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PHOTO BY BRIAN TIETZ

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## “Post-secondary education and training has to be for everybody”

Modern workforce requires more than a high school diploma.

**Q:** There are more than 18 million students attending colleges and universities in the United States, but that represents a shrinking percentage of students around the world – a percentage that is growing in other countries. Is the U.S. university system losing its advantage internationally?

**A:** No, I don't think so, not in any absolute way. It's important to understand that colleges and universities around the world are expanding at an unprecedented pace. They are also increasing their recruitment efforts to attract both international students and faculty to their institutions. Therefore, the higher education environment is becoming increasingly competitive internationally.

The United States' higher education system still serves as a model for public higher education. But countries like China and India are investing more into higher education and building new universities, which gives young men and women in those countries more local



options for earning their degrees, rather than having to travel to the U.S. to study.

**Q:** Universities around the world are not only educating the leaders of tomorrow, but also the teachers of tomorrow. That's a profound responsibility. Is there a new direction in training these future teachers?

**A:** First and foremost, these future teachers are learning how to make optimal use of instructional technology. They are developing innovative teaching

techniques to serve students who have been technology savvy most of their lives. Therefore they are very comfortable with receiving information using recently developed technologies. The challenge for these future teachers is to maximize the links between students and technology to enhance learning.

Today the world is at our fingertips. Nothing happens on the other side of the world that we don't know about in minutes. That's a new world. The teachers we're training today have to understand that to inform how they approach students in the years to come.

**Q:** It seems that higher education in the United States is trending toward the idea of preparing students for employment. What does that mean for higher education?

**A:** There is increased pressure to respond to workforce needs because students today want to be prepared to step into a job or a career after earning their degrees. The pressure to meet that need is much stronger than it has been in the past. Institutions of higher education must be responsive – and we are. But our



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### Q&A: PRESIDENT WILSON G. BRADSHAW

(continued from previous page)

challenge in responding to this need is to ensure that we keep the right balance between “knowing how to do” (skills) and “knowing” (critical thinking).

These new expectations require us to constantly assess the curriculum: What are we trying to achieve? What are the learning outcomes? What are we preparing students for? Answering those questions informs curriculum development. Knowledge is changing rapidly and we, in turn, need to be responsive to that change and to transfer that new knowledge to students in our classrooms.

### Q: Is attending a college or university necessary for everybody?

**A:** I strongly believe that post-secondary education and training has to be for everybody. The knowledge and skills required for our country to maintain and advance its position in the world will require its citizens to have some training beyond high school. Those with some post-high-school education earn better salaries and also are more civically engaged. So to a great extent, our democracy and way of life increasingly depend on a better-educated population.

As university educators, we need to work closely with K-12 educators to have a common understanding of what is needed for students to be prepared to successfully transition from high school to post-secondary education. Vocational and technical training must be components of what we offer students continuing their education beyond high school. Georgia and Minnesota, for instance, have a network of technical colleges that provides programs to students whose interests lie outside the offerings of a traditional college or university. Here in Florida, there is somewhat of a void in offering that kind of range of educational opportunities.

In my opinion, it's axiomatic that some level of education beyond 12th grade is necessary to prepare the kind of workforce we need today and into the future. ■

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## In family's story, a reason for hope

**E**VEN THOUGH I HAD A BROTHER, I GREW UP AN ONLY CHILD. FIVE YEARS MY JUNIOR, Greg had developmental disabilities – what we called mental retardation then – so extreme he could never even sit up on his own, let alone walk or talk. The doctors told my parents he had no cognitive function and, considering how limited his life was, I hope that was so. He died at age 21.

During much of my youth, I tried to fill in for the son my father would never have, making feeble efforts now and again to fish, garden or watch football with him.

Unable to do anything to help my brother, I yearned for a way to make a difference for someone. I helped spruce up a dormitory at a state institution where people like Greg lived when their families could no longer care for them. I spent a summer volunteering at a camp for children with developmental disabilities. Once I became a journalist, I took every opportunity to write about people with developmental disorders, always looking for success stories, for breakthroughs in therapy, for hope.

Although doctors couldn't tell us what caused my brother's brain damage, I worried from an early age that I might have a child similarly afflicted. My solution was to not have children and, lacking siblings, to need and demand more from my friends and lovers than most could give.

My brother has been gone for almost three decades, but I've thought about him a great deal over the past year as I've spent time with Kathy and Charles Lowers and their six children, watching in awe as they work with FGCU assistant professor Tina

Gelpi to help 4-year-old Nate combat the confounding mysteries of autism. (See article on page 22.)

I found myself envying them, not because of the immense struggles they face each day, but for the fact that they have found ways to help the little boy, to coax him back from wherever it is that the disorder has taken him. I also envy the fact that they have one another, a large and loving family, to share those struggles as well as the victories that have come with ever greater frequency.

Nate's condition and that of my brother have little in common beyond the mystery of what caused them. There were no therapies, protocols or special diets that could have ameliorated the devastating defects with which Greg lived. There was no Tina Gelpi.

But I hope that because the Lowers family has banded together and taken action, Nate will grow up to enjoy a rich and meaningful life. For his family, I hope the bonds they have formed as a result of that work will comfort and unite them throughout their lives. And for readers, I hope the family's story will serve as an inspiration and a reminder to count their blessings.



*Karen Feldman*  
KAREN FELDMAN  
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# UPFRONT

[ HOW TO... ]

## Listen to Southern gospel music

**F**OR MOST PEOPLE, “GOSPEL MUSIC” CALLS TO MIND THE SOULFUL SPIRITUALS and swaying, enrobed choirs of the African-American church. However, there’s an equally rich tradition of so-called Southern gospel that emerged among poor and working-class whites from the rural South in the generations after the Civil War. Today Southern gospel is popular mostly among white evangelicals who are from the South or culturally Southern, but you don’t have to be either to enjoy this glorious music. Some suggestions:

### First, get the good stuff:

Most online music stores carry a respectable selection. Sample broadly, buy discriminately: The all-male quartet is the cornerstone of the genre (try the Cathedral Quartet’s classic album “Symphony of Praise”). But there are also mixed gender family groups (try the Perrys’ “This is the Day”); trios (Greater Vision, whose best album is called – trust me on this – “Quartets”); and backwoods virtuosos (pretty much everything by the Happy Goodman Family). Notwithstanding this advice, live albums are usually superior to studio recordings.

**Second, tune your ear to the music’s frequency:** Southern gospel reflects the plainspoken piety of the people who create and consume it. Be prepared for songs about the blackness of sin, the unmerited favor of saving grace, and above all, the redeeming blood of the cross. One of my favorite songs says “when I knelt, the blood fell.” No words can fully explain how Southern gospel transforms a line like this into musical poetry that works wonders – no matter one’s religious beliefs, or lack thereof. Feeling this power may take a little time if you’re new to the music, but it’s worth the wait.

**Finally, let the spirit move:** Back in the hills of southern Missouri where I grew up, this phrase, loosely translated, means: Surrender the preconceptions and let go of the self-imposed limitations that so often get in our way. At its core, Southern gospel is about the alluring mysteries of the self’s search for grace and salvation. When it’s good, this music can trample the intellect and stampede straight to the heart, to the soul itself – but only if you’ll let it. ■

DOUGLAS HARRISON is an assistant professor of English at FGCU who teaches American literature and culture and blogs about Southern gospel music and culture at [averyfineline.com](http://averyfineline.com). His book, *“Then Sings My Soul: The Culture of Southern Gospel Music,”* is forthcoming from the University of Illinois Press.





“ I think my greatest achievement has been helping individuals gain access to better lives through higher education.”

- JOE SHEPARD, VICE PRESIDENT  
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

## [ HOT TOPIC ]

### Vice president headed to top post at New Mexico university

**J**OE SHEPARD, AMONG FGCU'S LONGEST-SERVING ADMINISTRATORS, LEAVES in July to become president of Western New Mexico University.

Steve Magiera, currently FGCU's vice president for university advancement, will succeed Shepard as vice president for administrative services and finance. A national search is under way to fill Magiera's position.

Shepard came to FGCU in 1995, before there was a campus. He helped create the Student Affairs division, became dean of Student Affairs in 2002, and moved to his current post a year later.

He's played a key role in establishing university housing, which now accommodates 3,000-plus students; constructing the university's 15-acre solar field



Shepard

and expanding campus facilities. He's also taught courses in finance, organizational behavior, public budgeting and statistics.

Shepard was active in the community as well, serving on several boards including the American Heart Association, Edison and Ford Winter Estates, Lee Mental Health Center and the Southwest Florida Boy Scout Council.

"My place in the history of FGCU may soon be forgotten," he says, "but I think the ability to change lives for the better will have a rippling effect for generations to come." ■

## [ A-VERSE ]

### GRIDIRON GOLD

**NEWS ITEM** — Citing financial constraints, FGCU trustees have voted to delay fielding a football program.

*Statistics track the run, the kick, the throw,  
The penalties, the pass, the downs, the dash,  
But from the start, all nascent programs know  
The only sacks that count are filled with cash.*

### SEA LEVEL HEADED

**NEWS ITEM** — In the Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta, FGCU students won trophies for original design, team spirit and people's choice for their 20-foot Viking ship.

*An optimistic sailing trip  
Promotes this point with pleasure:  
There needs to be a sinking ship  
Before there's sunken treasure.*

### IS THIS FOR HERE?

**NEWS ITEM** — New food court options come to campus this fall, including Blu Sushi and Chick-fil-A.

*A student chooses a profession  
When he realizes that  
He never wants to ask the question,  
Whether you want fries with that.*

### SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

**NEWS ITEM** — FGCU will launch a new degree program in journalism in the fall.

*A first-year reporter will share and discover  
A bathing-suit wearer's appeal:  
There's interest developed, not by what they cover,  
But more so in what they reveal.* ■

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

### FGCU takes a pass on football – for now

**W**HILE ENTHUSIASM FOR FOOTBALL EXISTS AT FLORIDA Gulf Coast University, the money needed to build and operate a successful program remains years away.

"I believe FGCU will have football," says President Wilson G. Bradshaw, "but I don't believe now is the time."

He recommended – and the Board of Trustees concurred – that the university re-assess the matter when FGCU has 18,000 to 20,000 students, roughly 5 years from now. This fall, the university

expects to have about 13,000 students.

Bradshaw based his conclusion on a feasibility study conducted by Carr Sports Associates Inc., a consulting firm that specializes in intercollegiate athletics.

The study concluded FGCU would need to spend as much as \$90 million to construct a football stadium, support services buildings and a practice facility. That doesn't include the cost of the land on which the complex would stand or a host of other related experiences.

FGCU could expect to spend \$10 million a year to run the program and would likely lose more than \$4 million annually. ■

## [ PASSAGES ]

### Duane Swanson, FGCU's No. 1 fan

Florida Gulf Coast University athletics lost its biggest fan when Duane Swanson died March 8 of complications from diabetes. He was 71.

His passing came a week after the athletics department awarded him an honorary letter, in thanks for his long and ardent support of the developing program. A memorial service at Alico Arena drew hundreds to pay their respects.



Swanson became an avid supporter of the university's fledgling athletics program after meeting FGCU baseball coach Dave

Tollett in 2002. He and his wife, Cookie, donated generously toward baseball scholarships, construction of the baseball/softball field – known as Swanson Stadium – and the Outdoor Sports Complex.

In 2007, he explained his and his wife's philosophy of giving this way: "The Southwest Florida community has been a great place for me, both personally and professionally. Cookie and I believe strongly in giving back to this community. We both enjoy our relationship with the FGCU Athletics Department, the coaches and student-athletes, and we saw the need to help the program as it was beginning."

Born in Gary, Ind., he grew up on a farm. He earned a bachelor's degree in accounting at Augustana College and a master's in business administration at Indiana University. Swanson began his professional life as an accountant, later purchasing Raymond Building Supply in Fort Myers.

While enjoying his business success, he also relished spending time with his family and friends, traveling, attending the theater and the symphony and dining well.

He is survived by his wife of 42 years, two daughters, two sons and 10 grandchildren. ■

## William C. Merwin, 1939-2011

**W**ILLIAM C. MERWIN SERVED as Florida Gulf Coast University's president for eight years, but his accomplishments will benefit students for generations to come.

The university's second president, he died May 6, at age 71 after a lengthy illness. Beside his bed was an FGCU eagle statue, which his family said provided him comfort in his last days.

Merwin succeeded Roy McTarnaghan in 1999, when the 2-year-old university had fewer than 3,300 students and offered 26 academic degrees. There were no athletic teams, no music or engineering programs, and just one residence hall.

His vision for the small institution was vast. By the time he left, he'd help raise \$175 million, tripled the number of students enrolled and academic degrees offered and guided FGCU's 14 athletic teams toward NCAA Division I competition.

Merwin helped secure funding for Lutgert Hall, Holmes Hall, the Kleist Health Education Center and the Sugden Welcome Center, among many other structures and programs.

"When Dr. Merwin said 'we,' he meant WE – all who are here now, all who came before, and all who will come



President William C. Merwin

after our time at FGCU," said Susan Evans, FGCU chief of staff. "His legacy is his many outstanding accomplishments and none was more important than making it about all of us, together working to build something spectacular."

His talent for making everyone feel important – whether he was wooing a potential donor or eating pizza with students – contributed to his success.

"Dr. Merwin mastered the art of listening to individuals and finding their passions and talents," said Barbara Krell, who has served as executive assistant to all three FGCU presidents. "He then matched those talents and passions to the university's needs. Those of us who worked for him became better at what we did because of him."

Merwin came to FGCU after having served as president of Salisbury State University, State University of New York College at Potsdam and Montana State University – Northern. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in history at University of Wisconsin, Lacrosse/Madison, was a Fulbright Scholar at Sophia University in Tokyo and earned his doctorate in history/social science education at the University of Georgia.

As FGCU president, he quickly became a part of Southwest Florida and it was the community he considered home.

"President Merwin was often described as a man who could fill a room," said Joe Shepard, vice president for administrative services and finance. "He could also fill the hearts and souls of those he met. With a gregarious smile and infectious enthusiasm, he advanced FGCU into a premier regional university that has positively impacted students' lives and made Southwest Florida a better place."

He is survived by three sons and their wives, seven grandchildren, one great-grandchild, a sister, a brother, nieces and nephews.

At a memorial held for Merwin at FGCU, President Wilson G. Bradshaw said, "I only realize today what big shoes I have to fill... I will always be proud to walk in Bill's footsteps." ■

“ I only realize today what big shoes I have to fill...  
I will always be proud to walk in Bill’s footsteps.”

— WILSON G. BRADSHAW,  
FGCU PRESIDENT

## [ CUTTING EDGE ]

# Canny about canines

Professor, honors students create dog-safety program for kids.

**Y**OUNGSTERS HEAR A LOT OF WARNINGS ABOUT THE DANGER OF STRANGERS, but the lessons generally focus on people.

A less obvious – but equally serious – hazard comes in the form of man’s best friend. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 4.5 million Americans suffer dog bites each year. Those most likely to be injured: children 5 to 9 years old.

To help lower that number, Tunde Szecsi, an FGCU associate professor of education, worked with FGCU honors students Maria Barbero, Alyssa Del Campo and Maria Toledo to devise a dog-safety course for kindergartners. A paper they wrote on the project appeared in the winter issue of *Childhood Education*.

Using the “American Humane Kids: Kids Interacting with Dogs Safely” program, they developed a seven-week service-learning project that sent FGCU students into kindergarten classrooms. The primary purpose was to teach children to be safe around dogs, but a secondary



goal was to help the youngsters learn to be kinder to their fellow humans, too.

“It’s a great program,” says Szecsi. “It incorporates several subjects – reading, writing, art, singing – and we can see how learning to interact with dogs affected how they do with people.”

It also provided university students with the chance to try their hand at teaching.

To determine the effectiveness of the program, the team created pre-and post-course assessments that quizzed children on their dog-safety savvy. They watched videos, sang songs, drew pictures and engaged in interactive play. While no live dogs took part, the students used a stuffed dog and hand puppets to represent the real thing.

In Jackie Graham’s kindergarten class at St. Michael’s Lutheran School in Fort Myers, FGCU freshman Emmalea Bozone stood in front of a dozen children seated at their pint-sized desks, each holding a sock puppet meant to represent a dog.

FGCU student Emmalea Bozone reviews dog-safety practice with kindergartner Andrew Kelton at St. Michael’s Lutheran School in Fort Myers.

First, she showed them a short video that discussed how to approach dogs and how animals might react.

If a dog is sleeping, for example, it’s best not to touch it or shout, scaring it and possibly causing it to bite. The same goes for a dog that’s eating or one that is nursing.

The course ended with a mini graduation. “Every child who graduates gets a book about dog safety they can share with family and friends,” Szecsi says.

The FGCU students have presented the findings of their project at several professional conferences, an opportunity many students don’t get until they reach the graduate level.

“It is a joy to work with them,” Szecsi says. “They make me shine.”

— Karen Feldman

## ▶ HOW TO MEET A DOG

When approaching a dog and its owner:

1. Ask: “Is your dog friendly?”
2. If the owner says yes, ask: “May I pet it?”
3. If the owner agrees: Gently hold out your hand for the dog to sniff.
4. Once the dog has sniffed you: It’s OK to pet it.

— American Humane Association



## [ COMMUNITY ]

### Pair leads team to raise \$22,000 to fight breast cancer

Kris J. Thompson and Judson McCormick ('08, Management) took the "think pink" campaign to the extreme this spring, rallying 90 FGCU co-workers and students plus off-campus friends and family to raise \$22,000 to battle breast cancer. The team netted the second largest amount in Southwest Florida.

McCormick and Thompson, senior registered nurse in FGCU's Student Health Services, planned to raise \$3,500 for the annual Susan G. Komen for the Cure fund drive. But their inventive fundraising efforts prior to the Race for the Cure in March paid off beyond their wildest hopes.

Thompson led his spinning class at a local fitness center in a pink bra and raised money through prize giveaways in class. The team held an auction dinner that drew 70 people and led "bra crawls" of women – and men – wearing pink lingerie, who marched through local shopping centers collecting donations. Their hot pink cups runneth over.

"People loved it," Thompson says. "We had (breast cancer) survivors coming up and hugging us."

McCormick says, "It seemed to be raining money. It was a real grassroots thing. It was the perfect example of teamwork."

Miriam Ross, executive director of Susan J. Komen for the Cure Southwest Florida, believes the awareness the team built is as important as the money it raised. Early detection of breast cancer saves lives.

"They're so fun," she says. "They have all the passion and energy to really make a difference. It helps spread the word." ■



Thompson

## [ WHERE ARE THEY NOW? ]

### Jennifer Alvarez: Purely inspired

Illness spurred spa owner to find balance in life.

**A** MISDIAGNOSIS OF CANCER LED JENNIFER ALVAREZ ('04, Psychology) on a path toward

making the world a healthier place.

She was a 21-year-old FGCU student in 2002 when doctors told her she had cancer. A biopsy revealed the lump in her left calf was a benign desmoid tumor, which doesn't metastasize, but can grow quickly and damage nearby tissues and bones. By the time she had surgery to remove it a month later, she could no longer walk.

A year of chemotherapy followed, and Alvarez has been free of symptoms for five years. But the experience inspired her.

"It was life changing for me. I didn't know how long I had to live," says Alvarez, 30, of Naples. "But something positive came out of it."

She became an advocate. Every year, two to four people in a million are diagnosed with desmoid tumors, a condition also known as fibromatosis. Because it's so rare, there has been little public awareness or scientific research, she says.

"I have this personality that, if something bad presents itself, I look at it as an opportunity and a challenge to overcome. I got more health conscious.



Jennifer Alvarez created Purely You Spa to help others lead healthy lifestyles.

I started a walk for the Desmoid Tumor Research Foundation that raised \$17,000. I wanted to be a role model."

A self-described overachiever, Alvarez channeled her energy into a new career. After working as a resort concierge and a massage and fitness supervisor, she launched her own business in 2009: Purely You Spa in Naples. Starting with just a few clients, the licensed esthetician now heads a staff of 18 that uses only

certified-organic products.

Though also busy in the community volunteering for causes such as domestic abuse, Alvarez says she has found balance in her life. To help others achieve equilibrium, she offers wellness seminars that put her FGCU degree to good use. Her psychology studies helped her understand the connections between behavior and health and prepared her to lead others hoping to change their lives, she says.

"We don't just pamper people on their birthdays," she says of her spa. "It's an all-around healthy lifestyle."

— Drew Sterwald

“They have all the passion and energy to really make a difference. It helps spread the word.”

- MIRIAM ROSS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
SUSAN J. KOMEN FOR THE CURE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

## [ COLLECTIVE WE ]

# Baking Yummies Obsessively in Biscayne (BYOB)

Grub-and-gab sessions bring students together.

“I’M STARVING,” LEANNE COOPER GROANS AS SHE STIRS GROUND BEEF IN A SKILLET in the fourth-floor kitchen of Biscayne Hall. Cooper, an environmental studies major, is not conducting a science experiment: She’s making lasagna with meat sauce on a Tuesday night in the South Village residence hall with a casual collective of budding foodies known as BYOB – as in Baking Yummies Obsessively in Biscayne.



Cory Mundy and LeAnne Cooper put the finishing touch on a pan of lasagna.

“It’s half social, half cooking,”

Cooper says as she drains the cooked-off grease from the meat. “We started the second week of school. This is my first year here, and I didn’t know anyone. And I didn’t know how to cook. Baking stuff and handing it to random people in the hall didn’t really work.”

Through Facebook and networking, she and a few other students got the dough ball rolling last fall. By spring, as many as 12 to 15 gathered weekly for grub-and-gab sessions funded by pocket change and fueled by a yen to learn a little cooking while meeting new people. They’ve already planned a menu of yummys for 2011-12.

Against a backdrop of classic rock courtesy of online radio service Pandora, they share dating stories, academic worries and spring-break plans. The budding chefs so far have run the gastronomic gamut from banana bread to cream puffs to shepherd’s pie.

“We try to make things from

scratch,” says BYOB treasurer Mandy Searle, who is majoring in resort and hospitality management. “We always end up missing one thing, like oven mitts or a mixing spoon.”

This time? They’ve got just one pot holder to pull a 9-by-13-inch pan of bubbling-hot lasagna from the oven.

By the time BYOB vice president and “social director” Rob Paletta arrives, a dozen students huddle around the stove, ratcheting up the volume in these close quarters.

DJ Pandora settles on Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” – a song that is almost twice as old as the BYOB members – and a sing-along ensues.

Paletta explains why

BYOB works.

“You need a group of loyal, dedicated members who all get along and are socially cohesive,” says the resort and hospitality management major. His videos of “The BYOB Show” can be seen on YouTube.

– Drew Sterwald



## [ BY THE NUMBERS ]

### Pomp and circumstance

As FGCU’s enrollment climbs past 12,000, commencement ceremonies are experiencing growing pains. More and more students each year choose to walk in cap and gown, and last spring’s graduating class of 1,349 was split into morning and afternoon events that filled Alico Arena. Chief of Staff Susan Evans has said the university may have to re-evaluate future commencement arrangements to accommodate growth. Here are some Spring 2011 Commencement figures:

Percentage of graduating students who participated in spring commencement.

The number has climbed as enrollment has grown. Only 65 percent of degree candidates walked in Spring 2006.

88

6 Guest tickets allotted per graduate



Total guest tickets issued for Spring 2011 commencement ceremonies

6,950

3,709

Guest capacity for commencement at Alico Arena, including seats behind the stage

Volunteers needed to help run each commencement ceremony

50

\$30

Highest price offered for extra commencement tickets on Craigslist (Students who scalp tickets face possible disciplinary action.)

Number of degrees awarded last spring in

Communication. Elementary Education ranked second highest with 84, while Management was represented by 74. Most common graduate degree awarded: Master of Business Administration, with 39.

96





The FGCU engineering students row their boat in the 18th annual Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta.



## ► CARDBOARD COMMANDOS

Student engineers  
show team spirit,  
go down with ship

**P**ROUDLY WEARING THEIR HORNED HELMETS, BROWN CAPES, TANGERINE LIFE VESTS and warriors' swords, the mighty Vikings went down with their 20-foot ship in the Cape Coral harbor. The water-logged finish – for which the team captured the coveted Most Spectacular Sinking Award – marked the end of an 8-month voyage for the inventive team of students from FGCU's recently accredited U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering.

The aspiring civil engineers built their entry in the 18th annual Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta from recycled cardboard and six cases of Liquid Nails. The popular event, sponsored by the Cape Coral Rotary Club, attracts dozens of competitors, whose entries must be made of nothing but cardboard and adhesive.

After transporting their hand-built boat by trailer to Cape Coral and launching her at Four Freedoms Park, the FGCU Vikings waged an all-out battle against the fearsome Ragin' Cajuns of Lamar Advertising – in their alligator-shaped craft – while hundreds of people lining the shore cheered them on.

Although the Vikings narrowly lost the race, their spirits remained buoyant, even as the vessel disintegrated into masses of sodden paper during a free-for-all finale when a small boat rammed the craft. To say it took on water hardly describes the ship's swift demise.

BY KAREN FELDMAN

PHOTO BY BRIAN TIETZ



**N**onetheless, the 12 crew members felt victorious, capturing second place for Best Original Design, first place in Best Team Effort and third place in People's Choice, along with the award for sinking in style.

"We did really well," says Corey Smith, the ship's captain. "If we'd had the inside lane we would have won."

Although there was plenty of fun involved, the underlying purpose of the project was educational.

Team members estimate they put in about 1,000 hours starting late last summer and culminating in the race April 16.

After arriving at a theme, the students hauled huge cardboard boxes into the Holmes Hall high bay, a two-story room designed for building tall structures. They cut the cardboard into broad strips, then fashioned them into nine-layer walls held together with Liquid Nails. They designed the hull and conducted compression testing that determined it would withstand as much as 1,700 pounds of pressure. Then they constructed the mast and sails. The final touches included painting on the boat's name, *Ran*, after the Norse goddess of the sea, as well as the Norse saying "*Folkjorf of barg ok fari peira*," or "Aid the men and all their faring."

They even added circular shields meant to symbolize the villages and ships they'd plundered and a stuffed eagle head as the figurehead. They completed the Viking theme by donning horned helmets, capes and as much facial hair as they could muster.

"The work ethic of the students is something else," says Kristoph-Dietrich Kinzli, FGCU assistant professor of civil engineering and the group's tireless adviser. "They are here early in the morning and late at night. It was an awesome experience. Everyone learned a lot."

The vessel was meant to be a minor side project of the FGCU chapter of the



**Top:** The engineering students build their craft in the school's high bay.

**Below right:** Capt. Corey Smith and Kristoph-Dietrich Kinzli, assistant professor of engineering, prepare to race.

American Society of Civil Engineers, members of which also built a concrete canoe and a steel bridge they entered into a regional ASCE competition in Tennessee just weeks before the cardboard regatta.

This was the first year the young engineering school's chapter competed in the regional conference, going up against teams from much larger and longer-established engineering programs such as Auburn, University of Tennessee and all of the Florida state schools. They didn't win with either project, but did bring back the best team spirit award.

"We don't have the money or resources the larger schools do," says Smith, who is president of the FGCU







chapter of ASCE, “but we have the time, effort and dedication. That’s what you have to have to run with the big guys.”

The project prompted one volunteer to change majors. Jenna Gargano was pursuing a degree in occupational therapy. Living in the same residence hall as Smith, she wondered why he and his friends were rarely home.

“I listened to what they were talking about,” she says. “I’ve never found anything that made me so excited. I wanted to do it, too.”

She joined the project during the winter break and switched majors

Top: FGCU’s Viking Explorer, right, does battle with the Ragin’ Cajuns of Lamar Advertising.

Top right: The Vikings go down with the ship.

Bottom right: FGCU students and the remains of their craft.

shortly thereafter.

The team had so much fun, the members had barely removed their helmets before they began brainstorming about next year’s entry.

“We’re thinking about a 40-foot, three-masted pirate ship,” says Smith. “It’s going to be huge.” ■

## THE TEAM

Corey Smith, captain, Steven Agatstein, Jonathan Cohen, Chris Conti, Jenna Gargano, John Tyler Glenn, Jordan Jensen, Steven Johnston, Katelyn Kersey, Rob Tetla, David Spelman, Kevin Yole

### The team thanks the following for their support:

Advanced Solar, for the cardboard; Thomas Marine Construction, for the trailer; Estero River Outfitters, for paddles and life vests; FGCU Foundation and the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering, for funding for supplies



Below: Lucas Century engraves names on the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in 1983.  
Right: The artist sits in the walk-in-closet-sized booth where he sandblasts his creations.



Photo by Janet Century

# ART TO LAST A CENTURY

Sanibel artist's work  
engraved in campus history

**T**AKING A BREAK FROM ENGRAVING NAMES ON THE GRANITE WALL OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS' MEMORIAL in Washington, D.C., Lucas Century flew to Miami in 1983, intending to kick back for a week in the Keys.

He didn't get very far. On his first day in Florida, someone stole his rental car.

Even people less intuitively inclined than Century might interpret that as a sign.

A friend suggested he try Sanibel Island instead, so he rented another car and drove across the state with a tent to camp out and explore the islands. He was hanging out at the Crow's Nest bar at Captiva's Tween Waters Inn when he met a woman by chance on the dance floor. Another sign?

He later married her.

BY DREW STERWALD  
PHOTO BY BRIAN TIETZ







**A**t a crossroads in his young career, the then-27-year-old craftsman fell in love with a woman and an island during a brief vacation that's turned into half a lifetime. Within two years, he bought a house and began to live the artist's life on a lush little island preserved by like-minded nature-loving residents.

Many people look for signs from the universe, but not everyone is open enough to find them or bold enough to follow them.

"That's how my brain chooses to operate," Century says. "Signs float up to the surface. You see how they fit together in your life. Serendipity is comforting to me."

Now 56, an established artist and an island fixture for half of his life,

Century could say he knows a lot about surfaces as well as signs: He specializes in engraving them.

Using a process he pioneered on the Vietnam memorial in the early 1980s and has refined in the years since, Century etches artwork into glass, ceramic tile, stone and other materials. His work can be seen in four buildings at Florida Gulf Coast University – the largest presence of a single artist on campus.

His latest addition, "Water Symphony," is a 10-by-30-foot mural adorning the donor wall in the building

**Century developed a technique for mass-engraving that he used on the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.**

that houses the Bower School of Music. Commissioned by the FGCU Foundation, the mural consists of 75 2-by-2-foot ivory ceramic tiles engraved with black swirling patterns. Like much of his work, it reflects the imagery of his beloved island.

"It was inspired by patterns in low tidal areas, the ripples left by the incoming and outgoing water," he says. "The intersecting ripples have a marvelous flow. It's something I watch during my evening walks on the beach."

"Water Symphony," which took a month and some serious adhesive to install, strikes a dramatic chord over the entrance to the U. To Be Recital Hall. Visitors get their first glimpse through the two-story glass façade before they even enter the building.



Photo courtesy of Janet Century, taken in 1983.





“Luc Century’s discipline-specific recognition walls add a refinement and process appropriate to a university,” says Judie Cassidy, the FGCU senior director of advancement who has worked with Century on his university art. “His creations are capable of standing on their own as works of art. In the conceptual process, he encourages donor involvement and blends their ideas with his own. The resulting installations are cerebral, precise and spectacular.”

“Give me a place  
to stand and I will  
move the world.”

— Archimedes

Century’s work ensures he will have a presence on the FGCU campus for generations. When it came to his own college education, though, he never really settled in at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland. He tried a number of disciplines – not including art – before working toward a business degree he didn’t finish. In fact, he never studied art formally and collaborates with other artists when his work requires illustrations, such as the Archimedes mural in the Holmes Hall lobby.

“I’m all self-taught,” he says.

The teaching began during his Cleveland Heights adolescence. A couple of neighborhood friends owned cameras and had their own darkrooms. Century picked up a camera and was drawn to photographing patterns he saw around him – the bark on a tree, the ripples of moving water.

A sign perhaps?

“When you’re young, you’re attracted

“Water Symphony,” in the Bower School of Music building, consists of 75 2-by-2-foot engraved tiles.

to things you most enjoy but often move away from,” he says. “I’m living a vision I had in high school with the camera.”

Century’s attraction to etching blossomed around the same time, when he got a job engraving people’s names on snow skis at a resort shop.

Still, the two threads of inspiration did not begin to intertwine until years later. On summer break and pondering what to do after college, Century washed windows to earn money. An epiphany struck one day as he pulled a squeegee across a pane and saw his face reflected in the glass: He should try to transfer graphic images to glass.

Four years of experiments with acid etching and other techniques produced a photographic process for creating stencils that could be used in sand-blast engraving.

About the same time, Century heard about the Vietnam wall project and contacted Maya Lin, the 21-year-old architecture wunderkind chosen to design the \$9-million memorial. Once again, destiny seemingly stepped in. The project manager told Century they had given up on being able to engrave 58,000 names in time and on budget for the planned November 1982 dedication.

Century could, and did. “No one had done any amount of engraving like that before,” he says. “We ended up doing it on time for \$275,000.”

The job and its scale presented a number of challenges, including humidity, high temperatures, sunlight heating the granite and inconsistencies in the material. “It was like fighting my own war.”

Naturally contemplative and soft-spoken, the artist could see firsthand the memorial’s impact on family members who came to find their loved ones’ names. One day, the widow of a soldier who turned out to be the first casualty of the war stood over Century’s shoulder and watched him engrave her husband’s name on Line 78, Panel 1E: Capt. Harry Cramer.

“The power behind the wall is amazing,” Century says, softly.

“If there’s energy out there, I’m open to it.”

— Lucas Century

Working on the wall helped Century buy his piece of Sanibel paradise at an age when few men have the wisdom or wherewithal to consider the bigger picture.

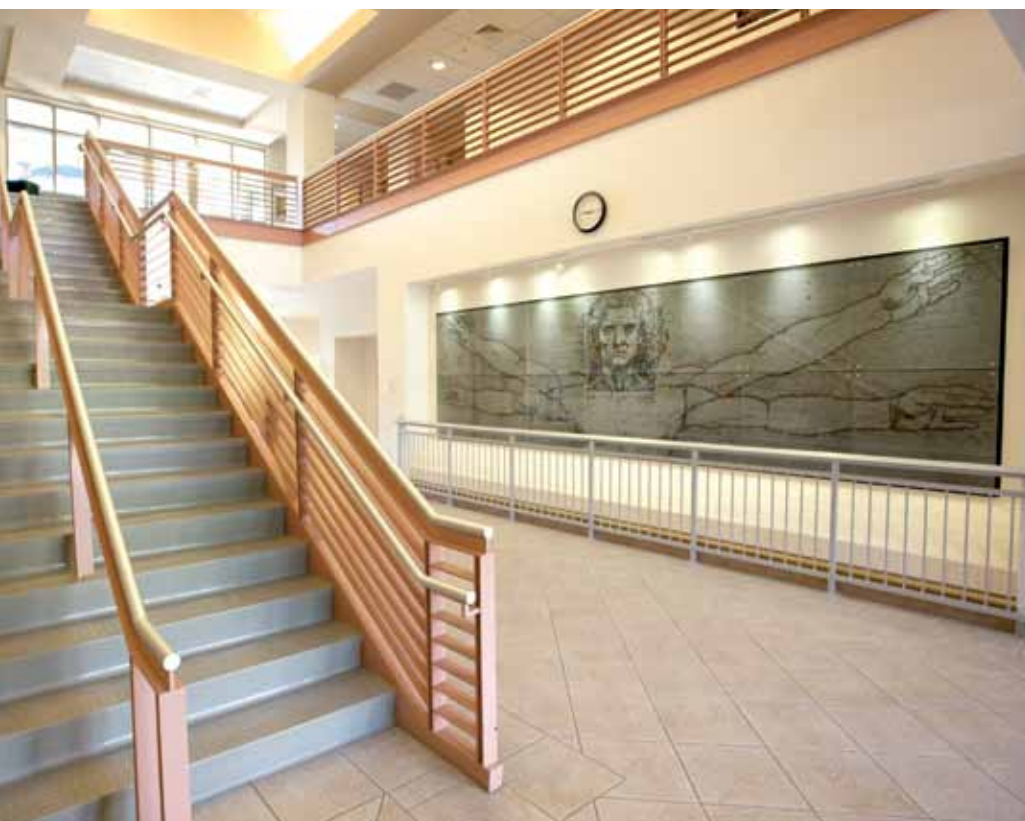
“He’s wide open,” says retired businessman Will Schlosser, an islander for more than three decades. “I’ve known Luc ever since he came to Sanibel.



Photos by Brian Tietz







Upper left: "Tourbillion," etched glass 50 inches in diameter and 3/4-inch thick, hangs over the lobby of Academic Building 7.

Above: Leonardo da Vinci's "Vitruvian Man" inspired Century's drawing and sketches in Whitaker Hall.

Left: "Elements of Machinery" is one of two Century murals gracing Holmes Hall.

"He's got both feet on the ground for sure."

Schlusser sponsored significant Century works at the Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum and at Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall. But the artist's hand and heart can be seen all over Sanibel in pieces large and small, in a line of commercial wildlife engravings and in community-minded projects. Recently, he fabricated a solar-powered Eternal Light sculpture symbolizing unity that shines on the shared grounds of the Sanibel

Congregational United Church of Christ and Bat Yam Temple of the Islands.

"I would call him an island treasure," say Al Hanser, a congregation member and longtime friend whose family donated the Eternal Light. "Luc is just basically a part of the fabric of Sanibel and Captiva. There's not a charity on the island where he doesn't donate a work of art. He's very generous with his time."

Sanibel and Captiva attract artists and environmentalists who share a common, utopian dream inspired by preservationist and local legend J.N. "Ding" Darling, Century believes.

His own home? Not one of the infamous island McMansions of the 1990s, but a modest two-bedroom cottage on the lighthouse end of Sanibel that dates to 1959. The office bursts at the seams with shelves of glass goblets, vases and bowls destined for engraving. Out back, a palm- and fern-fringed yard is dotted with beds of aromatic rosemary

and oregano shrubs. But Century sniffs the air and picks out a sweet, hay-like scent.

"Cat's claw," he says. "I love that smell. It's so great to work at the homestead with the garden at the doorstep. It's a transition that's soft between the house and the hard, gritty atmosphere in the studio."

A separate shed houses the makeshift plywood sandblasting booth where he dons a protective suit and a hand-fashioned air-conditioned hood to protect himself from the floating grit the process stirs up. A thin film of sandy dust coats every surface in the walk-in-closet-sized booth where Century blasts sand and compressed air through a nozzle to abrade the surface of whatever he's engraving – glass, stone, ceramic tiles.

Here were engraved the glass "Tourbillion" disk that hangs overhead in the Academic Building 7 lobby as well as the tiles of the Bower mural. Fitting for a man named Century, he invokes time to explain his love for engraving.

"It's erosion, the sands of time," he says. "It's what weather would do, but it's sped up. That's very empowering." ■

## FACTS OF LIFE

### LUCAS CENTURY

**BORN:** June 23, 1955, Newark, N.J.

**FAMILY:** Wife Dee; greyhound Gracie

**HOME:** Sanibel

**FGCU CONNECTION:** Five murals and sculptures on campus

**CLAIM TO FAME:** Created process used to engrave names on the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, D.C.

**LAST BOOK READ:** "Spontaneous Evolution: Our Positive Future and How to Get There from Here" by Bruce H. Lipton and Steve Bhaerman

**FAVORITE SANIBEL BEACH:** Lighthouse Beach

**HIDDEN TALENT:** "I can wiggle my nose."



# SAVING NATE



It takes a village –and one great dog –  
to break barrier of autism

By Karen Feldman

Photo by Nate's brother Abraham Lowers

Nate and his twin sister, Maggie, were born in December 2006, about a month premature, but were otherwise happy and healthy babies with that special bond twins share. They learned to crawl and walk right on schedule. Nate was the first to speak. He'd wave "bye-bye," point to things and ask "What's that?"

But by the time he turned 2 ½, Nate no longer made eye contact or spoke. He didn't respond when his mother called his name. He stopped running around with his five siblings in the sprawling backyard of their Naples home, preferring to page through books alone or complete intricate puzzles that were too advanced for his twin. He also had a penchant for lining up items according to the color spectrum – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet.

Kathy Lowers figured her son was just an intellectual kid who liked to play independently.

"I thought it quirky," she says, "but did not worry until it got to the point where he would line up just about everything in a room."

When a friend saw how Nate had regressed, she gave Lowers a book on autism, a developmental brain disorder that affects social interaction and communication skills. Researchers estimate it strikes one child in every 110 and four times as many boys as girls.

"Autism had been staring me in the face, screaming in my face, but I had been in denial," Lowers says.

She took Nate to a neurologist and a team of diagnostic specialists, but didn't wait for the results before sending out a desperate email to her home-school group. Someone told her about the Center for Autism & Related Disabilities, an organization run by the University of South Florida to help families coping with autism. They referred her to Tina Gelpi, an FGCU assistant professor of occupational therapy.

Although it may sound like something related to career development, occupational therapy for children with

**"With a special needs child, you have to celebrate every small improvement they make, rather than mourn the skills they have not yet mastered."**

— Kathy Lowers

autism helps to encourage appropriate responses to information received from the senses, such as touch, sound and movement. Therapeutic activities aim to develop social, play and learning skills as well as the ability to perform tasks such as getting dressed and playing with others.

Gelpi began working with Nate several times a month, then recruited a class of her graduate students in the summer of 2010 to enhance the work with Nate and his family.

"We set goals based on Nate's needs and his family's interests," Gelpi says. "It's such a wonderful learning experience for the students and me."

It would have been difficult to find a better family with which to work.

Lowers, who has a master's degree in education and taught community college, had been home-schooling Nate's older siblings – Abraham, 12; Victoria, 10; Catalina, 8; and Isabella, 6. Adding 3-year-old Nate and Maggie created a "one-room schoolhouse with a peer (his twin) and suitable role models (his older siblings)," Gelpi says.

They started with basic activities most people take for granted: climbing steps. Then they progressed to swimming, helping Nate develop coordination and muscle strength.

A group of occupational therapy students took Nate and his siblings to Pump It Up, a Fort Myers party place filled with inflatable slides and other equipment, where climbing and romping in stockinged feet are the primary activities. He also began attending Naples Equestrian Challenge, a non-profit therapeutic riding program that helps those with disabilities improve balance, self-discipline and concentration.

As the family's sole breadwinner, Nate's father, Charles, spends most of his time working as a software developer. But he also has teaching experience so he helps with the children's schooling and handles the most physical aspects of Nate's therapy.





Kathy Lowers explains the multidimensional approach this way: “The theory is that there’s a window of opportunity that closes, an opportunity to form new pathways of communication in the brain. If you don’t reach them before they are 4 or 5, they may never speak. I’m trying everything there is.”

Among the behaviors common to children with autism are frequent emotional meltdowns, which aptly describe the daily episodes when Nate crumbled to the floor, crying inconsolably.

Gelpi thought a therapy dog might be the answer, even though it’s rare for children younger than 6 or 7 to get them.

Armed with a recommendation from Gelpi, Lowers applied at Paws for Love, a program sponsored by Humane Society Naples, which trains therapy dogs for people with developmental disabilities.

**Top:** FGCU occupational therapy students work with Nate Lowers at Pump It Up in Fort Myers.

**Right:** Charles Lowers works out with his son.

Enter Falcon, a specially trained golden retriever who comes from a line of dogs bred for their supremely mellow temperament and high intelligence. Even at 5 months, the gangly puppy knew to be gentle with his new companion and quickly understood his role.

When Nate has a meltdown, the dog puts a paw on him, sidles up next to him and licks his face or simply lies down next to him. Not only does it immediately calm Nate, he now has far fewer meltdowns.

“They used to happen multiple times a day,” says Lowers. “Now he has one maybe once a week. Falcon is like having a therapist in the house.”





Above: FGCU assistant professor Tina Gelpi helps Nate prepare for his graduation at Naples Equestrian Challenge.

Top: Nate's mother, Kathy, watches her son ride.

Left: Mindy Cowan and Tina Gelpi guide Nate and his horse, Pick A Spot, across the arena.





Every morning, the family runs around the yard for exercise. Falcon makes the circuit and, as a result, Nate's happy to run, too.

Home schooling involves all the children taking turns working with Nate. Included in their arsenal of therapy-based educational equipment are games Gelpi's students designed just for him.

There's one that helps him match animals to the sounds they make; an obstacle course he can use in a pool; a song that's helping him learn how to get dressed; and a story that teaches him

how to play cooperatively with his twin sister by taking turns constructing a Thomas the Train puzzle. A homemade basketball hoop and kicking games develop his gross motor skills. There's even a manual that shows his mother how to massage him to get him to sleep better or pay attention.

Lowers says the games the students designed specifically for Nate, understanding his history and needs, have been invaluable.

"I use the therapy games they made every day in our home therapy regimen and Nate is definitely gaining skills from them," she says.

Speech therapists work with him at the house a couple of times a week. Gelpi also guided the family to use something called therapeutic listening, which increases his attention to what he hears in the environment.

The combination of therapies has made a vast difference, and it's not just Nate who's benefiting.

"It's productive, meaningful time for Nate and his siblings," Gelpi says. "They are developing family bonds. The household is a community of learners,

all working on strengths, all getting the attention they need to blossom."

Lowers says Gelpi and her students have helped her tremendously as well.

"When I first met Dr. Gelpi, I was in a fog, confused about what therapies were out there and not sure how to start," she says. "I had talked to doctors and read websites, but they all seemed to focus on the problems of autism and it was all such a downer. In contrast, the first thing Dr. Gelpi told me was that we would be focusing on what Nate could do, not what he could not do. We would find his strengths and praise and encourage him in those, and

## ▶ ABOUT AUTISM

- Autism affects 1 in 110 children and 1 in 70 boys.
- Boys are four times more likely than girls to have autism.
- More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with AIDS, diabetes and cancer combined.
- Autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the United States.

— Autism Speaks



**Top:** Kathy Lowers reads to Isabella, left, Nate and Maggie.

**Above:** Kathy and Nate Lowers play a color and shape sorting game created by an FGCU student.

**Opposite page:** Nate Lowers gets acquainted with therapy dog Falcon.

then work step by step on the areas he needed help in.”

It changed her thinking.

“I went from being overwhelmed with bad news to seeing that there was a way to work with my son and help him improve,” she says. “Sessions with

her not only helped Nate tremendously, but they were a boost to me, too. I always left feeling so proud of Nate’s accomplishments. With a special needs child, you have to celebrate every small improvement they make, rather than mourn the skills they have not yet mastered.”

There have been many occasions for celebration over the past year.

This spring he suddenly began writing numbers and words using capital and lowercase letters.

He now makes frequent eye contact and smiles. He runs and jumps, scampering up stairs and climbing ladders with glee. He is learning to dress himself and brush his teeth. His sister, Isabella, taught him some American Sign Language, which he uses when he wants something. He’s begun talking more.

“He’s making tremendous progress,” Gelpi says. “He’s in a loving environment and he is learning to be loving toward others. His creativity is being tapped and he’s able to express it. He’s a very sensitive child with amazing thoughts that someday he’s going to share with everyone.” ■

## FALCON AS THERAPY

Abraham Lowers documents one of his brother’s meltdowns. As soon as Falcon sees Nate get upset, he climbs up next to him and calms him down.





### A skeleton crew

Forensic anthropologists conduct bare-bones reasearch.

**T**HE CLOSEST MOST OF US GET TO BONES AND UNSOLVED MYSTERIES THAT INVOLVE them is watching episodes of "CSI." Florida Gulf Coast University's forensic anthropology students, however, find themselves up close and personal: face to skull, in many cases. In FGCU's human osteology lab, overseen by Assistant Professor Heather Walsh-Haney, they learn how to identify human bones and how to differentiate them from their non-human counterparts. Here's an anatomical breakdown of the lab:

- 1 LUIS CORTINAS:** Forensic studies graduate student
- 2 JESSICA CARTIER:** A 2011 forensic studies graduate and graduate student
- 3 SERRIN BOYS:** Senior in forensic studies
- 4 GAUTIER SKELETAL COLLECTION:** On loan from the state Bureau of Archaeological Research, this collection of ancient hunter-gatherers' bones, as well as some of their stone points and animal bones, is being inventoried and catalogued by Walsh-Haney and her students.
- 5 DONATED REMAINS:** These boxes hold remains from modern-day cases including skulls and whole skeletons contributed by families interested in helping FGCU forensic anthropology students learn by using authentic remains, rather than just man-made casts.
- 6 ANATOMICAL CASTS:** Cast from real skeletons, these are used as study materials.
- 7 NON-HUMAN PRIMATES:** To help students differentiate non-primates from primates, researchers use these bones to study the subtle differences.

- 8 PELVIC BONES:** Female
- 9 PELVIC BONES:** Male
- 10 SPECIMEN:** A manmade human skeleton
- 11 PHOTOGRAPHIC COPY STAND:** The stand holds a camera used for photographing a cranium (skull minus mandible).
- 12 SCALE:** This instrument allows investigators to obtain precise measurements.
- 13 COMPARATIVE MICROSCOPE:** Researchers can use this device to analyze bones that have undergone blunt force trauma.
- 14 HISTOLOGY MICROSCOPE:** Used to examine slides containing cross sections of bone to determine an individual's age.
- 15 MACERATION POT:** Filled with hot fluid, it is used to render or remove soft tissue from remains.
- 16 OSTEOMETRIC BOARD:** Measures long bones from arms and legs to determine an individual's height.
- 17 MICROSCRIBE:** This 3D digitizer allows for specific bone measurements of skulls to determine sex and ancestry.
- 18 FORDISC 3.0:** A statistical program, it's used to look at population difference to help researchers narrow down the ancestry, sex and stature of individuals whose identities are unknown.
- 19 CRANIUM:** Donated to the program.
- 20 PRIMATE SKULLS:** Monkey and baby chimp skulls belonging to the William R. Maples collection, a large body of the renowned late forensic anthropologist's research, given to FGCU because of his friendship with Walsh-Haney. ■



Photo by Brian Tietz





The Eagle Nebula is 6,500 light years from Earth.  
Photo by sophomore Salvatore Grasso





# TOTALLY COSMIC

New imaging capabilities allow  
FGCU observatory to capture  
Hubble-like vistas

BY DREW STERWALD

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE



**T**HE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE'S PAINTERLY IMAGES OF THE COSMOS CAPTURED THE MINDS and imaginations of Americans in 1990. New stars sparkled like neon pinpricks atop watercolor washes of crimson, blue and gold clouds in the now-famous pictures.

With the recent purchase of color filters and a high-resolution camera, Florida Gulf Coast University's Evelyn L. Egan Astronomical Observatory now produces its own Hubble-like images to advance research and spark the next wave of star-struck students.

"They open the door to a brand-new line of research efforts, which we were previously not able to do," says Michael Fauerbach, professor of physics and astronomy. "They are an excellent tool to combat the ever-increasing light pollution around the observatory. The beautiful images we can now produce will inspire a new generation of people to become

interested in astronomy and related STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields."

The enhanced imaging capability — made possible by an FGCU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs grant — expands opportunities for studying celestial bodies at the 9-year-old observatory, which boasts a state-of-the-art Ritchey-Chretien reflective telescope. It shares the same dual-mirrored optical design as Hubble but on a smaller scale: The primary mirror is 16 inches in diameter compared to Hubble's 8 feet.

"In astronomy, bigger is better," quips Fauerbach, comparing the mirror's size to a large pizza. "It's not the biggest telescope, but it's the sexiest."

The optical tube's outer shell is dressed up in a stylish metallic herringbone pattern and sits atop a racy-red robotic mount that controls the telescope's movement.

The filters, the observatory's latest addition, are used to capture a series of 10- to 15-minute exposures over several hours that computer software turns into a composite or mosaic image. A new electronic imaging camera also boosts the resolution of the astrophotographs by eight times over what was formerly possible at the observatory.

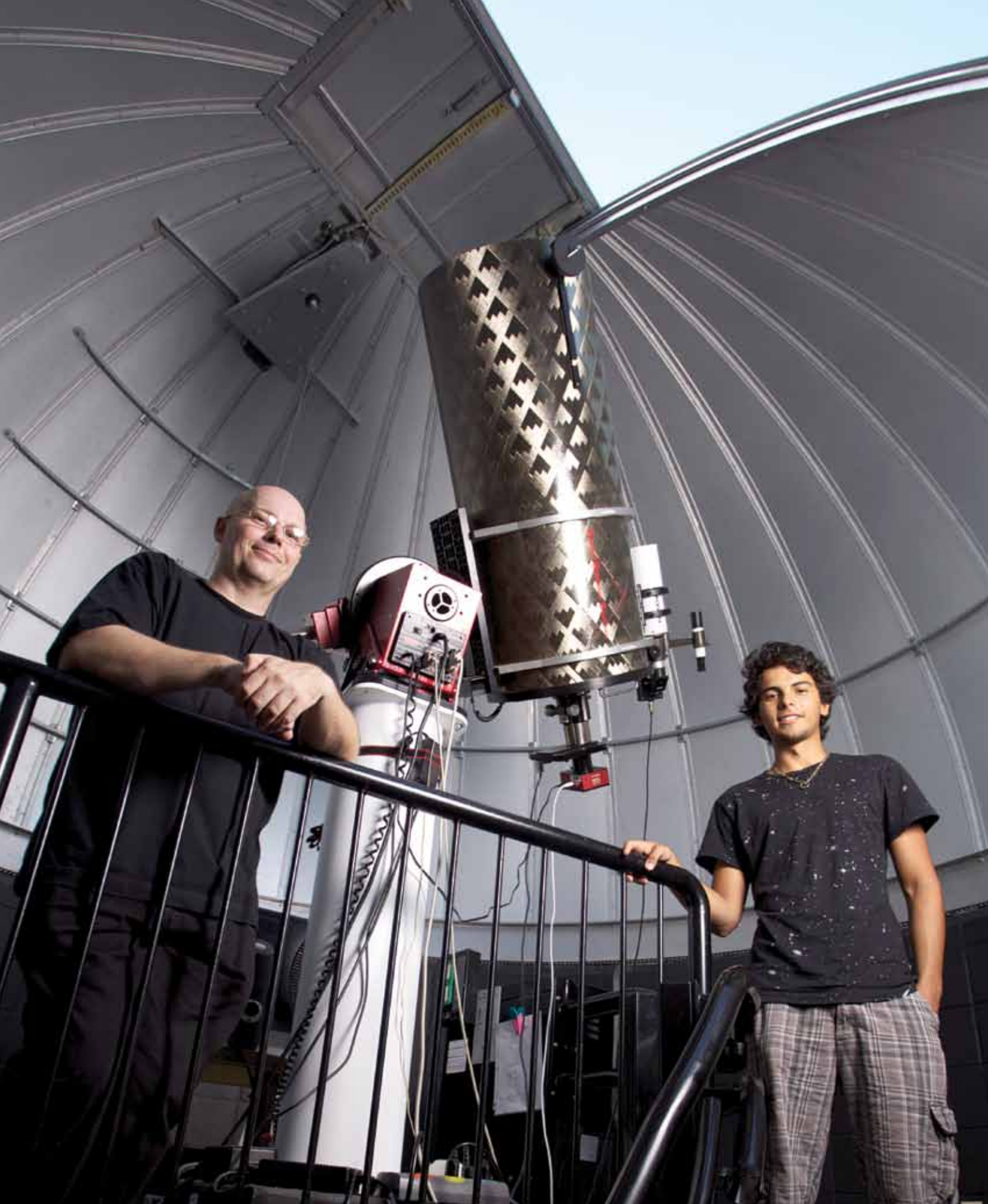
That all means long nights in the observatory for undergraduate assistant Salvatore Grasso, a sophomore biology major from North Salem, N.Y. When the sky cooperates, he tracks and maps stars.

"When it's clear, we're here," he says.

The observatory's aluminum dome has to be rotated every 20 minutes throughout the night during observation periods to follow the targeted star. Grasso ascends a narrow spiral staircase to the upper deck, where the telescope is aimed



Right: Physics and astronomy Professor Michael Fauerbach and undergraduate assistant Salvatore Grasso inside the upper deck of the observatory. Left: The Evelyn L. Egan Astronomical Observatory on campus.





# FGCU'S EYE TO THE SKY

The Evelyn L. Egan Observatory is home to FGCU's state-of-the-art 16-inch Ritchey-Chretien reflective telescope — the same optical design as the Hubble Space Telescope on a smaller scale.

## Gathering light

- 1 Light from the sky passes into the telescope and is focused and reflected by the primary mirror.
- 2 The light then reflects off the secondary mirror.
- 3 Finally, the light passes back through the center of the primary mirror, where it is filtered and recorded by a high-resolution digital camera.

**Robotic mount**  
Costing nearly as much as the telescope itself, this computer-controlled mount is state of the art.

## The facility

### Light lock

Prevents light from control room entering the dome.

### Control room

Where the telescope is monitored and controlled.

### Dome

A spiral staircase leads to the observatory level where the telescope is mounted.

### Mounting post

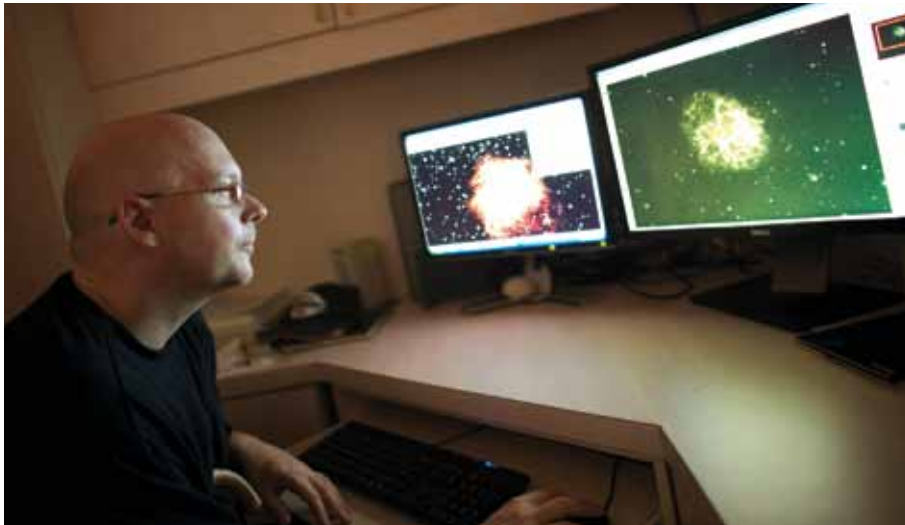
For maximum stability, this post reaches several feet beneath the foundation into bedrock.

ILLUSTRATION AND GRAPHICS BY  
MICHAEL DONLAN

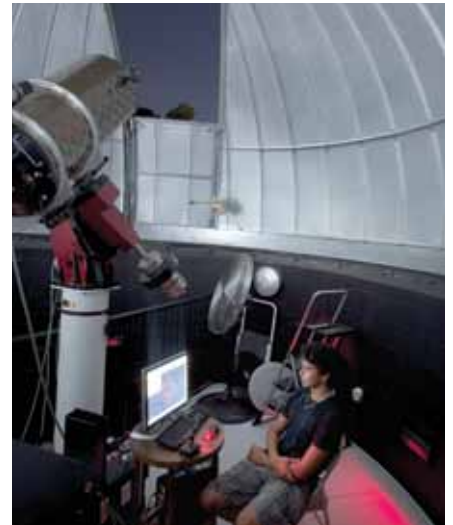
## Hubble filters

Usually, Hubble-style images are composites of three exposures — one each taken in red, green and blue light. When combined, these exposures create the rich, colorful images that allow us to better understand the shape of our universe.





**Left: Professor Michael Fauerbach views images captured through the telescope.**



**Right: Salvatore Grasso at the telescope where he maps and tracks stars.**

through an open slot in the roof. The dome is not air-conditioned because a sharp difference in indoor-outdoor temperatures would create air currents that distort the telescope's resolution. The slot in the roof is opened several hours before sunset to allow the room temperature to adjust to the outdoor level.

"It's like an oven in here in the summer," Grasso says.

At 19, he represents the next generation of stargazers using the latest technology to further our understanding of space. He caught the astronomy bug when he was 12; now an experienced image-maker, he maintains galleries of his stellar snapshots at his own website – sgastrophotography.com.

"My first memories with astronomy were waking up with my parents for a meteor shower yielding 2,000 to 3,000 meteors per hour," Grasso says. "I couldn't believe my eyes."

These days, his eye-popping sightings at the Egan Observatory include deep-sky objects such as the Eagle Nebula, a cloud of gas and dust some 7,000 light years away, where stars form and fade. (See pages 30-31). First catalogued in the 18th century by French astronomer Charles Messier, the nebula is so named because of a feature that resembles an ascending raptor.

The telescope's location brings both advantages and disadvantages for astronomers.

On the downside: Summer rains leave the sky cloudy at night; and continued

growth on and around campus adds light interference.

On the upside?

"There are usually very stable skies – very good observing conditions – during our dry season," Fauerbach says. "Being close to the equator allows us great access to stars in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. This is where you want to be." ■

## WHO WAS EVELYN L. EGAN?

Evelyn L. Egan's blue eyes twinkled, friends say, like the proverbial stars.

"She always had a smile on her face," said David McQuade, a financial adviser and friend for more than 20 years.

Egan's 1999 gift of \$125,000 to build the observatory was matched by the state, and she attended the 2002 dedication, where then-president William C. Merwin presented her with her own star in the constellation Monoceros.

Born on a Minnesota dairy farm, Egan had a soft spot for animals. She was an avid golfer who reportedly notched more than one hole-in-one in her lifetime. She played numerous musical instruments, performing in a local bluegrass band made up of senior women well into her 90s.

Her gift to the university stemmed from



her desire to help young people. Egan didn't have offspring of her own but supported children's charities.

"I have an interest in helping to educate young people," she told The News-Press of Fort Myers in 1999.

After the observatory opened, she developed an interest in astronomy. She often phoned McQuade to ask, "What's new at my observatory?"

"It was a neat thing for her to be able to focus on the last year or two of her life," he said. "I don't think anything she'd done had brought her more excitement and joy than doing this."

Egan died in 2004 at age 99.



# BEAR MARKET

Former Azul  
soars to mascot  
success as  
big-time Bruin

By Jay MacDonald



LAST FALL, MATT MCLAUGHLIN SKATED ONTO CENTER ICE AT BOSTON'S HALLOWED TD Garden for the first time and stared in awe at the championship banners hanging from the rafters. Growing up in nearby Brockton, this hockey fan's dreams had been etched on this ice by greats like Ray Bourque, Cam Neely, Adam Oates and the rest of his beloved Boston Bruins. Now, it would be his turn to prove himself worthy of a Bruins uniform.

He just never figured it would involve a bear costume.

How this 2009 Florida Gulf Coast University history grad suddenly found himself pumping up 18,000 beer-goggled hockey fans as Blades, the ready-to-rumble Bruins mascot and hero to thousands of New England kids, still eludes him.

"I think I got into mascotting because I was dared to do it," he reflects. "It just kind of happened."

McLaughlin's accidental career began with an offhand wisecrack in North Village's Egret Hall, where he was a sophomore resident adviser in the spring of 2007. An RA who was on the dance team stormed in quite upset. "Our mascot just quit!" she wailed, referring to the student who performed as FGCU's Azul the Eagle.

"I turned around and said, 'It's not like he had a hard job,'" McLaughlin says, chuckling at his naiveté.

Next thing he knew, he was finding out firsthand just what it takes to make an eagle fly.

"When I put the suit on, it wasn't like 'oh my God, this is hot, this is terrible, what did I get myself into?' I just made it my own," he recalls.

"The thing with Azul was there wasn't a character developed yet. That made it a lot easier."

McLaughlin stumbled upon his interpretation of Azul while watching TV with his roommate, an avid pro wrestling fan. "With Azul



Matt McLaughlin as Blades, the Boston Bruin's official macot.  
At left: McLaughlin in his Azul days in 2007.



being a very big, muscular, intimidating-looking eagle, I just started mimicking wrestlers – the crowd taunts they would use, the arm in the air pose, the hand behind the ear. It was perfect,” he says.

During a spring sports season in which FGCU’s women’s basketball team finished 34-0 and the men’s baseball team toppled Notre Dame, McLaughlin strutted and flapped his way through his 80 service learning hours. His rare off-campus appearances as Azul, including a skating birthday party for the Florida Everblades’ gator mascot Swampy, caught the eye of Linda McNabb, then president of the Fort Myers Miracle minor league baseball team. She eventually talked McLaughlin into succeeding another FGCU grad, Mike Julius (see story below), as Miss A-Miracle, the Miracle’s rotund Golden Retriever mascot.



McLaughlin

McLaughlin spent three seasons as Missy, the third as a full-time intern, which immersed him in every aspect of running a minor league sports franchise.

His most memorable Miracle moment? During a season-long “green” promotion, McLaughlin pulled double duty as Sparky the Hamster “running” the power for the scoreboard and lights between innings on an eight-foot hamster wheel that he and his dad, David, constructed. “It was like building my own prison,” he says with a laugh.

Following the Miracle’s 2010 season, McLaughlin decided to return to Massachusetts, where family members were encouraging him to pursue a career in secondary education. But two weeks before he made the move, a cousin sent him a message that would shake up his plans: “Hey, I don’t know if you saw this but I was on the TD Garden website and the Bruins are looking for a backup mascot.”

Frantic that he might have missed the opportunity to join his hometown heroes, he called the man who would soon become his boss.

“He said, ‘Let’s just start here: How tall are you?’ I thought, ‘What?’ So I said, ‘Well, I’m 5-foot-7.’ He said, ‘Great. Send me your resume, your pictures, any video you have.’ I didn’t hear back from him until I was already up there and he called and said, ‘Can you come in for an audition next Monday?’”

On the ice, he met the veteran Blades. They stood the same height. He’d obviously passed the first test. The rest of the audition involved demonstrating that he felt comfortable on skates and that he had the moves to get the crowd motivated.

Skating in the bear suit “is like skating in goalie pads,” he says. “Because of the wide bases of your feet, you can’t really angle as well as you normally would. You have to make sure not to overdo your angles or you’ll bottom out.”

Needless to say, he won the job.

“Matt McLaughlin is a great example of a passionate employee,” says his boss, Brett Bovio, the Bruins’ promotions coordinator. “His selfless dedication to promoting the Boston Bruins is evident every time he works a game or event. His enthusiasm

## BIRDS OF A FEATHER (Former Azuls)



**Matt Williams**  
(’03, History)

**Wore the feathers:** Once in 2000-01. “If I had had more time I might have done it more. I was working and going to school full time.”

**Other mascot experience:** None. “It was the first time I’d ever worn a costume like that. I had no idea how hot it was in that thing.”

**Role preparation:** Was a residence hall adviser when drafted to put on the costume when main mascot and backup were unavailable. “They said, ‘OK, run around and wave at the kids and make them laugh.’ I made it up as I went along.”

**Pros:** “You can be as ridiculous as you want.” Later printed a fake recreation ID for “Feathers J. Eagle” as a joke.

**Cons:** “The field of vision was very limited. Whenever I turned I would bowl over a little kid.”

**Current occupation:** Deputy sheriff, Mecklenburg County Sheriff’s Office, Charlotte, N.C.



**Jen Fritz**  
(’05, Nursing)

**Wore the feathers:**  
2003-04

**Other mascot experience:**  
None.

**Role preparation:** Went to camp for cheerleaders and mascots in Myrtle Beach, S.C. “I did a lot of exercise to be physically able. I kind of psyched myself up listening to really loud rock ‘n’ roll.”

**Pros:** “It was one of the best times of my life. I met my husband, who was captain of the basketball team” (Brett Fritz, ’04 Health Science, ’06 Master of Business Administration). “You could say it brought us together. I’m excited to tell my kids about it.” The Fritzes have two children.

**Cons:** Being 5-foot-4 wasn’t a problem, but sometimes fans got a little too playful. “One time a guy punched me in the stomach. I couldn’t say anything. I had to keep my cool. He had no idea if I was a girl or a guy. I remember thinking, ‘What did I get myself into?’ You have to be ready for anything.”

**Current occupation:** Labor and delivery nurse, Carolinas Medical Center, Charlotte, N.C.



**Michael Julius**  
(’09, Sports Management)

**Wore the feathers:**  
2005-07

**Other mascot experience:**  
Before transferring to FGCU played RapidMan mascot

for Colorado Rapids of Major League Soccer; after Azul, went on to become Miss A-Miracle for Fort Myers Miracle for three years.

**Role preparation:** Mascot Boot Camp run by

is contagious and you can see the positive effect that he has on both fans and staff.”

Since he first donned the bear suit, McLaughlin’s life has been a blur of community appearances at hospitals, charitable events and skating parties, for which he earns \$100 per event. While the veteran Blades works most of the home games, with his young backup serving as escort through the maze of suite appearances and fan photo ops, McLaughlin has logged sufficient ice time as backup to get seriously hooked.

“There is nothing like entertaining 18,000 people,” he says. “It’s still an out-of-body experience.”

And yes, being a 23-year-old single professional mascot can be something of a date magnet in this hockey-obsessed town.

“Recently, I was at a bar called Ned Devine’s in Fanueil Hall talking to this girl and I look up and they were showing an event I was at as Blades,” he says. “So I said to her, ‘I’m about to be on TV,’ and sure enough, Blades came on and I said ‘There I am’ and she said, ‘No way!’ Most of the time, people don’t believe you’re the mascot. Girls



McLaughlin as Fort Myers Miracle’s Miss A-Miracle (left) and as Wally the Green Monster, Boston Red Sox’ official mascot (right).

will say, ‘You’re too good a dancer’ or ‘You’re not big enough to be him.’ There’s always an excuse for why you’re not the mascot.

“So what I do to prove it is, we have these mascot sports cards that we use as our autograph cards and I’ll pull out one that is already signed and one that isn’t and I’ll sign the signature exactly the way that it is on the signed card. Sometimes that works, but sometimes they’ll say, ‘How do I know you

didn’t just sign the first one?’ and I’ll say, ‘I did just sign the first one. That’s the point.’”

In his wildest dreams, McLaughlin never imagined that being a mascot could be a viable career path. “My education is all in teaching but my work experience is all in sports management and marketing,” he says. “My attitude moving back was, whatever works out best is what I would go with.”

Let’s see: Bruins vs. study hall. Tough call. Could he imagine ever parting with the bear wear?

“I’m having too much fun to think about that,” McLaughlin says. “If there ever comes a day that they don’t want me, I’ll gladly step back. But until that day comes, I’m not moving.”

Still, he’s not averse to adding to his portfolio.

In April, McLaughlin realized another childhood dream when he donned the proud pinstripes of the Boston Red Sox – as the new third backup mascot, Wally the Green Monster. ■

JAY MACDONALD *is a freelance writer who lives in Clearwater.*

original Phillie Phanatic Dave Raymond in fall 2004. “Once the head goes on you become that character. I had a personality profile written out – how Azul would react to different situations.”

**Pros:** “To me, it’s the smile on the kids’ faces. I like the one-on-one interaction with people.”

**Cons:** “It cut into school work a little bit, but it taught you to be on schedule and plan your days better.”

**Current occupation:** Director of special events, Carolina Mudcats, AA minor league team of the Cincinnati Reds, in Raleigh, N.C.



### Tyler Cole

(Senior, Communication)

**Wore the feathers:**  
2008-11

**Other mascot experience:** Played

another eagle, Swoop, during high school in Fleming Island, near Jacksonville.

**Role preparation:** “As soon as I get in costume I put on a whole new persona. I’m trying to be an actor – that’s my goal in life. I plan to move to L.A. after I graduate.”

**Pros:** Seeing people laugh and smile at his antics. The crowd went wild when Cole swished a 65-foot shot in costume during a contest at a 2010 women’s basketball game. “That was really cool. My parents and grandparents were there – it was the only time they saw me as Azul. I’m really bad at basketball, but when I put on the costume ... it is by far the best moment of my life so far.”

**Cons:** The heat. “It averages about 110 degrees in the suit. I drank a half-gallon of Gatorade at every game.”

**Current occupation:** Hopes to train a new Azul during his final semester this fall.



### Tariq Humes

(’10, Communication)

**Wore the feathers:**  
2009-10

**Other mascot experience:**  
None.

**Role preparation:** Drafted to suit up for FGCU’s first women’s National Invitation Tournament basketball game. “They did not have anyone on the schedule for the mascot, and I was always around the athletics department. They asked if I would like to do it.”

**Pros:** “It was fun. I felt it was my job to get the crowds into the game.”

**Cons:** “It was hot – very hot. (The costume) had its own unique odor. We used a lot of Febreze.”

**Current occupation:** Assistant program director, intramural sports, Campus Recreation, FGCU.

— Drew Sterwald





# SPORTS PAGES

▶ compete, excel

[ WOMEN'S BASKETBALL ]

## Triumph and defeat

Women finish strong season; men look to new start

Story by CHRIS DUNCAN   Photos by BRIAN TIETZ







CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE



**W**ITH NO PLAYER TALLER THAN 5-FEET-11, THE 2010-11 FGCU WOMEN'S basketball team nonetheless captured its second Atlantic Sun Conference title in three years and made it to the second round of the women's National Invitation Tournament.

Although team members were disappointed to stop there, they remain proud of their accomplishments.

"We get random people coming up to us all the time, even after road games, telling us how much they enjoy watching us play," FGCU senior point guard Shannon Murphy said. "We're the only (NCAA Division I team) with nobody 6-feet tall. We don't care if you're bigger or stronger. We're going to fight and scrap and play team basketball."

Coach Karl Smesko's system led to another superb season. Fueled by excellent 3-point shooting, FGCU won 17 of 20 conference games to capture its second A-Sun regular-season title in three years and the No. 10 position in the Collegeinsider.com Women's Mid-Major Top 25 poll. The Eagles, who will be eligible for the NCAA Tournament next year, qualified for a fourth women's NIT appearance in the program's fourth year in Division I, beating Drexel 73-67, then falling to Florida, 74-69.

"I've never seen any team run what we run. Our offense is a big advantage for us," said Smesko.

The key to his offensive system, he said, is recruiting versatile players who can "handle the ball, pass, shoot and think. There are no set plays. Our offense is more about reading what the defense does and then thinking the right move on the floor."

Murphy, who is 5-foot-7, led the team in assists in route to being named to the



Top: FGCU's Sarah Hansen revs up during a game against University of North Florida in February.



Left: Shannon Murphy huddles with the team during the same game.

Previous page: FGCU won against University of North Florida, 70-54, in Alico Arena.

A-Sun first team. At 5-foot-11, redshirt freshman Sarah Hansen led the Eagles in scoring and rebounding to earn A-Sun second team and all-freshman team honors.

Smesko, who is 231-44 in nine years at FGCU, recently signed a contract extension through the 2016-17 season. With eight seniors and Oregon transfer Brittany Kennedy on the roster, the Eagles look primed to qualify for the NCAA Tournament.

After a 10-20 season, the men's basketball team also hopes to be competitive next year. The Eagles finished strong, winning four of the last five games and placing seventh in the A-Sun conference.

The disappointing season led FGCU to

buy out coach Dave Balza's contract in March. Balza, FGCU's first men's basketball coach, went 153-121 in nine seasons at the school. He was 114-39 in five seasons in Division II, but was just 39-82 in four transitional seasons to Division I.

After a whirlwind search, FGCU athletic director Ken Kavanagh hired Andy Enfield, former assistant coach at Florida State. (Story on page 43.)

FGCU's new men's coach will have some top young talent to work with. Redshirt sophomore forward Anthony Banks led FGCU in scoring (14.6 points per game) and rebounding (6.4) in 2010-11. Christophe Varidel, a unanimous A-Sun all-freshman selection, averaged 11.5 points per game. ■

CHRIS DUNCAN is a freelance writer who lives in Bonita Springs.

“My goal here is to create a culture of family. I don’t want to just win the A-Sun; I want to develop student-athletes.”

- ANDY ENFIELD,

FGCU’S NEW MEN’S BASKETBALL COACH

## [ MEN’S BASKETBALL ]

# Enfield ushers in new era in FGCU basketball

Florida State transplant has high hopes for Eagles.

IT’S BEEN A WHIRLWIND SPRING FOR ANDY ENFIELD, FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY’S NEW MEN’S basketball coach. Since he was named head coach March 30, he’s had his third child, fielded thousands of phone calls and text messages, hired three assistant coaches and begun recruiting new players.

The former Florida State University assistant coach is the second person to hold the head position at FGCU. He succeeds Dave Balza, who founded the team and coached it for 10 years.

With the university about to enter full post-season eligibility in Division I this fall, FGCU Athletics Director Ken Kavanagh decided it was time for a change.

“I want to thank Dave Balza for his decade of dedication to FGCU and the basketball team,” he said during a news conference announcing Enfield’s appointment. In choosing Enfield, he said, “We looked for the best fit for FGCU’s men’s basketball as we move into post-season eligibility.”

Kavanagh cited Enfield’s integrity, experience and entrepreneurial savvy, demonstrated by his hand in raising \$7 million in a capital campaign at FSU.

“I’ve been preparing for this day for a long time,” Enfield said at the news conference. “My goal here is to create a culture of family. I don’t want to just win the A-Sun; I want to develop student-athletes.”

He says he hopes to take the team to the top of the Atlantic Sun Conference and on to the NCAA post-season tournament, where he expects to “win some games. How far we go will be determined by how hard we work.”

Enfield’s other goal is to create



Andy Enfield happily signs on as FGCU men’s basketball coach.

excitement in the community and fill Alico Arena with cheering fans.

He’s hired three assistant coaches and signed three promising recruits, including 6-foot-9-inch Croatian forward Filip Cvjetanin and 6-foot-9 Iowa State transfer student Eric McKnight.

Enfield brings impressive credentials with him. Originally from Shippensburg, Pa., he was his high school’s valedictorian. At Division III Johns Hopkins University, he set an NCAA career free-throw record at 92.5 percent (431 of 466 throws). Enfield still holds nine career records at Johns Hopkins and was inducted into the school’s Athletic Hall of Fame in 2001. His 2,025 career points are nearly 500 more than any other player has scored for the Blue Jays. Enfield led his team in scoring during all four seasons and also holds the two highest single-season point totals in school history, with 606 points in 1990 and 610 points in 1991.

He also excelled in the classroom, majoring in economics and earning GTE Academic All-America first team honors as a senior and second team honors as a junior. He was the first basketball player at Johns Hopkins to earn an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship and was named the NABC Scholar-Athlete of the Year in 1991.

Enfield spent five years as an assistant coach at FSU, helping lead that school to the Sweet 16 last spring. Recruiting and player development were among Enfield’s responsibilities at FSU. In 2009, Basketball Times named him the nation’s “Most Visible Assistant Coach” for the summer recruiting period while ESPN the Magazine called him one of “Five Super Assistant Coaches in College Basketball” in 2008-09.

A former NBA assistant with the Boston Celtics and Milwaukee Bucks, he then became a player development consultant for several NBA teams, while starting his own company, All Net Basketball, which concentrated on shooting form. In that capacity, he worked with more than 100 NBA players.

In addition to his aspirations for the team, Enfield’s happy to sign on at FGCU for a personal reason as well: “I’m extremely excited about being an Eagle, but my daughters (ages 3 and 4) are even more excited than I am,” he said. “They love the eagle.” ■

— Karen Feldman



## [ SWIMMING ]

# Making a big splash

Recruiting, hard work pay off for young program.

**W**ITHIN HOURS OF BEING NAMED FGCU'S FIRST SWIMMING AND DIVING coach in July 2006, Neal Studd picked up his cell phone and started dialing every elite high school senior swimmer in the nation.

"Other college coaches couldn't believe it," Studd recalls. "They said, 'Are you trying to recruit all of the nation's top swimmers for the first year of your program?' I just believed in FGCU and what we could become."

Studd's recruiting prowess and indomitable work ethic have quickly shaped FGCU into a national swimming power. In February, FGCU captured its third consecutive Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association championship in only the program's fourth season.

The Eagles ended the year ranked No. 37 in the NCAA Division I Swimming and Diving poll, ahead of big-name and more established programs such as



Studd

Miami and Kansas.

"We're really excited to be ahead of schedule with our program, but there's more to be accomplished," says Studd, who was named the CCSA Coach of the Year for the third consecutive year. His first-year diving coach, Andy Goe, won CCSA Diving Coach of the Year.

The Eagles will be NCAA Tournament eligible for the first time next year, and Studd hopes to send several individuals and a relay team to the meet.



FGCU's two 2008 Beijing Olympians – sophomores Danielle Beaubrun and Eva Lehtonen – will spearhead the club next year. Beaubrun and Lehtonen swam for their native countries of St. Lucia and Finland, respectively, in the 2008 Olympics.

"We've got a very strong sophomore, junior class coming back and we got some excellent recruits coming in," Studd says. "On the balance of it, I think we're going to be even stronger next year."

Junior Leah Daniel, who won three CCSA gold medals, said the entire team is emboldened about being eligible for the NCAA Tournament.

"All four years, I've been looking forward to this moment," Daniel says.

Studd, whose recruiting efforts have been buoyed by FGCU's state-of-the-art

The FGCU swimming and diving team earned its third straight Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association (CCSA).

aquatic facility built in 2004, credits his seven-member senior class for building the program.

Senior Viktoria Hyddmark – a 4.0-GPA student being offered graduate school scholarships at Duke, Florida and Miami for biogenetics – won the 100- and 200-yard backstroke at the conference meet despite being plagued by a rib cage injury. Senior Karmin McNamara, meanwhile, won her third consecutive CCSA's most outstanding diver award.

"Those girls started our (winning) tradition," Studd says.

— Chris Duncan

## [ SPORTS ROUNDUP ]

# Overcoming injuries, inexperience

Key players boost golfers; tennis teams struggle.

## [ BASEBALL ]

**B**ASEBALL COACH DAVE TOLLETT CALLS IT THE WORST STRETCH OF PLAYER INJURIES he's had in his nine seasons at FGCU.

Senior shortstop Stephen Wickens, senior pitching ace Richie Erath and freshman shortstop Alex Diaz went down with major injuries in the first two months of the 2011 season. Their departures left the three-time defending Atlantic Sun Conference regular-season champions with a .533 record.

FGCU ended the season 27-28 overall and 16-14 in conference. Despite winning five of the last six outings of the season, the Eagles missed advancing to

the A-Sun Tournament by one win.

An All A-Sun first-team selection last year, Wickens suffered a stress fracture in a toe but returned later in the season. Diaz, his backup, had surgery to repair a broken finger and missed the rest of the season. Meanwhile, Erath, the conference's Preseason Pitcher of the Year, underwent season-ending Tommy John surgery on his elbow.

FGCU also dealt with the departures of 2010 A-Sun Pitcher of the Year Chris Sale and 2010 A-Sun All-Conference pitcher Pete Woodworth to the professional ranks. Sale is with the Chicago White Sox; Woodworth is with the Traverse City (Mich.) Beach Bums of the Frontier League.

In post-season honors, senior second

baseman Mikel Alvarez added another A-Sun accolade to his illustrious four-year resume when he was named to the All-Conference second team. Right-hander Ricky Knapp was named to the All-Freshmen team.

## [ SOFTBALL ]

A pair of seniors spurred FGCU's softball team to a solid season.

The Eagles, who went 24-28 last year, finished 31-25 overall and 14-6 in the Atlantic Sun Conference. Courtney Platt and Catherine McDaniel fueled the team in their farewell season.

Platt led the conference in batting average (.387), doubles (16), walks (57) and total bases (93) and led the Eagles in RBI (30). In addition to being the only

unanimous pick for the all-conference first team, she was named A-Sun Player of the Year. Graduating in December, she ended her career atop the FGCU record book in



Deiros

walks (175) and doubles (49), is second in on-base percentage (.514) and fourth in RBI (124).

"She has been an integral part in our success in the last four years, but she really exhibited her value and versatility this season and it showed not only throughout our conference but in the south region as well," FGCU softball coach Dave Deiros says.

Meanwhile, McDaniel was selected to the all-conference second team after





## SPORTS PAGES

(continued from previous page)

finishing sixth in the league with a 1.56 ERA, while striking out 124 in 170 innings. She pitched a

16-10 record overall and 9-1 mark in conference play, which led the league.

The duo's performance boosted the Eagles to overcome a 3-9 start to the season and finish in third place after winning 10 of their last 14 games. Next year the team will be eligible for postseason play.

### [ MEN'S GOLF ]

FGCU senior Dan Mazziotta showed the college golfing world why he's one of the nation's premier amateur golfers.

The Fort Myers native put together a pair of individual titles and 10 straight top-20 finishes this season, highlighted by seven top 10s and four top fives. He was the only Eagle to participate in all 11 tournaments, setting a program record for counting scores.

"I am extremely proud of the way he has worked, played and handled himself," says coach Brent Jensen. "He is not only one of the best players in the conference, but also one of the better players in the nation."

Mazziotta was one of three golfers to earn post-season accolades from the Atlantic Sun Conference, making the first team. Teammate Matt Cote was named Freshman of the Year, and junior Brandon Pena earned second-team honors.

The Eagles closed the season in a tie for sixth among 11 teams in the conference tournament.

### [ WOMEN'S GOLF ]

Sophomore golfer Briana Carlson had better clear some room in her trophy case.

With top-five finishes in all five spring tournaments, she finished the A-Sun Championship in a two-way tie for fifth with a score of 224 (76-75-73).

For the spring, Carlson carded five sub-par rounds, highlighted by a five-under par 67

at the UC Spring Invite, where she took medalist honors for the second time in her career. Post-season, she was unanimously chosen for the All-Conference first team – the first FGCU women's golfer to make that mark.

Carlson's precocious development has boosted the Eagles during an unusual time. First-year coach Meghan Spero left the team in March for a position with PGA Magazine. Until the school can fill the vacancy, men's head golf coach Brent Jensen is coaching the women.

The team's third-place finish at the A-Sun championship marks the highest rank the Eagles have attained since joining the conference. Junior Fabienne Haremza finished second overall at the tourney, sitting just five strokes off the leader.

### [ WOMEN'S TENNIS ]

After getting off to a 4-5 start to the 2011 spring season, the FGCU women's tennis team ripped off five consecutive match victories to right its season.

The performance makes third-year head coach Jennifer Gabou eager for the future. FGCU had just one senior in 2011. Senior Iris Rendon provided leadership for a club that had three sophomores, two freshmen and one junior.

Rendon picked up a pair of wins in her singles and doubles contests to help





**Left: FGCU senior Dan Mazziotta**  
**Above: Sophomore Briana Carlson**  
**Right: Bettina Botha, freshman**

FGCU secure a key 4-3 victory over the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in March.

Next season, when the Eagles are eligible for the NCAA Division I postseason for the first time, FGCU will have an elite incoming freshman on its roster. Bettina Botha of Cape Town, South Africa, signed with the team in December.

Botha was ranked as high as No. 3 in South Africa and No. 9 in the nation for doubles this year.

## [ MEN'S TENNIS ]

Injuries and inexperience played a role in the FGCU men's tennis team's struggles this year.

The Eagles finished the season 3-18 overall and 1-9 in the Atlantic Sun Conference. FGCU had just three seniors on the roster as some of the team suffered injuries. But coach J. Webb Horton already



has designs on a team record improvement next year, when FGCU will be eligible for the NCAA Tournament for the first time.

Two premium recruits – Michael Beiler of Palm Harbor and Tianyu Bao of Bradenton – will join the team next season. Beiler and Bao are ranked No. 40 and No. 29, respectively, in amateur singles in Florida.

Until then, Horton credits seniors Mitchell Lvovsky, Carlo Checchia and Frank Acierno for helping to build a foundation at FGCU even though the team has had three consecutive losing seasons.

— Chris Duncan



# THE ARTS

► "...function without encumbrance ..."

## [ THEATER ]

### Play gives voice to teens in foster care

Collaboration highlights flaws in state system.

**U**NLOCKING MEMORIES OF NEGLECT, ABUSE AND ABANDONMENT CAN HELP many teens in foster care take their first steps toward survival, forgiveness and transcendence.

That's part of the message of a theatrical collaboration between Florida Gulf Coast University and Footsteps to the Future, a nonprofit group that aims to empower young women who age out of Florida's foster care system when they turn 18. Through interviews with girls in foster care and their Footsteps mentors, theater students and Assistant Professor Michelle Hayford pieced together the scenes and themes of "TL002: A Performance Constellation: Suit My Heart."

After its April premiere at FGCU, the ensemble effort found international

exposure at the 2011 CU Expo at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada; the conference showcases community-university partnerships around the world.

Combining reality-inspired and fictional scenes, music, dance and video, the piece was an exercise in civically engaged theater – drama that reflects the real world and aims to inspire community reaction.

"We want people to walk away knowing how broken the foster care system is and wanting to do something about it," Hayford says.

For Artkeda Hunt, 19, the project presented an opportunity to share her positive experience in Footsteps to the Future and to find common ground with the students. A Footsteps member since

she was 14, Hunt participated in the interviews as well as the production.

"I'm hoping it will help some kids, let them know that somebody's out there for them," she says. "You don't forget what happened to you. You have to deal with it before moving on."

Statistics show many women like her don't.

Half fall prey to crime, homelessness and drug and alcohol abuse after aging out of state care.

A quarter become homeless within three years, and 70 percent never earn a high school diploma or equivalent.

Footsteps to the Future aims to catch them before they fall into those traps. The 10-year-old program focuses on instilling responsibility, accountability, integrity, love and self-reliance. Volunteer mentors provide positive role models as the young women try to finish their education, find jobs and establish homes.

Teens emerging from foster care feel abandoned, says Footsteps to the Future Executive Director Judi Woods.

"They're scared to death," she says. "They don't know what will happen to them."

After a childhood in which they may have been neglected or abused, and

Theater students collaborated with Footsteps to the Future to develop "Suit My Heart."



## GET INVOLVED

Footsteps to the Future always needs "time, talent or treasure," says Executive Director Judi Woods. For details on how to volunteer or donate, visit [www.footstepstothefuture.org](http://www.footstepstothefuture.org).

Photo by Brian Tierz

“ We want people to walk away knowing how broken the foster care system is and wanting to do something about it.”  
 - MICHELLE HAYFORD, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
 AND DIRECTOR OF “TL002: A PERFORMANCE  
 CONSTELLATION: SUIT MY HEART.”



## [ THEATER ]

### Student's first play premiered on campus in June

**P**LAYWRIGHTS RARELY GET TO SEE THEIR VERY FIRST SCRIPTS PRODUCED on stage, but Brittney Brady has. The senior's independent study project, “Paler than Grass,” was performed by students under the direction of Barry Cavin, FGCU's Visual and Performing Arts program chairman. It was the second time a student writer has been showcased with a summer production.

Although she's majoring in English, Brady acted in campus productions starting in her sophomore year – including the title role in “Miss Julie” in spring 2009. But her primary interest lies in writing and directing, which she plans to pursue in graduate school.

She calls “Paler than Grass” a “memory experiment”

dramatized with fragments instead of a traditional narrative. A half-dozen actors portrayed multiple characters.

Brady is inspired by



Brady

Heiner Mueller, a 20th-century German dramatist known for “sampling” others' texts.

“Memories become self-animated and break off into their own worlds,” says Brady, 22. “It explores three different memory worlds from one person, but you're never sure whose memories they are.” ■

Dance, music and dialogue explored themes of survival, forgiveness and transcendence.

song of gratitude:

“I am so blessed, I am so blessed  
 “I am so grateful for all that I have.”

For her part, Woods is grateful that FGCU gave her girls a chance to speak out.

“This is a great opportunity for our young women to tell their stories,” Woods says. “The more they can talk about what happens in their lives, the more empowered they become, the more self-esteem they build and the more healing they do.”

– Drew Sterwald

then moved from one foster home to another, they need to learn how to forgive, trust and move on, she says.

When Hunt was accepted in the program, she says she had a lot of anger to work out.

“If it weren't for them, I would have been going to jail,” she says of her Footsteps mentors. “They helped me stay out of trouble.”

Instead, she graduated from Riverdale High School in 2009, and hopes to get a job in child care.

Such stories offer a hopeful note to counter the dark truths of incest, alcoholism and betrayal that underlie “Suit My Heart.” The play ends with a



## Laura W. Bush speaks out for the world's women

Former first lady helps launch President's Lecture Series.

**W**HILE HER AUDIENCE MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED A TALK REMINISCING ABOUT HAPPY MOMENTS IN THE White House, former First Lady Laura W. Bush chose instead to focus on some of her most painful memories when she spoke at Florida Gulf Coast University in April.

The keynote speaker for the President's Lecture Series, she shared her recollections of the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, when she was scheduled to address a Senate hearing about early childhood education. Instead, she and the late Sen. Edward Kennedy sat riveted to a television in his office watching in horror as the World Trade Center's twin towers crumbled beneath Al Qaeda's assault.

She recalled watching her husband, President George W. Bush, agonize over the war that followed, and the military personnel who died or suffered life-changing injuries as a result.

The attack and subsequent events led her to grow more aware of the plight of the women of Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern countries in which women lack basic rights, including education and health care.

Helping them gain access to both has become a primary cause for which she now works.

"I believe it is important that the United States stand with women who are lifting their voices and asking to be heard," she said.

Providing health care and education to women in developing countries improves not only their own lives, she said, but those of their families and of the country as a whole.

Bush urged today's students to get involved in whatever way they were able, whether it's traveling to Afghanistan to help create water purification systems or raising money for a non-profit organization that's involved in work abroad.

Her appearance at Alico Arena on the FGCU campus marked the debut of the President's Lecture Series, which is planned as a signature event that will bring compelling speakers with meaningful messages to the region. It builds upon the previous University Lecture Series, which featured Maya Angelou, Mikhail Gorbachev and Gen. Colin Powell.

— Karen Feldman



“ I believe it is important that the United States stand with women who are lifting their voices and asking to be heard.”  
 - LAURA W. BUSH,  
 FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES (2001-09)



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Laura Bush photo by Greg Kahn/NON; reception photos by Brian Tietz.



## PHILANTHROPY

(continued from previous page)

### Wachovia Bank supports Small Business Development Corp.

**W**ACHOVIA BANK HAS DONATED \$30,000 TO THE SMALL BUSINESS Development Center at the Lutgert College of Business, to provide community outreach and technical assistance to Southwest Florida businesses with annual revenues of \$1 million or less.

The SBDC provides business counseling, training and advice to entrepreneurs, to those who own businesses or are considering starting them in Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee counties.

Wachovia's donation helps to provide these services without charge to clients in an effort to help grow businesses and expand employment throughout the region. ■



From left: Roy Bailey, vice president Wachovia business banking manager, business banking Gulf Coast; Richard Pegnetter, former dean of the Lutgert College of Business; Dan Regelski, director, FGCU Small Business Development Center; Barbara Melvin, vice president, Wachovia senior relationship manager, business banking; and Suzanne Specht, assistant director of FGCU Small Business Development Center.

### Gift, partnership spark museum studies program

**F**LORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY PLANS TO LAUNCH A MUSEUM studies program in partnership with the Holocaust Museum and Education Center of Southwest Florida and with support from Charles Dauray and the College of Life Foundation.

Dauray and the College of Life Foundation donated \$60,000 to help establish the program, which will begin as a minor and eventually grow into a major that will help prepare graduates for professional positions in museums.

FGCU has worked with the Holocaust Museum on a variety of projects and developed a close alliance.

Donna Henry, dean of FGCU's College of Arts and Sciences, says, "The development of the museum studies program is an outgrowth of the

expanded relationship with the Holocaust Museum. The College of Life Foundation has provided resources that allow the university to increase its support and engagement with the Southwest Florida community."

Looking to the future, FGCU officials envision structured internships in area museums, through which faculty and museum professionals will supervise and mentor interns to prepare them for the museum workforce.

Dauray, who is the chairman and CEO of the College of Life Foundation as well as a Holocaust Museum board member, believes the money provided by the foundation, which oversees the funds of the defunct Koreshan sect, will serve as "a catalyst to get the program started." ■

Charles Dauray



## Music scholarship fund honors Joyce Anne Vitelli

**J**OYCE ANNE VITELLI LOVED MUSIC AND REVELED IN TEACHING OTHERS TO LOVE it, too. In addition to working as a music teacher, she devoted many years to volunteering to support several music-focused organizations.

A resident of Naples, she died in April 2006 at the age of 67. Her husband of 42 years, Raymond Vitelli, donated \$200,000 to Florida Gulf Coast University to create the Joyce Anne Vitelli Scholarship Fund to honor her memory. The scholarship benefits students with exceptional musical talent who also demonstrate financial need.

The university will apply to the state of Florida for \$100,000 in matching funds.

FGCU student Roland Forti was among the first recipients of the

scholarship. He plans to become a music educator.

In a thank-you letter to Raymond Vitelli, he wrote: "Music has always been my passion. I find myself inspired on a daily basis by professionals, teachers and even students around me. I hope one day to inspire my students in the way I have been inspired. There is no way that I could have ventured this far without the support of generous donors such as you."

Joyce Anne Vitelli was born in Hornell, N.Y., and graduated from Canisteo Central School and Syracuse University. After a short music teaching career, she became a volunteer for a variety of arts



Joyce Anne Vitelli

and health organizations.

She was a member of North Naples United Methodist Church, the Philharmonic League, Pelican Bay Women's League and The Club Pelican Bay.

Joining Kappa Alpha Theta in college, she maintained a lifelong affiliation to the foundation, serving as a trustee. Among the roles she found most satisfying was that of chairwoman of the

committee that distributed scholarships to deserving students.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by her sister and brother-in-law, nephews, aunts and cousins. ■

## Sanibel Captiva Trust Company creates business scholarship

**T**HE SANIBEL CAPTIVA TRUST COMPANY HAS endowed a scholarship fund that will help business majors at Florida Gulf Coast University.

The company donated \$25,000 to create The Sanibel Captiva Trust Co. Business Scholarship Endowed Fund, which will provide scholarships in perpetuity to students in FGCU's Lutgert College of Business.

According to Donald A. Lesch, co-chairman of the trust company and chairman of the FGCU Foundation, "Through my association with Florida Gulf Coast University, I have witnessed firsthand the impact of scholarships



From left: Terence M. Igo, president, The Sanibel Captiva Trust Company and The Tampa Bay Trust Company; Donald (Chip) Lesch, co-chairman, The Sanibel Captiva Trust Company; S. Albert D. Hanser, founder, chief executive officer and co-chairman, The Sanibel Captiva Trust Company; and Wilson G. Bradshaw, FGCU president.

on students' lives. We hope that others will be inspired to join us in supporting scholarships for FGCU students as well."

Albert D. Hanser, founder, chief executive officer and co-chairman of The Sanibel Captiva Trust Co. says, "It is our hope that these students will stay in the

Southwest Florida area to enrich the economy for the benefit of all of us."

The Sanibel Captiva Trust Co. is a state-chartered independent trust company that provides wealth-management services to individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations and endowment funds. ■



## Hospitality group endows fund

**T**HE LOCAL CHAPTER OF HOSPITALITY FINANCIAL & TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS has created an endowed scholarship that will benefit students pursuing careers in resort and hospitality management or accounting.

The organization donated \$10,000 to create the Hospitality Financial & Technology Professionals: Florida Gulf Coast Chapter Scholarship Endowed Fund, which will be awarded to qualified juniors or seniors majoring in resort and hospitality management or accounting and who demonstrate community involvement.

“Our organization is a huge advocate of education,” says Laurie Jackson, chapter president. “These students are the future financial and hospitality leaders for Southwest Florida. We want to help provide the resources with which they can obtain their degrees and join us in the local workforce.”

HFTP is a global professional



From left: Sherie Brezina, director of FGCU's Resort & Hospitality Management Program; Laurie Jackson, chapter president, Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals; Christa McKnight, chapter treasurer; and Joshua Hall, chapter vice president.

association for financial and technology personnel working in hotels, clubs and other hospitality related businesses. ■

## Advertising exec funds scholarship

**S**TUDENTS INTERESTED IN PURSUING CAREERS IN MATH OR SCIENCE will benefit from the scholarship created by Naples resident G. Jeffrey Provol.

With a gift of \$10,000, he created the G. Jeffrey Provol Scholarship Fund, which will be awarded to



Provol

qualified applicants majoring in math or science or education, if the student's goal is to teach either subject.

Provol, who has had a successful career in advertising, believes that with success comes the responsibility to help others.

His best advice to students: “Do one thing each day that scares you.” ■

## Shell club supports marine, environmental studies

**T**HE MARCO ISLAND SHELL CLUB HAS DONATED \$20,000 TO CREATE AN ENDOWED scholarship to help students pursuing degrees in marine science, environmental science or environmental studies.

The Marco Island Shell Club Scholarship Endowed Fund will be awarded annually to a junior or senior majoring in one of the three areas and who maintains a 3.0 or higher GPA. Preference will be given to Marco Island residents.

Members of the club put a lot of thought into the creation of this scholarship.

“After a great deal of research, we



From left: Marco Island Shell Club members Ruth Grzyb, treasurer; Sandra Martell, immediate past president; Charlotte Roman, former committee member; Carolyn Ginther, chairwoman, scholarship and grants committee; Joan Robbins, former committee member; Jae Kellogg, president; and Marsha Prunetti, recording secretary.

decided the best long-term use of our funds it to endow a tuition scholarship,” says Carolyn Ginther, chairwoman of the scholarship and grants committee. “In doing this, we maximize our investment both scientifically and monetarily by ensuring the development of future

leaders who will work to understand and protect marine life.

“All 175 club members are thrilled at the prospects of helping to safeguard the waters of Southwest Florida and planet Earth through this endowment at FGCU.” ■



# IRA Charitable Rollover

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**WHO:** Donors 70½ years and older who have Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)

**WHAT:** Can take advantage of a provision of the Tax Relief Act of 2010 that allows them to donate a maximum of \$100,000 to public charities without having to recognize the distribution as taxable income.

**WHEN:** Now through Dec. 31, 2011, when the act expires

**WHERE:** The FGCU Foundation, which will help donors channel their contributions to whatever educational purpose suits them. A \$10,000 gift, for example, can create an endowed scholarship fund that will last in perpetuity.

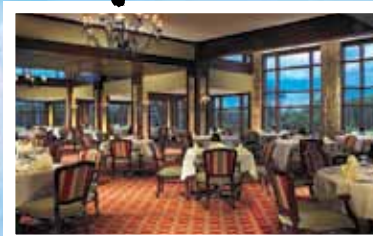
**HOW:** Contact your IRA custodian or **Peter Lefferts**, FGCU director of planned giving, at **(239) 590-1077**.





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# CLASS NOTES

► This world is but canvas  
to our imaginations

## Barbara Esno

Fort Myers native recognized as best in class.

**B**ARBARA ESNO, LEE COUNTY'S 2011 TEACHER OF THE YEAR, HAS BUILT A REPUTATION for leadership and innovation.

She earned her degree in elementary education at FGCU in 2000. A decade later, the school board has honored her for her work.

Esno teaches gifted fourth- and fifth-grade students at Lehigh Elementary School. She has also taught at Franklin Park Magnet School and at the former Michigan International Academy in Fort Myers.

The 36-year-old Fort Myers native believes her time at FGCU contributed to her success. She is particularly grateful to Sally Mayberry, a professor of elementary education.

"She taught us classroom management even though it wasn't her responsibility," Esno says. "It has been so valuable to me."

Esno has managed to steer her classroom and school in creative ways. She's launched innovative programs, including a two-day field trip to the Everglades and a Good Neighbor initiative that recognizes students and staff for good deeds.

She also resurrected an Odyssey of the Mind program this year after a 10-year hiatus.

One of her three teams won a regional competition in March and went on to place ninth in the state

competition in April.

As Teacher of the Year, Esno will represent the school district by speaking to organizations and attending functions including the 2011 Golden Apple Dinner. She also has a chance to win the state's Teacher of the Year Award for 2012.



Esno encourages education students to stay the course despite recent political battles over education.

"Understand that when you close the door and it's just you and the students, you are doing what's right and good for the students," she says.

— Catherine King

'00 ◀

## [WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS AND BIRTHS]



'04

**Tiziana Marchante**

(Psychology), and her husband announced the birth of their daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, on

Feb. 3. She weighed 7 pounds and 1 ounce.

'06

**Allison Allie**, (Master's, Business Administration), and Steve Young have announced their engagement. The couple live in Chicago.

'07

**Patricia Acquafredda**, (Communication), and Jeremy Robertson are engaged. Acquafredda is employed by Trace America in sales and public relations. Robertson is an operator and sound engineer who owns JR Audio. The couple plan to marry Sept. 22.

**Stacy Finnell**, (Art), and

**James Duquette**,

'06 (Elementary Education), welcomed the birth of their son, Nikolai, on Feb. 3. He weighed 6 pounds and 14 ounces.



**Melissa Richards**,

(Communication), and Chris Delacroix are engaged.

They will marry in Jamaica in February.

Richards is the

marketing manager for Adams & O'Reilly Inc. (McDonalds). →



## A greener cleaner

Couple makes clean sweep with Green Leaf.

IT WAS NATURAL ATTRACTION that brought Mike Brinkman and Kylee Snyder Brinkman together when they met in an FGCU residence hall in 2004. And it's an attraction to nature that's led them to partnerships in business and life.

The business management majors had to come up with a business plan for an entrepreneurship class. They decided to create a company that had a positive impact on the environment.

"We knew there were a lot of cleaning companies but we found our niche," Mike Brinkman says. "We went green."

The couple took first place in FGCU's EaglePlan entrepreneurial competition in 2007 for their project, Green Leaf Commercial Cleaning, an eco-friendly cleaning company.

They took a couple of classes in Miami to learn about green cleaning and used their \$500 prize money to launch their business the same year.

The Bonita Springs-based company focuses on commercial clients, using nontoxic, biodegradable products and employing methods that save energy and water. The company is Green Seal certified, which means it has met strict environmental standards based on federal guidelines.

Business is brisk enough for the



Mike Brinkman and Kylee Snyder Brinkman, owners of Green Leaf Commercial Cleaning

company to grow. The couple hired fellow FGCU alum, Robby Baker, '07, as operations manager in July 2010.

They also married last summer.

The Brinkmans believe the education they received at FGCU has contributed to their success.

"The business management program at FGCU played a huge role in providing the leadership and curriculum that helped grow our entrepreneurial spirit," Kylee Brinkman says.

They encourage other students to dream big.

"Take advantage of the talent and experience your teachers bring to the classroom," says Mike Brinkman. "The professors at FGCU are smart and successful business professionals who have connections to the community and information that will help you succeed." ■

'07, '08

'08

**Denise Kearney**, (Marine Science) and her husband announced the birth of their second child, Ava. Kearney is a substitute teacher for Charlotte County public schools and completed her professional teaching certificate in April. She thanks FGCU Professor Michael Savarese for the part he has played in her success.

**Andrew Luciano**, (History) and **Christian (Baker) Luciano**, '07 (Elementary Education), welcomed the birth of their son, Jackson Kendrick, on Sept. 18. He weighed 9 pounds and 4 ounces.



**Danielle Ruh**, (Communication), and **Mitchel Kuhn**, (Communication), were married March 28 in Boca Raton.

'09

**Antoinette Biffar**, (Finance), and John Biffar welcomed the birth of their son, Cayden Michael. He was 6 pounds, 2 ounces and 19 inches long. The family lives in Cape Coral.



'10

**Robert Baggett**, (Master's, Public Administration), and Ryungso Baggett welcomed their second child, Annabelle Kim. Baggett is employed by the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service. He was previously with the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation's Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco.

**Katelyn Clem**, (Master's, School Counseling), and **Ryan Uhler**, '06 (Communication), married on Jan. 1 on Captiva Island.

“The business management program at FGCU played a huge role in providing the leadership and curriculum that helped grow our entrepreneurial spirit.”  
 - KYLEE BRINKMAN, '08  
 OWNER, GREEN LEAF COMMERCIAL CLEANING

## [NEWSMAKERS]

'99

**LeAnn (Bridges) Toth**, (Executive Master's, Business Administration), has joined Freeborders Inc. as the executive vice president of sales and marketing. Freeborders Inc. is a global provider of consulting, technology and outsourcing solutions to financial services and Internet based businesses. Toth was previously with Allen Systems Group.

'00

**Michael McCabe**, (English), has joined the law firm of Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A. as an associate in the worker's compensation division. He represents insurance carriers, third-party administrators and employers in the defense of workers' compensation claims.



'04

**Melissa White**, (Elementary Education), was named teacher of the year for Charlotte County. White credits the FGCU education department for helping her to achieve this recognition.

'08

**Eric DeYoung**, (Master's, Business Administration), has been named vice president of commercial lending at Charlotte State Bank. He started his career as a credit analyst and has worked as a commercial officer since joining the bank in March 2008.

**Jennifer Hamilton**, (Communication), has accepted a position as an account executive at the Tampa office of Hill & Knowlton, a worldwide public relations agency. Previously, she was an account executive at RFB Communications Group, a local public relations agency in Tampa.

'09

**Michael Julius**, (Sports Management), is the mascot coordinator for Carolina Mudcats, a minor league baseball team. He lives in North Carolina.

**Michael Zeto**, (Executive Master's, Business Administration), is CEO of Proximus Mobility, a Naples-based company that offers digital content to consumers' mobile phones from the point of purchase or point of influence.

'10

**Kate Dillingham**, (Marketing), has accepted a position with ADP's small business division as business consultant with an emphasis on payroll and worker's compensation. She lives in Tampa.

**Heather Zimmerman**, (Criminal Forensics), attended Campus Leaders Today, Community Leaders Tomorrow program hosted by Omicron Delta Kappa, a National Collegiate Leadership Honor Society in Richmond, Va. The program prepares attendees for service as board members for nonprofit organizations.

## [IN MEMORIAM]

'07

**Suzanne (Sproat) Treadway**, (Elementary Education), died March 16 following the birth of her daughter, Sawyer Elaine. She was 27. Treadway is survived by her husband, Jordan; daughter, Sawyer; and parents, Kent and Betty Jane Sproat. She was in her first year as a second-grade teacher at Seminole Trails Elementary School after several years of teaching kindergarten at Cape Coral Elementary School and Tanglewood Elementary School. ■

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

[alumnirelations@fgcu.edu](mailto:alumnirelations@fgcu.edu)  
 or by mail to: Florida Gulf Coast University,  
 Attention: Alumni Relations, 10501 FGCU  
 Blvd. S., Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

6/23 THURSDAY

### Summer Soiree

Catch up with colleagues and fellow alumni as we celebrate the start of summer at McCormick & Schmick's. Bring along a business card for a chance to win an Eagle souvenir. 6 p.m., Mercato, 9114 Strada Place, Naples.



Lauren Richardson, '11, Jared Odor, Loretta DeMarco, and Lindsey Touchette, '05 at last year's "Eagles at the ballpark."

8/6 SATURDAY

### Eagles at the ballpark

Join fellow Eagles for an excursion to St. Petersburg's Tropicana Field to see the Tampa Bay Rays take on the Oakland Athletics. Following the game the Goo Goo Dolls will perform in concert. Tickets are available at a discounted rate and include lower level outfield seats and a food voucher. 7:10 p.m., Tropicana Field, 1 Tropicana Drive, St. Petersburg.

9/10 SATURDAY

### Dollars for FGCU Scholars

Have a ball bowling for a good cause at the fifth annual fundraiser benefiting the Alumni Association Scholarship Fund. Register a team of five or sign up as an individual for an evening of glow bowling, fun, food and Eagle giveaways. Alumni Association members are invited to a behind-the-scenes tour of Beacon Bowl. Companies interested in sponsoring a lane may call (239) 590-1087. The event takes place at 6:30 p.m., 5400 Tamiami Trail, Naples. ■





## Hot wheels



**N** EON-COLORED BIKES WERE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS to ride at FGCU's Earth Day festivities on April 14. Brian Tietz shot this photograph using a Canon EOS 5D Mk II with a 17-40mm f/4 lens and an aperture of f/9 with a 1/250th shutter speed. ■

**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](mailto:kfeldman@fgcu.edu) or call (239) 590-7093.

# the gift that gives back

## **What is a charitable gift annuity?**

It's a simple way to bestow a charitable gift while receiving income for life and a possible tax savings.

## **How does it work?**

A donor makes an irrevocable gift of cash, publicly traded securities or other assets to FGCU. In return, the university agrees to pay a fixed annual income at a set rate that's consistently higher than money market rates.

## **Why change from your current investment?**

Because the income from an FGCU charitable gift annuity will never decrease and you cannot outlive it. It yields a stable rate of return, unlike many investments.

## **How is the annuity determined?**

The rate depends on the age of the donor or donors at the time of the gift. The older the donor, the more income FGCU can agree to pay annually. The rate in effect when you establish the annuity never changes and is guaranteed for life.

### **SAMPLE RATE CHART FOR A \$25,000 GIFT ANNUITY ON A SINGLE LIFE**

Annuity age at gift	65	70	75	80	85
Annuity rate	5.5%	5.8%	6.4%	7.2%	8.1%
Charitable deduction*	\$7,004	\$9,014	\$10,630	\$12,244	\$14,024
Annual payment	\$1,375	\$1,450	\$1,600	\$1,800	\$2,025

\* Deduction will vary slightly with changes in IRS Discount rate. Assumed 3.0%. PLEASE NOTE: This example is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended as legal or tax advice. Consult your own legal and tax advisors prior to making any decisions.

**For more information: Contact Peter Lefferts,  
FGCU director of planned giving,  
at (239) 590-1077, or visit  
[www.fgcu.edu/foundation/plannedgiving](http://www.fgcu.edu/foundation/plannedgiving)**

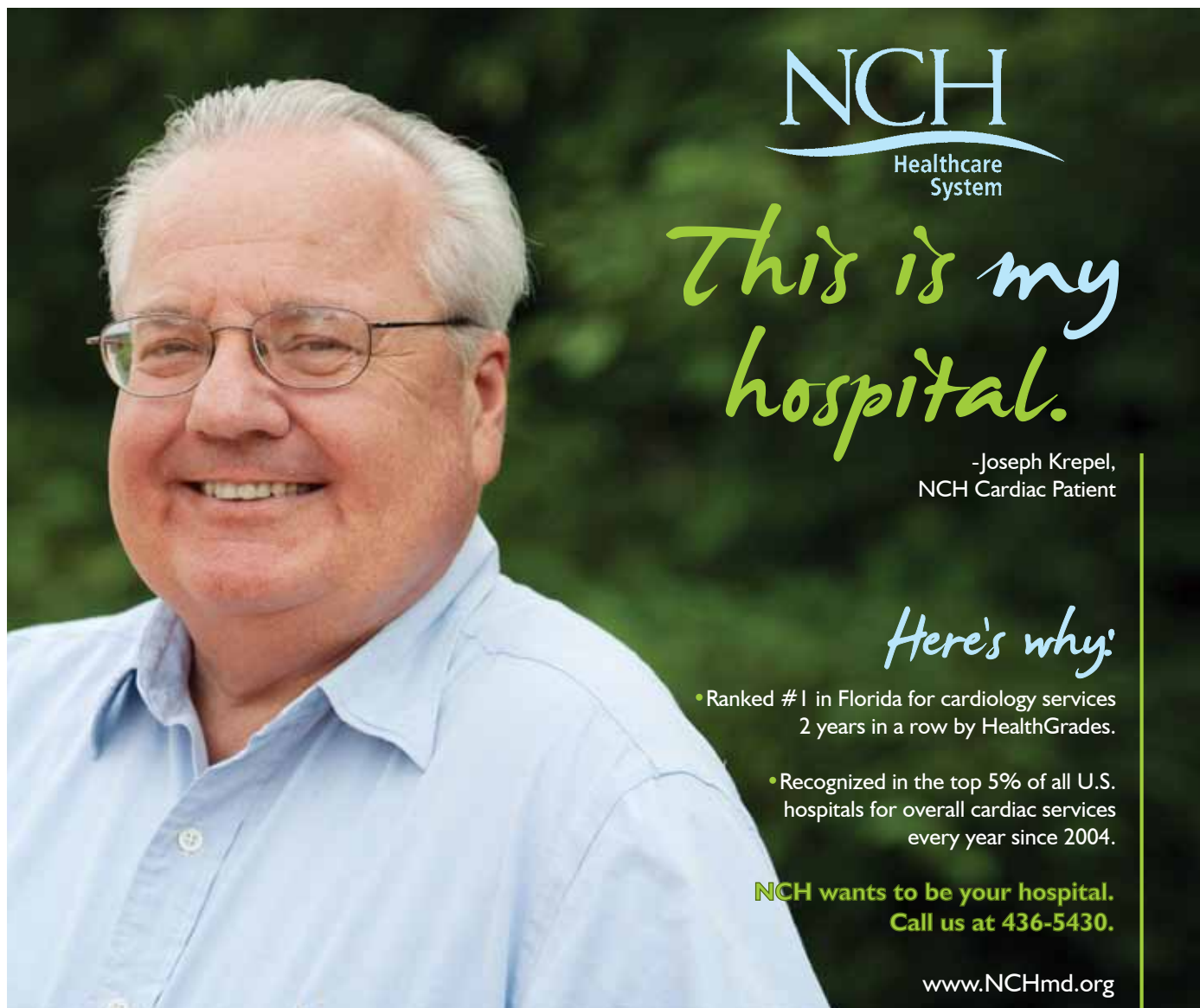






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A large photograph of an older man with white hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

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-Joseph Krepel,  
NCH Cardiac Patient

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