

The West Georgian

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Kyle Marrero: Gone West, Going South

Tiffany Maynard

Feature Editor

The University System of Georgia's Board of Regents named Dr. Kyle Marrero the President of Georgia Southern University on Jan. 17, 2019. Marrero has served as UWG's President since 2013, bringing new updates and record-setting graduation numbers throughout his presidency. Reflecting back on his time at UWG, Marrero says that he feels his impact has been made here.

"We knew this was coming," said Marrero. "As I look from the outside in, knowing UWG, with the leadership in place and the great strides being made, this might just be the best opportunity for me to see if I can make an impact somewhere else."

Beginning as a performer, and eventually an instructor, director and an administrator, Marrero follows his calling -- impacting the lives of those around him.

"I'm a bit of an unlikely president, in terms of pathway," said Marrero. "As you get a little older, your life zigs-zags and you do this here and that there ... but the connector, for me, was always impacting others' lives ... The thrill line is always to impact others more than yourself -- to help others grow."

Since 2013, Marrero has helped the campus grow with record-breaking enrollment and graduation rates. Also since Marrero's genesis on campus, UWG has had some major upgrades; from new bike lanes and buildings, to new programs and parking, Dr. Marrero and his team have worked hard to try to keep the campus up to date and constantly improving.

"There's been things that I think 'This has just done it; this is incredible,'" said Marrero. "The new College of Business building ... that was the largest gift commitment in the history of the University of West Georgia. That's really exciting because I know what that building is going to mean to the students and faculty. Achieving record degrees conferred last year, seeing that success and culmination of success ... These numbers indicate an entire team-coordinated effort towards your success, and that's incredible."

Though Marrero is on his last leg of his time at UWG, he says there is still work to be done.

"We're working continually on a strategic plan and a vision to be the best comprehensive university in America," said Marrero. "To be the best place to work, study and succeed, so with that, it's not just a plan that just goes through 2020, but it's also one that has annual goals and also one that has 90-day goals."

"I want to make sure the funding for the College of Business gets through the legislative process," said Marrero. "That's critically important for us."

Marrero's time here at UWG has come to an end, but he has left a lasting impact on the students, faculty, campus and community.

"What I want this community and the faculty, staff and students to know, is my heartfelt thanks for their continued care and nurturing, and allowing me to lead in unconventional ways and allowing me to be a partner with them in who and what we are and I want to encourage them to continue on this journey," said Marrero. "I expect to see great things from them."

Although Marrero's presidency at UWG ends April 1, 2019, more than a month before Spring Commencement, the plans for his successor are still unclear.



Photo Credits: University of West Georgia

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The Truth Revealed: Civil Rights Cold Cases Brought to Light

Tiffany Maynard

Feature Editor

UWG held its 10th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on Jan. 23, 2019.

The theme of this year's event was "The Truth Revealed". This title was fitting for the topics discussed by the keynote speaker, Hank Klibanoff.

Klibanoff is a veteran journalist, having most recently worked at the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. A co-author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *The Race Beat*, a current Professor of Practice at Emory University, working with students enrolled in The Georgia Civil Rights Cold Cases Project; as well as the creator and host of *Buried Truths*, a podcast drawn from his and his students' work on the cold cases studied in class, his journalistic career has proven to be plentiful and impactful.

In his appearance at the Campus Center Ballroom, Klibanoff spoke of the many cases he and his students investigated: Clarence Pickett, James Brazier, A.C. Hall, Isaiah Nixon -- all whose deaths were at the hand of an unjust system.

"Even though many of those perpetrators are dead, those stories aren't and we ought to continue to prosecute them even if it's in a newspaper or in a history course, or some other form," said Klibanoff. "They need to be prosecuted and brought to justice. The justice might be simply getting the story out."

The Cold Cases Project did more

than get the story out for Isaiah Nixon's case, however.

In 2015, three students traveled to Montgomery County, Georgia, where Nixon was shot in cold blood for exercising his right to vote. The students found not a trace of evidence of Nixon's death in the newspapers from the day, and decided to pay tribute to Nixon by visiting the Old Salem Cemetery, where it was assumed Nixon was buried in an unmarked grave. Upon further investigation, one student found the marked grave of Nixon, caked underneath layers of mud, which had been lost for 67 years.

Though this discovery was a triumph for the students, Klibanoff, and Nixon's family, there is still work to be done with the other cold cases.

"I hope people just become acquainted with their history," said Klibanoff. "And understanding history as it was, will help them understand who we are."



PLAN OF ACTION: UWG PREPARES FOR EXTREME WEATHER

Aurie Johnson

Contributing Writer

UWG has taken heed from past experiences with extreme weather and has a plan of action for any extreme weather that hits campus.

UWG's Emergency Management Department gets wind of any severe weather headed towards the state of Georgia from the National Weather Service in Peachtree City.

Michael Nelson, Director of Emergency Management for UWG, is in charge of receiving information about the weather and notifying the UWG administration as well as the varying departments.

As soon as UWG receives word of any weather that might impact the university, Nelson will send an email to weather update group. UWG athletics, the Coliseum, UWG facilities and other major departments are on this mailing list.

If the situation requires drastic action (such as closing the university), Nelson will meet with another group: UWG's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC is a collection of all the major on-campus departments that meet together to discuss emergency situations.

The UWG Marketing and Communications departments will put an alert on the LiveSafe app when potentially hazardous weather is detected. Afterwards, the information will be sent in a mass email to the student body. All of this information is inscribed in the most recent edition of UWG's comprehensive emergency management plan, which came out in July 2018. This plan details every step that UWG personnel should take in the event of an emergency or closure, from notifications to evacuations.

Last year, UWG had an issue with getting students fed during a campus snow closing. Students would have normally gotten food themselves, but with snow and ice on the roads they were stuck on campus. In response, the Z6 dining hall was reopened so that students could eat. But with Z6 open came another problem.

"They couldn't really get a lot of employees in here, so people that were available came over and helped. I went over there, several of the VPs were there, Dr. Marrero was there, so we were over there helping serve students food," said Nelson.

Nelson stressed emergency preparedness when giving advice to students on how to stay safe on campus this winter. He advised students to check the weather, have a plan of where to go in case something happens, and to have a winter kit in your vehicle to keep warm and to get out of sticky situations.

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PARKING UPGRADE:

Parking Counters Installed

Athea Hutchinson

Contributing Writer

The newest addition to UWG's parking lots are called parking lot counters.

Speed bumps located in Lot 30, Lot 4 and the Tyus parking lots monitor cars coming in and out to keep track of open parking lots. The amount of spots are then shown on displays, which run on solar power and are a part of the Green Initiative program.

"The parking spots in Tyus parking lot are underutilized," said Wade Crenshaw, manager of Parking Services. "Most students ride around campus in search of a parking spot because majority of the convenient spaces located near the bookstore all filled up from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m."

An option that has been frequently suggested by UWG students, to potentially improve parking on campus, is to build a parking deck. While a parking lot usually holds 350 spaces, a parking deck could hold twice as many, however the cost would be substantially more.

"The cost to build a parking deck would be \$400,000," said Crenshaw.

With that high of a price to build a parking deck that would mean students fees could possibly be bumped up. While the new parking lot counters were budgeted with the student fees and help from the Green Initiative program.

Parking Services has heard positive feedback pertaining to the parking counters but have also heard the complaints about the accuracy of the devices.

"Lot 4 has had issues with saying there are spots left but really there were not any," said Crenshaw. "With anything that is installed new there is always the chance of there being issues. Also, the parking lot counters are still in the beginning stages."

The purpose behind the parking lot counters is to show students that there is not necessarily a need for more parking spots. There is a plan to

install these counters in more parking lots around campus.

"I am just trying to relieve some of the stress," says Crenshaw.

"Trying to find parking on campus is an issue that everyone has to deal with whether you are a student or a faculty member but the new parking counters are here to relieve some of the stress."



Photo Credits: Athea Hutchinson

CAMPUS OUTREACH:

Spreading the Gospel

Amir Sports

Contributing Writer

Campus Outreach hosted their first meeting of the spring 2019 semester, Jan. 22 in Bonner Lecture Hall.

Campus Outreach is a network of Christian organizations that provides ministry services to college students all throughout the world. Founded in 1978 at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama Campus Outreach envisioned a ministry to have an influence on college students.

"Our weekly meetings are every Tuesday at eight; they're just an hour long and very fun," said Jef Fluevog, Campus Outreach staff member.

Fluevog has been a staff member for Campus Outreach for over a year now and he is pleased with the meetings' attendance since he has joined.

"Our meetings have a laid back setting where we allow students to come and learn who Jesus is," said Fluevog. "First we start with a testimony share, then we play fun games, after that we have a speaker give a good sermon of a particular message. Last, we break out into discussion groups where we discuss what we learned."

There are five UWG Campus Outreach staff members: Tyler Rollason, Zarah Spraggins, Rachel Wiggins, Beau Dugan and Jef Fluevog. Fluevog gave Campus Outreach a try during his late years enrolled at UWG, where he says he truly heard the gospel for the first time.

"I believe God led me to my first Campus Outreach meeting to help myself find who I am in Christ, and led me to people who loved me enough to teach me the true meaning of salvation," said Fluevog.

Campus Outreach offers more than just weekly meetings for students. They also provide group events throughout the year where students can come and meet other students on and off campus.

The biggest event Campus Outreach conducts every year is their Summer Beach Project. The project for 2019 is set for May 29- July 24.

The project provides an opportunity for college students to participate in a summer of Christian training that will prepare them to walk with the Lord for a lifetime.



Photo Credits: Jef Fluevog



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THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Anastasia Zbarazhskaya

Contributing Writer

Mikalai Mikhansenak, an international student from Minsk, Belorussia, came to the United States as a student to work and travel during the summer, but was unable to go back home because of a car accident in Myrtle Beach, SC.

A few hours before his departure back home, Mikalai decided to go to the beach to see the sunrise. However, he never made it to the shore. Instead, he woke up in a hospital bed after being in a coma for two months.

Mikalai's family was getting daily updates from his host family in the United States. His oldest brother flew to the U.S. after learning about the tragedy. He did not know where he was going, or if his younger brother was going to live, but he knew that he had to be by his side. Mikalai woke up almost right away after his brother arrived at the hospital.

"Where am I? I was sure that I was in Minsk," said Mikalai Mikhansenak. "I was thinking that I'm in a hospital in Minsk and that my mom was my doctor, which she isn't in real life."

It was a miracle that Mikalai woke, but his future did not look positive. He had to learn how to walk and speak again, but his family and friends were ready to go through all of this with him.

His host family stayed with him in the hospital until the moment he woke up. After he woke up they continued visiting him, talking to him and reading him the Bible.

"I remember everything while I was in coma," said Mikalai. "I remember I heard verses from the Bible, how people were talking around me, the

TV news and cartoons sounds. I was feeling that I couldn't give up after everything that I came through. I wanted to live for my parents."

The rehabilitation process is a long and painful one. Mikalai wanted to give up several times, but his brother never let him. Both of them knew that he could survive and go back to regular life.

Now, Mikalai can speak, walk and do his everyday routines as he continues to go through the rehabilitation process.

"My day is so boring, I wake up at 6 a.m., go to rehabilitation center. After this, I sleep sometimes or go for a walk," Mikalai said. "Hopefully, in the beginning of December, I will start running again."

Mikalai can not change the things which happened to him, but he is determined to get his old life back. He has not given up on his dreams, goals and plans for his future life. He is an example of a person with a strong spirit who shows that giving up is the last thing to do.

Cease Fire: Government Shutdown Ends... For Now

Matthew Harvey

Editor-In-Chief

The longest government shutdown in this country's history has ended -- for three weeks. President Donald Trump has demanded \$5.7 billion in federal funding for a U.S. - Mexico border that he promised back in his 2016 presidential campaign.

The shutdown began on Dec. 22 and lasted up until Jan. 25, totaling 35 days. On Jan. 25, the House and Senate passed a stopgap spending bill funding federal agencies for normal operations until Feb. 15.

The stopgap bill will not allow for funding of the U.S - Mexico border wall, but it does increase the funding for border security. It also provides financial relief for many federal workers who have either been out of work or working with no pay for the last month. However, Trump has said that if the money for the wall is not funded by Feb. 15 he will impose another shutdown or declare a national emergency.

"We really have no choice but to build a powerful wall or steel barrier," said Trump in a speech in the White House Rose Garden. "If we don't get a fair deal from Congress, the government will either shut down on Feb. 15, or I will use the powers afforded to me under the laws and Constitution of the United States to address this emergency."

The shutdown began when Trump refused to sign the spending bill for the 2019 fiscal year because it did not include funding for the wall that he says is key to our national security. On the other side, the Democrats feel that the wall not a necessity and refuse to provide him the money to fund it.

"Our government operates on a budget and normally budgets for the coming year are sorted in about June or July. Congress passes that budget and the president approves it," said Dr. Chapman Rackaway, Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science. "The government runs on a budget set one year at a time and if there is no new budget set then there is no money to run the government."

Without a budget set in place for the government to operate on, both non-essential and essential workers are among those who have struggled through this shutdown. Non-essential workers are those who work for the government, but their presence at work during an emergency is not required. Essential workers are those who perform work that involves the safety of human life or the protection of property. Non-essential workers have now missed work for a month, while essential workers have been working without pay for the last month.

"There will be some sort of element of back pay, but that doesn't matter if you're living paycheck to paycheck and you can't pay your rent or your mortgage and you lose your home," said Rackaway. "I think the fact that there have been around 1800 GoFundMe pages started by people who are in that essential mode speaks to just what a challenge it is. It's all well and good to say that you're going to get paid eventually, but my bills can't just be paid eventually."

While this shutdown has affected thousands of people in the country, neither the Democrats nor the Republicans seemed eager to end it. If anything, both parties had their own reasons to keep the shutdown going.

"Both sides have a bit of incentive to keep this shutdown going. At least they think they have an incentive because this shutdown is going to be one of the key issues in the presidential election of 2020," said Rackaway.

Democrats know that the longer this shutdown lasts the angrier the American people will become closer to the 2020 election and if that happens they will have a much easier time pushing their candidate over Trump or any other Republican candidate.

"Democrats don't want to give Trump the wall because they know that he will campaign off of that. They also think that they can beat him and other Republicans up by blaming the shutdown on them," said Rackaway. "So the longer it goes, the more recent it is in people's memory, the more the Democrats think it will help them electronically in 2020."

Beyond the reason of having the wall built, Republicans also see this shutdown as an opportunity to show the American people that the federal government can and should be shrunk down.

"Trump, as a lot of conservatives, would like to see the federal government shrink, so they're seeing a prolonged shutdown and saying that if people aren't getting up and arms about this why aren't we cutting more about what the federal government does," said Rackaway.

Much of what the government does is behind the scenes and does not impact the everyday life of the average American, therefore, much of the public is unsure of what this shutdown means for those that it does directly impact.

"There is not a big public outcry about this because on a day to day basis people are not seeing much of an impact of the shutdown," said Rackaway. "The general public needs something big and they need something inconvenient to shake them out of their complacency on this.

"When people find things that are really personally relevant to them that is when they tend to take action," continued Rackaway. "Even when they see bad things happening for other folks they tend to stay on the sideline until it impacts them personally. Then they spring into action."

With many Americans unaware of the severity of the situation at hand, it is important that they educate themselves on the issue--and beyond that, voice their thoughts to elective officials.

"The budget process is what is driving this, but also I think this is a wake-up call for a lot of people," said Rackaway. "We can post things on social media, we can talk about these things amongst ourselves and we all tend to have pretty clear ideas on how we want this to resolve. What we are not doing is communicating this to our elective officials and that is what we need to do more of."

CITY STATION’S HEALTH AND BEAUTY EXPO COMES TO CARROLLTON

Imani Asberry
Contributing Writer

Citizens of Carrollton were invited out to City Station’s Health and Beauty Expo event last Saturday afternoon, Jan. 19.

At the Health and Beauty Expo there were dermatologists exfoliating faces and threading eyebrows, vendors selling their jewelry and make-up and promoting healthy living through eating habits. The event also had door prizes and a lot of food for the guests.

One of the more unique booths at the event was about healthy drinking water. The display showed the PH of acid and alkaline. Acid is at a P.H. of 4.5 and alkaline at 9.5, which is where our drinking water should be. However, most of the water on display that we drink on a daily basis, like Dasani or Aquafina, were at a P.H. of 5 or lower.

Allison McNease, an alkaline water distributor and advocate at the display table, spoke highly of the alkaline water.

“It detoxifies the body and helps inflammation,” stated McNease. “It’s an antioxidant.”

Another booth at the Health and Beauty Expo that piqued interest was a jewelry booth called Kim’s Jazzy Jewels.

The consultant and advocate of this particular display table, Kimberly Wilson, sells fashionable necklaces, earrings, and bracelets at a low price.

“The whole idea is to empower women and give you financial freedom,” said Wilson. “It’s not about \$5 jewelry, it’s about how you feel when you put

on the jewelry.”

Although there was a small turnout, the women who came and participated learned and bonded a lot.



Photo Credit: Imani Asberry

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

PRINTER’S ALE PRESENTS BEER YOGA

Taylor Barton
Contributing Writer

Printer’s Ale Manufacturing Company hosted their monthly Beer Yoga class on Sunday, January 27, 2019, at the brewery.

Beer Yoga is the term coined by Brooke Larson in 2014. It is a form of yoga that is performed or practiced in breweries and taprooms where participants do yoga while they have a beer, or save the beer for after.

“Beer Yoga is a way to get people to do two really cool things,” said taproom manager Matt Tapley. “You get to have a really great session with the teacher here and then afterwards you have that last bit of relaxation by having one of our beers.”

Printer’s Ale attempted to host Beer Yoga last summer but due to the instructor leaving and a lack of location, it slowly dissipated. According to Tapley, they hope that Springtime will be the best time for it.

“We can have the classes out in the yard and we now have a lot of space for it,” said Tapley.

Stephanie Mitchell, owner of the mobile yoga studio, The Rolling Mat, is the instructor of Beer Yoga at Printers Ale, but this is not her first time teaching beer yoga in Georgia.

“I started teaching Beer Yoga at different breweries in Marietta and Atlanta and we reached out to Printer’s Ale to see if they would be interested,” Mitchell said. “I love doing this because it brings a sense of community and breweries are a great place for it because they are small businesses and I like to support them. They typically have a great space for it both indoor and outdoor and what’s better than a workout and a beer after.”

Though this month’s session only had three partakers, Printer’s Ale has seen an attendance up to twelve in previous sessions. Mitchell states that Beer Yoga is great for people who are just beginning or are intimidated by the practice.

“It’s a great atmosphere because it’s loose and fun and everyone kind of cuts up with each other, and it’s nothing super serious aside from being serious enough to be safe,” said Mitchell.

Printer’s Ale has their monthly Beer Yoga sessions on the last Sunday of every month. According to Mitchell, the classes will be offered as long as there is a demand for it. The cost is \$15 which will pay for an hour-long yoga session and a pint of beer afterward, however, participants must be twenty-one or over.



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UWG BASKETBALL PLAYERS WIN GULF SOUTH CONFERENCE ACCOLADE

Conrad Mears

Contributing Writer

Two members of the UWG men's basketball team were recently awarded a prestigious honor on Jan. 8 for their performances against Oakwood and Mississippi College.

Freshman guard Jared Simmons was awarded Gulf South Conference Freshman of the Week after averaging 17.5 points per game during the two contests. Senior guard Marquill Smith was also awarded GSC Player of the Week after averaging 20.5 points per game and 13 rebounds during the two-game stretch.

Although the award is a prestigious honor, Smith has his sights set on bigger goals.

"Honestly getting that award doesn't mean too much to me," said Smith. "I'm just trying to win games and help my teammates get better."

Smith's team-leading scoring average of 25.6 points per game is reflective of his natural strength. Smith has a keen talent for scoring in a multitude of ways but his deadliest weapon on the court is his jump shot.

However, scoring is not Smith's only responsibility. Providing leadership for the team is perhaps his most important one. On a team that is littered with young players, good leadership is

crucial for the Wolves to have success this season.

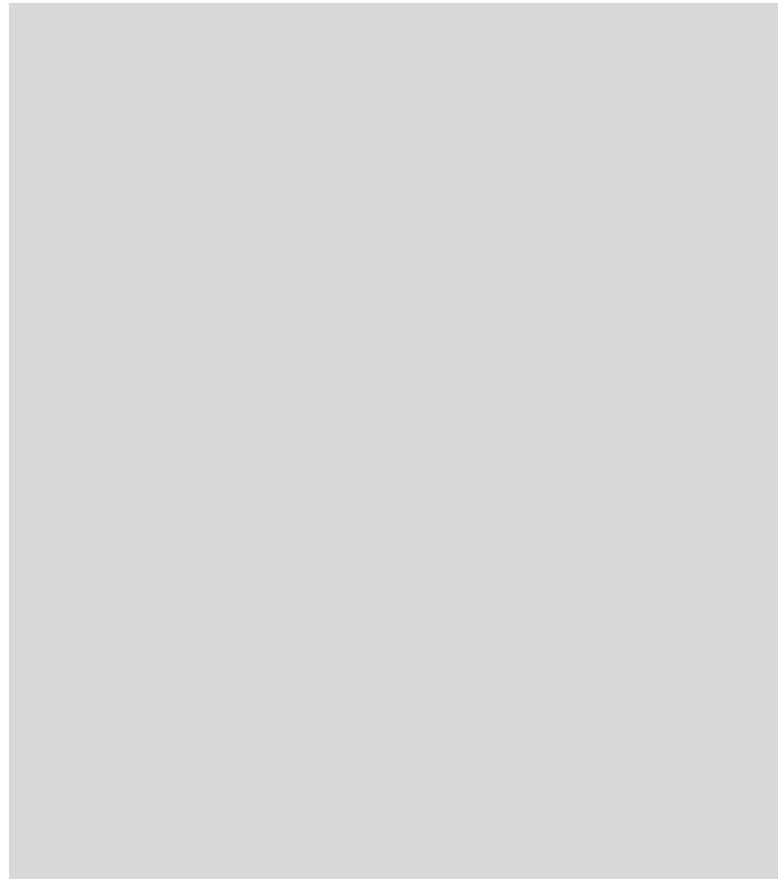
"I feel like leading more by example is a better example for the younger guys like [Simmons]," said Smith.

If Simmons' recent play is any indication, Smith's lead by example approach has surely paid dividends for the Wolves.

Typically, freshmen experience difficulty when first adjusting to the heightened competition level in college. Fortunately for Simmons, the rise in competition level has not affected his performance on the hardwood at all.

"It wasn't too big of an adjustment for me because I have been playing against top competition since I was a freshman in high school," said Simmons.

The season will continue to be a long journey for Smith and Simmons, but their recent successes will have to stay consistent in order to meet their lofty expectations, but these wolves are off to a convincing start.



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