

**EGSC Graduation Spring 2016  
Bob Boehmer's Script  
Friday, 05/06/2016 7 pm Gymnasium**

**Announcement is made by Student Affairs preceding ceremony about behavior during the graduation ceremony**

**Student lights a candle preceding the ceremony.**

**Ceremony begins promptly at 7 pm**

**Susan Westberry plays prelude**

**Processional Music (Pomp and Circumstance) Begins to Play (Susan Westberry). Audience stands.**

**Processional begins as soon as processional music begins – I will follow John Blackburn and David Gribbin up the center aisle. They will turn off before they reach the stage. I wait while David places mace in the stand. I then proceed up to the right side of stage (facing the stage), go up on stage and stand in front of the furthest chair to the right (facing audience) – All remain standing**

**After music stops, I walk to podium**

## **Welcome**

Good Evening!

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of East Georgia State College, welcome to our Spring 2016 commencement. This graduating class, 224, is the largest ever at East Georgia State College. This is due to the incredibly hard work of our faculty and staff and these graduates. Give them a well-deserved round of applause.

The ceremony is being recorded so each graduate will be able to share it with family and friends.

Please remain standing as Mr. Gilbert Westberry, Minister of Music at First Baptist Church of Swainsboro and Music Instructor for East Georgia State College, sings God Bless America. Mr. Westberry will then deliver our invocation.

**I return to my chair and remain standing.**

God Bless America- Gilbert Westberry

Invocation – Mr. Westberry will ask all to be seated at the conclusion.

**I return to the podium.**

## **Remarks**

Thank you, Mr. Westberry.

We hope you all enjoy the music this evening provided by our pianist, Susan Westberry. We are honored to have such talent in both Mrs. and Mr. Westberry. We deeply appreciate their contribution to our commencement ceremony.

In addition, our Student Marshalls, Jordan Robins and Rachel Mizell, and our student ushers are listed on the last page of your program. Thank you to all these individuals for participating in this commencement and making today a memorable one for our graduates and their supporters. Please join me in thanking them with a warm round of applause.

Please take note of students wearing academic insignia this evening in recognition of their special achievements:

- Green tassels adorn the mortarboards of our graduates receiving the Associate in Arts degree;
- Gold cords signify honor graduates. These are students who have earned a 3.5 cumulative or higher GPA. Cum laude graduates have earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher, Magna Cum Laude graduates have earned 3.8 or higher and Summa Cum Laude have earned a 3.9 or higher;
- Medallions worn by (g2)2 graduates, Get to Graduation in Two Years, signify completion of the associate degree in two years;
- Gold and blue cords signify membership in Beta Iota Beta, the East Georgia State College chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society;
- Navy colored cords signify graduates who are active or retired military;

- Black cords signify participation in the African American Male Initiative;
- Medallions worn by AAMI participants signify a GPA of 3.5 or higher.
- Purple, green, and gold cords are worn by our East Georgia State College Ambassadors.
- Red, white and blue cords signify members of the Student Government Association
- Service to community is part of who we are at East Georgia State College. The Service Seal of Distinction is presented to those students who volunteered and acted as models for building a culture of service by encouraging others to serve.

Graduates, few days as special as this take place in a lifetime. As we begin this momentous ceremony

- Breathe deeply and enjoy this moment that you have earned
- Quickly recall a special learning moment at East Georgia State College
- Smile and commit that moment to memory
- Silently commit to say thank you today to all those who helped you achieve what you celebrate tonight
- Tonight, dream in vivid colors about the exciting future that awaits you.

Family and supporters of the graduates, earning a college degree is difficult. Currently, only about 1/3 of adults in the United States achieve a college degree. As you participate in this

ceremony, you deserve to take great pride in your graduate as they enter the Academy of Scholars.

At practice yesterday, the graduates and I discussed that today's ceremony is an initiation into the world-wide Academy of Scholars. It is a solemn occasion worthy of decorum and order. This initiation ceremony has long-standing traditions, and unique trappings: robes, hoods, hats with tassels, medallions, a gonfalon and a mace. The traditions are observed today to demonstrate the respect that all present today have for your accomplishments. They are described in your program and are consistent the world-over.

### **I introduce Alumni speaker – Teresa Renew Davis**

It gives me great pleasure at this time to introduce our alumni speaker, Teresa Renew Davis.

Theresa Renew Davis joined East Georgia State College in July, 2014, as the founding program Director of the CHOICE Program for Inclusive Learning. Theresa brings with her over 30 years of experience working with individuals with disabilities,.

For the past 24 years, Theresa has served students with disabilities in various roles at Swainsboro High School. As a Special Education Teacher, from 1990-2002, Theresa provided educational support services to all categories of students with disabilities by adapting and modifying the general curriculum to enable student success.

Most recently, Mrs. Davis served as the Career and Technical Instruction Coordinator (2002-2014) for Swainsboro High School. Prior to this role, Theresa served as Recreation Therapist Director for a mental health unit of the Georgia Department of Corrections.

Theresa's goal is to help students discover their interest and develop an understanding of their needs. She realizes that these elements are important to the success of every student preparing to transition into life beyond high school.

Theresa obtained an Associate of Arts degree at Emanuel County Junior College, now East Georgia State College, in 1982. She also represented the college as Miss ECJC. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Recreation with emphasis in Therapeutics from Georgia Southern University. Theresa went on to earn an Educational Specialist Degree and a Master of Science Degree from Nova Southeastern University. Please join me in a warm East Georgia State College welcome for Teresa Davis

**I walk to podium**

**I introduce Student Speaker – Jessica Dixon**

Jessica was crowned Miss East Georgia State College in February of this year. She will also compete for the prestigious title of Miss Georgia in June. Jessica is 18 years old and is from Girard, GA. She is majoring in Biology at East Georgia State College, and plans to pursue a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Georgia in Athens. Her hobbies include martial arts, helping out at her local vet office & barrel racing. It

has just been announced that Jessica is a Correll Scholar at East Georgia State College for this next year.

Jessica Dixon will now deliver remarks on behalf of our remarkable East Georgia State College students. Please welcome her to the podium.

### **I walk to podium**

### **I introduce commencement speaker Jesse Stone**

East Georgia State College is privileged to have the esteemed State Senator Jesse Stone, as this evening's commencement speaker. Senator Stone is truly one of our own. He taught Criminal Justice at East Georgia State College from 1989 to 1994 and now serves as Emeritus Trustee of the East Georgia State College Foundation. As State Senator, Senator Stone represents Burke, Glascock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, McDuffie, Screven and Warren counties and portions of Columbia, Emanuel and Richmond counties.

Senator Stone was born in Augusta, Georgia. He was raised in Waynesboro where his family has deep roots. His father was a small businessman and a pilot who led the Georgia Air National Guard. The youngest of three brothers, he has practiced law for over 25 years, representing small businesses, farmers, and working people across South Georgia.

Senator and his wife Amanda have twin daughters and one son, Drew, Laura and Sarah. The Stone's believe in giving back to the communities where they call home. Over the years, Senator

Stone and his family have faithfully served in churches they've attended. Senator Stone continues to serve his community, volunteering in the Boy Scouts as an Eagle Scout as well as an assistant scoutmaster. He has served in many other roles such as the Central Savannah River Area Regional Development Council, Waynesboro Historic Preservation Commission and the Downtown Development Authority.

Senator Stone's political career began in 2003 when he was elected as Mayor of Waynesboro. During his time in office, he cut taxes and spending, improved infrastructure, and brought new industry to the City. In 2010, he was elected State Senator of District 23.

He currently serves as Chairman of Judiciary (Non-Civil) Committee and Vice Chairman of Banking and Financial Institutions Committee. He is also a member of the Education and Youth, Ethics, Judiciary (Civil) and Appropriations Committees. He is a member of the Rural Caucus, the Savannah Caucus and the Sportsman's Caucus.

Senator Stone received a joint Masters in Business Administration and Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Georgia. Currently, he is managing partner at the law firm of Merrill & Stone with offices in Waynesboro and Swainsboro where he specializes in the practice of business reorganization and commercial litigation. Senator Stone is recognized as an outstanding practicing lawyer as well as a political leader in our state. His roles in the State Bar have involved serving as Chair of the State Bar's Agricultural Law Section and Secretary of the Middle Judicial Circuit Bar Association.

Please join me in welcoming Senator Jesse Stone.

## **Senator Jesse Stone delivers Commencement Address**

**I return to podium and shake Senator Stone's hand**

**Thank Senator Stone.**

**I remind the audience about behavior**

In a moment we will award the diplomas. It is what we have all gathered here to witness – your son, your daughter, your spouse, your parent, your relative, your friend, walking across the stage with diploma in hand. It is East Georgia State College's tradition to call out each graduates name individually and give them the well-deserved opportunity to walk across the stage and receive their diploma. It is a joyous occasion, but one that calls for proper respect and decorum, which appropriately reflects the importance of this major milestone in the lives of these graduates.

So, on behalf of the graduates and the College, I ask you to join me in giving each of these amazing students their moment in the sun. Let's all agree not to use noisemakers or whistles or shouts. Let's wait to celebrate loudly until all names have been read, so each name can be heard by their families and friends and the graduates can receive their diplomas in a setting truly befitting this significant high occasion.

Not to worry, we will have an opportunity at the end for applause and exaltation that I trust will raise the roof. At that time, after all graduates have been recognized individually, let's all agree

that we will truly raise the roof to celebrate the achievements of the students.

Dr. Goodman comes to podium

**I remain at podium immediately to the right of Dr. Goodman.**

### **Presentation of Candidates**

*Dr. Goodman:* Will the candidates for the degrees of Associate in Arts please rise? President Boehmer, these candidates have completed all the coursework required for their degree and have been approved by the faculty. It is my distinct pleasure to present them to you for the conferring of their degree. **(TIP HAT)**

*President Boehmer:* By the authority vested in me by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon you the Associate Degree with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities appertaining there unto.

Please come forward and receive your diploma.

**STUDENTS WALK ON STAGE FOR DIPLOMAS.**

**I walk back to the table on which the degrees are located and Donald Avery walks to the back of that table.**

As each student comes across the stage, I hold the diploma in my left hand and shake the students hand with my right hand –

Student and I face the photographer to the right of the stage for photo.

**When the last row of students have all returned to their seats and are standing, I return to the podium immediately to the right of Dr. Goodman and the student marshall returns to the center of the floor.**

*President Boehmer:* Will all of our graduates please rise? It is a longstanding tradition that after receiving a postsecondary degree the cap tassel is shifted **from the right side to the left side** of the cap. This signifies to *all* the completion of the degree.

Graduates, please move your tassels.

Ladies and Gentlemen, family and friends, I present to you the Spring 2016 graduating class of East Georgia State College.

Graduates, raise the roof!

*President Boehmer:* Graduates, your family and friends, who helped and supported you as you earned your degree, have just extended their congratulations to you.

It is fitting that you recognize them for the support they have given you.

(APPLAUSE)

(PAUSE) Graduates, the remarkable faculty and staff who led you on the educational journey you completed today, have come today in their academic regalia to honor you.

Please recognize them for their efforts on your behalf.

*(APPLAUSE)*

*President Boehmer:*

Following the singing of our alma mater and the recessional by faculty, staff and students, please join us for a reception to honor our graduates. Immediately following the ceremony, the faculty and staff will form a corridor outside the entrance to this building as the graduates exit through that corridor and celebrating green and gold balloons are released in their honor. Please follow the graduates through the corridor and across the street to the Jean Anderson Morgan Student Center for the reception.

Do all the good that you can  
By all the means that you can  
In all the ways that you can  
In all the places you can  
At all the times that you can  
To all the people you can  
As long as ever you can

John Wesley

**Will the audience please rise** and join the graduates as Mr. Westberry, leads us in the singing of the East Georgia State College Alma Mater. The words are on the back of your program.

**I return to my seat**

**Gilbert Westberry comes to podium to lead the alma mater.**

**Following alma mater, John Blackburn and David Gribbin will proceed to the area in the front of the center aisle. I will then exit to the right side of the stage and proceed to follow John and David out of the building --- do not stop in the entry area. All go outside immediately.**