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Two Georgia Southern University Cheerleaders Named All Americans

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Georgia Southern University senior Kayla Wheatley and 2011 graduate Janee Demery have been named All Americans by the College STUNT Association (CSA).

The CSA, under the leadership of USA Cheer, recently completed its inaugural STUNT season. Both Demery and Wheatley are two of only 20 in the country to be recognized as All Americans.

"Nationally, cheerleading is shedding traditional stereotypes and is being replaced by serious athletes who are demonstrating complex and demanding skills that rival competitive gymnastics," said Barry Munkasy, Ph.D. head coach for Georgia Southern's cheer team. "This is the first year that the College STUNT Association has recognized All American competitors for STUNT. To have two members of our team honored is a credit to their hard work and the many hours they have spent practicing."

Demery, from Carrollton, Ga., recently graduated in May with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry and was a two-year captain of the team. She competed as an elite base and was an elite tumbler. Wheatley, from Augusta, Ga., is majoring in health and physical education and is a past member of the All-Girl and CoEd teams. She competed as an elite flyer and tumbler. In addition to cheering for the Eagles, Wheatley is also a National Cheerleading Association staff member and will be a volunteer coach with the Eagles this year. Both students are four-year members of the cheer team, also participating in the 2008 and 2011 national championship wins.

The All Americans were chosen through a national selection process. Coaches from the 22 teams that participated in the first season of STUNT were invited to nominate two athletes from their teams to be All Americans. Nominees for All Americans were required to exhibit superior skills and techniques, good game sense and knowledge of STUNT, and be in good academic standing. Requirements also included participation in at least half of the games or tournaments for at least 50 percent of the routine.

STUNT removes the traditional crowd-leading focus and concentrates on the technical and athletic components of cheer, which include the partner stunts, pyramids, basket tosses, jumps and tumbling skills. STUNT was designed with the goal of being considered for NCAA Emerging Sport status and to ultimately satisfy Title IX's requirements for intercollegiate sport.

This is the second major recognition for Georgia Southern's cheer team in the past month. The team captured the 2011 national championship title in Daytona Beach, Fla. For more information on the College STUNT Association, visit: <http://collegestunt.org>

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