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# Georgia Southern University confers 1,700 graduate and undergraduate degrees during Fall 2016 Commencement

December 13, 2016



Held for the first time at Allen E. Paulson Stadium, the 25th annual Georgia Southern Fall 2016 Commencement ceremony represented a momentous day as approximately 1,700 of Georgia's best and brightest undergraduate and graduate students received degrees from the University's eight colleges.

Approximately 400 graduate degrees were conferred, while around 1,300 undergraduate students received degrees. University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D., congratulated students and recognized their achievements.

"Graduates, I extend to you my personal congratulations on your academic success," said Hebert. "Your University salutes you on your success and sends you off soaring on wings of eagles."

Outstanding Georgia Southern alumnus Mike Royal served as the guest speaker for this year's ceremony. Royal is the chairman of the Georgia State Board of Education, and has served on this board since 2012, when he was first appointed by Gov. Nathan Deal. He also serves on the Board of Advisors to the University's College of Education, and is the founder of Partners Risk Services – a fast-growing risk management and insurance firm with offices in Georgia and Colorado.

Royal encouraged the graduates to keep an optimistic mindset for their future and the choices they make in life.

"Life is full of choices and decisions, and ultimately, your life will become a sum of those choices and decisions you make," Royal said. "The bad ones, learn from them, and the good ones, learn from them and replicate them."

"One of the biggest choices you have ahead of you right now is what to do next," Royal continued. "And just like many of you here today, I was not sure what my dream job was, and if that's you right now, if you're not sure what your big 'why' is in life, that's fine. Many successful people take years or even decades to find that."

He also reminded graduates that life is full of uncertainty, and not to let that, or fear, get in the way of accomplishing their goals.

"You'll also find the challenges in your life there is uncertainty, but uncertainty is an ingredient for opportunity, however uncertainty is also very main ingredient of fear," he said. "Do not let that be."

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