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#### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2008). *Newsroom*. 283.  
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# Georgia Southern alum honored by Entomological Society of America

*FEBRUARY 14, 2008*

Georgia Southern University alumnus Joseph McGaughey was honored for the presentation he made at the Entomological Society of America (ESA) 2007 Student Competition.

McGaughey earned the ESA President's Award for taking first place in Section D/E, which featured research related to medical and veterinary entomology.

He was recognized for an experiment he conducted while a student with Dana Nayduch, an assistant professor in the University's Department of Biology.

"The experiment was focused on determining how flies transmit bacterial disease and how they can remain healthy while in contact with a poor environment," said McGaughey, who graduated from Georgia Southern in Fall 2007 with a bachelor's degree in biology.

"I transformed bacteria with jellyfish DNA that produces a green, glowing protein. It makes the bacteria glow under a special kind of light, and you can track them very easily. I fed the glowing bacteria to the flies and dissected the flies at different points in time.

"Under the microscope, the bacteria look really amazing. I compare it to looking at a starry night," he said.

The ESA is the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of entomologists and people in related disciplines. It has more than 7,500 members affiliated with educational institutions, health agencies, private industry and government. The student competition was held in conjunction with the ESA's annual global conference, which was held in December in San Diego, Calif.

McGaughey, from Macon, Ga., is not the only Georgia Southern University alumnus in his family. Both of his parents are also graduates of the University.

"I've always been interested in the latest techniques in biology," McGaughey said. "I began reading stories about biotechnology, genetic engineering and the development of new medicines, and have been fascinated by it."

McGaughey was a recipient of a Paulson Student Research Award, which is presented annually by the College Office of Undergraduate Research in the Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology at Georgia Southern.

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