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# Georgia Southern's new Advanced Processing Research Network launched with \$1 million gift from Crider, Inc.

March 30, 2022

Georgia Southern's Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Computing received a \$1 million gift to develop the Advanced Processing Research Network (APRN) from [Crider, Inc.](#) of Stillmore, Georgia, a global processor of shelf-stable and fully cooked protein products.

Father and son, Billy Crider Jr. and Bill Crider III ('96) made their gift announcement at the Engineering Research Building on the Statesboro Campus surrounded by robots and robotic imaging devices.

As the Criders have seen their business grow through automation technology, the need for talented engineers to program and maintain that technology is growing with it. They believe Georgia Southern holds a local opportunity to find the talent they need.

"We wanted to help develop a program that will produce more of the fantastic engineering talent we've already been getting from Georgia Southern and help the University become a source of engineering talent for the entire Southeast," said Bill Crider III.

"When we saw the quality of the Georgia Southern graduates we were getting, we knew we had to get more from here to better enable us to compete all over the world," added Billy Crider Jr.

The Criders' donation will provide the foundation for APRN graduate and undergraduate scholarships, more faculty support, state-of-the-art equipment and software for the growing economic sector of process automation. The APRN will equip and create an industry-class research facility, housed in the [Engineering and Research Building](#), using the latest technology in imaging, robotics, extended reality/gaming, and IT to solve industry-related problems while managing the underlying information systems.

"This gift will help apply and develop technology to solve problems due to labor shortages, processing inefficiencies and supply chain disruptions, while establishing an experienced high-tech workforce in southeast Georgia," said [Mohammad Davoud, Ph.D., P.E., dean](#) of the Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering and Computing.

Over the next four years, the APRN will build a first-class program through an investment in state-of-the-art technology, graduate research assistants and undergraduate scholarships, involving students and faculty from departments across the college.

Plans for the APRN also include the exchange of ideas between Crider, Inc. and the University regarding processing equipment and operations, student and faculty research at the Crider facility, internships/co-op opportunities and many more joint projects.

“This type of gift is transformational – impacting students, area businesses and our communities,” said Georgia Southern President Kyle Marrero. “This gift will also help solve the engineering talent needs of our region and provide outstanding engineering career opportunities locally.”

“But to me, this is more about Georgia Southern and what they’re doing,” said Bill Crider III. “We just happen to be able to be a part of it in a small way.”

Crider, Inc. is the family-owned market leader in canned chicken as well as a major producer of canned turkey, ham, pork, and beef. Their products are distributed globally as private label goods by companies such as Costco, Walmart and Publix. They serve customers in Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Peru, Chile, Columbia, Mexico and many more.

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