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Message from the President

Georgia Southern University

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April 2, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

We have raced into April and the last weeks of the semester! With events, celebrations, performances, spring athletic games, awards ceremonies, and ultimately commencement, this is indeed the busiest and most fulfilling time of the year. April is also an anniversary month for me...can you believe it, April 1 marks the completion of my fifth year as president of Georgia Southern. I am so incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to collaborate with you—our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community. I am incredibly proud of what we've accomplished together, how we have navigated challenging times, and as we begin our sixth year together, I couldn't be more excited about our future.

This week we shared the results of our fourth Employee Engagement Survey. In case you missed the Virtual Town Hall on April 1, the presentation is recorded and posted on the [Employee Engagement Survey website](#). I want to thank our faculty and staff for their engagement as we reached a participation rate of more than 67%. In addition, we saw improvement in almost all areas of the survey with an overall mean of 3.87 out of 5 (up from 3.78 the previous year and the highest cumulative score in the survey's history). In mid-April, divisional and unit reports will be provided as we begin our roll out and action plan updates and development. In addition, comments will be posted in the MyGS Portal. Remember, these results and the developed action plans will serve us for the next two years, providing us with comprehensive data and information to grow ourselves to grow others.

The Georgia General Assembly closed out the 2024 legislative session on March 28. Good news all around, as the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) salary increase of 4%, not to exceed \$3,000 per eligible employee, was funded for July 1, 2024 implementation. The \$66 million in formula funds have been restored along with

incremental formula funding for enrollment growth (\$2.2M), maintenance and operations (\$658,000), and health benefits increase of \$22.4 million as requested. In addition, we received \$5 million funding for the Parker College of Business renovation/addition project. Over the next few weeks, the Board of Regents will provide our specific institutional budget information and, as always, we will provide transparent budget reporting to all campus constituents. We continue to be grateful for the support of Governor Kemp, the State Legislature (with a special thanks to our local delegation), and the Board of Regents.

Last week, we cut the ribbon on our new Institute for Water and Health (IWH) labs and announced federal funding of \$2.04 million for [IWH's Safe Water Together](#) initiative. Thanks to the leadership of Congressman Buddy Carter, and with the support of Senators Ossoff and Warnock, this funding will allow Georgia Southern to further our research and our impact on the communities we serve.

With the success of these important research initiatives, I am excited to welcome [Dr. David Weindorf](#) as our new Vice President for Research and Economic Development. Dr. Weindorf officially began at Georgia Southern yesterday, and we look forward to his leadership in further developing our institutional infrastructure to support our growing research enterprise and driving us toward research excellence as we "SOAR to R1" and achieve our stated goal of reaching Carnegie Research 1 eligibility by 2028.

We have so much to be grateful for at Georgia Southern University...we are in motion, on the rise, and serving a growing region. This month, we celebrate and honor the accomplishments and support of our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community. It is this collective commitment to excellence that ignites transformational growth and propels our legacy into the future!

Sincerely,

Kyle

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

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Growing ourselves to grow others