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## Taking Flight – February 2021

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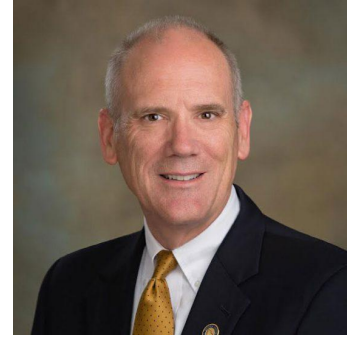
## Taking Flight – February 2021

### Message from the Dean

For a change of pace, I want to use my commentary in this month's newsletter to talk about something other than the Parker College. Specifically, I want to give a loud shout out to every member of the [Fred and Dinah Gretsch School of Music](#), here at Georgia Southern University. That includes the faculty, the staff, the students, those across the University who helped pull this gift and this naming together, as well as the thousands of Gretsch School alumni, and, of course, Fred and Dinah Gretsch. I tip my hat to you all and offer you my hearty congratulations and gratitude!

You see, I'm an old musician. In fact, long before 1980, when I took my first class in what would later become the Parker College of Business, I was a drummer who dreamed that one day I would make it big. I played every kind of gig and every style of music, with any group that would let me join them on stage. I took private lessons and studied music in school. For a time, I even planned to major in music before I switched over to business and management and my career took me in new directions. But, for all of those early years, and all the many years since, I was familiar with Gretsch. I even have a Gretsch drum set. Who else plays Gretsch instruments? My goodness, it's a veritable who's who of the industry. Charlie Watts, Cindy Blackman, Chris Fryar, Pat MacDonald, Steve Ferrone, and Vinnie Colaiuta, to name a few of the world's great drummers. On Gretsch guitars are artists like Chet Atkins, Bo Diddley, George Harrison, Bono, Brian Setzer, and Tom Peterson. These folks are the best of the best; they created their own styles, founded new sounds and genres, and moved music and the music business forward, through their talent and hard work. And they did all of that playing Gretsch drums and guitars. And, now, Georgia Southern is home to the Gretsch School of Music; my goodness that's huge, and it's a tremendous step forward for our University. So, naturally, I'm appreciative of Fred and Dinah and their generosity, as I am appreciative of those who have invested their lives and careers in our School of Music. But I'm mostly excited about the future and the broader implications for Georgia Southern.

You see, as exciting as events like this are, and, certainly, we were excited when our College was recognized as the Parker College of Business, the real story is what they mean for the future and for the Georgia Southern brand. Going forward, we will be nationally competitive with a reputation and footprint that is increasingly recognized across the nation. We will attract the best, expect the best, deliver the best, and push forward with the confidence of an institution whose names represent the best. As an institution that includes the Parker College of Business and now the Gretsch School of Music, we will continue to build momentum and accelerate forward, as we move toward a position of national prominence and impact. This gift and this naming are one more step in that direction and one more reason why the future is bright for Georgia Southern!



### Alumni Spotlight: Ned Butler

from [Walton Tribune](#)

Ned Butler is the new chair of the Walton Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

Butler, a Walton County native, is the vice president of land development for Reliant Homes in Loganville. He is a graduate of Georgia Southern University.

After working for The Community Bank (now BankOZK) in Loganville, rising to the level of vice president and commercial loan officer, and later serving as a vice president of Oconee State Bank in Watkinsville, Butler became interested in the development and construction industry.

With a desire to build something tangible, he made the decision to leave banking and pursue a new path. At Reliant, he oversees acquisition and entitlement, project bidding and budgeting, development payables and project financial analysis.

Butler is a member of the Leadership Walton 2021 class. He is a father of two and will add three children to his family with his upcoming marriage to his fiancée, Katie.

The Butler family attends First United Methodist Church in Monroe.

Butler became the chair Thursday night at the chamber's annual meeting as 2020 Chair Renee Park passed the gavel.

Park and her husband, Joe, are the owners and operators of TAPP Plumbing. They've been in business in Walton County for 12 years, and prior to that were in business together for 10 years in new-construction plumbing.

The Parks have been married for 23 years and been in business together for 22 of those years. They have three children — Tony, Austin and Paige Park, who are the namesakes of the business. They also have two young grandchildren.

For 2021, the executive board of the chamber includes Butler; Chair-elect Ammie Elliott of Truist; Park; Bonnie Haynes, of Peach State Federal Credit Union, vice chair of chamber resources; Superintendent Nathan Franklin, of the Walton County School District, vice chair of community development; and Larry Ebert, CEO of Piedmont Walton Hospital, vice chair of economic development.

Board members are Tammy Baker, Kevin Barrelle, Drew Bowen, Tammy Callaway, Katie Comer, Dawn Griffin, Cindy Haddon, Eli Lussiana and Susan Sykes.

Ex-officio board members are Chair David Thompson of the Walton County Board of Commissioners; Mayors Mark Moore of Walnut Grove, Rey Martinez of Loganville, John Howard of Monroe, David Keener of Social Circle, Robert Post of Between and Randy Carithers of Jersey, and the mayor of Good Hope, a position that's currently vacant; Franklin; Robbie Hooker, superintendent of the Social Circle City Schools; Dan Dolan, head of school at George Walton Academy; Doug Monda, CEO of Loganville Christian Academy; Shane Short, the executive director of the Development Authority of Walton County; state Sens. Bill Cowser of Athens and Burt Jones of Jackson; state Reps. Tom Kirby of Loganville and Bruce Williamson of Monroe; Lenzy Reid, director of the Athens Technical College Walton County Campus; Kristy Daniel, events director for the city of Loganville; Sadie Krawczyk, Monroe economic director; and Amber McKibben, Social Circle Main Street director.



### The New Convocation Center Will Be Named After Georgia Southern Graduates

by *Miriam Boston, The George-Anne*

Georgia's Southern University's planned convocation center in Statesboro will be named in honor of the late Senator Jack Hill (BUSA '66) and his wife, Ruth Ann Hill (Home Econ '73, M.Ed. '90).

"This will be a tremendous addition to our Statesboro campus, for our local community, and for our students, said Georgia Southern President Kyle Marrero, "We are grateful to the Governor and the Legislature for supporting this project, which will be a permanent reminder of the generational impact made by Jack and Ruth Ann Hill.

Jack and Ruth Ann Hill Convocation Center will be the signature building on Georgia Southern's south Campus.

The Funding for this project will come from a combination of state and privately raised funds. Gov. Brian Kemp's Fiscal Year 2022 budget recommendations to the General Assembly include more than \$12 million for construction.

Final designs and a groundbreaking schedule will be completed once funding has been secured.



## Spring PEP Activities

In spring semester, Parker College MBA students participated in a workshop, "Résumé Writing," and heard from guest speaker, Jina Etienne, CPA, CGMA, of Etienne Consulting. These experiential learning activities engage students intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully, and/or physically and allow them to begin to form abstract ideas based on their experiences bringing about deeper understanding of interpersonal skills such as collaboration, leadership, and creative problem-solving.

The Parker PEP workshops help MBA students to develop or strengthen their knowledge, skills, or abilities under the guidance of a workshop leader. These workshops provide more hands-on learning than do most guest speaker programs. They also allow for discussion and debate while availing the participants with customized deliverables. Using a packet of information, including a plethora of examples and helpful suggestions, Glenn Gibney of the Georgia Southern University Office of Career and Professional Development walked participants through the steps involved in preparing a professional résumé and discussed career planning in "Résumé Writing." They also explored the concepts of team building, coaching/mentoring, and change management.

The executive guest speaker series introduces MBA students to leaders with a passion for motivating and inspiring others who also wish to pass along what they have learned about leadership and career success. In Etienne's "Understanding 'D' & Navigating 'I': Exploring the Fundamentals of Diversity and Inclusion" talk, she explained the research that links diversity and improvements in creativity, innovation, and financial performance and explored the research and science of unconscious bias. Students also learned the importance of collaboration and communication and the impact of culture in the business environment.



## Parker College of Business Students, Faculty Excel in Virtual Global Competition

from the University Newsroom

Sales students in the Parker College of Business spent the fall semester communicating and making deals with a robot through the virtual RNMKRS College Sales Skills Competition.

The students, who placed in the top 1% of more than 2,200 participants, learned and practiced selling a product by speaking virtually with Alex, a consumer bot who listens, adapts and responds as students used voice activation on their mobile phones.

"This style of communication during the pandemic was actually very beneficial," said Hannah Peterman, who placed third overall in the competition. "As each of us has been required to communicate online and via teleconferencing systems, RNMKRS offered coaching in many facets of this environment. This competition also gave me exposure to employers that were sponsors, which resulted in me being able to network. Many times, as a student, I am reluctant to contact these individuals, and RNMKRS allowed exposure that would have not been possible otherwise."

Georgia Southern was among the 59 schools that competed. Georgia Southern had the most students overall with scores in the top 30% and the eighth-highest percentage of students with scores in the top 30%.

Students are able to compete from anywhere in the world. Schools from the U.S., Canada and Germany participated in the RNMKRS program during the fall semester. Following training, students participate in the worldwide sales competition where they are recognized for their skills. Employers like Dell, Gartner, Herc Rentals, Tom James, TTI, and YRC Worldwide select students for jobs.

"Any time you can get students to be interactive, work in teams for an end, learn and have fun learning, the activity is successful," said Linda Mullen, Ph.D., director of the Center for Sales Excellence and associate professor of marketing. "Our partners for our Center for Sales Excellence love our sales students because the students have grit. I have been told this over and over by recruiters."

Kasey Perks won runner-up for most persistent student, and Peterman, Perks and Alexander Wolf were recognized for making the most student practice role-plays.

Students Ty Black, Christopher Christenson, Logan Craig, Caroline Peckeroff, Shelton Quants, Kelsey Salmon, Nicolas Sanches and Morgan Sterrett were named to the RNMKRS 1% Club for being in the top 1% of students.

Additionally, professors and faculty were recognized in the RNMKRS competition for their roles in coaching their students. Mullen tied as Top Coach Advocate and was named as a member of the RNMKRS 1% Club for being one of the top 1% of coaches.

Elmira Shahriari, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing, was a runner-up in the category for Most Prepared Class Call. Lindsay Levine, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing, was a runner-up for Most Tenacious Coach.

The resources provided by the Parker College of Business and access to professors like Mullen helped Peterman feel confident and prepared for the competition.

"It was gratifying to get put in situations and then be able to draw from information and knowledge that was taught in a previous class or even in multiple classes," she said. "When I first started the process, in all honesty, I was concerned I wasn't prepared. As I encountered each new situation in RNMKRS, I realized just how many selling and marketing scenarios we had covered and how to respond to each."



## Groundbreaking Held for Small Business Incubator

from [Coastal Courier](#)

After more than six years of planning the City of Hinesville finally broke ground on their Small Business Incubator. The groundbreaking ceremony held Jan. 29, in downtown Hinesville brought together officials from the City of Hinesville, the Hinesville Development Authority (HDA) and dignitaries from community partners such as Georgia Southern University President Kyle Marrero.

The City first discussed a proposed business incubator during a two-day planning workshop at the Sea Palms Resort and Conference Center back in 2015. At that time the Small Business Incubator was originally planned to be housed in the old Hinesville Bank building, on the corner of South Main Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

Instead the Small Business Incubator is being built at 207 W Memorial Drive and will be a 5,000 square foot building and according to a city release, the first and only of its kind for the Hinesville community, which will help local entrepreneurs develop and grow business in the area.

"We have put in a lot of effort to get to this point," City Manager Kenneth Howard said. "This is the culmination of great partnerships, not just the City Development Authority, but also the City of Hinesville Mayor and Council, the Liberty County Chamber of Commerce and most important Georgia Southern University who will be managing this facility for us. They have a facility similar to this in Statesboro. We visited their site several times and we feel this small business facility in the City of Hinesville will work well."

The small business incubator, which will take approximately 18 months to construct, will serve as a central hub for local entrepreneurs to receive the necessary technical assistance and infrastructure needed to develop and grow a business in the area. Not only will the small business incubator give entrepreneurs a physical space to operate their business, it will also give them access to services that will help them refine their business model and access capital.

The construction of the incubator is the culmination of a communitywide initiative to grow business in the Hinesville area. With GSU onboard as a partner, leaders purchased a .72-acre parcel at 207 W. Memorial Dr. to serve as the small business incubator's home site.





Howard called it a \$1.5 million dollar investment into the community.

"At the City of Hinesville, we are committed to supporting our local business economy by investing in tools and resources that our local entrepreneurs need to launch and maintain a successful thriving business, thereby benefiting the community as a whole through job creation and adding to our community's quality of life," Howard said.

Howard added that the incubator will offer between 11 to 13 office spaces at a discounted rate. This will give new entrepreneurs the opportunity to operate and grow their businesses before taking the big step of setting out on their own. He said that in addition to GSU staff, they will be utilizing the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center.

"They come with a certain level of expertise," Howard said.

"The small business incubator will enhance our community's entrepreneurial ecosystem," HDA Chairman Justin McCartney said. "Our goal is to help new and seasoned business owners grow, expand and thrive."

"The Small Business Incubator will be a game changer in Hinesville," Hinesville Mayor Allen Brown said while crediting the HAD with implementing successful projects in the City, like the Oglethorpe Shopping Square and now this project. "It will be a catalyst for small business growth in Hinesville. Without small business millions of Americans would be without jobs."

The Small Business Incubator will be located directly across from the GSU Liberty Campus and just minutes away from City Hall and the Liberty Chamber of Commerce. "We are very excited to be expanding our presence in Hinesville through this partnership," said Georgia Southern President Kyle Marrero. "The Business Innovation Group at Georgia Southern exists to ignite small business development throughout our region, and we look forward to having an innovation hub located in Hinesville that is dedicated to enhancing and supporting economic growth and prosperity to the community and the entire region."

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## Economist: COVID-19 Vaccinations Vital to Economic Recovery

by DeAnn Komanecky, [Savannah Morning News](#)

Much of the economic recovery from the COVID-19 recession underway, both locally and statewide, depends in part on one thing — vaccinations, according to economics professor Michael Toma of Georgia Southern University.

"Get vaccinated," Toma said to a crowd gathered for the Savannah 2021 Economic Trends luncheon hosted by the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday. "That's how you can help with economic recovery."

Toma said Savannah's unemployment rate rose to 16.6% in April, with a loss of 26,000 jobs from the "COVID bomb," with the hardest hits impacting the leisure and hospitality sector.

"Thirty-five percent of all the unemployment claims in the Savannah MSA were from leisure and hospitality," Toma said. The Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area includes Chatham, Bryan and Effingham counties.

Toma said the leisure and hospitality sector lost nearly half of its employment base and is only back to 81% of its pre-pandemic levels.

Overall recovery in the area will "depend crucially" on recovery of the hospitality sector, Toma said.

For that sector and other growth and employment predictions to improve will take confidence by workers, consumers and employers once the vaccine is widely available and adopted, Toma said.

"The level of confidence is crucial," he said.

A 4% growth in the economy is predicted for 2021, mostly in the second half of this year, he noted.

Strong points include logistics and distribution, port activity and real estate development.

Residential construction is expected to have a good 2021 with low interest rates and an increase in single-family home building predicted.

Also expected to continue to do well is the Savannah port, area manufacturing and health care.

An increase of 4% is also predicted for the unemployment rate. Job growth is expected, however, and will be partially dependent on the confidence of consumers, employers and workers as more of the population receives COVID-19 vaccinations.

Overall the economy is back to 99% of where we were pre-pandemic, Toma said.

Toma said that while 2020 had been very difficult, the Savannah metro area economy overall will experience notable growth this year, especially when compared to last year.



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## Faculty/Staff News

David Sikora, Ph.D., associate professor of management, has received the 2020 Human Resource Management Review Excellence in Reviewing Award. As part of the editorial board of *Human Resource Management Review*, a top-rated journal in the HR Management research field, David performs many peer reviews each year. Great job, David!

Nicholas Mangee, Ph.D., associate professor of finance, has been appointed as a member of the investment committee for Fiduciary Advisor Solutions in New England, a firm that offers a unique proprietary Macro-Micro Portfolio architecture to its clients. Nicholas will be on the research side supporting the framework for this investment approach. Congratulations, Nicholas!

Arda Yenipazarli, Ph.D., professor of operations management, has had his manuscript, "On the Effect of Antitrust Policy Intervention in Pricing Strategies in a Distribution Channel," accepted for publication in *Decision Sciences*. Congratulations, Arda!

Yuan Li, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing, has had her paper, "Cuteness Inspires Men's Risk Seeking but Women's Risk Aversion" accepted at *Journal of Business Research*. Grats, Yuan!

Gulver Karamemis, Ph.D., assistant professor of supply chain management, has had her paper, "A Win-Win Strategy Analysis for an Original Equipment Manufacturer and a Contract Manufacturer in a Competitive Market," co-authored with Yuwen Chen and Jiayuang Zheng, accepted for publication at *European Journal of Operational Research*. Way to go, Gulver!

Hyunju Shin, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing, has had her manuscript, "Use It or Lose It: Point Expiration and Status Demotion," co-authored with Riza Casidy at Macquarie University, accepted for publication in the *Journal of Services Marketing*. Congratulations, Hyunju!

### In Memoriam

On February 15, 2021, the Parker College lost Kitty Williams, assistant professor of accounting. Kitty taught accounting at Georgia Southern for 26 years before her retirement. She once said she was tough on her students because she knew it was in their best interest. Kitty's good humor and dedication to her students will be missed.

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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 \_\_\_\_\_

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We look forward to hearing from you soon!



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