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Office of Marketing and Communications
Governors State University

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News

Welcome, New and Returning Jaguars!

The Spring ’18 semester has begun—get your new year off to a great start by getting involved on campus with Welcome Week events [http://www.govst.edu/welcome-week/] hosted all week long by Student Life.

New students can visit the “Where are my classes?” Welcome Tables located in the Hall of Governors by the Registrar’s Office on **Wednesday, January 17** and **Thursday, January 18** from 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. The tables are hosted by student staff from New Student Programs, the Dual Degree Program, and the Center for the Junior Year.

University Presidents Continue to Fight for Higher Ed

In December 2017, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) was scheduled to vote on its proposed FY 2019 higher education budget recommendations. If approved, the recommendations would then be sent to the Governor’s Office for consideration as the Governor prepares his annual proposed budget.

The presidents of Illinois’ public universities composed a letter [http://www.govst.edu/uploadedFiles/121117%20Letter%20from%20Presidents%20to%20Executive%20Director%20Bowman_final.pdf] stating their unified position to IBHE. Showing a display of strong advocacy for Illinois public universities, the presidents argued that the “two-year budget impasse cost public universities tens of millions of operational dollars, and the lack of capital funding forced institutions to cancel or dramatically cut back on necessary construction and maintenance projects.”

New Book Features GSU

Governors State University plays the central role in a new book on academic best practices and shifting the narrative on higher education. Written by GSU President Elaine P. Maimon, Leading Academic Change: Vision, Strategy, Transformation is being published by Stylus Publishing and will be released on January 31, 2018.


COE Receives Grant for LGBTQ and Gender Awareness Training

Congratulations to the College of Education (https://www.govst.edu/coe/) for its upcoming reception of a grant for work in LGBTQ and Gender Awareness Training!

On February 6, a representative from The Schultz Foundation for Advancing Counseling will present an almost $10,000 grant for the WE Project. to Dr. Katie Wix (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/kwix/), Dr. Shannon Dermer (http://www.govst.edu/Site_Navigation/Contact/Directory/sdermer/) Ms. Nicollete Karl (current GSU master's student), and Dr. Molli Bachenberg (graduate from our doctoral program). This project focuses on the commonalities between people, their rights, and the right to safety and support in their educational environments--especially as it relates to their sexual and gender expression.

Annual MLK Commemoration
Although campus was technically closed, education was open and free as GSU used Martin Luther King Day as an opportunity to reach out to the community. Featuring a keynote address from Dr. Haki Madhubuti; welcoming words from Rev. Reggie Williams, Provost Bordelon, University Park Mayor Vivian Covington, and Sheryl Jones-Harper, president of the University Park MLK Commission; and live music and dancing, the full-capacity event was held in Sherman Hall and brought the community together for celebration and empowerment.

Co-sponsored by the GSU Office of Intercultural Student Affairs, the University Park MLK Committee, the University Park Public Library District, and the Monee Alliance of Churches, attendees were asked to bring new and gently used clothing items to donate to victims of the recent hurricane in Puerto Rico.

Service Learning in Nicaragua

At Governors State University, learning is not limited to the traditional classroom. Faculty members encourage students to experience not just the immediate community but the world, and they provide guided opportunities through multiple programs at GSU.

One opportunity is the Public Health Brigade trip to Nicaragua, a service-learning trip supported by both faculty and the Office of International Services. (http://www.govst.edu/study-abroad-programs/) 19 students recently returned from a week-long trip to improve sanitation in Nicaragua. Read more . . . (https://gsunews.govst.edu/gsu-students-learn-outside-university-walls/)

GSU Votes!

Every vote counts, so make sure you are registered and vote in the upcoming Illinois primary election this March. Because the primary falls during Spring Break, GSU will not be the site of early voting for this election. But, it is still easier to vote than you think. Did you know you can vote by mail? Just go to the Illinois Board of Elections site (http://www.elections.il.gov/), select an application for regular Illinois citizens, then follow the instructions. Remember that applications need to go to your local election office. The Board of Elections site will show you the right place to submit your application to vote by mail.

Since a lot can happen between now and Primary Election Day that may potentially keep you away from the polls, the surest way for your vote to be counted is to register today to vote by mail then vote as soon as you receive your ballot. Make sure you exercise your right and vote!

Bring Friends and Family to GSU at an Upcoming Open House Event
All are invited to attend two upcoming Open House events that will showcase Governors State to prospective students.

On **Saturday, February 10**, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., GSU’s Undergraduate Open house will help prospective students and their families learn more about admission requirements, academic programs, campus resources, student activities, and on-campus housing. Register here [http://www.govst.edu/openhouse-events/](http://www.govst.edu/openhouse-events/).

The annual Graduate Open House will be held Saturday, **February 24** from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. in the Hall of Governors.

Meet with program advisors, coordinators, and staff. Attend breakout sessions on financial aid, housing GRE preparation, program admission requirements, and much more. Prospective students who attend the Open House will receive a waiver code for their application fee. Programs requiring application through the Centralized Application Service are excluded. Register [here](http://www.govst.edu/GSU-openhouse/), or for more information contact Julie Anderson (mailto:janderson13@govst.edu) at 708.534.4086.

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Do you have a story or event you want to submit for the GSU View? Click here to learn about our submission guidelines. ([http://www3.govst.edu/adecastro/GSUview/guidelines.html](http://www3.govst.edu/adecastro/GSUview/guidelines.html))

[Governors State University](http://www.govst.edu)
University Park, IL, January 17, 2018

**New Book Features GSU**

A story without conflict is no story at all. Struggle develops character and, ideally, leads to growth. This is a basic principle of good narrative writing, and in *Leading Academic Change: Vision, Strategy, Transformation*, GSU President Elaine P. Maimon—a woman who knows a great deal about good writing (she’s a professor of English and authored one of the most-read writing handbooks on American college campuses)—uses the struggle and growth of Governors State University to tell the larger story of modern higher education and where it needs to go.

The book, published by Stylus Publishing and being released at the end of January 2018, takes the reader through a series of academic principles and best practices, but instead of rolling out dry concepts, Dr. Maimon demonstrates how these ideas actually work by telling her university’s story. From instituting the university’s first freshman class to guiding it through the Illinois State Budget Crisis, Dr. Maimon’s lessons abound, and throughout the book, Governors State emerges from the text as the lead character in the story.

The book has already garnered press, with an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and a chapter on foundation-level courses published in *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*. In a series of interviews with GSU News, Dr. Maimon discussed the principles and elaborated on her core beliefs about education.

**GSU Newsroom:** Dr. Maimon, you often talk about the value of working from a strength-based model as opposed to the traditional deficit one. Why did we need to make this shift?

**Dr. Maimon:** Here’s an analogy: What if we taught kids to play baseball by sitting them all down in the locker room and saying, “We’re not going to let you get out on the field. For three weeks, we’re going to tell you everything that can go wrong, how you can get hurt, all the bad things, all the mistakes that players make.” The students would be paralyzed. Instead, let them play, and then show them what they’re doing well.

In education, we have taken the easy way out by focusing first on what students are doing wrong. Well, you do that all the time and students will want to escape. And that in a nutshell is the deficit model.

**GSU Newsroom:** As seen in your new book, ceremonies play a significant role in the student experience at GSU. Where does your commitment to ceremony spring from?

**Dr. Maimon:** Ceremonies are important to creating a sense of shared culture. Anthropologist Dell Hymes says, “A culture is defined by people who know the same stories.” And many of those stories have to do with ceremonies.

Our DDP students receive cords in the main color of their community college when they enter GSU as a sign of respecting what they have learned there. When they graduate from GSU, we present them with cords braiding the community college color with our colors. That creates a living symbol of the cooperative endeavor of guiding the student from community college to university graduation. It’s memorable.

The hooding ceremony for our doctoral students symbolizes the honor and continuity of receiving the highest academic degree in the land. It’s a memorable moment to share with family and friends.
GSU Newsroom: Transformation is a main theme of Leading Academic Change. In its pages, you point out a trend of viewing higher education as a commodity instead of a transformative experience. Can you point to the when and why of that shifting point of view?

Dr. Maimon: It's hard to say historically when these changes occurred. Was there a time when everybody thought about education as transformation? I do know that in the latter part of the 20th and the early 21st centuries, we have gone way too far on the side of looking at education as a commodity.

GSU Newsroom: You talk about the value of a liberal arts education—and certainly GSU is known for its commitment to providing that in a public square setting—and you use the example of children's stories. You say essentially that all children would benefit later in life if they learned the story of The Three Little Pigs not only from the pigs' perspective but also that of the wolf. As you led Governors State University through two years of budget crisis, did you step into the wolf's perspective, so to speak?

Dr. Maimon: Well of course, then you have the question of who's the wolf? What I will say is that for anybody in a leadership position, it's absolutely essential to be able to see issues from different points of view. It's actually essential for everybody. We're talking about being able to see reality from different perspectives and to understand that people look at the same phenomena in very different ways.

I think that the budget crisis, for example, was an instance of many people applying deeply held principles. The challenge was to find common ground.
University Park, IL, January 22, 2018

**College of Education Receives Grant for LGBTQ Awareness Training**

On **February 6**, a representative from The Schultz Foundation for Advancing Counseling will present an almost $10,000 grant for the WE Project to Dr. Katie Wix, Dr. Shannon Dermer, Ms. Nicollete Karl (current GSU master's student), and Dr. Molli Bachenberg (graduate from our doctoral program). The project will help train school counselors and other school personnel to be comfortable discussing sexuality and gender in general, and will specifically focus on anti-bullying and advocacy related to LGBTQ students.

This project focuses on the commonalities between people, their rights, and the right to safety and support in their educational environments—especially as it relates to their sexual and gender expression. The project follows the principles: *WE* are all sexual beings; *WE* all have the right to express our sexuality and gender free from coercion, discrimination, or violence; *WE* have the right to the love and security intimate relationships can provide; *WE* all have the right to education, and; *WE* all have the right to feel safe and supported in our schools.

The grant recipients will provide five day-long trainings across Illinois. The main focus of the trainings will be on assessing attendees’ level of comfort discussing various sexual issues, helping them become more comfortable discussing issues related to sexuality and gender, and providing education on the importance of being seen as an advocate for LGBTQ students. A specific focus will be training school counselors, since they provide direct services to students and can also train school staff members. In addition, school counselors should be influencing school policy, provide anti-bullying prevention and intervention activities, and be seen as an advocate for LGBTQ students.
University Park, IL, January 16, 2018

GSU Students Learn Outside University Walls

At Governors State University, learning is not limited to the traditional classroom. Faculty members encourage students to experience not just the immediate community but the world, and they provide guided opportunities through multiple programs at GSU.

One opportunity is the Public Health Brigade trip to Nicaragua, a service-learning trip supported by both faculty and the Office of International Services (http://www.govst.edu/study-abroad-programs/). Led this year by Dr. Phyllis West, senior lecturer in the department of Social Work, and Dr. Nicole Koonce, assistant professor in Communication Disorders, the two professors worked side by side with 19 students and one staff member as they helped bring necessary sanitation facilities to a small village.

Now in its third year, West said this is the first year that men have participated in the brigade, and she hopes to see that number grow.

"It was really nice to have the four [men] who joined us, and we're really looking to increase male involvement in the brigades in the future," she said.

She also said this is the first year that the university selected and sent a Global Brigade Scholar.

"The Global Brigade Scholar," West said, "is a person in their junior year who wants to excel and has a commitment to service. We know that people of color—African Americans in particular—are less likely to study abroad than any other group in the United States. We also know students who travel abroad are more likely to graduate and excel and succeed in their future careers."

This year's Global Brigade Scholar was Jamal McPherson, a junior in GSU's Criminal Justice program.

The work the students did in Nicaragua involved building hygiene units to provide latrines, septic tanks, and showers, as well as contributing to a water brigade which will eventually supply water for local citizens.

"This year, we worked on the water brigade with other universities. It should be completed in four months and will provide running to 450 people in 100 homes," West said.

Although the onsite work was service focused and labor-intensive, students prepared by learning about Nicaragua's culture, history, public health, and politics before they embarked on the journey.

Before leaving Chicago, both the students and faculty learned as much as they could about Nicaragua. Once there, they immersed themselves in the culture, meeting with translators and community leaders to receive an overview of their public health assignment. From there, they established goals to get as much done as possible in the seven-day span of the trip.

"The students worked even faster and were able to accomplish more in a shorter amount of time than ever," West said.
She shared, too, that this was her colleague’s first year in Nicaragua—although Koonce treks to Haiti every year for service work—and said she was an "outstanding to work with" on the brigade.

Upon returning home, students complete a research paper and will host a symposium on their experiences in Nicaragua. The GSU community, family, and friends can all come learn about this transformative service learning journey.