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Georgia Southern gives back to local communities through Treasure Savannah and alumni service projects

SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

On Sept. 22, almost 300 Georgia Southern University students, faculty and staff joined to volunteer for Treasure Savannah, the biannual day of service on the Armstrong Campus in Savannah and Liberty Campus in Hinesville.

This marks the ninth year for the spirited volunteer event that allows the campus community to connect with the greater Savannah and Hinesville areas, make connections with local nonprofit organizations and serve the communities in which the University members live, work and study.

The Office of Leadership and Community Engagement's Ben Phillips led the early morning kickoff on the Armstrong Campus, which was live streamed to the Liberty Campus, as volunteers gathered around the steps outside of Student Union.

"This marks nine years of giving back to the community and making a difference," said Phillips. "We're honored to have President Shelley Nickel join us today, us as we seek to engage in our community and empower positive change."

President Nickel welcomed the crowd and encouraged them to give a shout-out to volunteers on the Liberty Campus. She also reminded them why Treasure Savannah is such an important event.

"We are doing what we think is the right thing for our communities," said Nickel. "Part of your education at Georgia Southern University is to learn to be a leader. One way we do that is by giving back to the communities that we reside in. So, I want to thank each and every one of you for coming out this early on a Saturday morning and realizing that we are not in this alone. We have to be participants in the broader college community we live in."

First-year psychology major Celeste Chapman couldn't wait to volunteer at Hoofs 4 Healing, a nonprofit organization that offers therapeutic equine-assisted activities for individuals with disabilities including cerebral palsy, spina bifida and down syndrome, in addition to Fort Stewart soldiers who suffer from PTSD.

"I love volunteering," said Chapman. "I like having a sense of helping something bigger than me. And I love what this program stands for. We can make the area more beautiful and accessible for everyone. Plus, this is really fun out here."

Brendon Hines, a transfer student in the rehabilitation sciences program, also volunteered at the equine facility.

"I like the Hoofs 4 Healing program because they make horseback riding accessible for people with disabilities," noted Hines. "So I think that's really cool, especially being a rehab sciences major."

He also likes giving back to the community.

"I feel like you have to give back a little bit of what you get," he said. "And I think it's good because it establishes a good relationship between the school and the community."

Additional Armstrong Campus service sites included Keep Savannah Beautiful, Salvation Army and the Armstrong Campus. Liberty Campus service sites included Liberty Humane Shelter, Keep Liberty Beautiful, Hinesville Downtown Development Authority, Liberty County Manna House and the Liberty Campus.

The Georgia Southern Alumni Association also hosted events throughout Chatham, Bulloch and Bryan Counties, in addition to other parts of Georgia, Florida and New York in connection with the University's national day of service. Alumni donated their time and talents to volunteer projects that enhanced area communities.

For photos of Georgia Southern's Fall 2018 Treasure Savannah event, visit https://photos.georgiasouthern.edu/Georgia-Southern-University-2018/Special-Events/Treasure-Savannah/2018-Treasure-Savannah-Fall/.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research institution founded in 1906, offers 142 degree programs serving more than 27,000 students through nine colleges on three campuses in Savannah, Statesboro, 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.