

Georgia Southern University

Digital Commons@Georgia Southern

Newsroom

University Communications and Marketing

3-10-2020

Newsroom

Georgia Southern University

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



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2020). *Newsroom*. 1818.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/1818>

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

WCHP faculty member receives Morton B. Duggan Distinguished Service Award

March 10, 2020

Douglas E. Masini, Ed.D., chair of the Department of Diagnostic and Therapeutic Sciences in Georgia Southern's Waters College of Health Professions, was awarded the Morton B. Duggan Distinguished Service Award by the Georgia Society for Respiratory Care.

"I am very proud to be recognized by my colleagues and the leadership of the Georgia Society for Respiratory Care," said Masini.

In addition to this award, Masini has been recognized as a national leader in his profession. Masini was nominated by the 2019 President of the Georgia Society of Respiratory Care and the Georgia Society for Respiratory Care Board of Directors.

The Morton B. Duggan Distinguished Service Award is awarded annually to someone who has demonstrated outstanding dedication to society and the respiratory care profession.

Duggan was a respiratory therapist and one of the founding fathers of the Georgia Society for Respiratory Care. He worked tirelessly on behalf of the program and education committee and was a recipient of the President's Award in 1982.

MHA students receive Foster G. McGaw Graduate Student Scholarship

March 10, 2020



Two Master of Health Administration (MHA) students, Vinh Nguyen and Ana Lanier, have been named the recipients of the Foster G. McGaw Graduate Student Scholarship for 2020.

Faculty in the MHA program selected Nguyen and Lanier due to their overall student performance both academically and experientially. Nguyen and Lanier were both awarded \$750.

“I am beyond grateful for what the Foster G. McGaw Scholarship provides,” said Nguyen, a Georgia native. “Being awarded this scholarship provides me with a solitary confirmation of my dedication and passion for health care.”

“This scholarship will help with any financial burdens that arise throughout the year,” said Lanier, a Suffolk, Virginia, native. Lanier currently works as a graduate assistant for Student Wellness and Health Promotion and plans to work in hospital administration after graduation.

Since 1975, more than 900 scholarships have been awarded. The scholarship was endowed by Foster G. McGaw, the founder of the American Hospital Supply Corporation. McGaw recognized the importance of health administration education and AUPHA’s contribution to the field.

[How a goat named Moonpie is helping special needs students to socialize](#)

March 10, 2020



Moonpie with Georgia Southern special education major Abi Walker

Moonpie may be small, but her impact is mighty. A Nigerian Dwarf goat, Moonpie was born premature and the runt of her litter. Her owner, Tonya Cooper, a special education instructor for the College of Education at Georgia Southern University, saw potential in her for a powerful new therapy venture.

“She’s very calm, unlike my other two goats,” said Cooper. “I started noticing as I would take her places how well she interacted with people and how calm she remained.”

The first place Cooper took Moonpie was the Tractor Supply in Statesboro.

“I have three goats because I was envisioning having people be able to visit my farm and play with the goats outside in their environment,” she said. “But as I realized Moonpie’s temperament was much calmer than the other two, I would take her places, and she behaved so well around shoppers. People really enjoyed seeing and spending time with her.”

Cooper began to do some research. Animal-assisted therapy has become a commonly practiced technique in the counseling and psychology realms, and one that especially interests Cooper as a teacher educator and special education clinical supervisor for the College of Education.

“Research indicated that goats offer a unique approach to animal-assisted therapy,” said Cooper. “Goats are curious and nosey. They don’t have to have a bond with you to socialize. Instead, they just walk up to you and demand attention.”

These traits prove useful for students with disabilities who struggle with socialization and communication. Goat therapy has been shown to lower anxiety, increase mental stimulation and improve mood and behavior of individuals during and after interaction.

“For students, especially those with disabilities, goat therapy offers them the opportunity to interact without rejection or judgment,” said Cooper. “It’s hard to explain, but when Moonpie goes into schools to visit with the special-needs students, she thrives. She pushes for interaction with those who are hesitant to interact with her, and once she gets to know them, she will crawl into their laps and just want to be held.”

Cooper explained that during one school visit, a student who is nonverbal was scared to interact with Moonpie at first and even ran from her. He continued to watch Moonpie from afar until he finally began to pet and interact with her. Cooper said before they left the school, the young man was walking Moonpie around on her leash showing her to the entire school. The student even allowed Moonpie to crawl into his lap, and he made noises to attempt to communicate with her.

“You just cannot fully understand until you see it for yourself,” said Cooper.

Along with outfits tailored to the occasion, Moonpie now wears her National Service Animal Registry identification. To become a certified therapy animal, Cooper had to complete 60 hours of training with Moonpie in various environments, proving that she was capable of coping with various settings that include loud and quiet areas, floor coverings, stairs and elevators. She also worked with small and large groups of people in a range of communities, from elementary school students to the elderly living in assisted living facilities.

“The hardest part of the training was actually getting people to allow us to come and get the hours completed,” said Cooper. “People are hesitant about the rules or whether a goat will be acceptable in their work and educational settings, but once they have seen Moonpie and interacted with her, we are immediately invited back for another visit.”

You can find Moonpie in the College of Education on the Statesboro and Armstrong Campuses at least two times per semester.

“It’s a great opportunity for our students to learn about the multitude of ways that you can make a difference for your students in the classroom and enhance their learning abilities,” said Cooper. “Especially when you are preparing teacher candidates to work with students who have special needs or exceptionalities, you have to consider opportunities that may be outside of the normal realm of thinking for teaching practices.

“Moonpie may definitely be outside of the norm for a classroom, but the impact she makes when working with students — especially students with disabilities — is a remarkable experience. She is a special little goat.”

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving more than 26,000 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 to host free mini-conference for special education professionals, registration limited to 100

March 10, 2020

Special education professionals and teacher candidates from across the state are invited to Georgia Southern University on April 4 for the Georgia Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Mini-Conference to be held at the College of Education on the Statesboro Campus from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“For the past few years, the Georgia CEC has provided grant funding for the Student Council for Exceptional Children (SCEC) chapters to host mini-conferences,” said Karin Fisher, Ph.D., SCEC faculty mentor and GA Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) board member. “This year, Georgia Southern SCEC volunteered to host the mini-conference to give teachers and pre-service students in the southeast an opportunity to network with special educators from across the state and hear from a special education expert.”

The keynote speaker for the mini-conference will be Georgia Department of Education’s (GaDOE) Franeka Colley, who serves as the content integration specialist for special education programming. Colley is a Georgia Southern alumna, earning a bachelor’s in special education from the University in 2007. She also completed an Ed.S in curriculum and instruction from Lincoln Memorial University and an Ed.S. Certificate in Educational Leadership and Administration from Valdosta State University. Prior to joining the GaDOE, Colley served as a special education classroom teacher, exceptional student education administrator and special education department chair in the Atlanta area.

Attendees will have the opportunity to choose from sessions on topics including: behavior strategies, co-teaching, self-determination, classroom support curriculum, math strategies, the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach for middle and high school levels, family engagement, and technology.

“While we are inviting special education teachers, preservice teachers, administration and related service providers to join us, all are welcome,” said Fisher. “We are all special education teachers.”

The mini-conference is free to attend and lunch will be provided. Registration is limited to 100, and the deadline to signup is March 27. To register, visit <https://forms.gle/dmMJuD6thmKjesmr9>.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers 141 degree programs serving more than 26,000 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.