TOUGH ROAD TRIP

Breaking down commuter safety on I-16
Page 6

Center for Sustainability aims to reduce contamination at annual tournament
Page 8

Eagles sign 23 recruits; finished with No. 1 class in Sun Belt
Page 13

EDWIN JACKSON 1991-2018
Page 5

SKATING AT SOUTHERN

Group of skaters in front of Dining Commons build community
Page 9

Eagles fall in Jonesboro with impressive performances by Trell English-Lurry and Mike Hughes
Page 14
Students can create the official Georgia Southern cookie by winning recipe contest

BY CHRISTA FEAZELL
The George-Anne staff

One lucky student will have the chance to make university history this month and receive a $500 University Store gift card by winning the Georgia Southern Cookie Recipe Contest. The winning recipe will be named the official Georgia Southern cookie, which will be served at every Georgia Southern event.

The winning chef receives a $500 gift card for the University Store, an award and a featured article in official university media. According to the contest’s rules page, the winner will also receive the greatest prize of all: bragging rights, forever.

To be eligible for the contest, the recipe must be completely original. If it has been published online, or in a cookbook or a magazine, it cannot be used. It is up to the judge’s discretion to determine if a recipe is original.

The cookie dough must be made in just 30 minutes, but can bake or cool for as long as necessary. Participants can only use ten ingredients. Water, salt, pepper and flour used solely to prevent sticking do not count towards a recipe’s ingredient count. As with every recipe, the ingredients listed should be in exact measurements.

Creativity is a must in this competition. Students are expected to take the essence of GS and distill it into a delectable baked good of their own making.

Start creating, testing and tasting your recipes now, because recipe submissions close at the end of February.
Georgia Southern Relay for Life/Colleges Against Cancer

What we do: We provide cancer awareness and try to raise money for the American Cancer Society, bringing the fight against cancer to Georgia Southern’s front doors.

What that means to you: We provide a place for everyone with us. Cancer can affect any of us. We are part of a cause that is all about bringing more hope and less fear.

Interested? Contact us through myInvolvement email us at ml04878@georgiasouthern.edu or check us out on Facebook at RFL.GSU
Opinions

HALFTIME IN THE ATL

Sunday night the 2017 football season officially came to an end by way of a swatted down Tom Brady heave to the endzone. Now, we as football fans have to wait until Aug. 30 for meaningful football to grace our televisions.

One of the marquee games of the college football is Auburn vs Washington in the Chick-fil-a Kickoff Game- in Atlanta. The football season ended this year in the new Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta and featured a Kendrick Lamar halftime show. This Kendrick show was electric and had the whole city buzzing.

With another huge opportunity for a historic halftime show in one of the most musically influential cities less than a year from year, the NFL has the power to make the 2019 Super Bowl halftime show the best ever. Atlanta and Georgia as a state has been known for its’ musical contribution for decades. Whether it be country sensations like Alan Jackson, Zac Brown Band and Luke Bryan or blues legends like Ray Charles or Otis Redding, the Peach State is enriched with musical icons.

The two genres, however, that are most noteworthy to Georgia are rock and hip-hop. Hailing from Athens, are two groups that have earned their fair share of accolations and respect in the industry- R.E.M. and the B52’s. Outside of “The Classic City”, the rock group the Indigo Girls, Christian rock band Third Day and American Idol winning singer-songwriter Phillip Phillips all grew their roots in Georgia and call it home.

The list of hip-hop groups and artists from the ATL seems to grow each year. 2 Chainz, Akon, Bow Wow, Childish Gambino, Future, Gucci Mane, Kanye West, Ludacris, Outkast, T.I. and Usher are just the most famous of the many hip-hop/R&B icons from Georgia. I’ve listed all these musical geniuses because Bruno Mars’ tweet during the Super Bowl Sunday night got me really excited for the endless possibilities for next year’s halftime show. Mars called for an all hip-hop show, which would be legendary and a show that would compete with the actual game regardless of who is playing. But what I think would be even more Georgian and historic is a fusion of artists and genres. Have Usher start things off, then him and Zac Brown cover Redding’s “(Sittin On) The Dock of the Bay”, then Kanye West and 2 Chainz come out for a artistic collection of classics from the two Grammy winners. Then R.E.M. and Childish Gambino do a legendary mashup of “The One I Love” and “Redbone” that makes all other halftime shows irrelevant and Outkast performs “Hey Ya!” for the grand finale.

So, Roger Goodell get on it because there are just 362 days to book all these incredible guests. Perhaps even Bruno Mars himself would volunteer to do the National Anthem.

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Georgia Southern University remembers the life of former Eagles linebacker Edwin Jackson.

According to an Indiana State Police press release, 26-year-old Jackson and 54-year-old ride sharing operator Jeffrey Monroe were killed Sunday morning after being struck by a suspected drunken driver along Interstate 70.

From walk-on to two year starter on defense to NFL starter with the Indianapolis Colts, Jackson left a legacy on and off the field that will be missed by all.

In 2014, the GS Eagles went 8-0 in Sun Belt play, earning them a conference championship. This was Jackson’s senior year where he had the best season of his career, awarding him First Team All-Sun Belt honors. Jackson had a career high 100 tackles, a forced fumble and an interception.

After his remarkable senior campaign, Jackson was invited to the Medal of Honor Senior Bowl in Charleston, SC. He finished with four tackles including a huge tackle for loss in the showcase. Jackson wasn’t invited to the NFL Combine, but showed up on his Pro Day with a 4.80 40 yard dash and completing 30 reps of 225 pounds on the bench press. He was signed by the Arizona Cardinals as an undrafted free agent, but was waived right before the season. He was then signed to the practice squad by the Indianapolis Colts, where he would spend the rest of his athletic career.

Jackson played in all 16 games for the Colts in 2016 and started in 8 of them. The 24 year old recorded 66 tackles for Indianapolis.

An excerpt of a statement by the Colts reads, “We were heartbroken to hear the news of Edwin Jackson’s passing. Edwin was loved by all in the Colts organization. We admired his outgoing personality, competitive spirit and hard-working mentality. He was well-respected among all with whom he crossed paths, and he will be greatly missed in our locker room and throughout our entire organization.”

Jackson also participated in charity works including the Riley Hospital for Children’s holiday caroling in Dec. 2017, and the Huddle for Peace event he and his fellow Colts participated in with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department in Nov. 2017.

GS head football coach Chad Lunsford offered his thoughts and condolences about the life of Jackson on gseagles.com.

“To learn of the news of the untimely passing of a former Eagle causes great sadness and hurt,” Lunsford said. “Edwin Jackson represented not only Georgia Southern but also how a young man should live his life.”

- GS head football coach Chad Lunsford

(© PHOTO COURTESY OF GSEAGLES.COM)

Remembering Edwin Jackson

BY MCCLAIN BAXLEY AND SHIANN SIVELL

The George-Anne staff

Edwin Jackson represented not only Georgia Southern but also how a young man should live his life.”

- GS head football coach Chad Lunsford
Due to Interstate-16 playing an integral role in the transportation of students and occupants of Statesboro, many people have formed their own opinion on the busy road. With the busy roadway serving as a lifeline for students to reach home and many parts of the state, many students are well acquainted with the highway. Due to recent media attention and rising notoriety, students have become more aware of the danger and growing reputation of the busy road.

With Highway I-16 showing up more and more in the public’s eye and Governor Nathan Deal having to respond to recent fatalities with promises of construction to improve the safety of the state residents, students are forming their own perception of the growing infamy of the highway. One interesting trend that shows from asking students campus about their level of safety when traveling on Highway Interstate I-16 is the near consistency of hearing about the danger level of the major road. Despite hearing these claims students often feel safe or have no problem with the road personally.

Fatalities on the road

When looking at solely the total amount of fatalities per road Interstate-75 leads the list with 61 fatalities in 2015 according to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Following I-75, Interstate-20 had a total of 34 fatalities according to GDOT. Serving as the median of the list comes highway I-16 with 28 fatalities. Although this data may lead you assuming that Highway I-16 is a relatively average major road when it comes to safety. There is a slight shift in the data whenever you compare the safety to the total amount of road that people travel on. This assumption about the safety of I-75 may be influenced when one realizes that Highway I-75 is the second shortest highway in the state.

When comparing the rate of fatalities per mile the most recent data collected in 2015, the data from GDOT shows I-16 is not the most dangerous highway in the state but is rather tied for second with I-20 when it comes to deaths per mile. I-16 and I-20 both have a ratio of 1 death per 6.6 miles which is near twice the amount of I-285. These roads follow behind highway I-85, which leads this list with a 1 fatality per 5.5 miles. Highway I-75 which runs north to south and has nearly twice the length of I-16 demonstrated a ratio of 1 death per 5.5 miles.

Student Experience on I-16

I-16, which also serves as an evacuation route in the event of a hurricane, is a 116.8-mile route that stretches from Macon to Savannah providing many Georgia Southern students the ability to connect to areas around Statesboro or even to visit home.

One student Andrious Nelson, freshman mechanical engineer major with a music minor, drives every two to three weeks taking a route that consists of traveling on all major roads consisting of mainly I-16W and I-75N. On his trip to Henry County Nelson states that throughout his travels he fears I-75 more due to the increased speed on travelers and the number of lanes. He states although the increased amount of people make it feel like they are faster, the speed difference per driver seems to be increased more on I-16.

Where I-16 does lead is the staggering amount of fatalities attributed to deaths by tractor trailers or otherwise referred to as heavy traffic. With a 18 tractor-trailer deaths attributed to its name, I-16 is leading the state with I-75 following behind with nearly 10 tractor-trailer deaths. In addition, this number is projected to climb with the addition of a new port being created in Savannah, according to GDOT. This may lead to increased heavy traffic in the area due to the increased amount of importation.

When it comes to witnessing one of these incidents that give the road such an infamous name one student, Brandon Sellers, senior psychology major, has had a hands-on experience with the more fatal side of the argument. Although he is
very cautious stating how he grows more cautious when it comes to the stretch between Statesboro and Savannah one has seen and heard of so many accidents happening on I-16.

“I feel just as safe on it as I would any other major interstate but, it’s got a history and that’s worth taking into account,” Sellers said.

Sellers also shared a story in which he “looked over and the truck next to him randomly burst into flames,” Sellers said.

**Student Opinions on I-16**

Despite stories such as the one provided by Brandon Sellers, Georgia Southern students such as Carlie Sheppard, sophomore biology major, occasionally drive on I-16 view the route as a decent route without any worries.

Jasmine Sparks, sophomore psychology major, also treats the road like any other interstate or major highway stating that “I feel pretty safe” on the highway despite feeling slightly nervous due to people speeding past her.

**GDOT Expansion**

Due to the public’s increased scrutiny towards the major road, the Georgia Department of Transportation has recently released plans to start construction as early as 2019 and expecting to finish around 2021 as shown by the project description provided by GDOT. With the construction of 19 miles of extended lane-miles by widening lanes from four to six lanes and the reworking of the I-16 and I-95 interchange should increase heavy traffic mobility around the Savannah area and improve safety on the interstate for more information regarding these projects you can see the project details at http://www.dot.ga.gov/BS/Projects.

With I-16 being an integral part of students lifestyles and day to day operations, it will be interesting to observe the changes and modifications the state issues to improve the safety of the community and in turn the students. Maybe when the improvements are installed we will see student opinions will shift in favor of the interstate.

“It

**I feel just as safe on it as I would any other major interstate but, it’s got a history and that’s worth taking into account.”**

**BRANDON SELLERS**

Senior psychology major
Georgia Southern University is gearing up to compete in the nationwide tournament, RecycleMania in February. The eight week tournament begins Feb. 4 and ends on March 31. RecycleMania is a friendly competition that encourages universities across the nation to promote waste reduction and lead challenges to promote reducing, reusing and recycling.

Universities across the United States and Canada compete each year to collect the most recyclables per capita and reduce waste. Stats for each school participating are updated weekly on Fridays.

The winning school will be recognized in a national press release and gain bragging rights throughout their region. Each residence hall on campus will also compete to house a trophy and win a pizza and wings party.

Last year, Recyclemania was won by Eagle Village and GS recycled 51,420 pounds of paper. This year, one of the Center for Sustainability’s main goals during RecycleMania is reducing contamination in recycling bins. Contamination is putting an item in recycling bin that does not belong there, such as putting a styrofoam plate into a recycle bin marked ‘Plastic Only’.

There are also a few special events during Recyclemania.

GET CAUGHT GREEN HANDED

During the competition, students have a chance to win something from the Tech Corner. Last years prizes included a Bluetooth speaker and Bluetooth headphones. To be entered to win, just take a photo of someone performing a green action and send their name and email to cfs@georgiasouthern.edu.

Students who submit a photo can include their name as well and both the catcher and the culprit will be entered into Tech Corner raffle. There is no limit on how many times someone can enter. Winners will be announced during the Green Eagle Award reception April 19.

RECYCLED BOAT REGATTA

The Center for Sustainability, in partnership with Southern Adventures, will host a recycled boat race on Lake Ruby on March 27 at 6:30 p.m. Teams have to build their boats from recycled materials and compete for titles of speediest craft, best sinker and most superior team effort. Registration will open Feb. 5 and close 5 p.m. March 20 on the Center for Sustainability’s website.

Georgia Southern University will hold commencement ceremonies in Savannah and Statesboro for Spring 2018 graduates. GS President Jaimie L. Hebert, Ph.D. will preside over each ceremony.

The GS campus will have two separate ceremonies for the undergraduates and graduates due to the access number of graduates this semester.

The undergraduate ceremony will be held Saturday, May 5 at 9 a.m. at the Allen E. Paulson Stadium. Tickets are not needed for the guests to attend the undergraduate ceremony unless the rain plan is enacted.

The graduate ceremony will be held Friday, May 4 at 1 p.m. at Hanner Fieldhouse. Due to limited seating, students will receive four tickets to provide to their guests for the graduate ceremony.

The Armstrong Campus will have a combined ceremony for their graduate and undergraduate students. The ceremony will be held at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 4, at the Savannah Civic Center. Due to limited seating, students will receive seven tickets to provide to their guests for this ceremony.

Due to the consolidation, graduates from Armstrong and Liberty will have the option of requesting a “Georgia Southern University” diploma from the university by filling out the request form.
In the bustling eastern corner of the Georgia Southern University campus, daily patterns emerge. Students walk in droves to the Russell Union or the Dining Commons for lunch, and the blue and gold route buses cycle through with dozens of passengers. Meanwhile, skateboarders practice their moves by a bus stop.

On a sunny Thursday afternoon last week, two students filmed each other skating and performing tricks on the street between the Centennial Place residence halls and the Dining Commons. These are their stories.

Meet two GS skateboarders
Julien Mendes, freshman theatre major, began skating when he was 10 years old. "Every weekend, I would go to my local skatepark back at home, rain or shine. It was great. I'd say [that I have been skating] nine years now," Mendes said.

As a new arrival on campus last semester, Mendes felt relieved to find fellow skateboarders at GS. "It was like my second day here. I was shy as hell," Mendes said. "All I see is five or six skaters here, and I was like, 'Thank God.' It's nice to finally meet some people here that skate."

Soon, Mendes joined a small community of skaters on campus, many of whom often skate on the street between the Centennial Place residence halls and the Dining Commons. "We all have a group chat," Mendes said. "We call it Skatesboro."

The Skatesboro group chat, comprised of around 15 members, is where Mendes said the skating community makes plans together, including skating on campus and in downtown Statesboro on Main Street.

Brandon Lewis, a friend of Mendes and a sophomore computer science major, is another member of the skateboard community on campus. He reignited his skating pastime when he saw people skating on campus. "When I came here, I just saw people skating, and I was like, 'All right. I left my board at home. I'm gonna get back into skating,'" Lewis said.

Lei said he befriended other skaters with a classmate. "I had a class with this dude who used to skate... He brought one of our other friends out here, and from there, we just saw other people skating. We talked to them, they talked to us. And then we made the [Skatesboro] group chat," Lewis said.

Lack of options for local skaters?
When asked if the skateboarders on campus ever had difficulty with the University administration or law enforcement while skating, Mendes mentioned just one place where he knew people had been discouraged from skating.

"At the Rotunda... That's the only place we've ever really gotten kicked out of a place," Mendes said.

Lewis, on the other hand, had a bit more experience with being told not to skate in certain spots on campus. "I got kicked out at the loading dock behind Chick-Fil-A and the science building once," Lewis said. "We skated a bench near Watson Hall. We're not supposed to. We're just going to leave if they ask us to leave."

Overall, Lewis and Mendes agreed that there are few places nearby where students can skateboard, aside from the popular spot beside the Dining Commons, formerly known as Landrum. "There isn't much to skate in Statesboro. All we really have is in front of Landrum, and we've tried the Rotunda - it doesn't work out for us," Mendes said. "We go to a skatepark, it's about 45 minutes away from here... It's called Pembroke Skatepark."

Pembroke Skatepark was partially funded by a $5,000 grant from the Tony Hawk Foundation about ten years ago, according to the foundation’s website. "Every skatepark is the result of a partnership between youth, government and local civic organizations," the Tony Hawk Foundation wrote on their website. "In spite of their rough edges, skateboarding youth often prove to be incredible advocates for the things that are important to them...."

According to a 2014 article from The George-Anne, the City of Statesboro once had plans to build a local skatepark through a project called the "Boro Skatepark Project". The project received funds from both the Tony Hawk Foundation and the Rob Dyrdek Foundation, according to the article. However, the 'Boro Skatepark Project does not appear to have come to fruition. According to a June 2016 Connect Statesboro article, the project "hit a couple of bumps and is set for the future rather than the immediate present."

Statesboro-Bulloch Parks and Recreation has been reached for comment on the 'Boro Skatepark Project.
The Perfect Restaurant for Your Perfect Valentine’s Day

Coconut Thai Cuisine

7 College Plaza, Statesboro, GA 30458

Specials For Valentine’s Day:
- Three Course Meal
  - First Course: Crispy Coconut Shrimp Salad with a House Strawberry Balsamic Vinaigrette or Roasted Chicken Coconut Soup
  - Second Course: Pan Seared Lobster on a Bed of Thai Fried Rice, Glazed with a Sweet Thai Chili Reduction or Flank Steak on a Bed of Garlic Fried Rice, Marinated in a House Sauce, served with a Balsamic Glaze and Sautéed Asparagus or Grilled Salmon with an Avocado Red Curry, served with Bell Peppers, Green Beans, Carrots, Avocado, and a side of Jasmine White Rice
  - Third Course: Strawberries covered in House White and Dark Chocolate or Homemade Strawberry Cream Cheese Spring Rolls

Drink Menu
- Lovely Champagne Cocktail, Raspberry Valentines Collins, Cupid’s Kiss Martini, & Her Martini

With its stunning interior as well as its authentic Thai food, Coconut Thai Cuisine is the perfect place to take your date. They offer a three course meal for Valentine’s Day and a assortment of original drinks you cannot find anywhere else.

Coconut Thai Cuisine’s owner and head chef, Kamolwan (Amy) Kawpunna, said, “Coconut Thai Cuisine is designed to entice the five taste senses. Its unique flavors depend on certain ingredients native to Southeast Asia and the hottest chillies in the world to make an adventure out of your dining experience. We have made a special effort to keep Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) out of our kitchen.”

It is strongly recommended that you make a reservation for Valentine’s Day!

40 East Grill

40 E Main St, Statesboro, GA 30458

40 East Grill is a delightful restaurant nestled in Downtown Statesboro. With its dim lighting and delicious menu selection, it’s the perfect atmosphere to get intimate with your partner. They have a variety of options for brunch, lunch, or dinner, including bottomless mimosas (Brunch-$15), Cherry Tomato Basil Flatbread (Lunch-$10), and Garden Chicken Carbonara (Dinner-$19).

Emma’s Restaurant and Lounge

455 Commerce Drive, Statesboro, Georgia 30461

Emma’s Restaurant and Lounge has a beautiful patio and a very chic atmosphere. They have a variety of food selections such as Portobello Stack ($16), Gumbo ($15), and NY Strip Steak ($25). They are located in The Holiday Inn Statesboro. Park in the back of the hotel and you’ll see the entrance to the restaurant.

Orchid Asian Restaurant

1525 Fair Rd #104, Statesboro, GA 30458

With a sushi menu fit for a king, as well as many other food selections, Orchid Asian Restaurant is a great place to take your date. They have many affordable options such as their California Roll ($4) or Teriyaki Chicken ($8). Their incredible chandelier hangs in the middle of the restaurant, and their beautiful environment is perfect for any couple.

The Boiling Shrimp

12218 US-301, Statesboro, GA 30458

The Boiling Shrimp’s food selection is perfect for any seafood loving couple. With a variety of shrimp, crab, and more, it will make any guy or gal happy. Their most popular meal during Valentine’s Day is “The Whole Nine Yards” which includes Boiled Lobster, Blue Crab, Shrimp, Crawfish, Snow Crab Legs and all extras for $59.99. For dine in customers, they will have a photo booth. (One ticket for a photo session per two guests.) Drew Ferguson, an employee at The Boiling Shrimp, said, “Valentine’s Day is one of our favorite days of the year…we have a Fabriplyinlovel. If you use that on your Instagram, post a picture you took in the photo booth, you’ll be up for a fifty dollar gift card as well.”

Gee-Da’s Table

30 W Main St, Statesboro, GA 30458

Gee-Da’s Table has many food options that will fill you up while making your taste buds dance. With their many options like Grilled Mahi Mahi ($22), Grilled Chicken Pasta Carbonara ($16) or Fried Goat Cheese Croquettes ($8), they have a little something for everyone.

All of these restaurants are great options, and you cannot go wrong with any of them! Each one has its own unique atmosphere and is sure to give you and your date the aura of romance.
Cesar Perez, a Georgia Southern University alumnus, survived a serious accident on I-16 last month. A drunk driver hit his car head-on, propelling him into a semi-truck, according to his girlfriend, Chelsea Rodriguez.

To help cover Perez's medical expenses and other accumulating expenses, Rodriguez, senior exercise science major, organized a fundraiser night at the Statesboro Chick-Fil-A, located on Northside Drive.

The fundraiser is scheduled for 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Feb. 12 and has a Facebook event page, where Rodriguez may predict an approximate head count.

**ABOUT CESAR PEREZ**

Cesar Perez graduated from GS in 2015 with a degree in multimedia communication.

"He was involved in so many other things [outside of his major]. He was doing personal training. He was a big gym rat," Rodriguez said. "He was doing music as well. He plays instruments and sings, so a lot of times, he was in the Foy Building."

Beyond his activities in physical fitness and music, Perez is a Chick-Fil-A aficionado. Rodriguez said he used to eat Chick-Fil-A "all the time." "All I can say from the bottom of my heart [is] Cesar brings joy to everyone around him. He's the most optimistic person I know. Everybody that meets him just falls in love with him," Rodriguez said.

**AFTERMATH OF THE CAR CRASH**

According to WTOC, Perez was on his way home to Savannah from Atlanta when the a driver in the wrong lane hit his car, causing him to spin in front of a semi-truck.

"People thought [Perez] wasn't going to make it because they had to revive him twice in the ambulance. It was just a really bad accident," Rodriguez said.

After suffering multiple facial fractures, a broken left femur and brain contusions, Perez is recovering at a rehabilitation hospital, according to Rodriguez.

"So far, he's had a lot of progress. He can see now. He's not able to talk at the moment because of his trachea. They had to put a breathing tube in his throat," Rodriguez said. "Right now, he's just at [a rehabilitation hospital] doing physical therapy, trying to regain mobility and walk. There's nothing wrong with his spine or anything, and his brain is perfectly fine. He's slowly getting there, but it's going to be a long recovery process."

Rodriguez said a lot of costs are accumulating for Perez and his family, like the cost of his medical expenses, apartment and lawyers.

In the aftermath of the crash, Rodriguez said she would advise intoxicated people to get an Uber rather than drive under the influence.

"A lot of times, when we're young, especially in high school, we're taught 'Don't drink and drive.' We always go through those seminars in the auditorium or gymnasium. At first, though, you don't realize the impact it could have on you until it happens to you," Rodriguez said.

Perez's family has created a GoFundMe page. As of Feb. 7, they have raised nearly $27,000.

Rodriguez said, "We say we can take control of our lives, but unfortunately, we also gotta depend on the actions of others. I'm happy that [Perez] is progressing, and I'm happy that the guy who did this is in jail now. It would be wonderful if stuff like this could just be prevented."
For college football fans and high school football fans alike, National Signing Day is one of the most exciting days in football.

This was Head Coach Chad Lunsford’s first recruiting class as head coach and many will agree that he did a very fine job.

“Everything we took was a need,” Lunsford said. “The skill players, the great thing about them is that they can do different things. On offense, you need to have guys that are explosive and can get the ball on different parts of the field.”

And the recruiting staff did just that—get guys that are explosive and flexible at different positions, some on both sides of the ball.

Georgia Southern’s 2018 recruiting ranked first in the Sun Belt conference and 86th nationally. What makes the ranking even more impressive is that this is just three months after a two win state of Georgia and ESPN has him as a 3-star recruit. He is very fast off the edge and can get the ball on different parts of the field.

Nearly all of the signees had hard verbal commitments in December then hit the ground running in January. For a full breakdown of every player, check out the coverage on thegeorgeanne.com.

**EAGLES BRING IN 25 RECRUITS**

**ALREADY SIGNED IN DECEMBER**

**Jontavius Ferguson**
RB
3 Stars
Also had offers from Arkansas St, Rutgers, UCF among others
Ferguson had 75 solo tackles in his senior year, averaging 10 total tackles a game. The inside linebacker helped lead Manchester to the Elite 8 of the Class A Public state playoffs.

**Marcus Rogers**
WR
2 Stars
Also had offers from Lake Erie College, Liberty, West Virginia State
Rogers played both sides of the ball at Campbell High School averaging 42 Y/G at wide receiver, but also racking up nearly two tackles a game at free safety. Campbell lost to Lowndes in the first round of the Class AAAAAA state playoffs.

**Najee Thompson**
ATH
2 Stars
Also had offers from Central Michigan, Massachusetts, Western Carolina
Thompson does it all whether it’s catching the ball (71 Y/G), playing safety on defense (3 T/G) or even throwing the ball for 58 yards on one scoring play this season.

**Andrew Cunningham**
RB
3 Stars
Also had offers from Alabama, Georgia, Oklahoma, TCU among others
Cunningham is the biggest get for Coach Lunsford and the team. The 6-foot running back from Tampa had offers from 67 FBS schools, with heavy interest from Louisiana. Though he suffered a leg injury midway through his senior year, Cunningham was still able to pick up three 100+ yard rushing games and 10 rushing touchdowns. Cambridge Christian School lost to state champion Champagnat Catholic in the Final Four of the FHSAA Class 2A state playoffs.

**Quin Williams**
OLB
3 Stars
Also had offers from Auburn, Michigan, Oklahoma among others
One of the surprises on NSD was Williams who waited until the big day to commit. According to 247sports, Williams is the 45th best recruit in the state of Georgia and ESPN has him as a 4-star recruit. He is very fast off the edge and was even used as running back sometimes at Morgan County. Williams is probably the best pass rusher in this class. A year ago winning the state championship, Morgan County High School lost to East Hall in the first round of the GHSA AAA state playoffs.

**Brandon Cross**
CB
3 Stars
Also had offers from Indiana, Miss St, Syracuse among others.
Another highly recruited signee, Cross had initially committed to Tennessee, but decommitted in December. At 5’10” 185 lbs, the cornerback is quick off the ball, but also has the speed to keep up with some of the top wide receivers in Florida. Jones High School was upset in the first round of the FHSAA Class 5A state playoffs by Cardinal Gibbons High School.

**Christian “Scoobie” Ford**
WR
3 Stars
Also had offers from Virginia Tech, Wake Forest, West Virginia among others
Ford had several top FBS offers, but wanted to stay in-state. The wide receiver averaged nearly 60 total yards a game, 50 of them through the air. Ford will be a great target for Dellesse’s offensive scheme. Marietta High School lost to GHSA Class AAAAAAA state champion North Cowinnett in the Elite 8.

**Aaron Dowdell**
OG
3 Stars
Also had offers from LSU, South Alabama, Western Kentucky among others
As a transfer from Georgia Military College in Milledgeville, Dowdell helped lead the Bulldogs to an 8-2 season. At 6’4” 310 lbs, the offensive guard easily gives his quarterback time to throw and is stealthy in his run block scheme.

“Everything we took was a need,” Lunsford said. “The skill players, the great thing about them is that they can do different things. On offense, you need to have guys that are explosive and can get the ball on different parts of the field.”

And the recruiting staff did just that—get guys that are explosive and flexible at different positions, some on both sides of the ball.

Georgia Southern’s 2018 recruiting ranked first in the Sun Belt conference and 86th nationally. What makes the ranking even more impressive is that this is just three months after a two win
Senior guard Mike Hughes became the first Eagle in modern era to tally 1,200 points, 500 rebounds, 200 assists and 100 steals.

Both Georgia Southern basketball teams traveled to Jonesboro, Arkansas for matchups with the Arkansas State Red Wolves.

The Women’s Game
Once again, the Eagles have fallen in conference play, this time by more than a 20-point deficit.

Although senior guard Trellanie English-Lurry had an impressive career high of 17 points, the Eagles as a whole only shot 27.6 percent from the floor, there for not being enough to top the Red Wolves who shot 44.6 percent from the floor.

Throughout the game the Red Wolves maintained a steady lead on the Eagles the was too difficult for them to catch up to and overcome.

Freshman guard Peyton Martin lead the Red Wolves with scoring a total of 17 points and Jada Ford followed behind with 11 points.

This is Arkansas State’s second win in a row and makes their overall record 12-10.

The Men’s Game
Before this game, the Red Wolves were on a 4-game losing streak at home.

The Eagles started off hot, going on a 10-3 run in the first three minutes of the game, capped off by a senior guard Mike Hughes three pointer.

That three sparked an Arkansas State timeout, and thus ended the run following a Red Wolves jumper a minute later.

After another Hughes three, ASU broke GS’ defense. They sparked a 9-0 run over just around a minute and a half, not missing a shot in the stretch, which also included taking the lead, the score being 20-17. The run was stopped by a R-freshman guard Quan Jackson layup.

The rest of a half was an offensive battle, with GS eventually taking the lead at the end of the half up 37-36.

This offensive lead would last until the 2-minute mark in the half. GS continued to fight for the whole game, but did not tie the game until the score broke even at 85 points.

For the rest of the game, the Eagles did not hit another field goal. They almost tied the game with free throws, but they ended up just one short, and when junior guard Tookie Brown got the ball with two seconds left, he threw a Hail Mary shot that ended short of the basket, ending the game 91-89.

Although Georgia Southern lost, there were good individual performances. Hughes finished the game with a season-high 27 points with an additional six boards. Junior guard Ike Smith, finished the game with 19 points and a team high 8 rebounds.

What’s next?
Both teams will end the season with five of their seven remaining games at home, including the next three. Eagles will host ULM Thursday night with the women tipping off at 5 p.m. and the men following at 7:30 p.m.
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