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Georgia Southern University soars to Albania

AUGUST 29, 2016

Professor Lori Amy, Ph.D., department of writing and linguistics, has co-founded a new International non-governmental organization (NGO), OTTOmomy, which provides unique interdisciplinary internship opportunities for Georgia Southern students in Albania and the western Balkans.

OTTOmomy was created with a grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to build a regional center for cultural heritage in the western Balkans, and currently works with interns in social media, public history, art, journalism, film, writing and linguistics, anthropology and sociology, and marketing and communications. Interns began their ground-breaking work with the foundation in Summer 2016.

This summer, Kristen Baker, the University's first OTTOmomy intern, worked with the Organization to Support Albania's Abandoned Babies (OSAAB), the Albanian government, international NGOs and research institute on research and policy for child protection and welfare. Her work will help to change the legal framework for adoption in Albania. Baker worked with the executive director of OSAAB to analyze their longitudinal data tracking placement of abandoned babies in orphanages from the mid-90s until now, which is also the most significant data the country has to date, and to research legal and international frameworks for family law and adoption. She also participated in a government roundtable presenting findings from the study, and is now working on producing an article for publication in an international journal and identifying an appropriate conference in the Balkans at which to present these findings.

Daranis Madera, an art student with previous curatorial experience, will visit Albania from September until December 2016, as an intern helping to curate "Presidential Pathways." The international exhibition of George Tames' (1919-1994) iconic photographs of American presidents will be shown at the Averitt Center for the Arts and will travel to Albania and the Western Balkans through a \$10,000 grant from the U.S. Embassy in Tirana. Tames was one of the most renowned photojournalists of his time who worked inside the White House and with presidents from Franklin D. Roosevelt to George H.W. Bush and his photos are a Statesboro treasure. Through her work to curate the exhibition, Madera will have the opportunity to work in Albania with the U.S. Embassy, the Ministry of Culture of Albania and many other embassies and international organizations.

Internship scholarships have been supported by the University's Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health; the Office of Student Affairs; the departments of writing and linguistics, sociology and anthropology, art, and political science and international studies; the Women's and Gender Studies Program; the Office of Career Services; the Office of International Programs and Services; the

Averitt Center for the Arts; and many of the University's committed faculty and community members.

On Monday, Aug. 29, the OTTOnomy interns will share about their collaborations with Georgia Southern students, including students from Albania, faculty and staff, and the community at Nessmith-Lane Conference Center, room 1909, 5 – 7:30 p.m. Those who have worked tirelessly over the years to support the work Amy began as Fulbright Scholars Fellowship to Albania in 2009, have hosted many students from Albania, and have helped create many important collaborations, will be honored.