UNIVERSITY PARK -- The celebration of Governors State University's 20th anniversary starts July 17 and continues throughout the year.

To mark "Founders Day" GSU's first president, William Engbretson, will be returning to campus for a day of activities. Engbretson and other members of the first staff will be honored at a "Founders Day" breakfast July 17.

After Gov. Richard Ogilvie signed legislation creating Governors State University on July 17, 1969, Engbretson and members of the Directors of Academic Development (DADs) worked for two years developing curricula and courses so that students could be admitted in 1971.

That group, and others who have played a role in the development of GSU, will be feted at the 9 a.m. "Founders Day" breakfast July 17 in the Hall of Honors on campus. The community is invited. Tickets are $10.

Work on the main campus buildings was begun in 1972, and the shovel that was used for the groundbreaking ceremonies will be brought out of the archives for the "Happy Two Decades GSU!" birthday party celebration at 3:30 p.m. July 17. All in attendance will be served a slice of the birthday cake after a special toast to GSU's two decades.

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The Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities, the governing board for GSU, will conduct its summer meeting at 9 a.m. July 20 on the GSU campus. A videotaped look back using old television and film footage will help mark the anniversary.

On July 29, the community will enjoy a "Midsummer's Ball" on campus. This special social event will feature music by The Big Band Machine and the Eddie Baker Jazz Quintet. Guests will enjoy an elegant buffet, and they'll be able to bid on GSU memorabilia and other items through a silent auction. Tickets for the event are $25.

The GSU celebration Aug. 12 will be for the whole family. The day begins at 8 a.m. with the 5-K "GSU Run to the Next Decade" sponsored by the GSU Civil Service Senate and the Park Forest Running and Pancake Club. Runners and walkers will follow a route through the GSU campus and Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park on the GSU grounds.

Later in the day, the Civil Service Senate is hosting its annual picnic. This year the activity will be open to the community. Special games and a scavenger hunt through the sculpture park are planned.

Capping off the day will be "Folkfest XII" sponsored by the GSU Office of Student Life. Singer/songwriter John Hartford, whose song "Gentle on my Mind" won him two Grammy awards, will be the featured artist. The folkfest will begin at 7 p.m. at the amphitheater on campus. Tickets are being sold in advance or at the door. Ticket prices vary.

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Former Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm will be the guest speaker for the GSU convocation at 9 a.m. Sept. 15 on campus. Known for his frank insights, Lamm will discuss what the public expects from a university and how public policy should address the needs of the next century.

The annual GSU planning conference will discuss "Planning for the Third Decade" and the role of the university in the year 2000 and beyond. The program will be at 9 a.m. Sept. 26 on campus.

A joint conference with GSU, Illinois Bell Telephone and the Chamber of Commerce of the Southern Suburbs will be conducted Fridays, Oct. 6, 13 and 20. "Vision '90, The Southern Suburbs Growing With You: Communication, Transportation, Education" will focus on changing aspects of the GSU communities in the next decade.

Other celebrations will be scheduled throughout 1990, and the year-long 20th anniversary celebration will conclude with a GSU open house in the spring.

For further information on any of these events contact the GSU Office of University Relations at (312) 534-5000, extension 2122.

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