

# Newsroom

December 8, 2011

Georgia Southern University

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Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern University Staff Member Kevin Chambers Awarded for Outstanding Customer Service

DECEMBER 8, 2011

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Georgia Southern University Assistant Director of Admissions Kevin Chambers has been named the gold winner of the 2011 University System of Georgia Chancellor's Customer Service Awards in the Individual category.

The awards program was created to honor University System of Georgia (USG) employees that have gone "above and beyond" their normal job responsibilities in helping their internal and external customers and consistently promoting customer service excellence. The Individual award is presented to employees based on their ability to adopt continuous-improvement methodology that emphasizes customer satisfaction and quality of service.

"I am fortunate to work with many great individuals who share this same commitment to customer service in Georgia Southern University's Office of Admissions," said Chambers. "There are

also many great individuals within the division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and across campus that share this same mission. The commitment to customer service is what truly makes Georgia Southern University what it is today."

Chambers was among more than 300 submissions honoring seven categories from USG colleges and universities across the state. Winning the highest level of individual recognition, Chambers also broke a record by having the most nominations submitted in support of an individual with 15 total nominators.

This marks Georgia Southern's fourth statewide customer service recognition award during the last two years.



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Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern University Professor Says Competition Among Retailers Is Good For Consumers During the Holidays

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The retail industry is in an “ever-evolving state” according to Georgia Southern University Associate Professor of Marketing Kathleen Gruben, and that can only mean good things for a holiday shopper. This holiday season shoppers are benefiting in several ways from competition among retailers.

- Service with a smile.

Smaller, brick-and-mortar retailers can’t often compete with the major department stores on the price tag, so they compensate with service. The benefits of shopping local and at smaller specialty stores, aside from the positive impact on the local economy, include better service, faster checkout and more knowledgeable associates.

- Layaway is back.

Layaway is a good way to make payments on an item without worrying about interest, but there are plenty of downsides, too. You can’t take the item home until it’s paid off, and any money put towards the item can be lost if payments are stopped. Most stores mark mid-December as the deadline to pay off an item purchased with layaway.

“Most layaway systems are going to require that you make regular payments,” said Gruben. “A lot of times you determine the frequency of the payments, but you have to make those payments. A lot of retailers will work with you on payments as long as you contact them, but they have an ending date. They want time to be able to re-sell the merchandise if payments aren’t made.”

- A new way to price-match.

Many department stores offer price matching when a competitor offers the same product at a lower price, and a new trend is to offer consumers a gift card containing the difference in price.

“It really helps their image,” Gruben said about stores that match prices with gift cards, “but does it really help the consumer? If they redeem it in the store, no problem, but sometimes cards get set aside and forgotten about.”

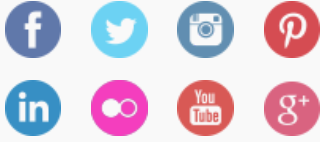
A reward for patience.

Believe it or not, the best time to shop for deals is December 26.


"A lot of people don't realize that retailers call the week after Christmas, 'The 13<sup>th</sup> Month.' They do so much volume that they do a month's worth of business in a week," said Gruben. "People think of the day after Christmas as, 'National Return Day,' but what do people do when they return items? They get money, they spend it, and they spend more to get what they want. Plus, all those gift cards and checks that were exchanged are put to use because prices are marked down so much deeper during post-holiday sales."

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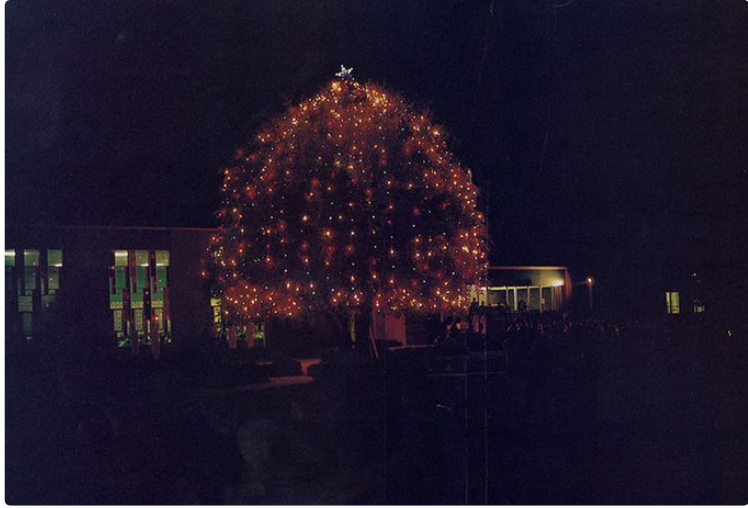
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"O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree..." 🎄🎵#TBT to circa 1964, when a tree in front of the Williams Center was decorated for the holidays.



12h

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