

Newsroom

August 6, 2019

Georgia Southern University

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Department of Biology researchers host Citizen Scientist Training Workshop

August 6, 2019

Researchers from the Georgia Southern University Department of Biology hosted a Citizen Scientist Training Workshop earlier this summer in Waverly, Georgia. The workshop was funded by Georgia Southern University's Office of the Provost through a faculty service award and was organized and led by biology professors Loren Mathews, Ph.D., and Elizabeth Sargent, Ph.D., and biology alumna Lindsey Stanfield Jones.

Mathews and Sargent are members of the interdisciplinary Satilla Science Group, whose goal is to study, restore and protect the ecologically important Satilla River estuary.

"Our hope was to give participants the knowledge and basic skills needed to collect scientific data," Mathews said. "This will allow them to play an active role in research, conservation and restoration efforts in the Satilla River and other coastal Georgia ecosystems."

Participants learned important measures of coastal water quality, such as temperature, salinity, pH, dissolved oxygen, light, turbidity, and the types, sources and potential biological impacts of microplastics. Participants then received hands-on training on how to use field equipment to measure and record these data.

Georgia Southern College of Education professor represents Georgia at national summit on special education

August 6, 2019



College of Education's Karin Fisher, Ph.D. (far left), was one of 10 college professors in the United States to be selected to participate in the Council for Exceptional Children's Special Education Legislative Summit held in Washington D.C., in July.

Karin Fisher, Ph.D., assistant professor at Georgia Southern University College of Education, was one of 10 college professors in the United States to be selected to participate in the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Special Education Legislative Summit held in Washington D.C., in July.

Participants were selected to represent regions from all over the country and received a \$1,000 stipend to assist in registration and travel expenditures for the summit.

Fisher was assigned to a team of individuals representing the state of Georgia and provided a higher education and teacher preparation perspective. Team members also included special education teachers, school administrators and nonprofit agency representatives. Topics encompassed the issues that impact youth with disabilities, their families and the professionals who work on their behalf.

"As an assistant professor of special education and a parent of a student with autism, I am dedicated to improving educational and developmental outcomes for children with disabilities and special gifts and talents," said Fisher. "This summit made me feel like I am making a difference for

everyone — teachers, professors, parents and most importantly, the lives of the students."

One of the courses that Fisher teaches at Georgia Southern is Special Education Law and Procedures, a graduate-level course that provides knowledge about legislative requirements and procedures associated with children with special needs.

Fisher found that the summit helped to provide a deeper understanding of federal and state policies and processes. Specifically, Georgia's shortage of more than 3,000 special education teachers was addressed.

One possible resolution discussed at the summit, Fisher said, is to invest more money in programs sponsored under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), federal legislation that ensures students with disabilities are provided with free and appropriate public education that is tailored to meet their needs.

"Investing more money in IDEA programs and special education research to provide the tools to be an effective professor and researcher would help improve outcomes for these children," said Fisher. "I also think it is important to improve the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program and public service loan forgiveness programs. At Georgia Southern, as of May 2019, 50 students used the TEACH grant, and of those, 44 percent were in special education teacher preparation programs."

The CEC's Special Education Legislative Summit is hosted annually, providing educators with information about the legislative process and forthcoming policies that could affect students with disabilities. Participants are also given the opportunity to meet with state and regional legislators and/or members of their team.

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.

[Georgia Southern, Ogeechee Technical College sign agreements to provide more education opportunities for local students](#)

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Georgia Southern University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Carl L. Reiber, Georgia Southern University President Kyle Marrero, Ogeechee Technical College President Lori S. Durden and Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Ryan W. Foley.

Georgia Southern University (GS) and Ogeechee Technical College (OTC) have signed three new agreements to create seamless transitions for students seeking a bachelor's degree in information technology, logistics and intermodal transportation, and criminal justice and criminology programs at GS. The agreements for these

three programs are designed to minimize the loss of credit and course requirement duplication for students transferring to GS from OTC.

Today, GS President Kyle Marrero and OTC President Lori S. Durden formalized the collaboration between the two institutions to streamline the path to success for local students.

Marrero said the signings are a first step in a regional collaboration that will surely expand in Statesboro and throughout the region.

“This is merely a start,” Marrero said in front of a crowd of officials from both institutions in the main lobby of OTC. “We are working together to make sure that we can continue to serve the southeast region with an educational network that works together to ensure that everyone is employed, enrolled or enlisted by the time they are 18 years old.”

Durden said the agreements will be good for the most important members of the partnership — the students.

“Any time we have a chance to help students succeed, it is a good day,” Durden said. “These agreements help with our goal of promoting the economic well-being of this region. This is the right thing to do.”

Georgia Southern has also signed agreements with other local institutions, including Savannah State University and East Georgia State College, to improve administrative efficiency and serve students more effectively.

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