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# Georgia Southern, Robins Air Force Base sign agreement supporting student success

November 7, 2019



*(l-r) Col. Katrina Stephens, 78th Air Base Wing vice commander at Robins Air Force Base, Thomas Fischer, director of engineering and technical management for the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, President Kyle Marrero and Mohammad Davoud, dean of the College of Engineering and Computing, signed an educational agreement to provide opportunities to both institutions.*

On Nov. 6, leaders from Georgia Southern University and Robins Air Force Base publicly signed an Educational Partnership Agreement to provide more educational opportunities to students, faculty and staff in the areas of research, development and engineering.

“It’s critical for our institution that we develop partnerships that will expand our presence in southeast Georgia, particularly with Robins Air Force Base, to connect military with advanced educational opportunities,” stated Georgia Southern President Kyle Marrero. “We couldn’t be more proud to be signing this agreement.”

Specifically, the College of Engineering and Computing (CEC) and the Air Force will collaborate in the education of graduate and undergraduate students and faculty and staff with defense-related projects and development in

aerospace research and technology, including materials, information technology, computer science, flight dynamics, aero propulsion and power, electronics, avionics, aging aircraft issues, manufacturing, and environmental issues.

Thomas Fischer, director of engineering and technical management for the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, noted significant changes in the Air Force’s national defense strategy.

“This partnership enables us to identify things we can collaborate on, make the Air Force better and help the Georgia Southern community,” he said. “This is an opportunity for us to figure out new ways to solve our newest challenges. We’re also interested in hiring your students. I meet with a lot of industry people and they all say I need workers that are ready to work. And you do that, you create workers.

“We have the best Air Force in the world for a reason. I believe it’s because of our ecosystem (of) industry, government and academia. If any of those are weak, we’re all weak. So this is how to keep it strong.”

Georgia Southern Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Carl L. Reiber and CEC Dean Mohammad S. Davoud were among the officials at the ceremony.

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](http://GeorgiaSouthern.edu).

# Georgia Southern students volunteer, provide health screenings to Savannah community

November 7, 2019



When Luke Thayer signed up to volunteer for a National Physical Therapy Day of Service event hosted by Georgia Southern University's Department of Rehabilitation Services, it was about more than simply volunteering.

"I chose to volunteer because the profession that I am working toward does not stop outside the hours of 9 to 5," said the second-year Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) student. "Physical therapy is meant to be a continual effort to serve the community in the best way that you can."

Thayer and his classmates in the DPT program in the Waters College of Health Professions volunteered earlier this month by providing blood pressure and balance screenings to 114 Savannah community members. He enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the community while educating people on the overall benefits of physical therapy.

"A lot of citizens are not informed of the benefits of physical therapy and do not realize that we treat more than postoperative individuals and sports injuries," Thayer said. "We are musculoskeletal experts and can facilitate an increase in one's wellness by improving function, movement, balance and decreasing pain."

These community events, which were hosted at the Southwest Branch of Live Oak Public Library and the Forsyth Farmers' Market, were organized by Haley Worst, DPT, assistant professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences. They were held in recognition of National Therapy Month, which is organized by the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia and the American Physical Therapy Association.

Students were enthusiastic about the community's response to the events and valued the opportunity to provide participants with meaningful healthcare services.

"By volunteering, I was able to help in the community and continue to develop my personal communication skills in a professional setting," said Jacob Gross from Thomaston, Georgia.

Alicia Connolly from Dacula, Georgia, participated to make a contribution to the community and bolster her communication skills.

"The event gave me an opportunity to assess people and talk with them about their health, which will help better my skill set for when I am actually working and treating patients," Connolly said.

In addition to the students, several current and retired physical therapy faculty members assisted in the event, including Sharan Zirges, PT, Andi Beth Mincer, DPT, and Emeritus Anne Thompson.

The Physical Therapy program at Georgia Southern University is a full-time doctoral program housed in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences. The program consists of nine semesters of academic coursework, including three full-time clinical affiliations and several additional clinical experiences.