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Alumni Spotlight: Ames Barnett, Building a Legacy with Fellow Alumni

September 26, 2016



Successful entrepreneurship as a career during or after college is a possible option that is often overlooked. Georgia Southern alumni, Ames Barnett, is an entrepreneur and business owner of Barnett Southern Corporation and Barnett Southern Logistics, LLC. Barnett Southern Corporation specializes in all aspects of heavy civil construction. Barnett Southern Logistics was formed when Barnett Southern Corporation expanded their existing trucking business. Both businesses are located in Washington, Georgia.

Barnett graduated from Georgia Southern University in 1999 with a B.S in Civil Engineering Technology. He started working as a part-time employee for Barnett Southern in 1996 while he was enrolled at GS. After graduation, he joined as part owner in 2000 and took over as the sole owner in 2009.

Barnett said, "There's no substitute for hard work. If you're committed to success; quitting is not an option. Every day isn't sunny, but remember It takes a little rain to make things grow."

Georgia Southern's Business Innovation Group (BIG) at City Campus works heavily to encourage and support student entrepreneurship. Barnett graduated before BIG was established. Dominique Halaby, director of BIG, congratulates the success of all current and former GS entrepreneurs and celebrates their stories to share and inspire others.

"It is important to teach students that working for someone else is an excellent opportunity to obtain great skills, and while doing so or exclusively students may use our resources by taking advantage of programs bridging the gap between theory and practice," said Halaby.

Being an owner allows Barnett to control daily operations while making his visions come to life. Sharing the connection of their alma mater Barnett employs five Georgia Southern Alumni who are excited to be a part of the company.

Barnett values the GS curriculum and experience. He believes the university does a great job of balancing their approach by both educating students in their career field and preparing them on how to utilize their education following graduation.

Barnett Southern generates more than \$15 million in annual revenues with strong continuity from customer referrals and repeat business. Its mission is to provide superior utilities and site development services safely, on time and within budget.

Including Barnett, the five alumni hired by Barnett Southern are members of Eta Zeta Chapter of the Sigma Chi fraternity at Georgia Southern. Their connection makes working together a unique and rewarding experience. Each offer words of wisdom for students working toward their next big step.

Ames Barnett – Owner of Barnett Southern; 1999 GS graduate

Mayor of City of Washington, GA 2012- Present

Work hard, give 100% and never give up. Easy is not always best. Be adaptable to change. Failure is an event, not a person. Be able to get along with others.

Bobby Bagwell – Business Development Director for Building Construction and Contracting; 2001 GS graduate

Enjoy every minute of your time at Georgia Southern. Get engaged. There are very few, if any, occasions in life following college when you will be exposed to so many unique opportunities and amenities in one place. Your college experience will provide memories and create relationships that will last a lifetime, so take advantage of what GS can provide. Do your homework when selecting a degree. Be sure you will enjoy the career opportunities your degree offers.

Reese Taylor – Project Manager; 2004 GS graduate

LISTEN AND LEARN. Throughout life there will be many obstacles that you will face. Don't be afraid to ask for help ("If you do not ask, the answer will always be NO"). LISTEN to what others have to say and LEARN from other's mistakes, and you will be greater than most with success.

Matt Durden – Vice President of Building Construction and Contracting; 2003 GS graduate

Enjoy your time at college. Learn all you can and make as many connections as you can. It is surprising how many people we run into in this line of work that we went to school with or that have attended GS. It is always common ground to start a conversation with.

Jeremy Fordham –Project Manager for Building Construction and Contracting; 2005 GS graduate

Work hard and take as many classes as you can. There are some classes that I wish I would have taken the time to enroll in. It will broaden your horizons and with our ever changing economy you never know what tomorrow may bring.