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# Eagle military members, families to be recognized during Military Appreciation Month

April 28, 2021



Each May, individuals are encouraged to celebrate National Military Appreciation Month in a symbol of unity. Throughout the month, the Office of Military & Veteran Services (MVS) at Georgia Southern University will honor active and former members of the Armed Forces, as well as their dependents and spouses, who are part of the Eagle Nation family.

“Here in Eagle Nation, we are so proud of our military, our veterans, our active duty, our Guard and Reserve members, our spouses of the military and children of the military,” said retired Col. George L. Fredrick, Ed.D., director of MVS. “It

is truly an honor to recognize and commemorate our military-connected student population at Georgia Southern University. We are so proud to serve this wonderful community and to recognize them during this national celebration.”

The University will first observe Military Dependent Day on April 30 to recognize more than 3,000 children of military personnel on Georgia Southern’s campuses.

For Military Spouse Appreciation Day, which is May 7, MVS encourages military spouses from the campus community to stop by the Military Resource Centers on the Statesboro, Armstrong and Liberty campuses beginning on May 12 to receive special gift bags in thanks for their many sacrifices.

On May 15, the University will recognize active military men and women across all campuses for Armed Forces Day. To nominate a University-affiliated member currently serving in the Armed Forces visit [here](#).

In honor of the men and women of the Armed Forces who have made the ultimate sacrifice during their time of service, MVS encourages you to submit a Memorial Day tag of remembrance for fallen service members. The Memorial Day Flags Observance will be on view on all three campuses from May 19 through June 4.

To submit a memorial, visit [here](#).

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# Georgia Southern undergraduate student steers childhood passion to national research stage at Capitol Hill

April 28, 2021



*Amanda Weaver working in the on-campus Automotive and Aerospace Combustion Laboratories.*

Amanda Weaver, a senior mechanical engineering student, grew up with a desire to understand how things work and a passion to protect the environment. It was these interests that led her to her work with alternative fuels research at Georgia Southern University.

“I grew up pretty fascinated with mechanical systems,” Weaver said. “In particular with this climate change mitigation research, it grew out of a fondness for the environment. I watched a lot of ‘Planet Earth’ growing up. I just wanted to combine my love of aerospace travel and combustion systems with making sure to keep in mind climate change.”

Weaver has spent her college career working on multiple research projects, including “Hydrogen for aerospace travel, the new climate change mitigation theory.” At the encouragement of Valentin Soloiu, Ph.D.,

professor of engineering, director of the Automotive and Aerospace Combustion Laboratories and Allen E. Paulson distinguished chair, Weaver submitted her research to the Council for Undergraduate Research’s (CUR) Posters on the Hill competition where undergraduate students present their research at Capitol Hill.

Weaver was one of only 60 individuals selected nationwide to present her research, which focuses on using hydrogen as an alternative fuel source for aerospace travel. She noted that hydrogen is clean-burning and can be compressed considerably making it not only a practical solution, but also significantly cleaner for the environment.

Soloiu, who has more than 30 years of experience in education and more than 35 years of experience in engineering, encourages competition for his students.

“I give my students competition information regularly,” Soloiu said. “I do this to promote their work, to give them a chance to shine on the regional or national stage. This is the first time we have submitted to this competition in roughly 12 years. It is very difficult and competitive. You have to submit your best.”

Soloiu noted that all of their research projects are team efforts. Weaver has not been the sole researcher on this project and she believes that had she not found this team opportunity, she would not have learned nearly as much.

“I found a flyer on a table and it said automotive and aerospace labs recruiting now,” Weaver said. “Both of those things sounded really cool, so I came into the lab and I was incredibly nervous. It was the most out-on-a-limb thing that I’ve ever done in my life, but I feel like it’s been worth it. I’ve gotten so much better at what I do and I would be so much further behind if I had not come here and supplemented my classes with this hands-on research and with learning how to work in a team on projects.”

While Weaver hadn’t thought about the challenges that might come with entering a male-dominated field, her experience has been positive.

“It was very strange at first because my first mechanical engineering class, it was all guys and I was the only girl,” Weaver said. “I didn’t see that coming. I thought I’d get more pushback right off the bat and I was pretty self-conscious about being a girl. But every one of the guys that I’ve worked with has been very supportive, so I haven’t had much issue with just being confident in myself and putting myself out there and doing my best work. It’s been really rewarding.”

Weaver will graduate with a bachelor’s degree this May and plans to continue her education and research at Georgia Southern as a graduate student.

“I want to keep moving forward with this research, developing these climate change mitigation fuels and trying to reduce greenhouse gasses,” she said.

Weaver has even bigger plans for life after college.

“A job in the aerospace field would be incredible,” Weaver said. “I dream big with NASA and SpaceX. I think they’re both cutting edge in space flight and that’s where I want to be.”

The Posters on the Hill competition is an annual, national competition held by CUR in Washington, D.C., that encourages undergraduate students to submit their research for a chance to present it on Capitol Hill. The competition brings attention to the topics of research and to the importance of undergraduate research as a whole.

Presentations take place virtually on April 27 and 28. To learn more about Weaver’s research and that of the other student researchers, visit <https://www.cur.org/what/events/students/poh/>.

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# Georgia Southern Model Arab League takes home awards at National University Model Arab League conference

April 28, 2021



Members of the Georgia Southern Model Arab League won two awards at the National University Model Arab League conference in March.

The Georgia Southern University Model Arab League (MAL), made up of 11 students and two faculty advisors, won two awards at the team's inaugural appearance at the National University Model Arab League (NUMAL) conference in March. Head delegate Emily Zanieski took home the Distinguished Delegation Award for her work in the Summit of Arab Heads of State, and Claudia Hopper and Adam Sikes earned an Outstanding Delegation Award for their work in the Economic Affairs Committee.

Since 2015, Georgia Southern has participated in the MAL, which is a simulation where students from various majors act as representatives from the Arab state the team is representing. At regional and national conferences, students work and compete with other schools to come up with diplomatic solutions to crises the Arab League faces on issues such as climate change and the refugee crisis.

Zanieski, who is a junior history and Arabic double major with a minor in international studies, credits MAL with helping her understand how to implement policy and how governments can affect people.

“As a person who wants to work in public policy and international development after graduate school, Model Arab League helps me learn to craft policy and work with other people who have different ideas than my own,” Zanieski said. “When we represent a country at a conference, we have to put in mind the best interests of the citizens of that country, and that helps shape our own perceptions on effective policy.”

Faculty advisors Jacek Lubecki, Ph.D., and Youssef Salhi supported the Georgia Southern team at NUMAL. Salhi said students learn skills from MAL that can be used across numerous majors and careers.

“Through participation in Model Arab League, students learn about the politics and history of the Arab world, and the arts of diplomacy and public speech,” Salhi said. “Model Arab League helps prepare students to be knowledgeable, well-trained and effective citizens as well as civic and public affairs leaders.”

Zaniecki noted that one of her favorite things about going to the MAL conferences is that students don’t have to be Arabic majors or speak Arabic to participate. MAL provides an opportunity to meet a diverse group of students from all over the world.

“While winning awards is always fun, the best part of conference is the friends you make with not only your team but with other students across the country,” she said. “I have friends now from Georgia to Wyoming.”

The Georgia Southern MAL team will compete in fall 2022 in the Appalachia Regional MAL conference. For more information about MAL, email Salhi at [ysalhi@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:ysalhi@georgiasouthern.edu) or Lubecki at [jlubecki@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:jlubecki@georgiasouthern.edu).

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