



Conversations

with the Chairman

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▷ ARE GREEKS MAKING THE GRADE AT GEORGIA SOUTHERN?

The Georgia Southern University administration continues to challenge the Greek Community on the issue of academic performance. Recently a University committee elected to impose a new requirement that all incoming male freshmen have a high school grade point average of 3.0 to participate in formal IFC recruitment. Greeks pushed back, arguing that they were not represented on the committee and that the University should not maintain a standard for Greeks that is not also applied to other student organizations. From the TKE perspective, we are concerned that the University continues to maintain an adversarial approach on these issues, versus engaging the Greek Community in a conversation and partnership to achieve these goals. We're sympathetic to the concerns raised by other Greeks, but have also elected to adopt the new requirement, incorporating it into our TKE Academic Policy. In the end, the argument that Greeks shouldn't have a higher standard is ridiculous (of course we should). The question is whether or not the University should have to impose such a standard ... or should we have been out in front of this issue and adopted such a policy on our own? The University argues that the only alternative was transitioning to a deferred recruitment program, meaning freshmen men could not join until the second semester of enrollment. This alternative would have been devastating for the system and, perhaps, for TKE.

▷ TKE REMEMBERS FRATER RANDY RAY

Tau Kappa Epsilon mourns the loss of Frater Randy Ray (AY 474), who passed into the Chapter Eternal on Sunday, February 22, following a short but valiant fight with cancer. Frater Ray led the effort to establish our TKE Parents Association, and also served as a member of the Board of Advisors and Alumni Association Board of Directors. Frater Randy is the father of Frater Cody Ray (AY 465) and Frater Corey Ray (AY 512). No funeral services were planned, but the family has indicated that they will host a celebration of Frater Randy's life in the next few months. Frater Randy was a wonderful person and a great supporter of TKE, making dozens of trips from Atlanta to Statesboro to support the collegiate chapter, work on the chapter house, participate in alumni functions, and more. We'll miss his sense of humor, great personality, and extraordinary commitment to Tau Kappa Epsilon. Our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to the Ray family during this difficult time.



▷ GOVERNOR PERDUE RECOMMENDS CLARK AS NEW DNR COMMISSIONER

Governor Sonny Perdue has announced that Frater Chris Clark (AY 227), past-Prytanis of our TKE collegiate chapter and Executive Director of the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), is his recommended choice to succeed Noel Holcomb as Commissioner of DNR when Holcomb retires in April 2009. "Chris has demonstrated his talent and commitment to Georgia's citizens during his tenure as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development and as Executive Director of GEFA," said Governor Perdue. Under the Georgia Constitution, the DNR Board appoints both the Commissioner and the Director of the Environmental Protection Division. By making his recommendation to the Board now, Governor Perdue hopes to set the stage for a smooth transition given the state's current budget challenges and the complexity of the programs and issues statutorily assigned to DNR and the Environmental Protection Division. This will be the first time in the history of DNR that the department's commissioner was not promoted from within the organization. As Executive Director of GEFA, Clark has led a number of important initiatives since being appointed to that position in 2007. GEFA serves as the state environmental bank by providing financing for water and sewer infrastructure projects and is home to the State Energy Office. During his tenure, he served on the State Water Council and helped launch a new Water Supply Division at GEFA to assist communities with reservoirs development. Clark also led the creation of the Governor's Energy Challenge which seeks to reduce energy use by state government by 15 percent, as well as the Conserve Georgia initiative which is the state's conservation clearing house (www.conservegeorgia.org). He also launched Georgia's Energy Innovation Center that works to bring alternative energy projects to the state. Additionally, he is Governor Perdue's proxy on the Southern Growth Policy Board and represents Georgia as a commissioner on the Southeast Commission for Low-Level Radioactive Waste. Prior to his appointment at GEFA, Clark served for four years as Deputy Commissioner of Global Commerce at the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Among his highlights at GDEcD was the recruitment of a new Kia Motors manufacturing plant to West Point, Georgia. Clark is a native of Fitzgerald, earning a bachelor's degree from Georgia Southern University, and a master's degree in public administration from Georgia College and State University. Frater Clark resides near Peachtree City in Fayette County with his wife Tiffany and son Christian.

▷ **COLLEGIATE TEKES ATTEND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

A delegation of fourteen Lambda-Upsilon Tekes spent the weekend of January 23-25 at the TKE Regional Leadership Conference in Jacksonville, Florida. Members participated in a variety of educational sessions to help prepare them for success in college and the business world, networking and building relationships with other members and alumni, and strengthening their understanding of TKE's ideals and principles. Georgia Southern's TKE delegation was the largest in attendance and included Frater Frank Sanders (AY 214), BOA Chairman, and Frater Buddy Clay (AY 2), Chapter Advisor and Vice Chairman of the BOA. Funding was provided by the Board of Advisors to assist in covering registration fees and transportation costs for the collegiate members.



▷ **MORE STUDENTS MAJORING IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING**

A recent study has eased the minds of technology recruiters deprived of fresh, engineering-based talent, USA Today reports. The Computing Research Association recently released a report highlighting an 8% increase in North American computer science and engineering programs over the 2007-2008 school year. The CRA, a trade group for about 200 university computing departments, emphasized this jump as the first since 2002, when the dot-com bubble infamously burst. For several years, the tech industry has resorted to outsourcing these essential jobs to countries like India and China. However, a patriotic shift is evident as more and more students are pursuing these tech-savvy majors. "The perception that IT jobs are hard to come by is over, and the field is now considered an interesting place to be," says Peter Harsha, director of government affairs for CRA, told USA Today. This growing popularity can contribute to the influence of popular social networks and Web 2.0 applications that are driving online traffic. Harsha observed to USA Today that the iPhone, Facebook and YouTube have drawn more teens into computer science and should boost enrollment figures next year, too. Jeff Hollingsworth, associate chair at the University of Maryland's computer-science department, also noticed a handful of business and finance majors switching to undergraduate programs directed towards computing.

▷ **GSU PRESIDENT BRUCE GRUBE STEPPING DOWN**

Bruce Grube has announced that he is stepping down as President of Georgia Southern University effective June 30, 2009. On July 1, 2009, Grube will take one year of educational leave to prepare to return to the classroom as a professor of Political Science for the 2010-2011 academic year at Georgia Southern University. In addition to preparing to return to the classroom, Grube will also serve as a consultant and mentor with the University System of Georgia where he will work with new and newer presidents within the 35-school state system. The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia will begin a national search to replace Grube. Grube began his tenure as the 11th President of Georgia Southern University July 1, 1999. During his presidency, Georgia Southern University has undergone the greatest increase in academic quality, and the greatest expansion of physical facilities than during any other comparable period in the history of the institution.

▷ **SOUTHERN BOOSTERS CHANGES NAME**

The Southern Boosters' Board of Directors unanimously voted during their January 2009 meeting to change the organization's name to the Georgia Southern University Athletic Foundation, Inc. The name change is designed to more clearly communicate the organization's purpose and mission as a fundraising and supporting organization of intercollegiate athletics at Georgia Southern University. "The name 'Georgia Southern University Athletic Foundation, Inc.' was selected following surveys of our membership and supporters. The name will be consistent with other Georgia Southern University foundations including The Georgia Southern University Foundation, The Georgia Southern University Housing Foundation, Inc. and the Georgia Southern University Research Foundation, Inc.," said John Mulherin, president of the Georgia Southern University Athletic Foundation, Inc.



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