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Professor Lemon Creates Brooch for Former U.S. Secretary

October 26, 2012

Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright recently visited campus where she was presented with a commemorative, custom Georgia Southern University brooch by Professor Christine Lemon during her speech at Hanner Fieldhouse.

The idea to create a brooch for Albright originated when Heather Jo Harralson, coordinator of Civic Engagement, visited the Clinton Presidential Library and Museum in Little Rock, Arkansas and discovered Albright’s collection on display.

“When I first learned that we would be hosting Madeleine on campus, I immediately remembered that she had an extensive brooch collection. I was fascinated by the collection and even more intrigued by the way Mrs. Albright used them to speak messages. I thought that a brooch unique to Georgia Southern would be an excellent opportunity for us to honor Mrs. Albright during her visit to campus,” says Harralson.

“Read My Pins: The Madeleine Albright Collection” features more than 200 pins, many of which Secretary Albright wore to communicate a message or a mood during her diplomatic tenure. The exhibition examines the collection for its historic significance as well as the expressive power of jewelry and its ability to communicate through a style and language of its own.

On the night Albright spoke at Georgia Southern, she came to campus wearing an eagle brooch, which was then replaced with the pin that was given to her.

Department of Art Professor Christine Lemon made and presented the brooch to Albright. She describes the design below.

The centerpiece is the southern magnolia flower with two asymmetrical and stylized eagle wings on either side. The beautiful, fragrant and stately magnolia flower served as the inspiration for the design. The blue sapphires and yellow citrine gemstone accents are symbolic of Georgia Southern University. The sterling silver brooch combines techniques of engraving, fabrication and shell forming.