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Coca-Cola Foundation Scholars from China welcomed at Georgia Southern

AUGUST 27, 2007

As the fall 2007 semester began, Georgia Southern University welcomed five exchange students and two exchange faculty members from Central China Normal University (also known as Huazhong University) in Wuhan, China. Their visit is supported by the Coca-Cola Foundation, which recently presented a \$200,000 grant to implement an educational exchange between Central China Normal and Georgia Southern.

The students, all young women, are adapting well to higher education in the United States, partly because they both understand and speak English. They will be on the Statesboro campus for two semesters, with side trips to American cities during their school breaks.

'We came here to get more international experience,' said Yang Liujing, an English major who has adopted the American name of Vivian. 'Georgia Southern is a beautiful place. We find the people here nice and helpful.' Liujing's home is in central China's Hubei province, not far from the Three Gorges Dam, a Chinese hydroelectric dam spanning the Yangtze River.

'While these students from China are here, they will have an opportunity to get involved on the Georgia Southern campus through student activities, volunteer services, intramurals, the International Club, and through our weekly International Conversation Hour,' said Jeffrey Palis, Georgia Southern's coordinator of student exchange programs. 'There is more to coming on an exchange than just classes. There's also an exchange of friendships and ideas.'

The five have chosen to live together for easier cooking and transportation purposes, but they are exploring a variety of academic coursework. In addition to English language classes, they are taking American literature, social psychology, public speaking, composition, anthropology, and social dance for their physical education credit.

'I am expecting a totally new literature,' said Li Gaoqing, who is majoring in Chinese language and literature. Gaoqing, who has adopted the American name of Sophia, is from Shandong province, a coastal province in Eastern China.

'We live together, but we are meeting American students in class,' said Yi Huang, a psychology major from Fujian province, in southeast China. 'The other students introduce themselves to us, and in one class, the teacher asked us to introduce ourselves to each other.' When their new American friends discovered that the group prepares Chinese food, some have even managed to get a supper invitation.

'The schedule of classes is different here,'" said Vivian, and her fellow students agreed. 'In China we take 36 credits in a semester, and here we take 12. The scoring system is different. In China, the final exam is the most important part of a class, but here, all parts of class are important. There are papers and quizzes all semester long. In China, classes are easier in the beginning, harder at the end.'

Palis pointed out that the exchange goes two ways, and right now five Georgia Southern students are studying at Central China Normal.

'To prepare students who are interested in this exchange, Georgia Southern is offering Chinese language classes, taught by, Xiaojie Li, one of the exchange faculty members,'" said Palis. 'The introductory Chinese class is full and has a waiting list. The other exchange faculty member, Hong Yang, is conducting research under the guidance of Martha Pennington, chair of Georgia Southern's Writing and Linguistics program.

Palis also noted that the Chinese students and faculty visiting here will take part in this year's Study Abroad Fair on Tuesday, Sept. 25 in the Russell Union Building.

Student leadership conference Sept. 15

AUGUST 27, 2007

Georgia Southern University's Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement will host the 'Leadership Prime Time: What's Your Focus Leadership Conference' Saturday, Sept. 15, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Russell Union. Check-in begins at 8 a.m. outside the Russell Union Theater.

'The student planning committee came up with this year's theme. They want to help students find their focus whether it be a specific organization, improving their leadership skills or meeting other students to network and build collaboration,'" said Jodi Middleton, leadership coordinator in the Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement.

The conference is geared to students of all levels who are interested in leadership. Participants may choose from sessions on balancing life and leadership, marketing leadership skills, effective communication for conflict resolution, teambuilding, and more.

'The sessions are designed around the social change model for leadership development. They will focus on the students as individual leaders and group leadership,'" Middleton added. 'Students will

learn what they can do and their potential to change society, whether that society is Georgia Southern, their hometown, the world or wherever they go.”

The keynote speaker is Dan Czech, associate professor, graduate program director and sport psychology coordinator in the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Georgia Southern. “Dr. Czech will speak about not having fear when it comes to achieving success,” Middleton said.

Registration fees are \$10 for Georgia Southern students and \$20 for non-Georgia Southern students. The cost includes a continental breakfast, lunch and the day of training sessions. To register, visit <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/leadership/savethedate.php>.

For more information on the conference, contact the Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement at 912-871-1435.

Leadership Workshop Series underway

AUGUST 27, 2007

Georgia Southern University’s Office of Student Leadership is offering 12 leadership workshops throughout the fall semester. The workshops are designed for student organization officers and students who would like to hold a leadership position within an organization.

“This is a great way for student organizations to train their members who have leadership potential. It is way for them to gain additional training and experience,” said Jodi Middleton, leadership coordinator in the Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement.

All workshops are held in Russell Union Room 2044 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Presenters include members of the faculty and staff at Georgia Southern.

“We also have Charlie Wilson, CFO for Bulloch County Schools, coming to discuss budgeting,” Middleton said. Following is a list of workshops and dates:

- Tuesday, Sept. 4 – Training New Members
- Monday, Sept. 10 – The E.L. Experiment (Ethical Leadership)
- Tuesday, Sept. 18 – Leadership Listening: The Key to Communication During Conflict
- Monday, Sept. 24 – Building and Maintaining Interpersonal Relations
- Tuesday, Oct. 2 – Marketing Your Leadership Skills
- Monday, Oct. 8 – Group Dynamics: Making the Most of Differences
- Tuesday, Oct. 16 – What’s Your Price? (Values)

- Monday, Oct. 22 – Budgeting for You and Your Organization
- Tuesday, Oct. 30 – Motivating Your Members
- Monday, Nov. 5 – Working for Leadership Experience
- Tuesday, Nov. 13 – Leadership and Service.

There are no costs to attend any of the sessions. Students who attend nine workshops over the 2007-08 school year will receive a certificate from the Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement stating they were trained through the leadership workshop series.

“What I think is great about the workshop series is that students can use it as a series of building blocks of skills. They can come to a lot of them, or for students who have a lot going on, they can go to one or two,” said Kellie Pickett, assistant director of student leadership and civic engagement. “Students can make this work for whatever purpose they’re looking for.”

For more information on the series, contact the Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement at 912-871-1435.