

### Inaugural Year of Jaguar Athletics



## Summer 2016

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Among the exciting changes at Governors State University over the past year has been the addition of competitive athletics. Two years ago saw the addition of freshmen to GSU, and last year saw the lure of competitive athletics to help put Jaguar Nation on the map. Now, student-athletes and fans alike can enjoy the scope of men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's golf and women's volleyball. Although wins and losses aren't important yet, what's important is getting started on the road for athletics.

The first step was being accepted in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the oldest governing body for collegiate athletics, and the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference, the largest conference in the NAIA. The next step was drawing local talent, and all the teams have a strong pool of student-athletes from numerous local high schools within a five- to 10-mile radius of Jaguar Nation. That gave parents and local fans a chance to watch their hometown heroes in competitive collegiate sports action in a tough conference.

"It was a good eye-opening first year for us as an athletic program," said GSU Athletic Director and Head Men's Basketball Coach Tony Bates. "It's our first year in the NAIA and it's a process of keeping student-athletes eligible, learning and improving

inside and outside of the classroom. We also want to keep drawing on local talent."

The men's basketball team compiled a 9-21 record in its first season. However, the Jaguars were in great form for many of those games. With eight players on the roster for most of the season, Jaguar hoopsters had a lot of work cut out for them. The team still fielded varsity and junior varsity teams much of the season, giving fans a taste of things to come.

The team showed many moments of competitive flair. It was a good solid learning experience playing against many nationally-ranked NAIA teams, some of whom are also in the CCAC. "Everybody got to play a lot of basketball," Bates said. "Now we want basically separate varsity and junior varsity teams to really help build the program."

The women's basketball team, coached by LaToshia Burrell, who also serves as assistant athletic director, also had eight girls for most of the season. They had a 2-28 record for their freshmen season. Like the men's hardwood team, they were also in great form for most games. "We did play a lot of exciting basketball," Burrell said. "We were learning how to finish a game. I think they played well most of the time and that should be something to build on for the future."

*Continued on page 2*

## Welcome from Dean of Students



The summer semester offers both an opportunity to reflect on the past academic year and focus on planning for the upcoming academic year. The content of our summer edition of the newsletter reflects that nexus between reflection and moving forward. In this newsletter we celebrate the accomplishment of our first year in competitive intercollegiate athletics along with recognizing student leadership and activism. At the same time, we announce the launch of GSU STAR, a new initiative to support our student success

network, and recognize the 2016-2017 Student Senate members.

This has been quite a year! (again). While the 2104-15 academic year marked the transformation of GSU to a comprehensive four-year institution, the 2015-16 year was filled with comparable excitement and firsts too! Our first freshmen became sophomores, GSU Jaguars were welcomed into the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference, NAIA's biggest conference, and in the face of a state budget impasse, GSU students demonstrated vigilance and advocacy with four trips to Springfield and hosted an on-campus rally with an audience of more than 300 in attendance.

As we prepare for the launch of the Fall 2016 semester, I hope you will plan to attending the Convocation Ceremony on Friday, August 26, at 3 p.m. in the Center for Performing Arts and be sure to Save-The-Date for our Third Annual Family and Friends Weekend to be held October 7 – 8, 2016!

As always, you have an open invitation to stop by my office, located in A-2134, if I can be of assistance. While I don't hold scheduled office hours during the summer, they will resume in the fall. Even if you don't need anything, stop in and simply visit!

Sincerely,

Dr. Aurélio Manuel Valente  
Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students



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[www.twitter.com/GSUDean](http://www.twitter.com/GSUDean)

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## Inaugural Year of Jaguar Athletics *Continued from page 1*

Cross Country also came to Jaguar Nation. Led by Kevin Kredens, the men's and women's Jaguar harriers were also small in numbers their first season but huge in heart. The Jaguars finished the season with three women and four men on the respective teams. While they did not score at a meet, as five finishers are needed to score as a team, they did have runners who made good showings at each of their seven meets, with some runners finishing in the upper half at some meets.

In collegiate cross country, the women run a 5K (3.1-miles) and the men do an 8K (5-miles). While the cheetah is actually the fastest land animal, the Jaguars are looking to give their competitors a good run for their money. "What I really liked about my teams is the way they fought for every mile," Kredens said. "They never gave up and showed a lot of character out on the course. It was nice to get compliments from other coaches on my team and the way they competed. I was very proud of them."

The teams has grown to full capacity for the upcoming season as new recruits will add to the roster and give them full strength to score and push each other at every meet. "Our new recruiting class will compliment nicely to what we already have," Kredens said. "I have a nice group of freshmen with a lot of enthusiasm, and transfer students with a lot of experience."

The Jaguar Men's and Women's golf teams, led by Coach Mark Haines, also had a good start as it too is building to score at tournaments. They competed in 13 matches during the fall/spring seasons. The Jaguars had four men and two women on their respective teams but had several individuals finish in the top 25 percent of the matches they were in.

"This indicates that the Jaguars will be competitive in the future as the program continues to grow," Haines said. "We will have a great blend of new recruits, many of whom competed in the state tournament last fall, in addition to some transfer students, the squad will be well-rounded. "They're going to help put GSU on the gold map," Haines said.

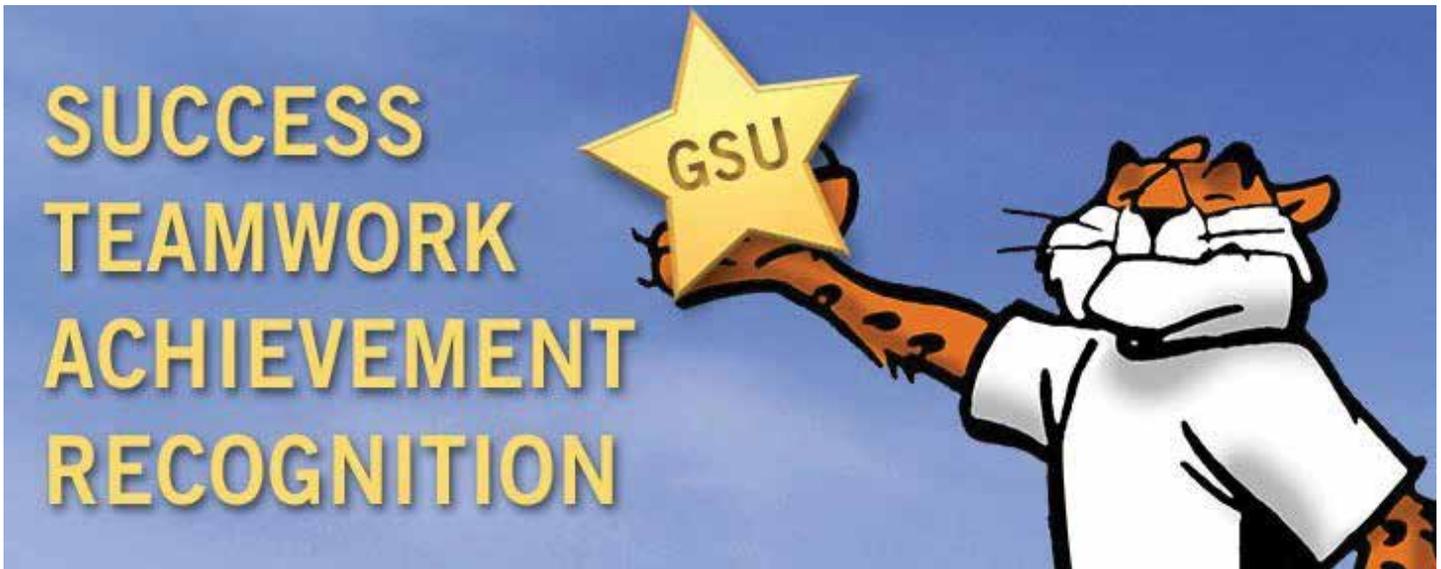
The women's volleyball team also competed in 2015-16 and like the other Jaguar teams, had some growing pains as well. The Jaguars finished with a 2-31 record, but like the basketball teams, played very well in many matches but had a tough time finishing a match in a competitive schedule. The Jaguars had eight women for most of the season and are also adding to their roster for a new competitive season.

Now, as the teams enter their second full season, the expectations and excitement are at a higher level. The freshman jitters are gone and the sophomore season should add a new flair for Jaguar fans. "We'll be having full teams at every level in every sport," Bates said. "That will be exciting for our students, our fans, our athletes, the university community and especially recruits," Bates said. "When recruits come on campus and see that excitement, they will want to come to GSU and be a part of it."

"Winning is important, but first and foremost, we want to provide our student-athletes with a quality education, a competitive atmosphere, and to take pride in being a part of Jaguar Nation athletics."

It's time to add another ROAR!

## Be a GSU STAR – Launching this Fall!



Come Fall 2016, GSU will be launching the STAR Student Success Network. STAR utilizes Starfish, a platform designed to improve student success and facilitate communication among students, faculty and advisors across campus. The STAR Student Success Network gives students the tools needed to be successful right at their fingertips. Students who utilize the network are called “GSU STARS.” GSU STAR students are more likely to succeed as they connect with faculty, advisors, and GSU services in their individual success networks. Each network consists of the student; his/her course instructors, advisor and support staff who work together with one common goal, to achieve student success. Students receive instructor feedback on class performance, can schedule appointments with their network relationships and services, and raise a flag if they have a question or concern.

GSU chose the STAR acronym because:

**SUCCESS** - Students utilizing Starfish are more likely to succeed.

**TEAMWORK** - In a student’s network, faculty, the student, and staff work together as a team.

**ACHIEVEMENT** - We acknowledge students’ achievements.

**RECOGNITION** - We give recognition/kudos for those achievements.

Amy Comparon, Director of the Academic Resource Center, and co-chair of the GSU STAR implementation team said “We are excited to introduce Starfish and collaborate with students, faculty, advisors and staff across campus to ensure student success! Students will have access to campus resources in one centralized location, making it easy for students to connect.”

GSU STAR is using the Starfish platform which is used by hundreds of higher education institutions, including the entire community college systems in California, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, and Virginia, four-year private institutes such as Bates College, High Point University, and Johns Hopkins University, and four-year public universities such Penn State University, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the University of New Mexico, to support student success and ensure students stay on track to reach their goals. Locally, both Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and the University of Illinois at Springfield have used this platform with great success.

For more information, please visit the GSU STAR Student Success Network website at <http://www.govst.edu/STAR/>. More information will be posted throughout the summer.



### For Students

GSU STAR empowers students to be more playful and connect more meaningfully with the people and resources to help them succeed. Information for students using GSU STAR will be coming soon!



### For Faculty

GSU STAR allows faculty to communicate with students and easily connect them with campus resources. Information for faculty using GSU STAR will be coming soon!



### For Advisors

GSU STAR allows advisors to centralize communications and makes it possible to take a more holistic approach to student success. Information for advisors using GSU STAR will be coming soon!

## Student Accomplishments Celebrated at Annual Student Leadership Awards

The 4th annual Student Leadership Awards Banquet was held on April 22, 2016 in the E-lounge. This annual program celebrates the accomplishments of student leaders, officers in student clubs and organizations and student athletes. This year we have seen phenomenal programs, fundraisers and new initiatives from our award winning clubs. Currently Student Life recognizes more than 80 clubs and organizations. During this year's celebration, awards were given in 13 categories and the recipients were selected from 131 nominations.

The award for Outstanding Support Staff/Faculty recognizes full-time or part-time, faculty members who provide service and support to a student organization. This person goes above and beyond their job description to ensure the success of student organizations at GSU both in and outside of the classroom. The Outstanding Support Staff/Faculty Award recipient was Dr. Ellen Walsh.

The Outstanding Support Staff recognizes full-time or part-time staff members at GSU who displays outstanding service and support to a recognized student club/organization. The Outstanding Support Staff recipient is Ashley Stewart.

The Outstanding Student Club/Organization Advisor recognizes an outstanding administrator, staff or faculty member currently serving as an advisor or co-advisor for a recognized student club or organization. The nominees have displayed outstanding service in the growth and development of the students involved. The Advisor of the Year recipient was Dr. Crystal Blount.



Drs. Blount and Provost Bordelon

The **Outstanding Graduate Student Award** recognizes a GSU Graduate student. Each nominee must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better. The nominee displays leadership qualities and dedication to co-curricular activities throughout their academic career. The deserving recipient of this award is Matthew Gentry.



The **Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award** recognizes a GSU sophomore, junior or senior student. Each nominee must be in good academic standing, with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better. The nominee displays leadership qualities and dedication to co-curricular activities and their academic pursuits. The Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award recipient is Gwen Medrano.



The **Freshman of the Year Award** is awarded to a GSU Freshman. Each nominee must be in good academic standing with a 3.0 gpa or better. The student displays commitment to their academic success and campus involvement. We congratulate all who were nominated. The 2016 Freshman of the Year recipient was Nicole Ames.



The **Rising Star Award** is presented to a group of students who are in their first year of service to a club, organization or program. The students' service can be through club membership or executive

board leadership. The nominees have demonstrated a level of service and dedication to their club that has promoted the mission and values of the organization. The 2016 Rising Stars selected were:

**Ryan Boyer**  
**Hillary Chadare**  
**Ju'Juan Day**  
**Kinga Drag**  
**Keena Garner**  
**Jennifer Gudino**

**Elizabet Lopez**  
**Elexis Marquardt**  
**Lester Van Moody**  
**Estellita Sides**  
**Brian Stone**



The **Civic Engagement Fellow** is a student who has demonstrated a positive community impact through involvement and engagement. The recipient of this award not only excels in the area of leadership and scholarship, but also seeks to apply these abilities in innovative ways to improve the lives of others on campus. The 2016 Civic Engagement Fellow is Sharita Walker.



The **Outstanding Athletes of the Year** have shown dedication to their studies, teammates and the GSU Athletic Program. The recipients this year were Dominique Hunt, Cross Country and Willie Lipsey, Men's Basketball.



The nominees in the **New Student Club of the Year** category have been established as a club during the 2015-2016 year. They have been recognized by Student Life and the Student Senate, and are working toward building membership, creating new programs, and providing initiatives that speak to a specific area of interest. The New Student Organization of the Year selected was the GSU Media Society.



The **Program of the Year Award** recognizes the activity, event or program that best exposed students to opportunities to learn more about themselves and others,

promote a sense of campus community and leadership. The programs nominated were all sponsored by a recognized Student Life club/organization. The 2016 Program of the Year selected was the Giving Tree, sponsored by the Student Education Association.



Giving Tree wins award



The nominees in the highly coveted **Student Organization of the Year Award** have all worked extremely hard this year to create motivating, engaging and educational programs for the GSU community. They have worked to motivate their membership and increase their visibility and promote the mission of their organizations. The deserving recipient of this award is the Association of Latin American Studies (ALAS).



Michael and Provost Bordelon

The prestigious **Elaine P. Maimon Award** is designed to celebrate the accomplishments of a president of a student organization. The nominees have demonstrated leadership through service to their club members and mission. The 2016 recipient of the Elaine P. Maimon award is Mychael Vanarsdale, President of Student Senate and Black Student Union.

## Internship Growth Slow but Steady at GSU

The Office of Career Services (OCS) annually collects data for the university-wide Community Placement Survey, asking members to report on internship placements and field experiences for their respective areas of expertise. OCS received a total of 30 responses from all of the academic departments across the university that participated in the survey, which was compiled into the second annual report. The aggregated data was collected to document the impact on the GSU student community as well as local employers and organizations who participated with our students. Each academic division was reviewed in terms of student placement by class, divisions, departments within divisions, type of placement (whether clinical, non-clinical or student teaching experience), and business or organizational sector. Within the sector section, a representation of types of employers and organizations that extended opportunities to our students was also included.

Total internship placements and field experiences reported for Governors State University for Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 increased by almost three hundred placements. The College of Arts and Sciences held steady, even though there was a slight decrease in the amount of students that enrolled into internships and field experiences in 2015-2016, possibly due to the increased interest in other areas such as Social Media and Criminal Justice.

After the College of Business and Public Administration was reorganized and became the College of Business in the past year, internships became more widely discussed and on the radar of COB faculty, but there had still been a slight decline this year in actual academic internships taken. The College of Education also continues to experience a decline in enrollment of student teachers looking for field experiences, possibly due to the shrinking job market for Education and School Counseling majors.

Additionally, the College of Health and Human Services is the one major division that has experienced growth in several areas, especially in Community Health and Health Administration. Other programs have also gotten larger, such as the Social Work program, now reporting numbers for both undergraduate and graduate students.

As a university overall, GSU has went from 1119 reported internships and field experiences in the 2014-2015 academic year to 1339 students reported in the 2015-2016 academic year and it is hoped that this growth continues for the 2016-2017 academic year.

### Community Placements by College

College of Arts and Sciences: 167 (13%)

College of Business: 5

College of Education: 111 (8%)

College of Health and Human Services: 1,056 (79%)

### Community Placements by Types

Internships: 964 (72%)

Student Teaching: 45 (3%)

Other: 330 (25%)

## Spotlight Internship on Nikki Zarnecki



"During my internship at the Village of Park Forest Recreation and Parks Department I was able to get real-world working experience related to my major and my future career goals. As a communications major, with a focus on advertising and public relations, I was able to utilize classroom knowledge in combination with prior social media marketing experience to maintain the social media accounts for the department. I created many advertisements to be used on social media and through print to get the message

across about classes, programs and events! A main focus of my internship, which also enhances my future career goal, was to plan events for the department. I developed a new program called Painting, Pizza and Punch which was very successful and will be continued throughout the summer. I also planned and executed all details for an event called Easter Eggstravaganza which had over 300 participants! I am grateful for the office of Career Services for making this opportunity possible as I thoroughly enjoyed the experience!"

-Nikki Zarnecki, *Undergraduate Communications Student*

### Upcoming Career Services events!

#### Student Employment Fair –

August 31, 2016 – Hall of Governors – 2-5 p.m.

#### BALANCING SCHOOL AND: Work, Family, or other Responsibilities

September 8, 2016 – Academic Resource Center – 6-7 p.m.

#### Finding the Work You Love, Love the Work You Do –

September 14, 2016 – Hall of Honors – 3:30-4:30pm

#### Professional Image Career Conference –

October 4 – October 6, 2016

#### Interviewing Like A Star –

November 2, 2016 – Hall of Honors – 3:30-4:30 p.m.

#### Career Fair Prep Talk/Resume Lab –

November 16, 2016 – Room B2201 – 2:00-4:00 p.m.

#### Health & Human Services Career & Internship Fair –

November 22, 2016 – CPA Lobbies – 2:00-5:00 p.m.

## Male Success Initiative has a Successful Launch Year!



The Male Success Initiative was launched this year with a symposium in October 2015 with Dr. Shaun Harper, founder and director of Penn's Center on Race and Equity, to garner more support and inform campus community on the importance of male student of color success. In April 2016 a follow up symposium was held with Drs. Luke Wood and Frank Harris, founders of the Minority Male Community College Collaborative, that spoke more to teaching methods and strategies for male student of color success.

All programs and events of the pilot year for the Male Success Initiative reflected the program tenets of civic engagement, curricular enhancement, character enrichment and cultural exploration during Manhood Mondays. Some programs and events were done in collaboration with Prairie State College to ensure a seamless transition for prospective transfer students. There were 35 male students of color who participated in the programs and events of the Males Success Initiative in some capacity. There were 16 faculty/staff mentors as well as a diverse cadre of students, faculty/staff and administrators serving on the advisory council. A total of 25 Manhood Mondays were hosted.

## Dual Degree Program Continues to Connect



Harper College students, Stephanie Martinez and Berta Gomez, at the Spring 2016 DDP Induction.

The Dual Degree Program (DDP) has participants at all seventeen community college partner campuses, two of which are over sixty miles away from the GSU campus. In an effort to keep students at the remote partner campuses engaged, new outreach strategies have been implemented.

A live chat feature has been added to the DDP website. Using this tool, site visitors can virtually converse with a DDP staff member during business hours. This is a great feature because DDP staff members work from various locations, some of which do not have phone access. Using this online chat, students will always be able to get answers in real time.

Each fall and spring semester, DDP holds an orientation-type program on the GSU campus for new DDP students called DDP Induction. It is a fun-filled event that outlines the benefits and expectations for DDP students and asks them to pledge to their academic success. Unfortunately, many students are unable to attend DDP Induction due to distance/transportation issues, work/class conflicts, etc. A DDP Online Induction was recently initiated to allow students to learn about DDP and GSU without having to travel to the GSU campus. Jessica Specht, DDP Transfer Specialist, works with students at the remote partner campuses and led the creation of the DDP Online Induction. It shares the same information as live DDP Induction by utilizing videos, pictures, and short quizzes. Students who complete the DDP Online Induction earn a DDP t-shirt just like students who attend live DDP Induction. After only three weeks of invitations being sent, there is over 50% completion of the DDP Online Induction.

Although DDP continues to create tools to reach students virtually, the goal is always to attract students to our GSU campus. Attending a live DDP Induction or any other GSU event allows DDP students to see our beautiful locale, meet our caring staff and faculty, and know that GSU is the right place for them to transfer after earning their associate degrees.



Contact DDP at [dualdegree@govst.edu](mailto:dualdegree@govst.edu) or 708.534.4494 to learn more! Visit our website at: [www.govst.edu/ddp](http://www.govst.edu/ddp)

## What Residents are Saying about Living On-campus!



University Housing administered a Quality of Life (QoL) survey to the students living in Prairie Place in the 2016 spring semester. The survey was online from: March 31, 2016 – April 15, 2016 and was sent to all 250 students who lived in Prairie Place in the spring semester. Eighty-two students (32.8%) responded to the survey.

There were 48 different questions asked of students regarding their experience living in Prairie Place in 2015-16. Some of the broad conclusions of the data include:

- Students enjoyed living in Prairie Place and felt comfortable living in the hall; and reported that living on campus had a positive impact on their studies;
- Undergraduate students (Freshman, Sophomore, Transfer) were the most satisfied with their residential experience with male undergraduate students reporting the highest levels of satisfaction with living in Prairie Place;
- Residents reported being satisfied with academic support in Prairie Place and knowing (and interacting) with their Faculty in Residence;

- Resident students viewed their Resident Assistants as available, visible, demonstrating concern for students and responding to policy violations;
- Residents reported that the campus police are visible and accessible in Prairie Place and the exterior doors are consistently secured; and
- Students reported they enjoyed most meeting people, social interactions; apartment style living; feeling safe and secure; convenience of being on campus.

Recommendations provided by students, included: have more events in Prairie Place, improvements in the c-store, and more parking near the hall. University Housing will be incorporating the feedback received from students into their planning for the 2016-17 academic year.



## VRC Moves to New Home!



### VRC Relocates to the GMT Building

The Veterans Resource Center has moved to the GMT Building. The center is now located at GMT160 and can be reached at 708.235-7597. Kevin Smith, Coordinator for Veterans and Military Personnel, can now be found in GMT157 and called at 708.235.2223.



Pictured: Veterans Coordinator Kevin Smith, Csm Howard O. Robinson, retired IL National Guard, President Maimon, and Provost Bordelon.

## 2016 SALUTE Induction Ceremony

36 student veterans were inducted into the SALUTE Veterans National Honor Society on Friday, April 29 at GSU's Center for Performing Arts. President Elaine P. Maimon, Provost Deborah Bordelon, and Veterans Coordinator Kevin Smith presented certificates and honor cords to 18 Undergrad, 13 graduate, and 5 doctoral students. Over 100 guests, faculty, and staff attended the banquet. "This evening was all about our graduating veteran students," said Kevin Smith. "I am honored to represent such a fine group of inductees and I congratulate them on their success!"

The graduates who were inducted into membership in SALUTE represent every slice of American military and veterans in higher education at GSU. Members include retirees, disabled veterans, active duty military, National Guard and reservists who are returning to higher education, starting second careers, or helping fund their college careers with military service.

Faculty, staff, and fellow students offered a salute to our 2015 SALUTE recipients – including President Obama (with the help of Assistant Dean of Students, Sheree Sanderson)!

### 9/11 Day of Remembrance

Main Entrance

September 12, 2016

from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Meet the 2016-17 Student Senate



Justin Smith, *President, COB*  
Jessica Love-Jordan, *Vice-President, CHHS*  
Lester Van Moody, *Treasurer, COE*  
Linda Coleman, *Secretary, CHHS*  
Hilary Chadare, *CAS*  
Latia Alexander, *COB*  
Trauvell Crawford, *COB*  
Marcin Kuruc, *COB*  
Dwaylon Bledsoe, *COE*  
Derrick Brown, *COE*  
Yolanda Pitts, *Board of Trustee Student Representative, COB*  
Marie Penny, *Community Member/Alumni*

Senators represent the interests and concerns of the student body and actively serve on college-wide committees made up of students, faculty, administrators, and staff members. In addition to chartering, regulating, and funding student organizations.

Senators represent all colleges and include a Board of Trustee Student Representative, who has a voting position on the GSU Board of Trustees; as well as an Illinois Board of Higher Education Student Representative who represents GSU as part of the IBHE student advisory committee at regional meetings.

GSU's student senate has been proactive in working with President Maimon advocating funding for higher education, and creating a voice for student concerns from MAP grants to encouraging students to become engaged citizens by holding voter registration drives. The senate is actively involved in all aspects of student concerns, and encourages fellow students to get involved. Within their capacity as representatives of the student body, student government fulfills a range of responsibilities.

The student senate meets the 1st and 4th Friday of every month during the spring and fall semesters at 3:30 p.m. Students are encouraged to attend these open meetings to see your student senate in action. *Meet Your Student Senate* at these upcoming events: Jaguar Café Monday, August 15, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in the Hall of Governors; Welcome Week August 30, Clubs and Organizations Fair where they will once again launch the GSU Rocks the Vote; Club and Organizations Advisor and Officers Training, August 16, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., and GSU's Convocation, August 26.

Student senate elections are held during the spring and fall semesters. Be sure to follow the student senate on Facebook and Twitter and/or visit the Student Senate office in Student Row Room A2122.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
for a fun-filled weekend at GSU  
**Friends and Family Weekend**  
**October 7 - 8**  
[www.govst.edu/weekend](http://www.govst.edu/weekend)



For new, updates, and complete calendar of events, visit: [www.govst.edu/campus\\_life/](http://www.govst.edu/campus_life/)