

**Weekly Update**  
**Sunday, March 10, 2013**

Dear friends and colleagues,

Here are some of the things on my mind this week:

**Bobcat Basketball Success**

It has been a wonderful and amazing week for the EGSC men's basketball team. The team posted impressive victories on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday evenings to win the State of Georgia NJCAA Championship. This means that the Bobcats now move forward to Hutchinson Kansas during spring break week to participate in the national tournament. Please join me in congratulating the team and its coaches for achieving this high level of excellence in the fourth year of the program's existence.

The team was ranked #6 nationally before this week's games. It is likely that they will go into the national tournament ranked #5.

There are many reasons that this week's victories were wonderful. These include:

- The team plays a fast and extremely athletic brand of basketball. It is played far above the rim -- a part of the gym I have never visited personally.
- The team represents the College very well. Representatives of the other participating schools and members of the community had high praise about the sportsmanship of our team.
- The EGSC coaches place an extremely high priority on academic excellence. As a result, the team members are performing well both on the court and in the classroom.
- Many members of the local community, students, faculty and staff came out to watch the games. It is encouraging to watch the positive interaction among all of these members of our college community.

During spring break week, I will be attending a meeting of the SACSCOC Executive Committee in San Antonio Texas on Monday through Wednesday. I am not yet certain when the Bobcats will play their

first game. Joyce and I are hopeful, however, that we will be able to travel to Hutchinson, Kansas to support them.

### **Partnership with Georgia SW University**

As you know, students from EGSC are now able to obtain Georgia SW University bachelors and masters degrees online as a result of a cooperative agreement between EGSC and Georgia SW. EGSC and Georgia SW representatives have participated in recent meetings to find creative ways to expand this partnership (i.e., make more degrees available; expand the partnership to cultural and civic areas; create opportunities for collaboration concerning improvement of higher education).

These discussions have led to a plan to offer annual conferences on one of the campuses of the two institutions focused on topics of interest to the two communities. This is only one way the partnership will be expanded. However, it is a good example of the high level of cooperation between the two institutions.

This partnership, which will be known as "*East Meets West*," will likely present the first of these conferences in fall 2013 on the Georgia SW campus. The next conference will be held at EGSC.

The first conference, which will include a noted expert as a speaker, will focus on ways colleges and universities can work in partnership with K-12 educators to assure that high school students have higher expectations about attaining college degrees and are fully prepared to do that when they graduate from high school. I look forward to many faculty and staff travelling to Americus to participate in this intellectual endeavor in fall.

The two institutions are discussing other creative ways to collaborate. This partnership holds, in my opinion, a great deal of promise.

### **Recruiting Strategy for Fall 2013**

I have been meeting every Friday morning with the entire Admissions staff plus representatives of External Affairs and Athletics. We are working on a series of strategies to enhance our student recruiting efforts. Our focus is on recruiting students in the golden triangle --- the area inside the triangle formed by Augusta, Macon and Savannah. Although the national and statewide trends portend reduced enrollment levels in colleges and universities again in fall 2013, we are optimistic that a lot of

hard work combined with creative thinking may allow us to buck the trend.

Some of the ideas are relatively straightforward ---- but involve a lot of hard work. For example, one goal is to assure that an EGSC recruiter visits each and every high school in the golden triangle to meet with prospective students this spring. Whenever possible, we want these recruiters to be accompanied by a student, faculty or staff member from EGSC. We will assure that these recruiters are armed with the appropriate tools this year --- brochures, electronic presentations, and high quality application materials.

Some of the ideas adopt new strategies. For example, the new COMPASS test standards were a hurdle which stood in the way of the enrollment of almost 500 potential EGSC students last fall. Some of these prospective students failed to post a passing score. Other applicants simply failed to complete their application by attempting the test. My concern is that many of these 500 were likely students with the aptitude to attend college; and most of these unlikely went on to a technical college or other institutions of higher education. In all likelihood, their educational journey simply ended and that is a tragedy.

This spring, we are working to assist applicants in preparing for the test, to provide these applicants with personal encouragement to take the test, to provide transportation to the test site when needed and to provide remediation when students initially fail the test.

We will be calling on faculty and staff to assist in these recruiting efforts. Please help whenever you can.

### **Black Male Leadership Initiative**

The USG has, for many years, sponsored an African- American Male Initiative. A high percentage of USG institutions already offer programs sponsored by this USG initiative. EGSC is not yet one of those institutions.

Last fall, a group of EGSC students were presented with the opportunity to attend the annual USG African-American Male Initiative Conference. They attended and represented EGSC admirably.

In addition to the attendance by these students, I formed an EGSC task force to address this issue. That task force has listened carefully to the ideas the students brought back from the USG conference.

As a result, the College will be submitting a proposal to the USG tomorrow for a "*Black Male Leadership Initiative*." If the proposal is accepted, this program will commence in fall 2013. The proposed program would provide mentoring for at-risk EGSC students by their peers who have been academically successful. Also, it will provide mentoring by EGSC faculty and staff. In turn, the mentoring would be provided for local high school students by EGSC students. This proposal holds a great deal of promise for improvement in the retention, graduation and successful transfer of African-American Male EGSC students. I will let you know if the USG approves our proposal.

### **HB 512**

Last week, this house bill passed the House and moved to the Senate. If adopted, it would allow for the concealed carry of guns on Georgia College campuses. Put simply, this is a very bad idea in my opinion. As a result, I have written a letter to a key Senator expressing this opinion.

Last week at EGSC provides an apt example of the reasons for my opposition. It was a busy and energetic week on campus: regular classes, high school students on campus for a theatrical competition, many sporting events on campus, .... All of this occurred in a safe academic environment. However, it did not just happen to be safe. It was safe due to the effort and planning of our police force and others. Making that already difficult job of keeping our campuses secure even more difficult - - by adding the potential of concealed weapons -- is not acceptable.

The Chancellor has taken a leadership role in articulating the reasons for the opposition of college presidents and police chiefs to this legislative proposal. I am hopeful that the strong expression of opposition by leaders in higher education will result in defeat of the proposal.

Hope you all have a great week.

Sincerely,

Bob Boehmer  
President  
East Georgia State College