

**40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration: Introductory Comments - East Georgia State College**  
**September 28, 2013 11AM**  
**Goal length: 4 minutes**

Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, East Georgia State College.

Thanks to Fred Morgan, class of 1977, for serving as MC of this joyous event and thanks so much to all of you for joining in this special celebration.

Since the time of my first visit to the College, a couple of years prior to arriving here as interim president in early 2012, the single most striking feature of the College's history for me has been and continues to be the unique and special relationship between the college and the community. In almost all college towns, there is an ongoing discussion about the town/gown relationship. That discussion is not at all unusual. Commonly, that discussion focuses on traffic or parking problems or encroachment of the institution on the community. In other words, the discussion is often focused on problems. Here the discussion is focused squarely on contributions and possibilities --- the achievements as a result of that relationship and the future potential of that relationship.

That is why this celebration of that special relationship is so important and why I so deeply appreciate the work of the committee that has planned and organized this celebration. It is important to celebrate and recall that community/college relationship --- to burn it into our collective memory. Otherwise we run the risk of losing sight of the future possibilities the relationship presents.

Fittingly, that committee is chaired by Norma Woods Kennedy and comprised of distinguished community members, students, faculty and staff.

Martha Brown,

Joe Canady,

Darlene Dickens,

Beau Gunn,

Annelle Herrington,

Jerry Hooks,

Stacey King,

Houston Kirkland,

Angie Russell,

Vicki Sherrod,

Marielle Singletary,

David Steptoe,

Robin Willis and

Tyler Wilson

In a few moments, we are going to enjoy a skit entitled “A Journey Through Time.” After we watch this skit, let’s all agree to daydream about the possibilities it presents for the future. Can you envision a vibrant downtown area teeming with community members and students who live in new residence halls? Can you envision a dramatic growth in the \$70,000,000 impact of the College on the region? Can you envision the impact on our community of a dramatic improvement in the number of high school graduates who choose to go to college, earn degrees and then stay and work and live in the community. I can see all these clearly and I know you can as well.

I deeply appreciate the work done on the skit about our past which by remembering our past is going to help us envision these future possibilities even more clearly. Thanks so much to

- Steve Lavender, Instructor of Creative Writing and English, for writing the skit's script,
- Student Government Association for constructing the skit's duct tape time machine,
- Stacey Poole for assistance with sound and lighting and
- Darlene Dickens, Biology Lecturer, and Ben Mimbs, SGA Sophomore representative, for performing the skit.

Immediately following the program, please join us for a 40th Anniversary Group Photo in the grassy area across from the George L. Smith building. Please stand anywhere on the “40” chalk line and face the building.

Immediately after the photo, our Parent/Family/Alumni Day kicks off. Everyone I invited so please stay and enjoy your time on campus. We’ve planned fun activities, free food, and plenty of fellowship opportunities to celebrate the students, faculty, staff and community who contribute to East Georgia State College’s success.

And now it is my pleasure to turn the podium over to Beau Gunn, class of 2007, for an introduction of some very special guests. Beau, ...