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Athletics Department Recognizes Team Behind The Team

*Behind-the-scenes groups are what make program tick*

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**STATESBORO** - For five or six game days every fall, fans of Georgia Southern football pour into Paulson Stadium to cheer on their Eagles. Sure, the fans know who Matt Breida and Ironhead Gallon are, but do they know who the public address announcer is? What about the official stats personnel who love the Eagles so much that they drive in from out of state on game days? How about the person who coordinates all the buses or the IT group who make sure all the equipment is working?

There are countless groups and departments around campus that all come together as one to work behind the scenes at Paulson Stadium to make game day go smoothly.
With the Eagles' success this year, athletic director Tom Kleinlein held a special recognition Wednesday afternoon in Bishop Fieldhouse for some of those who are critical to the behind-the-scenes operations of Georgia Southern football, not just on game day, but year-round.

"We had a historic season this year, capped by a bowl win in the GoDaddy Bowl, and it occurred to me that while we recognize the accomplishments of our student-athletes our coaches and people who have an immediate impact on the program, sometimes we fail to recognize or understand that there is an entire team associated with the success of our athletic program," Kleinlein said. "Many of these people are never seen by the public, the coaches or the players coming in for a football game. We wanted today to be about recognizing the team behind the team and honor them in a way that we could give them something to remember our accomplishments by."

Around 100 individuals, ranging from compliance to marketing, from the R.A.C. to parking services and many others were presented with a plaque that featured the 2015 team photo, team record and the GoDaddy Bowl logo to thank them for their hard work. The members of the football team, along with the coaching staff, were also on hand to show their appreciation for the thankless work done by this group and to get a chance to have the two groups meet away from game day.

"I think was really good because sometimes we overlook and fail to recognize the things that the people outside of the team do for us," rising senior quarterback Kevin Ellison said. "All of the hard work they put in, we couldn't do it without them, so we're just thankful to have such a great group of people who are willing to help our athletic program out."

Head football coach Tyson Summers brought the entire team as a way to thank the workers, but also to help his players recognize how much work goes into their success that often times is never seen.

"I think it's important for our players to realize how many people devote themselves to the best efficiency for Georgia Southern and for our players on game day. I think sometimes we all take for granted the amount of people who work behind the scenes and the amount of support we have from our university in terms of what goes into a game day outside of our team. We wanted to make sure we came over here and thanked all the people who help us out each day and throughout the season and year and show them how much we support them and appreciate what they do."