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Georgia Southern named an Innovation and Economic Prosperity University

November 8, 2022



In recognition of its strong commitment to economic engagement, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) has designated Georgia Southern University as an Innovation and Economic Prosperity (IEP) University. The national designation acknowledges public research universities working with public and private sector partners in their states and regions to support economic development through a variety of activities, including innovation and entrepreneurship, technology transfer, talent

and workforce development, and community development.

“As the national leader in championing the substantial role that public universities play in regional economic development, the APLU’s recognition represents a crowning achievement not only for the team at Georgia Southern but for our committed partners in private industry and the communities we serve,” said Georgia Southern University Vice Provost for Research Chris Curtis, Ph.D. “These cherished relationships stand at the crux of Georgia Southern’s Public Impact mission in research and innovation. We look forward to our future contributions to the region’s economic prosperity through technological and entrepreneurial innovation as an IEP-designated university.”

“Economic development is a major pillar of universities’ work,” said APLU President Mark Becker. “From talent development to path-breaking research to entrepreneurship and beyond, institutions have a central role to play in economic development. We’re pleased to recognize Georgia Southern for its commitment to engaging its community around these issues to advance regional economic development.”

Georgia Southern received the designation after an independent panel reviewed the school’s application, which included an internal review and analysis of its economic engagement activities that were conducted with outside stakeholder input. APLU’s Commission on Economic and Community Engagement (CECE), which manages the designation process, is a national leader in efforts to help public research universities plan, assess and communicate their work in regional, national and global economic development and community engagement. The CECE “Economic Engagement Framework” includes tools for university self-assessment, metrics determination and economic impact analysis.

As part of the self-study conducted with external stakeholders that was central to the designation application process, the University identified three areas of institutional strength in economic engagement and described programs in these areas. Officials also identified areas for growth and improvement for the University's economic engagement enterprise, and developed an improvement plan. This work demonstrated a commitment to continuous learning and improvement in this kind of engagement vital to universities and their regional partners.

The Business Innovation Group (BIG), located in downtown Statesboro, is the business outreach arm for Georgia Southern. BIG provides resources for students and entrepreneurs to gain skills and training necessary to understand business principles, experience how businesses operate, and successfully launch new enterprises. BIG has a center in Metter and one in development in Hinesville. Over the past decade, BIG has assisted more than 3,000 entrepreneurs in creating 380 new businesses in local communities.

The center just received news they are one of 51 nationwide grant recipients to receive \$600,000 in grant funding along with \$600,000 in local match funds. The goal is to accelerate technology entrepreneurship by increasing inclusive access to entrepreneurial support and startup capital.

Such accomplishments is why Georgia Southern is now one of 80 higher education institutions designated as an IEP university. Institutions that have received the IEP designation have reported significant advancement of their efforts due to the stakeholder engagement and self-study efforts undertaken in conjunction with the program. They are leveraging their status as Innovation and Economic Prosperity universities to identify new areas of opportunity in aligning with economic development objectives. Those schools are developing deeper engagement with others in their regional innovation ecosystems, and making changes within the institution to expand their impact.

“Earning the IEP Designation is not only about recognizing Georgia Southern's efforts in cultivating talent, driving innovation and fostering a sense of place in the communities we serve,” said Dominique Halaby, Georgia Southern's associate provost for innovation and commercialization and founding director of BIG. “It's also about strengthening our long-term strategy to maximize our region's economic potential.”

Applications for the designation are evaluated by a panel of reviewers representing other universities and regional and national partners. Scoring was based on a range of criteria emphasizing universities' development of their economic engagement enterprise, their planning efforts around economic engagement, strategic communications around these efforts, and participation in encouraging economic engagement among peer institutions.

APLU is a research, policy and advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening and advancing the work of public universities in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. With a membership of 250 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems and affiliated organizations, APLU's agenda is built on the three pillars of increasing degree completion and academic success, advancing scientific research and expanding engagement. Annually, member campuses enroll 5 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.3 million

degrees, employ 1.3 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$49.5 billion in university-based research.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers approximately 140 different degree programs serving nearly 26,000 students through 10 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).

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Georgia Southern partners with Fort Stewart and Georgia National Guard for soldier injury prevention training, retention

November 8, 2022



PHOTO: (l-r) Georgia National Guard Major Gen. Tom Carden, Georgia Southern President Kyle Marrero, Soldier Athlete Human Performance Program Director Nancy Henderson and Fort Stewart Col. Manuel Ramirez signed a memorandum of agreement to facilitate soldier injury prevention training.

On Nov. 5, Georgia Southern University President Kyle Marrero signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with Fort Stewart and Georgia National Guard leaders to provide soldier injury prevention training through the University's Soldier Athlete Human Performance Program (SAHPO).

Implementing a train-the-trainer model, Georgia Southern Doctor of Physical Therapy students will provide education designed to prevent and reduce injuries to select soldiers, who will then take information back to their units.

“These partnerships have been part of our tradition with the Eagle Battalion,” Marrero said. “I’m so proud of the fact that our public

research agenda, specifically around holistic wellness and fitness and this project, the Tactical Athlete Program, aligns with the needs of our community.”

Injuries are the leading cause for military hospitalizations, and result in the most lost workdays, greatly affecting troop readiness.

“We believe that the train-the-trainer program will have an incredible impact,” he continued. “And not just for our Doctor of Physical Therapy students and their training, but also to have certified training within the military itself. For us, it’s a win-win. I’m so excited about this.”

The Pentagon recently announced that the U.S. is currently facing its largest recruitment challenge in 50 years, with a potential deficit of up to 21,000 active-duty troops in 2023.

“We believe that signing this MOA will assist with preventing injuries and result in increased rates of retaining soldiers,” said George Fredrick, director of Georgia Southern’s Military and Veteran Services. “In the current operating environment, there is the need for the Army and academic institutions to build collaborative engagements with full-fledged partnerships. Today, the agreement between Georgia Southern University, the Georgia National Guard and Fort Stewart seeks to share knowledge and concepts to reduce injury and subsequently create readiness of our soldiers.”

For more information on SAHPO, visit: <https://chp.georgiasouthern.edu/tactical-athlete-initiative/military-initiatives/soldier-athlete-human-performance-sahpo-program/>.

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