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# Georgia Southern University Receives Quality of Life Grant from Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

*AUGUST 18, 2009*



Georgia Southern University has received an \$11,700 Quality of Life grant from the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, which will be used to purchase adaptive sports

wheelchairs for students who would otherwise be unable to participate in intramural sports.

"The purchase of these chairs will allow us to form the first wheelchair intramural sports teams at Georgia Southern," said Wayne Akins, director of the University's Student Disability Resource Center. "We'll take input from our students who need these chairs to participate and let them decide which sports they would like to pursue. Our goal is to have the chairs ready, teams formed and play underway during the fall semester."

"The sports chairs will allow students to experience a level of play they would not be able to achieve in the wheelchairs they use day to day. These sports chairs are built for speed, performance, and safety. They turn on a dime and are built to withstand the impact of competitive sports," said Student Disability Resource Center Educational Program Specialist Ryan Coskrey.

Georgia Southern University's award was one of 86 grants totaling almost \$500,000 awarded by the Reeve Foundation to nonprofit organizations nationwide that help people living with paralysis and their families become more integrated members of society. Since inception of the program in 1999, nearly 1,600 grants have been awarded, totaling almost \$13 million.

"We are honored that the Reeve Foundation chose Georgia Southern University as a recipient of this award," said Associate Vice President of Research Services and Sponsored Programs Charles Patterson. "This grant will allow the University to expand its student disability services and offer more of our students the opportunity to engage in the fun and camaraderie of intramural sports."

"The Quality of Life program recognizes and supports organizations that assist individuals living with paralysis, their families and caregivers in ways that more immediately provide them with increased independence, well-being, and improved access," said Peter T. Wilderotter, president and CEO of the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation. "Throughout the past ten years, we have had the privilege of being able to impact the lives of thousands of people living with paralysis through these deserving organizations. As Dana Reeve used to say, 'our Quality of Life program is about freedom' and we are pleased to do our small part to assist Georgia Southern University in fulfilling its mission."

The Reeve Foundation's Quality of Life grants are awarded twice a year and are divided into three categories, Actively Achieving, Bridging Barriers and Caring and Coping. Some grants are also

funded through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Cooperative Agreement number 1U59DD000338).

The Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation is dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by funding innovative research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis through grants, information and advocacy. For more information, and to review the entire list of Quality of Life grant recipients, please visit the foundation's website at [www.ChristopherReeve.org](http://www.ChristopherReeve.org) or call 800-225-0292.

## **Michael Russell Named Georgia Southern University Director of Public Safety and Chief of University Police**

*AUGUST 18, 2009*



Michael Russell has been named Director of Public Safety and Chief of the Georgia Southern University Police. Russell, who has 28 years of law enforcement experience, including 21 years in campus public safety most recently served as Assistant Director of Public Safety at Georgia Southern University and Major of the Georgia Southern University Police.

Russell joined Georgia Southern in 1988 as Captain of the Department of Criminal Investigations. He later moved into Police Services and was promoted to the rank of Major and became the Assistant Director in 1999. As Assistant Director of Public Safety, Russell served as senior supervisor in Police Services and supported areas of Public Safety including environmental safety, fire safety, compliance and hazardous waste management.

Prior to joining Georgia Southern, Russell served as a Parole Officer with the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles. He began his career in law enforcement with the City of Statesboro Police Department where he held increasingly responsible positions including Patrol Lieutenant.

Russell earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice from Georgia Southern. He is a Certified Police and Parole Officer and General Instructor with the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council. He is also an instructor with the Georgia Crime Information Center.

Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University, offers 115 degree programs serving nearly 18,000 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelors, masters and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. The University, one of Georgia's largest, is a top choice of Georgia's HOPE scholars and is recognized for its student-centered approach to education. Visit: [www.georgiasouthern.edu](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu).