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Georgia Southern University to Receive \$4.7 Million to Support Complete College Georgia Initiative

JUNE 5, 2012

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Georgia Southern University will receive \$4.7 million from the Board of Regents to support the state of Georgia's *Complete College Georgia* initiative, designed to increase Georgia's share of workers with a college degree or certificate.

The new funds represent part of \$72.5 million provided by Gov. Nathan Deal and the General Assembly to support efforts to increase college completion rates. As a result, all 35 University System of Georgia (USG) institutions will receive new funding to strengthen programs serving the system's almost 320,000 students.

By 2020, it is projected that more than 60 percent of jobs in Georgia will require some form of a college education, whether a certificate, associate's degree or bachelor's degree. Today, only 42 percent of the state's young adults — its burgeoning workforce — qualify. Georgia's Higher Education Completion Plan, a joint effort between the USG and the Technical College System of Georgia, defines a way to ensure that by 2020, 60 percent of young adults in Georgia will hold a college certificate or degree.

"College completion is critical for a prosperous future in Georgia," said Brooks Keel, Ph.D., president of Georgia Southern University. "The United States, once a world leader in the proportion of young adults holding a college degree, now falls behind 14 other developed nations. Georgia Southern's goal is to graduate students who are not only competitive and work ready, but that can serve as a talent pipeline for current and future business in Georgia."

Georgia Southern will use approximately \$4.7 million in new funding to address priority full-time faculty and staff hiring needs in support of college completion efforts. New faculty will be recruited for all of the University's academic units including the recently established Allen E. Paulson College of Engineering & Information Technology and renamed College of Science & Mathematics.

In addition, the University will recruit new faculty in the College of Business Administration, College of Education, College of Health & Human Sciences, College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences and the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health. The funding for recruiting new faculty will be in addition to the University's ongoing efforts to replace vacant faculty positions.

In addition to hiring faculty, the University has plans to use a portion of the \$4.7 million to add academic advisors, enhance the academic experiences provided by its unique First-Year Experience program and add staff at the Zach S. Henderson Library. The University is also working to expand its University Honors Program and will provide additional international learning opportunities for students.

"We appreciate the state's confidence and investment in Georgia Southern University," said Keel. "This is first and foremost an investment to support current and future generations of students. In addition, this will have an immediate positive impact on our University and our community. Our goal is

to ensure that as we continue to grow, we maintain the 'small feel' that has made Georgia Southern the first choice for record numbers of outstanding students."

For more information about Complete College Georgia, visit:http://www.usg.edu/educational_access/documents/GaHigherEducationCompletionPlan2012.pdf

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Tweets by @GeorgiaSouthern

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Congratulations to #GeorgiaSouthern @GSCOSM alumnus Nick Wiley ('83) who was recently named the chief conservation officer of @DucksUnlimited! ow.ly/BhVW30hkDJR



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