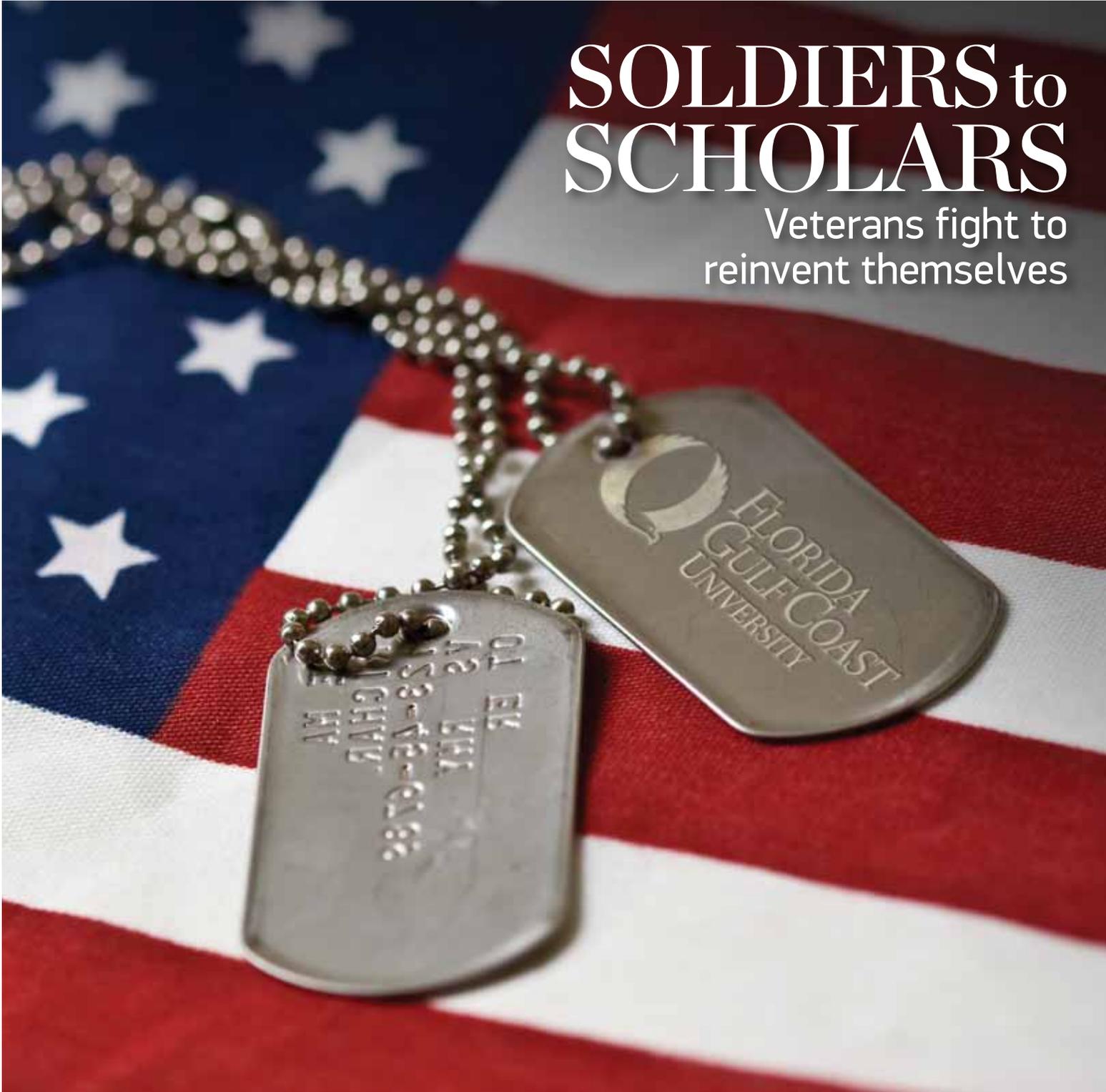


Exploring Florida's quirky election process ▶ Researchers probe impact of oil spills
Alumni entrepreneurs savor success ▶ FGCU sports teams gain momentum

▶ FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

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A photo of runner Chris Rudloff that appeared on page 36 of the Winter edition of Pinnacle was missing a credit. It was taken by Ralphoto.

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Access the current issue of Pinnacle magazine.

The President says:
Learn what President Wilson G. Bradshaw has on his mind.



Photo galleries:
See pictures from recent FGCU events.

Roll 'em:
View videos of events and behind-the-scenes stories about FGCU.

The big story:
Read about the people and programs that make the university so dynamic.

Sports:
Get the latest news on FGCU's sports teams.

Q+A

▶ a conversation with President Wilson G. Bradshaw

“FGCU has been successful in its pursuit of specialized accreditation”

Accredited programs undergo rigorous review.

Q: We hear a lot on campus about accreditation. Can you explain what it means?

A: At its most basic level, accreditation is a form of educational quality control. Accreditation organizations arose as a way to achieve national standards of quality. They thoroughly assess specific programs to ensure that they provide a rigorous education.

While there are many organizations that offer accreditation, those recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) are considered the top tier. The accreditations that Florida Gulf Coast University has earned all come from CHEA-recognized organizations.

Q: How is FGCU doing in terms of accreditation?

A: FGCU has been aggressive and successful in its pursuit of specialized accreditations. The Lutgert College of Business, for example, earned its accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) in less time than any other college the association has ever reviewed. The U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering also achieved accreditation in a very short time. The College of Education recently earned accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), an organization that conducts extremely rigorous reviews. We are now in the process of seeking accreditation for the Bower School of Music.

The university as a whole is accredited



through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

We are also doing well in achieving accreditation for individual degree programs, such as counseling, nursing, athletic training, civil engineering and other specific subjects. Not all programs have an accreditation opportunity, but we are committed to obtaining accreditation for all those for which one is offered.

Q: Why is accreditation important?

A: Accreditation by a CHEA-recognized organization ensures that graduates in those programs have received an education that meets the rigorous standards set by accreditation agencies. Other institutions recognize that a

ACCREDITED COLLEGES

- ▶ College of Education
- ▶ Lutgert College of Business
- ▶ U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering

ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Bioengineering
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Environmental Engineering
- ▶ Master of Public Administration
- ▶ Master of Science in Nursing Anesthesia
- ▶ Master of Science in Occupational Therapy
- ▶ Doctor of Physical Therapy
- ▶ Master of Arts and Master of Education in Counseling (concentrations in mental health and school counseling)
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- ▶ Master of Science in Nursing
- ▶ Bachelor in Social Work
- ▶ Master in Social Work
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Clinical Laboratory Science
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Professional Golf Management
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training
- ▶ Bachelor of Science in Resort and Hospitality Management

** FGCU continues to seek accreditation for all programs and colleges for which there are such designations.*

Q&A: PRESIDENT WILSON G. BRADSHAW

(continued from previous page)

student coming from an accredited program possesses a solid foundation in that discipline. Graduates in some disciplines are required to take and pass an exam before they are allowed to practice professionally. In most cases, only graduates from accredited colleges and universities are allowed to sit for those exams.

Q: What standards are measured in the process?

A: It begins with an intensive process of self-evaluation, in which the institution or program assesses its strengths and identifies and corrects its weaknesses. Among the standards that we look at are graduation rates, licensure rates, equipment, the scope of the curriculum. It's not just a snapshot in time; it's a

continuous review of the program. There's a site visit by an accreditation team, followed by a review and decision by the accrediting agency. The status must be reaffirmed every five or 10 years.

Q: Is it worth all the effort?

A: Absolutely. It's a valuable process that measures what students are achieving. It's an important tool for assessing academic quality, part of our continuing effort to improve what we do. And it's a valuable tool for prospective students who are looking to obtain the best education possible.

FGCU is committed to achieving the highest levels of quality and to continuously raising the bar; accreditation is an important indicator for achieving excellence. ■

“ FGCU is committed to achieving the highest levels of quality and to continuously raising the bar; accreditation is an important indicator for achieving excellence. ”

— Wilson G. Bradshaw Ph.D.,
President, Florida Gulf Coast University

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All charged up and ready to roll

WITH ITS OVERCROWDED CLASSES, SPLIT sessions and obsession with all things athletic, high school wasn't a time I recall with much nostalgia. Still, I felt an unfamiliar stirring last month when I clambered behind the wheel of a solar go-kart and tooted around the parking lot next to Holmes Hall.

My 5-minute test drive whetted my appetite for a full-fledged immersion in building and racing a vehicle just like the sleek red kart with a trio of solar panels that I drove. I envy the students at six Southwest Florida high schools who are busily constructing and testing their solar go-karts in preparation for the High School Solar Challenge, which will take place on the FGCU campus on Saturday, April 6.

The first-ever event is sponsored by the FGCU Renewable Energy Institute, the STEM Team of Southwest Florida and the FGCU Whitaker Center. Professor Joseph Simmons, who holds the Backe Chair in Renewable Energy and leads the energy institute, plans to involve additional schools each year, meaning more and more high school students will have the opportunity to take part and, hence, get a solar-charged, hands-on opportunity to explore the vital STEM disciplines – science, technology, engineering and math.

It's just one of the many ways in which the university has come to benefit students younger than the 13,000-plus enrolled here. When FGCU was established, it was a given that college-age students – and adults looking to enhance their educations – would directly benefit from having a local university. But it's turned out that FGCU has come to play an important role in whetting the intellectual appetites of many young people whose exposure to the university's faculty, students and programs may well awaken their potential and put

them on the course to a college education and all the opportunities it brings.

Consider just a few of the other programs that do this:

■ Bower School of Music students who teach at-risk preschoolers in Immokalee how to play the violin.

■ The Panther Posse, which teaches hundreds of fifth-graders every semester about the importance of panthers and the environment.

■ The multi-disciplinary team of professors and students who sponsor Girls in Engineering, Math and Science (GEMS) programs, immersing middle-school girls in subjects that were once considered the sole domain of boys.

■ The annual FGCU Invitational Mathematics Competition, which attracted teams from 56 middle and high schools in 2012.

■ CEO Academy, a weeklong camp at FGCU run by the Lutgert College of Business and Junior Achievement in which high school students learn what it takes to be a successful business owner.

These are but a few of the programs that help generate excitement about learning from a young age. The upcoming go-kart races are sure to set the pace for even more such programs for children and those of us who are well past those formative years but can still get charged up about learning. I hope to see you at the races on April 6.



Karen Feldman
KAREN FELDMAN
Editor
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UPFRONT

[COMMUNITY]

Soup's on

Annual Empty Bowls event helps fill food pantry shelves.

IT WAS OBVIOUS AT FIRST SNIFF THAT THE ARTISTRY UNDER WAY IN THE FGCU ARTS COMPLEX courtyard involved the palate, not the palette. In place of the musty scents of paint and clay were the tempting aromas of soups such as bison chili, vegan spicy black bean, beef and butternut squash, all bubbling away in large pots as hungry patrons lined up for the sixth annual Empty Bowls Soup Lunch.

The pre-Christmas event featured 11 varieties of soup provided by area restaurants as well as FGCU's Science of Cooking class served in bowls created by students and professors in the FGCU Art Program.

The event raised \$5,078, every cent of which goes to Interfaith Charities of South Lee in Estero for its community food pantry, according to Patricia Fay, an FGCU art professor whose Ceramics I class crafted the 360 bowls offered at this year's fundraiser.

For a \$15 donation, visitors pick out the bowls they like best and fill them with the soup of their choice. After enjoying a soup-kitchen-style meal, they can wash the bowls and take them home.

Also on sale were hand-crafted items from members of the United Arts Council of Collier County. Sales from the 12th annual event go to the council's art education program in Immokalee.

"This is my favorite event of the year,"



Above: Senior Whitney Blair, left, and sophomore Leslie Nova help distribute handmade bowls.

Left: Students ladle out soup.



said Lindsey Touchette, FGCU's director of Alumni Relations. "I do my Christmas shopping here."

In addition to the donation she made for her lunch bowl and soup, she purchased a vase, a teapot and other hand-crafted items for those on her gift list.

"This is a testament to offering what you have to offer," Fay told the crowd. "The restaurants make the soup. The artists make the bowls. And the baker makes bread then all of it comes together here."

Junior Ashley Eastmann, an art major, helped out by glazing some of the bowls.

On the day of the event, she ladled Outback Steakhouse's creamy potato soup from a large pot.

Her participation would be credited toward the community service hours all students are required to complete. She found this project particularly rewarding, having visited the charity and its food pantry.

"We can see how we're helping," she said. "You know where your service is going."

— Karen Feldman

“Most of us will look back at this as one of the most important things we’ve done. It was really hard completing a 100-mile day. People got injured or sick, and the next day we had to do another 100 miles.”

- SEAN KELLY,
HONORS PROGRAM DIRECTOR

[COLLECTIVE WE]

Trails for Tails

Honors students and faculty run 600 miles to raise \$13,000 for panthers.

“OH, 6:30 IN THE MORNING AND MY ONLY GOAL IS TO not fall into the water this morning. Seven-Mile Bridge. The distance isn’t scary. It’s the morning drivers and the black water that we’re running over. As the sun comes up and the miles roll by, my stomach begins to settle. Key West is in our plans today, and I’m excited for the next 40 miles that lie ahead.”

Gretchen MacMillan’s blog post highlighted some of the perils that FGCU honors students and faculty faced in December as they ran from campus to Key West and back to raise awareness and money for Florida panther conservation. There also were alligators, road kill and injuries to dodge during the event they called Trails for Tails.

A junior nursing major from Ocala who runs on the university’s cross-country team, MacMillan joined nine other competitive and novice runners in the weeklong, 600-mile relay through panther habitat. They raised close to \$13,000 for The Conservation Fund, a nonprofit that supports conservation efforts around the country.

Runners tag-teamed each day, jogging a few miles at a time then resting in a van before their turn came up again. Other volunteers on the trip watched for traffic hazards, snapped photos and updated the group’s blog (see trailsfortails.blogspot.com).

Freshman biology major Santiago Yori of Cape Coral said the experience was more rewarding and productive than much of the community service he had done before.



Above: Starting out on campus

Left: Day 6, in the Everglades

“This sounded like something that one could really grow from as a person, as well as an opportunity to make new friends and have a new story to tell,” he said. “It was honestly the highlight of my winter break.”

The marathon-with-a-mission was a life-changing experience, said Honors Program Director Sean Kelly, who lost a toenail while running with MacMillan over the Keys’ notorious 7-mile span. Mornings were humid, afternoons blazing hot and nights exhausting, he wrote on the team blog.

“Most of us will look back at this as one of the most important things we’ve done,” Kelly said. “It was



really hard completing a 100-mile day. People got injured or sick, and the next day we had to do another 100 miles.”

Besides their physical limits, students learned about online fundraising, social media and marketing to sponsors. Their eyes also were opened to the impact of humans on wildlife along U.S. 1 and other busy roads; they spotted an injured blue heron struggling on a roadside and countless dead animals.

“Most of us walked away pretty committed conservationists,” Kelly said.

– Drew Sterwald



UPFRONT

▶ "short shorts"

[A-VERSE]

KEVIN PIERCE is host and producer of "The Florida Environment" on WGCU-FM and other Florida public radio stations. He lives in Fort Myers.



10K RUN

NEWS ITEM — Florida Gov. Rick Scott wants state universities to develop degrees in certain subjects that would cost \$10,000 or less.

*In future college bags of tricks,
Beyond ten-grand degree,
Along with four years done prix fixe,
Comes buy one get one free.*

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

NEWS ITEM — Online classes are gaining attention and popularity. Even students who live on campus are now taking them.

*If 80 percent of success
Is in showing up,
And you're thinking you need to be present
In order to win,
Don't ever let lack of proximity
Hold you up;
The 20 percent that remains
Comes from logging in.*

SOUTHERN COMFORTS

NEWS ITEM — A new residence hall at FGCU features amenities including massage chairs and laundry facilities that text you when your clothes are ready.

*A houseguest's welcome must convey
This convoluted weave:
We hope that you enjoy your stay,
Yet trust that you'll soon leave. ■*

[IN THE NEWS]

Advocacy campaign aims to strengthen FGCU's voice

EAGLE ADVOCACY IS A NEW FGCU PROGRAM DESIGNED TO ENSURE that decision makers understand

Florida Gulf Coast University's legislative agenda and the importance of funding to the institution's continued success.

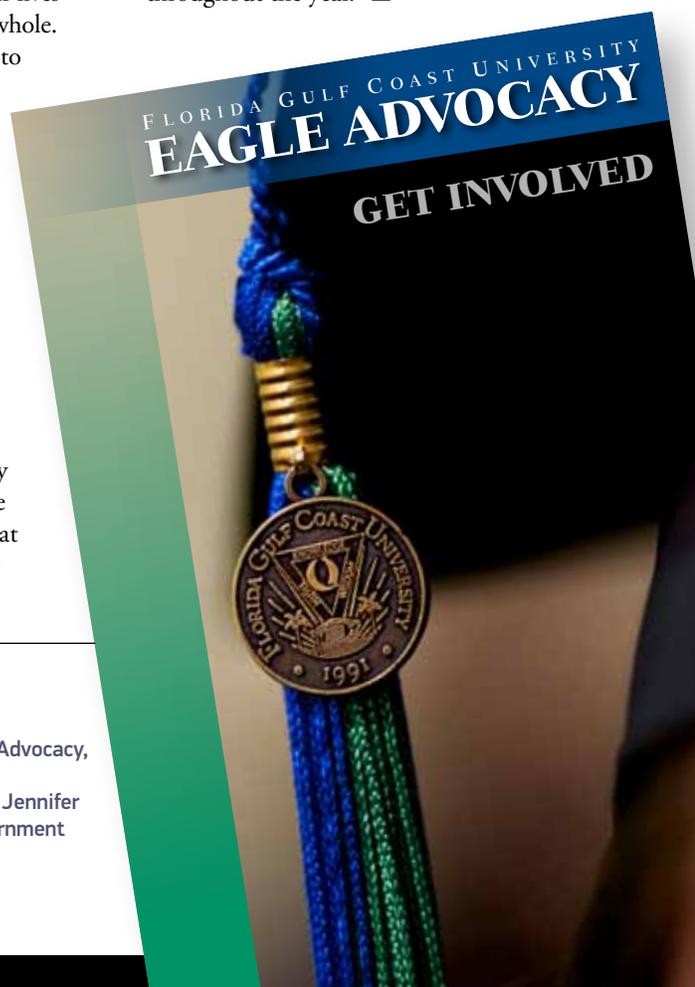
The program is designed to bring together individuals to advocate on behalf of FGCU, educating lawmakers and other leaders about the impact and relevance of the university to their lives and that of the community as a whole.

Membership is free and open to anyone interested in helping convey that message to those in positions to shape the university's future. Eagle Advocates receive regular updates on FGCU, including proposed legislation and other governmental activities that could potentially impact the university.

"FGCU receives tremendous support in Southwest Florida, and I encourage the community to join me as an Eagle Advocate to help expand and build on that support," says FGCU President

Wilson G. Bradshaw. "Members of this important advocacy organization can help ensure that our FGCU future remains bright."

Larry Hart, Lee County Tax Collector, former chair of the FGCU Board of Trustees and an honorary Eagle Advocate, says, "Your voice can make a difference to our state legislators and other elected members by providing them with valuable information at strategic times during the 60-day legislative session and throughout the year." ■



▶ HOW TO JOIN

To become a member of Eagle Advocacy, sign up at www.ciclt.net.fgcu. For more information, contact Jennifer Goen, FGCU's director of Government Relations, at (239) 590-7410.

[FACES]

Pavel Babaev

Swim team volunteer balances coaching and competing.

PAVEL BABAEV IS TRULY IMMERSSED IN SWIMMING. WHEN HE'S NOT HELPING train FGCU's five-time conference champ swimming and diving team at the pool or in the weight room, he might be working with the Eagles Swim Club recreational swimmers. Or putting summer swim campers through their paces. Or coaching for Swim Florida, a competitive regional team.

That is, when he's not in the pool himself, training for his own next meet.

Babaev practices eight times a week, usually for 1 ½ to 2 hours at a stretch, often with a parachute attached to his torso to increase resistance and thus improve his overall speed. That's on top of 20 or more hours a week he volunteers with FGCU's team, leading strength and conditioning workouts, monitoring heart-rate charts and motivating swimmers.

"I love this sport," says Babaev. "I really like what I'm doing."

FGCU head coach Neal Studd, his trainer and mentor, likes what Babaev is doing, too. The pair met at a state swim meet when Babaev was breaking records at Lehigh Senior High School. Studd recruited Babaev to swim for Florida Atlantic University, where Studd coached at the time. Babaev continued to set records at FAU while earning a bachelor's degree in health administration.

"Pavel is a very promising young coach," Studd says. "He comes in every day at 6 a.m. and is back again at 2 p.m. and works weekends – and he is a volunteer. Now that is passion and commitment. I wish all my athletes had his focus and attention to detail."

All of that intensity and hard work



Pavel Babaev helps train FGCU's swim team, while also working to win a spot on the U.S. National Swim Team.

appear to be paying off.

Babaev won a bronze medal in the 50-yard freestyle at the U.S. Winter National Championships in December in Austin, Texas. He posted the same time in a preliminary heat as Olympian Ryan Lochte, who ended up not competing in the final where Babaev improved on his time. This summer, if he continues to make a splash in qualifying races he could score a spot on the U.S. National Swim Team – after just missing the chance to compete in the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

"This has probably been my best year," says Babaev, who also is working toward personal-training certification.

Most of his 29 years have been spent in clear blue pool water, which fittingly

matches his eyes. Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, he swam by the time he was 3 and topped his age group at 7. His family moved to the United States when Babaev was 12 and eventually settled in Lehigh Acres. His high school career peaked with a state title in the 50-yard freestyle in his senior year.

"Sprinting is my specialty," he says. "I don't breathe at all when I do the 50. You train to be perfect for 20 seconds."

Although he just started swimming competitively again in 2010, he's making up for lost time.

"Third in the country in the 50 is pretty good, but there's always something new to do," he says. "As long as I'm still getting faster, it's silly for me to quit."

– Drew Sterwald

[CAMPUS REPORT]

FGCU names Academic Building 5 after longtime supporter Charlie Edwards

Academic Building 5 at Florida Gulf Coast University became Charles B. Edwards Hall on Dec. 12. The dedication commemorates the countless hours over many years in which Edwards, a Fort Myers attorney, worked to bring a university to Southwest Florida.

After he helped bring a branch campus of the University of South Florida to the area, Edwards continued to push for a full-fledged university for Southwest Florida in the 1970s and 1980s. His involvement led to his appointment to the state Board of Regents from 1987 to 1993, and he served as its chair from 1989 to 1991. He went on to help create the FGCU Foundation for private fundraising.

"He took the region's dream and turned it into reality," said Florida Gulf Coast University President Wilson G. Bradshaw at the dedication. "His efforts were instrumental in bringing to life our 10th state university, FGCU."

Edwards is proud of what the university has become and the part he played in bringing that about but says it also involved a great many other people.

"Never has an area and its people come together more than Southwest Florida did to bring about FGCU," he said. ■



Charlie Edwards and his family at the naming of the building.

New dean seeks to expand U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering

RICHARD BEHR ARRIVED AT FLORIDA GULF Coast University last fall, having built a firm foundation in his chosen field.

The new dean of the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering grew up in New York City, conducted research in New Zealand and worked in the Arctic, Texas, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire and Missouri.

As the second dean of FGCU's young U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering, he plans to build on the sound structure created by founding Dean Susan Blanchard, who retired last year.

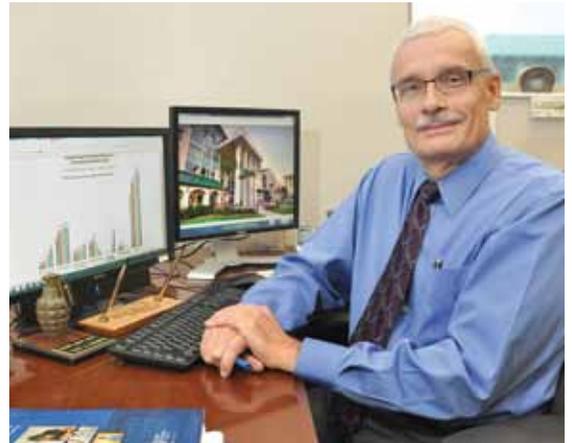
Coming from the long-established program at Penn State, Behr was attracted to the FGCU post in large part because it's so new.

"I liked the idea of a young university and a very young college," he says. "It's a unique opportunity to make a big difference."

The fact that it was in a prime subtropical location, where he can ride his bicycle, swim, walk and play golf year round, was a bonus.

Behr grew up in Bayside, Queens, the son of a police officer who taught his children to turn off lights and conserve water long before conservation became fashionable.

He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering from Carnegie Mellon University and a doctoral degree in the same field from Texas Tech. It was also at Texas Tech that he played a key role in developing an



Richard Behr

earth-sheltered housing research program.

As a Fulbright Scholar, he conducted research at the University of Auckland in New Zealand, exploring the use of high-strength concrete.

His work as a senior research engineer for Atlantic Richfield Corp. took him to the Arctic, where he led efforts to develop ice load structural design criteria for offshore arctic drilling platforms.

He subsequently served as head of Penn State's architectural engineering department for a decade, then as director of the Penn State Smart Spaces Center for successful aging in place. He also is a national authority on building enclosures and architectural glazing systems that resist severe windstorms, earthquakes and environmental weathering effects.

He hopes to expand undergraduate offerings and research in the college, launch a graduate program and "build a nice big endowment that will be a perpetual source of resources," he says.

— Karen Feldman

“ He (Charlie Edwards) took the region’s dream and turned it into reality. His efforts were instrumental in bringing to life our 10th state university, FGCU.”

– WILSON G. BRADSHAW,
PRESIDENT, FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

[WHERE ARE THEY NOW?]

Brett Diamond

Entrepreneur creates shared workspace to spark collaboration.

BRETT DIAMOND WANTED TO MAKE THE BUSINESS WORLD MORE LIKE HIS classes at Florida Gulf Coast University. At school, Diamond completed assignments in groups. He found it odd that as soon as you graduate you are split off into cubicles or closed off in private offices. He figured if group settings work for academia, then the same open spaces would work for business endeavors. Hence the birth of Venture X.

in Mercato in North Naples, Venture X allows small businesses, startups and freelancers to work in a shared space, promoting collaboration and creativity.

The progressive space feels like an urban loft. Just by walking in the door you enhance your social circle. Ideas spark like you’re sitting next to light bulbs. Diamond describes the concept, saying, “You’re working for yourself, not by yourself.”

Venture X opened in October. By mid-January, Diamond had 29 members. There

are conference rooms and filing cabinets, a coffee bar and a creative white board, where members write down services they may need help with or skills they have to offer.

Before launching his venture, Diamond spent the summer in New York studying a popular mixed-space, General Assembly on Broadway. “Sitting elbow-to-elbow with 150 people, you think you’re not going to like it,” he says. “But when you go there and experience it, you see

it makes you want to work harder. You want to succeed like some guy over there. It’s like going to a gym versus working out at home.”

Venture X gives those looking to start their own business a space to work in. It gives freelancers a more professional place to meet their clients than Starbucks. It gives web designers a chance to work beside film producers, innovators and patent lawyers.

“When I see the connections made, it makes me happy,” Diamond says. “When I see two companies collaborating on something together, that tells me, ‘This is working. Don’t stop.’”

– Athena Ponusis



Brett Diamond believes in teamwork.

“At the library, we work out in the open and that open area gives off an energy. You’re inspired by everybody else around you,” says Diamond, a 2012 graduate in business management. “Wouldn’t you want to be in an environment where you can see the inspiration rather than in an office where a shut door blocks off the inspiration? You’re not doing yourself a favor by closing everybody else out.”

Venture X lends such stimulus. Diamond cofounded this co-working facility with his father, David Diamond, and his father’s business partner, John DeAngelis. Located

[BY THE NUMBERS]

Sent items

If you think your inboxes are overloaded, consider this: @fgcu.edu accounts receive an average of 216,197 e-mails and spam a week, or about 30,885 a day, according to statistics provided by Mary Banks, assistant vice president for Business Technology Services. Here are some other interesting numbers she compiled for Pinnacle – and e-mailed to us, of course.

26,345

Number of active student EagleMail accounts. If an account remains inactive for three semesters, it is deleted.

6

Number of months users can maintain the same password.

However, Banks recommends changing it every 90 days. “A longer password is better than a short password, and a password phrase is easier to remember than random passwords,” she says.

26,982

Average number of e-mails sent from university accounts to external sources in a week. The daily average is 3,854.

60

Percentage of e-mails sent to FGCU accounts that are blocked by the system’s initial spam filter. An average of 86,712 e-mails are allowed through in a week – 12,287 per day – which includes legitimate messages and e-mails tagged as potential spam or quarantined.



2,405

Number of departmental and individual staff and faculty e-mail accounts.

[HOT TOPIC]

Famed poet delivers environmental message on Sanibel

Natural world's condition evokes sadness as well as joy.

ENVIRONMENTAL POET MARY OLIVER WAS CLEARLY DELIGHTED TO STAND BEFORE a capacity crowd of like-minded people – believers in sustainability and nature's power – in a Sanibel church.

"I still get practically ecstatic going out in nature," said Oliver, who has won a Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. "But there is sorrow attached now because of what we've done to it. Everybody here could go back to a place now that they went to as a child, and it's not that place."

Oliver was the featured speaker at the 2013 Rachel Carson Distinguished Lecture, which took place in February at Sanibel's St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church. The annual event is sponsored by FGCU's Center for Environmental and Sustainability Education as a way to engage the public in discussions on sustainability, ethics, democracy and literature.

"The wonder and majesty of nature is in the spirit of Mary Oliver's poetry," said Mary Walch, assistant professor in the Department of Communication and Philosophy and a senior faculty associate at the center.

"The center and its work have been highly interdisciplinary," Walch said. "We have hard science but it also ties into art. The lecture series is named for Rachel Carson, who – even though she was a trained scientist – had a style of writing that was literary, beautiful and engaging, and therefore more persuasive." Like Oliver's, she said.

The audience was clearly engaged, applauding, maintaining a reflective silence or uttering a soft "ahh" as Oliver ended each piece. As she read her famed poem, "Wild



Mary Oliver urges a capacity crowd in Sanibel to celebrate and treasure nature.

Geese," fan Ginny Amsler of Useppa Island tapped the knee of the person next to her and said, "Oh, this is good."

"Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting – over and over announcing your place in the family of things."

"People slap me if I don't do that one," the poet said.

Oliver, 77, began articulating her lyrical connection to the natural world as a teenager. Six decades

later, she's renowned for her evocative and precise imagery that scholars and laypeople alike say brings nature into clear focus, transforming the everyday world into a place of magic and discovery.

Even though she lives in Provincetown, Mass., her observations resonate with Southwest Floridians. In "One Hundred White-sided Dolphins on a Summer Day" she says "each one, as God himself, could not appear more acceptable."

Jaye Boswell, who leads dolphin-watching tours on Captiva, nodded in agreement. "The magic of these creatures is so pure. They're what nature is all about."

– Betsy Clayton



“Human trafficking is increasing in Southwest Florida. In the last five years, it has grown exponentially. It’s easy to hide people here,”

– NAIRRUTI JANI, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT FGCU AND DIRECTOR OF THE FILM, “SHADOWS OF SEX TRAFFICKING”

[CUTTING EDGE]

Documentaries bring sex trafficking, gender bias out of the shadows

LURED AWAY FROM HER FAMILY IN SOUTH AMERICA BY THE PROMISE OF A GOOD-PAYING job in the United States, the young girl was smuggled across the border, beaten and drugged into submission and forced by her captors to have sex with countless strangers for months before she was able to find a way out.

“They treat you worse than an animal,” she says through an interpreter. “I can try to not remember. But I can never forget.”

The girl tells her harrowing story, an increasingly common nightmare of shattered dreams and brutal exploitation, in “Shadows of Sex Trafficking,” one of two short documentaries produced and directed by Assistant Professor Nairruti Jani that will be screened on campus in April. “Shadows” will be presented at noon Monday, April 1. “Trapped: Stories from Puppets of Patriarchy,” a film about gender bias and violence against women in South Asia, will be screened at noon Monday, April 8.

Jani, of FGCU’s Division of Social Work, produced “Shadows” as a way to raise awareness of the alarming growth of human trafficking and to warn at-risk girls away from the empty promises of organized criminal networks that prey on innocent and trusting youths.

“Human trafficking is increasing in Southwest Florida. In the last five years, it has grown exponentially. It’s easy to hide people here,” Jani says. “I have recently known a case where a girl in the foster-care system was recruited to traffic more girls into sex servitude. These horrifying stories need to be told to our community.”

Jani filmed interviews with three trafficking victims silhouetted in darkness to protect their identities at WFCU’s Gulf Coast Studios. She has used the film in



Jani

class and is working to circulate copies in South and Central America to warn potential victims and their families. Traffickers often convince eager, naïve girls that they are working on behalf

of family members who will meet them in the States and help them secure jobs.

“Traffickers are getting more smart and finding new ways to do it,” Jani says. “They’re ahead of us. They’re getting difficult to stop.”

Her other documentary explores how male-dominated societies in India and other Asian countries leave many women powerless and vulnerable to prostitution, sex trafficking and HIV exposure. The production involved 10 years of research into the plight of Asian women, who often face gender bias from birth, and dozens of interviews filmed overseas.

“It’s my personal journey in the research,” Jani said. “This film is an inspiring resource for academic learning and human-rights advocacy.”

For details, contact Jani at (239) 590-7828 or njani@fgcu.edu.

– Drew Sterwald

Students turn environmental education into trendy game

Florida Gulf Coast University now boasts a 21st-century-style treasure hunt that’s informative, entertaining and environmentally friendly.

Geocaching, a game that involves finding hidden objects by using GPS coordinates, is on at FGCU. With the proliferation of Global Positioning Systems, which are now available as low-cost phone apps, the pastime has attracted a growing fan base.

A group of students in an Environmental Biology class came up with the project, which resulted in the establishment of eight geocaching sites around campus.

“The point was to raise awareness of the university’s efforts to make it a green campus,” says Alexis Freedman, a junior from Clearwater who carried out the project along with classmates Claire Baldia, Katie Black and Ted Tramonte. “We wanted to show that people are doing more than putting aluminum cans in the recycling bin.”

They came up with 20 ways in which the university was promoting sustainability and selected eight that “we hadn’t known about or we liked a lot,” says Freedman.

Among those were the Food Forest, a student-run edible garden, and the Arts Complex, where the students recycle and reuse many materials that would be considered toxic if they found their way to a landfill.

At each of the eight sites, the students placed a geocache – a plastic container that holds information and a QR code. Geocache enthusiasts hunt for these objects and, upon finding them, can scan the QR code on their phones. That leads them to short informational videos that explain the site’s environmental significance.

Freedman says the project shows that “we’re doing more than the average person does. We’re trying to create a better environment on campus.”

Kathleen Crawford, FGCU coordinator of environmental stewardship and sustainability, says, “It’s really a fun way to have a self-guided tour. It gets people out in nature and looking at things they might not ordinarily see.” ■



IF YOU GO

WHAT: “Shadows of Sex Trafficking”
WHEN: Noon, Monday, April 1

WHAT: “Trapped: Stories from Puppets of Patriarchy”
WHEN: Noon, Monday, April 8

WHERE: Room 112, Edwards Hall, FGCU campus

A room of one's own

Today's residence halls reveal decorating sophistication.

RECLINERS THAT MASSAGE MUSCLES AFTER A LONG DAY OF HUNKERING OVER textbooks. Three-bedroom suites with shared kitchenette, bathroom and living area. Arcade and video game rooms, a movie theater and even a classroom where students can learn without leaving their residence hall. That's all part of the premium package that is Osprey Hall.

The latest addition to South Village, Osprey quickly filled up with its first 533 residents last fall. The hall is part of the First Year Residence Experience, a program designed to help freshmen transition seamlessly from home to college.

One of those freshmen is Sierra Coffers, an elementary education major from Naples, who showed Pinnacle how today's college student makes a cookie-cutter room that's 9-feet-7-inches by 12-feet-10-inches feel like home.

"I really like it," she says of the accommodations. "I tell everyone to move here. It's not that big, but I don't feel crowded. I have my own room, my own space."

"Weird ... abstract ... modern" is how Coffers describes her decorating motif.

1 RED-LETTER DATES: Counting down the days to final exams last December.

2 STAYING HEALTHY: A list of "Foods That Can Provoke Headache" reminds Coffers to make eating choices that don't compound the stress of college.

3 ARTSY TOUCH: A wall piece from World Market offers words to live by: "Dance Like No One is Watching."

4 PATCHWORK PIZZAZZ: The Anthropologie bedspread was her first purchase and the inspiration for other color choices. "Nothing quite matches exactly," Coffers says, but the pillows from World Market fit right in.

5 ROOM WITH A VIEW: World Market curtains and strings of blue and green disks obscure a view of the lawn outside Osprey Hall.

6 HOT SEAT: A hanging rattan chair from Pier One Imports is a popular perch for visitors. "Everyone who comes in wants to sit in it," Coffers says. "Everyone loves it."

7 MESSAGE ME: Dry-erase boards are de rigueur for residence hall rooms. Coffers' bedroom opens onto the kitchen and living area she shares with two roommates.

8 GREEK TO ME: A bulletin board shows her sorority affiliation, Zeta Tau Alpha. Motto: "Seek the noblest."

9 FREEZE FRAME: A framed picture of Coffers and a roommate (even though it says "cousins").

10 CONSTANT COMPANION: Coffers works on her MacBook Pro more than her desktop computer. "I take it with me everywhere pretty much."

11 KIND OF BLUE: A teal rag-style rug from Target helps protect bare feet from cold floors in the morning.

12 IT'S A WASH: A rattan hamper from World Market. Osprey's high-tech laundry facilities alert students by text when their dryer cycle is done. ■



Photo by Brian Tietz



The HIJAB Challenge

Students
face
up to
misconceptions
about
Muslims.

By KALHAN FOLEY ROSENBLATT

Photos by ED CLEMENT



“**T**

HAT'S

the problem with journalism. You've got to keep the Muslims happy," a nail technician at Gulf Coast Town Center said to me.

We had been discussing my major – journalism – when her remark cut the conversation short. It also sparked my determination to bring the Hijab Challenge to Florida Gulf Coast University.

The Hijab Challenge encourages U.S. women to experience Islamic culture by wearing a traditional scarf for one day to one week. Muslim women wear these headscarves to cover their hair and necks when in the presence of most males to whom they are not related.

There are many misconceptions in the United States about Muslims and their culture. In a country that is supposed to be built on freedom from religious

oppression, Muslim women in particular tend to feel the brunt of discrimination. Displays of modesty and devotion to principle are often mistaken for cultural oppression or extremism.

According to the Muslim Women's League, the proper term for the headscarf is hijab. It can be tied in a variety of ways, depending upon the woman and her interpretation of modesty as described in the Quran, the central religious text of Islam.

I chose to tie my scarf in a waterfall style that covered my hair and neck. During the week of the experiment, I alternated between pink and purple hijabs. Before I knew it, I began accessorizing.

I found myself taking great pride in the way I looked. My hair, neck and chest (all things I usually left exposed) disappeared beneath the folds of my scarf and I began to appreciate the simplicity of leaving only my face visible. My conservative clothing and hijab were the polar opposite of my typical style. To my shock, I felt empowered.

Tiara Brown, an FGCU junior who also took part in the experiment, experienced similar feelings of empowerment.

"So many people told me how beautiful I looked," Brown said. "But I *felt* more beautiful, which I didn't expect."

As the week progressed, Brown and I, though acting individually, shared many experiences while wearing the hijab.

On the first day of the experiment, I walked to a lecture on campus and saw a student with whom I had attended high school. We are still friends and talk frequently. As I passed him in the hall, we locked eyes. At first I felt confident he would walk up to me to say hello. But as we made eye contact, his face showed no recognition of who I was, and his eyes snaked away from mine as he walked by.

I couldn't believe he didn't recognize my face. After all, it was the only thing exposed.

Brown had a similar experience on her second day. FGCU junior Sam Robinson looked her in the eyes, and although they had met in the same spot countless times, Robinson did not recognize her.

"I asked [Robinson] why she didn't recognize me," Brown said. "She just looked at me with a very serious look but also with a sheepish smile and said, 'Racism. When you were walking by, I saw your headgear and didn't see anything else...that's who you were.'

Previous page: Tiara Brown, left, and Kalhan Foley Rosenblatt as they appeared in their hijabs.

Right: Brown and Rosenblatt in their typical attire.



That was your identity.’ When I walked up to her and she recognized me, I had a face. And only then did I become a person.”

Brown and I shared a number of hijab moments. People were often more formal and respectful when responding to a question or serving us. We were frequently referred to as “ma’am” instead of “miss” or “guys.” In some instances, we noticed people physically distancing themselves from us as we moved closer.

The most common reaction, however, was staring.

Everybody stared.

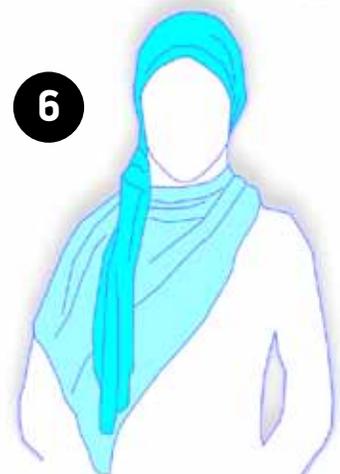
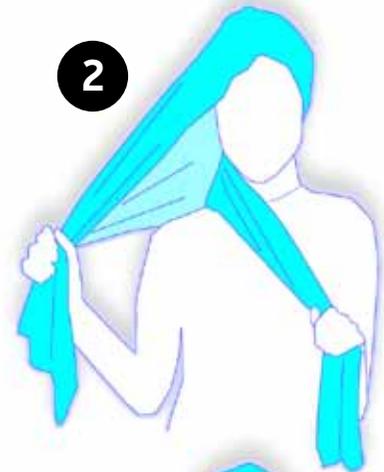
Some people looked at us and smiled. Others looked at us straight faced long past the socially acceptable passing glance. A few even craned their necks as we walked by.

As the experiences added up, Brown and I agreed on the one unwavering feeling we both shared: pride. With hijabs on, we felt like powerful, strong women. It was almost a divine feeling; one that has to be experienced to be fully comprehended.

With nothing but our faces and hands exposed, we had to rely on our natural beauty and intellect to shape how we presented ourselves. Showing nothing but my face, I felt sexier than if I was wearing a tank top and high heels. A common misconception in America is that the hijab is a symbol of oppression, when in reality Muslim women consider it an expression of modesty.

According to the Muslim Women’s League website: “If you ask [Muslim women] if they are oppressed, they will tell you no, they feel protected and valued by covering themselves

TYING A HIJAB 101



and that Western women who uncover themselves and are sex objects are oppressed.”

The most nerve-racking experience occurred when I met 12 friends for lunch. I hadn't told them about the experiment. Clad in my hijab, I walked boldly up to the table and waited for the barrage of comments.

The first 10 minutes were a tidal wave of teasing.

The comments ranged from shouts of “Allah Akbar!” (“God is great”) to “Hey, take off your Halloween costume!” My nerves burned quietly in my chest as the harassment continued.

Finally, once all the jokes and commentary had subsided, the real questions began.

“So why do Muslim women wear these things? Do they have

to, or is it their choice?” asked Sean Donnelly, an Estero High alumnus who attends FGCU.

The hijab opened up a dialogue among my peers not only about Muslim women but also about why it is important to walk a mile in another person's shoes.

While this encounter with my friends was one of the hardest moments of the challenge, I realized it had made the biggest impact. It had

given 12 people the tools to be more open-minded, allaying misconceptions they had previously held.

On the final day of the experiment, Brown and I bought coffee at the Southwest Florida International Airport Starbucks. Looking at both of us in our hijabs, the barista asked us, “Where are you girls from?”

We glanced at each other.

“We're from here,” Brown said.

“You're Americans?” the barista asked, confused. “That's weird.”

It was a bittersweet ending to an experiment that opened many doors and answered many questions.

Ignorance still rages in this country. That is why the Hijab Challenge is so important. The only way to cure ignorance is to

learn, and learning sometimes requires being thrust into new and sometimes frightening situations. While this experiment teaches innumerable lessons about the Muslim culture, it is even more a journey of immense self-discovery. ■

— *Kalhan Foley Rosenblatt is an FGCU junior from Weston, Fla., who is majoring in journalism.*

* This article was reprinted from *FGCU's Eagle News*.

EDITOR'S NOTE

What would possess a young Jewish woman to don the garb of a Muslim woman?

For Kalhan Foley Rosenblatt, it was an attempt to see the world through the lens of another culture.

“I'm a big supporter of Israel but I'm an even bigger supporter of peace and understanding,” says Rosenblatt, who wore the traditional Muslim headscarf, the hijab, for four days last October. Her friend, Tiara Brown, of New Port Richey, joined her in the experiment for 2 ½ days.

The goal of the project, known as the Hijab Challenge, is to give non-Muslim women the opportunity to experience the world as Muslim women do.

Dressed in their hijabs, the FGCU juniors visited Target and Marshall's in Gulf Coast Town Center, strolled the halls of Southwest Florida International Airport, attended classes and dined out with friends. Brown led a campus tour.

As Rosenblatt recounts, there was plenty of material for a story as people peppered them with questions, teasing and, in some cases, taunts.

Brown found that generally honors and graduate students tended to be more supportive than younger students. Both women discovered that it was easier talking to strangers than friends about their outfits and motivations.

Two months later, friends were still commenting about it in person and on Facebook.

Looking back, both women view it as a valuable experiment, one that changed their perspectives and those of many with whom they came in contact.

— *Karen Feldman*

According to the Muslim Women's League website: “If you ask [Muslim women] if they are oppressed, they will tell you no, they feel protected and valued by covering themselves and that Western women who uncover themselves and are sex objects are oppressed.”

From SOLDIER to STUDENT

Adjusting to college life can be an uphill battle, but more veterans are using GI Bill benefits.

At 27, Thea Windsor often is the oldest student in her classes at Florida Gulf Coast University. Most of the time, she also is the only mother. Her two children are in day care when she's in class.

On top of all that “weirdness,” as she calls it, Windsor usually is the only military veteran in her classes. She served in the Army during the first wave of troops into Afghanistan in 2004.

“I spent my 21st birthday on the side of a mountain pulling guard duty,” she says. “I was fighting and trying to stay alive. I went to war, and now I have to live with it my entire life. It’s hard making people understand.”

By DREW STERWALD

Photos by BRIAN TIETZ



T'S NO WONDER

veterans like Windsor have a tough time relating to younger classmates and transitioning from soldier to student. They've taken different paths to college than the teenagers and twentysomethings they sit next to in most of their classes. They're not just older; they have experiences their fresh-from-high-school classmates cannot even imagine.

Veterans face unique obstacles on the road to graduation: schedules that might juggle work, school and family; the bureaucratic Veterans Administration maze they must navigate to secure their education benefits; the hurdle of translating skills they learned in the field to skills useful in the classroom and workplace; and, for some, an emotional minefield of combat memories.

"You have to push yourself," says Windsor, a junior majoring in psychology who experienced combat in Afghanistan. "It takes positive thinking. I constantly tell myself I am awesome and amazing. Otherwise, I'd sink into a hole."

A new generation of veterans like Windsor has entered college campuses like a troop surge. Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill went into effect three years ago, universities have nearly doubled their enrollment of student veterans, according to the American Council on Education (ACE), the nation's largest higher-education association. The ACE's survey last year of nearly 700 accredited degree-granting institutions found an average enrollment of 370 veterans – more than twice the average of 2009. Last fall, more than 480,000

students enrolled in post-secondary education under the GI Bill.

"Institutions have not faced such a significant influx of veteran students on campus since World War II," the council wrote in its report.

A PARALLEL BUT SMALLER

wave has struck Florida Gulf Coast University. Veteran enrollment rose almost 68 percent from Fall 2009 to Spring 2013, when 235 veterans were registered – still well below the national average.

Like other universities, FGCU is grappling with how best to serve those who served. Some state campuses, such as the University of Central Florida and the University of North Florida, have established one-stop service centers where veterans get help accessing academic resources or just decompress with peers. Others are developing orientation programs geared toward veterans or sensitivity training for faculty and staff. Nearly two-thirds of the four-year universities in the ACE survey planned to budget more to bolster veterans' services and programs over the next five years.

At FGCU, the Office of the Registrar has a staff member designated to certify Veterans Administration benefits and help veterans access resources they need. A registered student organization, Students Who Served, connects veterans with each other, spreads awareness about VA benefits and works with university administration to bring attention to veterans' rights and issues.

"Our mission is to provide help to veterans transitioning from warrior to student and student to employee – navigating the VA system, filling out

paperwork, helping them understand good study habits," says Tim Tyler, 33, a Navy veteran, education major and president of Students Who Served. "We want to make sure they finish with a high GPA, find employers, translate what they did in the service to a resume, do cover letters. It's 'how to be a civilian.'"

Establishing a campus veterans' center – the No. 1 priority of Students Who Served – would provide a central location for such services as well as a place for veterans to connect with others who have similar backgrounds. For those who experience post-traumatic stress, it also could serve as an oasis when anxiety strikes.

"If we had a veterans' center, people would be like, 'Hey, this school really takes care of vets,'" says Aaron Schutz, 32, a Navy veteran majoring in psychology. "It could bring more veterans and money to the school."

Meeting the needs of a small but growing slice of the student population will continue to challenge the university to find space and funding to expand services. Veterans now comprise less than 2 percent of FGCU's enrollment but are part of the diverse campus mosaic the university strives to foster.

"We try to support diversity on all levels – veterans are a piece of that," says Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ron Toll. "Part of this is the university becoming better equipped, better educated, and as a result more receptive. We are trying to see if we can find office space for veterans as a group – we don't have a heck of a lot of space available. Their needs are somewhat

Previous page: Thea Windsor

Right: Tim Tyler



different from a standard RSO. Not to take anything away from other student groups, but the things that brought these men and women together are more powerful than a group of students coming together for a common interest.”

Universities with higher proportions of veterans may be able to offer more targeted programs or facilities, says Vice President for Student Affairs Mike Rollo, but FGCU strives to ensure that services such as academic advising, counseling and career development are geared toward veterans as well as traditional students.

“Here, the numbers just don’t drive that kind of thing,” he says. “We try to make all those offices sensitive to veterans’ needs. We need to be able to respond to them. It really is a challenge. Groups like Students Who Served are real key parts to connecting them to the university.”

A COLLEGE CAMPUS CAN SEEM

like a daunting environment for someone transitioning from wearing a helmet to wearing a hoodie. Accustomed to structured days, institutionalized discipline and following orders, veterans can feel at sea in a world where they are left to chart their own course. Teamwork and esprit de corps are deeply ingrained from basic training on, so flying solo can take some getting used to.

With facial piercings and inked arms, Schutz doesn’t look that different from students a decade younger. But he feels different.

“Life on campus is so different from the military,” says Schutz, who served as a hospital corpsman at the Naval Air Station in Key West until 2004.

“Time is regimented when you’re on a ship. You don’t have time off. College kids are a different animal. It kind of throws you. You don’t have to go to class if you don’t want to.”

The absence of structure and direction can rattle veterans accustomed to discipline and decorum, echoes Windsor.

“As a vet, you need things laid out, you need to be told what to do,” says Windsor, who enlisted when she was 19. “With PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), anything new makes you anxious. Your heart starts beating. You have to override your senses – the anxiety, paranoia, fear.”

Flashbacks, or what she calls split realities, can happen unexpectedly. She has learned to watch for triggers.

“I might be driving somewhere and suddenly will be back driving in Afghanistan,” Windsor says. “I’ll go back to the day when I got hit by an IED.”

Individuals have different experiences in the military, but for a combat-zone veteran a hallway with many doors can seem like an endless corridor with danger lurking behind each entryway. A trash bag left outside a building could be an improvised explosive device (IED). It’s not unusual for veterans to gravitate toward seats near classroom doors thinking they need a quick escape route, or to sit with their backs to walls so they know they’re not exposed.

This kind of thinking might surprise teachers and fellow students. That’s one reason veterans would like them to become better educated, maybe even take some kind of seminar, to improve their understanding of people who served in the military. Veterans say they’re shocked at how little their

classmates know about American war history or even current conflicts. Too often, veterans who identify themselves are asked insensitive questions about their service: “Did you kill anybody?” or “Is it like ‘Call of Duty’”? Or they’re made to feel like outsiders.

“I don’t walk around with a flag that says I HAVE PTSD, but I don’t mind talking about it. I can live with mine,” Windsor says. “There’s a stigma. We’re not crazy. If people aren’t knowledgeable about it, we can’t fix it.”

Some people get it. There was an instructor who noticed Windsor’s behavior changing and her work slipping; she was failing the class, but the instructor gave her an incomplete so she could finish when she was back on track.

Her children keep her motivated through long days of driving to day care, attending classes, working at Publix and training for mud runs and obstacle-course races.

“I’m dedicated to bettering myself now,” she says.

But many veterans experience starts and stops on the way to earning a diploma. The current GI Bill – formally the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 – pays tuition, a monthly housing allowance and a stipend for books and supplies for up to 36 months. If a student veteran takes a break, benefits are put on hold; they have 15 years to use their allotment.

The federal government has just begun tracking their retention and graduation rates, but staying in school remains a challenge for many veterans – and advocates question the feasibility

Right: Aaron Shutz

Next page: Jason Holman



of completing a degree program in 36 months. The National Center for Education Statistics' latest data shows 52 months is the median time it takes today for a full-time student to earn a bachelor's degree.

"This isn't Biff and Betty going off to college and earning a degree in four years," says Chris Wright-Isak, the Students Who Served faculty advisor. "Even civilians now take six years on average to complete a degree. Transforming their state of life is not a straight path for veterans."

WRIGHT-ISAK, AN ASSISTANT professor of marketing in the Lutgert College of Business, is a strong advocate for student veterans. Her family tree is flush with military men: Her father was part of the D-Day invasion in World War II; two brothers served in Vietnam; her son has been in the Navy 12 years. When she was studying for her doctorate in sociology at the University of Chicago, she did her research under Morris Janowitz, a pioneer in the field of military sociology. She has lectured frequently on changing generations of warriors at the U.S. Army War College.

"The military prepares them to be among our best citizens," Wright-Isak says of those who serve. "As educators we need to ensure that they get the education to become great contributors to society and develop skills they can use in the civilian world."

Jason Holman, 33, is on the way to fulfilling that potential though it has been an uphill battle for the Army veteran, who served in the infantry in Iraq in 2003-04. He nearly gave up enrolling when he encountered a



wall of red tape while trying to transfer credits from another school to FGCU. He withdrew from classes a couple of times, but instructors were supportive and Holman soldiered on, earning his bachelor's degree in criminal justice in Fall 2012.

"I didn't want to quit and become a statistic," Holman says. "So many people fall through the cracks. I'd gone so far. To quit would have been stupid. College is a gate. If you don't go through it you won't get farther in life."

Jobless numbers bear that out. Iraq- and Afghanistan-era veterans with a high school degree had a 16.4 percent unemployment rate in 2011, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. With

an undergraduate degree or higher, the rate fell to 6.3 percent.

"The hardest part is not being comfortable in the environment," Holman says. "There should be more training for teachers, maybe a seminar on what we're seeing as students. They should think of veterans as a resource. We're adults with experiences and knowledge. The university can benefit from our perspective."

The message he would send to other veterans still in the higher-education trenches?

"Don't feel like you don't belong, that you don't fit," he says. "There are plenty of faculty and other people who want you there. People went to bat for me. I'm grateful for them." ■



CAMPUS PAVILION TO HONOR VETERANS

A pavilion honoring military veterans is going up on the Great Lawn.

Student Government earmarked \$226,000 for design and construction of the monument, which is projected to be completed this spring on the green near the Wellness Center. The senate unanimously OK'd an additional \$76,000 in student funds in January; an initial project proposal was approved in March 2012.

"This is something that we hold very close to our organization, and doing it

halfway will not be enough," said Student Government President Peter Cuderman. "We must be very conscientious in the planning stages to make this special."

A committee, including representatives of Student Government and Students Who Served as well as university administration, facilities planning and physical plant, developed the design for the pavilion. A plaque honoring veterans will be affixed to the structure.



FIRST STRIKE



1ST BN-502ND IN



In this aerial photo taken April 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico, an oil slick is seen as the Deepwater Horizon oil rig burns.



Collateral damage

FGCU researchers delve into the
murky mysteries of oil spills

By **KEN SCHEXNAYDER**

[Macondo, The Gulf of Mexico]

At approximately 10 p.m. on April 20, 2010, seawater erupted onto the submersible offshore oil rig, Deepwater Horizon – a geyser that shot 240 feet into the air. Within minutes, the water transitioned to a sludge of mud, gas and water. By 11 p.m., the sludge had morphed into pure gas and exploded. Two days later, with the fire continuing to rage out of control, the rig sank. On the seabed – nearly 5,000 feet below the surface – the well spewed oil into the Gulf of Mexico for the next 87 days.

Some thought the unimaginable had just happened. Others, the inevitable. Months later it was clear that the Deepwater Horizon blowout was the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history.

[Brest, France]

Aswani Volety, FGCU professor of marine science and interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, stands on the terrace outside the Laboratoire des Sciences de l'Environnement Marin at the University of Brest. The cold, October wind off the Celtic Sea whips through his thick, jet-black hair. Volety is the lead investigator on a study to research oil toxicity on oysters that live within the near-shore environments. His study is one of two major research initiatives underway at Florida Gulf Coast University that investigates oil toxicity in the Gulf of Mexico and its near-shore environment.

Today, Volety listens intently to Philippe Soudant, professor and chief researcher at the University of Brest, who is collaborating with him on the project. Volety and Soudant have partnered on various research projects

for more than a decade. Soudant's research focuses on the reactions of organisms to toxins at the sub-cellular level, which complements Volety's larger-scale approach to looking at the entire organism.

Volety, an international expert on oysters, says that he chose to focus on oysters because they are excellent indicators of the health of an ecosystem. "Oysters are filter feeders; they draw their nourishment from filtering plankton and algae from the surrounding water," he says. "Also, they remain fixed in one place, and so offer an accurate sense of the degree to which a specific ecosystem has been affected by pollutants."

Volety and Soudant are looking at the viability of oyster gametes after exposure to oil and the dispersants released into the Gulf in an effort to manage the oil spill. Gametes are eggs and sperm, which are released into

the water by oysters when conditions are right. "If the oil or the oil and dispersants have a toxic effect on the oyster gametes," says Volety, "then we will likely see a decrease in fertilization success." He hopes the results of this research project will guide future researchers assessing ecological damage from oil spills.

"We are trying to demonstrate what could have happened in nature if organisms and ecosystems were exposed to various levels of oils and dispersants and provide data that can be used to assess injury to the ecosystem," says Volety.

To begin his study on the effects of oil and dispersants on the reproductive health and viability of oysters, Volety and Soudant collected oyster gametes and examined them microscopically to assess viability. Then they released gametes into a controlled environment where they were exposed to various concentrations of oil, and oil and dispersant, for 30 minutes. Results indicate that fertilization success of eggs and sperm began to be affected with exposure of as little as 2.5-5 milligrams per liter of dispersant. Similarly, growth of larvae was impaired at 1.34 micrograms per liter of dispersed oil (oil and dispersant mixture), while developmental abnormalities of larvae were observed after exposure to 3.33 micrograms per liter of dispersed oil. For reference, one milligram per liter is approximately the equivalent of one drop of food dye in 16 gallons of water, or one cup of water in a swimming pool. One microgram per liter is the equivalent of one drop of food dye in 16,000 gallons of water, or one

quarter teaspoon of water in a swimming pool.

[Fort Myers, Florida]

Soudant and his research assistant Nelly Legoic are hard at work analyzing oyster sperm and immune cells (blood cells) in a fourth-floor laboratory in the Arts and Sciences building on the FGCU campus. Voley stands nearby, consulting his notes and talking with Soudant about work that needs to happen in the three weeks they will be together in Florida.

The samples Soudant and Legoic analyzed are showing an inhibition of the mitochondria, an organelle (a specialized part of a cell, analogous to an organ in the body) that generates most of the cell's supply of energy. This is important because reduced energy can be responsible for decreased sperm motility (the ability to move spontaneously and actively), and thus can result in lower fertilization rates.

According to Soudant, "Successful fertilization depends on the cellular mechanisms of the sperm and eggs. The exposure to dispersant and oil highly inhibited the supply of energy and oxygen, which impairs the ability for the sperm to fertilize the egg."

[DeSoto Canyon, The Gulf of Mexico]

About 40 miles off the coast of Pensacola, the waters around DeSoto Canyon plunge to a depth of nearly 3,700 feet. But today Darren Rumbold, professor of marine science at FGCU, is interested in the top 50 to 100 microns of the Gulf – an area



Aswani Voley's research indicates that the health of oysters is an excellent indicator of the health of a particular ecosystem.

about the thickness of a human hair. That layer of the ocean, where the surface comes into contact with the atmosphere, is called the sea surface microlayer and constitutes a unique

ecosystem in itself, providing a home for micro-organisms and a nursery, of sorts, for fish larvae.

Rumbold and Ai Ning Loh, FGCU associate professor of marine science, are co-principal investigators in a \$325,000 grant from the Florida Institute of Oceanography, one of 20 grants funded from nearly 300 proposals. These grants were funded with money paid by BP oil company to the State of Florida to support research into the oil spill. The project is looking at residual toxicity from the oil or dispersant on planktonic organisms – tiny

crustaceans known as copepods – and urchin and red drum embryos. The grant provides funding for several graduate and undergraduate research assistants, and included a partnership with a researcher at Florida A&M University.

"Investigating the mid- and long-term effects of the Deepwater

"Investigating the mid- and long-term effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill on the Gulf of Mexico and its ecosystems is important work. It's especially rewarding that as a result of being awarded the grant, we have made this a teachable moment for students at FGCU."

*– Darren Rumbold
Professor of marine science at FGCU*

Horizon oil spill on the Gulf of Mexico and its ecosystems is important work,” says Rumbold. “It’s especially rewarding that as a result of being awarded the grant, we have made this a teachable moment for students at FGCU. Ai Ning [Loh] and I felt like this was an important component of the project because our students are getting a first-hand look at how our environment responds to traumatic events.”

To collect samples from the sea surface microlayer, Rumbold contracted with the Applied Environmental and Ocean Sciences group to construct a battery powered, remote-controlled surface vehicle, affectionately nicknamed “Dottie” by Rumbold’s research assistants. For collecting plankton, Rumbold used a fine-mesh net.

Rumbold and his graduate students lower “Dottie” over the gunwale of the 28-foot C-Hawk. A rotating Teflon



According to Darren Rumbold, determining toxicity in the sea surface microlayer, home to micro-organisms and fish larvae, can predict future impact on the health of fish.

drum on “Dottie” skims the top layer of water from which Rumbold and Loh will run tests to determine if there is any residual toxicity, using

copepods and urchin embryos. Loh will run chemical tests on the water to quantify various components of the oil, specifically the polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). PAHs are some of the most widespread organic pollutants, and they naturally mix more easily with oil than water.

To test for residual toxicity, Rumbold incubates copepods and embryos of urchins in beakers filled with the seawater samples, then examines them under a microscope.

Before using them in the bioassays, the sensitivity of these organisms were assessed by exposing them to known

quantities of oil obtained from BP. After 24 hours of exposure, copepods were evaluated and scored based on swimming ability and reaction to physical stimulus. Urchin embryos were scored on physical development, and red drum embryos on ability to swim and physical structure. Rumbold found toxicity in some of the collected samples, and PAHs were present in others. But according to Rumbold: “The weight of evidence from the various measures of exposure and effects does not support lingering impacts of toxicity on organisms. That said, there are toxins present, but their source remains unknown.”

[CEDRE, Brest, France]

The laboratory at The Center for Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution is a bit cramped, but the chemical analysis technology is state-of-

“The tools and approaches we developed through our two research projects will guide future researchers who are investigating accidental oil spills into marine ecosystems. And that’s a valuable contribution to the future health of our oceans.”

– *Aswani Volety*
FGCU professor of marine science
and interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

the-art. Ai Ning Loh is loading samples extracted from oil collected from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill into a gas chromatograph, quantifying the various PAHs within the components of the oil.

According to Loh, the analysis provided by the gas chromatograph will provide the identity and concentration of all the components of the oil samples. “We don’t have this system of analysis at FGCU and so have partnered with researchers at the center. This particular gas chromatograph analysis is incredibly fast, highly accurate, and uses less solvent than other methods of analysis, and so is better for the environment,” Loh says. “After I have identified the components in the Deepwater Horizon oil, I can then run the analysis of water samples to search for the same distribution of the PAH components.”

Loh brought water samples from two areas of the Gulf of Mexico, each taken about a year and half after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. She and Rumbold collected water samples 25 miles off the coast of Pensacola and Fort Myers. She will be looking for higher concentrations of PAHs in the water off the coast of Pensacola – near the epicenter of the Deepwater Horizon blowout.

In addition to analyzing the components of the oil using the gas chromatograph, Loh is introducing Deepwater Horizon oil into seawater to determine the water accommodated fraction (WAF) – the degree to which



Ai Ning Loh partnered with French researcher Anne-laure Balcon to determine how much crude oil mixes with water, providing a guide for dealing with future oil spills.

oil mixes with water. She is also determining the chemically enhanced water accommodated fraction – the degree to which oil and water mix when a chemical dispersant is added to the mixture.

To test the WAF, and thereby understand how much crude oil mixes with the water, Loh introduces the oil, or oil and dispersant, into the seawater and gently agitates the samples for 24 hours. The results offer insight into what happens when oil is introduced into a natural ecosystem, and can inform and guide the strategies for dealing with future accidental spills.

Loh’s analysis of the two Gulf water samples showed that there was no statistically significant difference in

the levels and types of toxins found in either the Pensacola or Fort Myers samples. Whether this is because the oil is no longer at the surface, or because the oil remains at a greater depth, or simply isn’t there at all, may be determined by future research.

[Long Beach, California]

On a November afternoon, Volety, Rumbold and Loh are at the annual meeting of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry, preparing to present the results of their two-year research project to an auditorium full of scientists and researchers

from around the world.

“In the synthesis of our research projects, we are trying to tell a story,” says Volety. “The narrative we develop will guide future researchers, and possibly the United States government, in determining the effects of oil, and oil and dispersants toxicity on organisms and ecosystems within the Gulf of Mexico.”

Volety says that his intent is to provide a benchmark against which researchers and government officials could make assessments of damage to the ecosystems and, by extension, to local economies based on a healthy natural environment.

“The tools and approaches we developed through our two research projects will guide future researchers who are investigating oil spills into marine ecosystems,” Volety says. “And that’s a valuable contribution to the future health of our oceans.” ■

▶ WHY DOES FLORIDA'S VOTING SYSTEM SEEM ARCHAIC?

Last November, Peter Bergerson stopped by an early-voting location near his Bonita Springs home to cast his ballot in the presidential election, but the lines were too long. So he tried again later. And again. And again. And again. With each attempt, he found himself with more line than time. On Election Day, he finally managed to vote. It took him more than an hour.

And he was one of the lucky ones.

As Floridians watched and cringed, national election-night TV coverage zoomed in on yet another Sunshine State debacle in the making as frustrated voters in Lee, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach counties and elsewhere waited in line up to seven hours like displaced Black Friday shoppers with no box store in sight. Demand to vote so exceeded opportunity that Miami polls simply shut down after midnight, leaving

lines of jilted voters to learn that President Barack Obama had won re-election before they'd even touched a ballot.

By **JAY MACDONALD**



VOTUS!

OBAMA

ROMNEY

For many, this all felt like déjà-2000 all over again – without the infamous butterfly ballots and hanging chads, of course.

But for Bergerson, a professor of public affairs and FGCU's resident elections expert, the only similarity between Florida's two black eyes was the color of the bruise.

"The circumstances were different," Bergerson says. "In 2000, it was the process and the ballots. In 2012, it was a lack of preparation and resources that was the key. The supervisors of elections didn't plan to be the laughing-stock of late-night television and newspaper editorials, they just failed to plan."

To fully appreciate how that happened requires a little background.

In Florida, there are 67 supervisors of elections, one per county, each elected by partisan ballot and charged with upholding state and federal voting laws. While they work together to some degree through the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections, the supervisors are largely free to develop their own procedures and processes, for good or ill.

"Being a successful supervisor of elections primarily involves being a manager/administrator, but in order to get the job, they have to be successful in the political arena," Bergerson explains. "This points to one of the root issues: how do you combine political expertise and management expertise? There will always be a considerable difference in the administrative quality and expertise

that these supervisors bring to their job."

Though their management experience may vary, supervisors are keenly attuned to changes in the political winds blowing from Tallahassee that might ruffle their ballot-counting. And those winds have been blowing more frequently lately. Since the 2008 election, Florida's Republican-controlled Legislature has reduced the number of early voting days from 14 to eight, limited sites where supervisors can conduct early voting, restricted non-partisan voter registration groups such as the League of Women Voters, increased voter ID requirements and conducted a



Bergerson

controversial voter fraud purge.

"They in essence structured where you could vote and reduced the number of days you could vote," says Bergerson.

"Many people think that one of the reasons they did it was to prevent minorities from voting. It's clear that at least the supposition was there that they hoped to reduce voter turnout by manipulating the process to limit those who would have the tendency to vote for the Democrats versus the Republicans."

At press time, the Florida Senate was expected to pass a bill to restore early voting to 14 days, place new limits on ballot lengths and expand early voting sites. The measure won quick approval in the House when the Legislature convened March 5.

Attempts to manipulate the voting process for political gain are nothing new. What distinguished the election

of 2012 was the number and blatant transparency of these efforts – and not just in Florida. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, no fewer than 25 new laws and two executive actions have been passed in 19 states in the past two years to make it more difficult for eligible Americans to vote.

"The overt attempts by some states like Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania and others really increase when you have a close election at the national level," Bergerson says. "When you have a very close election, the warts tend to be more obvious and the election cancers stand out more."

Fewer early voting days, fewer polling stations, stricter ID requirements – it was easy to spot the 2012 voter traffic jam building up ahead. To compound the chaos, the four-page ballot read like "War and Peace," thanks to a state legislature that placed 11 wordy and confusing constitutional amendments before the voters. All but three were soundly defeated.

"The length of the ballot surely was a factor. It discouraged voting rather than enhanced it," Bergerson says. "Can it be prevented? Yes, but there's a cost at the other end if you limit the citizens' opportunity to update and change the constitution and re-elect judges."

Despite all its tinkering and tailoring, Florida might have been spared another helping of national ridicule had it not once again found itself under a microscope, both for its 2000 shenanigans and its position once again as potential kingmaker.

"We were really ground zero this year, from the early Florida primary that in essence sealed the (Republican) vote for Mitt Romney to the

Republican National Convention in Tampa up to and including the presidential debate,” says Bergerson. “Florida is the fourth largest state in the country, the largest competitive state in the 2012 presidential election, and with 29 Electoral College votes, could have been in the position to decide the presidency. Instead, we ended up being the caboose in terms of turning in election results.”

Given all it stood to lose in 2012, why wasn't Florida better prepared?

“The two issues were lack of voting precincts and lack of voting machines. Had there been more of both, the system might have worked better,” Bergerson says. “Here in Lee County, I know the supervisor of elections (Sharon Harrington) and it wasn't a problem of commission – that she set out to do it – it was a problem of omission. She didn't see the tsunami coming.”

Just days after the election, Harrington tearfully apologized for the problems Lee County voters had. Among the woes she cited were an inadequate number of scanners to process the ballots, jammed equipment, a lengthy bilingual ballot and an unexpectedly large voter turnout. In a state Senate hearing in January, she said that “it was a combination of things that have contributed to our perfect storm election.” Among those was a reduction in precincts from 171 to 125, which may have been overzealous in retrospect.

Bergerson largely agrees with the assessment made by Secretary of State Ken Detzner, who in December toured six counties, including Lee,

“In 2000, it was the process and the ballots. In 2012, it was a lack of preparation and resources that was the key. The supervisors of elections didn't plan to be the laughing-stock of late-night television and newspaper editorials, they just failed to plan.”

that had experienced problems and concluded, “We had a really good election. Sixty-two of 67 counties performed very well. But it doesn't take but one county to not quite meet the standards for Florida to get a reputation.”

Could it be, as some critics claim, that elections in the Sunshine State have just become corrupt?

“It's not so much corrupt as inept,” Bergerson says. “I don't think there's fraud or boss politics on the level of New York's Tammany Hall or Chicago or New Orleans. There, corruption tends to be embedded, whereas here the problems we saw this year were related to management and implementation. Those hopefully can be easily addressed, and I think they probably will be. We did learn from 2000; we did away with hanging chads and butterfly ballots.”

In Bergerson's view, the best possible course correction would be to address local election failures at the local level.

“I would like to see the county commission act; I think it's one of their responsibilities because voting is localized at the county level,” he says. “I'd like to see the Lee County Commission appoint a research body of citizens and elected officials to explore the problems and come up with solutions. Voting is a local issue. That's why I think local fact-finding and recommendation would be best.”

Still, Bergerson predicts that election perfection will always remain elusive.

“No election is going to be perfect,” he says. “It's always an ongoing process of learning from the past and trying to improve the future.” ■

THE ARTS

▶ "Expressing the inexpressible"

[ARTS]

Balancing act

Artist bridges Seminole traditions and contemporary ideas in work that explores identity.

JESSICA OSCEOLA ('08, ART) GREW UP ENVELOPED in Seminole Indian culture. The lives of her extended clan of great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins revolved around a tribal village off the Tamiami Trail near Naples.

They danced the traditional green corn dance each spring. They prepared food in a cooking chickee and gathered for meals in the eating chickee

– her father made a living building the traditional huts with thatched-palmetto roofs. Her

grandfather was a medicine man, and her grandmother made and sold traditional Seminole crafts to visitors. The Osceola name itself reverberates in Florida history, the legacy of a great Seminole warrior.

Now an artist by profession, Jessica Osceola is proud to balance the cultural traditions of her people with her contemporary aesthetic sensibilities, building a bridge between past and present through ceramics, cast metal and other media. Having an Irish-American mother as well, she is perhaps

'Self Portrait,'
cast aluminum



Jessica Osceola works as a professional artist from her Naples home.

accustomed to the dual sides of life – the diptych, in artistic terms.

"I am Seminole, but it is not the only thing that defines me," Osceola says. "My mother gave me the greatest gift ever, and that is work ethic and drive. It is a good balance with the more patient and steady tribal way of doing everyday tasks. Both are cultures I am proud to represent."

When she was a child, she strung together bead necklaces under her grandmother's watchful eye to sell at the family's gift stand. It wasn't until after she earned her FGCU degree that she began practicing traditional tribal art again, stitching beads onto TOMS shoes, for instance. In between, she often wrestled with perceptions of her biracial identity.

"People are always trying to tell you who you are," she says. "Identity has always been a struggle. In my work, I'm always reflecting on it. I'm in a good place now. I am no longer letting people tell me who I am."

And in her work, Osceola strives to balance the traditional with the contemporary without exploiting or merely replicating the traditional, she says. It is a line the artist has seen crossed by at least one commercial fashion house that she believes has profited from copying traditional tribal patchwork patterns.

"The patchwork design is a huge part



“ I try to bring a positive light to the younger kids, so they can see they can do something with creative energy.”

- JESSICA OSCEOLA, ARTIST ('08, ART)

of our Seminole identity,” Osceola says. “A lot of my artwork is about standing up for my heritage. I don’t necessarily make things people want in their house. The concept, the message is more important. It’s a perspective from an indigenous person that I can best express through my art.”

That’s something she learned at FGCU through art instructors such as Mary Voytek and Patricia Fay, she says. They stressed the importance of focusing not on simply making a beautiful object but evoking a response in the viewer: What does it mean? What is the artist saying?

Associate Professor Voytek calls Osceola “one of my prize sculpture students.”

Osceola was invited for the second time to Art Basel last December. The South Beach scene is a far cry from the rural lane east of Naples where the 28-year-old lives with her husband, Benjamin Velasco, and creates artwork in a sunny nook off the kitchen and in a shed-turned-studio. The garage houses two kilns for firing ceramics.

Pottery sales and mold-making help pay

for classes she’s taking online through the Academy of Art University in San Francisco to earn a master’s of fine art degree. She also teaches tribal art and wellness-related programs at the Seminole Tribe of Florida Naples Community Center.

“I’ve always tried to stay active in the tribal community,” she says. “I’ve had tribal scholarships throughout undergraduate and graduate school. I try to be a positive role model. I try to bring a positive light to the younger kids, so they can see they can do something with creative energy.”

Art Professor Fay continues to relish watching her former student tackle one challenge after another on the journey to becoming a serious professional artist.

Deciding to use her

artwork as a platform for grappling directly with issues related to her shared heritage was a real turning point for Osceola and for her work, Fay says.

“Life as an artist has many benefits, but it is always a struggle to make a place for yourself in the art world,” Fay says. “Jessica is well on her way, and I know she will succeed because she has what it takes – commitment, talent and a strong personal vision.”

– Drew Sterwald

Above: ‘Emerging Artist’ bronze

Left: ‘Stewing,’ ceramic



ARTS CALENDAR

3/19 TUESDAY

“Vitelli 2013 Discovery Grant Recipients: Artistic Discovery and Inspiration”

Exhibition by theater, visual arts and museum studies students selected for alternative spring break based on expanding horizons of young artists. ArtLab, west side of FGCU library. Runs through 4/5.

4/3 WEDNESDAY

Annual Celebration of the Arts

• 5-7 p.m., Opening reception, “Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition,” Main Gallery, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. Runs through 4/11.

• 7 p.m., FGCU chamber ensembles concert, U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building, FGCU campus.

• 8 p.m., Opening night, “Constellation III: Dog Wish,” TheatreLab, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. An original ensemble performance exploring human-dog relationships, created in collaboration with the Humane Society of the United States. Runs Wednesday-Sunday through 4/14. \$7

4/7 SUNDAY

University Choir/Chamber Choir Concert

3 p.m., U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building, FGCU campus.

4/11 THURSDAY

“Music of Schubert”

7:30 p.m., Concert featuring pianists Naomí Niskala and Michael Baron, U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building, FGCU campus. \$7

4/14 SUNDAY

Wind Orchestra Concert

3 p.m., Lamb of God Church, 19691 Cypress View Drive, Fort Myers.

4/18 THURSDAY

“Finales: Spring 2013 Senior Projects”

5-7 p.m., Opening reception, Main Gallery, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. Runs through 5/4, with additional artwork on display in ArtLab.

6/12 WEDNESDAY

“James and the Giant Peach”

FGCU Children’s Theatre production of Roald Dahl’s classic tale. TheatreLab, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. Runs through 6/16. \$7 adults, free for children younger than 12.



[THEATER]

Show sheds light on complex relationship of man and dog

JUST AS INDIVIDUAL STARS CLUSTER TO FORM A CONSTELLATION, FLORIDA Gulf Coast University's theater program crafts something greater than its parts with its ethnodrama "Constellation."

This year's show, "Constellation III: Dog Wish," explores the diverse ways in which humans interact with canines. It will be staged in April at FGCU's TheatreLab and at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center.

Ethnodrama is also known as applied theater or community engagement theater, says Michelle Hayford, an assistant professor in the department of Visual and Performing Arts and theater program leader who is scripting and directing the production.

"Constellation is a montage," she says. "There's no linear story being told. It's a pastiche. It's co-created with a nonprofit partner. In this case, it's the Humane Society of the United States."

The goal of applied theater is to be a democratic space for the community.

"I really have this belief that theater can change the world for the better," Hayford



Michelle Hayford guides theater students in the creation of "Constellation."

says. "I've seen it happen incrementally in individual lives."

FGCU students interview those involved with the nonprofit then create narratives based on those interviews and, finally, perform those narratives.

The title comes from a quote from James Thurber: "Man is troubled by what might be called the Dog Wish, a strange and involved compulsion to be as happy and carefree as a dog."

But as the performance will illustrate, not all dogs live happy, carefree lives.

The students began their research by interviewing Humane Society staff who rescue animals from the brutal and illegal dog-fighting industry. They also interviewed staff at Lee County Domestic Animal Services.

This is tough material, Hayford concedes, adding that the creators also show the positive side of the man-dog

connection with material about animal-assisted therapy and the joy that comes from adopting a shelter animal.

"It's amazing how many people don't know about rescue, how many think rescue dogs are not an ideal choice," she says. "We need to explain why going to the boutique to buy a designer dog is not the right choice."

She plans to produce a DVD of scenes from the show that could be used in middle and high schools to start dialogue, but she wants the message to spread beyond the classroom.

"We have an oversimplified understanding of dogs as man's best friends," she says. "We're not always so nice to our friends. Take dog fighting, for example. How is it that human beings can perpetrate such violence on animals? Those who do it are more likely to abuse others. It's something broken that we need to address."

The intent of the show is to teach us about ourselves as well.

"We are all wounded animals and the most important thing is to take care of each other," Hayford says. "It's a literal and metaphorical thing for me, finding connections. So often we want to distance ourselves from other creatures on the planet. We suffer by denying our animal natures. If we tap into our animal nature, we'd be better off."

She wants people to come away from this performance "thinking dogs have an intrinsic right to enjoy their lives and be part of our lives in ways we haven't critically thought about."

And she promises that it will not all be deep, dark and depressing.

"It covers the whole gamut of relationships with dogs," she says. "Parts will make you cry. Parts will make you cry with joy. People will leave feeling good."

— Karen Feldman

▶ IF YOU GO

WHAT: "Constellation III: Dog Wish"

WHAT: TheatreLab, Arts Complex, FGCU campus

WHEN: 8 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, April 3-7 and 10-14

COST: \$7

FOR TICKETS: Visit <http://theatrelab.fgcu.edu> or call (239) 590-7268.

ETC.: Additional performances will take place at 8 p.m. April 15-17 at the Sidney & Berne Davis Arts Center, 2301 First St., Fort Myers. Tickets are \$10. Visit www.sbdac.com for details.

[SOCCER]

Kicking and dreaming

Soccer teams look to next season after fighting but falling in NCAA first round.

MOMENTS AFTER SUFFERING A GUT-PUNCHING, SEASON-ending playoff defeat in Tampa, FGCU men's soccer players collapsed to the turf in agony.

A team loaded with freshmen and sophomores had pushed the nationally ranked University of South Florida Bulls to the brink before losing 5-3 on penalty kicks.

FGCU coach Bob Butehorn believes the first-round NCAA Tournament defeat will only fuel his young team to train harder in the off-season. With 21 freshmen and sophomores returning to the team next year, the Eagles feel confident they can challenge the nation's top programs.

The FGCU women's team will also carry a positive outlook next year. Despite playing with 19 underclassmen, the Eagles won their third consecutive Atlantic Sun Conference championship this year and advanced to the NCAA Tournament. The Eagles lost to SEC champion Florida 2-0 in the first round.

"We're still maybe not getting the recognition we want, but that's going to be from us doing the work and winning games," Butehorn said. "Next year, our goal is to be one of the elite programs. It's going to take a lot of work. We know that. But I think it's coming together for us."

The men (11-5-3) came oh-so-close to becoming the first FGCU team in any sport to post a tournament victory. South Florida, which was ranked No. 13 in the nation, won on penalty kicks after neither team scored in two overtime sessions.

The Eagles might have had a better result if not for two key injuries. FGCU's leading scorer, Felipe DeSousa, and sophomore forward, Santiago Echeverri, fell



Above: Brittany Brown makes a save in the match against the Florida Gators last November.



Left: Felipe DeSousa was recently named to the Soccer America All-Freshman second team.

to injuries against South Florida. Butehorn said both players should be healthy at the start of spring practice.

"It was disappointing we didn't move further in the NAAs," Butehorn said. "I felt we were the better team going in, but unfortunately it didn't work out."

DeSousa, the A-Sun Conference's reigning Freshman of the Year, will lead the charge next season. Xavier Silva, who won the conference's Freshman of the Year award after the 2011 season, is another top returning player.

The women (14-4-3) will be led by freshman goalie Brittany Brown, one of 13 rookies on FGCU's roster. With so much youth on the roster, FGCU coach

Jim Blankenship called it "a tremendous success" for the squad to win its third consecutive Atlantic Sun championship.

"To win back-to-back-to-back conference championships is not an easy feat," Blankenship said. "It was an extremely young group, but they were definitely eager and excited to prove themselves. They know the history here. It's something they were aware of and they wanted to make sure to continue the legacy of winning."

Like the men, the FGCU women will only graduate five seniors. Blankenship believes this season's experience will make his team better.

"Our expectations have always been so high," said Blankenship, who founded the program six years ago. "Even with the new recruits coming in next year, the expectations won't change. We're pleased with the group coming back. We just have to keep building."

— Chris Duncan

[MEN'S BASKETBALL]

With an 88-75 win over top-seeded Mercer, the FGCU men's basketball team captured the Atlantic Sun Conference tournament March 9, earning an automatic NCAA Tournament bid in the process.

"This is a special moment for our program, our athletic department and the University," said head coach Andy Enfield following the upset of Mercer. "We came into the tournament determined to defend and we did that. I'm very proud of everyone involved with our program because it took everyone to accomplish this."

At press time, the team was awaiting the release of the men's NCAA Tournament bracket, set for March 17.

After upsetting second-ranked Miami and then tearing through the early part of its A-Sun schedule, the team finished the regular season 21-10 (13-5 A-Sun).

FGCU's landmark 63-51 home upset of Miami on Nov. 13 grabbed national attention and will surely boost the school's resume when the NCAA Selection Committee chooses teams for the March tournament.

The Eagles' tough non-conference slate, which included visits to No. 2 Duke, Virginia Commonwealth, St. John's and Iowa State, seemed to prepare the Eagles for the conference season. Sophomore Bernard Thompson has been a key contributor all season long, pouring in five 20-point performances on the road.

[WOMEN'S BASKETBALL]

The FGCU women's basketball team turned in a strong season, but fell to second-seed Stetson in the A-Sun Championship March 9.

Senior Joyce Iamstron scored a career-high 31 points and earned Tournament MVP honors as the No. 1 seeded FGCU women's basketball team fell to Stetson, 70-64.

"You have to give Stetson credit," said



head coach Karl Smesko. "They came out and played aggressive in the second half and we did not execute and play FGCU basketball."

With the loss, FGCU falls to 27-6 overall, while the Hatters improve to 24-8 on the season and have punched their ticket to the NCAA Tournament.

Nonetheless, the Eagles have much to be proud of, winning 41 consecutive A-Sun games overall (including the conference tournament). FGCU's 41 consecutive conference overall victories ranked as the second longest streak in the country behind defending national champion Baylor (46).

They also won their third consecutive A-Sun regular-season title, which was also the fourth in five years.

Eagles junior Sarah Hansen has played a significant role in the winning streak, averaging 17 points per game this season.

[SOFTBALL]

The FGCU softball team's season got off to a strong start in February as the Eagles nearly defeated the defending national champion Alabama Crimson Tide. The team headed home from a seven-game road trip to California with a 3-4 record, giving them a 15-9 record overall. The Eagles lost to No. 1 Alabama 2-1 on Feb. 15 in front of a sellout home crowd of 1,109. The team

The FGCU women won their third consecutive A-Sun regular-season title.

picked up three hits and a seventh-inning unearned run off Alabama junior ace pitcher Jackie Traina. FGCU head coach David Deiros is hopeful the performance will benefit the team as it attempts to advance to the NCAA Tournament.

"I thought our kids did well, they fell behind, but kept hanging in there," Deiros said. "For us to be in there with a chance to win at the very end says a lot about what our ball club can do."

The team won four out of its five games at the USF Under Armour Invitational in Clearwater March 1-3.

[BASEBALL]

The FGCU baseball team has made an impressive start this season with a 13-3 record as of March 11, which includes a resounding three-win sweep against the University of Florida. At Florida.

The Gator-stomping brought the Eagles national attention.

"I think it does put us on the map," coach Dave Tollett said about the Florida series win. "Anytime you go on the road and beat an ACC or SEC team, it definitely gets you noticed. This is really big for us."

The team followed that up by winning two out of three games against

“ I think it does put us on the map. Anytime you go on the road and beat an ACC or SEC team, it definitely gets you noticed. This is really big for us.”

- DAVE TOLLETT

FGCU BASEBALL COACH

Swimming and diving team wins fifth conference championship

THE FGCU SWIMMING AND DIVING TEAM took home three of a possible seven first-place finishes on the final day to clinch its fifth-straight Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association (CCSA) Conference Championship.

In the three-day tournament that ended Feb. 23 at the University of Georgia, the Eagles set five new program and CCSA records and won 13 of a possible 20 events. It was a suitable caper to what coach Neal Studd called “a spectacular year.”

“It’s great to win our fifth title,” he said. “It was an up-and-down day with two disqualifications. We did not let it spoil our day.”

Sophomore Emma Svensson garnered Most Outstanding Female Performer of the Meet, winning the 50-free, 100-free and 100-back events. Her times in the 50-free and 100-free qualified for NCAA “B” cuts. Senior Maegan Butler was named Most Outstanding Diver of the Meet for the second consecutive year; she won the 1-meter and 3-meter boards and set a meet record in the latter.

Studd was named CCSA Coach of the Year for the fourth time, while first-year diving coach David Boyko won Diving Coach of the Year. ■

Manhattan and beating Michigan 11-6. It was the fourth time FGCU and Michigan faced off, with FGCU winning its third consecutive year against the Big Ten foe.

[VOLLEYBALL]

The FGCU volleyball team saw its strong season come to an end in the A-Sun Conference Tournament semifinals.

The top-seeded Eagles (22-10) lost to North Florida in five sets. The defeat overshadowed a tremendous season that saw FGCU capture the regular-season A-Sun championship for the first time in four years. The team also tied the program’s D-I record with 15 straight wins, including 14 straight in the A-Sun, and lost only 14 sets in 18 A-Sun matches.

[MEN’S AND WOMEN’S TENNIS]

The men’s and women’s tennis teams have high aspirations for the spring season.

As of March 5, the men were 4-5, with solid victories over Connecticut, Troy and Oklahoma State. The women were 4-2 as of March 5, with wins over teams such as Iowa State, Florida Atlantic and Florida International. The FGCU doubles teams of sisters Elizabeth and Sarah Means and Johanna Sterkel and Gyanna Mandic are playing well.

[MEN’S AND WOMEN’S CROSS COUNTRY]

The men’s and women’s cross country teams turned in strong performances at the south regionals in the fall.

The men sent a full team to regionals for the first time and finished in 20th place. Junior Argeo Cruz led the Eagles with a 64th place finish with a school record time of 32 minutes, 22.9 seconds in the 10K event. The women, meanwhile, sent two runners to regionals. FGCU junior Kelly Perzanowski placed 101st and set a school record time of 22 minutes, 2.6 seconds in the 6K event.

[MEN’S AND WOMEN’S GOLF]

The men’s and women’s golf teams are looking to improve after their first tournaments of the 2013 spring season.

The men placed 13th out of 15 teams at the Sea Best Seafood Invitational on Feb. 5 in Jacksonville. FGCU freshman Edward Figueroa finished in a tie for 25th place. The women, meanwhile, placed 10th out of 16 teams at the Hurricane Invitational on Feb. 3 in Coral Gables. Redshirt freshman Kristin Swindell led the squad, sitting in a tie for 29th overall.

— Chris Duncan

FGCU junior right-hander Ricky Knapp, last year’s Atlantic Sun Conference Pitcher of the Year, hopes to repeat his success from last year.



Baseball photo by J. Mericw

Student-athletes pitch in to raise money at Night at the Nest

FOR THE NIGHT AT THE NEST GALA – THE EAGLES CLUB’S LARGEST FUND-raising event in support of Florida Gulf Coast

University’s athletics program – student-athletes from all 15 teams contribute, whether it’s setting up tables at Alico Arena, serving or cleaning up.

Senior Kayla Ramey was in the right spot: manning a table packed with filled-to-the-brim water pitchers. Ramey wasn’t going to fumble any of them. A softball player from North Fort Myers High, she committed only six errors in 49 games at third base and shortstop last season.

While she poured water, Chris Sale stood on the stage and poured out his heart on the importance of the night.

Yes, he’s a star pitcher now for the Chicago White Sox and coming off an electrifying season in which he finished sixth in the American League’s Cy Young voting. But at the start of his time at FGCU, he was a virtual nobody and the program struggled for everything it could get.

“After my sophomore year (in 2009), a sponsor dropped us,” he told the crowd of supporters. “We were all kind of bummed about that. I’ll never forget one day going to practice and there were four brand new bats. Coach (Dave) Tollett had gone to Sports Authority and bought those out of his own pocket. He didn’t have to do that. We were all going to fend for ourselves and make it happen somehow.

“But that’s the kind of love and support we have. This is a family. This is my family. If you guys could just open up your hearts – and your wallets, too – the littlest thing goes the longest way. What we get here tonight goes toward little things. It’s not a big stadium. It comes down to bats and gloves and hats and shoes, and even socks.”

Director of Athletics Ken



Kavanagh added a little nugget that undoubtedly surprised some in attendance: only four of the school’s 15 teams are at the maximum number of scholarships allowed by the NCAA. In 2011-2012, four FGCU teams that went to the NCAA Tournament had not achieved the limit because there wasn’t enough money to fund them all.

“Look at what we’re doing right now,” he said, “and we’re not even fully funded.”

Everything they said resonated with Ramey. After transferring from Seminole State College in 2011, she had a spot on the team. But she didn’t receive a scholarship until this school year.

“As an athlete, this night means a lot,” she said. “I’m very grateful for it. It’s great to know so many people care about FGCU and athletics enough to support us and help make our dreams come true.”

In the end, Night at the Nest generated a net profit of roughly \$165,000 – nearly doubling



the previous year’s \$90,000 – and an additional \$11,000 came in from the Eagles Celebrity Golf Classic, which took place the following day.

“The sports program is exploding,” Ramey said. “Things can and will only get better. You will hear a lot more about us. I can assure you of that.”

She’s sold. Sale’s sold. And they hope many more will be, too.

– Rick Weber



“As an athlete, this night means a lot. I’m very grateful for it. It’s great to know so many people care about FGCU and athletics enough to support us and help make our dreams come true.”

- KAYLA RAMEY, SENIOR,
FGCU SOFTBALL PLAYER



1. Steve and Joanne Rasnick with Marla and Allen Weiss
2. Mary and Scott Fischer
3. Suzanne Long, Sherwood Brown and Garry Long
4. Dave Rice
5. Ben and Arlene Roth
6. Dean Shreiner and Azul
7. Gary Bigham and Derek Lowe
8. Cookie Swanson and Chris Sale
9. Casey Coleman, President Wilson G. Bradshaw, Jo Anna Bradshaw and Chris Sale
10. Nicole and Jay Westerlund with David Kent

"The results ... are always beyond calculation"

Paying tribute

Annual gala honors longtime board chair.

SUPPORTERS OF FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY – MORE THAN 430 OF THEM – turned out for the President's Gala, which this year had a dual purpose: to honor a leader for his dedication to the university and to raise money to help the next generation of leaders obtain college educations.

The February gala at the Waldorf Astoria in Naples paid tribute to Scott Lutgert, chair of the FGCU Board of Trustees from July 2001 through May 2012.

In honoring him, President Wilson G. Bradshaw said that the decade in which he led the board is now affectionately called The Lutgert Years.

"Tonight we publicly recognize Mr. Lutgert for his genuine commitment to Florida Gulf Coast University, its students and the greater community, and thank him for the myriad accomplishments that placed FGCU on the path to greatness," he said.

Richard Peggnetter, the founding dean of the Lutgert College of Business, added, "Scott could have chosen any number of ways to spend his time rather than those countless hours at the university. Like his father, Raymond, Scott focused on projects that would improve the quality of life for others. Fortunately for our community, this new university fit the bill.

"During The Lutgert Years, FGCU owned the title of the fastest-growing university in the country, with double-digit percentage increases in student enrollment annually even while increasing the admission qualifications."

Visibly moved by the tribute, Lutgert said, "The students here are what this is all about, their love and passion for this university. It was my pleasure to lead the Board of Trustees for a decade. It's been an incredible journey with a whole group of people who worked very hard to make

FGCU the excellent university it is today."

Students also expressed their gratitude to Lutgert. Argeo Cruz, a community health major from Immokalee, said the scholarship he was awarded allowed him to attend college and gain the education he needed to return to his community as a counselor for adolescents and families.

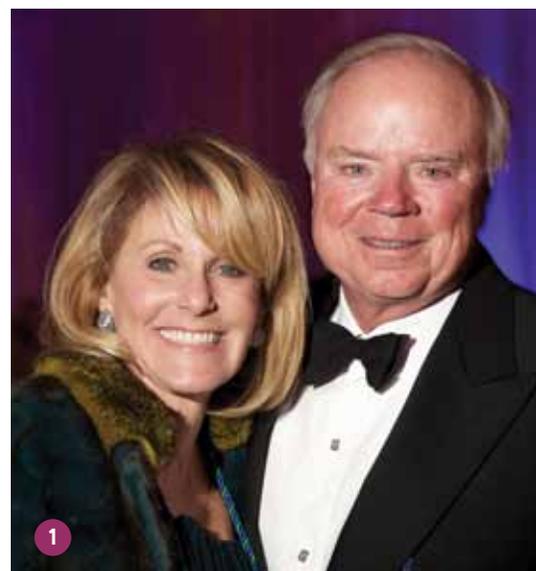
"I'm going to make a positive difference in Immokalee because of you and my scholarship sponsor," he told Lutgert.

John Fumagalli, chairperson of the FGCU Foundation and president of Northern Trust, which sponsored the gala, welcomed Elaine Nicpon Marieb into the Order of the Majestic Eagle, the foundation's highest honor. Marieb, an internationally recognized author of anatomy and physiology textbooks, donated \$5 million to the university last year to fund scholarships as well as research, outreach and teaching in the health professions. The building housing the College of Health Professions and Social Work is now known as Marieb Hall.

This year's President's Celebration at the Waldorf Astoria raised \$742,000 through sponsorships, ticket sales, donations, live and silent auctions.

– Karen Feldman

1. Simone and Scott Lutgert
2. Joe and Carrie Gammons and Angela and Todd Gates
3. Barbara and Daniel Melvin
4. Geoff and Robbie Roepstorff, John Ammons, Melanie Geenan, Marshall Bower, Janelle Beaver, Lou and Steve Pontius
5. Stephen and Connie McIntosh, Laurie Holquist and Donnie Crandall
6. Sara and John Fumagalli
7. Steve and Esther Machiz
8. Larry and Mary Hart
9. Deborah and Ben Hill Griffin, III
10. President Wilson G. and Jo Anna Bradshaw, Jim and Karen Nathan
11. Elaine Nicpon Marieb and Harvey Howell



Photos by Brian Tietz



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Scholarships “encourage and lift” students at a critical time

Annual luncheon honors donors who make that possible.

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY SENIOR JOSHUA MICHALIK’S PURSUIT OF A bioengineering degree came perilously close to collapsing, despite his promising start as someone who entered college during his senior year of high school and graduated in the top 10 percent of his Naples High School class.

He planned to apply to medical school upon college graduation, but a month after graduating from high school, his older brother died in an accident. As the family attempted to recover, his father lost his job and his mother, who is disabled, could not work. It wasn’t long before the family lost their home.

“These events stripped away the foundation of security from my life,” Michalik told the more than 500 people who gathered for the 13th annual President’s Scholarship Luncheon, held Dec. 2 at Alico Arena.

But Michalik has been able to continue his studies because of the generosity of those who established the RWA Scholarship in Memory of James Anderson and the Pop and Marj Kelly Scholarship.

He says he has thrived at FGCU, earning a 3.87 GPA and acquiring vital skills through the Lessons in Leadership class taught by FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw. An internship with Arthrex Manufacturing enhanced those skills.

Michalik and sophomore Marina Diez, recipient of the Cecile Liston Wang Scholarship and a management major with a 4.0 GPA, spoke to the group composed of scholarship donors and their recipients at the annual event that allows them to get to know one another and gives students an opportunity to thank those who support them in person.

Diez, who is from Broward County, was training to become a professional tennis



1. Amanda Eisenga, Laura Worzella and Lauren Ferraro
2. Arden and Jacke McCurdy
3. Marina Diez
4. Shane Nieves, President Wilson G. Bradshaw and Bonie Montalvo
5. Vonceil Franklin and Barbara Fischer
6. Berne Davis and Jennifer Johnson
7. Joshua Michalik
8. Calvin Restrepo and Roy E. McTarnaghan

player when, in 2007, she found out she had Hodgkin’s lymphoma, a blood cancer. She survived, but missed a year of school because of the chemotherapy and the toll it took on her energy and body. She’s been in remission for four years.

The medical care that saved her life consumed the money her family had been saving for her college education.

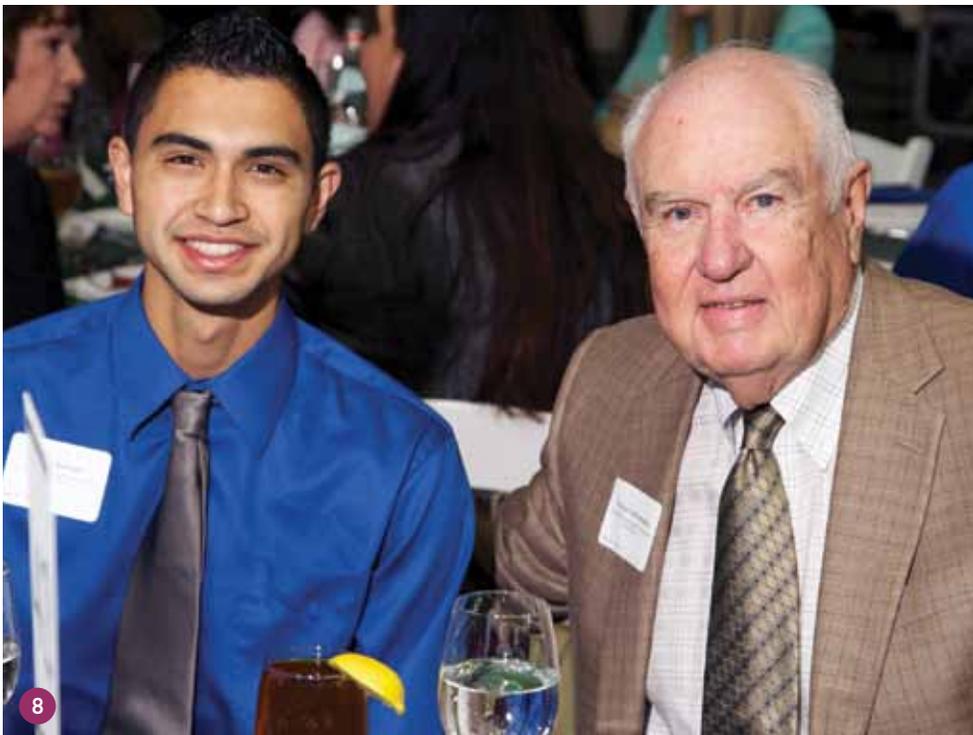
She took out a loan for her first

year at FGCU and worked hard, earning a 4.0 GPA and playing on the women’s tennis team. But Diez wouldn’t have been able to afford to continue without her scholarship.

“I’ve been blessed so much more than I’ve been hurt, and I’ve learned to never take anything for granted,” she said.

“What each and every one of you do is incredible. FGCU is home to thousands of students because you gave us a chance, an opportunity to make you, our families and our community, proud.”





The FGCU Foundation's endowed funds exceeded \$58 million, enabling the foundation to award \$1.46 million to 950 students in the 2011-2012 school year, according to Bradshaw, who also supports a scholarship with his wife, Jo Anna. In 2013, more than 1,000 students were awarded roughly \$1.4 million.

To the scholarship recipients, Bradshaw said, "Take a moment to remember the individuals who helped you throughout your life and add to that list the person sitting next to you. Your scholarship sponsors believe in you. They believe you will succeed and make the world a better place. They – we – want our scholarships to encourage and lift you during this time in your life."

And, to scholarship sponsors, he said, "Thank you for making their education and career dreams possible. Your scholarship awards also show the students that their hard work and dedication has been noticed. For so many of our students, the scholarships they are awarded are the lifelines to a better future."

– Karen Feldman

Sheffield scholarship honors family's legacy in education

LOUISE SHEFFIELD CAME FROM A HARD-WORKING FARM FAMILY IN VIRGINIA. Her father, a Cherokee Indian, was determined that his children would receive college educations and Louise Sheffield did. She went on to teach elementary school, thus passing on the thirst for knowledge to further generations.

"She felt a very strong obligation to succeed," says her son, Karl Sheffield of Naples. "In a real sense, she was like many of our Southwest Florida families of today who are first-generation college students."

As a tribute to his mother, and as a way to help Florida Gulf Coast University continue to groom tomorrow's teachers, Karl and his wife, Alice, recently made a deferred gift commitment of \$1 million to establish the Louise Sheffield Scholarship Fund. The endowed fund will provide grants to education majors who



Alice and Karl Sheffield

demonstrate academic merit and financial need.

Once realized, the endowment's annual

scholarship allotment will be matched.

"The result will be more teachers, better teachers, sooner," says Sheffield, a successful domestic and international businessman. "It is payback time for us."

"The college is so fortunate to call Karl and Alice friends," says Marcia Green, dean of the College of Education. "They are not only impacting the scholarship recipients, but also generations of learners."

A Duke University graduate, Sheffield chose FGCU for the couple's legacy because it is "one of the best places to put our resources to get the greatest returns

on our philanthropic dollar."

Sheffield knows well the value of giving as well as the value of a dollar.

"Philanthropy is a very satisfying reward for those who save, invest wisely and live prudently," he says. "It is great for the recipients, great for the economy and great for the philanthropists."

His family's educational heritage is not limited to his mother's teaching career. Karl Sheffield served as a school board chairman, and his uncle was a school superintendent. Alice Sheffield, a graduate of James Mason University, worked as an elementary school teacher, and their daughter is a college professor in Colorado.

"Alice and Karl believe wholeheartedly in the College of Education at FGCU," says Senior Director of Advancement Judie Cassidy. "They say that their investment in education is good for their hearts. A joyful heart is a great blessing." ■

First-generation education a top priority for Bonita couple

HARRY GAINES AND DEBRA CARRIER WERE THE FIRST IN THEIR FAMILIES TO attend college. They went on to enjoy successful careers that have, in turn, allowed them to help others obtain a college education.

The couple, who divide their time between Bonita Springs and Newtown, Pa., donated \$50,000 to create the Gaines-Carrier First Generation Scholarship Endowed Fund, for students who are the first in their families to seek bachelor's degrees.

It was FGCU students who provided the impetus for the scholarships.

"Every time we'd go out, wherever we went, we met students from FGCU," Carrier says of those she encountered while shopping or dining out. "They are bright, lovely, hard-working, American

kids. You don't see a lot of that."

Because the gift helps first-generation students, "we thought it was a very meaningful program, one that's close to our hearts," she says.

The fact that the state matches donations to First Generation scholarships made the gift even more appealing.

Gaines worked for many years for Prentice Hall, a leading publisher of educational books, then went into computer-based training and corporate training. He recently published "Fitness Beyond 50: Turn Back the Clock," and writes a column for The News-Press.

Carrier earned an MBA and worked in finance and computer technology for Motorola and other large companies.

In addition to endowing scholarships at a number of schools, Carrier coaches and mentors undergraduates. The couple



Harry Gaines and Debra Carrier

consider their gift an investment in the community.

"We're going to be here and in Pennsylvania for the rest of

our lives," Carrier says. "We're happy to be part of the FGCU family."

Linda Lehtomaa, interim vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the FGCU Foundation, which administers the scholarships, says, "First Generation scholarships are critical to changing the lives of so many students and their families. We are deeply grateful to Harry Gaines and Debra Carrier for recognizing their importance and helping to make them available to students who truly need them." ■

Gift a legacy of successful career in education

A LONGTIME EDUCATOR AND EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR WHO overcame the odds to become a first-generation college graduate has pledged his estate to help financially challenged FGCU students complete their degrees.

With his gift, William J. Garbey of Fort Myers hopes to inspire today's students to similar acts of generosity after they graduate and establish careers.

"None of us has achieved any degree of success without the help, assistance and sacrifice of others," he says. "It is hoped that anyone receiving such aid would also be inclined to help someone else in the future to also achieve some degree of success."

The Lucille Garbey and Dr. William J. Garbey Scholarship Endowed Fund will provide grants to undergraduates who have attained sophomore status or higher as well as to graduate students. Applicants must demonstrate academic merit and financial need.



Bill Garbey

The fund honors Garbey's mother, who was an eighth-grade graduate. His father's education ended with sixth grade, but Garbey was able not only to earn a bachelor's degree but master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Pittsburgh.

"I was the first in my family to get the opportunity to go to college," he says. "I figure that was my exit out of the possibility of never being able to enjoy middle-class amenities that were out there. If I can do something with what's left after I go to help someone else experience the same thing, I am happy to do it."

Throughout his own years in school, Garbey worked hard to put aside money and took out loans to continue his education so he understands how important financial assistance can be. He began his career as a teacher and worked

his way through the administrative ranks to superintendent of the Penn Hills School District in suburban Pittsburgh. He retired from the position in 1986 after 25 years in the district, the 10th largest in the state.

When he decided to make Florida his home, Garbey took a keen interest in the development and growth of FGCU, according to Senior Director of Advancement Judie Cassidy.

"Our founding president, Roy McTarnaghan, took the time to talk to him about the university," she says. "The personal attention he received then impressed him and prompted him to return to FGCU when he was ready to consider his estate planning. He feels the same humanity and thoughtfulness from President (Wilson G.) Bradshaw and others he has met at FGCU."

Garbey says, "I feel privileged to be associated with the university in any capacity at this point in my life and know that young minds are being provided the opportunity to develop and contribute to our future society." ■

Family honors FGCU alum's memory with scholarship

LUKA BALENOVIC WAS A SPIRITED YOUNG MAN WHO LOOKED FORWARD to a career in law enforcement. He graduated from FGCU in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. He died in a motorcycle accident Aug. 6, 2012, the day before he would have joined the Navy. He was 25.

"His goal was to be in law enforcement, so he decided that he would join the Navy and was going through the process to get into the officers' program," a path he believed would help him land a job with the FBI or CIA, says his stepmom, Cathy Balenovic. His father, Tomislav Balenovic, says, "He was an extraordinary young man. He wanted to make a difference."



Luka Balenovic

To honor his memory, his parents, who live in Pembroke Pines, established an endowed scholarship that will be awarded to a student majoring in criminal justice who intends to work in the field of law enforcement. Many friends and family members have contributed to the Luka Balenovic Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Luka Balenovic enjoyed riding his motorcycle, swimming and spending summers in Croatia with his paternal relatives.

"He was a fun-loving young man, down to earth and always optimistic," says his

father. "He touched many lives. He was extremely close to his younger brother, Tomi, and he loved his dog, Lolie."

Although the Balenovics know motorcycles are less safe than cars, they say Luka was a careful driver. He was wearing a helmet and proceeding through a green light when a car driven by a man with a suspended license failed to yield the right of way and struck him.

The family has started Look & Listen for the Love of Luka, which includes a list of safe-driving tips posted on his memorial website, www.lukabalenovic.com. Money raised from the program goes to the memorial scholarship. "It really means a lot to us," says Cathy Balenovic. "We know it would make Luka happy, too." ■

Hospitality majors benefit from new scholarships

SCHOLARSHIPS TOTALING \$20,000 WERE AWARDED THIS FALL TO HELP deserving students achieve their goal of earning degrees in the School of Resort & Hospitality Management at Florida Gulf Coast University.

A donation from the Culinary and Hospitality Education Foundation of Southwest Florida, Inc. (CHEF) funded \$15,000 in scholarships. The CHEF is a charitable organization that serves the culinary and hospitality arts professions by providing scholarships, awards, financial incentives and skills development opportunities.

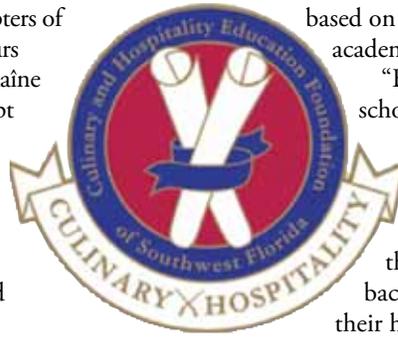
“We share with FGCU the goal of supporting the most promising students who need financial aid to attain the fine education that Florida Gulf Coast University provides,” said CHEF President Judith M. Hushon.

A separate gift from The Chaîne Foundation provided for an additional \$5,000 in scholarships to resort and hospitality management students. The funds were raised by members of the Bonita

Springs and Naples chapters of The Chaîne des Rôtisseurs and matched by The Chaîne Foundation, a tax-exempt organization of the Confrérie de la Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, Bailliage des Etats-Unis, which provides scholarships to culinary, oenological and hospitality students.

“The foundation’s grants help culinary and hospitality students, who will someday be staffing the restaurants and hotels we all enjoy, to passionately pursue their studies,” said Sandi Moran, president of the Naples chapter of The Chaîne des Rôtisseurs and a trustee of the foundation. “Our goal is to ease the financial strain of the costs of education, allowing the students to concentrate on their studies and develop their talent.”

Donors were invited to meet scholarship recipients in November during a reception and dinner at FGCU. Full-time resort and hospitality management majors from Lee and Collier counties were awarded grants



based on financial need and academic standing.

“Each year, the CHEF scholarships provide more and more students who have a career interest in food and beverage management the opportunity to earn a bachelor’s degree and turn their hopes and dreams into reality upon graduation,” said Sherie Brezina, director of the School of Resort & Hospitality Management.

The bachelor’s degree program prepares students for careers in resort, spa, hotel, event, restaurant and tourism-destination management.

“Many of today’s students wouldn’t be able to complete their programs and compete in the workforce without the generous financial support of organizations like CHEF and The Chaîne Foundation,” said Linda Lehtomaa, interim vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the FGCU Foundation, which administers the scholarships. ■

Scholarship gives public relations students a boost

HELPING TO MOLD FUTURE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS IS THE aim of a new endowed scholarship.

Amy and Peter Gravina and the Al & Nancy Burnett Charitable Foundation donated \$10,000 to establish an endowed fund that will award scholarships to students from Southwest Florida who major in marketing or communications with a concentration in public relations.

The Al & Nancy Burnett Scholarship Endowed Fund honors Amy Gravina’s parents.



Peter and Amy Gravina

“Our parents instilled in us a passion for supporting higher education and doing whatever we can to help young people achieve their dreams,” she says.

She is the founding partner of Gravina, Smith, Matte & Arnold Marketing and Public Relations in Fort Myers.

“This scholarship honors their legacy and underscores our commitment to FGCU, a great university that continues

to have a tremendously positive impact on its students and our region,” says Peter Gravina, a longtime partner with the Pavese Law Firm.

“Amy and Peter Gravina have been friends and generous contributors to the university since 1993, four years before it opened,” says Linda Lehtomaa, interim vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the Florida Gulf Coast University Foundation. “With the establishment of this endowment, the Al & Nancy Burnett Scholarship will continue to benefit FGCU students in perpetuity, for which we are most grateful.” ■

CLASS NOTES

▶ This world is but canvas to our imaginations



▶ '06

Kehrinn Hassan

Taking risks pays off for wedding planner.

WHEN PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMERS HEAR THE NAME OF KEHRIN HASSAN'S WEDDING PLANNING BUSINESS – JET SET WEDS – SHE wants their mental image to be of high fashion, trend setting, risk taking and travel.

“Don't let traditions and other people's influence dictate what a wedding will be like or feel like. Make sure it's fun,” said Hassan, ('06, Communication). Perhaps the ambitious 30-year-old is in her element handling destination weddings because her own life has been anything but traditional.

Born to a mother who worked as a dental assistant and father who ran an air-conditioning business, Hassan yearned as a girl to plan special events, and did so covertly at Riverdale High in east Fort Myers with her friends. It was simple: Find a friend whose parents were leaving town, rent a U-Haul, take photos of how everything looked, get guy friends to load the U-Haul, throw a party, charge admission, take a percentage of the profits, clean, unload the U-Haul and depart.

“I probably shouldn't admit that,” said Hassan, who clearly likes taking risks.

It paid off post-graduation when she worked as a special events coordinator for the American Red Cross, Beasley Broadcasting Group and Donald Trump, whose company hired her to set up real estate investment seminars. For two years, she'd fly to two cities each week and stage events.

She also found her FGCU education provided some of the skills she needed.

“Psychology and writing courses come into play,” she said. “The psychology helps me figure out the inter-workings of tense situations. And writing social media, plus the ‘how to market yourself’ and branding were all helpful.”

Now three years into owning Fort Myers-based Jet Set Wed, she's organized brides' big days in Miami, Chicago and Jamaica, and local spots such as Naples Botanical Garden and LaPlaya Beach Resort.

Her favorite planned event? “The one for a principal ballet dancer for the New York City Ballet,” she said. “It was a carnival-like Parisian circus theme at a park with Victorian decor.”

Hassan, who has been a bridesmaid in seven weddings, is not yet married.

“I'll probably get hitched at the courthouse someday,” she said.

– Betsy Clayton

CLASS NOTES

(continued from previous page)



'05

Zack Eaton

Acquiring a taste for “freaky” fast-food business.

IF THERE'S ONE THING ZACK EATON LEARNED WELL WHILE EARNING HIS BUSINESS MANAGEMENT degree ('05) it would be time management. It's proven especially valuable now that the 29-year-old owns three Jimmy John's franchises at bustling locations in Estero and Naples.

“Being a multi-store owner demands that, and you learn in college,” said Eaton, who grew up in Fort Myers but visited his dad in Quincy, Ill., during summers, occasionally grabbing a sandwich at his dad's Jimmy John's franchise.

It's not as if Eaton had planned to join the

“freaky fast, freaky good” chain that delivers within 15 minutes and cuts its veggies and meats fresh daily. After an initial stint at Naples' Tiburon Golf Club, he wanted something new but quickly realized the job market was faltering. He knew a 9-to-5 job wouldn't suit his personality.

He opened his first Jimmy John's in 2008 near Coconut Point, his second in January 2012 off Immokalee Road, and his third in October in Alico Lakes near FGCU. He oversees 80 employees. “I get to choose my own hours, and I knew I didn't want to work for someone else.”

His method to success? “Systems and

procedures. Train and retrain. Attention to detail,” he said in his clipped way of describing most everything.

Corporate Jimmy John's mandates that new franchise owners participate in a seven-week training program, with three at the Jimmy John's Training Center in Champaign, Ill., and four as an apprentice. Eaton praises the experience.

“Do what they tell you, and it's fail-proof,” he said. “All you have to do is pick the right spot.”

Oh, and enjoy the food. “The roast beef is nice and it's medium-rare,” he said. “I eat a sandwich every day.”

— Betsy Clayton

►'11

Brittney Brady

A writer, director and actress takes flight with her own theater company.

“USE THE WORDS YOU TAUGHT ME. IF THEY DON'T MEAN ANYTHING ANY MORE, TEACH me others. Or let me be silent.”
– Samuel Beckett’s “Endgame”

Samuel Beckett’s lines in his 1957 play,

“Endgame,” befitted FGCU alumna Brittney Brady (English, '11) at this stage in her career. With a minor in theater, Brady is happy to immerse herself in both writing and theater in Southwest Florida.

At 24, she’s founder of the new Ghostbird Theatre Company – the resident troupe

at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center (SBDAC) in Fort Myers – Brady is an actress, artistic director and playwright.

Directing “is where I feel most at home, and most challenged,” she says. “I feel really fulfilled.”

Writing “is pretty solitary. You’re working on your own and against obstacles you set for yourself. When you’re directing, there’s a collaborative set of obstacles. Actors come to roles with their own expectations and limitations. Basically, they offer a color and I’m working with the colors.”

Brady wrote “Paler Than Glass,” which became her directorial debut at FGCU’s TheatreLab in June 2011. While guiding her former FGCU poetry professor, James Brock, in “MUD” at the Davis Center last summer, Ghostbird took flight.

In April, she directs “Endgame,” featuring Brock and her former FGCU theater professor, Barry Cavin. An intimidating prospect? “I’m really not worried about it at all. He’s excited to act; he’s excited to let the directing thing go,” she says of Cavin. “It will just be fun.”

Brady, a dental assistant by day, grew up in Cape Coral and nurtured her performance passion at Cypress Lake High School Center for the Arts in Fort Myers. Ghostbird is named for “the mystery, the elusiveness, the magic and the legend” of the swamp-forest-dwelling ivory-billed woodpecker, declared extinct.

With the audience, states her mission, “we seek those deeper spiritual woods, where there may be beauty, loss, communion, reconciliation and hope, all in a flash of wing and feather, or rooted in the dark and fecund earth.” For tickets to “Endgame,” visit www.sbdac.com

– Cathy Chestnut



CLASS NOTES

(continued from previous page)

[WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS AND BIRTHS]

'04

Jeffrey Faramo, (Marketing), and **Rachel Faramo**, '05 (Communication), welcomed the birth of their daughter, Madison Jean, on Nov. 11. They also have a 2-year-old son, Joshua.



'05

Darrin Wallace, (Liberal Studies), and **Kimberly Williams**, '09 (Master's, School Counseling), were married on March 9 at the Burroughs Home in Fort Myers. Wallace is a basketball coach at Canterbury High School, and Williams is the owner of Forever Yours Boutique and is employed in the FGCU Office of Alumni Relations.



'06

Allison Allie, (Master's, Business Administration), and **Scott Young** married Sept. 8 in Saugatuck, Mich. The couple live in Brussels, Belgium, where Allie is an adjunct professor at the College of Advertising & Design and United Business Institutes.



Carrie D'Angelo, (Community Health Services), and **Brad Witt** were married in Las Vegas on April 20. D'Angelo works for the American Hospital Association in marketing and communications. The couple live in Chicago.



Trevor Montgomery, (Special Education), and **Natalie Montgomery** welcomed their first child,

Jameson Mack, on Nov. 2. Trevor Montgomery recently earned his master's in educational leadership from the American College of Education.

'07

Jenna Desiderio, (Marketing), and **Nathan Oppe** are engaged. Desiderio is employed with Premier Beverage. The couple lives in Coconut Creek.



'08

Angela Bell, (Communication), and **Wes Bell** welcomed the birth of their daughter, Cassandra Rose, on Jan. 16. She weighed 6.2 pounds and was 21 inches.

Charles Faramo, (Management), and **Talia Ferreira**, '10 (Resort and Hospitality Management), have announced their engagement. An October wedding is planned. They live in Orlando.

'10

Michael Nacheff, (Political Science), and **Felicia Walker**, '11 (Finance), were married Nov. 18 at the Marco Island Marriott. Nacheff works as a legislative aid for state Sen. Garrett Richter. Walker is a talent consultant for Career Builders. They live in Fort Myers.



Keith Von Behren, (Master's, Business Management), and **Danielle Von Behren** welcomed the birth of their son, Kaden James, on July 25.



'12

Rachel Boyko, (Master's, Social Work), and **Christopher Pfeiffer** are engaged. They are planning a June 8 wedding at Disney World. Boyko is the program director at Homewood



Residence of Naples, an assisted living and dementia/Alzheimer care facility.

Brett Diamond, (Management), and **Becca Harley** have announced their engagement. A May wedding is planned. Diamond recently launched his own business, Venture X, in Naples.



[NEWSMAKERS]

'03

Jerry Elliott, (Master's, Business Administration), has been named the vice president of sales and practice leader at BB&T Insurance Services. In this role, he will work with family risk managers in the personal lines division.

'04

Jennifer Alvarez, (Psychology), owner of Purely You Spa Services, was honored with the Greenest Spa Award at the Eminence Organic Skin Care event in West Palm Beach.



'06

Sarah Weiss, (Communication), has accepted a job as the event manager at the Denver Post. She will be responsible for all events, trade shows and expos.

'08

John Calabrese, (Finance), has joined Plevin & Gallucci Company, L.P.A., one of the top plaintiffs law firms in Ohio. He will focus his practice on workers' compensation appeals, personal injury claims and medical malpractice litigation. He earned his J.D. at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law.

Karen (Layer) Folcik, (Psychology), created Ring Wrapper, a skin-safe, protective silicone band that stretches around your ring, keeping it safe from damage and from falling off of your finger. She earned her master's degree from Columbia University and is an entrepreneur.

SEND US YOUR NEWS

Email to alumnirelations@fgcu.edu or mail to: Florida Gulf Coast University, Attention: Alumni Relations, 10501 FGCU Blvd. S., Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

Jonel Gomez, (Master's, Nursing), is a nurse practitioner for oculoplastic surgeon Stephen Laquis. She was recently appointed to the editorial board of the Journal of the Dermatology Nurses' Association and will speak about periocular lesions at several national dermatology conferences.



place overall Hackathon App 2012 at the Mobile App Hackathon (Miami) by AT&T. Beauvais and his wife, Denisha, live in Fort Lauderdale.

Jessica Carter, (Human Performance), has been sworn in as a member of the Lee Memorial Health System Executive Board of Directors District 5.

Ashley Jennings, (Management), has joined Ted Todd Insurance Agency as a licensed insurance agent. She holds a Florida 4-40 insurance and real estate license. She assists clients with property and casualty insurance policies to protect them from unexpected financial losses.

Tiffany Kesterson, (Management), has joined Ted Todd Insurance Agency as a licensed insurance agent. She assists clients with property and casualty insurance needs to ensure they are financially protected against life's uncertainties.

'10

Michael Jaskolka, (Communication), has joined the FGCU alumni-owned real estate company, Priceless Realty, as a licensed Florida Realtor. He will focus on residential sales throughout Lee County.



'11

Kelsey Thompson, (Master's, Accounting and Taxation), recently passed the American Institute of CPAs exam and met the requirements to become a licensed certified public accountant in Florida. She is employed with Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Company P.A.



'09

Ken Beauvais, (Computer Information Systems), is the co-founder of Schedu.ly, an application to help users stay on time by integrating real-time traffic and location data into your schedule to alert you when it is necessary to leave to make your next meeting. Schedu.ly was awarded third

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

4/16 TUESDAY

Green and Blue Tailgate

Are you ready for some baseball? This is the game you do not want to miss as FGCU takes on the University of Florida. Join the FGCU Alumni Association and Eagle fans for an exclusive tailgate featuring music, a dinner buffet and drinks. 5 p.m., Hammond Stadium, 4100 Six Mile Cypress Parkway, Fort Myers.



4/18 THURSDAY

Spring Senior Projects

Join graduating art majors as they unveil their projects during the opening reception. 5 p.m., FGCU Art Gallery.



6/6 THURSDAY

Summer Soiree

Celebrate the start of summer by mixing and mingling with fellow alumni, colleagues and friends. Be sure to bring a business card for a chance to win an Eagle souvenir. 6 p.m., Seasons 52, 8930 Tamiami Trail N., Naples.



— For more events, go to www.fgcu.edu/alumni

P.S.

▶ The obstacle is the path

Golden moment



F GCU STUDENT MORGAN BOWEN WAS HEADED off campus after a day of shooting photos when she noticed how beautiful the sky was. She stopped to take this photo of the clock tower atop the Cohen Center with the sky aglow behind it. The junior from Bradenton, who is majoring in criminal justice with a minor in art, used a Panasonic Lumix to take the photo. ■

PARTING SHOT is a forum for essays, photos and art that present a unique, personal perspective. Submit material for consideration to Pinnacle Editor Karen Feldman at kfeldman@fgcu.edu or call (239) 590-7093.

Baseball

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY



#7



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