

By Senator Richter

23-02251-15

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing March 24, 2015, 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 unserved region of Southwest Florida, and

WHEREAS, on August 25, 1997, FGCU opened its doors to students 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 51 undergraduate, 28 graduate, and 2 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 more than 1.5 million hours contributed to the Southwest Florida community since 1997, and

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

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30 costs annually, and

31 WHEREAS, FGCU emphasizes innovative and interdisciplinary
32 learning, using the region as a living laboratory while offering
33 students diverse opportunities to participate in meaningful
34 research led by their professors, who have conducted more than
35 \$184 million in research and sponsored programs since 1997, and

36 WHEREAS, FGCU is a leader in the State University System of
37 this state, with alumni employed or continuing their education
38 within 1 year after graduation, and

39 WHEREAS, FGCU focuses on college affordability for all
40 students by maintaining its commitment to cost containment, and

41 WHEREAS, FGCU serves as a cultural hub for the region,
42 offering a wealth of enrichment opportunities that include the
43 visual arts, music, theater, public radio and television, as
44 well as athletics, and

45 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics program is a growing source of
46 pride for its many fans, with the women's basketball team
47 winning the Atlantic Sun Conference title for five straight
48 seasons and in March 2015, ranking 20th in the nation in the AP
49 Top 25 poll, and the swimming and diving team claiming the 2015
50 Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association Championship, its sixth
51 such win in 7 years, and

52 WHEREAS, in 2014 the FGCU men's soccer team captured its
53 third Atlantic Sun Conference Championship in 4 years, the
54 women's soccer team won the 2015 Atlantic Sun Championship, and
55 the men's basketball team in 2013 made an unprecedented Sweet 16
56 run in the NCAA Tournament while establishing "Dunk City" as a
57 national favorite, and

58 WHEREAS, the collegiate experience continues to enrich the

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59 lives of FGCU students through the university's longstanding
60 commitment to promote racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity on
61 campus, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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65 That the Florida Senate hereby recognizes March 24, 2015,
66 as "Florida Gulf Coast University Day" in Florida, and
67 celebrates FGCU's contribution as an outstanding institution of
68 higher education focused on student success.

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
70 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Wilson G.
71 Bradshaw, Ph.D., President of Florida Gulf Coast University, as
72 a tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida Senate.