

By Senator Martin

33-02346-23

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing March 28, 2023, 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 2,584 students on August 25, 1997, and held its first commencement of 81 graduates in May 1998, 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 have a clear pathway to success and an academic home that embraces college affordability for all students, and

WHEREAS, FGCU's top priority is student success, with internships, credentialing opportunities, and a focus on providing the necessary academic resources and laboratory facilities to allow students to timely complete degrees from one of the six colleges providing essential programs, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has an accomplished faculty and a dedicated staff who help students gain necessary skills and abilities to meet regional and statewide workforce needs, and

WHEREAS, FGCU has strategically grown into a regional

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30 university of more than 16,000 students and today offers 63  
31 undergraduate, 26 graduate, and 7 doctoral programs and 18  
32 academic certificates, and

33 WHEREAS, FGCU's pathways to student success have led to  
34 national prominence in academics, environmental sustainability,  
35 and student service learning, with 4.4 million hours contributed  
36 to the Southwest Florida community since 1997, and

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

41 WHEREAS, in 2022, The Water School opened its doors 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 area of water, focusing on local  
45 issues to address challenges 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 by graduating career-ready students from Marieb College's  
49 School of Nursing, which has one of the highest first-time  
50 passage rates in the State University System on the required  
51 nursing licensure examination, and

52 WHEREAS, FGCU has established the Daveler & Kauanui School  
53 of Entrepreneurship, where students chart their paths to career  
54 success, whether it be securing great jobs after graduation,  
55 creating startup companies, transitioning into family  
56 businesses, or starting artistic careers, leading the *Princeton*  
57 *Review* to recognize the school as the highest-ranked  
58 undergraduate entrepreneurship program in Florida and 15th in

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59 the nation, and

60 WHEREAS, with more than 20 chapters around the nation, the  
61 FGCU Alumni Association has more than 42,822 members, with 70  
62 percent of graduates working in their respective fields of study  
63 and with more than 2,000 businesses started by graduates in  
64 Southwest Florida, and

65 WHEREAS, FGCU strives to bring diversification of the  
66 economy to the region through innovation in agribusiness,  
67 construction management, environmental engineering, and public  
68 health, and

69 WHEREAS, FGCU serves and engages its surrounding community,  
70 offering a wealth of enrichment opportunities, including visual  
71 arts, music, theater, and public radio and television, and

72 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs continue to be a growing  
73 source of pride for their loyal fans, with student-athletes  
74 continuing to also demonstrate their academic strengths, and

75 WHEREAS, the collegiate experience enriches the lives of  
76 FGCU students and serves the surrounding community through  
77 "Turning Ideas into Impact" and the university's longstanding  
78 commitment to service, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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82 That March 28, 2023, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast  
83 University Day" in Florida.

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