The Georgia film and television industry is a large and prosperous entity, earning $5.1 billion this fiscal year. Georgia attracts film companies for reasons ranging from its varied geography to its tax incentives for film and television productions. Most recently, Georgia has been used as the filming location for scenes in movies such as the “Hunger Games” franchise and “Selma.”

As a result, there is a demand for a workforce with the skills necessary to support these endeavors, but production companies that shoot in Georgia say they often struggle to find the workers they need.

One measure that is being taken to meet this need is the establishment of the Georgia Film Academy. In January, Gov. Nathan Deal announced that a portion of the 2015 state budget would fund the new initiative, which is expected to launch this fall as a collaborative effort between the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia.

A new effort at Georgia Southwestern State University is also preparing students for careers in the film industry. The Department of Theater, Communication and Media Arts (TCMA) has given students the opportunity to experience the process of creating a movie, as it recently wrapped shooting on the department’s first major feature film.

The film, entitled “Which Way There,” was directed by Joey Watson, Ph.D., assistant professor of communication and media arts at Georgia Southwestern. The lead role was played by Natalie Donner, an Atlanta-based actress. Joanna Miller, a writer from Los Angeles, co-wrote the screenplay with Watson. Both Donner and Miller are former students of Watson.

Many of Watson’s current students at GSW also worked as cast and crew members, filling roles like assistant director and production coordinator.

The production was aided by collaboration from the GSW School of Nursing, where the simulation lab was used to shoot hospital scenes and by several local businesses. Perry Brothers Oil Co., the Windsor Hotel, the Rylander Theater and the Sumter Historic Trust all allowed the film to shoot on their properties.

For the full story, click here.
GSW students present history papers at Phi Alpha Theta Honors Conference

Six GSW students, along with Susan Bragg, assistant professor of history, attended the Georgia Regional Phi Alpha Theta History Conference at Reinhardt University on March 28. This conference drew faculty and student participants from across the state and even outside the region. Phi Alpha Theta is the national honor society for students of history.


Regional Phi Alpha Theta conferences provided an excellent opportunity for GSW students to participate in broader conversations about historical research and analysis. These students represented GSW admirably, and the department and its students look forward to the 2016 Georgia Phi Alpha Theta conference next spring.

New program launches to expand cultural awareness

This semester, a new program called The Intercultural Ambassadors was launched. The program is designed for both American students who have studied abroad and international students who are currently studying in America. GSW Intercultural Ambassadors are trained to encourage, inspire and ignite global curiosity in those around them through their presentations as well as cultural conversations in settings such as Residence Life programs, GSW classes, middle and high school classes, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs and Magnolia Manor.

If you would like to have one of the Intercultural Ambassadors visit your class or organization, please feel free to contact Maribel Greene at (229) 931-2346 or maribel.villegas@gsw.edu. If you have any questions please check out the Intercultural Ambassador website here: https://gsw.edu/about-gsw/qep/international-studies-consortium-of-georgia-2.

GSW Jazz Ensemble “jazzes up” the community

During the fall 2014 semester, the GSW Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Mark Laughlin, associate professor of music, performed for the Andersonville Historic Fair, Innovative Senior Solutions Fall Festival, River View Senior Center (Oglethorpe, Ga.), GSW Department of Music Fall Concert, Lenny’s Market and the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving Annual Gala.

Most recently the ensemble performed for Books for Sumter Children: Valentine’s Day Gala and Jazz Night at the Americus Center for the Arts. Upcoming performances include Arts in Rees Park and the GSW Department of Music Spring Concert.
GSW Chemistry Dept. and ACS co-host presentation

On Feb. 25, 2015, the Southwest Georgia Section of the American Chemical Society (SOWEGA-ACS) and the Chemistry Department at Georgia Southwestern State University hosted a presentation entitled “Carotenoid neutral radicals: a new photosynthetic pathway of dissipating excess energy?”

The event was organized by GSW associate professors of chemistry Tzvetelin Iordanov, chair of the SOWEGA-ACS section, and Nedialka Iordanova, treasurer of the local ACS section.

Forty students and faculty from GSW and Valdosta State University attended the event. The presentation was given by Alexandrina Ligia Focsan, assistant professor of chemistry at Valdosta State University.

GSW alumni magazine wins award

GSW’s alumni magazine, Aeolian, won a Special Merit Award in the category of Print and Digital Publications from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District III. The award was a part of the 2014-15 Advancement Awards presented in Orlando, Fla in February 2015.

CASE is a professional association that serves educational institutions and the advancement professionals who work at those institutions. CASE helps members accomplish tasks such as forming stronger relationships with alumni and donors, producing recruitment materials and marketing institutions to prospective students.

Laughlin leads women’s self-defense seminars

Mark Laughlin, associate professor of music, conducted several free women’s self-defense seminars throughout the fall and spring semesters, including seminars for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, GSW’s Academic Resource Center and 'Fight Like a Girl' Month. He also held a seminar for the teachers of Kinchafounee Primary School in Lee County. Over 40 teachers participated in the seminar. In May, he will conduct another seminar for Kinchafounee Primary and a self-defense seminar for the teachers of Lee County High School. Mark teaches martial arts through Titan Karate Academy (www.titankarate.com), which is part of the Continuing Education Program at GSW.
**Griffin Bell Lecture to feature leading DNA expert**

Greg Hampikian, Ph.D., a leading DNA expert in the U.S. and co-author of “Exit to Freedom,” is the featured speaker for Georgia Southwestern State University's Griffin B. Bell Lecture to be held **Wednesday, April 15 at 11 a.m. in the Nursing Auditorium** of the Rosalynn Carter Health and Human Sciences Complex. This event is free and open to the public.

Hampikian has a joint appointment in the Departments of Biology and Criminal Justice at Boise State University (BSU). He is best known as the volunteer forensic DNA expert on Innocence Network cases around the world including that of Amanda Knox. He also works with police on cold cases and recently worked with French police to solve a 10-year-old mystery using a novel DNA technique that was published in the “Journal of Forensic Science” in April 2014.

Hampikian is the founder and director of the Idaho Innocence Project at BSU, and he helped establish the Georgia Innocence Project and the Innocence Project France. His research on subjectivity and bias in forensic DNA was featured in the “Economist” and “New Scientist,” and his “New York Times” op-eds, “Men Who Needs Them? (2012)” and “When May I Shoot a Student (2014)” both rose to the top of the Times most shared lists. His work has been covered by Anderson Cooper, the “Today Show,” “Good Morning America,” “Dateline,” “Nightline,” “20-20,” “Time” and many others.

The Bell Lecture Series, which brings notable individuals and outstanding alumni to campus to share their experiences, is made possible through a gift from the late Griffin B. Bell, GSW alumnus and former U.S. attorney general.

Immediately following the lecture, Hampikian will be signing copies of his book “Exit to Freedom” in the lobby outside the speaking venue. Copies of this book will be available in the GSW Bookstore beginning this week.

For additional information about this event, call (229) 931-2037.

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**Third World Seminar to examine U.S. foreign policy in Middle East**

“The U.S. and the Middle East” is the title of Georgia Southwestern State University's Third World in Perspective Program Seminar set to take place on **Tuesday, April 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the Nursing Auditorium** of the Rosalynn Carter Health and Human Sciences Complex.

The public is invited and encouraged to attend this free program, which is a GSW Windows to the World sanctioned event.

The seminar will feature presentations by two GSW professors with expertise on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. David Jason Berggren, assistant professor of political science, will discuss “U.S. Presidential Leadership in the Arab-Israeli Conflict,” and Brian R. Parkinson, associate professor of history, will analyze “U.S. Policy Toward the Middle East.”

A session of questions and discussion will follow the speaker presentations.

The forum, moderated by GSW Professor Emeritus of History Harold Isaacs, is co-sponsored by the Department of History and Political Science; the School of Business; the Office of International Programs; the GSW Foundation, Inc.; the Office of Continuing Education and the Association of Third World Studies, Inc.
Scholarship recipients meet donors at annual luncheon

The 7th Annual Donor-Scholar Luncheon took place on Thursday, March 12, 2015 and was an opportunity for named foundation scholarship recipients to meet their scholarship donor/sponsor.

Two student representatives, Johnathan Simmons, a junior English major with teacher certification, and McKenna Ingram, a freshman psychology major, spoke about the tremendous impact their respective scholarships had on them.

A special “thank you” video was also screened.

The luncheon was sponsored by the GSW Foundation.

GSW 3rd Annual Poker Run set for April 25th

Georgia Southwestern State University’s 3rd Annual Poker Run will take place April 25, 2015 beginning at 9 a.m. All bikers are invited.

The cost is $25 per rider with extra hands and extra passengers costing $15 each. The Best Hand will receive $250.

The ride begins at the GSW Education Building and ends in Warm Springs, Ga., or riders may choose to loop back to GSW for a chance to discard/redraw and increase their hand(s). The winning hand will be determined upon return to the GSW Education Building.

The event is sponsored by the GSW Alumni Association. All proceeds will benefit student scholarships offered by the Alumni Association. To RSVP for the ride, email alumni@gsu.edu or call 928-1373. More event information can be found at www.gsu.edu/alumnievents.

Thanks to all the faculty, staff and students who helped beautify our campus on Campus Pride Day!
President’s Note

In keeping with our Hurricane theme, I think it is fair to say that the month of March has been a whirlwind of activity (sorry for the pun). During the Town Hall meeting in early February, I spoke of the need to develop the “value proposition” for Georgia Southwestern, to grow the University’s enrollment base and to develop plans and priorities that will further enrollment growth and student engagement for the long-term benefit of campus. To this end, we have been busy at work doing just that.

With the help of recent policy changes approved at the Board of Regents’ March meeting, GSW is now one of ten institutions in South Georgia with the ability to grant in-state tuition to Florida, Alabama and South Carolina residents. This means that financial barriers to attending GSW, namely the cost of out-of-state tuition, have been removed. This is but one “value proposition” that we will use in our recruitment efforts, and the Division of Enrollment Management and Athletics have already begun actively recruiting prospective students and student athletes in these states.

Working with the University System of Georgia, we are developing plans for the University to serve as a regional hub for the Brazilian government’s larger initiative to grant 100,000 Brazilian students scholarships with the opportunity to study abroad at colleges and universities in the United States. Our Brazilian students would be involved in an intensive English language instruction experience and would continue on our campus for two additional

▲ Charles Patterson, Ph.D.
Interim President

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 4</td>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Leesburg Stockade Girls Event</td>
<td>Fourteen young black girls from Americus, Ga. were held hostage in 1963 during the Civil Rights Movement. They will speak about for the first time about their experiences. Storm Dome</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Statewide Career Fair</td>
<td>Cobb Galleria - Atlanta, Ga. For more information, contact Sandra Fowler at <a href="mailto:sandra.fowler@gsu.edu">sandra.fowler@gsu.edu</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Department of Music, Spring Concert</td>
<td>Feat. the GSW Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, Concert Band, and Jazz Band. Jackson Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 22</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Majors Fair</td>
<td>Student Success Center Conference Rooms For more information, contact Sandra Fowler at <a href="mailto:sandra.fowler@gsu.edu">sandra.fowler@gsu.edu</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Arts in Rees Park</td>
<td>Outdoor festival showcasing a variety of artistic disciplines including singing, painting, glassblowing and ceramics Rees Park, 409 Elm Ave, Americus, GA 31709</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Alumni &amp; Friends Beach Bash</td>
<td>Sponsored by the GSW Alumni Association Griffin Bell Golf Center Tickets: $50 each/$90 couple RSVP: 229-928-1373</td>
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terms (spring and fall) before moving to one of the research-intensive institutions in the USG to perform a capstone project. While a bit more exploratory, the program has the capacity to assist with our Quality Enhancement Plan, Windows to the World, as well as our efforts to diversify and internationalize campus.

In addition, we are in the beginning stages of implementing eCore, and we are incorporating the USG’s “Go Back. Move Ahead.” program. Outside of these four recruitment/enrollment initiatives, our traditional recruitment efforts are also trending well. Applications for undergraduate admission are up, applications for graduate admission have increased significantly, thanks in part to the School of Education, and reservations for campus housing also indicate that our enrollment and retention efforts are moving in a positive direction.

We hosted another Preview Day on Saturday. I, personally, relish the opportunity to welcome families to our campus and to watch them, sometimes nervously, interact with our energetic faculty, staff, students and retiree volunteers. It is truly a group effort. On the day prior, approximately 25 volunteers from across campus joined me in making sure that everything looked beautiful for all of our arriving guests by planting flowers and picking up debris.

Like the flowers we so carefully planted, it is through our hard work and dedication that we’ll see Georgia Southwestern State University grow. We’ll look back at some point and admire all that we have accomplished in such a short amount of time, but not yet. There is still much work to be done, but we are so blessed to have such a supportive Georgia Southwestern family to help our garden grow.