

Georgia Southern University

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### Message from the President

Georgia Southern University

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# Dear Colleagues,

July 6, 2021

I hope everyone had a wonderful July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend celebrating with family and friends!

July marks the last full month of our summer terms and preparation of our upcoming fall semester, and it also marks the beginning of the new fiscal year. For me, it marks the beginning of my 9<sup>th</sup> year as a President in the University System of Georgia! I am so grateful to be here, at Georgia Southern, and to be part of the Georgia Southern family...to be part of these extraordinary communities in Southeast Georgia! And, I'm excited to welcome all of my colleagues and students back to campus!

As we gear up for Fall, we continue our commitment, progress, and preparation to be fully open. We will continue to assess and communicate safety protocols and guidance from the Georgia Department of Public Health, the Governor's office, and the University System Office.

Enrollment projections continue to look good...summer enrollment was up over last summer and this fall we expect to welcome a freshman class well above 5,000 students and overall modest growth at all campus sites, propelling us above 27,000 total students!

This month is also when we assess performance of our stated goals (KPIs) from last fiscal year and define goals for FY 2022. In spite of all of our challenges this past year, we have achieved record indicators: 4- and 6-year graduation rates, record freshman to sophomore retention, record fundraising, and record faculty-sponsored research awards. I encourage you to visit our Performance Excellence landing page to view the FY 2021 results on our balanced scorecards and review the 90-day actions that directed these outcomes (<https://president.georgiasouthern.edu/performance-excellence/>). The FY 2022 scorecards with stated goals will be completed the end of this month and will direct our actions this upcoming year. We are committed to provide this level of accountability and transparency to our internal and external stakeholders.

As a musician myself, the Gretsch collaboration and gift naming of our School of Music - the Fred and Dinah Gretsch School of Music - represents a hallmark event for our

nationally acclaimed music program. A major part of this gift commitment is the opportunity to showcase and exhibit historic Gretsch instruments – telling the story of the Gretsch instruments and impact on music, the family history, the company, and the worldwide network. In partnership with Richard Kessler and the Plant Riverside District, I am proud to announce the installation and presentation of “That Great Gretsch Sound,” an interactive exhibit to open at the new Atlantic building to be completed in early August. More information on this important collaboration and Georgia Southern’s presence in this new downtown Savannah venue will be forthcoming.

Another exciting project highlighting one of our Public Impact Research initiatives, is the Tactical Athlete Certificate Program. Through a collaborative partnership between the Waters College of Health Professions and Ft. Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield, our graduate students in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program work directly with soldiers in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division to educate on injury prevention principles and techniques in order to decrease injury risk and maximize physical performance of our soldiers, with the overarching goal of force readiness. Our students receive unparalleled experiential learning opportunities, and soldier-athletes not only gain injury prevention education, but also receive program certification upon completion to train other soldiers in the field on these principles in a “train the trainer” format. I will keep you updated as we continue to engage with the U.S. Army and our regional military installations in support of the military’s holistic health and fitness goals.

Finally, please place on your calendar the “State of the University” addresses, August 4<sup>th</sup> (Armstrong) and 5<sup>th</sup> (Statesboro), both in-person at 10 a.m. Further information will be sent out in the coming weeks.

We have persevered, succeeded, and now we are ready to soar to new heights! I want you to know how much I appreciate your commitment to our mission and values and to helping Georgia Southern grow and improve!

Sincerely,  
Kyle

**Georgia Southern University**  
Statesboro • Savannah • Hinesville

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

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