ATHLETES
PLAYERS SPEAK OUT ABOUT THE MERGE

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MERGER:
What we know and what’s next
INKWELL EDITORIAL BOARD

The Georgia Board of Regents approved the merger between Georgia Southern University and Armstrong State University Wednesday, Jan. 11. Students were notified earlier this week on Jan. 17 of a website created by the University System of Georgia that aims to answer questions and address concerns regarding the impending merge.

According to the consolidation website, the merge process will take place over approximately 18 months, completing in the fall semester of 2018. But that date could change depending on the needs of the future institution.

Once the merger is complete, Armstrong will assume Georgia Southern’s title, their President, Dr. Jaimie Hebert, as well as bring the total student population to approximately 27,000 — roughly 20,000 more students than Armstrong’s current student body.

The Board of Regents believes the schools ultimately serve many of the same students. Georgia Southern is already the number one transfer choice for Armstrong students and both institutions are among top destinations for students seeking public higher education from Bryan, Chatham, Effingham and Liberty counties.

Combining the institutions also allows for a broader range of degree programs, such as engineering and health care.

Although the Board of Regents promises growth for the new combined institution, the consolidation brings questions and many unanswered questions for students and faculty.

Athletics:

Several student-athletes told The Inkwell that they have asked for their transfer release and permission to contact, enabling them to begin their search for a new university. Others, however, are still hopeful that separate athletics between the consolidating schools will be implemented.

Sophomore Armstrong soccer player Casey Coach participated in both protests and lead the making of the anti-merge video.

“I came to Armstrong because of the small classroom size and to be able to connect with people on a personal level,” Coach said. “This is also seen in the athletic department. All of the coaches, staff, athletic trainers and directors know the athletes and support all of us. These people here only want the best for us and it’s completely unfair to watch it take away.”

The Frequently Asked Questions section of the consolidation website addresses that athletics is an aspect of the consolidation that has to be decided upon early in the process and that scholarships will be honored throughout the consolidation process.

“I think the news affected our team because everybody’s mind was focused on what’s going to happen with us,” junior liberal studies major and student athlete KJ James said. “We are still concerned because they haven’t really told us exactly when everything is going to take place as far as giving us another year or stopping athletics as a whole after this season.”

Faculty:

The impact on Armstrong’s roughly 260 faculty members and 350 staff members is also unclear at this time. USG officials released a that a decrease in the number of positions will likely occur. Certain administrative functions will be combined, resulting in the need for fewer positions over time.

Next steps:

An institutional implementation committee will be formed, which will include representatives of faculty, staff and students. It is expected that majority of decisions will be made at the institutional level subject to final approval by the Board.

University System of Georgia staff will provide overall leadership to the implementation effort, but the campus committee will be identifying and recommending the rest of questions for key issues.

A Town Hall meeting will be held at Armstrong Thursday, Jan. 19, at 4:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Auditorium in an effort to answer questions and concerns regarding the GSU/ASU merge. Parking will include Armstrong State University President Linda Bleicken, Georgia Southern President Jaimie Hebert, University System of Georgia Vice Chancellor for Organizational Effectiveness and University System of Georgia Executive Vice Chancellor for Strategy and Fiscal Affairs, Shelley Nickel.

For those who cannot attend, the meeting will be livestreamed online at consolidation.georgiasouthern.edu. Students, faculty, alumni and community members are all welcome and encouraged to attend.

The new Student Success Center will provide more classroom and study space.

Armstrong State University’s news source since 1935

MERGE: What we know and what’s next

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I think it makes sense as to why they went through with it as far as the money part, but for the athletics it sucks. I would say that it puts the most pressure on freshman and sophomores since they have to transfer if they want to keep playing, which is what I plan on doing. It is a little stressful that most pro-
grams have already done their recruiting for next year, but I am looking at it as an oppor-
tunity. Our team was already close before this happened but I think it actually brought everybody closer since we aren't sure if this will be our last season together or not.

Spencer Ball Freshman
Men’s Golf

Just am upset that all this is happening and we didn't even have a say. I feel so bad for Coach Eric and Coach Kayley who have spent so much time and put so much work into this program to have it just taken from them and then all the younger girls have to leave if they want to continue a soccer career. I hate how this decision was made by a few people whom it's not even affecting, and the people who's lives are being changed by it don't even have a voice in the matter.

Randi Schroeder Junior
Women’s Soccer

After finding out about the merge, I was initially worried about my teammates, other athletes, and their fu-
tures. As a Student-athlete I couldn't imagine my life without sports, and the way this merge would dissolve Armstrong Athletics is abso-
lutely crushing. This merge, however, is so much more than just about the athletics. The futures of staff and cur-
rent students hang in the balance. From whether that staff member will have a job in a year or if that student's major could be taken away, all hang

up in the air. Being active in protesting the merge was definitely a priority for me. I was initially contacted by Casey Couch about a merge opposition video, and ev-
everything took off from there. Athletes, students and alumni were all contacted about the video, and that we were showing our opposition of the merge on campus. I edited and filmed the video as well as attended the protests on campus. So regardless of the outcome of the merge, no one can say Armstrong didn't go without a struggle.

Savanna Gladez Senior
Women’s Softball

As an athlete, I think that the merge is quite unfortu-
ate. For the athletic depart-
ment to have just reinstated Women’s Cross Country so it can be taken away so quickly is incredibly heartbreaking. We barely got a chance to prove ourselves and develop our program. I don’t want to transfer but I also want to play sport more than anything and this giving me no choice but to consider trans-
ferring due to the cut in ath-
letics. I fell in love with Arm-
strong being stripped of their chance is scary to anyone.

Audrey McCormick Freshman
Women’s Cross Country

Personally, this merge is not having a dramatic effect on me at this specific point in time, as I am graduating in May, however, I will never be able to come home to my Pirates ever again. Over the last four years I have made huge strides educationally and personally, been given so many incredible opportu-
nities and I will be so hurt if this merge decides to ignore me.

Many of my fellow Ath-
letes are also struggling with this merger is giving me no

personal satisfaction far more students and Savannah residents than the Board of Regents are choosing to accept. Many student

athletes and administrators have yet to be given infor-
mation regarding our futures here at Armstrong. We are having to plan to lose our jobs, many of my fellow ath-
letes are also struggling with the lack of ability to know

what is happening and we didn’t necessarily hear good news, every single per-
son on the team showed and continue to show their loyalty to Armstrong College College.

As a student-athlete, I care about this and I could feel the disappointment settle through the house. Although we didn’t necessarily hear

good news, every single per-

son on the team showed and continue to show their loyalty to Armstrong.

I feel this merge is ex-
tremely unfortunate. It is im-
 pacting far more students and

beginning much more stress

than it should be for most. This ends my

career at Armstrong, it is scary to anyone.

I am not a spring athlete. I

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Fellow students,

As The Inkwell Editorial Board, we know the community that 20,500 strong Armstrong would take over Georgia Southern University's 20,500 students. Armstrong will take over a Southern's 20,500 strong. Armstrong will also take over Southern's name in marriage, effectively creating the fourth largest university in Georgia. But the name change is not the only source of frustration for those here in Savannah. As The Inkwell has tirelessly talked with the Armstrong community, we have heard many of the same valid concerns the main one being the suddenness of this decision. Although it is now clear that this consolidation has been in the works for quite some time, the news broke with no time or opportunity for conversation. The vote occurred on Jan. 11, the university that has already been made without student input. Why would either university's president or the board of regents sit here other than to sit back and wait for the crying to die down? GA Southern Eagle pride is too little too late now that the decision has already been made without student input. Why would either university's president or the board of regents sit here other than to sit back and wait for the crying to die down? GA Southern Eagle pride is too little too late now that the decision has already been made without student input. Why would either university's president or the board of regents sit here other than to sit back and wait for the crying to die down?

There's no denying this is a big change for us as students. As you know, our campus will soon join Georgia Southern's 20,500 strong Armstrong. Armstrong will take over Southern's name in marriage, effectively creating the fourth largest university in Georgia. The transition is set to take place over the course of 18 months, after a paper was presented. Two years from now we will meet in Armstrong.
Savannah Stopover announces full lineup

LILA MILLER A&E EDITOR

Savannah Stopover music festival is quickly becoming a city staple. The three-day event runs during Spring Break from March 9-11. Single-day passes are available for $59 (good for March 9-10) and VIP access passes for $149.

This year features headliners Kishi Bashi, Lee Fields & The Expressions, Julien Baker, Lewis Del Mar, and Rude as well as Locals all the way to Australia.

Stopover aims to be accessible to festival-goers at any price point. If you haven’t heard of these bands yet, that’s understandable; it offers an affordable and walkable experience where you’re likely to see a slow of fantastic bands before they break out of the pack.

Construction of the suits made over the course of the last ten years. It also displays an installation of a seven-part Soundsuit, titled “Speak Louder” (2011). The last portion of the exhibit features two Tondos, which are large circular works evocative of the night sky and cosmic matters. Nick Cave lives and works in Chicago. He continues to make art and in the director of the graduate fashion program at the Art Institute of Chicago.

As a Chicago-based artist, Cave explores art and the role of identity within it through his own personal lens as an African-American. He experiments with a variety of work such as sculpting, visual and fine arts, installation, video, sound and performance.

His latest exhibition focuses primarily on his “Soundsuits” series. Cave creates sculptural “suits” called Soundsuits to the scale of his own body comprised of what he describes as “materials that rattle with movement... Like a coat of armor, they embelish the body while protecting the wearer from outside culture.”

The exhibition also features a recently-commissioned essay by Armstrong’s own Dr. Regina Bradley of the Languages, Literature and Philosophy department. Bradley is an assistant professor of African American Literature and English course. “OurKnees” and the Rise of the Hip-Hop South.

Cave’s perspective as an African-American is portrayed vividly throughout his work. In “Soundsuits,” Cave explores race and identity, particularly in America. His first Soundsuit was a direct reaction to the 1992 beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles. Cave often uses his art to turn pain into a product. His Soundsuits are primarily based on the intentional use of camoflage as a second skin devoid of gender, race and class. In utilizing the idea of anonymity, Cave encourages the viewer to observe the work without prejudice, bias or judgment.

The exhibition features a variety of Soundsuits made over the course of the last ten years. It also displays an installation of a seven-part Soundsuit, titled “Speak Louder” (2011). The last portion of the exhibit features two Tondos, which are large circular works evocative of the night sky and cosmic matters. Nick Cave lives and works in Chicago. He continues to make art and in the director of the graduate fashion program at the Art Institute of Chicago.

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Good things Come in threes: A review of The xx’s third album “I See You”


February: Student Juried Art Exhibition January 30 – February 18 Fine Arts Gallery - Free Admission Reception on February 8 at 12:00pm - Free Art program students shine in this annual competitive exhibition that features awards in various media.

Fine Arts Calendar

The closer of “I See You” reflects on The xx’s members strained relationships with each other both geographically and emotionally. Although at times volatile, the song resulted in a happy reunion between Sim and Croft as the last lyrics reveal, “I’ll take it out on you/ It’s easier than talking it through/ Tell me, see if I stay/ How could I walk the other way?”

Overall, “I See You” is an amazing addition to the ever-growing stack of The xx’s albums and accolades. The xx hasn’t changed in being able to nail down deeper emotions like heartbeat, loss, love and relationships, but this time, you can dance to it.

Calling all Writers and Photographers

The Inkwell wants you. Every Wed. 12:30 p.m. MCC 202

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE INKWELL COMES OUT EVERY THURSDAY?