

By Senator Benacquisto

27-02217-20

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing January 28, 2020, 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, FGCU has been led by four outstanding and dynamic presidents: Roy McTarnaghan, William C. Merwin, Wilson G. Bradshaw, and Michael V. Martin, and

WHEREAS, with the leadership and vision of current President Michael V. Martin and the FGCU Board of Trustees, FGCU students will have a clear pathway to success and FGCU will be able to maintain affordability for all students, and

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

WHEREAS, FGCU has strategically grown into a regional university of nearly 15,000 students and today offers 58

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30 undergraduate, 25 graduate, and 6 doctoral programs, and

31 WHEREAS, FGCU's pathways to student success have led it to  
32 achieve national prominence in academics, environmental  
33 sustainability, and student service learning, with approximately  
34 3 million hours of service learning contributed to the Southwest  
35 Florida community since 1997, and

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

40 WHEREAS, FGCU has established The Water School, breaking  
41 ground on the new academic building on November 21, 2019, to  
42 create a University of Distinction Program that will provide  
43 FGCU the foundation to pursue designation as a recognized state  
44 and national leader in the field of water science, focusing on  
45 local issues but having the ability to address challenges  
46 throughout the world, and

47 WHEREAS, FGCU has established the School of  
48 Entrepreneurship, bringing together students from all  
49 disciplines to develop products and business plans in a real-  
50 world setting, leading to recognition by the Princeton Review,  
51 which named it the best such school in Florida and ranked it  
52 30th in the nation, and

53 WHEREAS, FGCU strives to bring diversification of the  
54 economy to the region it serves through innovation in  
55 agribusiness, construction management, hydrology, environmental  
56 engineering, and public health, and

57 WHEREAS, FGCU serves and engages its surrounding community,  
58 offering a wealth of enrichment opportunities that include the

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59 FGCU Research Roadshow, visual arts, music, theater, and public  
60 radio and public television, and

61 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs continue to be a growing  
62 source of pride for their loyal fans, with student athletes  
63 continuing to demonstrate their academic strengths, and

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

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

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72 That January 28, 2020, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast  
73 University Day" in Florida.

74 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with  
75 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Florida Gulf  
76 Coast University President Michael V. Martin, Ph.D., as a  
77 tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida Senate.