After 16 years with Georgia State, President Patton prepares to retire

University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr. announced last week that Georgia State University President Carl V. Patton will retire from his position June 30, 2008. “Over the past 16 years, Dr. Patton has transformed Georgia State and much of downtown Atlanta,” said Davis. “His clear vision of how a vibrant university should be a contributing member of the community has created an outstanding academic experience for students and has revitalized the central city. His vision and his energy will be missed.”

“While I will miss playing a role in guiding Georgia State’s growth,” Patton said, “the institution is well-positioned for continued excellence, and the System will be able to attract extremely strong candidates for the presidency. There is a great leadership team in place at Georgia State, our enrollment growth is robust, our budgets are balanced; we have both strategic academic and physical master plans that are being successfully implemented, and we are ready to launch our next comprehensive campaign.”

Now in the 16th year of his presidency, Patton arrived at Georgia State in July 1992 from his position as vice president for academic affairs at the University of Toledo. After his arrival at Georgia State, Patton launched a universitywide planning effort that produced the Main Street Master Plan. This strategy has resulted in the addition of 14 new or renovated facilities for the university. The master plan was updated in 2006, and plans are underway for $1 billion worth of new facilities for the campus.

Patton also has overseen the acceleration of Georgia State’s reputation as one of the nation’s largest urban research institutions in the country. The university has now achieved the highest rating possible from the Carnegie Foundation as a “research intensive university.”

Another hallmark of the Patton presidency is his leadership in establishing the university’s first comprehensive capital campaign. The “Results” campaign raised more than $127 million for academic programs, professorships and endowed chairs, scholarships and facilities. He also began the university’s annual faculty-staff campaign.

In support of Georgia State’s fundraising activities, Patton and his wife, Gretchen, have been among the university’s biggest supporters making personal contributions totaling more than $275,000 during his presidency.

Another significant change for Georgia State has been Patton’s leadership in moving the university’s NCAA Division I athletics program into a new conference. In 2006, after a 20-year association with the Atlantic Sun Conference, Georgia State joined the Colonial Athletic Association.

Chancellor Davis will initiate a national search process to identify candidates to fill the post being vacated by Patton. Details of that process will be announced in the coming months.

Unanimous decision
Committee approves fee increases supporting football and student activities

In October, the Georgia State University Mandatory Student Fee Committee unanimously approved a proposal from the Athletics Department for an $85 per semester increase to support football, additional women’s sports and a marching band program. The committee also unanimously approved a $35 increase request from the Student Activity Fee Committee that would increase funding for student organizations, fine arts programming and a lecture and concert series.

Douglass Covey, vice president for student affairs, said the committee vote brings closer to reality the possibility of an NCAA Football Championship Subdivision (formerly Division I-AA) team at the university. The next step, following review by a university senate committee, will be for Georgia State President Carl Patton to make a recommendation to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents for its consideration.

“For many years, the Georgia State student body has been extremely positive in voicing its desire for the university to field a football team,” Patton said. “I am delighted that the students have supported the increase.”

Last April, Georgia State hired former Atlanta Falcons coach Dan Reeves as a consultant to examine the feasibility of adding football at the university. If football does become the 17th NCAA Division I sport at the university, the earliest it could field a team would be 2010, according to Athletic Director Mary McDroy.

As a member of the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA), Georgia State would become the eighth member of the league to have football.
Drinks for active people

Part 2: The exhausting claims of energy drinks

by Chris Rosenbloom • dietitian@ajc.com

Since Red Bull took the beverage industry by storm in 1987, drinks such as Monster, Full Throttle, Rock Star, No Fear, Amp and Adrenaline Rush have been jumping off the shelves.

On the Georgia State campus, you can find vending machines selling nothing but energy drinks. Many adults can be found upon energy drink consumption while sipping a Starbucks grande coffee, which contains 320 milligrams of caffeine compared to Red Bull’s 80 milligrams.

What makes these drinks so popular? Marketing surely helps. However, claims they can improve performance in times of high stress (remember finals exams?), enhance mental function and provide energy. The energy comes from two sources: caffeine and calories. While some are available in lower-calorie versions, most contain sugar and about 100 calories in 8 ounces.

One complaint about the energy drink industry is that the caffeine content is not required to appear on the label, so it is hard to know how much of a jolt you will get when you drink one.

Energy drinks also contain ingredients such as taurine, carnitine or ginkgo biloba. While none provides caffeine, they might have a mild effect on the brain, helping to sharpen your mental focus. But the research is scant and unclear about their true effects.

Energy drinks in moderation, just like caffeine in moderation, are safe for most people. Try to keep caffeine content under 500 milligrams a day.

A newer subset of energy drinks, such as EnviRga and Celsius, claim to burn calories or contain “negative calories.” EnviRga touts research that claims you can burn an extra 100 calories per day when you drink three cans of the product. EnviRga contains caffeine and EGCG, an extract of green tea. The Center for Science in the Public Interest contends the claims are misleading and has asked the Food and Drug Administration to make EnviRga’s parent company stop making the energy-burning claims.

Celsius contains about 200 milligrams of a “proprietary” blend of caffeine, guarana and EGCG. While the company has provided research dollars to investigate its claim that the drink will increase resting metabolic rate, none of the studies have been published. It is not surprising to see a rise in metabolism after caffeine consumption; a 5 percent to 4 percent increase in metabolism over two hours has been reported in scientific literature.

Energy drinks aren’t cheap — expect to pay $1.70 to $2 per can. If you think they must taste good because they are so popular, think again. One young college student said they taste like cough syrup. And the sugar-free varieties are cloyingly sweet and leave an artificial sweet aftertaste.

Original musical debuts at Georgia State

The Department of Communication and the VIA Theatrical Company have teamed with the Players of GSU, Student Life, and Leadership/Intercultural Relations for an original musical about the life of popular songwriter Johnny Mercer.

Called “Love, Johnny,” the musical was drawn from private letters written by Mercer; his family and various showbiz luminaries such as Cole Porter, Ray Charles, Henry Mancini and others. Much of the material used to write the musical was researched at the Georgia State Special Collections, said Todd Studebaker, the production manager at the University Theatre.

“Love, Johnny” is a musical memory of Johnny Mercer and his friends drawing from Mercer’s voluminous musical songbook. The cast of dancers, actors and musicians will comprise Georgia State students and community professionals.

The play will run Nov. 15-18, Nov. 29-Dec. 1 and Dec. 6-8 at the Alumni Hall Theatre at 30 Courtland St., Room 118. For more information, call (404) 413-5693.

Album 88 nominated for CMJ awards

Georgia State’s student radio station, WRAS 88.5 (Album 88), was nominated for three college radio awards, including station of the year from the College Music Journal (CMJ).

Along with station of the year, which went to KEXR operated by the University of Washington in Seattle, Album 88 was nominated for best specialty programming and most “team spirit.”

Though the station did not come back from the Oct. 18 awards ceremony with any hardware, it still boasts 100,000 watts, making Album 88 the largest student-run station in the country.

Adopt a grandparent-headed family for the holidays

Since 1997, Georgia State’s faculty and staff have generously contributed to the annual holiday celebration that supports families headed by grandparents. During the upcoming holiday season, program facilitators are again asking departments, colleges, units and individuals to adopt a family participating in Project Healthy Grandparents, a Georgia State-sponsored program.

For more information, call Jevent Mikenge, nursing services coordinator, at (404) 413-1117 or e-mail mikenge@gsu.edu.

COLLEGE NEWS

Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

FRC hosted roundtable on GREAT Plan

The Fiscal Research Center at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies hosted a roundtable discussion last month on the issues surrounding the funding of local governments through state grants, as proposed in Speaker Glenn Richardson’s GREAT Plan for Georgia.

The discussion, held Oct. 3, was attended by 27 individuals representing a diverse collection of organizations. It was moderated by Katherine Willoughby, professor of public administration and urban studies.

College of Arts and Sciences

CRADL launches postdoctoral program in language and literacy

The Center for Research on K-12 Development and Learning has started its first postdoctoral program, thanks to a prestigious grant from the federal Institute of Education Sciences. CRADL aims to launch the careers of language and literacy researchers, providing them with research training and advice in professional matters like grant-writing.

CRADL is able to offer some unusual advantages for postdoctoral researchers, which is why its program was chosen for funding by the IES. First, the center places a high priority on sharing its research with schools and policymakers, making the latest science available to the students who need it. Second, the center pulls together scholars from a wide variety of disciplines, including psychology, education, speech-language pathology and law.

Mathematics now accepting Ph.D. students

Starting in the spring 2008 semester, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics will offer a Ph.D. program for the first time. Students can study in three areas: mathematics, biostatistics or bioinformatics.

Department chair Johannes Hatzithomas said the creation of the Ph.D. program will allow them to retain their master’s degree graduates and improve the quality of research in the department.

The department will eventually have about 12 Ph.D. students.

Those interested in the program can find more information at www.mathstat.gsu.edu.

College of Education

Attorney and education advocate leads seminar

As part of American Education Week, the College of Education will host a seminar Thursday, Nov. 15, with guest speaker Cathy Hanson, founder of the Georgia School Council Institute. The seminar, titled “The Politics of Education,” will be held from 3:15 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the COE building at 30 Pryor St., Room 1030.

Hanson is an attorney and advocate for the improvement of public education in Georgia. In 2000, she founded the GSCS, a nonprofit organization that encourages collaboration among parents, educators and members of the business community to improve Georgia’s public schools.
Hearing screenings available for faculty, staff and students

Hearing screenings and evaluations are available on campus at no charge to faculty, staff and students. The Georgia State Speech, Language and Hearing Clinic, located on the 8th floor of the College of Education in Room 800, offers appointments from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesdays. Screenings last 30 minutes, and evaluations are one hour. Call (404) 413-9084 to schedule an appointment or receive more information.

Faculty/Staff Appreciation Night at women’s basketball game

Georgia State Athletics is hosting a Faculty/Staff Appreciation Night at the Nov. 27 women’s basketball game against Jackson State. The game starts at 6 p.m. in the Sports Arena. Admission and concessions are $1 with a faculty/staff ID, and faculty and staff members will have opportunities to win various prizes.

Henson chairs the Georgia State University Board of Trustees and serves on other nonprofit boards. Henson also teaches education law at the College of Law.

For more information, call Angela Turk at (404) 413-8114.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES
School of Nursing receives Regents’ funding

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia allocated $189,320 to the Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing as part of the Regents’ nursing education initiative. The school earned the competitive grant to increase the number of students in the B.S. nursing program each year, shift more students onto an accelerated nursing track, recruit and retain more nursing faculty, and develop new clinical sites and teaching partnerships.

COLLEGE OF LAW
Center for Health, Law & Society receives U.N. Convention

The College of Law’s Center for Health, Law & Society will host the National Briefing Day on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Nov. 16.

The convention is the most comprehensive international treaty developed to ensure the rights and well-being of children. A panel of experts will discuss the treaty, what it could mean for Georgia children, and why the United States has declined to sign it. The panelists include Jonathan Todres, Georgia State law professor; Karen Baynes, associate director of the University of Georgia’s Carl Vinson Institute of Government, and Tom Rawlings, director of Georgia’s Office of the Child Advocate.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Senate Salon of the Student Center at 44 Courtland St. Please RSVP to Christine Nwakamma at lawcnw@gsu.edu or (404) 413-9083.

J. MACK ROBINSON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
EMBA program rises in Financial Times rankings

The Executive MBA program at the J. Mack Robinson College of Business has another feather in its cap: a Financial Times ranking putting it among the top EMBA programs in the world.

The 2007 EMBA rankings by the London-based business newspaper, released in October, ranked the college’s EMBA program 57th in the world (one spot above last year’s ranking) and among the top 25 in the United States. The rankings of 89 EMBA programs are based on a 2004 survey of graduates and 16 categories of statistical data.

“One of the most significant elements of the Financial Times ranking is its survey of EMBA students,” said Dave Forquer, assistant dean of executive programs. “Therefore, our position among the best programs in the world confirms for us that we are delivering on our promise and helping our students develop as global business leaders.”

PAW PRINT

The men’s varsity four of the Georgia State crew team finished 17th out of 31 boats at the Head of the Charles Regatta in October, beating the University of Georgia as well as elite Northern schools such as Penn State and William and Mary. The rowers are Ben Beddingfield (front left), Zach Benson, Jack Ellsworth and Sam Rollinson.
A new beginning
Library transformation complete, dedication Thursday
By Liz Bobak
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After six years and nearly $23 million, Georgia State now has a library defining its status as a leading urban research university.

A grand re-opening will be held at 11 a.m. Nov. 15 on Library South's second floor to celebrate the transformation of the two-building facility located at the heart of campus.

Not only does the library have more volumes and media resources, it also boasts the latest technology, a variety of study spaces and improved services such as classes on research skills. Expanded Sky bridges allow visitors to navigate the library easily, and a new décor provides a more welcoming environment.

Already, students, faculty and guests are flocking to the library, raving about its amenities.

“Before, it wasn’t bright, and it looked very old,” said Gloria Ramchandani, 19, a sophomore majoring in psychology. “I like it so much better. It’s easier to concentrate.”

But perhaps no one is happier with the end result than Dean of Libraries Charlene Hurt, who has been involved in almost every aspect of the project, from campaigning for funding to moving books to keeping the collections available during the growing pains.

“I’m very pleased because the students love it,” Hurt said. “It has exceeded my expectations.”

While the project’s completion marks the beginning of a new era for the library, it is also Hurt’s swan song. Hurt will retire in June after a decade as Georgia State’s librarian. During that time, she overhauled the library’s physical transformation and reorganized the library’s administration to be more focused on serving its 1.5 million annual visitors.

The St. Louis native isn’t sure what she will do next. She may join the Peace Corps or move closer to her children. Wherever she goes, Hurt says she will hold the memories of Georgia State dear and wish the best for the library’s future.

“I hope it becomes even more of a vital part of the campus itself, both the physical library and the services and people,” Hurt said.