

Georgia Southern University

Georgia Southern Commons

Newsroom

University Communications and Marketing

7-29-2019

Newsroom

Georgia Southern University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom>

Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2019). *Newsroom*. 1719.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/1719>

This news article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Communications and Marketing at Georgia Southern Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Newsroom by an authorized administrator of Georgia Southern Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu.

Georgia Southern students go ‘bananas’ for local baseball team, create new merchandise concepts

July 29, 2019



Fans at home games of the Savannah Bananas baseball team have a new, appealing way to stay cool on sweltering Savannah days thanks to the creativity of several Georgia Southern University Parker College of Business students.

Rachel Hart, Jessica Longoria and Katie Hillery were the brains behind the Fanana, a battery-operated misting fan that Savannah Bananas fans can use to keep cool during games.

Hart, Longoria and Hillery have since graduated, but their team was one of six in a small business management class that created a product concept or prototype for the Savannah Bananas to help enhance the fan experience for home games.

The class, instructed by Curtis Sproul, Ph.D., assistant professor of management, on the Armstrong Campus, presented their ideas to Jesse Cole, the owner and president of the Savannah Bananas. Since then, the organization has adopted the Fanana, and used another idea — a t-shirt design contest, from the class.

“Everything we do is about how we get our fans involved in the experience of our company, and we had never done a fan-designed T-shirt contest,” said Cole. “When we put that out there, we had hundreds of comments and almost 100 submissions of really well-done artwork. When we narrowed it down to the final five, we ended up getting thousands of comments and remarks. That shirt, I could argue and say it’s been one of the bestsellers we’ve ever had in our four years here, and it all came from working together at brainstorming ideas.”

Cole was notably impressed with the students.

“The class’ enthusiasm was second to none,” said Cole. “I have spoken to a lot of classes in my day, and seeing these kids really get excited about it meant a lot because obviously, the Bananas are part of this community.”

Sproul believes students gained invaluable real-world experience from the project.

“This project helped these students by giving them experience with product design from conceptualization to market,” said Sproul. “They were able to grow their skill set by overcoming challenges such as working with a company to make sure their creation was a unique, cost-effective, feasible and quality product, while having to make adjustments to the product.”