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## Newsroom

Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern University President Brooks Keel Re-Signs Climate Commitment

APRIL 30, 2012

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Georgia Southern University President Brooks Keel, Ph.D. has re-signed the American College & University's President's Climate Commitment, an agreement between nearly 700 colleges and universities to promote sustainability through teaching and action. Keel's signature reaffirms Georgia Southern's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to accelerate research and education to become climate-neutral.

Georgia Southern's re-commitment comes on the heels of the University being recognized as one of *Princeton Review's* 322 Green Colleges. For the second year in a row, Georgia Southern was recognized as one of the nation's top eco-friendly institutions based on its proven commitment to environmental and sustainability issues. The annual guide is produced in partnership with the U.S. Green Building Council.

"Georgia Southern University has and continues to take steps to become climate neutral," says Keel. "By re-signing the President's Climate Commitment, we are pledging to stay the course to not only meet its goals and objectives, but to continue our focus on becoming a regional leader in sustainability and renewable energy."

To date, Georgia Southern has undertaken numerous sustainability projects ranging from a partnership with Georgia Power to "re-lamp" the campus with Compact Fluorescent Bulbs (CFLs) to implementing a comprehensive waste reduction, diversion and reuse plan centered on a campus-wide recycling effort. In addition, the University has worked with the U.S. Green Building Council to achieve LEED certification for numerous facilities and 30 percent of its current buildings have undergone retrofits to make them more energy efficient.

According to Keel, one of the University's most successful projects is its partnership with the City of Statesboro. The two partnered to help conserve the local drinking water supply by using recycled water to irrigate approximately 30,000 square-feet of the university's athletic fields. Not only has the project resulted in a significant cost savings, but has decreased the burden on the area's groundwater table and drinking water aquifer.

Georgia Southern is not stopping there. It is continuing to build on its efforts focusing on renewable energy sciences with an emphasis in application. Teams of faculty and students are conducting research to identify renewable sources of energy in South Georgia that will lead to the design of products to capture the energy in a useable form for commercial or residential use. Georgia Southern faculty are also working to assist regional industries in energy consumption analysis, appropriate strategies for conservation of energy, and preservation of the environment. In addition to creating a regional repository of technology that showcases renewable energy application, these activities will help advance the State of Georgia and the region through the benefits of higher education.

Other examples of the University's efforts include ensuring that the next generation of students graduating from Georgia Southern's engineering programs will be educated in renewable energy technology both at graduate and undergraduate levels. This past year, the University even launched a concentration in Environmental Sustainability that requires those students who select the program to complete a four-credit environmental course before graduation.

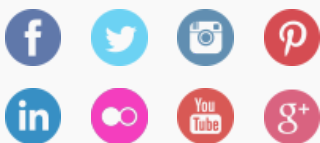
"We are proud of the efforts that we have made to date, but recognize there is still work to be done," says Keel. "Through the work of our outstanding students, faculty and staff, we are making a meaningful and measurable difference on our campus, in our community and throughout our state and region. That is something we can all be proud of."

**About the ACUPCC:**

*The ACUPCC is a high-visibility effort to address global warming by garnering institutional commitments from college and universities to accelerate the education, research and community engagement to equip society to re-stabilize the earth's climate, and eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions from their own operations. Learn more at: [www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org](http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org).*

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