

State of Florida

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Resolution 8023

By Representatives Heather Fitzenhagen, Dane Eagle, Michael Grant, Ray Wesley Rodrigues and Bob Rommel

A resolution recognizing March 28, 2017, as "Florida Gulf Coast University Day" and commemorating the university's 20th anniversary.

WHEREAS, in May 1991, then-Governor Lawton Chiles signed into law a bill passed by the Florida Legislature authorizing the creation of Florida's tenth public university, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), to provide higher education opportunities and workforce development in the previously underserved region of Southwest Florida, and

WHEREAS, FGCU opened its doors to students on August 25, 1997, and held its first commencement in May 1998 with 81 graduates, and

WHEREAS, in August 2017, FGCU will celebrate its 20th anniversary, and

WHEREAS, during FGCU's first 20 years, it has been led by three outstanding and dynamic presidents: President Roy McTarnaghan, President William C. Merwin, and President Wilson G. Bradshaw, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has strategically grown into a regional university of nearly 15,000 students and today offers 55 undergraduate, 30 graduate, 11 certificate, and 3 doctoral programs, and

WHEREAS, FGCU's top priority is student success, with five colleges providing relevant programs with an accomplished faculty, small classes, and extensive individualized attention to help students prepare for successful careers and meet regional and statewide workforce needs, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has achieved national prominence in academics, environmental sustainability, and student service learning, with over two million hours contributed to the Southwest Florida community since 1997, and

WHEREAS, FGCU started with land and a grand plan consisting of 400 acres of restored and preserved wetlands, and

WHEREAS, FGCU operates a 15-acre solar field that generates 85 percent of the electric power for three academic buildings, saving \$700,000 in energy costs annually, and

WHEREAS, FGCU emphasizes innovative and interdisciplinary learning, using the region as a living laboratory while offering students diverse opportunities to participate in meaningful research led by their professors, who have conducted more than \$204.8 million in research and sponsored programs since 1997, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has established the Institute of Entrepreneurship, bringing engineering and business students together to develop products and business plans in a real-world setting, and the Emergent Technologies Institute to provide learning opportunities that will enhance the university's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and sustainability initiatives, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has one of only 19 PGA-certified golf management programs in the country and the only certified program in Florida accepting enrollment of new students, and

WHEREAS, FGCU is a leader in the State University System of this state, with approximately 75 percent of alumni employed or continuing their education within one year after graduation, and

WHEREAS, FGCU focuses on college affordability for all students by maintaining its commitment to cost containment, holding tuition at the same level for four years, and

WHEREAS, FGCU serves as a cultural hub for the region, offering a wealth of enrichment opportunities that include the visual arts, music, theater, and public radio and television, and

WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs continue to be a growing source of pride for their loyal fans, earning 56 league titles in the past 9 years and making 25 NCAA Tournament appearances in the previous five seasons, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has had a total of 9 student athletes who have advanced to professional teams, and

WHEREAS, FGCU experienced international exposure at the 2016 Summer Olympic Games held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with beach volleyball player, Brooke Youngquist Sweat, 2008 alumna, representing the United States, joining two FGCU alumnae swimmers, Lani Cabrera, 2016 alumna, and Evita Leter, 2017 alumna, and

WHEREAS, FGCU student athletes continue to demonstrate their academic strengths by earning an overall grade point average of 3.24, which has led the university's student body statistics for 15 consecutive semesters, and

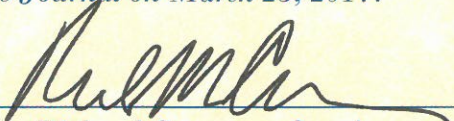
WHEREAS, the collegiate experience continues to enrich the lives of FGCU students through the "FGCU Effect" and the university's longstanding commitment to promoting racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity on campus, NOW, THEREFORE,

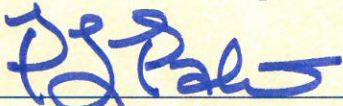
Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Florida:

That March 28, 2017, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast University Day" in Florida, and that Florida Gulf Coast University is celebrated for its 20th anniversary as an outstanding institution of higher education focused on student success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be presented to Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D., president of Florida Gulf Coast University, as a tangible token of the sentiments expressed herein.

This is to certify the foregoing was adopted by publication in the Journal on March 23, 2017.


Richard Corcoran, Speaker


Portia Palmer, Clerk

