-month construction project would create 70 jobs to build the $9.2 million facility and it would generate $22.5 million to the local economy each year after it was built, the study suggested. That doesn’t include the 10,000 to 15,000 visitors who would come to the region to see a launch, he said.

What makes Camden County such an attractive site when other commercial spaceports have struggled is the central location near other facilities including sites in Virginia, Florida, Mississippi and Alabama.

A spaceport is an opportunity to attract new industries to the region and have a spillover effect on manufacturing jobs.

Trey Hood, a political science professor at University of Georgia, also shared the results of public surveys conducted in 13 counties in Southeast Georgia. Support for the project has increased during early surveys, with more than 59 percent of registered voters polled saying they support the project.

Most of the increase in support has come after residents have learned more about the project and the possible benefits it could bring to the region.

The poll, commissioned by the Georgia Association of REALTORS, determined about 21 percent were opposed, 18 percent were neutral and two percent had no opinion.

The concerns by opponents are possible environmental contamination, explosions, noise and possible closure of Cumberland Island National Seashore. One of the speakers said only the north end of Cumberland would be evacuated for launches.

Bob Scaringe, a consultant with AVG Communications, said the commercial space industry continues to grow because private launch sites can launch rockets on a schedule favorable to their needs instead of the federal government’s at Kennedy Space Center. And they can send rockets into orbit at half the cost.

“The market is being segmented,” he said. “They’re doing it efficiently, quicker. They’re putting their own funds in this. All this is good for Spaceport Camden.”

He told the audience the county will have to do the marketing because state economic development officials aren’t going to market the site.
“They literally wait for people to express interest,” he said of the state’s marketing strategy. “You have a great story to tell.”

The commercial space industry is a $329 billion a year industry that is projected to grow to $1.1 trillion by 2040 and could grow to a $3 trillion a year industry in 30 years, Scaringe said.

“This is not a new industry,” he said. “It’s been around for decades and it’s growing.”

Eagle Executive Society – Student Chapter Hosts Annual Dinner

On Wednesday, March 28, 2018, the Eagle Executive Society-Student Chapter (EExS-SC) hosted its annual business etiquette dinner in the Nessmith-Lane Conference Center.

As part of the EExS-SC’s dues, members have access to two annual events: the business etiquette dinner held during the spring semester and the golf etiquette event held at the Georgia Southern Golf Course during the fall semester. During the etiquette dinner, students learn which eating utensils to use at the appropriate time, the correct way to eat soup, proper dinner conversation and the correct way to pass bread, among other things. This year’s etiquette dinner was presented by Kirstie Harsha (MKTG, ’14), communications and programs manager for the Statesboro-Bulloch Chamber of Commerce.

“The Eagle Executive Society hosts the etiquette dinner so that our members have the opportunity to develop skills that will set them apart when entering the professional world,” said Alea Simmons, president of the Eagle Executive Society Student Chapter. “Many final job interviews take place over lunch or dinner, so having proper etiquette skills will help our members stand out from other applicants and increase our odds of landing our dream jobs.”

Billy Hickman Named Humanitarian of the Year, Honored at the 30th Annual Deen Day Smith Awards

From the Statesboro Herald, by Holli Deal Saxon

Touted for a genuine love for his hometown, the 2018 Statesboro Herald Humanitarian of the Year Billy Hickman (ACCT, ’74) credited his friends and family for helping inspire and support him.

Hickman was honored Tuesday during the 30th Annual Deen Day Smith Service to Mankind Awards gala, held every spring to recognize those in the Statesboro and Bulloch County community for generosity, compassion, and selflessness shown through acts of kindness and caring. Statesboro attorney Gerald Edenfield presented Hickman with the award, leading up to naming him by listing his accolades.

Hickman “cultivated good will, family values and dreams of success” through his endeavors, he said. “He has the foresight to look for opportunities to help” both individuals and charitable organizations, he said.

“If anyone in this room truly loves Bulloch County and its residents, it is our Statesboro Herald Humanitarian of the Year,” Edenfield said. “Born and raised here, this man vowed at an early age that he would do all he could to make our community the best it can be, a place where his own children could grow and remain.
"A friend said this man “never hesitates to help those in need. He doesn’t wait to be asked. Our humbly Christian honoree has unselfishly given countless hours, not only to the community and various non-profit organizations, but also to individuals who need a friend, a shoulder, a visit, but first and foremost, always a prayer.”

Hickman gives money and time to a host of civic and charitable endeavors, he said. “You may have seen him working diligently to help raise funds and awareness for the Alzheimer’s Association, helping organize and support local events like Striking Out Alzheimer’s and Rockin’ Out Alzheimer’s that provide the resources needed to support caregivers, to create additional awareness and to fund research.”

Hickman “has wholeheartedly supported Statesboro’s Blue Mile project and is a true blue fan of Georgia Southern University. This dedicated and determined person has provided leadership to numerous civic and community groups for years.

“Friends and coworkers praise this man for his heart and kindness, his attention to the most minute need. He is always available when needed, whether it is on a weekend, early morning or late evening. He finds the time to make a difference and never hesitates to sacrifice his time to help others. He shows genuine care and concern, taking time out to do such things as visit a friend sitting with a gravely ill parent at the hospital on Thanksgiving day.”

Edenfield read a list of Hickman’s contributions to society, some of which include leading the forensic practice and overseeing the audit, review and compilation practices at a local accounting firm and testifying as an expert witness countless times in regional Superior Courts and Federal Bankruptcy Court.

At Georgia Southern University alone, his alma mater, Hickman served as chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Georgia Southern University Foundation, Inc. as well as the Advisory Council for the School of Accountancy, the College of Business Administration.

“Our Humanitarian serves on the boards of Excelsior Electric Membership Corporation, East Georgia Regional Medical Center, Lynda Brannen Williamson Foundation, Inc., and the Board of Trustees of First Baptist Church of Statesboro,” he said.

“He is past president of the Downtown Rotary Club of Statesboro, and serves on the Southeast Georgia Society of Certified Public Accountants Business Advisory Council. He also served on the Ogeechee Technical College Board of Directors, OTC Executive Committee and is past president of the Ogeechee Technical College Foundation.”

Hickman also served as co-chair for the Committee to Review Consolidation of local governments in Statesboro-Bulloch County; is past president of the Statesboro-Bulloch County Chamber of Commerce and chairman of Savannah to Augusta Developmental Highway Association and served eight years on the Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee.

He also served on the Development Authority of Bulloch County; as chairman of the Board for United Way of Southeast Georgia and as campaign chairman; as section chairman of Human Services for United Way Fund Drive in Bulloch County and a participant of Leadership Georgia, Class of 1986.

“That’s not all,” Edenfield continued. “This man served as chairman for Relay for Life cancer drive, 2002 and 2003 and as chairman of ‘A Day for Southern’ campaign at Georgia Southern University in 2004.”

Hickman is past president of the Midday Optimist Club and is on the First Baptist Church Finance Committee. In 1989 he was honored here with the Deen Day Smith Service to Mankind Award and was noted as Alumni of the Year in 1997 for Theta Kappa Chapter of Sigma Nu. In 1998, he was named Outstanding Accounting Alumnus, Georgia Southern University.

He gave the December 2002 Commencement address to Georgia Southern University and was honored by the Statesboro-Bulloch County Chamber of Commerce as the 2007 Business Leader of the Year.

In 2012, he was inducted into the International Honor Society of Beta Gamma Sigma at Georgia Southern University and in 2013 was named Alumni of the Year for the GS College of Business Administration.

In 2014, he was awarded an Associate Life Membership in the Peace Officers’ Association of Georgia.

Hickman’s most recent and well-known accomplishment is that he has “been carrying a torch for the last 20 years regarding a dream that has become reality for many Bulloch County residents. Hickman “spearheaded the efforts to build a multipurpose agricultural arena in the county,” he said.

He is now the chairman of Bulloch County Multi-Purpose Agricultural Building Committee.
While the project was delayed for various reasons, Hickman never gave up. He made presentations to major donor prospects to create renewed interest and to promote the potential of the new facility. Hickman did the market research and studied the demographics which showed that the closest facilities of this type were located outside of a 75-mile radius of Bulloch County.

“This facility will not only contribute to the quality of life in Bulloch County, but will provide a venue to attract visitors from a wide area. Statistics show these visitors place little burden on county infrastructure while providing a significant boost to the local economy,” he said.

Hickman enjoys a lifelong passion, horses, and is active in Thoroughbred racing. He also lectures on a variety of topics including individual and corporate taxation and forensic accounting. He and his wife, JoAnn, have two sons and five grandsons.

Hickman graciously accepted the award and told guests that the room held many people who were his mentors.

“I thank God to have been born in Bulloch County,” he said. “I thank God to have grown up here and to still live here. I love this community. I want to die here and be buried in Eastside Cemetery. My life is Bulloch County.”

Hickman thanked his wife, family and coworkers in his office, Dabbs, Hickman, Hill and cannon, CPA, for his success.

Herald reporter Holli Deal Saxon may be reached at (912) 489-9414.

Young Alumni Give Back

During the week of April 2, the College of Business welcomed back to campus two of its Young Alumni Board members, Shannaan Dawda (ACCT and FINC, ’09) and Jasmine Lightning-Meeks (MGNT, ’10). Shannaan was invited by Georgia Southern Auxiliary Services and University Housing to educate students and faculty and staff on financial literacy. Speaking twice, once on April 2 in the Nessmith-Lane Auditorium and, again, on April 3 in the Russell Student Union, Shannaan, a financial coach, empowered attendees financially to help them become uncomfortable with financial mediocrity. Many people live pay check to pay check and are content working to pay bills throughout their lives. Shannaan wants to be the catalyst that enables them to see themselves having financial freedom and achieving generational wealth. In his presentation, he said, “Handle your money with intention. Money is a tool, [so] use money to build, not destroy.” To learn more, visit frompaycheckstopower.com.

On April 5, the Eagle Executive Society-Student Chapter (EExS-SC) hosted, “LinkedIn: A Step by Step Guide.” The event was led by Jasmine Lightning-Meeks, founder of Lightning Clout, a full-service career counseling and résumé writing firm. More than 100 students came to hear Jasmine’s informative workshop, giving attendees tips and strategies on how to craft a standout LinkedIn profile and build a professional brand to showcase their background to prospective employers. To find out more about Jasmine and Lightning Clout, visit lightingclout.com.

The EExS-SC recognizes the growing importance of LinkedIn in college students’ careers and plans to turn this workshop into a series in the future.

Georgia Southern’s Economic Monitor Reports Continued Growth Despite Hurricane
Georgia Southern University’s latest Coastal Empire Economic Monitor, which analyzes data and identifies trends affecting the regional economy, reports that the Savannah metro economy closed out 2017 with moderate growth, while still feeling some of the effects of Hurricane Irma on employment and energy use (electricity sales). Exceptional strength in port activity, along with increased retail sales activity and tourism, lifted the regional economy.

“The regional economy continued to power along but at a slightly slower pace than during the previous quarter,” said Michael Toma, Ph.D., Fuller E. Callaway Professor of Economics and director of the Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research. “The lingering effects of Hurricane Irma on the forecasting index are dissipating, and signs are pointing to continued economic vitality in the second half of 2018.”

Overall, the Savannah metro economy remains on an upward trajectory of healthy, sustainable growth. With the passing of Hurricane Irma in September adversely affecting some economic indicators, sufficient forward momentum propelled the economy through the lag and kept the economy on its 12-month trend of 3.5 percent annual growth in regional output.

Additional highlights from the latest Economic Monitor include

**Tourism**
Regional tourism rebounded after the September hurricane even though boardings at the airport were flat. The year ended with a 16 percent increase in boardings from 2016, however. Hotel room sales increased 10 percent from the third quarter, closing out the year at 4.6 percent over 2016. Additionally, auto rentals increased 8 percent, while alcohol sales and the number of visitors on guided tours in the city saw gains of 11 percent and 18 percent, respectively.

**Port Activity**
Activity at Savannah’s port facilities soared by 13 percent compared to the previous quarter and is up 15 percent from the same time the previous year. The total number of containers handled exceeded four million in 2017, which is a record high and a gain of 10.6 percent over 2016.

**Employment Trends**
Fourth quarter employment bounced back to offset the September decline of 1,200 jobs caused by Hurricane Irma. The Coastal Empire’s metro area employers added 4,600 jobs, an increase of 2.7 percent, equaling the average pace of expansion since 2010, and an improvement (up from 2.4 percent) from 2016. The fastest growing sector was construction with an increase of 200 jobs to 7,600 workers, adding 2,200 jobs since the post-recession low set in mid-2013, followed by leisure and hospitality, wholesale trade and business and professional services.

**Regional Unemployment**
The regional unemployment rate saw a slight increase to 4.2 percent; however, this remains one full percentage point below the 5.2 percent recorded in the fourth quarter of 2016.

**Residential Construction**
Residential construction in the region improved over last quarter’s performance. Seasonally adjusted building permit issuance for single-family homes rebounded 7.4 percent after plummeting 23 percent during the second quarter of 2017.

Building permits issued in the Savannah metro area for single-family homes increased to 443 during the quarter, compared to 413 units in the previous quarter. The average valuation of building permits for single-family homes increased 6.6 percent, rising from $223,500 to $238,400.

**Economic Index/Forecasting Index**
The Coastal Empire coincident economic index increased 0.61 percent from the previous quarter. The forecasting economic index increased slightly during the fourth quarter, with softness therein reflecting the passage of
Hurricane Irma. Most leading indicators moved favorably during the quarter, but the dip in residential construction caused by the hurricane was not completely offset during the fourth quarter.

The Coastal Empire Economic Monitor presents quarterly economic trends and short-term economic forecasts for Savannah’s Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The quarterly report measures the heartbeat of the local economy, based on the analysis of economic data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, the City of Savannah, Georgia Power and the three counties in the MSA—Chatham, Bryan and Effingham.

The report presents a short-term forecast of the region’s economic activity in the next six to nine months and is available by email for free. To subscribe, email mtoma@georgiasouthern.edu.

The Georgia Southern Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research, housed in the College of Business’s Business Innovation Group, meets the applied research needs of Savannah’s business and community organizations. Areas of concentrated research include regional economic forecasting, economic impact analysis, economic development and business expansion, tourism development, survey-based research and specialty reports on topics of state, regional and local interest.

Logistics and Supply Chain Management Moves Up in Rankings

The Georgia Southern University Logistics and Supply Chain Management (L&SCM) department is ranked in the top 15 in the world by The SCM Journal List for empirically-focused research publications in leading supply chain management journals. Each year’s ranking is based on the research published in these journals during the prior five years. Ranking 15th out of 400+ programs, the L&SCM Department is recognized for its continued excellence in research. The 2018 ranking is up seven spots from last year.

The empirically-focused SCM Journal List™ annual ranking is based on shares of original authorship of publications in four widely respected journals (Decision Sciences Journal, Journal of Business Logistics, Journal of Operations Management and Journal of Supply Chain Management). These journals were selected by SCM Journal List™ based on existing lists such as the Financial Times and UT-Dallas journal lists, as well as a recognition that those lists included a set of journals that focused on analytical methodologies and also underrepresented journals that encompass logistics and supply chain management. To differentiate from other existing lists, the SCM Journal List™ ranking uses output from top-tier journals that publish research across a broad spectrum of supply chain research areas in both the analytical and empirical arenas.

“This recognition is very helpful to our institutional reputation, but it is especially important because the department houses a Ph.D. program in L&SCM,” stated Jerry Burke, Ph.D., department chair of Logistics and Supply Chain Management. “Ultimately, our Ph.D. students will benefit from this strong external validation when they are on the market. It also adds great value to our undergraduate programs in this field of study and informs our graduate programming. It is all thanks to the hard work and dedication of faculty in the department.”

To view the list in its entirety, visit scmlist.com.

Georgia Southern Logistics and Supply Chain Team Wins 10th Annual IANA Case Competition

On Friday, April 6, 2018, thirty-six students and faculty from Auburn University, Georgia Southern University, University of Arkansas, University of Maryland, University of North Florida, University of North Texas and the University of South Florida participated in the 10th Annual IANA Logistics & Supply Chain Management Case Competition at the University of North Florida. Students from Georgia Southern University impressed the judges with their presentation, taking first place honors.
The student presentations were judged by a group of professionals representing a broad section of related industries. The judges panel consisted of Adriene Bailey of Brooks Davis Consulting and Chair of the IANA Board of Directors, Benjamin Freedman from Volkswagen Group of America, Jenny Johnson of Intermodal Support Services, T. Parker McCrory, Debbie McDowell of Matrix Logistics, Tim Nelson of Shoreside Logistics, Todd Pye from Florida Rock & Tank Lines and Kirk Williams of Proficient Auto Transport. Larry Gross of Gross Transportation Consulting was commissioned by the University of North Florida to develop the intermodal case study, “Atlantic and Western Railroad,” specifically for the 10th Annual IANA Case Competition.

“In the debrief after judging was completed, faculty from the various programs heard from the judges regarding what stood about the successful teams. From this discussion and our eventual first-place finish, it is clear that the judges were impressed by how well versed each of Georgia Southern’s students knew the case and the aspects of the team’s approach and recommendations,” state Jerry Burke, Ph.D., chair for the Department of Logistics and Supply Chain Management. “The judges appreciated the simulation approach the team used to analyze more than 70,000 line haul pricing combinations as a main feature of the case challenge. Judges also commented on how solid all of the teams were, but that the Georgia Southern team’s recommendations were especially strategic as well as rigorously analyzed and explained.”

On Saturday, the students enjoyed a tour of the Anheuser Busch bottling plant in Jacksonville. It was a great way to cap the experience by learning about production and distribution of a major brands products while at the same time casually interacting with students from other programs without competitive pressures.

During the three-day event, the students honed their analysis and presentation skills. Faculty mentors and students also enjoyed networking with their peers and learning about academic programs at other universities.

To watch the Georgia Southern team’s presentation, visit youtube.com/watch?v=JPQq7r4jfwM.

BIG Café

By Caroline Nimnicht, Marketing minor (‘18)

The BIG Café, a one-hour structured business innovation session creates a space for peers, mentors and advisors to help local entrepreneurs solve small business problems while enjoying a cup of coffee and some doughnuts. On April 11, 2018, local entrepreneurs, students and business people from Statesboro joined for the monthly collaborative coffee session at 9:00 a.m. to hear Corey Robinson of Mammoth Creative Partners and David Vaughn with Tailr present.

Corey Robinson is the project manager for Mammoth Creative Partners, a design firm that focuses on web development, graphic design and branding. This organization began after Corey’s team won BIG’s Three Day Startup (3DS) a couple of years ago; however, the business began to fall apart once everyone on the original 3DS team graduated, that is, until the firm’s client, Roblox, came along. Roblox is an online multiplayer game creation platform that allows users to create and design their own games and play a wide variety of different games created by the developer or other users. “Roblox is the backbone of our company,” said Robinson.

Mammoth Creative Partners currently has four partners, four contractors and one team. The main focuses right now are to recruit skilled people in Statesboro to join the team, find clients locally and nationally so they are not forced to rely on Roblox to keep going and to address the absent ownership issue the firm is currently facing. With helpful advice from local entrepreneurs and business people, Corey can now make the adjustments necessary to make Mammoth Creative Partners thrive.
After a networking coffee break, David Vaughn with Tailr introduced himself and informed the audience of how Tailr got started. Tailr was the business that won this year’s 3DS. The issue that Tailr addresses is that the clothes you order online do not fit the way you anticipated, which leads to returns for retailers. Tailr’s solution is an innovative app and website that captures measurements to ensure you get clothes that fit correctly every time. The target market is local, regional and national online retailers and the owners plan to reach them by going to smaller business trade shows, email marketing, small-time social media marketing and popular channel endorsement. They are currently waiting to hear back from investors and are in an in-between phase. To learn more, go to Tailr.com.

April’s BIG Café was another success thanks to Corey Robinson, David Vaughn, everyone who attended and those who gave constructive and beneficial feedback to the presenters. Thanks to sponsors, Cool Beanz, for providing the coffee each month, and Downtown Statesboro Development Authority, for providing doughnuts. If you would like to present your business challenges at BIG Café, please contact Suzanne Hallman at shallman@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-5586. Attend the next BIG Café if you are interested in networking in Statesboro, drinking coffee and helping one another solve business problems. Also, attend five times, and you will receive a free BIG Café coffee mug. Catch BIG Café on Facebook Live on the second Wednesday of each month.

Candler County Hospital Impact Reveal

*From the Statesboro Herald, by Al Hackle*

Metter’s city government and Candler County Hospital will make public the results of a study of the hospital’s economic impact Monday evening.

The city of Metter commissioned the study by the Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development at Georgia Southern University. Benjamin McKay, from the university’s Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research, will present the Candler County Hospital and Clinic Economic Impact Study at 6 p.m. in the Wilcox Auditorium on South College Street in Metter.

**Struggling hospital**

The hospital’s financial struggles are well known. In 2017, the Georgia Department of Community Health ranked Candler County Hospital the second-most financially in need among hospitals qualifying for money from the state’s Rural Hospital Tax Credit.

For Metter’s mayor and City Council, commissioning the study was another step in making economic development a priority, said Metter City Manager Mandi Cody. She noted that the city has also created an economic development department with a director of tourism and business development.

“Another step has been to commission the impact study regarding the hospital because, as I’m sure you know, there has been a number of conversations over the last few years about the fiscal distress that the hospital has been suffering,” Cody said.

So the council wanted to know what part the hospital plays in the local economy “and how to approach that particular conversation about what needs to happen for the future of the hospital based on real data about what the hospital offers,” she said.

**More than 200 jobs**

The study found the total amount of local economic activity linked to operating the Candler County Hospital was $21.42 million and 245 full-time or equivalent jobs, the city’s news release noted. This job count included 199 direct hospital jobs plus 46 jobs in the local economy made possible by hospital spending.

The 25-bed critical access hospital is governed by the public Hospital Authority of Candler County and receives financial backing from the county, including a tax increase last year. The city has no official supporting role, but Cody noted that the hospital is within Metter and directly affects the city’s economy.
McKay will present information not only on spending and the number of jobs created, but the number of residents the hospital draws, where patients come from, the hospital's market share and “how others can support the hospital,” Cody said.

McKay, whose degrees include a Master of Public Administration from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and a Master in Business Administration from Georgia Southern, has done a number of research projects throughout Georgia.

_Herald reporter Al Hackle may be reached at (912) 489-9458._

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Leadership Symposium – Logistics

For more info, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/LeadershipSymposium.

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Faculty/Staff News

On Friday, April 6, Hyunju Shin, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing, and David Sikora, Ph.D., professor of management, presented their research during one of the 2017 Summer Research Grant Seminars held in the College of Business. Shin’s research, titled “Customer Responses to the Point Management Strategy in the Occurrence of Customer Demotion,” investigates the relative influences of the two types of point management
strategy, as opposed to the point maintenance strategy, which significantly reduce customers’ perceived unfairness, firm avoidance and patronage reduction. This study provides insights into how service organizations can better design status demotion in hierarchical loyalty programs to aid managerial decision making.

Sikora presented his article, “The Role of Line Manager Human Resource Implementation in Firm Performance,” which explores whether the implementation of an organization’s human resource (HR) practices by its operating managers impacts critical performance outcomes such as job performance, employee turnover intentions and workplace justice perceptions. Using data from 507 managers and 109 matched line manager-subordinate response sets, the overall results suggest that managers’ HR implementation level is directly linked to a) lower employee turnover intentions, b) higher job performance and c) higher workplace justice perceptions.


During the final 2017 Summer Research Grant Seminar held on Friday, April 13, Yenipazarli presented “Bricks vs Clicks: The Impact of Returns Online on the Dual-Channel Strategies of Retailers and Environmental Cost of Shopping.” This article examines how adopting a bricks-and-clicks dual-channel retailing strategy affects the strategic behavior, pricing decisions and profits of competing conventional retailers, and characterizes how online channel expansion decisions of those competing retailers impact the environmental cost of shopping. The results revealed that the higher returns that often accompany online orders have not only substantive supply-side implications for competing retailers but also implications for shoppers’ buyer behavior and, hence, the environmental cost of shopping.

On Friday, April 13, Jackie Eastman, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing, presented “Cause-Related Marketing and Millennials: Impact of Product Type and Donation Style” to faculty and staff during the final 2017 Summer Research Grant Seminar. Eastman’s research examined the impact of two kinds of cause-related marketing (CRM) efforts (a traditional donation to a related cause and a more strategic one-for-one donation to a related cause) on Millennials’ attitudes and purchase intentions for four different product types (laptop, hat, food and bottled water) and the role social media plays on CRM. The research found that while Millennials have relatively low awareness of CRM campaigns, the correlation between social media and CRM awareness is positive. In conclusion, for Millennials, CRM may have more of an impact on products and causes that deal with needed fundamentals, such as food and water, and the use of a strategic one-for-one style has an even greater impact than a traditional portion of sales donation.

Lindsay Larson, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing, and Hyunju Shin, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing, had their paper, “Fear During Natural Disaster: Its Impact on Perceptions of Shopping Convenience and Shopping Behavior,” accepted for publication in Services Marketing Quarterly. It will appear in Volume 39, Number 4 this year. Congratulations, Lindsay and Hyunju!

In February, Michael Toma, Ph.D., Fuller E. Callaway Professor of Economics, was elected to serve as president of the Academy of Economics and Finance. The group has approximately 250 members from 146 universities in 31 states and 13 countries. Toma has served in numerous roles for the organization, including program chair, vice president, board of directors member, local arrangements chair, site selection committee member, conference best paper award committee member, best Ph.D. paper award committee member and research fellow committee member. He was also a co-founder of the organization’s undergraduate research competition and served as competition organizer and judge for numerous years. Best of luck, Mike!
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