ON THE VERGE

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Dr. Marrero Talks: Commencement, 5-Year Plan and Inclusive Excellence Report

BY MADISON WATKINS
Editor-in-Chief

With October quickly approaching and a hurricane evacuation already disrupting the academic calendar, the fall semester is in full swing. With a new semester comes new updates to the university.

Within the first month of classes, a new commencement plan was announced for the university. Administration announced a new strategic plan detailing how they will unite the three campuses. Lastly, the Inclusive Excellence Report on how the campus community felt (in terms of diversity) was published.

The George-Anne Inkwell Edition sat down with University President Dr. Kyle Marrero and Director of Communications Jennifer Wise to discuss these topics.

FALL COMMENCEMENT

One of the first questions brought up was why isn’t the university using the Savannah Civic Center for the Armstrong campus commencement ceremony this fall. Marrero responded, “I think parking... is the issue with [the] civic center, just getting access to and into the civic center itself for those guests coming into downtown.”

On whether or not the Civic Center is an option for the Armstrong campus commencement in Spring 2020, Marrero said, “I’ll get a follow up from the committee. I think actually they’re meeting this [last] week to finalize the spring site. We’re even looking at Forsyth Park... but I don’t think it is available as of the last time we checked to do an outdoor ceremony... we should have an answer in the next week or two exactly where it’s gonna be and Civic Center is certainly still an option.”

HURRICANE EVACUATIONS

What happens if another hurricane is projected to hit the Chatham County area?

If a storm is projected to hit mainly Savannah, but not Statesboro or Hinesville and we have to close this campus, would just this campus be closed or will it be part of the official procedure to close the University as a whole?

“Well, we’ll always consider all options... There could be scenarios for weather-related events that only one campus would be closed while others are open,” Marrero clarified. Marrero also stated that students will not have to make up the class days missed due to Hurricane Dorian.

“Because of the folio assignments and our ability to post [online assignments], that keeps us engaged and moving forward. We don’t want to lose another three or four days, but at this point we’re good,” he explained.

5-YEAR PLAN

Next, the new strategic plan was discussed. This 5-Year plan is part of a new strategic plan to aid campus cohesion and establish the new university’s mission and vision. Some students are left wondering, “How does this help me now?” A large amount of the student body will have graduated in five years.

“Strategically, what we know is there’s already progress in place in terms of what we’re doing to expand the student experience and what we’re doing for the programs. There’ll be new programs as soon as next fall on this campus that’ll bring [a] new market, new student populations to this campus.

“What we’ll see... is more integration holistically with the community... and more opportunities we’re inviting Savannah and the region onto the campus. So we’ll see much more of a connection with campus and community... immediately. We [also] want to see further expansion of clubs [and] sports opportunities for students to engage in outside of class.

“So, within the even time if you’re a sophomore, you’re going to start to feel that here in this next 12 to 18 months as some of these plans come to fruition,” he elaborated.

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE REPORT

The next few questions discussed the Inclusive Excellence Report published by Dr. Damon Williams and his colleagues. One topic frequently discussed in the report when discussing the climate of the Armstrong campus was “the pain of consolidation.” Regarding the feelings voiced in the report and how he can make the Armstrong community feel like a part of the university as a whole, “With the new strategic plan... it will invite and expand and provide evidence of the value added of what we are as a consolidated institution that will start to see the efforts, the wins, the opportunities that it creates regionally for us all and that’s hard right now,” he said.

From the report, the consolidation leaves people unclear on how they will be personally affected. “That’s the real feelings that people have and how they’ve actually expressed them within a context of a survey mechanism on Diversity Inclusion. It wasn’t surprising but interesting to me that those viewpoints were shared and not necessarily in the confines or questions specific about diversity inclusion but more expressed about their feelings about consolidation still and those are real and it’s important for me to hear them, understand them, empathize and sympathize but more importantly, it’s for my job to set the vision and direction of the future and what that’ll mean their value added and why they’re still so important to the success of the institution... From the inclusion report from Dr. Damon Williams... if you looked across a constituency basis in that report of students, faculty, and staff almost across every question that you could benchmark with our Statesboro or even our Liberty campus colleagues and students and staff you would see that Armstrong had more negative perceptions in other words across the board... I have a learning network I meet with once a month which are faculty and staff on all three campuses that are my sounding board... I posed the question to think the scores that showed a more negative perception based from the Armstrong campus on diversity inclusion issues were true to the issue of diversity inclusion or more of a reflection of just still feeling, for lack of a better term, done to on consolidation or a negative context of consolidation.

It was an interesting dialogue because... some of those comments had nothing to do with diversity inclusion, they were more [about] how they feel and I think that was bottled up at least what I got back from my learning network was people haven’t had a chance perse in a survey mechanism to voice their concerns.”

In February 2020, GSU will launch the first full institutional climate and engagement survey open to every faculty and staff member.

One of the recommendations in the report for the university to better itself is to lift up the strategic campus integration journey across Statesboro, Armstrong and Liberty campuses by getting senior leadership engaged in conversation about one university and one heartbeat, particularly at Armstrong. Marrero said they plan to move forward with more specific open forum town hall meetings to improve morale.

Damon Williams will be returning in October to evaluate the town hall meetings as feedback on the report. The George-Anne Inkwell Edition will hold monthly interviews with Marrero. If you have questions for him, send them to us at chief.inkwell@gmail.com.
Pick of the Week
Active Minds Presents:
Lanterns and Lyrics
September 19
7 p.m.
Steps of the Student Union

Every year about 1100 college students lose their lives to suicide. Active Minds created Lanterns & Lyrics is a way to bring attention to suicide and mental health through musical performances, poetry, and discussion. Join us to bring to light what stigma forces us to keep in the dark on Sept. 19 at 7 p.m. on the steps of the student union. Perform and have a chance to win 1 of 3 gift cards and a FREE Lanterns & Lyrics shirt!

Email activemindsarmstrong@gmail.com or scan the QR code on the flyer!
For more information, Contact: Kera Molton at (912) 662-9635, or via email at activemindsarmstrong@gmail.com

Meme of the week
 WHEN THE PROFESSOR ASKS YOU TO CITE YOUR SOURCES BUT IT’S 2 A.M.

CALLIOPE SEeks SUBMISSIONS

Since 1983, Armstrong State University has been publishing The Calliope, a literary journal that captures both the written and visual work current students have to offer. Last year, The Calliope celebrated 35 years of publishing and invited students from the Statesboro and Liberty campuses to submit their work as a way to bridge the gap between the campuses. Once again, The Calliope invites students from all three campuses to submit their work for publication.

Accepted written works include fiction and creative non-fiction (no more than 1500 words) as well as poetry (under 100 lines). Visual Art includes PNGs such as graphic designs or photos of any works.

Please submit your work to The Calliope at http://tinyurl.com/Calliope2020. For any further questions, please contact the journal editor Brea Yates at by00597@georgiasouthern.edu.
Brand new dining experiences are coming to campus soon.

The Southern Café, which is situated next to the Chick-fil-A in the Memorial College Center (MCC), is set to open sometime this semester. GSU is also constructing a Starbucks franchise within the MCC building, and a Spring 2020 opening date is expected.

Director of Armstrong Campus Dining Michael Morgan said, “we are excited to bring more food, and beverage variety to this University.”

This is welcome news for students who don’t have time in between classes to sit and eat in the Galley, run somewhere off campus for food, coffee or other items of sustenance.

“More dining options would probably benefit a lot of people,” said Alexander Peralta, a Psychology major, of the news.

For those students who are interested in getting a job on campus, Morgan said, “I anticipate hiring 20-25 student workers for Starbucks.”

Terriana Mullen a Psychology major said, “I’ve been looking for a college job, especially on campus.”

Morgan says that the hiring process of the Starbucks will begin when he has “completed the recruitment process for the 3 full-time positions allocated to the Starbucks location.”

As for the Southern Café hiring process, it has already begun. “Southern Café is actively recruiting additional student staff,” said Morgan.

The job postings are located on the Georgia Southern Human Resources page under the name Campus Deli.

While sitting in the MCC Food Court, Kade Couey a Visual Arts Major said, “I’ll have to see the menu.”

Morgan said of the Southern Café menu options, “Southern Café will be offering an assortment of paninis, salads, soups, desserts and seasonal specials.”

After hearing the menu options, Couey went on to say “I like a pizza panini.”

For those of you who wake up early enough for breakfast, The Southern Café will serve it as well.

“Breakfast at Southern Café can be expected as early as spring semester,” said Morgan.

Whether or not the campus needs more variety of food service establishments, Kavon Robinson, a Fashion major said, “A couple more, just to have a variety of things.”

Robert Whitaker Vice President for Business and Finance for the university encourages a variety of dining options, “the investment in Chick-fil-A, Starbucks, Southern Café, and The Galley are important investments to create student engagement and atmosphere. We hope you all enjoy the new spaces and offerings!”

The BCCE is comprised of a percussionist, a clarinetist, a violinist who also composed a piece and an intermission later, the theme of the second piece was “anger.”

Everyone in the group played “On c e.,” a piece composed by a Georgia Southern graduate student, Francisco Corthey. The musicians used expressive body language as an aide to express their music on stage.

On the Verge is the program that bring groups that play contemporary classical music to Statesboro and Armstrong campuses.

Because the program relies on grants from a variety of sources to host events, Gendelman says, “I cannot assure we are going to have one next semester.” But he says, “First thing I would love to see is people coming to the concerts.”

He goes on to say, “It’s hard to continue something with an audience of 20 people.”

“There is always something that they are going to find interesting.”

Gendelman runs the On the Verge program himself with help from the music department.

If you are interested in helping with the On the Verge program, you can always approach him by email at jmgendelman@georgiasouthern.edu.
BY MADISON WATKINS
Editor-in-Chief

Last week, The George-Anne Inkwell Edition published an overview of the Inclusive Excellence Report that was published by administration on Aug. 28.

This article will go into what the report recommended for Armstrong campus and what it means going forward.

It was stated in the report once all data was collected that Armstrong reported 55 percent for campus climate, 50 percent for institutional commitment and 36 percent for valued and belonging.

The biggest themes that were discussed in the campus-climate survey and listed in the report were strategic diversity leadership, the pain of consolidation and opportunities for community and engagement.

The theme of “the pain of consolidation” was a hot topic to this campus in particular.

The report stated, “while present at all three campuses, it was strongest at Armstrong, where it was mentioned some 91 times by online survey respondents and consistently across listening sessions and interviews with campus stakeholders.”

Some of the comments listed in the report on all three themes, which came from the campus-climate survey, said:

“We need to stop reacting and create standard operating procedures for dealing with issues of diversity.”

“The university should prioritize diversity and inclusion systematically. Everything we do should be filtered through all the points outlined in our mission statement. Faculty and staff should be properly trained and acclimated to serve the needs of a student population that is diverse and increasingly non-traditional.”

“We are being treated like the step-child campus and it’s just getting old, I’m about sick of it.”

“The new Georgia Southern is a non-inclusive place to work. The campus does focus on diversity, but I feel this was because of the work of Armstrong and incidents that have happened on the Statesboro campus. Armstrong had a director of diversity. This position was taken away with the merger and then brought back. The events that are happening are reactive, not proactive, and focused on only two groups of people, racial and sexual. This is great for these groups of students, but I take inclusion to be all.”

“We need to get more vocal about diversity clubs and organizations on campus and make sure that people know everyone can be involved in any club. I think we need a special push to help.”

“Greek life is such a staple here, we have to do something about making it more inclusive. I mean put the Black Greeks on fraternity row and push the whites to be more accepting and open up. This is the root of our community’s problems.”

The report listed charts with the perceptions of campus climate by students, faculty and staff, racial and ethnic identity, gender identity and LGBTQIA identity.

Some important findings for each topic were:

STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF
At the Armstrong campus, faculty and staff rated satisfaction with climate at the at 43 and 34 percent respectively, with no significant statistical difference between these groups.

There was a statistically significant difference between employees and students, with faculty and staff rating satisfaction with climate lower than students.

RACE AND ETHNICITY
At the Armstrong campus, there were no statistically significant differences across different racial/ethnic groups on satisfaction with climate, value and belonging, or institutional commitment.

The sample size represented in each group is not necessarily representative of the campus.

GENDER IDENTITY
At the Armstrong campus, men, women and gender nonconforming respondents rated satisfaction with climate, value and belonging and institutional commitment at the same level.

The sample size was not necessarily representative of the campus.

LGBTQIA IDENTITY
At the Armstrong campus, there were no significant differences between heterosexual and LGBTQIA respondents. The sample size was not necessarily representative of the campus.

One of the seven recommendations listed at the end of the report to accelerate inclusive excellence for the university is “Lift up the strategic campus integration journey across Statesboro, Armstrong and Liberty campuses,” with the description saying, “Develop an approach to heal through the pain of consolidation, creating a new narrative that dovetails with this report and the new strategic plan.”

Some of the action steps listed in the report that can put this recommendation into action are:

Restart a working team that prioritizes strategic integration, picking up from the consolidation process, to determine how you can prioritize culture-building.

Tap a group of Armstrong faculty, in particular, to identify key themes that they feel are being missed in terms of the economic challenges and hardships of students.

Campus leadership must discover avenues to understand what elements of the transition are impeding offices and units from carrying out their jobs effectively after consolidation. Deans could establish a space (for example, on the first Friday of the month) to connect with academic and staff leaders to analyze how the transition towards consolidation is impacting their work. This information would be critical towards developing how each college will strategically plan to align with an overall institutional vision.

SO WHAT’S NEXT FOR ARMSTRONG NOW?
In an interview with The George-Anne Inkwell Edition, VP of Academic Affairs Dr. Carl Reiber stated, “one of the action steps is doing the climate survey. That climate survey is not just about inclusive excellence but it’s about how the people feel about their work environment…”

The climate survey Reiber is referring to will be a way for the university to collect data to assess change and progress on how the campus community feels about the university.

On the topic of how can administration improve the culture on this campus post-consolidation Reiber said, “Each campus brings to the table a history, a uniqueness and greatness that we need to recognize and celebrate… Armstrong has a 100-year history that brings with it tremendous capability and quality of undergraduate education that we need to make sure never goes away… I think the faculty here and the students here want to make sure that their campus gets the good programs and are respected and I think that’s showing up in a number of areas… No one in administration thinks that one campus is better or worse than another. What we’re looking at is what has been the quality history of the institutions, how can we keep that going and what we can add to it to let them flourish and do great things.”

Vice President of University Communications and Marketing John Lester said in the interview, “I think it has to be a show me, don’t tell me. And you gotta give the university a chance to show you.”

For more information on the findings on the Armstrong campus, you can read the full Inclusive Excellence Report on our website or in your student email.

Check our website and read next week’s issue for further coverage on the Inclusive Excellence Report.
OMA BEGINS HISPANIC AND LATINX HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATIONS

BY JAVANNA ROGERS
The George-Anne Inkwell staff

“Coming from African descent, it’s nice to know different cultures,” expressed freshman Marquavious Hardwick about the Independence Day Celebration hosted by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA).

Hispanic and Latinx Heritage month has begun and OMA ushered it in with their Independence Day Celebration in the Student Union on Sept. 12.

Hardwick went on to say he feels this month helps others stay united instead of divided.

“Nationally the month starts Sept. 15 because the five Central American countries Independence days are celebrated that day,” explained Stephanie Molina, the Coordinator of Multicultural Affairs for this campus.

The OMA staff educated students through fun quizzes and snacks such as marinelas, jiggly jels, nitos, along with guava and cheese.

Information boards about Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Chile and Mexico were on display.

Junior Joshua Lane thinks of this event as a “learning moment for others to see about other cultures.”

Senior Ariana Madir thinks it is important to have an event such as this to bring “inclusivity and educate the campus to know about different cultures and countries.”

Madir then explained, “[it] shows representation of the people we have here and that there is a place for others here at Georgia Southern’s Armstrong campus.”

Check the campus event calendar on the university website to find out more about upcoming Hispanic and Latinx Heritage Month events.

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PLAYLIST

Get Down On It- Kool & The Gang
Shutterbugg- Big Boi, Cutty
Godly Intersex- of Montreal
Golden Skans- Klaxons
Let’s Make Out- Does It Offend You, Yeah?
Hex Girlfriend- Neon Indian
World Princess part II- Grimes
begin again- Purity Ring
Bad Things- Cults
After the Moment- Craft Spells
O Lila- - Wild Nothing
DON’T DISS THE DIFFERENTLY-ABLED

Visible and Invisible Disabilities: Erasing the Stigma. Understanding Culture.

BY REBECCA MUNDAY
The George-Anne Inkwell Staff

Not all disabilities are visible. “You might look at someone and think ‘Oh, I know who they are,’ but you probably don’t...you most certainly don’t,” explained Dr. Nathan Palmer to the audience in attendance for a workshop called “Visible and Invisible Disabilities: Erasing the Stigma. Understanding the Culture.”

Palmer is an event speaker and professor of sociology and anthropology on the Armstrong campus.

The Office of Inclusive Excellence held the workshop at 12 p.m. on Sept. 11 in Solms Hall Room 113.

A flyer touting the mission of the workshop stated that it was “designed to address stereotypical responses to persons with disabilities and engage the audience in a lively discussion about visible and invisible disabilities.”

Palmer emphasized using inclusive language and eschewing the term “disabilities” in favor of “differences” because, “I’m not disabled. I’m not unable to do something,” he affirmed.

During the event, there was a lecture with PowerPoint slides that surveyed challenges and characteristics of a variety of disabilities from Bipolar Disorder to Deafness (disorders that those affected capitalize the first letter as a show empowerment.)

After the lecture, professors Palmer and Dr. Maxine Bryant shared their stories as people with disabilities.

There is no specific clinical term for what Palmer’s learning differences are. He shared his lived experience of being “different” from the rest of his classmates from the time he was a child, struggling in school, and learning differently than the rest of his classmates.

When talking about the usual path that most people take in life and school, Palmer remarked, “If I had stayed on that path...I wouldn’t be here today.”

After Palmer spoke, Bryant contributed to the workshop with examples of her daily reality living as someone who experienced deafness later in life.

People often tell her she doesn’t talk like she is hard of hearing. She illustrated the struggles of a person and a professor who is hard of hearing.

Bryant related that hearing aids are not covered under most health insurance plans. Then, she shared a moment involving how her hearing aid malfunctioned while she was driving.

Bryant also mentioned that even the people she spends the most time with often forget that they need to be looking at her for her to understand them properly.

“Hearing aids don’t make sound louder,” she articulated, meaning that she still needs people speaking with her to stand within her sight line and enunciate.

After the talk, Kelly Woodruff, Director of Accessibility Services and Dr. Dana Taylor, a Psychotherapist and Interpreter for the Deaf served as panelists for an open discussion with students.

The next event hosted by the Office of Inclusive Excellence will focus on LGBTQ+ issues.

Palmer also has an upcoming presentation titled “Succeeding through the Struggle.”

Both events are slated to be held in early October.

For more information regarding the Student Accessibility Resource Center, the office is located on the second floor of the Memorial College Center and officials can be reached via email at sarcsav@georgiasouthern.edu or via phone at (912) 344-2572.

SGA INDUCTS NEW MEMBERS

BY JASON CHAPMAN
The George-Anne Inkwell Staff

The SGA inducted six new senators on Sept.16. As the newly appointed senators took their seats, veteran senators looked on in approval.

Executive Vice President (EVP) Spencer DeMink lead them to the center of the room. The senators raised their right hands, and repeated the oath that DeMink read out to them.

Among the newly inducted members were James Hamilton, Haley Briggs, Camryn Ennis, Margaret Calandra and Maddie Foster. After finding their seats and meeting with the leaders of their committees the senators quickly got to work with the SGA’s weekly agenda.

Another member was also added to the SGA ranks. There was a motion soon after to appoint Louis Miller to the position of Vice President of Alumni and Veteran Affairs. Miller is a peer mentor at Georgia Southern and served in the military for 5 years.

Miller was given a chance to stand up and make some remarks before being sworn in, “Just ready to get after it,” Miller said.

After Miller addressed everyone DeMink said “In my opinion, he’s a great fit.” All three motions to approve the new members went through without any objections. When the induction ended the SGA got back to business with their newly appointed senators.
SUDOKU by Myles Mellor and Susan Flanagan

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1. Prevent
2. Vases
3. Take steps
4. Helpful
5. Crannies’ pals
6. Kind of jacket
7. Raptor
8. French cheese
9. Balloon filler
10. Creates a picture
11. Position
12. Summer hrs. in D.C.
13. Walked
14. Holiday event
15. Horse trot
16. English river
17. Meager
18. Actor Kilmer
19. Store sections (Abbr.)
20. Kind of nut
21. Indian side dish
22. Compass pt.
23. Pressed
24. Operatic prince
25. Go-between
26. Appraisal
27. Daybed
28. Children’s card game
29. Sign of the zodiac
30. Brick holder
31. Naval unit
32. Laziness
33. Carries on
34. Pipe joint
35. Flower holders?
36. Fancy tie
37. Miss the mark
38. Editor’s mark
39. Motif
40. Fitting
41. Greek vowel
42. Circus wire
43. Model
44. Macpherson
45. Staggered
46. Full-length, like a movie
47. Wander about
48. de guerre
49. Doubter
50. Modify
51. A la
52. Small fry
53. More stylish or brainier
54. Life stories, briefly
55. March date
56. Garden tool
57. Roof overhangs
58. Beetle Bailey character
59. Pastry pest
60. Scrappy
61. Duplicate
62. Close attention
63. Make reparations
64. Florida’s Key
65. Warning signs
66. River islet
67. Feels remorse
68. Apothecary’s weight
69. Camera position
70. Noah’s landfall
71. Recluse
72. Command
73. Usurp, usually by force
74. Minute arachnid
75. Pinnacle
76. Short run
77. Fishing aid
78. Male cat
79. Fr. holy woman
80. Paws
81. Pardon
82. Your
83. Other
84. Waste
85. Oh Yeah
86. Stables

To contact the news editor, email ganewsed@georgiasouthern.edu