

By Senator Rodrigues

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing January 25, 2022, 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 been led by 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 Martin and the FGCU Board of Trustees, FGCU students have a clear pathway to success as the university remains committed to maintaining affordability for all students, and

WHEREAS, FGCU's top priority is student success, demonstrated by its focus on providing the necessary academic resources and laboratory facilities to ensure that students may timely complete degrees under the guidance of an accomplished faculty and dedicated staff, all of whom are committed to assisting students in gaining necessary skills to meet regional and statewide workforce needs, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has strategically grown into a regional university of more than 15,000 students and today offers 63

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30 undergraduate, 26 graduate, and 7 doctoral programs, and

31 WHEREAS, FGCU's pathways to student success have led the
32 university to achieve national prominence in academics,
33 environmental sustainability, and student service learning, with
34 3.7 million service hours contributed to the Southwest Florida
35 community since 1997, and

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

40 WHEREAS, FGCU has established The Water School, a
41 University of Distinction Program opening its doors in 2022,
42 which will provide FGCU the foundation on which it may pursue
43 designation as a recognized state and national leader in the
44 area of water science, focusing on local issues to address
45 challenges faced throughout the world, and

46 WHEREAS, FGCU continues to work collaboratively with the
47 State University System to meet regional and statewide workforce
48 needs in the health care field and is graduating career-ready
49 nurses with one of the highest first-time passage rates on the
50 required nursing licensure examination of any of the State
51 University System institutions, and

52 WHEREAS, FGCU has established the Daveler and Kauanui
53 School of Entrepreneurship, where students are achieving success
54 in securing great jobs, creating new start-up companies,
55 transitioning into family businesses, or starting artistic
56 careers, leading to recognition by *The Princeton Review*, which
57 named it the best such school in Florida and 22nd nationwide,
58 and

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59 WHEREAS, FGCU strives to bring diversification of the
60 economy to the region it serves through innovation in
61 agribusiness, construction management, environmental
62 engineering, and public health, and

63 WHEREAS, FGCU serves and engages its surrounding community,
64 offering a wealth of enrichment opportunities, including visual
65 arts, music, theater, and public radio and television, and

66 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs continue to be a growing
67 source of pride for a loyal fan base, with student-athletes also
68 demonstrating their academic strengths, and

69 WHEREAS, the FGCU experience continues to enrich the lives
70 of students and to serve the surrounding community through "The
71 FGCU Effect" and the university's longstanding commitment to
72 service, NOW, THEREFORE,

73

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

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76 That January 25, 2022, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast
77 University Day" in Florida.

78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
79 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Michael V.
80 Martin, Ph.D., president of Florida Gulf Coast University, as a
81 tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida Senate.