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## Message from the President

Georgia Southern University

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February 1, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

I hope that you are as excited as I am about the opportunities on the horizon for Georgia Southern as we continue to grow ourselves to grow others!

The spring semester is well underway with over 4% increase in enrollment over last spring. This promising outlook continues into the summer, where enrollment numbers are tracking over 8% projected growth. As we look ahead to the Fall 2024 semester, I am thrilled to share that we have both record freshman applications and admitted students to date, a testament to the hard work and dedication of our faculty and staff to our students, the exciting developments in Southeast Georgia, and the burgeoning reputation of Georgia Southern. The commendable efforts of our enrollment management, marketing and communications, and student success teams have played a crucial role in achieving these milestones.

These efforts include the continued development of our Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP), most recently with presentations of our student satisfaction survey results. Nearly 2,000 of our students completed the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) during the Fall 2023 semester—the survey aimed to understand our students’ perceptions and satisfaction across all aspects of the student experience. The findings provided us with what matters most to our students, areas of strength, and challenges. According to the SSI results, 59% of students indicated they are satisfied or very satisfied with their GS experience, outperforming the national average of 53%. Among our top strengths, students identified faculty’s knowledge in their field, quick response by security staff in emergency situations, and their ability to experience intellectual growth at GS. This feedback is a testament to the quality of our faculty and staff, and to the work that each of you do every day to help our students grow and succeed. Regarding areas for improvement, students indicated challenges with academic advising, WiFi access, and ease of class

availability and registration. To address these challenges, the Office of Student Experience will be working with deans, department leaders, and our SEP action teams to develop strategies that help us address the challenge areas and continue to meet students' needs proactively.

On February 6, Carnegie will return to campus to unveil the results of your feedback from our True Blue Brand Week workshops last September where more than 700 of you—our faculty, staff and students—helped us identify several ways to describe Georgia Southern on its current average day and who Georgia Southern University is at its best (among a number of other intriguing data points about who we said Georgia Southern is). We will also learn who the unbiased market says we are, who our competitors say we are, and where Georgia Southern fits into it all. See more information [here](#).

As we gear up for our fourth Employee Engagement Survey, scheduled for launch on March 1-18, we will share communications and host information sessions throughout February. We have made improvements to the survey and, most importantly, the rollout process and action plan development that we believe will further the impact of this continuous improvement initiative. Remember, the survey provides all employees an opportunity to share feedback that will help supervisors and Georgia Southern leadership ensure that our university fosters a workplace environment where employees feel engaged and valued. Thank you in advance for your continued commitment to student success, performance excellence, developing a culture of high performance and evidence-based leadership.

Legislative session is now in full swing as we are incredibly grateful for the Governor's amended FY2024 and FY2025 budget recommendations. Within our annual budget presentations to Faculty Senate and Staff Council, we shared the Governor's state budget recommendations pertaining to Georgia Southern. We will keep everyone posted as the session continues and information becomes available.

Continuing with the tradition of highlighting outstanding achievements within our university community, I am thrilled to showcase Dr. Howard Keeley, Director of the Center for Irish Research and Teaching (CIRT). [Dr. Keeley recently received the 2023 Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad from the Government of Ireland](#). This award is the highest honor the country of Ireland can give to a person who is a non-resident acknowledging his 20 years of building a program, research center, and now an instruction site in Wexford, Ireland. His continued commitment and legacy truly exemplify our vision statement of People. Purpose. Action: Growing Ourselves to Grow Others!

Sincerely,

Kyle

*People. Purpose. Action: Growing Ourselves to Grow Others!*

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