

EGSC Graduation Spring 2019

Bob Boehmer's Script

5/10/2019 – 6pm Gymnasium

Arrive at 2:20pm on Thursday, 5/09/2019 for Practice

**Arrive at Cyber Café by 4:20 on Friday, 5/10/2019 for
Reception**

Be at Gym by 5:10pm on Friday, 5/10/19 for Faculty Photo

Sounds of Gabriel plays music preceding ceremony while guests are seated. Music begins at 5:30pm and stops at 5:58pm.

Student Marshall lights a candle preceding the ceremony.

Announcement is made by Student Affairs (Sara Young) preceding ceremony about behavior during the graduation ceremony

Ceremony begins promptly at 6 pm when processional Music Begins to Play (Connie Terwilliger)

Processional begins as soon as processional music begins – I will follow **Alan Brasher and **Paul Cerpovicz** up the right hand aisle. They will turn off before they reach the stage. I wait while **Paul** places mace in the stand. I then proceed up to the right side of stage (facing the stage), go up on stage and stand in front of the furthest chair to the right (facing audience) – All remain standing.**

After music stops, I walk to podium.

Welcome

Good Evening!

Please be seated.

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of East Georgia State College, welcome to our Spring 2019 commencement.

East Georgia State College is a special place and all of you are a special community devoted to assuring that every student in our region has the opportunity to achieve their dreams. Tonight, we celebrate the fact that 167 of these students have achieved a major milestone in the path to realizing those dreams. We will award 118 associate of arts degrees, 27 associate of science degrees, 27 associate of science degrees, 6 certificates of workforce development, 3 bachelor of arts degrees in fire and emergency services management and 13 bachelor of science degrees in nursing. Thank you for being here this evening to celebrate the amazing students who have had the tenacity and dedication to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by this special place and people.

Jean Anderson Morgan, a former trustee of the East Georgia State College Foundation, long-time friend and benefactor of the college and leader of the community, passed away in Tennessee on May 5, 2019. Our student center, the Jean Anderson Morgan Student Center affectionately known as the JAM, is named in her honor. As we celebrate the

achievements of these amazing students tonight, we all recognize the contributions her vision and generosity and leadership made to their education.

East Georgia State College is strongly supported by its foundation. We are honored today to have members of our board of trustees join us at this graduation. Will Denny Key, chair, and all members of the board of trustees of the foundation stand and allow us to recognize you with our applause for all you do for the college and these graduates?

Thank you to Dante' Johnson and the Sounds of Gabriel choir and musicians for providing such beautiful pre-ceremony music.

Sounds of Gabriel was organized by Mr. Johnson, a former EGSC student, in 2010 to further the singing and musical knowledge of local church choirs. The workshop also provided an opportunity to fellowship with other Christians through music once a year. The choir has been and continues to be a great success which has ministered to many lives.

Dante and all of the members of Sounds of Gabriel, please stand and allow us to show our appreciation.

God Bless America and Invocation

We are honored this evening to have Morgan and Megan Bryant sing *God Bless America*.

Megan and Morgan are from Reidsville and are graduates of Tattnall County High School. Both Morgan and Megan are future Nursing majors and plan to transfer to Augusta University to study nursing. They are both active in student organizations and activities. In fact, they are known around campus as the dynamic duo.

Morgan and Megan are accompanied by their mother, Phyllis Norman. Mrs. Norman, please stand so that the East Georgia State College family can welcome you back to campus.

Please rise now as Megan & Morgan come to the podium to sing *God Bless America*. Following *God Bless America*, please remain standing as Dr. Tommy Upchurch delivers our invocation.

I return to podium after God Bless America

We are honored to have Dr. Tommy Upchurch deliver our invocation. Dr. Upchurch has been a faculty member at East Georgia State College since 2001. He is now a full professor of history. Dr. Upchurch earned his Ph.D. from Mississippi State University and has published numerous books and articles on the history of race relations, racism, civil rights and abolition. Dr. Upchurch's wife, director of our nursing program is on stage today. Dr. Linda Upchurch, please rise and be recognized as Dr. Tommy Upchurch comes to the podium to deliver our invocation.

Invocation – Dr. Upchurch will ask all to be seated at the conclusion of the invocation.

I return to podium.

We know you have all enjoyed the music provided by our pianist, **Ms. Connie Terwilliger**. Ms. Terwilliger is a music instructor at the college and a practicing attorney in Swainsboro. Additionally, we have with us on the stage **Mr. Robert Nordan**, who is the Assistant Director of the First Year Experience program and Instructor of Music at our Augusta campus and conductor and musical director of the Augusta Symphony. Mr. Nordan will lead us in the singing of our Alma Mater after our graduates receive their diplomas. We are honored to have such talent in our East Georgia State College family, and deeply appreciate the contribution of Connie and Rob to our commencement ceremony.

Our Student Marshals, **Elizabeth Hutton** and **Michael Harper**, along with our student ushers are listed on the last page of your program. Thank you to all of these amazing East Georgia State College students for participating in this commencement and making today a memorable one for our graduates and their supporters.

Please join me in thanking our dynamic duo – the Byants, Dr. Upchurch, Mrs. Terwilliger and Mr. Nordan and all of these student leaders with a warm round of applause.

You will notice that students are wearing academic insignia this evening in recognition of their special achievements. Descriptions of these Academic & Leadership Distinctions are on pages 10 & 11 in your program.

Graduates, few days as special as this take place in a lifetime. As we begin this momentous ceremony

- Breathe deeply and enjoy this moment that you have earned
- Quickly recall a special learning moment at East Georgia State College
- Smile and commit that moment to memory
- Silently commit to say thank you today to all those who helped you achieve
- Tonight, dream in vivid colors about the exciting future that awaits you.

Family and supporters of the graduates, earning a college degree is difficult. Currently, only about 1/3 of adults in the United States achieve a college degree. As you participate in this ceremony, you deserve to take great pride in your graduate as they enter the Academy of Scholars.

At practice yesterday, the graduates and I discussed that today's ceremony is an initiation into the world-wide Academy of Scholars. It is an occasion designed to demonstrate to these students the respect we all have for their achievements. It is designed to give each student the moment in the sun they so richly deserve. We are recording today's ceremony so that each

student will be able to share it later with pride with children, friends, and family. As the ceremony proceeds, I ask that we all conduct the ceremony in a manner which will assure that this recording is something which each one of these students will treasure as they share it with others.

I introduce Alumni speaker

It now gives me great pleasure at this time to introduce our **alumni speaker, Ms. Harley Strickland**. Harley Strickland is a native of Evans County. She graduated from Pinewood Christian Academy. After graduation, she began her college education at East Georgia State College. We are deeply proud to claim Harley as one of our own.

Harley is a cum laude graduate of Georgia Southern University where she majored in journalism and minored in public relations. During her time at Georgia Southern, Harley was an anchor and reporter for Eagle News which earned her the Rising Star award and the Lois Scholarship for the Department of Communication Arts. She was active in student media organizations and the National Society of Leadership and Success.

Harley was a member of the Miss America Organization for many years. She competed at the state level multiple times and helped raise money for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. Her platform is hospice care and she volunteers regularly with patients and their families. One of the titles that took her to the Miss Georgia Pageant in Columbus was the title of Miss East Georgia State College. Harley was later selected as Miss Georgia Southern University.

Competing in the pageant system helped Harley become more involved with media. She has been featured in national tv commercials and movies. After obtaining her journalism degree, she started working with WTOC-TV in Savannah, Georgia. She has covered numerous stories in Southeast Georgia on a variety of topics. Before working for WTOC, Harley was the reporter for The Produce News, a news source about North American produce. She traveled the United States attending produce shows and reporting the significance of the produce industry.

Harley is accompanied tonight by her mother, Mrs. Jo Ann Strickland and her fiancé Kaleb Smith. Mrs. Strickland and Mr. Smith, please stand and let us welcome you while Harley comes to the podium.

I walk to podium

I introduce Student Speaker

Our student representative this evening is **Zahnay Smoak**.

Zahnay Smoak is the daughter of Nicole Smoak. She was born in New Jersey and moved to Georgia early in her life. She has three siblings, Geneva, Phylicia, and Robert. Zahnay is a first-generation college student and we are deeply proud that she, like Harley chose to begin her higher education at East Georgia State College. After Zahnay graduates, she plans to transfer to Georgia Southern University to continue to pursue her degree in Political Science with a focus in Pre-Law and one day fulfill her dream of becoming a judge. We know she will achieve that dream.

Please join me in welcoming **Ms. Zahnay Smoak** to speak on behalf of our amazing students.

I walk to podium

I introduce commencement speaker

East Georgia State College is truly privileged and honored to have **Regent Laura Marsh** as this evening's commencement speaker.

Regent Marsh is a member of the law firm Taulbee, Rushing, Snipes, Marsh & Hodgin in Statesboro. She began her legal career at Sullivan & Cromwell in New York City and worked as an investment banker and counsel to the capital markets group at Lehman Brothers.

Regent Marsh served as both Vice Chair and then Chair of the Board of Trustees of Bulloch Academy. She is a member and past President of the Statesboro Service League and served on the Board of Directors for the Boys & Girls Club of Bulloch County and the Bulloch County Chapter of the American Heart Association. Regent Marsh is a recipient of the Business Mentor Award from the Georgia Southern University College of Business Administration and the Deen Day Smith Service to Mankind Award. Regent Marsh also provide pro bono legal services to numerous charitable and civic organizations.

Regent Marsh earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from Florida State University where she was a member of Delta

Delta Delta sorority. She received her law degree, magna cum laude, from the University of Georgia School of Law. While attending the University of Georgia, Mrs. Marsh was a member of the Editorial Board of the Georgia Law Review, the Intrastate and National Moot Court teams, Blue Key, Phi Kappa Phi, Order of the Coif, Order of Barristers and was a Pupil of the Lumpkin Inn of Court.

Regent Marsh and her husband, Randy, have two daughters and are active members of the Statesboro First United Methodist Church. Randy, please rise and allow us to recognize you as Regent Marsh comes to the podium.

Regent Marsh delivers Commencement Address

I return to podium and shake Regent Marsh's hand

Thank Regent Marsh

I remind the audience about behavior

In a moment we will award the diplomas. At yesterday's graduation practice, each of the graduates received a book of messages from faculty, staff and students – "A Word Before You Go." The message from the members of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society is

"As you prepare to walk across the stage, celebrate yourself and what makes you beautiful, including the amazing achievement of earning a degree from East Georgia State College."

Graduates, please keep those special words in mind as you each cross the stage. Family members and supporters of the graduates, this moment is what we have all gathered here to witness – your son, your daughter, your spouse, your parent, your relative, your friend, walking across the stage with diploma in hand. It is East Georgia State College's tradition to call out each graduates' name individually and give them the well-deserved opportunity to walk across the stage and receive their diploma. It is a joyous occasion – it is that special moment in the sun we discussed earlier this evening.

So, I ask you to join me in giving each of these amazing students their moment in the sun. Let's all agree not to use noisemakers or whistles or shouts. Let's wait to celebrate loudly until all names have been read, so each name can be heard by their families and friends and the graduates can receive their diplomas in a setting truly befitting this significant high occasion.

Not to worry, we will have an opportunity at the end for applause and exaltation that I trust will raise the roof. At that time, after all graduates have been recognized individually, let's also agree that we will truly raise the roof to celebrate the achievements of the students.

Dr. Deborah Vess, Vice-President for Academic & Student Affairs, will you now join me at the podium to present the degree candidates?

Dr. Vess comes to podium

Dr. Vess comes to podium and stands immediately to my left.

Presentation of Candidates

(1.) Posthumous Degree

Bob: At this time, we would like to take a few moments to honor the memory of a young woman who is no longer with us. Christian Brooke Joiner graduated from Valdosta State University in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry. Following graduation, she came to East Georgia State College to take additional Biology and Chemistry classes in preparation for pharmacy school. She was an outstanding scholar. I am honored to announce that the college is today posthumously awarding to Christian Brooke Joiner an Associate of Science degree.

Brooke's son, Rhys Joiner, and Brooke's brother, Britt Joiner are here today to honor Brooke. I would like to invite Rhys Joiner, Brooke's son, to the stage to accept the Associate of Arts degree on her behalf. Rhys will be accompanied by Britt as he comes to the stage to accept his mother's degree. Brooke's mother, Cathy Brandenburg and other members of the family are with us today. Mrs. Brandenburg, would you and the other members of your family rise and allow us to recognize you as Rhys and Britt come to the stage.

I move to right side of podium.

Dr. Vess: It is my distinct pleasure to present to you, Rhys Joiner, the son of Christian Brooke Joiner, for the conferring of her degree. **(TIP HAT)**

(2.) Present Associate of Arts Degrees

Dr. Vess: Will the candidates for the degrees of Associate of Arts please rise? President Boehmer, these candidates have completed all the coursework required for their degree and have been approved by the faculty. It is my distinct pleasure to present them to you for the conferring of their degree. (TIP HAT)

President Boehmer: By the authority vested in me by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon you the Associate of Arts Degree with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities appertaining there unto.

Please come forward and receive your diploma.

STUDENTS WALK ON STAGE FOR DIPLOMAS.

I walk back to the table on which the degrees are located and Karen Jones walks to the back of that table.

As each student comes across the stage, I hold the diploma in my left hand and shake the students hand with my right hand – Student and I face the photographer to the right of the stage for photo.

When the last row of students have all returned to their seats and are standing, I return to the podium immediately to the right of Dr. Vess and the student marshal returns to the center of the floor.

(3.) Present Associate of Science Degrees

Dr. Vess: Will the candidates for the degree of **Associate of Science** please rise? President Boehmer, these candidates have completed all the coursework required for their degree and have been approved by the faculty. It is my distinct pleasure to present these students to you for the conferring of their degree.
(TIP HAT)

President Boehmer: **By the authority vested in me by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon you the Associate of Science degree with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities appertaining there unto.**

Please come forward and receive your diploma.

STUDENTS WALK ON STAGE FOR DIPLOMAS.

I walk back to the table on which the degrees are located and Karen Jones walks to the back of that table.

As each student comes across the stage, I hold the diploma in my left hand and shake the students hand with my right hand – Student and I face the photographer to the right of the stage for photo.

When the last row of students have all returned to their seats and are standing, I return to the podium and Dr. Vess stands to my left and the student marshal returns to the center of the floor.

(4.) Present Bachelors Degrees – FESA

Bob: We now will award Bachelors of Arts degrees in Fire and Emergency Services Administration. All of these degree recipients are already professional firefighters in their community and have been working for many years to keep their communities safe. East Georgia is proud of the service of these special students and proud to have been able to play a role in a lifetime of continuing professional development for each of these outstanding individuals.

Dr. Vess: Will the candidates for the degree of **Bachelor of Arts in Fire and Emergency Services Administration** please rise? President Boehmer, these candidates have completed all the coursework required for their degree and have been approved by the faculty. It is my distinct pleasure to present these students to you for the conferring of the B.A. degree. **(TIP HAT)**

President Boehmer: **By the authority vested in me by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon you the Bachelor of Art degree with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities appertaining there unto.**

Please come forward and receive your diploma.

STUDENTS WALK ON STAGE FOR DIPLOMAS.

I walk back to the table on which the degrees are located and Karen Jones walks to the back of that table.

As each student comes across the stage, I hold the diploma in my left hand and shake the student's hand with my right hand – Student and I face the photographer to the right of the stage for photo.

When the last row of students have all returned to their seats and are standing, I return to the podium and Dr. Vess stands to my left and the student marshal returns to the center of the floor.

(5.) Present Bachelors Degrees – Nursing

Bob: We award Bachelors of Science degrees tonight to a cohort of thirteen dedicated nurses. All of these graduates have been employed full-time as health care professionals in their own community as they earned this degree. A number of them are at this moment working at a local hospital and are unable to celebrate with us this evening. East Georgia State College is proud to have been able to play a role in a lifetime of continuing professional development for each of these outstanding individuals.

As we prepare to award these nursing degrees, I am also proud to announce that our nursing program was accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing at its March 2019 meeting. Congratulations to Dr. Linda Upchurch and her entire team for achieving this major milestone.

[Dr. Upchurch will be on stage. As each nursing students name is called, Dr. Upchurch will pin each student. After pinning, each student will walk towards me to receive their diploma.]

Dr. Vess: Will the candidates for the degree of **Bachelor of Science in Nursing** please rise? President Boehmer, these candidates have completed all the coursework required for their degree and have been approved by the faculty. It is my distinct pleasure to present these students to you for the conferring of the B.S. degree. **(TIP HAT)**

President Boehmer: By the authority vested in me by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon you the Bachelor of Science degree with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities appertaining there unto.

Please come forward and receive your diploma.

STUDENTS WALK ON STAGE FOR DIPLOMAS.

I walk back to the table on which the degrees are located and Karen Jones walks to the back of that table.

As each student comes across the stage, I hold the diploma in my left hand and shake the students hand with my right hand – Student and I face the photographer to the right of the stage for photo.

When the last row of students have all returned to their seats and are standing, I return to the podium and stand to the right of Dr. Vess and the student marshals returns to the center of the floor.

****There are CHOICE candidates receiving certificates****

(6.) Present CHOICE Certificates

Dr. Vess: Will the candidates for the Certificate of Accomplishment in Work Readiness Skills through our CHOICE program please rise? President Boehmer, these candidates have completed all the coursework required for their **certificate** and have been approved by the faculty. It is my distinct pleasure to present them to you for the conferring of their **certificate**. **(TIP HAT)**

President Boehmer: By the authority vested in me by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon you a **Certificate of Accomplishment** with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities appertaining there unto.

Please come forward and receive your certificate.

STUDENTS WALK ON STAGE FOR CERTIFICATES.

I walk back to the table on which the certificates are located and Karen Jones walks to the back of that table.

As each student comes across the stage, I hold the certificate in my left hand and shake the students hand with my right hand – Student and I face the photographer to the right of the stage for photo.

When the last row of students have all returned to their seats and are standing, I return to the podium.

(7.) All Graduates Move Tassels

President Boehmer: Will all of our graduates, associates of arts and associates of science degrees, and CHOICE certificates, please rise? It is a longstanding tradition that after receiving a postsecondary degree the cap tassel is shifted from the right side to the left side of the cap. This signifies to *all* the completion of the degree.

Graduates, please move your tassels.

(8.) Present Graduates

Ladies and Gentlemen, family and friends, I present to you the Spring 2019 graduating class of East Georgia State College.

Graduates, raise the roof!

***President Boehmer:* Graduates, your family and friends, who helped and supported you as you earned your degree, have just extended their congratulations to you.**

It is fitting that you recognize them for the support they have given you.

(APPLAUSE)

(PAUSE) Graduates, the remarkable faculty and staff who led you on the educational journey you completed today, have come today in their academic regalia to honor you.

Please recognize them for their efforts on your behalf.

(APPLAUSE)

President Boehmer:

Graduates, in words of John Wesley

**“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”**

Following the singing of our alma mater and the recessional by faculty, staff and students, it is an East Georgia State College tradition that the faculty and staff form a corridor outside the entrance to this building as the graduates exit through that corridor and receive the congratulations they deserve. Once all of the graduates have exited the gymnasium, please meet your graduate on the lawn outside the gym.

Will the audience please rise and join the graduates as Mr. Nordan leads us in the singing of the East Georgia State College Alma Mater. The words are on the back of your program.

I return to my seat

Rob Nordan comes to podium to lead the alma mater.

Following alma mater, Alan Brasher and Paul Cerpovicz will proceed to the area in the front of the center aisle. **I will then exit to the right side of the stage and proceed to follow Alan and Paul out of the building --- do not stop in the entry area.** All go outside immediately.