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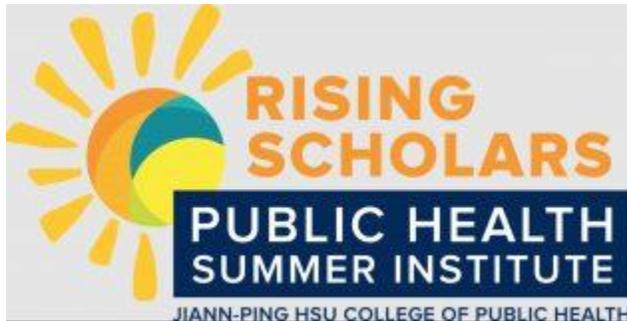
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High school students dive into public health, one of the nation's top fields of study, at Georgia Southern institute this summer

March 9, 2022



In the wake of the pandemic there has been an explosion of interest in public health as a field of study in universities around the country. Applications for master's programs in public health programs jumped by 20% in 2020 alone. But ask most people to define public health and they can't.

"A lot of folks have no clue what public health is," said Nandi A. Marshall, DrPH, associate professor in Georgia Southern University's Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH) and associate dean for Academic Affairs. "We're in the middle of a pandemic, so of course, you hear about public health all the time. But even still with COVID, some folks still have no idea what a career in public health really is. But they're interested."

In response, JPHCOPH will host the inaugural Rising Scholars Public Health Summer Institute for high school juniors and seniors June 22–24 on the Statesboro Campus. The program will expose students to the breadth and depth of the public health discipline.

Public health professionals promote and protect the health of people and the communities where they live, work and play. Jobs may include epidemiologists, health educators, public health physicians, scientists and researchers, public health nurses, nutritionists, community planners, public policy makers, social workers and occupational health and safety professionals, among others.

During the institute, high school students will explore the diverse areas of public health through expert faculty lectures, collaborative problem-solving, field research and lab demonstrations.

Additionally, college-track students will become aware of important historical and current public health events, as well as what a career in public health could entail. This program integrates the Georgia Southern University setting into all learning opportunities allowing for student exposure to campus life.

"The main reason we're doing this is because we really want students to be aware of public health," said Marshall. "Many times, particularly with our majors, they don't even find out about public health until late into their journey at Georgia Southern. We thought this was a good time to really introduce public health to folks before they even get to college."

The cost for the Rising Scholars Public Health Summer Institute is \$125, and includes the workshop, breakfast, lunch and snacks each day, and a T-shirt. Students can register [here](#).

If you are interested in sponsoring a student for the program visit [here](#).

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[Georgia Southern now one of nation's Top Ten Military Friendly® Schools](#)

March 9, 2022

[Military and Veterans Resources >](#)



Georgia Southern University has now earned a 2022-2023 Top Ten Military Friendly® distinction by Viqtory. Georgia Southern ranked at number nine on the Top Ten list. Being named a [Military Friendly School](#) is nothing new for Georgia Southern University, having earned a gold-level distinction for the past 10 years.

Fort Stewart, and the fact that about 10% of our student body is military-connected, we have a responsibility to ensure our people and our processes are attuned to the needs of those who are serving selflessly, who are retired or who are related to a veteran or active-duty service member. My thanks to all our faculty and staff who have worked hard to earn this recognition.”

“We are extremely proud to be recognized as being among the 10 most military friendly universities in the country, especially after learning that more than 1,800 schools participated in the survey,” said Georgia Southern University President Kyle Marrero.

Institutions earning the Military Friendly® School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. More than 1,800 schools participated in the 2022-2023 survey with 665 earning special awards for going above the standard.

Georgia Southern University has a strong and proud history of supporting veterans, current-serving military personnel and their families, and has accumulated many awards for its dedication to the military community. Information and resources are available on the [Military and Veteran Services webpage](#).

“We are honored to receive such a significant recognition as a Top Ten Military Friendly[®] institution,” said Retired Col. George Fredrick, Ed.D., director of Military and Veteran Services. “Georgia Southern University maintains strong ties to the military forces in our region, specifically Ft. Stewart, Hunter Army Airfield, the Marines, the Georgia National Guard, the Air Force, and the Coast Guard. We proudly serve our veterans and their families while on their academic journeys. We are indebted to our faculty, staff, students, and communities for their continued support of our military-connected student population.”

Methodology, criteria and weightings were determined by Viqtory with input from the Military Friendly[®] Advisory Council of independent leaders in the higher education and military recruitment community. Final ratings were determined by combining the institution’s survey scores with the assessment of the institution’s ability to meet thresholds for student retention, graduation, job placement, loan repayment, persistence (degree advancement or transfer) and loan default rates for all students and, specifically, for student veterans.

“Military Friendly[®] is committed to transparency and providing consistent data-driven standards in the designation process,” said Kayla Lopez, national director of Military Partnerships, Military Friendly[®]. “Our standards provide a benchmark that promotes positive outcomes and support services that better the educational landscape and provide opportunity for the Military Community. This creates a competitive atmosphere that encourages colleges to evolve and invest in their programs consistently. Schools who achieve awards designation show true commitment in their efforts, going over and above that standard.”

The 2022-2023 Military Friendly[®] Schools list will be published in the May and October issue of G.I. Jobs magazine and can be found at www.militaryfriendly.com.

About Georgia Southern University

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers approximately 140 different degree programs serving more than 27,000 students through 10 colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia with expert faculty, the University is focused on public impact research and engaging learning opportunities through knowledge and know-how that prepare our students to take ownership of their lives, careers and communities. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.

About Military Friendly[®] Schools

The Military Friendly[®] Schools list is created each year based on extensive research using public data sources from more than 8,800 schools nationwide, input from student veterans, and responses to the proprietary, data-driven Military Friendly[®] Schools survey from participating institutions. The survey questions, methodology, criteria and weighting were developed with the assistance of an independent research firm and an advisory council of educators and employers. The survey is administered for free and is open to all postsecondary schools that wish to participate. Criteria for consideration can be found at www.militaryfriendly.com.

About Viqtory

Founded in 2001, VIQTORY is a service-disabled, veteran-owned small business (SDVOSB)

that connects the military community to civilian employment, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities through its G.I. Jobs® and Military Friendly® brands. VIQTORY and its brands are not a part of or endorsed by the U.S. Dept of Defense or any federal government entity. Learn more about VIQTORY at www.viqtory.com.

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‘The Eagle Experience’ wins national award for excellence

March 9, 2022



[‘The Eagle Experience,’](#) a collaborative cross-university effort to ensure new students’ successful transition into their college years, grabbed the attention of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and won a 2021-22 NASPA Excellence Bronze Award.

“NASPA, the professional home for the field of student affairs and higher education, is known for promoting development and best practices for co-curricular student engagement and success,” said Amy Smith, associate vice president for Enrollment Management. “Recognition by this 15,000-plus member national organization helps to validate the work being done to facilitate student success at Georgia Southern!”

The NASPA [Excellence Awards](#) recognize the contributions of members who are transforming higher education through outstanding programs, innovative services and effective administration. NASPA’s Excellence Awards cover 11 categories crucial to the success of students. Sharing our successes benefits students, improves institutions and promotes our profession. Georgia Southern was the only University System of Georgia institution recognized in this year’s list of winners.

‘The Eagle Experience’ began with a charge and directive in fall 2020 from the vice presidents in Enrollment Management, Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to reimagine the transition experience for incoming students beginning summer 2021. This resulted in more than 50 faculty, staff and students working together to create an exemplary experience for new students.

“This recognition showcases the success shown when the University strategically coordinates programming and focuses on outcomes that are serving students on our three campuses for the greater purpose of student success,” said Ken Gassiot, Ph.D., associate vice president for Student Development. “Academic affairs, enrollment management and student affairs were guided by learning outcomes that were aligned with University pillars and USG’s [Momentum Approach](#), and intended to welcome all students so that their unique story could thrive in and outside of the classroom.”

Much effort was given to design a schedule that considered engagement and support for a broad range of student populations, including online-only, first time-first year, graduate, LGBTQ+, multicultural, dual-enrolled, military-affiliated, honors, international and transfer, among others, to showcase the value that Georgia Southern has in ensuring all voices and students feel welcome, Gassiot added.

Winning the bronze award reassured the committee they are on the right track for future iterations of the program.

“The award speaks to the potential of ‘The Eagle Experience’ more than anything else,” said Dustin Anderson, Ph.D., associate provost for Student Success. “This was a big change in the culture around the orientation and transition of new students through their first year at Georgia Southern. The goal was to build a coherent voice across all of our units for our students. We feel ‘The Eagle Experience’’s approach in connecting students with academic departments and support prior to classes beginning, along with University-wide engagement, supported that goal.”

Throughout the events for fall and spring semesters, The Eagle Experience planners welcomed and collected feedback from the campus community. This valuable information was used for planning summer and fall 2022 initiatives.

Fall 2022 programming will focus on wellness and balance, scholarship and success, and discovery and exploration to help create greater connections with these topics for students. In addition, efforts are being put into hosting more large events, even more involvement with faculty and academic departments, as well as additional ways to connect students.

“The external validation through this national award speaks to how other professionals across the country view Georgia Southern’s commitment to successful student transition,” Gassiot said. “The examples, data and people who participated in so many capacities of ‘The Eagle Experience’ provided the substance of the nomination submission. An enormous amount of pride is felt for the faculty, students, and staff who planned, participated in, and supported ‘The Eagle Experience.’”

Learn more about programming and upcoming events at GeorgiaSouthern.edu/EagleExperience.

Posted in [Awards and Recognition](#), [Press Releases](#)

Community garden idea readies MPA students for career, earns first place in policy competition

March 9, 2022



MPA students Ikeoluwa Akanmu, Melinda Roell, Jennifer Morgan and William Golden

Four Georgia Southern University students used the concept of a community garden to enhance their public administration education and win first place in the University of Georgia's [Georgia Students for Public Administration 2022 Policy Competition](#).

For the competition, Master of Public Administration (MPA) students Jennifer Morgan, Melinda Roell, Ikeoluwa Akanmu and William Golden were tasked with developing nonprofit solutions to a relevant policy problem in their community. Their project focused on food scarcity in the community and a solution — Boro Grown, a community garden and food security initiative for Statesboro.

The community garden concept was introduced to the team by Roell, who has worked in various nonprofit organizations in the Statesboro and Bulloch County area. Through her work with the OutReach Center — a building near the Bulloch County Health Department that houses several local nonprofit organizations — she noticed a vacant spot on the west side of Statesboro.

“As I would drive into town from where we lived, I passed several overgrown vacant lots in the neighborhoods where I knew a lot of clients lived,” she said. “One day the idea of a community garden in these lots just came to me. I’ve been thinking about this project off and on for nearly 20 years. Last semester, in our nonprofit management class, our end-of-semester project was to design a nonprofit. So, I pulled out my garden idea, dusted it off and used it for my class project. It just so happened that the garden idea was the one selected by the team to use in the competition.”

The competition allowed the students to put theory learned in the classroom into practice through a high-impact learning experience, said Trent Davis, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Public and Nonprofit Studies and director of the MPA program.

“This is an important step in their career development. The MPA program is a professional management program where students develop the skill set necessary for leadership roles in the public and nonprofit sectors,” he said. “This policy competition was a great opportunity for these students to put into practice what they have learned in the classroom, and build a real-world experience that is directly applicable to their future careers.”

Morgan, a Savannah, Georgia, native, is in her final semester of the MPA program and is grateful to get a preview of what her future could look like.

“This experience was great for career readiness,” she said. “As future public administrators, we will likely experience situations where we have to present our ideas for public policies or public programs. This competition was exactly that.”

This was the first year Georgia Southern has competed in the competition, Davis said.

“As a program and department, we continually look for competitions, internships, practicum experiences and professional development requirements to prepare our students for their careers,” Davis said. “This preparation is particularly important for our pre-service students who have little to no work history in government or nonprofits.”

The student team entered the competition just a few days before the deadline at the end of January, and prepared their final presentation in a little more than a week.

“The competition helped us practice realizing, presenting and organizing the practical elements of a proposal before a panel of strangers,” said Golden, a first-year MPA student from Savannah, Georgia. “It helped me feel more ready to present real-life initiatives in my future career.”

Akanmu, who is from Nigeria, is in her first year and semester at Georgia Southern. She enjoyed the team experience and is looking forward to more out of her MPA education.

“We were delighted to have won first place in the competition,” Akanmu said. “We made a great team, sharing ideas and knowledge, which made us outstanding. Creating initiatives that impact people has been one of my goals. I believe there is more to come.”

The Georgia Students for Public Administration strives to help students of public administration and policy at the University of Georgia build social and academic networks. By fostering friendship and professional development within our diverse student body, we hope to encourage students not just to learn their chosen profession but to form lasting bonds with their peers, faculty, staff, and community.

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