Newsroom

August 1, 2018

Georgia Southern University

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The Georgia Educational Research Association opens call for proposals

AUGUST 1, 2018

The Georgia Educational Research Association (GERA) has opened its call for proposals for the 43rd Annual Meeting, taking place Oct. 5 at the Anderson Conference Center in Macon, Georgia.

In concurrence with the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the theme of the GERA 2018 Annual Meeting is “The Dreams, Possibilities, and Necessity of Public Education.”

Those interested in submitting a proposal may also be considered for the Distinguished Paper Award, which allows the winner to present at the 2019 AERA Annual Meeting. Currently enrolled graduate students are eligible to submit papers for the Outstanding Student Research Award, the winner of which will receive recognition at this year’s GERA Annual Meeting.

The deadline for proposal submissions is Aug. 31.

GERA is a state affiliate of the national organization, AERA and one of Georgia’s most dynamic research organizations. GERA has approximately 150 members from universities and colleges; public and private schools; and state, local, public, and private educational agencies and institutions. The organization covers disciplines in education, psychology, statistics, sociology, history, economics, philosophy, anthropology and political science.

For more information on GERA from the Division of Continuing Education, please contact Judy Hendrix at gera@georgiasouthern.edu or by phone at 912-478-5555. More information may also be found by visiting the organization’s website at GeorgiaSouthern.edu/conted/gera2018.

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 Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.
The Georgia Southern University Alumni Association has named the "40 Under 40" Class of 2018.

Designated by the University’s Alumni Association, the honor recognizes young alumni who are leading the way in business, leadership, community, educational and/or philanthropic endeavors.

“We are excited to honor the ’40 Under 40’ Class of 2018 not only for their leadership in their personal and professional lives but for their commitment to the University,” said Wendell Tompkins, Director of Alumni Relations. “Our outstanding graduates from Georgia Southern University and Armstrong State University are leading the way as stalwarts in their communities.”

Chosen by a selection committee based on their professional expertise and achievements, as well as dedication to charitable and community initiatives, “40 Under 40” honorees represent the excellence of the University’s young alumni and demonstrate the positive contributions and remarkable achievements for which Georgia Southern and Armstrong graduates are known.

The full list of “40 Under 40” Class of 2018 honorees is available online [here](#). The class will be recognized at an awards luncheon on Friday, September 28 in the Nessmith-Lane Center Ballroom on the Georgia Southern Statesboro Campus. In addition, the honorees will be featured in the fall edition of Georgia Southern magazine and on the Alumni Association website.

To learn more about the program, visit [GeorgiaSouthern.edu/40under40](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu/40under40).

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Tags: Alumni
Georgia Southern University Police Department’s K9 Bear to get donation of body armor

AUGUST 1, 2018

Bear poses for a photo in front of a Georgia Southern Police Department K-9 vehicle.

Georgia Southern University Police Department’s K9, “Bear”, will receive a bullet and stab protective vest thanks to a charitable donation from non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. Bear’s vest is sponsored by Optima Energy, Inc. and will be embroidered with the sentiment “This gift of protection provided by Optima Energy”. Delivery is expected within eight to ten weeks.

K-9 Unit officer Philip Garza said the new vest will provide a variety of advantages to the department.

“The vest will enable us to be better prepared for worst case scenarios such as post-blast as well as an active shooter incident,” Garza said. “The most important benefit of the vest for K-9 Bear is it will offer ballistic protection to him just as my ballistic vest protects me. It increases my chances of survival as will his.”

Garza said the vest will make him feel better when taking Bear out on a call.
“At the end of the day, K-9 Bear is a sworn officer with Georgia Southern University Police, but most importantly, he is my partner, and the added protection gives me great peace of mind,” he said.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. is a 501c (3) charity located in East Taunton, MA whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. The non-profit was established in 2009 to assist law enforcement agencies with this potentially lifesaving body armor for their four-legged K9 officers. Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provided over 3,000 protective vests, in 50 states, through private and corporate donations, at a value of $5.7 million dollars.

The program is open to dogs actively employed in the U.S. with law enforcement or related agencies who are certified and at least 20 months of age. New K9 graduates, as well as K9s with expired vests, are eligible to participate.

The donation to provide one protective vest for a law enforcement K9 is $950.00. Each vest has a value between $1,744 – $2,283 and a five-year warranty, and an average weight of 4-5 lbs. There is an estimated 30,000 law enforcement K9s throughout the United States. For more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call 508-824-6978. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provides information, lists events, and accepts tax-deductible donations of any denomination at www.vik9s.org or mailed to P.O. Box 9 East Taunton, MA 02718.

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Tags: Office of Public Safety
School psychology graduate student attends advocacy institute in Washington, D.C.

AUGUST 1, 2018

Courtney Smith, far right, takes a picture in front of the U.S. Capitol with her Georgia colleagues.

Throughout her graduate education at Georgia Southern University, Courtney Smith has become an advocate for her future career field of school psychology.

"Not many people know what school psychologists are," Smith said. "They often get us confused with school counselors, and that is why it is so important to advocate for the profession and awareness of our role in the schools."

Smith serves as the University's student representative on the Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP) Executive Board and has been an active member of the Georgia Southern School Psychology Student Association (SPSA). Throughout her time in the Educational Specialist program, Smith has participated in career events, speaking to prospective applicants and coordinating campus activities for School Psychology Awareness Week.

It was not until recently that Smith realized that she could do more. After being nominated by a faculty member, Smith received the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Graduate Student Advocacy in Action Scholarship. This award provided free registration for the annual Public Policy Institute. A partnership between NASP
and Georgia Washington University, the Institute offers intensive learning experiences that help build foundational knowledge of education public policy and grassroots advocacy skills.

“Prior to attending the Institute, all of my advocacy efforts had been trying to recruit students to our program and trying to let people in different fields know what school psychologists do,” Smith said. “But the Institute really shifted me towards legislative advocacy and the importance of legislation and policies that affect our students and their access to mental health services.”

Held July 16-18 in Washington, D.C., the Public Policy Institute culminated with participants visiting Capitol Hill where they met with representatives and staff members from their regional districts.

“The main thing I advocated for was the Increasing Access to Mental Health in Schools Act, Smith said. “This act looks at lowering the ratios of students to school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors in schools.”

Smith explained that NASP recommends school psychologists serve 500 to 700 students for a comprehensive mental health service.

“In Georgia, school psychologists are only funded one to every 2,475 students,” Smith said. “It’s frightening to think about when you need to provide service and support to that many students. It’s really about meeting the needs of the children.”

Since attending the Public Policy Institute, Smith, who is scheduled to graduate in fall 2018, now says she plans to expand her advocacy for the school psychology field.

“Sometimes in education, we think we are not supposed to be political,” she said. “But I think it is important to know that there are policies being made that could either really help or harm children in our schools. The Institute really inspired me to bring these skills back on a state and local level and be an active voice for children on a legislative platform.”

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Tags: College of Education, School Psychology Program