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7-26-2018

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#### Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2018). *Newsroom*. 1528.  
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/1528>

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# Georgia Southern provides students with new opportunities to 'Start Now'

JULY 26, 2018

Save



Georgia Southern University is hosting events specifically tailored for transfer and non-traditional students. Students who want to attend Georgia Southern University for the first time or re-enroll have a unique opportunity to START NOW through events that will provide opportunities to meet with a counselor about same-day admission decisions and to meet with an academic advisor to start classes this summer. Start Now events are offered at the University's three campuses in July and August.

The Statesboro Campus Start Now event will take place on Tuesday, July 31, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Lewis Hall. The Armstrong Campus in Savannah will host the event on August 1, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., in Victor Hall. The Start Now event on the Liberty Campus in Hinesville will take place on August 2, from 2 to 7 p.m.

Interested individuals are encouraged to register [online](#) to attend the event for the campus at which they wish to enroll. They may also complete their

Georgia Southern University application online for free. Students should obtain official copies of their transcripts from all schools attended prior to the event.

Students also will be able to speak with Financial Aid while they wait for a decision. If admitted by a certain time (varies by campus), students may also see an academic advisor on the same day. Students unable to meet with an advisor on the same day will be contacted by an academic advisor the next day to be advised. Some students may be required to take a college placement exam prior to receiving a decision.

# Unique farm-to-table program rolls out on Georgia Southern's Armstrong Campus Fall 2018

JULY 26, 2018

Save



*(L-R) Heather Joesting, Ph.D., Georgia Southern's FORAM Sustainable Aquaponics Research Center (SARC) senior scientist, Ryan Bryzcki and James Morgan from Eagle Dining Services on the Armstrong Campus and SARC Director Brent Feske launch a farm-to-table program with a planting in the greenhouse.*

Select dining options will be just-off-the-farm fresh on Georgia Southern University's Armstrong Campus in Savannah beginning Fall 2018, thanks to a unique in-house partnership.

Employing aquaponics, a method of soilless farming that cultivates produce and fish simultaneously, the FORAM Sustainable Aquaponics Research Center (SARC) and Eagle Dining Services have joined to introduce the University's first farm-to-table program. Armstrong's Galley Dining Commons and other campus venues, including the University's food truck, will have the opportunity to feature dishes crafted with fresh vegetable offerings grown on campus.

"I believe this will be a powerful partnership that will have a positive impact on our students, campus, sustainability and both of our departments," said Michael Morgan, director of Dining on the Armstrong Campus. "It is my long-term goal

to have at least one of our Dining concepts' to be fully supplied by this partnership as long as growing seasons and weather permits."

In April, associate professor of chemistry and SARC Director Brent Feske, Ph.D., invited Morgan to take a tour of the aquaponics program and greenhouse, located in the field off of Arts Drive.

"This meeting led to talks of a partnership where we could commit staff to assist in the planting and harvesting of the produce grown in the Aquaponics Center, in lieu of produce bought off-campus to be used in our Dining facilities," he said. "Ryan Bryzcki, assistant director of Dining on the Armstrong Campus, and I felt it important that we be the first to volunteer to assist in the planting to show the aquaponics program directors and our dining staff our commitment to this partnership."

Last week, Heather Joesting, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology and SARC senior scientist, led Morgan and Bryzcki through a kick-off planting of Red Noodle Beans, deep-hued, nutrient-rich stringless Chinese beans popular in stir fry dishes or as steamed stand-alones, in the Aquaponics Lab.



They then transferred the seedlings to the greenhouse, which is home to four 800-gallon aquatic tanks brimming with Nile and Blue tilapia that grow from fingerlings to adult-sized fish. Within the modern ecosystem, evolved from an ancient Chinese aquaculture practice, plant and aquatic life thrive as bacteria introduced into the system converts fish waste into nutrients, which then fertilize the plants and filter the water.

“The process is really amazing,” noted Joesting. “It’s really nice to watch your food go from a seed to a sprout that then comes out to the grow beds into a vegetable that can then be consumed. I’ve had some of our produce and it is amazing.”

The hope is to harvest the Red Noodle Bean crop, along with many others, which may include arugula, basil, cabbage, cilantro, collards, kale, lettuces, mustard, sage, spinach and thyme, as well as various types of peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers and squash, for debut menus filled with pizza, pastas, salads and other dishes crafted with the just-picked items by mid-fall.

“Here we have the security and the pride to know that the produce came from this very campus and we’re supporting the campus in the process,” said Morgan.

For more information on the FORAM Sustainable Aquaponics Research Center, visit <http://cosm.georgiasouthern.edu/sarc/>.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving more than 27,000 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia

# Georgia Southern professor focused on shark, stingray research

JULY 26, 2018



*Georgia Southern professor Christine Bedore, Ph.D., holds a bull shark.*

Fans of the popular Discovery Channel event Shark Week have something in common with Georgia Southern University professor Christine Bedore, Ph.D.

Bedore, an associate professor in the Department of Biology, has a passion for learning all she can about the ocean's top predators, as well as a passion for researching stingrays. She's done extensive studies and works regularly with OCEARCH, a nonprofit organization that tags sharks to conduct research off the East Coast.

Specifically, Bedore studies the eyes of sharks and stingrays to see how they are viewing their prey and other predators. When she is out on board with the OCEARCH crew, she helps where she can, but is most interested in getting photographs of shark eyes.

"We get a bunch of eye measurements and bring that back to the lab and match it up with museum specimens," she said. "Then we do some modeling where we trace the path of light through the eye. This tells us how far away a shark can see a prey item or another shark under different environmental conditions."

Additionally, the OCEARCH crew and Bedore take blood samples to understand shark physiology and their stress levels. They also take skin samples to look at bacteria and antibiotics that are on the skin and remove parasites and look at the overall health of the shark.

She has also been working with shrimpers off the coast of Georgia to understand how sharks and stingrays interact with shrimp boat equipment.

“We are interested in how sharks and stingrays act with the trawl gear,” she said. “Whenever a shrimp boat is actively fishing, they have nets they put down on the bottom of the ocean and tow them along and basically catch whatever is in the path of the net, which is what we call bycatch.”

Bycatch, or unwanted fish and other marine creatures caught by the giant shrimp nets, is essentially a big ball of bait that sharks follow and bite at, which can cause a lot of damage to gear, she said. Bedore is working with scientists, fisherman and conservationists to develop a deterrent that will keep sharks from damaging gear.

But more importantly, Bedore’s research focuses on what happens when sharks and stingrays are caught with the bycatch.

“Part of what we’re doing is trying to understand how many sharks and stingrays are being caught by shrimpers,” she said. “What areas along the coast are they being caught, are they catching newborns or adults and how is that going to be significant for the environment?”

Bedore said this isn’t just happening off the coast of Georgia, but across the U.S., which she finds fascinating. She hopes the studies and conservation efforts can help scientists gain a better understanding of sharks.

“This is such an early project so we’re just trying to get an overall picture of what’s happening,” she said. “What we’ve figured out so far is that most of the species (of shark) caught as bycatch are some of the most reproductively successful species, and since they are putting out a lot of young, the impact on shark populations is probably pretty minimal.”

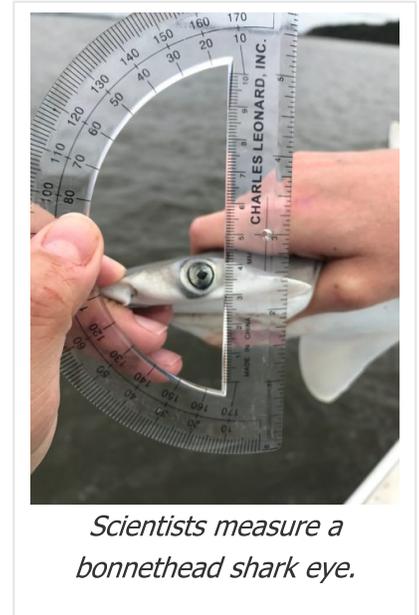
What is more interesting to Bedore is the effect trawl nets have on stingrays. Most shrimp trawl nets have turtle excluder devices, which helps prevent large sharks, large turtles and large fish from becoming trapped in the nets, she noted.

“What’s kind of interesting is that stingrays, because they’re flat, can turn sideways, so the turtle excluder devices don’t seem to work for the stingrays,” she said. “But stingrays tend to be pretty prolific, so they’re probably similar to some of the sharks we’re seeing that are caught in the net and there may be minimal impact.”

However, Bedore said some species of stingrays may only have one or two young per year, so scientists don’t know how these species populations may be affected long-term.

“Stingrays can also have some trauma from going through the net; they’re potentially towed for hours, and they have stingers that can get caught in the webbing so it can damage their tails,” she said.

As Bedore continues her research and works with teams like OCEARCH and local shrimpers, there is one common thread she finds most fascinating of all.



*Scientists measure a bonnethead shark eye.*