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Message from the President

Georgia Southern University

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Dear Colleagues,

May 6, 2021

We have reached the time of year where there is excitement in the air and much to celebrate as we prepare to confer 4,200 degrees next week across six ceremonies! Congratulations to our students who have worked tirelessly to achieve this milestone, and thank you to you - our faculty and staff - who remain dedicated each day to ensuring our students' success.

Eagle Nation has much to be proud of as we celebrate our student-athletes' recent achievements – Men's Golf and Women's Tennis brought home Sun Belt Conference Championship trophies and our Rifle Team shot a school-record to take runner-up at the 2021 SoCon Rifle Championship! Also, our All-Girl Cheerleading squad won their sixth national championship and our competitive Clay Target team won the Division 4 Championship, during their first-ever team competition, at the 2021 Association of College Unions International Collegiate Clay Targets Championships. Congratulations to our students, our coaches, and our support staff!

I want to also applaud the closed POD vaccination team – students, faculty, and staff – who have dedicated their time, in addition to their regular schedules, to ensuring our university community has ample access to COVID-19 vaccines. To date, we have put almost 7,000 shots in arms, a critical component to our future ability to be fully open this fall. We will continue to provide vaccination opportunities throughout the summer and into the fall semester and will communicate those various opportunities through the weekly “5 Things” email.

In adherence to recent changes to public health guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Georgia Department of Public Health, and an updated executive order from the Office of the Governor, we are assessing current protocols in preparation to be fully open and engaged with our students and communities in a face-to-face format this fall. Following these changes to public health guidelines, an [announcement](#) went out Monday noting several changes to our Spring commencement ceremonies. As always, we will continue to adhere to public health and safety guidelines and will actively communicate changes with you as we approach the fall semester.

Please be on the lookout for an email next week detailing our finalized FY 2022 budget decisions. As you remember, this annual process began in August and included opportunities for each level of the institution to engage, informing our final prioritization decisions. This process, in addition to the results gathered from our employee engagement survey, reinforced the importance of investing in our people. As such, you will see that we will be investing nearly \$800,000 in equity salary increases for our faculty and staff and providing strategic investments in replacement/growth funding for 10 key positions (5 faculty and 5 staff). The budget email next week will provide more detail regarding notification of eligibility for equity increases.

I am proud to share with you that the Board of Regents recently [announced](#) that there will be no tuition and mandatory fee increases for the 2021-2022 academic year. As we look ahead to summer and fall, enrollment continues to project growth on all of our campuses. Each unit across this institution plays an important role in student recruitment, and your efforts have been critical to the growth we saw this past year and to our projected growth for upcoming semesters.

Our first Employee Engagement Survey garnered 77% participation from our faculty and staff! This survey is part of our journey of assessment, growth and improvement at Georgia Southern. The roll-out process is underway within our divisions, and action plans – developed at the departmental, divisional, and institutional levels – will further our efforts to grow ourselves to grow others.

It has been certainly an academic year unlike any other, with unique challenges and triumphs alike, but the through-line has been your steadfast dedication to our students and your care for one another. It's embedded in our values and our culture... it's why students continue to choose Georgia Southern, it's why our alumni are so passionate about Eagle

Nation, and it's why we continue to achieve milestones of success, together. It all starts with our people!

Sincerely,
Kyle

Georgia Southern University
Statesboro • Savannah • Hinesville

PEOPLE...PURPOSE...ACTION:
Growing ourselves to grow others

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