

HR 9013

2016

## House Resolution

A resolution recognizing January 26, 2016, as "Florida Gulf Coast University Day" in Florida.

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, FGCU has strategically grown into a regional university of nearly 15,000 students and today offers 53 undergraduate, 24 graduate, 9 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 nearly two million hours contributed to the Southwest Florida community since 1997, and

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27 WHEREAS, 400 acres of the FGCU campus are designated as  
28 restored and preserved wetlands, and the university operates a  
29 15-acre solar field that generates 85 percent of the electric  
30 power for three academic buildings, saving \$700,000 in energy  
31 costs annually, and

32 WHEREAS, FGCU emphasizes innovative and interdisciplinary  
33 learning, using the region as a living laboratory while offering  
34 students diverse opportunities to participate in meaningful  
35 research led by their professors, who have conducted more than  
36 \$194 million in research and sponsored programs since 1997, and

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

44 WHEREAS, FGCU has one of only 19 PGA-certified golf  
45 management programs in the country and the largest certified  
46 program in Florida, and

47 WHEREAS, FGCU is a leader in the State University System of  
48 this state, with 74 percent of alumni employed or continuing  
49 their education within one year after graduation, and

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

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

56 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs are a growing source of  
57 pride for their many fans, with such outstanding accomplishments  
58 as the women's basketball team winning the Atlantic Sun  
59 Conference title for five straight seasons and, in March 2015,  
60 ranking 20th in the nation in the AP Top 25 poll; the swimming  
61 and diving team claiming the 2015 Coastal Collegiate Swimming  
62 Association Championship, its sixth such win in seven years; and  
63 both the men's and women's soccer teams capturing their sixth  
64 consecutive Atlantic Sun Conference Championships, and

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

69

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

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73 That January 26, 2016, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast  
74 University Day" in Florida and that FGCU is celebrated for its  
75 contribution as an outstanding institution of higher education  
76 focused on student success.

77 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be  
78 presented to Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D., president of Florida

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79 | Gulf Coast University, as a tangible token of the sentiments  
80 | expressed herein.