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[Georgia Southern awarded \\$3.25 million grant to increase diversity in health professions](#)

June 22, 2020

Keith Belcher, Ph.D., director of the Medical Laboratory Science program at Georgia Southern University, is the recipient of the 2020-25 U.S. Department of Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) grant valued at \$3.25 million. The grant funds the Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students program, designed to increase diversity in the health professions and nursing workforce by offering awards to institutions that provide scholarships to students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are enrolled full time in a health profession or nursing program.

“We are excited about the opportunity to support students in the Medical Laboratory Science program,” said Barry Joyner, Ph.D., dean of the Waters College of Health Professions. “Our goal is to produce quality healthcare professionals, but we need a healthcare workforce that represents our communities. Greater diversity in healthcare professionals has been associated with improved access to healthcare for minority patients. With this grant, we will help address this need for greater diversity in the workforce.”

Belcher and co-investigators Charlotte Bates, DHSc, Amy Chall and Carol Jordan, designed the grant specifically for eligible students seeking a Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science (MLS). Through 2025, up to \$650,000 will be available each year for scholarships. Students majoring in MLS who represent an economically disadvantaged background, as defined by the HRSA, are encouraged to apply.

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](https://www.GeorgiaSouthern.edu).