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Georgia Southern computer science professor judges robotics competition

JANUARY 19, 2007

Earlier this month, Georgia Southern University's Robert Cook served as one of the judges for the Coastal Kids' robotics competition in Savannah. The contest followed almost a year of planning and preparation for teams of middle school students from southeastern Georgia public, private or home schools.

'The students were excited to compete," said Cook, Yamacraw professor of computer science in the College of Information Technology. 'It was wonderful to see them demonstrate what they've learned in preparing for the contest."

The Savannah competition is a qualifying event for the FIRST Lego League (FLL) international competition, said Cook. The two winning teams from Savannah advanced to the state competition being held Jan. 20 in Atlanta.

Cook has used LEGO robotics kits as a teaching tool for many years. He said he hopes next year's contest includes teams from Bulloch and other surrounding counties.

'Middle school teachers interested in competing next year should start planning now," Cook said.

'The kits used in the competition cost around \$600, but they are great resources that provide many activities to enhance science and math curricula. In addition, as students prepare for the contest they learn how to work as teams to come up with creative solutions to problems."

Cook said the kits change each year to reflect the theme of the contest; the FLL unveils its new competition challenge in September. This year's contest focused on nanotechnology matter that is thousands of times smaller than human hair.

'I would be happy to talk with any teacher public, private or home school about how to obtain the LEGO robotics kit and how to get involved with the competitions," said Cook. 'Technology impacts virtually every industry. It is vitally important for students to have an understanding of science and math; the robotics kits are a great way to get kids excited about these subjects."

To contact Cook, e-mail bobcook@georgiasouthern.edu or call 912-681-0892.

Capitol Steps will bring political humor to Performing Arts Center on Feb. 10

JANUARY 19, 2007

The folks who put the 'mock' in democracy are coming to the Performing Arts Center (PAC) at Georgia Southern University.

The Capitol Steps will bring their hilarious combination of music and political satire to the PAC on Saturday, Feb. 10, at 7:30 p.m.

Famous for song parodies taken straight from today's headlines, the group has recorded 26 albums and been featured on ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC and National Public Radio (NPR).

Tickets for the Capitol Steps are \$30 plus tax per person for the general public. Georgia Southern faculty, staff and students will receive a 10 percent discount. Groups of 15 or more people from outside the University community are also eligible for a 10 percent discount.

In addition, if any tickets are available 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the performance, any Georgia Southern student with a valid University I.D. can purchase one ticket for \$10 plus tax.

The Capitol Steps were born in December of 1981, when three staffers for U.S. Sen. Charles Percy (R-Ill.) were planning entertainment for a Christmas party. According to legend, they wanted to stage a nativity play, but being in Washington, D.C., they were unable to find three wise men or a virgin.

Undaunted, the staffers decided to dig into the news of the day and create song parodies and skits. Their special brand of satirical humor quickly became the talk of the nation's capital and proved to be as popular in mainstream America as it was on Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Capitol Steps eventually grew to include performers who served in a total of 18 Congressional offices and compiled more than 60 years of House and Senate staff experience.

Over the past 25 years, the Capitol Steps have performed for five Presidents and been featured on 'Entertainment Tonight,' 'Good Morning America,' 'Nightline,' 'The Today Show,' and '20/20.' In addition, the group has made dozens of appearances on the NPR program 'All Things Considered.'

The Capitol Steps even have their own quarterly NPR special, 'Politics Takes a Holiday,' which is recorded live in Washington and broadcast on April Fool's Day, the Fourth of July, Halloween and New Year's Eve.

The group's latest album, 'I'm So Indicted,' was released in July 2006.

The PAC is located on the Georgia Southern campus at the corner of Chandler Road and Plant Drive. The box office is open every Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. The box office is also open one hour prior to the start of each performance.

To purchase tickets or obtain additional information, call (912) 486-7999 or toll free (866) PAC-ARTS, or visit the PAC Web site at <http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/pac> .

Destination: China

JANUARY 19, 2007

Students and faculty interested in pursuing educational opportunities in China are invited to attend a program on Wednesday, Jan. 31, at 6 p.m. in Forest Drive Building Room 1218.

The student component of the program will provide an overview of

- study abroad opportunities;
- Georgia Southern University study abroad scholarships and financial aid; and
- national scholarships such as the Gilman International Scholarship, Freeman-ASIA Award and U.S. Student Fulbright Grant.

The faculty component will highlight funding sources for teaching and research projects.

This gathering will be a unique opportunity for students and faculty to meet members of the Georgia Southern University community who are visiting from China:

- Professor Meng Deng, visiting Fulbright Scholar in the College of Education;
- Yan Liu, Instructor of Chinese in the Department of Foreign Languages; and
- Gaohua Gui, graduate student in the College of Education.

The program is sponsored by the Center for International Studies and the University Honors Program. For additional information, please contact Jeff Palis, coordinator of Study Abroad and Exchange Programs, at 871-1747 or jpalis@georgiasouthern.edu, or Bob Frigo, assistant director of the University Honors Program, at 486-7926 or bfrigo@georgiasouthern.edu.

S.O.U.L. brings international music to Georgia Southern Feb. 22

JANUARY 19, 2007

The Center for International Studies at Georgia Southern University will present Singers of United Lands (S.O.U.L.), four young professional vocalists from Israel, Japan, Mexico, and Uganda, on Thursday, Feb. 22, at the Assembly Hall of the Nessmith-Lane Building. The group will perform at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and the performances are free and open to the public.

'S.O.U.L. works as a team to develop international and cultural relationships by performing music from around the world," said Angie Threatte, administrative specialist in the Center for International Studies. 'They offer stories, photos, and music that will give us a sense of their unique ethnic and cultural heritage."

This event is also sponsored by the Multicultural Student Center, CLASS, and CLEC. Find information about S.O.U.L at <http://www.singersofunitedlands.org/Intro1.htm>. For questions about the event, call 912-681-0332 or send an e-mail to athreatte@georgiasouthern.edu.