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From The Desk Of TK

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From The Desk Of TK
AD addresses Eagle Nation in letter form
Football
Posted: 4/19/2018 10:20:00 AM
Dear Eagle Fan,

It's hard to believe we're heading into the home stretch of another athletic season. It feels like just yesterday we were welcoming everyone back and getting ready for the fall sports. But here we are, headed to the end of the spring seasons with tennis and golf wrapping up this week and baseball, softball and track finishing up here in the next few weeks.

Our student-athletes work hard all year on both their academics and athletics, so we'll be doing something new this year to honor their achievements: [The GUSPYs](#). Awards range from Newcomer of the Year, Play of the Year, Strength & Conditioning Athlete of the Year, True Blue Athlete of the Year and Comeback Play of the Year. For the first time, we will be honoring our four-year letterwinners who did it the True Blue by representing themselves and our department both on the field and in the classroom. These student-athletes will receive a custom-fitted blazer, and all letterwinners will receive an eagle bust with the years of their letters earned. The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee has been hard at work on the nominees, voting and show prep, so hopefully, you'll watch it on [True Blue Live](#) next Tuesday, April 24 at 7:30 p.m.



Before this event, we will hold our annual Scholar-Athlete and Scholarship Banquet in Nessmith-Lane. This is always a special event put on by our Student-Athlete Services department, and it gives us a chance to honor our student-athletes who perform well in the classroom. Each year, we have given out something special to these award winners, and this year's award is 3.0 scholar sneakers from adidas.



With the recent resignation of our swimming and diving head coach, I am pleased to announce that we are reaching the final stages of our national search and hope to have an announcement soon. A large pool of qualified candidates have expressed their interest in the position, and we are excited about the experience and knowledge the new head coach will bring to our program. Our search committee is compiled of athletic department senior staff, swimming and diving alumni and campus officials and they've done a great job narrowing down our candidate pool.

Spring football wrapped up last Saturday, and I was blown away by the attendance at the annual Blue-White Game. While it's hard to give an exact number, it was easily in the thousands showing up to support Coach Lunsford and the program. With the season opener on Sept. 1, less than five months away, we're still selling season tickets for the 2018 campaign. Right now, we're closing in on 6,000 season tickets sold and remember, if we are privileged to host the inaugural Sun Belt Championship Game this December, being a season ticket holder will be the only way to guarantee your seat location.

We also held tryouts to replace Dr. Todd Deal, who retired as the Voice of Paulson Stadium after 25 years of service for which we will forever be grateful for his service. We had an overwhelming amount of votes and feedback from our I've been told the marketing department will announce the winner this week!

I hope you all took notice of the big gift made to the [Matching Gift Challenge](#) in support of the Coaches Continuity Fund by Coach Lunsford and his wife, Tippy. Their donation is a testimony of their commitment to Georgia Southern and the football program. Keeping our coaches is vital to the success of our programs. Coach Lunsford and some initial donors have stepped up in a big way and have called for the rest of Eagle Nation to meet the challenge. Every dollar counts and will be matched by our anonymous donors.

For those of you that are either a new or established Eagle fan, our annual [Coaches Caravan](#) schedule has officially posted. Our coaches and personnel will be traveling to [Atlanta](#), [Augusta](#), [Charleston](#), [Macon](#), [Nashville](#), [Savannah](#) and [St. Simons](#) to discuss what's new and what's to come in Eagle Athletics. Guests will have the opportunity to meet our coaches, purchase season tickets and enter to win some exciting prizes.

Thank you to all current fans and donors for their continued participation in Eagle Athletics and supporting our student-athletes. We look forward to meeting new fans and young alumni to help continue to build the Eagles' Nest.

And finally, the most important day of the year in athletics is commencement and that date is set for May 5 which is just a few weeks away. The day before, we invite our graduating student-athletes and their families to the Stole Ceremony, where they are presented with this accessory to the cap and gown and signifies them as a student-athlete for the ceremony. Additionally, those student-athletes who will graduate with a 3.0 GPA or higher will be presented with a ring to signify their accomplishment during the Stole Ceremony.

I hope everyone gets a chance to come out and enjoy the warm weather these last couple of weeks. Have a great week and Hail Southern!



[Tom Kleinlein](#)

Director of Athletics, Georgia Southern University

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