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Georgia Southern University Alumnus Named Georgia Teacher of the Year

JUNE 23, 2010

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Georgia Southern University College of Education alumnus Pam Williams, an Economics teacher from Appling County High School, has been named the 2011 Georgia Teacher of the Year. Williams is the sixth Georgia Southern University alumnus to be honored with the award.

Ms. Williams was recently named the winner of the award at the annual Georgia Teacher of the Year banquet at the Georgia Aquarium. As Georgia's Teacher of the Year, she will spend the 2010-2011 school year serving as an advocate for public education and the teaching profession in Georgia.

"I know that Pam is going to be a great spokesperson for teachers in Georgia," said State Superintendent of Schools Kathy Cox.

Ms. Williams earned both her master's and specialist degrees from **Georgia Southern University**. She began her teaching career at Bacon County Middle School in 1991 and moved to Appling County in 1992. She taught sixth grade for two years and then taught Language Arts, Reading and Georgia Studies at Appling County Middle for 13 years. She came to the high school three years ago where she teaches Economics and American Government.

"We are very proud of Pam and congratulate her on this outstanding recognition," said Tom Koballa, dean of the College of Education. "Six Georgia Southern's alumni have been named Georgia Teacher of the Year with four having received the award in the past six years. Not only is this a great honor for Pam, but it is an example of the quality education that we are providing teachers both in the classroom and online at Georgia Southern University."

Georgia Southern University Alumni

Georgia Teacher of the Years

2010 – Pam Williams

2007 – Pam Walker

2006 – Dr. Brenda Shuman Riley

2005 – Chase Puckett

1985 – Julie Lanier

1990 – Molly P. Howard

Williams says her philosophy of teaching has been focused on respect and responsibility. She says, "I've always stressed the importance of two-way communication between myself and my students because I see the teaching profession as second only to parenting."

Williams noted that many children often spend more time daily with their teachers than they do with their parents. "As a result, I believe teaching encompasses far more than classroom instruction."

One of Williams' students said, "Ms. Williams has an amazing ability to break down difficult concepts into simple lessons for students to understand. Her enthusiasm and passion for the subject she teaches radiates throughout every word she speaks. She teaches us that we have a voice, one that can be heard and can make a difference if we use it correctly."

As Georgia Teacher of the Year, Ms. Williams will represent the Georgia teachers by speaking to the public about the teaching profession and conducting workshops and programs for educators. She will also compete for the 2011 National Teacher of the Year.

Williams was selected from 148 district teachers of the year that submitted applications to become the 2011 Georgia Teacher of the Year. The applications were read by a panel of judges that included teachers, past GTOY winners and finalists, administrators, community leaders and others. Ten finalists were chosen based on the strength of their essay responses.

Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University, offers 115 degree programs serving 19,000 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.

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