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## Newsroom

Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern University Spring 2014 Graduation Speakers Announced

MARCH 24, 2014

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Georgia Southern University has selected the Honorable Nathan Deal, governor of Georgia, and the 2014 Georgia Teacher of the Year and Georgia Southern alumna Jemelleh Coes as the speakers for the 2014 spring commencement ceremonies on May 9 and 10.



Coes will speak Friday, May 9, at 1 p.m. at Hanner Fieldhouse during the commencement ceremony for graduate students. Coes is a special education English language arts teacher at Langston Chapel Middle School in Bulloch County where she has taught for six years. In 2012, as the youngest member of the faculty, she was selected to represent her school as the Teacher of the Year and went on to become the 2014 Georgia Teacher of the Year.

As the Georgia Teacher of the Year, Coes travels the state to serve as an advocate for education. She provides workshops and keynote addresses statewide. She serves as a consultant for the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, is a member of the Department of Education Teacher Advisory Board, a Georgia Partnership of Excellence in Education board member and was recently appointed to Georgia's Network for Transforming Educator Preparation Advisory Council.

Gov. Deal will address undergraduates as they receive their degrees on Saturday, May 10, at 9 a.m. at Allen E. Paulson Stadium. Deal took the oath of office as Georgia's 82nd governor on Jan. 10, 2011, and his top goal is keeping Georgia the No. 1 place in the nation to do business, a ranking the state earned in 2013. He helped attain this recognition by creating the Competitiveness Initiative, reforming the tax code and recruiting businesses to relocate here.

Deal, a Sandersville native, served in the U.S. Army at Fort Gordon in Augusta after graduating with a law degree from Mercer University, and then began a private law practice in Gainesville, the hometown of his wife, Sandra Dunagan Deal. While his wife taught in Hall County public schools, the governor began a long span of service to his community as a prosecutor, judge, state senator and U.S. congressman.

During his 17 years in Congress, Deal rose to chair the Health Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce, where he became a noted expert on entitlement reform and health care policy. Deal ended his congressional career to campaign for governor, becoming the Republican nominee in August 2010 and then winning the governorship in November of that year.

Get more information on the spring commencement ceremonies including parking information by visiting [www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu/commencement](http://www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu/commencement). Both the ceremonies will be streamed live at [www.georgiasouthern.tv](http://www.georgiasouthern.tv).



Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers 125 degree programs serving more than 20,500 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](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu).

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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](https://ow.ly/BhVW30hkDJR)



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