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Taking Flight – September 2018

Message From the Dean

“All in all, it’s just another brick in the wall.” That memorable line is, of course, from Pink Floyd’s famous song of the same name. The song itself was released in 1979 and, in 2004, was recognized by *Rolling Stone* magazine as one of the 500 greatest songs of all time. The song was written by Roger Waters as a protest against the rigid and inflexible education system in place in England in the 1950s. But the metaphor of a solid, singular wall, constructed from many individual bricks, is one that extends well beyond this piece of music history and popular culture.

Indeed, I have used this same metaphor many times in talking about the Parker College of Business. I often say to alumni, faculty and students that we are building something special here at Georgia Southern. We’re doing more than merely teaching classes and publishing research. We don’t work every day simply to deliver programs or to graduate students. These things are all just parts of a larger whole; they are all just bricks in a larger wall. What we are building is a brand that will be recognized and respected, across the country, even around the world. A brand is simply the intangible sum of your offerings and attributes. Stated differently, our brand is the image people form in their minds when they hear the Georgia Southern name.

We’re building that brand one brick at a time. Each program, each event, each class, each accomplishment is another brick in the wall. If we win a competition, if a student gets a job, if we publish an article, if we create an internship program, if we send a group to study abroad, those are all great, but each of those successes is multiplied and amplified when it is combined with others and built into a singular brand. And, so, everything we do matters, and everything we do is part of a larger strategy. As you’ll see in this newsletter, great things are happening. We just held our 19th “Meet the Firms” event, which brings leading accounting firms to campus to meet with our faculty and students. We’ll host our third Professional Development Day next week where we’ll have more than 90 sessions designed to accelerate the professional development of our students. Our Business Innovation Group will soon expand its business incubator and open a new facility in the City of Hinesville. We continue to host a wide range of events designed to connect our 24,000 alumni to one another and to the College, and we continue to celebrate the success of alumni like Olin Downs. And, of course, our faculty continue to work on the cutting edge, producing great scholarship, serving the needs of the business community and supplying business and economic expertise across the region. All this stuff is great, and we’ll continue striving to do more and to do it better. More importantly though, we’ll continue striving to use these successes, strategically and intentionally, to build a nationally prominent brand, one brick at a time.

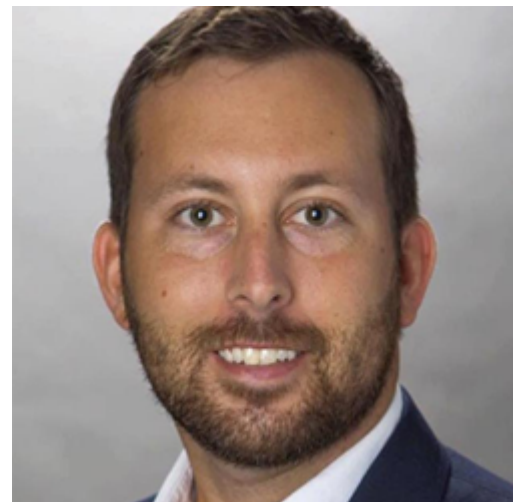


A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. C. C.", written in a cursive style.

Alumni Spotlight – Olin Downs

Olin Downs (IS, 2008; MBA, 2011) owns and operates an online marketing agency, Social Shark Media. An expert in search engine optimization (SEO), pay per click (PPC), and online marketing, Olin began his career working for other agencies before being recruited to work at a Fortune 500 company in California. The solid foundation of business and the technical knowledge his Georgia Southern information systems degree provided gave Olin a “leg up” that recruiters desired.

Olin really enjoyed his time at Georgia Southern. One of his favorite classes was a marketing course in which he developed a business plan for a local business and then pitched it to the representatives of the business. It was an open-ended assignment, and all decisions regarding the plan were up to the students.



In a SCUBA diving class while in grad school, Olin met his wife. Now, the couple has a one-year-old daughter. Outside of class, Olin had various jobs on campus including working at Southern Adventures and the Marketing Department at Campus Recreation and Intramurals. He made great memories and found wonderful friends while working on campus.

After deciding to open his own business, Olin returned to the east coast. It was challenging, scary, and exciting all at the same time to strike out on his own. Olin lost the comfort of company benefits and a guaranteed paycheck, but he is definitely glad he decided to open Social Shark Media. At Social Shark Media, Olin helps increase the chances that his clients' businesses will be found when someone does an Internet search. His success is tied to that of his clients, and Olin especially enjoys working closely with them and integrating with their marketing and development teams to increase their presence online. In the future, Olin hopes to continue growing Social Shark Media and helping other businesses to succeed online.

Olin and his family live in Jacksonville, Florida. In his spare time, Olin enjoys spending time at the beach with his wife and daughter. He also enjoys running and recently completed his first full marathon.

Parker College of Business Prepares Accounting Students for Careers and Internships Through Annual Career Fair

Students in the School of Accountancy at Georgia Southern University have an advantage when it comes to finding internships and careers in the accounting field thanks to the dedication of professors and staff who continually work to mentor their students.

Using their own professional career experiences to guide accounting majors through the progression of passing the CPA exam and becoming career-ready professionals, professors and staff work with students individually and prepare them for special events, including a career fair specifically for accounting majors called Meet the Firms.

At Meet the Firms, which has been held each fall for 19 years, students are given the opportunity to talk with recruiters and current firm staff about career goals and what to expect when going into an internship or career in public accounting.

Students are prepped for the event by the faculty and staff in the accounting department through professional development sessions. These required sessions prior to the event ensure the students are ready to put their best foot forward when meeting with recruiters. The professional development sessions cover topics ranging from acceptable professional attire, to proper conversation etiquette, to how to follow up with recruiters. Before Meet the Firms, all accounting majors in attendance must have their résumés approved by the Office of Career and Professional Development.

This year's event was held August 29 at the Nessmith-Lane Center on the Statesboro campus. More than 30 regional public accounting firms and businesses specializing in advisory and financial planning attended the event, recruiting Georgia Southern accounting majors for internships and full-time positions at their firms. The event, held every year during the peak recruitment season for accounting firms, showcases students looking for internships and full-time positions prior to the tax and audit busy season.

"Meet the Firms helped me to get my foot in the door with public accounting firms around the region," stated Masters of Accounting student Katherine Wagner. "I felt prepared for the event thanks to the help of the professors in the accounting department, and I plan to get an internship as a result of this event."



Professional Development Day Connects Career-Ready Students with Employers

At its core, the Georgia Southern University Parker College of Business's mission is to produce career-ready professionals. Our students are equipped with the knowledge, critical thinking skills, relevant tools and experiential learning opportunities needed for professional success. Offered to Parker College of Business

students, Professional Development Day (PDD) provides sessions on relevant “real-world” and discipline-specific topics and the opportunity to network with employers and recruiters prior to the Eagle Expo Career Fair, the University’s largest on-campus career fair, held on the following day.

The Georgia Southern University Parker College of Business will host the third annual PDD on Tuesday, October 2, starting at 9:30 a.m. During the event, students practice the networking, leadership and other soft skills they have attained, while employers and recruiters gain access to Georgia Southern’s best and brightest.

During PDD, business students attend conference-like sessions presented by the College’s corporate business partners. Topics for the educational sessions include “Steps to a Successful Startup Business,” hosted by JT Marburger (MGNT, ’84); “Life as an Auditor,” presented by Kate Randall (ACCT, ’09; MAcc, ’09); “The Job Hunt Exposed: A Recruiter’s Guide to Landing Your First Career Opportunity;” “Email Etiquette & Social Media;” and “Networking with Purpose,” among others. Similar to last year, approximately 80 sessions will be delivered during the day.

Held in conjunction with PDD, the Eagle Sales Showcase and Logistics Roundtable bring sales and logistics professionals to campus solely for marketing/sales and logistics students, respectively. Eagle Sales Showcase brings graduating sales and sales management students and sales professionals together, providing an all-access opportunity for the students and recruiters. The Logistics Roundtable allows students to explore the growing field of logistics and intermodal transportation. Professionals representing third-party logistics (3PL) firms, manufacturers, warehousing companies, distributors, motor carriers and major retailers provide students opportunities to gain valuable insights into logistics, transportation and supply chain career opportunities through interactive panel discussions and open-networking sessions.

For more information or to become involved in Professional Development Day, please contact Debbie Hilton, events coordinator, at dhilton@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-5050, or Danielle Smith, director of experiential learning and student engagement, at daniellesmith@georgiasouthern.edu or 912-478-6407. To view the PDD schedule, visit bit.ly/pdday2018.



Funded by \$1.5 Million in Grants, Georgia Southern and City of Hinesville to Build Business Incubator

Designing and launching a new business can be difficult. Georgia Southern University will soon provide expanded resources for entrepreneurs in Hinesville, with the addition of a new business incubator.

On September 7, Georgia Southern and the City of Hinesville Development Authority were co-awarded a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) to help fund the construction of a business incubator, which will be led by Georgia Southern’s Business Innovation Group (BIG). The organization connects startups with industry and faculty experts to assist in various stages of business, while providing student entrepreneurship interns hands-on experience to see what it takes to start a business.

The Hinesville Development Authority is providing an additional \$750,000 grant, bringing the total to \$1.5 million in support for the business incubator, which will support overall growth to the area.



"I applaud the Hinesville Development Authority and City Manager Kenneth Howard on their steadfast vision and determination for helping Hinesville residents in starting and growing their business," said BIG Director Dominique Halaby. "As such, I am excited to begin working with them to successfully execute that vision and to make this incubator a reality."

The Hinesville incubator will be adjacent to a new public library and within close proximity to Georgia Southern's Liberty Campus. Made possible by the Coastal Regional Commission's regional planning efforts, the new facility will house approximately 5,000 square feet to accommodate 12 new business clients.

"We commend the City of Hinesville for creating new opportunities for the community to grow and thrive," said EDA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs Dennis Alvord. "This project will help strengthen the local economy by providing a facility where entrepreneurs can develop new businesses."

BIG is committed to developing a vibrant entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem for southeast Georgia. Through innovative and entrepreneurial thinking, BIG assists local communities in achieving their dreams of becoming local entrepreneur hubs. By creating these opportunities, business incubators provide physical and developmental benefits to local entrepreneurs.

Faculty/Staff News

Arda Yenipazarli, Ph.D., assistant professor of logistics, was invited to join the editorial advisory board (EAB) from 2019 for the *Journal Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review* (TRE) and accepted to serve on the board for a three-year TRE EAB term.

Mike Toma, Ph.D., professor of economics, was mentioned in the *Savannah Morning News*' "City Talk: Seeking Savannah's definition of 'growth'" on August 4. To read the article in its entirety, visit <http://www.savannahnow.com/business/20180804/city-talk-seeking-savannahs-definition-of-growth>.

Rand Ressler, Ph.D., associate dean, was quoted by *WalletHub* in an article about the best and worst states for women's equality. To read the article in its entirety, visit <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-women-equality/5835/#expert=rand-w-ressler>.

LeeAnn Kung, Ph.D., assistant professor of information systems, recently had her paper, "Leveraging Big Data Analytics to Improve Quality of Care in Healthcare Organizations: A Configurational Perspective," accepted by the *British Journal of Management*.

STEP INTO THE ***SPOTLIGHT***

LOOKING FOR ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT CANDIDATES

Do you know a fellow Eagle Executive - Parker College of Business alum - we should know more about? Or, are you the Eagle Executive we should highlight in *Taking Flight*?



If so, please send us the name of the alum and email address so we can get in touch about being the Alumni Spotlight in a future *Taking Flight* newsletter.

**SEND NOMINATIONS TO
BUSINESS-MARKETING@GEORGIA SOUTHERN.EDU**

LET US HEAR FROM YOU!

☐ Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Ms. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Other _____ Date _____

Full Name (if female, include maiden name) _____

Name you prefer _____ ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

Spouse's Name (if female, include maiden name) _____

Did spouse attend Georgia Southern? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, Degree/Year _____

Your Georgia Southern Graduation Year _____ Degree _____ Major _____

Year _____ Degree _____ Major _____

Home Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone Number () _____ Business Phone Number () _____

Employer _____ Business Title _____

Business Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

Update your contact information at

GeorgiaSouthern.edu/Business/BlueCard

We look forward to hearing from you soon!



BUILDING A LEGACY

Georgia Southern University Parker College of Business