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# Cagle to address Georgia Southern's 2007 graduates

*APRIL 26, 2007*

Georgia's 11th Lt. Governor, Casey Cagle, will address 2,344 degree candidates at Georgia Southern University's spring 2007 commencement Saturday, May 5, beginning at 9 a.m. in Paulson Stadium. The candidates include 1,855 undergraduates and 489 graduate students.

Cagle made history by becoming the first Republican ever elected to the state's second highest office. He was born in Hall County and attended both Gainesville College and Georgia Southern University.

In 1994, at the age of 28, he was elected to the Georgia State Senate. He served prominent roles under the Gold Dome, including chairman of the Finance Committee. Cagle spent 12 years as a staunch supporter of lowering taxes and protecting private property rights, and is a passionate advocate for protecting Georgia's families. He serves as Vice Chair of the One Georgia Authority, Vice Chair of the Georgia State Finance and Investment Commission, and on the Executive Committee of the Republican Lt. Governor's Association.

Again this year, Georgia Southern's student radio station, WVGS-FM 91.9 "The Buzz" will serve as the voice of commencement. In addition to airing stories about graduates, "The Buzz" will provide ongoing traffic and parking information in the hours before and after the ceremony. The commencement will also be Webcast on [www.georgiasouthern.edu](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu), the University's Web site.

"As families come to celebrate with their graduates, traffic and parking near the University is a challenge on commencement day," said Georgia Southern Registrar Michael Deal, who oversees the day's festivities. "We encourage everyone attending commencement to be on campus by 8 a.m., to park in the lots across campus, and to use the University's shuttle bus to move from the parking lots to Paulson Stadium. WVGS will be broadcasting updates on traffic and parking to help people get where they need to go."

Information about attending commencement, including campus maps and a rain plan is at <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/registrar/CommBrochure/commbrochure200701.pdf>.

In the event of rain, the ceremonies will take place in Hanner Field House at 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m., and 6 p.m.

Additional information about commencement is available on the University Spotlight at [www.georgiasouthern.edu](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu).

# Georgia Southern marketing students experience their first charrette

*APRIL 26, 2007*

In a university setting, students are often asked to step outside their comfort zone and try something new. This spring, six marketing students in Georgia Southern University's College of Business Administration traveled to Toronto for the first competitive charrette sponsored by the American College Retailing Association. They returned with experience, self-confidence, an increased respect for teamwork and representatives on the first place and second place teams.

"Because this was the startup year for the charrette, we had only a vague idea of what would be expected of us," said Ashley Ferguson, a marketing student from Savannah, Ga. "All we really knew was that we would be applying the skills we had already learned. Kathleen Gruben, the professor who went with us, told us we would be given a strategic problem related to retail and a short time to accomplish the solution."

The group arrived in Toronto on a Wednesday afternoon and assembled into six teams, did teambuilding exercises, and met to discuss their assignment: design a 900-square foot retail store for the Toronto International Film Festival Group within a larger building named Festival Center. Design the store from the ground up, developing a concept, a business plan, a financial plan, and a sales plan.

At first, the teams were overwhelmed by the assignment. But as they talked with teammates and sorted out their skills and abilities, each saw that the assignment was doable, in spite of the "Apprentice"-type pressure.

"We learned more about marketing from our team members and team interaction than from the assignment," said Jennie Salerno of Newnan, Ga., a research assistant in the Center for Retail Studies. "Everyone had their expertise. Ryerson, the university that hosted this year's charette, had strong design skills and used video and 3-D illustration. Faculty and students agreed that Georgia Southern students had the best presentation skills. We each learned so much from our difference in perspectives."

"My group focused more on fashion and less on the analytical parts of the project," explained Ashley Murray of Atlanta, a fashion merchandising major with a minor in marketing. "The six Georgia Southern students roomed with students from other schools, so we had a lot of diverse

interaction. For the Ryerson students, it was their hometown, so it was hard socially for them to be separate from their friends and families, and to focus on the project.”

Because the teams were made up of students from a variety of schools, there were inevitable personality conflicts, but nothing that interfered with the charrette.

‘As a team, we were able to focus on our end goal,” said Chris Wilson. ‘We were there for a short period of time, and we were not going to let our differences impact our presentation and our chance to be the first place team. We learned to use other people’s strengths with ours.”

‘During the charrette the teams were able to meet with experts and industry executives to get advice about their projects,” said Gruben. ‘The advice was only as good as the questions the students asked, and sometimes they were disconcerted to find they got conflicting answers.”

Murray and Ferguson first learned about the charrette at a meeting of the student chapter of the Georgia Retail Association at Georgia Southern, while Christopher Wilson and Tianna Ross of Toccoa found out from classroom professors. Human resources Major Brittany Dixon went, too, and research assistant Jenni Salerno went at the urging of Gruben, who is not only her boss, but also associate professor of marketing and director of the Center for Retail Studies.

‘Through generous corporate and individual gifts to the Center for Retail Studies, we were able to provide scholarships that covered the cost of travel and registration for these students,” explained Gruben. ‘Participation was competitive. Twelve students applied to go, but through interviews and discussion the group was narrowed to six.”

In Toronto, the teams worked Thursday afternoon and Friday on their projects, then made presentations to the executives and faculty on Saturday. At the Saturday evening awards ceremony, Ashley Ferguson learned that she was on the first-place team, and Chris Wilson found that he was on the second-place team.

‘All six of the students out-performed what I expected of them,” said Gruben. ‘They were great. They can be proud to put these experiences on their resumes, and they learned a lot about teamwork through their first charrette.” Gruben was so impressed with the learning opportunity at this year’s that she offered to host next year’s charrette in Savannah March 25-30, 2008.

‘Next year we will have the benefit of learning from this years’ experience, so we should be able to hold a tremendous event,” said Gruben. ‘I’m already looking forward to it!”

More information about the American College Retail Association charrette is available at <http://acraretail.org/>.