

# President's Newsletter

May 2015

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*Georgia Southern University*

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# May 2015



## President's Newsletter

Georgia Southern University

### An Eventful Semester

As I write this newsletter, that end-of-the-school excitement is still in the air across campus. It's been a semester and school year to remember. There were so many proud moments of achievement, powerful momentum toward a brighter future and a community that showed extraordinary heart in the face of tragic loss.

Each day here brings new reasons to take enormous pride in Georgia Southern. I know you'll share that pride in the work of our accomplished faculty, exceptional students and dedicated staff. I hope you'll share our stories with others. Not just our stories of tragedy but those of renewing hope and great achievement. And I invite you to strengthen your True Blue connection to the Eagle Nation. You will be glad you did.

You've heard me say it again and again. Georgia Southern is truly is the Greatest University in America. Read on and see for yourself.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Brooks A. Keel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D.  
President  
Twitter: @PresKeel

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## Commencement 2015: 3,300 graduates, 2 eventful days and countless memories



Commencement Weekend, May 8-9, saw 600 graduate and 2,700 undergraduate degrees awarded before thousands of family members and friends. The undergraduate ceremony on Saturday filled Paulson Stadium to capacity for the awarding of degrees, traditional pomp and circumstance and the climactic eagle flyover by Freedom. Dean C. Bucci ('94), Judge of the Superior Court for the Paulding Judicial Circuit and the first Hispanic Superior Court Judge in Georgia history, delivered the commencement address.

Graduate commencement, held in Hanner Fieldhouse, featured Pam McMichael, the director of the Highlander Research and Education Center, a civil rights leadership school in New Market, Tennessee, as the commencement speaker.

For many, the Lantern Walk on Friday evening is a cherished memory, a tradition first begun in 1935 and reintroduced in 2009. Graduates don cap and gown and gather at Sweetheart Circle for a lamp-lit final stroll through campus with family and friends. [Read more.](#)

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## School of Nursing Students' Memorial Fund established to honor nursing students who tragically lost their lives



On April 22, five Georgia Southern nursing students died in a tragic early morning auto accident on their way to clinical rounds at a Savannah hospital. Our hearts go out to the family, friends and classmates of Emily Clark, Morgan Bass, Abbie Deloach, Catherine Pittman, Caitlyn Baggett, as well as to Brittney McDaniel and Megan Richards who are still recovering from their injuries.

I was so very proud as the Georgia Southern community came together in an outpouring of love and remembrance for these talented young women at the memorial service held on Sweetheart Circle. Now, to honor these young women, the School of Nursing Students' Memorial Fund has been established. [Read more](#)

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## Governor Deal signs budget law to fund \$33.6 million multipurpose building and \$1 million for new manufacturing engineering program



Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal visited Georgia Southern University on Monday, May 11, to sign into law HB 76, an important part of the 2016 Fiscal Year Budget, on the steps of the Marvin Pittman Administration Building on Sweetheart Circle.

Included in HB 76 is \$33.6 million in funding for a new multidisciplinary classroom building, and \$1 million in funding for the University's operating budget that will help build a world-class manufacturing engineering program. [Read more](#)

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## 14th Annual Research Symposium showcases 160 graduate, undergraduate and faculty projects



On April 24, students and faculty from across campus presented their work to almost 500 attendees at the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Research Symposium, coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies.

In keeping with the University's commitment to research excellence, the conference showcased Georgia Southern graduate, undergraduate and faculty research in multiple disciplines, as well as attracting researchers from seven colleges and universities around the state. Cash prizes were awarded to students for top research posters and presentation in nine categories:

- Education & Learning
- Engineering & Information Technology
- Exercise Science & Human Performance
- Humanities & Social Science
- Molecular Biology Initiative
- Natural & Physical Sciences
- Public Health and Well Being
- Qualitative Research
- Business & Logistics

Thank you to all who helped make this symposium a success again this year and congratulations to our students. [Read more](#)

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## Georgia Southern players signed to NFL teams



Georgia Southern linebacker Edwin Jackson (right) and offensive lineman Garrett Frye (left) are headed to the National Football League after the recent draft. Both were signed as undrafted free agents: Jackson to the Arizona Cardinals, and Frye to the Kansas City Chiefs. [Read more](#)

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## Staff Council celebrates successful year with annual picnic



Some 650 members of the University professional and support staff gathered on May 14 at the RAC pavilion for a picnic lunch, sponsored by the Staff Council. Amid good food and good friends, they celebrated the year's dedicated

work and accomplishments, as well as raising funds for the Staff Council Scholarship and Book Awards, which benefit staff members pursuing degrees at Georgia Southern. Thanks to everyone who came out to celebrate with us.

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## Latest Faculty Spotlight Video

The latest installment of the Faculty Spotlight features Hua Wang, Ph.D., associate professor of Mathematics at Georgia Southern. Dr. Wang shares his passion for mathematics research, and how the “large scale, small feel” of Georgia Southern allows his students to be a part of that — even as undergraduates. <https://news.georgiasouthern.edu/category/faculty-spotlight/>



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## Upcoming Events

**May 25** – Memorial Day – Campus Closed

For a full list of upcoming events, visit the [Campus Calendar](#).

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### Mailing Address:

#### The President's Newsletter

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