

By Senator Benacquisto

27-02067-18

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing January 23, 2018, 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 10th 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 celebrated its 20th anniversary, and

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

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2017, Michael V. Martin, Ph.D., became FGCU's fourth president, expressing a commitment to ensure that students will have a clear pathway to success and to maintain college affordability for all students, and

WHEREAS, FGCU's top priority is student success, which includes an emphasis on providing the necessary academic resources and laboratory facilities to timely completion of degrees from one of its five colleges, by providing relevant programs with an accomplished faculty and dedicated staff to help students prepare for successful careers and meet regional

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30 and statewide workforce needs, and

31 WHEREAS, FGCU has grown into a regional university of  
32 nearly 15,000 students and offers 54 undergraduate, 23 graduate,  
33 10 certificate, and 3 doctoral programs, and

34 WHEREAS, FGCU's pathways to student success have led it to  
35 achieve national prominence in academics, environmental  
36 sustainability, and student service learning, with more than 2.5  
37 million volunteer hours contributed to the Southwest Florida  
38 community since 1997, and

39 WHEREAS, FGCU emphasizes innovative and interdisciplinary  
40 learning, using the region as a living laboratory while offering  
41 students diverse opportunities to participate in meaningful  
42 research led by their professors, and

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

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

53 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs continue to be a growing  
54 source of pride for loyal fans, with student-athletes continuing  
55 to demonstrate their academic strengths by earning an average  
56 GPA of 3.27, and

57 WHEREAS, the collegiate experience continues to enrich the  
58 lives of FGCU students through "The FGCU Effect" and the

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59 university's longstanding commitment to promoting racial,  
60 ethnic, and cultural diversity on campus, NOW, THEREFORE,

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62 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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64 That January 23, 2018, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast  
65 University Day" in Florida.

66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be  
67 presented to Michael V. Martin, Ph.D., president of Florida Gulf  
68 Coast University, as a tangible token of the sentiments  
69 expressed herein.