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Taking Flight – July 2019

Message from the Dean

Just a few years ago, we launched an initiative called “Building a Legacy.” It was an effort to raise money to renovate our building. Many in my generation think of our building as new; we still remember taking classes in Hollis. But, this building opened in 1995; that’s more than 20 years ago. Meanwhile, our competition has moved forward at the speed of business. And, so, to compete with the other leading business schools in the southeast, we made plans to renovate and expand as well. As I said, that was a few years ago. Unfortunately, as events unfolded and leadership changed, priorities shifted, and our initiative lost momentum.

But the need remains, and our intentions have not changed. We need a building that is state of the art and exemplifies the talents and aspirations of our students and faculty. So, we designed the project in such a way that we could make progress, even with just a fraction of the funding. Our plan has three distinct parts, any one of which can be done independently. And, while the two biggest and most glamorous parts are the ones involving new construction and expansion, the third part, the improvement of the existing space, is every bit as important and is moving forward deliberately. Of course, a lot of this internal work takes place during the summer, which is why I’m thinking about this topic today.

This summer, for instance, we’ve been busy replacing a lot of the furniture and fixtures in our classrooms and offices. We want our building to look and feel like the spaces in which our graduates will work when they enter the business world. We’ve also changed our hallways, moving away from static displays to centralized, digital hubs, where we can provide real-time announcements and where our students can interact with touch screens to get needed information. We’ve upgraded our infrastructure, updating the technology in some labs, while replacing others altogether with newer smart classrooms. Our internet connectivity, cloud sharing capability and overall information processing capacity has expanded significantly, enabling our faculty and students to do more with technology and data. And, we’ve taken steps to improve visual impact, to make our building look and feel more modern, more welcoming and more energetic.

We’re now finishing the third summer since we introduced the initiative to improve our building, and the results are becoming more and more apparent. Don’t get me wrong, we’ve got a long way to go. Even with the progress we’ve made, we’re only addressing one part of our overall plan. Still, the progress is evident, and I get excited as I see the improvements. So, as we move out of the summer and into the fall, I invite all of our alumni and friends to pay us a visit. Whether you’re on campus for a football game, here to speak to a class or to visit a professor, even if you’re here to bring one of your own children to school at Georgia Southern, stop by the Parker College and take a look at what we’re doing. We want a space that reflects the world of business and conveys the aspirations of our culture. Moreover, we want the Parker College to have a space that will make our alumni and friends proud. Ultimately, that is the legacy we are building.



Alumni Spotlight: Callie Gordon Cramer

An active member of the Augusta chapter of the Georgia Southern alumni group, Callie Gordon Cramer (ACCT & MAcc, 2007) began her career at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in Atlanta, where she learned invaluable skills that carry over into the world of corporate accounting. After three years with PwC, Callie moved to Augusta, where she joined US CareNet (formerly CareSouth) as a financial analyst. Currently, she is director of financial reporting and analysis, where she and her team produce monthly financials for the firm’s Health at Home agencies, that operate throughout the U.S. Recently, Callie helped to launch My Sophi, a product that allows clinicians in the NavCare Care Center in Augusta, GA, to monitor patient vitals 24/7/365 through a cellular two-way communication hub. Every day at US CareNet is a challenge since, in the home care world, new policies and strategies need to be

implemented all the time. “Thinking outside of the box” to come up with new, better and more efficient ways to complete her tasks is Callie’s favorite part of her job.

While at Georgia Southern, Callie made it a priority to get involved whenever possible. The classes, job fairs and student organizations at Georgia Southern provided opportunities to develop her professional skills and to meet potential employers, leading to, first, an internship and, then, a job at PwC. As a student, Callie worked in the Honors Program with Steven Engel, Ph.D., and Linda Rushing and was president of SOAR under the direction of Amanda and John King, Ph.D.’s and associate professors of economics. Callie’s favorite class was introduction to accounting taught by Thomas Buckhoff, Ph.D. and associate professor of accounting. In fact, it was in this class that she realized she was destined for the world of accounting, which, in turn, led to her proudest professional accomplishment—passing the CPA exam!

In her spare time, Callie enjoys her role as “Mommy” to her two daughters and her involvement with the Augusta alumni group. In the future, she hopes to continue developing her managerial and leadership skills and growing with a company that she loves.



Georgia Southern in the Fastlane

Excerpt from the Spring 2019 GS Magazine

“NASCAR races 38 weeks a year, and we look for opportunities to partner with groups in our local race communities to enhance the medical care, health care and lifestyle needs for kids,” said Nichole Krieger, executive director of The NASCAR Foundation, the charitable arm of NASCAR.

As a business marketing major at Georgia Southern, the Atlanta area native kept busy with school work, waiting tables at the former Archibald’s in Statesboro, and as fundraising chair of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority. It was the experience of sorority fundraising and its mission of giving back to others, combined with her business studies that led Krieger to the nonprofit world.

“When I got out of college I moved to Washington, D.C., and I started working for Paralyzed Veterans of America,” said Krieger. “It was kind of like running your own business, but paired up with the desire to help others.”

Working for Nonprofits Led to NASCAR

Krieger worked for Paralyzed Veterans of America for almost 17 years, and while there she met her husband, Andy. She also met NASCAR.

Paralyzed Veterans was supported by a number of NASCAR drivers including Richard Petty, Martin Truex and the Penske organization. From then on, Krieger was bitten by the NASCAR bug, and jumped at the chance to work for The NASCAR Foundation. She’s been with them for six years and executive director the last two.

Krieger is a big fan of the Daytona-based sport, watching racing every weekend and being actively involved with NASCAR.

“The fact that we can help children in our racing communities is really what makes my job so great. So when we roll on to the next city, The NASCAR Foundation is able to leave an impact behind. That’s what I think is so important about what we do.”

Krieger feels the lessons learned at Georgia Southern have helped her throughout her career.

“I think the experiences at school definitely prepared me for this. Maybe you don’t always know it’s preparing you for what lies ahead. But I think being able to take what I learned in school and give back to the race communities is probably something that I’m most proud of.”



*Nicole Krieger ('94),
Nascar Foundation executive
director.*

But Krieger is proud of Georgia Southern too.

“I love it when people say, ‘Georgia Southern, I know where that is’. I’m certainly proud of being a Georgia Southern Eagle.”

Georgia Southern’s SHRM Student Chapter Receives National Award

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) has awarded the Superior Merit Award to the Georgia Southern University SHRM student chapter for providing superior growth and development opportunities to its student chapter members for the academic year 2018–19.

This is the fourth consecutive year that Georgia Southern’s SHRM student chapter has received this designation, and the award continues the chapter’s more than decade-long history of recognition by SHRM.

The SHRM student chapter merit award program, which began in 1972, was created to encourage student chapters to require ongoing excellence in student chapter requirements, chapter operations, chapter programming and professional development of members, support of the human resource profession, and SHRM engagement.

During the course of the year, the chapter hosted numerous industry guest speakers on campus while continuing its HR-focused education sessions. The chapter also saw high levels of student participation throughout the year.

“This award is special because the national SHRM organization is recognizing our Georgia Southern chapter as one of the best student chapters in the United States,” said David Sikora, Ph.D., who co-advises the Georgia Southern SHRM student chapter with John Harris, Ph.D.

“Dr. Harris and I are proud of the work done by our chapter’s executive board and this national recognition,” he continued. “We’re excited about working with our students to continue the chapter’s tradition of outstanding Georgia Southern results.”

SHRM student chapters have the opportunity to earn an award based on the number of activities they complete during the merit award cycle, the most recent one lasted from April 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019.

“SHRM is committed to engaging the future leaders of the HR profession — HR and Business students. As we work to shape better workplaces where employers and employees can thrive together, we are energized by the work our student chapters are doing to encourage students to choose HR as a career path,” said Johnny C. Taylor Jr., president and chief executive officer of SHRM. “Awarding this Superior Merit Award designation is just one small way for SHRM to recognize and celebrate the big steps Georgia Southern’s SHRM student chapter has taken this past academic year.”



Better Fresh Farms and the Metter Incubator

While Georgia Southern expands its business incubator footprint, the City of Metter hopes to put its own unique twist to the business incubator model—and Metter is getting off to a fast start.

The Business Innovation Group (BIG) and the City of Metter recently announced a deal to create a small business incubator in downtown Metter. As with most traditional business incubators, Metter hopes to provide businesses with space and utilities while Georgia Southern provides guidance and research to startup companies.

Metter, however, wanted to put its own spin on the business incubator model by at least partially focusing on Georgia Grown products and capitalizing on the burgeoning agriculture startup environment in Georgia. The City hopes to be a hub for entrepreneurial growth and



mentorship, particularly in agriculture and locally-sourced products.

To that end, the first incubator client is Better Fresh Farms—a new hydroponic produce business that will locate its first growing trailer at the incubator. By providing shared spaces, services and utilities to clients like Better Fresh Farms, startup businesses are able to keep their fixed overhead down during the sensitive early years of any new business. By providing research and expertise, Georgia Southern hopes to arm these new, energetic entrepreneurs with the tools and partnerships that they will need to leave the incubator and be on their own in the community.

The City of Metter was able to utilize a vacant building in downtown and repurpose it for productive use. Currently, the business has two hydroponic farms that produce a variety of lettuce, greens, radishes and herbs featured at such notable establishments as the Husk, The Emporium and Beeful, a Savannah Art and Design dining facility. The firm will be adding more hydroponic farms to its operations in the incubator in Metter as it grows in the coming months.

The Metter campus, with its focus on agriculture and Georgia Grown products, is the third for BIG in South Georgia. The initial location in downtown Statesboro was started in partnership from a \$1M donation from the City of Statesboro that led to a \$1.3M EDA grant to get the incubator started. Then, BIG expanded to the Liberty Campus after the merger of Georgia Southern and Armstrong University.

Faculty/Staff News

Michael Toma, Ph.D., professor of economics, recently contributed to *WalletHub* on “Best First Credit Card” in the “Ask the Experts” section. To read the article in its entirety, please visit https://wallethub.com/credit-cards/first/#expert=Michael_Toma.

Brian Dowis, Ph.D., assistant professor of accounting, has been named Professor of the Year for Georgia Southern University by the Sun Belt Conference. To read more about the award, visit https://gseagles.com/news/2019/6/24/general-dowis-named-professor-of-the-year-for-georgia-southern-by-sun-belt.aspx?fbclid=IwAR3qrNH6DydXhC8GJMgt1ppIL9H536_0LpEsz1lwrq6oHSdyrckTT00mmU4. Congrats, Brian!

Richard McGrath, Ph.D., professor of economics, was featured in *WalletHub*'s article about the coolest credit cards with the best terms, designs and trends. To view the article in its entirety, please visit https://wallethub.com/cool-credit-cards#experts=Richard_McGrath.

Charles Marvil, lecturer, hospitality management, received a scholarship from the American Hotel and Lodging Education Foundation. Congrats, Charles!

William Wells, Ph.D., associate professor of finance, was featured in *WalletHub*'s article about no annual fee credit cards. To read it in its entirety, visit https://wallethub.com/credit-cards/no-annual-fee/#expert=William_Wells.

Xinfang Jocelyn Wang's, Ph.D., associate professor of quantitative analysis, manuscript “Socially Optimal IT Investment for Cybersecurity” was accepted for publication by *Decision Support Systems*. Congratulations, Xinfang!

Joe Ruhland, Ph.D., associate professor and department chair of finance, was featured in *WalletHub*'s article about gas credit cards. To read the article in its entirety, visit https://wallethub.com/credit-cards/gas/#expert=Joseph_S._Ruhland.

Kwabena Boakye, Ph.D., associate professor of quantitative analysis, and Mark Hanna, Ph.D., professor of operations management, along with a team of researchers from the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, had their article, “The Impact of Interpersonal Support, Supervisory Support, and Employee Engagement on Employee Turnover Intentions: Differences Between Financially Distressed and Highly Financially Distressed Hospitals,” published in *Health Care Management Review*. To read more, visit <https://www.aspph.org/georgia-southern-impact-of-employee-relationships-in-financially-distressed-and-highly-financially-distressed-hospitals/>. Congratulations to you both!



PARKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
TAILGATES

Aug. 31 - @LSU

Sept. 7 - Maine

Oct. 26 - Homecoming

Oct. 31 - @App State

Tailgate begins 2 hours prior to kickoff! Food & drinks provided.

Join us at lots RVB33 and RVB34