

Newsroom

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Georgia Southern University

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Georgia Southern Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society chapter earns highest honor at national conference

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On behalf of the Georgia Southern Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society, chapter president Sharmita Saha Porshia receives the Capstone Award from the national Phi Eta Sigma staff at the Chapter Excellence in Awards in Washington, D.C.

Georgia Southern University Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society chapter on the Statesboro Campus recently earned the Capstone Award, the highest honor of the evening at the national Phi Eta Sigma Chapter Excellence Awards, held in Washington, D.C. The chapter was the only one in the country to receive the recognition.

"The Georgia Southern Phi Eta Sigma chapter is a group of well-rounded student-leaders who demonstrate best practices in their studies and organizational duties," noted Chris Caplinger, Ph.D., faculty advisor to Phi Eta Sigma and director of First-Year Experience. "They are compassionate and excited to continue learning how they can improve the world around them."

The pyramid on the Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society crest symbolizes strength, stability and long-standing tradition. Phi Eta Sigma seeks to recognize and reward local campus chapters that demonstrate those characteristics by presenting annually the society's Pyramid and Capstone Awards.

Of the 210 chapters in the country, 13 won the Pyramid Award, but Georgia Southern's chapter was the sole recipient of the Capstone Award, presented to chapters that undertake exemplary service or leadership projects and participate actively at the national level.

The Capstone Award continues a pattern of recognition for the chapter and its members. Since 2010, the Phi Eta Sigma national organization has awarded \$70,000 in scholarships to Georgia Southern students.

Known for their dedication to service and volunteerism, the Statesboro chapter works closely with the University's Office of First-Year Experience and helps new students adjust to college. In the fall, more than 60 Phi Eta Sigma members served as student assistants for Conversations with Professors, a 75-minute program that partners a faculty member and a student assistant with a small group of new students to discuss expectations in a college classroom, and how to successfully navigate coursework. Ninety-four percent of entering first-year students participated in the program.

In addition, chapter members participate in the Office of Leadership and Community Engagement's Alternative Breaks Program, an immersive, service experience in which small teams of students travel away from campus during breaks from school with the goal of engaging within a new community through education, service and reflection.

They also direct efforts throughout the Statesboro community, volunteering at Retails thrift shop, which supports a nonprofit animal rescue group, and ArtsFest, an annual Statesboro-Bulloch Parks and Recreation event hosted on the Statesboro campus.

"They have raised the bar for volunteering, with a project almost every month of the school year," noted Caplinger. "It is also notable that much of their volunteering is directed to promoting the success of first-year students. This is an exemplary group of peer leaders."

Phi Eta Sigma is the oldest national honor society for first-year college students in the U.S. Georgia Southern students must earn a minimum 3.6 GPA after the fall semester of their first year as a college student to become a member.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving nearly 26,500 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](https://www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu).

Board of Regents of USG announces finalist for next President of Georgia Southern

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Finalist named for Georgia Southern University Presidency



Dr. Kyle Marrero

ATLANTA (University System of Georgia) – Board of Regents Chairman Don L. Waters and University System of Georgia (USG) Chancellor Steve Wrigley today announced Dr. Kyle Marrero as the finalist for president of Georgia Southern University.

Marrero currently serves as president of the University of West Georgia, a position he's held since 2013.

"During his tenure at West Georgia, Marrero oversaw record enrollment growth, fostered and strengthened ties within the community and implemented strategic initiatives aimed at increasing student and academic success," said Chancellor Steve Wrigley. "Kyle's devotion to student success, innovation and growth are evident and will serve Georgia Southern students, faculty and staff well. I'm grateful for the diligent efforts of the campus search committee and am thrilled to name Dr. Marrero as our finalist."

Under Marrero's leadership, UWG has achieved record enrollment, record 4 and 5-year graduation rates, record degrees conferred, record fundraising, and record annual economic impact to the region. He has worked to develop new, student-centered partnerships within the education and business communities, and with the implementation of the Engage West! initiative, won the 2015 national award for Innovation and Excellence, in the category of

Leadership Development and Diversity, from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. The institution was also selected as the University System of Georgia 2015 Institution and President of the Year for the Chancellor's Service Excellence Awards.

"The search committee worked tirelessly on behalf of Georgia Southern University and the Board of Regents, and I am thankful for their time and energy," said Regent Laura Marsh, chair of the search committee. "There were several top-notch, high-quality candidates that we vetted, but ultimately, we believe Kyle is the best fit to lead Georgia Southern in this new chapter. He will bring his leadership experience, scholarly training and commitment to engaging key stakeholders to Georgia Southern, Statesboro and the region at large. I'm excited to watch Kyle lead Georgia Southern on to achieve great things."

Marrero founded the Carrollton/Carroll County Education Collaborative a collaborative focused on K-16 student success, now a state model. Most recently, he has been assigned to lead, as Chair of the Steering Committee, the University System of Georgia's Comprehensive Administrative Review in its efforts to assess administrative support service and support functions for efficiency and effectiveness for all 26 USG institutions over the next two years.

"Kyle demonstrates the energy, enthusiasm and know-how to lead one of our state's premier institutions," Chairman Don Waters said. "His track record at University of West Georgia speaks for itself, and I'm confident he will bring that passion and commitment to Georgia Southern. On behalf of the Board of Regents and the University System of Georgia, I wish Kyle well and anticipate great things from Georgia Southern and his administration as he takes the helm." Prior to his appointment at UWG, Marrero served as Vice President for University Advancement at the University of West Florida, overseeing the university's integrated marketing communications efforts, fundraising, development, and alumni relations' activities. Marrero's background in the arts has taken him to 10 foreign countries as an artistic ambassador for the United States Embassies and 40 states as a singer and stage director. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in vocal performance from Bowling Green State University and a

Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan. He and his wife, Dr. Jane Redding, have been married for 23 years and have an eight-year-old daughter, Lily.

"I am thrilled and honored for the opportunity to become the 14th President of Georgia Southern University," said Marrero. "I have great admiration for the institution and people of Statesboro, Savannah, and Hinesville –their communities, faculty, staff, and students—who represent the traditions and distinctiveness of each of the campuses that define Georgia Southern and look forward to working together to build a unified Eagle Nation."

The Board of Regents will take action on the finalist for the next president of Georgia Southern University at a future board meeting following the required five business days after the naming of a finalist.

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