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Georgia Southern University Announces Spring 2015 Commencement Speakers

APRIL 3, 2015

Georgia Southern University has selected Judge Dean Bucci, Superior Court, Paulding Judicial Circuit, and Pamela McMichael, director of Highlander Research and Education Center, as the speakers for the 2015 spring commencement ceremonies on May 8 and 9.



Pamela McMichael

McMichael will speak Friday, May 8, at 1 p.m. at Hanner Fieldhouse during the commencement ceremony for graduate students. She first became associated with Highlander as a long-time activist and organizer in Louisville, Kentucky. For decades now, her organizing and cultural work have focused on connecting people and issues across difficult divides. She has co-founded local, state and regional organizations with this core strategy, including Southerners on New Ground, where she served as co-director for eight years.

She was a national fellow with a Rockefeller Foundation leadership project to address the growing crisis in U.S. democracy, and her extensive nonprofit management experience includes social change and social service organizations.

Bucci will address undergraduates as they receive their degrees on Saturday, May 9, at 9 a.m. at Allen E. Paulson Stadium. The first Hispanic Superior Court Judge in Georgia history, he was appointed to succeed Judge James Osborne on Jan. 7, 2015, by Governor Nathan Deal.

Bucci has served on local boards such as the Fellowship of Christian Athlete's Paulding County Board and the Advisory Board of Paulding CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), as well as the Juvenile Court Liaison to MAP (Meth Alliance Paulding) and as the Committee Chair of Cub Scouts



Judge Dean Bucci

Pack 1916. While in private practice, he regularly volunteered his time and skills to support Legal Aid for those who could not afford private counsel.

Watch both spring commencement ceremonies live and get more information by visiting www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu/commencement.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125-degree programs serving more than 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

Georgia Southern University to Host 33rd Annual ArtsFest April 11

APRIL 3, 2015



UPDATE: Due to the possibility of rain the day of the event, ArtsFest will move into the Center for Art and Theatre at 233 Pittman Drive.

Georgia Southern University's Sweetheart Circle will come alive on Saturday, April 11, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. as thousands of people are expected to visit campus, celebrating visual and performing arts at the 33rd annual ArtsFest.

Hosted by the Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art, the free art festival welcomes and encourages the community to become artists for the day. Festival-goers can express their artistic abilities at more than a dozen ArtStops. ArtStops allow participants to explore types, techniques and media of art while learning about various subject matters. Patrons can paint, sculpt, craft a pattern, measure a fish, create paper flowers, tie-dye a commemorative ArtsFest T-shirt, repurpose materials, shoot a painted arrow, pet an instrument and much more – all for free. Guests can also grab something to eat and admire one-of-a-kind artwork made by local artisans in the Artist Market.

"ArtsFest allows our community, young and old, to celebrate the importance of the arts in our everyday lives," said Stephanie Arends Neal, director of ArtsFest. "Through the arts, we develop lifelong skills such as decision-making, motor skills, collaboration, analytical and critical thinking, inventiveness, self-expression, confidence and cultural awareness. It has been an honor to be a part of ArtsFest and watching it evolve over the years."

Neal encourages everyone, but especially youngsters, to visit as many ArtStops as possible during the event to get a well-rounded artistic experience. "Art can be delightfully messy, so be sure you wear clothing that can get as colorful as your ArtsFest experience," she added.

In addition to the ArtStops, attendees can experience the musical talents of headlining acts, Those Cats, F-Beams, and Pladd Dot School of Rock & Roll.

ArtsFest is a nonprofit event made possible by community and University volunteers.

"ArtsFest is made possible because of individuals who have devoted their time and love of the arts to give back to the community and university. Volunteers and ArtStop hosts consist of community members and faculty, staff, students and alumni from Georgia Southern," said Neal. "The Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art takes pride in giving back to the local community while offering events and services to provide students with valuable professional and leadership experience."

For a complete list of supporters and a festival guide, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/ArtsFest.

The Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art is housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS). CLASS, the University's College of the Creative Mind, prepares students to achieve academic excellence, develop their analytical skills, enhance their creativity, and embrace their responsibilities as citizens of their communities, their nations, and the world.