

# Newsroom

September 24, 2018

Georgia Southern University

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# Blind Willie McTell statue placed in front of Statesboro Convention and Visitors Bureau a symbol of working together

SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

Save



*Georgia Southern University art professor Marc Moulton, M.F.A., sits next to the sculpture he created.*

William Samuel McTell may have lost his sight during childhood, but that didn't stop him from becoming one of the most influential blues musicians of his time — and a local hero. While his impact on Statesboro is evident all over town, his likeness has finally been immortalized with a bronze statue created by Georgia Southern University art professor Marc Moulton, M.F.A.

McTell was born in Thomson, Georgia, in the late 1800s, and he learned to play the guitar after moving to Statesboro, where he lived until his mother died in the 1920s. He learned the standard six-string guitar first, but he eventually began to play the 12-string exclusively.

Soon after his mother's death, McTell moved to Atlanta and became a professional musician. He would then play music across the country before his death in 1959.

In 1928, McTell recorded his most famous song, "Statesboro Blues" for Victor Records in Atlanta. The song's popularity exploded after The Allman Brothers Band covered it in 1971, and people still visit Statesboro because of the song.

Bob Mikell, member of the Blue Mile Committee, said McTell was a perfect choice for the first step in honoring Statesboro's cultural and historic past through the arts and the Statesboro Stars program, which honors Statesboro's biggest and brightest figures through art.

"McTell embodies the cultural and historic past of Statesboro," Mikell said. "He composed 'Statesboro Blues' and grew up around the Blue Mile, so there was a great connection there. He is famous in the music community, and he was a good start to the Statesboro Stars."

Mikell, who was also part of the team that secured the funding for the statue, was the head volunteer on the committee that chose Moulton to sculpt the statue. He said the goal for the project originally was to bring Georgia Southern and the Statesboro community together symbolically and literally to honor a Statesboro icon.

"Marc is a very talented sculptor who was from Georgia Southern and in Statesboro and could work with us, so it was a no brainer," Mikell said. "We wanted to find someone from (Georgia) Southern to make the sculpture of a community leader, which furthers our mission of bringing the two together."

The statue, which is made of cast bronze, depicts McTell sitting while playing his 12-string guitar. Moulton said the statue shows McTell in his natural state.

"McTell usually sat while he played, so it was determined early on that the purpose was to have an object that people could sit or stand around and have a photo taken," Moulton said. "Putting it on a bench made the most sense."

In April 2017, Statesboro was awarded \$1 million after being named one of America's Best Communities. Part of the winnings was used to buy the supplies needed to make the McTell statue.

The statue was in development for around a year and eight months. Moulton, who also created the sculpture in front of the Center for Art and Theater on the Statesboro Campus, said the statue is based on a photograph of McTell.

"There weren't many photographs (of McTell) available," Moulton said. "The statue took about a year's worth of work to create. It's approximately life-sized, based on the photo we used."

The statue will serve as a symbol for Statesboro and the song that made the town famous for years to come, and Mikell said other Statesboro heroes will be honored artistically within the Statesboro Stars project. For now, however, McTell serves as the lead symbol for the community's storied past and its passion for teamwork.

"It was a long process, so to see McTell there with his guitar as I drive by every day is a reminder of what this community and university can do when we work together," he said.

*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](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu).*

Tags: [College of Arts and Humanities](#)

# Georgia Southern University offers transportation services to students, faculty and staff

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Save

Georgia Southern University students, faculty and staff need not panic when it's time to take a trip across campus or across town. Students, faculty and staff on the Statesboro Campus have the ability to not only rent cars through Zipcar but also now utilize bikes on campus provided through Lime.

The University's Parking and Transportation Services department has partnered with Zipcar Inc., since 2013 to offer accessible car services to faculty, students and staff on the Statesboro Campus, while Lime has been on campus since Aug. 18.

For the price of about four lattes, everyone on the Statesboro campus can have annual access to two cars that are available to be checked out and driven up to 180 miles a day.

"Zipcar benefits students who do not have their own vehicles and need to get to locations within the area, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and other retail locations," said University Director of Auxiliary Marketing Michael Murphy. "Any student of Georgia Southern University can use the service and enjoy the added mobility to their college experience. Auxiliary Services is proud to serve our students by providing convenient, safe services like Zipcar."

Zipcars are located in Lot C in the Centennial Place Parking Lot. They are available on-demand and can be easily reserved and accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The annual membership fee is \$15 for students, faculty and staff. Student leaders, such as student government leaders, resident assistants, campus tour guides and orientation staff, can join for free.

In an effort to stay on top of the rapidly changing shared-use transportation environment, Georgia Southern continues to provide students, faculty and staff with desirable options, such as rideshare service Lime.

If people aren't traveling as far or want a more sustainable way of traveling, Lime charges 50 cents per 30 minutes of bike time for anyone with a University email address. Riders download the Lime app, find the bike closest to them, scan the bike and unlock it to ride. At the end of the ride, the bike is parked and locked for the next rider's use.

"Lime always seeks to partner closely with cities, colleges and businesses to provide dock-free, subsidy-free, shared smart mobility services and promote urban mobility for the public," said Lime Operations Manager Megan Huggins.

Zipcars can be used by the hour or by the day. A gas card, parking card and insurance card are included in the reservation. There will be an additional charge for trips over 180 miles.

These services highlight the university's efforts to provide all students, faculty and staff with viable transportation options.

Visit [GeorgiaSouthern.edu/parking](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu/parking) to learn more about Zipcar on the Statesboro Campus. For more information on Lime, download the Lime app for iPhone [here](#) or Android [here](#).

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