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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2013). *Newsroom*. 1323.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/1323>

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Open Studios set for Empty Bowl Project

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

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The Betty Foy Sanders Department of Art at Georgia Southern University is gearing up for its annual Empty Bowl Project, a service project that benefits the Statesboro Food Bank.



Under the direction of ceramics professor Jeff Schmuki, ceramics students work year-round to create unique bowls to be sold with chili for \$10 each. All proceeds from the chili sale are donated to the Food Bank, which provides food for families not only in Bulloch County, but surrounding counties as well.

"Hunger is something we don't necessarily see, but just because we don't see it doesn't mean it's not happening," Schmuki said. "The bowls are a small reminder that people still go hungry in this country, and this is just something small we can do to help."

In addition to students who work diligently on this project, the ceramics studio is opened to the public twice. Faculty, staff, students and members of the community, from beginners to those experienced in working with ceramics, are welcome to attend the open studio sessions and create

their own bowl.

The open studios are slated for Monday, Sept. 23, and Wednesday, Sept. 25 from 2:30-5 p.m. in the Ceramics and Sculpture Building. Visitors will be able to work with experienced ceramics students to create and decorate bowls for the chili sale, set this year for Oct. 17 at the Rotunda on Georgia Southern's campus. Last year, the project raised nearly \$4,000. For every dollar donated, the Statesboro Food Bank is able to provide the equivalent of seven meals to someone in need.

"It's not just about making bowls, but beginning a conversation. One bowl equals around 70 meals and there are entire families that need help," Schmuki said. "We live in one of the poorest counties in Georgia and as citizens, we have the responsibility to help those less fortunate in our area. I'm often asked by students, 'How can I make a difference?' The answer is simple: Start where you live, start in your community."

Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers 125 degree programs serving more than 20,000 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered approach to education. Visit: www.georgiasouthern.edu.



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Rural Health Research Institute Establishes "Partnerships for Health"

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

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Georgia Southern University's Rural Health Research Institute (RHRI) has formed four county level "Partnerships for Health" to increase community capacity to address rural health-related issues. The Partnerships in Bulloch, Candler, Emanuel and Evans Counties represent collaborations between health-related community agencies in each county, RHRI and Mercer University's Center for Rural Health and Health Disparities. The goal of each partnership is to collaboratively identify and address the most pressing health needs in each community.

The initiative is part of a \$5.1 million grant awarded to the RHRI in August 2012 from the National Institutes of Health through the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. The grant, which focuses on research, training and community outreach throughout rural southeast Georgia, has already enacted several training programs and is in the process of developing new diabetes and high blood pressure focused health interventions.

"We are very excited to have the Partnerships established," said Bryant Smalley, Ph.D., RHRI executive director and joint principal investigator of the grant. "These collaborative partnerships will focus on improving health through grass-roots, community-driven efforts that are uniquely able to navigate the social, cultural and economic realities of rural living."

Each Partnership will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of its community and receive seed grant funding to allow them to implement a collaboratively-developed health education or intervention project to address an identified need. Partnership members also receive training in grant writing, communications planning, dissemination and community based participatory research where communities and researchers form equal partnerships in developing and implementing projects and programs.

The RHRI is an interdisciplinary hub of rural health research and outreach. Its mission is to improve health in rural areas by promoting cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research and outreach that connects faculty from diverse fields and promotes the development of researchers examining rural health issues. To learn more, visit: www.georgiasouthern.edu/RHRI.

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