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John Lester begins role as Georgia Southern's new Vice President for Communications and Marketing

July 9, 2019

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On July 1, John Lester, DPA, assumed the role of Vice President for University Communications and Marketing at Georgia Southern University. He served as interim vice president for the department since December 2018.

"I am proud to welcome Dr. John Lester to Georgia Southern University," stated President Kyle Marrero. "This was a highly competitive search, and we attracted great talent with diverse experiences and skill sets. Understanding just how important this position will be to the successful implementation of our strategic plan, our enrollment strategic plan, and our marketing and branding campaign, I am convinced we have identified a vice president who is best suited to lead us into this next phase at Georgia Southern."

Previously, Lester was Columbus State University's Chief of Staff in the Office of the President. In that role, he directed the University Relations office, overseeing the university's branding, marketing, media

relations, government relations, advertising and public relations efforts. Joining Columbus State in 2001 as director of public relations, he also served as executive director of community and public relations and associate vice president for university and government relations.

Lester began his professional career as a newspaper reporter in Tampa, Florida, before moving into higher education communications at the University of Florida, where he helped direct the Office of News and Public Affairs and served as editor of the alumni magazine.

An active member of the Columbus, Georgia, community, he served as a member of the Columbus Film Fund Board, Columbus Economic Development Commission Board of Directors, Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee and the Implementation Task Force of the Fort Benning Partnership Committee. In addition, he has been a member of the Columbus Citywide Branding Committee and Chamber of Commerce Public Relations Committee, among many other organizations.

Lester holds a doctorate in public administration with a focus on higher education administration from Valdosta State University, a master's degree in public administration from Columbus State and a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Florida.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 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.