

Professor combats genocide with awareness ▶ Night at the Nest draws sellout crowd
Growing honors program challenges students ▶ Watermelon queen savors sweet reign

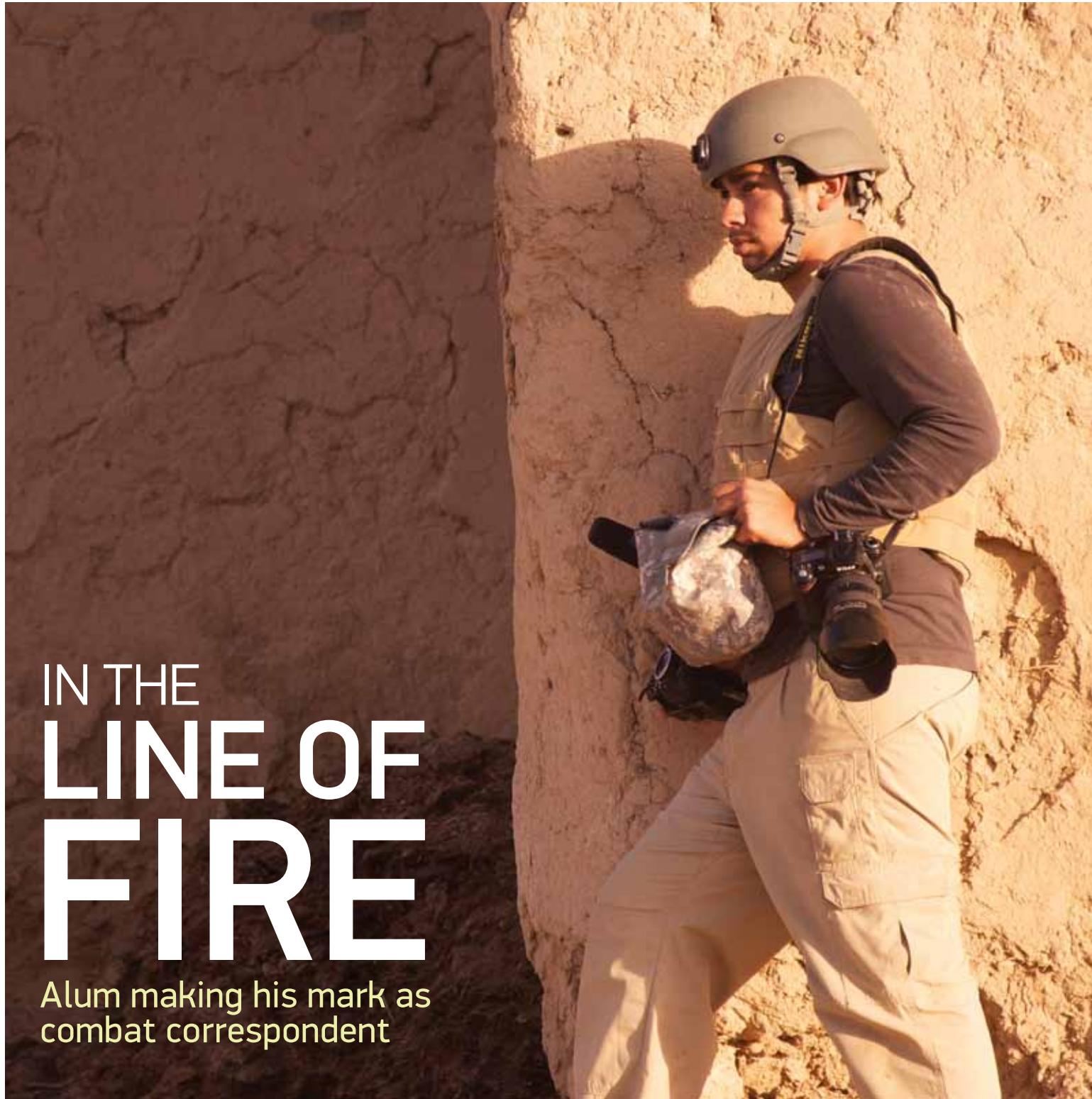
▶ FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

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IN THE
**LINE OF
FIRE**

Alum making his mark as
combat correspondent



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**FGCU ALUMNI
WEEKEND
FEBRUARY 19-21**

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“Our momentum remains strong”

There's much to see and experience at ever-evolving FGCU.

Q: How would you describe the atmosphere on campus these days?

A: I'd say our momentum remains exceptionally strong. There is so much going on around campus. On any given evening, there are at least a dozen events from which to choose – athletic events, lectures, art exhibits, plays and concerts. And it's not just on campus. We have events happening daily throughout Southwest Florida.

Q: What other changes do you see?

A: The academic profile of our students continues to grow stronger. Our incoming students this year had the highest SAT scores and GPAs ever, which contributes to a more academically prepared student body. And The Lucas Center for Faculty Development is energizing and honing the skills of our fine faculty, which ultimately benefits students. We are expanding leadership programs and opportunities for students to partner and conduct research with faculty. We envision creating a full Honors college in the future. All of this contributes to greater student success, which is our first priority. One of the greatest changes is that these days we talk less about growth and more about quality and it's clear that it's paying off.

Q: How so?

A: The metrics by which we measure our success and, just as significantly, those by which the Board of Governors measures it, show the improvements.



Q: How is your focus on quality manifesting itself in the academic programs?

A: The nursing program in the College of Health Professions and Social Work continues to excel, with pass rates on the licensure exam far exceeding national averages. The Bower School of Music and the Arts recently secured accreditation and started teaching the music therapy program this semester. Another point of pride is our Professional Golf Management Program. FGCU is one of only 19 schools in the country certified by the PGA. Our focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) is stronger than ever.

Q: How are things shaping up in Athletics?

A: I couldn't be more proud of our student-athletes and the success they are enjoying. The men's and women's soccer teams won the A-Sun championships again this year under the excellent coaching of Bob Butehorn (men's) and Jim Blankenship (women's). Coach Neal Studd continues to lead the swimming and diving team to outstanding performances. And our basketball teams are both looking great. They are very exciting to watch and games are well attended. Karl Smesko does a great job with the women's team year after year. Joe Dooley had a successful first year with the men's team and it's looking very promising this year. What's most impressive is that our student-athletes are students first. They

Our graduation rate for first-time-in-college students rose from 43 percent to 49 percent last year, and we are continuing to improve upon that. Our retention rate of freshman to sophomore rose to 78 percent, up from 76 percent the prior year. One year after graduation, 74 percent of the class of 2013-14 was employed, up from 72 percent for the previous class, and FGCU continues to lead the State University System in job placement of graduates. We are making improvements at all of these levels while continuing to hold the line on tuition, fees and housing costs.

SOCIAL CIRCLE

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- ▶ Get involved with the FGCU Alumni Association at www.fgcu.edu/alumni
- ▶ Learn more about supporting scholarships and other gift giving through the FGCU Foundation at www.fgcu.edu/foundation

Q&A: PRESIDENT WILSON G. BRADSHAW

(continued from previous page)



have a higher GPA than the overall student body. And they continue to compete at a high level despite the fact that compared to many of the Division I teams they face – teams like Ohio State and Clemson, for example – our resources are much more limited. We may not have the facilities of the big universities, but our students understand that if they train hard and play well, they may go to the NCAA Tournament. That's what they want and it's the reason we are able to get great student-athletes.

Q: What else might readers want to know about what's happening at the university?

A: We continue to play an active role in the community. Our student body gives more than 192,000 hours of service learning to the community each year, totaling more than 1.5 million hours since the program began in 1997. And that's just students. Our staff, faculty and alumni also are active in the community, as our Make a Difference Day effort illustrates. (See page 8). As much as FGCU relies on the community for support, it does an equally good job of paying back. ■

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Embracing a passionate life

WHY IS IT THAT "FOLLOW YOUR PASSION" HAS BECOME such a ubiquitous catchphrase? It seems to me that passion more often than not finds you instead of the other way around.

It was pure serendipity that I landed my first writing gig. I was in eighth grade. The junior high paper needed someone to tackle its advice column, Dear Erma. Like most 13 year olds, I was no expert on the human condition, but I could construct an English sentence, which seemed to be qualification enough.

At the time, my motivation to accept the position was more social than professional: Lacking athletic prowess, I felt comfortable among the other physically awkward but mentally agile tweens on the staff. I kept at it through high school. When I became editor of the college newspaper and landed a part-time job at the local newspaper, it finally occurred to me that this was what I was meant to do.

Passion found Alex Pena, '11, when he began videotaping his high school friends as they skated in Fort Lauderdale. He realized he loved telling stories with his camera. Before long, he was editing material for the school's news program and growing increasingly enamored with visual storytelling.

Once he became a journalism student at FGCU, he wanted to tell more substantive stories. While still in school, he traveled solo on spring break to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, one of the country's most dangerous regions, armed with nothing

more than a camera and backpack to report on the drug trade and the toll it was taking on the region and its people. His work won national attention and fed his desire to tell more stories like this one.

Just days after he graduated, he booked a flight to Nairobi, Kenya, his sights set on the front lines of war in South Sudan. He made it and has been reporting from war zones ever since. Combat, wounded soldiers, displaced refugees and the pain and danger that come with war have become a way of life for him. His work is lonely, physically and mentally demanding, sometimes terrifying and often heartbreaking, but it's what his passion drives him to do, despite the fact that he's risking his life in the process. He knows it's important that people see and hear these stories. He shares some of his experiences in this issue.

I believe passion taps everyone on the shoulder. The trick is recognizing and embracing it. In the pages that follow, you'll meet a host of people who have done that. I hope they will inspire you to do the same.



KAREN FELDMAN
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UPFRONT

[HOW TO...]

Listen to U2

P OTERS TRUMPETING U2'S "THE JOSHUA TREE" ALBUM AND "360" CONCERT TOUR adorn the walls, and the bookshelves burst with the Irish band's CDs and DVDs. "Songs of Innocence," the Irish super-group's latest album, rattles and hums through the desktop computer's speakers.

No, this is not an FGCU student's bedroom. It is the office of Christopher Endrinal – assistant professor, music theory specialist and "Bono-fide" fan-boy scholar of, in his words: "one of the all-time greats in rock history, as demonstrated by their longevity, sustained relevance, influence, album sales, concert attendance figures, critical acclaim and popularity with the general public."

If that sounds like the start of a well-supported argument, it's probably because it's a quote from Endrinal's 2011 paper published in *MTO: A Journal of the Society for Music Theory*. He also has written essays and album reviews for a fan website and is working on a book about U2's music. His doctoral dissertation at Florida State University? "Form and Style in the Music of U2."

"There was a little resistance from the old-guard theorists, but my dissertation committee was very supportive," he says of the presumed dissonance between classical academics and the latest iTunes hits. "By the time I wrote it, the winds of change were blowing. There are pop music sessions at national music theory conferences now."

In his aural analysis, Endrinal has studied the musical and lyrical qualities



Christopher Endrinal

that distinguish U2 and identified and quantified four distinct stylistic periods in the quartet's history as characterized by particular sonic, lyric and aesthetic traits.

"The unique U2 sound is not created by a single element alone," he says.

Next time you hear a U2 song listen for some of these common threads:

- The Edge's signature use of echo/delay guitar effects and arpeggiated chords (the notes are played in sequence instead of simultaneously). One of U2's

most recognizable attributes pulses through "Where the Streets Have No Name" from 1987's "The Joshua Tree" and many other songs. Unlike more mainstream guitarists, The Edge eschews showy guitar solos in favor of texture and resonance.

- Adam Clayton's "active bass." It functions as more than harmonic and rhythmic support for the lead guitar and vocals, adding texture and melodic lines to create musical layers. Notable examples are heard in the hits "With or Without You" and "Beautiful Day."

- Larry Mullen Jr.'s syncopated percussion. From the early '80s hit "I Will Follow" to "Stuck In A Moment You Can't Get Out Of" nearly 20 years later, the drummer simultaneously provides a steady pulse while often emphasizing "offbeats."

- Bono's layered vocals. Instead of singing the same vocal line repeatedly, he records several contrasting versions, frequently in different vocal registers or even spoken versions, and often adding electronic effects to change the quality and timbre or color of his voice. The final mix layers multiple renderings, mostly notably on the "Achtung Baby" album, the band's initial immersion in electronic-tinged rock.

— Drew Sterwald

[HOT TOPIC]

Grad student's research focuses attention on little known source of global warming

MOST PEOPLE KNOW THAT FOSSIL FUELS, DEFORESTATION and methane emissions produced by farm animals are major contributors to climate change. But FGCU student Peta Gaye Johnson wants to bring awareness to a lesser-known culprit: anesthetic gases.

The nurse anesthesia graduate student won national recognition with her project that called attention to the fact that anesthetics inhaled by those undergoing surgery are vented into the atmosphere after use, where they trap heat and contribute to global warming.

It all began when FGCU Assistant Professor Ann Miller was inspired by the book "Emotional Intelligence," which she discussed in a group at The Lucas Center for Faculty Development. It led her to suggest to students in her scholarly inquiry class that they research culturally sensitive topics for their capstone projects.

Johnson, whose undergraduate degrees include nursing and chemistry, had been curious about anesthetic gases for a while.

"While they are effective in treating patients, I wondered if there was a darker side," she said.

Her research turned up substantial evidence proving the emissions were harmful.

"With more hospitals, more surgeries, people living longer and little



Peta Gaye Johnson and her award-winning poster detailing the environmental hazards of anesthetic gases.

regulation of the release of these gases into the atmosphere, the amount of emissions released into the atmosphere is

getting worse," she said.

In addition to explaining the problem, her project includes recommendations that medical establishments decrease the amount of nitrous oxide they use, prevent the used gases from being released into the atmosphere and instead trap and recycle them, something that is being done in Canada and some other countries but

not much in the United States.

"I hope to make anesthesia providers want to invest (in recycling systems) rather than wait for the government to force us to do it," she says. "It would show we care about the environment."

Johnson and nine classmates were invited to display their projects at the Annual Congress of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists in Orlando, something Miller says is unheard of for a program the size of FGCU's.

"Just getting accepted is a big deal," she said. "Then we ended up with four finalists and two winners. It's unbelievable, especially when we were competing against entries from Virginia Commonwealth University, UCLA, Duke, the Mayo Clinic – top programs in the country. I couldn't be prouder of them. They took what they learned and spread the word on how to make the standard of care better."

What Johnson found most gratifying was that in speaking with others who attended the conference "most didn't realize we could do something about these gases," she says. "We have options we didn't have before. I felt honored that I could teach these people, many of whom have 20 or 30 years in the field. It's not just about patients and hospital systems, it's about the community, the nation, the world. We need to think big."

— Karen Feldman

FGCU nurse anesthesia students who displayed posters at conference:

Joseph Barnes
Kristen Frye
Peta Gaye Johnson
Richard Ligon
Casey Panepinto
Ginette Peterson
Monica Raney
Katherine Register
Jamie Weglarz
Kelly Zipko

UPFRONT

"short shorts"

[COMMUNITY]



FGCU, Wells Fargo team up to volunteer for national Make a Difference Day

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY AND WELLS FARGO DEMONSTRATED their commitment to serving the community on Make a Difference Day, Oct. 25.

More than 300 FGCU students, alumni, faculty and staff members along with representatives from the financial services company spread out from Fort Myers to Naples to plant trees, clean up yards and waterways, assemble food pantry packages and more during the annual national day of service.

"Make a Difference Day provides a great opportunity to reflect on and act

on one of FGCU's core values – service to the community," President Wilson G. Bradshaw said. "FGCU's students, faculty and staff, together with our partners from Wells Fargo, are making a difference in the community not just today, but every day."

Volunteers built an outdoor classroom at Easter Seals Florida in Naples, refurbished trail stations at Special Equestrians in Fort Myers and spruced up gardens at FGCU's Food Forest.

This was the third year in which FGCU and Wells Fargo joined forces for Make a Difference Day, an event created by USA Weekend Magazine in 1992 to encourage volunteerism. The FGCU Foundation,

Alumni Association and Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning coordinated the university's activities.

At the Vester Marine and Environmental Science Research Field Station in Bonita Springs, Laura Mattson, a sophomore communication major at FGCU, and Baylee Wolfendale, a sophomore biology major, braved low-tide muck and sharp oyster shells as they gingerly tugged on a tire that had wedged itself into the mangroves fringing Fish Trap Bay.

They came to help clean the waterway adjacent to FGCU's field station because they care about the environment, they said. Besides the tire, they found

barnacle-encrusted roofing material and black cable tangled in the mangrove roots.

In another canoe, senior resort and hospitality major Lindsay D'Amour paddled against the strong breeze and reflected on more than 700 hours of volunteer service-learning she has done in the community. FGCU requires students to complete at least 80 hours before they graduate.

"I enjoy service-learning," she said. "It makes you a well-rounded person to see different parts of the world outside your own."

Volunteers packed 500 bags of rice at the Harlem Heights Improvement

Opposite far left: FGCU sophomores Jamena Harvey, left, and Kishandra Lovett prepare a bin of sweet potatoes for packing at the Harry Chapin Food Bank during Make a Difference Day.

Opposite, left: FGCU and Wells Fargo volunteers help to construct an outdoor classroom at Easter Seals Florida in Naples.

Below: More than 300 volunteers took part in the FGCU-Wells Fargo effort.

Association's Gladiolus Food Pantry and fanned out through the neighborhood painting mailboxes, pressure-washing homes and pruning shrubbery.

Volunteering helps Gloria Simon-Jorge feel like she's giving back to a community that assisted her family when she was growing up. It also helped her overcome her shyness around strangers.

"I love volunteering," said the junior biology major. "I feel like I'm doing something for somebody. It gets you out of your comfort zone, and you meet people from different backgrounds."

Elizaveta Mack, a junior resort and hospitality major, said she could have spent her Saturday lying in bed watching television but would rather do something constructive.

"At the end of the day, I like to ask myself, 'Did I help someone today, or did I just help myself?' It's how my mom raised me," she said.

It's also how Miriam Ortiz is raising her five children. The community leader

and president of the Harlem Heights Improvement Association said young people can gain useful skills, empathy and understanding from helping others.

"They learn not to judge people," she said. "Somebody may come to the food pantry in a nice car, but that car might be their home."

At the Harry Chapin Food Bank in Fort Myers, beneath a sign that said "Respect the Food, Hungry People Need & Value It," 27 volunteers formed assembly lines to pack and tie 3-pound bags of sweet potatoes. The food bank supplies families in need throughout the Southwest Florida region.

Veronica Zaragoza, a senior elementary education major from Immokalee, has completed her required service-learning hours for graduating but signed on anyway.

"It's a great cause and I had such a good time last year I decided to help out again," she said.

Pat Van Fleet, executive secretary at FGCU's Center for Academic Achievement, took part because "I truly believe in volunteering and I think it's important for the students to see the staff out here helping as well. I love being a part of something like this."

Just a few miles away at Quality Life Center volunteers armed with brushes were giving some rooms fresh coats of paint. The not-for-profit organization works to strengthen families and the Dunbar community.

Machelle Maner, Wells Fargo vice president of community development, drove from Tampa early that morning to participate and was busily helping transform one room with a lovely light yellow paint.

"Our values and mission align perfectly with those of FGCU," she said. "This team is so committed to the community we serve. We want to create stronger communities. And it's the community where our team lives and works." ■



UPFRONT

"short shorts"

[BOOKS]

"Deviance": A Century of Behavioral Theory

FGCU forensic studies graduate students join professor as academic authors.

SEXUAL PREDATORS, SERIAL KILLERS AND PSYCHOPATHY ARE THE DARK MATTERS into which Duane Dobbert delves in his last three academic texts. His latest title, "Deviance: Theories on Behaviors that Defy Social Norms," continues in that vein, but also features 18 chapters authored mostly by his forensic behavioral analysis grad students.

"This book is a recognition that deviance is a multidisciplinary social problem that cannot be addressed by an individual discipline," says Dobbert, an FGCU professor of forensic studies since 2000. "Deviance is a blend of sociology, psychology, economics, political structure, demographics, environmental

influences and other phenomena."

The main goal of "Deviance" is to explore how classical theorists in deviant and criminal behaviors were themselves influenced by their own familial and cultural environments.



Duane Dobbert

"While the theorists' upbringing and their theories were not all consistent, some correlations between developmental exposures and subsequent theory may be observed throughout the text," writes co-editor Thomas X. Mackey, a doctoral candidate.

Jumping from text to text, Dobbert reasoned: Why not integrate individual theorists' backgrounds and their theories into one multidisciplinary tome? Their theories, after all, have laid

the groundwork for generations of scholars and clinicians. "Deviance" began with a course assignment for students to independently research a behavioral theorist and make a classroom presentation. Dobbert placed theorists' names in a baseball hat and students drew randomly.

After careful research, they gave presentations on their iconic scientists, philosophers, social psychologists and other experts dating to the late 1880s – experts such as Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Frank and B.F. Skinner. Dobbert "took ones I thought were the best representations" and submitted them to the publishers for final selections. Once the publishers approved the work, the student authors spent two more semesters researching and revising their chapters.

The project was initially intimidating but ultimately rewarding for Christina Molinari and Sarah Norman, both 29, who each wrote two chapters, gaining deeper insights into their field as a result.

Norman was sometimes overwhelmed by the amount of material she uncovered, but "found that patience and boundaries are key," she says. "Asking for opinion, direction and guidance from mentors and educators enhances the quality of your



work, and engages your brain to other possibilities."

Molinari, who plans a career in sexual violence prevention, spent two semesters on her first draft on criminal psychology researcher Robert D. Hare, who developed the Hare Psychopathy Checklist. "The amount of time and research that he and his colleagues put into developing this diagnostic tool was a

tremendous and arduous task," says an impressed Molinari. "His checklist has since been adapted in different forms so that many individuals within the justice system, like probation and police officers, can utilize Hare's experience and research with psychopaths to mitigate their impact on society."

She also contributed a chapter on researchers Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, who theorized that juvenile offenders often come from chaotic and disorganized family and communal environments. "I was only somewhat familiar with their theories prior to starting my research," she says. "I really enjoyed learning more about their ideologies and had fun developing scholarly arguments for how their early-life experiences influenced their later concepts of deviant behavior."

– *Cathy Chestnut*

[FACES]

Gestures of kindness

Instructor bridges deaf and hearing worlds with American Sign Language.

CHRIS HAMSTRA'S AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE STUDENTS ARE WORKING TOWARD all sorts of majors. But it's quickly evident that a teacher who is personable and passionate about his subject can make the curriculum relevant to anybody.

Sophomore Jess Distefano of Coral Springs plans to teach kids with behavioral issues. "Teaching them sign language would give them another way to express themselves," she says.

And junior Anna Delevoe of Hollywood believes it is a kinder, gentler way to communicate. "It's perfect for when you want to communicate but not get all up in somebody's face," she says.

Delevoe is right. On a fall evening, the American Sign Language class of about 30 students assembles and Hamstra flicks the lights on and off to get students' attention. When he asks them to pair up and practice asking one another a question by signing, nobody moves. Eye contact pairs a student in the back with one in the front or students two rows apart. Fingers move animatedly.

Hamstra was born hearing, but lost most of the sense when he contracted meningitis as an infant. When his parents noticed that he didn't react to loud noise, they took him to an audiologist. "That's when they started to realize their lives had changed," Hamstra says. He needed speech therapy. "Once you can't hear, you don't know how to use your mouth," he explains. "That therapist told my parents I would never be successful." Fortunately, they didn't believe her.

Hamstra, 35, uses hearing aids. Technology has improved since he was



Instructor Chris Hamstra teaches FGCU students the basics of sign language.

mainstreamed into Allen Park Elementary School in Fort Myers as a fifth-grader.

He learned sign language early, and reads lips. He uses a phone with relay service. He can text, use email, Skype and Facetime, no hearing required. He also has a service dog, Hiro, a golden retriever mix who attends class and waits patiently until it's over and gets Hamstra's signal for "play." Then he wanders row to row and collects his affection, which students freely give.

At home, Hiro nudges Hamstra if someone knocks on the door or is calling out, like son Zachary, who is 3 and hearing. "He'll yell 'Daddy, Daddy, Daddy,' but we're teaching him he has a deaf father," Hamstra says. And the word is deaf, not hearing impaired, he says. "Because then we feel impaired. We're not. We are deaf and proud. And so I

teach other people what it's like and what I had to go through."

After graduating from Fort Myers High School in 1998 then earning a degree from the University of North Florida, Hamstra volunteered with deaf students at Allen Park. Teaching was a natural fit.

In addition to teaching the ASL class at FGCU, Hamstra is back at Allen Park, where he met his wife, Michelle. Her mother taught at Allen Park and introduced them. "It was love at first sight," Hamstra says.

"Love" is one of the words students are learning in class on campus this fall evening. So are words for colors, some foods and telephone.

There's plenty of give-and-take in this classroom. It's fitting, because Hamstra sees himself as not only a teacher but also a link between the deaf and hearing worlds. "I try to bridge the gap," he says.

— Dayna Harpster

[IN THE NEWS]

Together, we're just getting started

Fundraising campaign aims to keep university on upward trajectory.

WHAT WOULD THE INFUSION OF \$100 MILLION MAKE possible at FGCU? It would certainly give FGCU the confidence to dream big. But FGCU didn't need the promise of \$100 million to do that. For years the university's leadership has been dreaming big – and strategically – and in September officially launched five focused fundraising initiatives with a cumulative goal of \$100 million.

In speaking about the campaign at the official kickoff celebration, President Wilson G. Bradshaw emphasized the special relationship the university has with the Southwest Florida community and the fact that FGCU is what it is today because of that partnership.

"This university represents opportunities for personal growth, intellectual advances, economic stability, environmental health, artistic and cultural vitality," said Bradshaw. "It represents the future. Our future. The region's future."

To ensure this shared future reaches its potential, the Florida Gulf Coast University Campaign's funding initiatives cover all aspects of the university. From building outstanding educational programs that are relevant to the region to recruiting and retaining the finest students and faculty, from further enhancing our beautiful campus to expanding partnerships with the Southwest Florida community, the Florida Gulf Coast University Campaign will influence the course of the university for decades.



Here are the five initiatives and their goals:

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

\$30 million goal

Support of academic excellence ensures that the university can build relevant programs and attract and retain the very best faculty and students, which in turn enriches the whole academic community. This initiative supports the development of timely, new degree programs that are responsive to the needs of the community, faculty endowments and training programs that enhance teaching techniques and scholarly research by faculty and students that positively impacts the environment of Southwest Florida and improves the lives of its residents.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

\$40 million goal

Creating a scholarship enables donors to directly change a student's life. It ensures that students will have access to a high-quality education that prepares them to lead successful lives. Opportunities to invest in scholarships include: First Generation scholarships for students with need whose parents have not earned degrees, endowed scholarships that provide student support in perpetuity and performance scholarships that support gifted students in athletics, theater, art, performance and music education.

STUDENT SUCCESS:

\$8 million goal

Investment in student success will ensure that FGCU continues to offer the highest quality education that develops the whole person, leading to success in life and rewarding careers. Student success is facilitated through undergraduate learning projects like the Honors Program, internship experiences, or increased opportunities for students to work alongside faculty in the laboratory or in the field. International and interdisciplinary learning, and career readiness programs provide further support for student success.

ATHLETICS:

\$12 million goal

The athletics initiative focuses on recruiting and retaining coaches and student-athletes and providing the facilities that help our student-

athletes train and remain competitive in Division 1 athletics. In addition to scholarships, the athletics initiative seeks support for capital improvements to Alico Arena, including a weight and training room, enhanced sports medicine facilities and new men's and women's basketball offices.

COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL IMPACT: \$10 million goal

Investment in this initiative will allow the university to continue to fulfill the intellectual and cultural interests of Southwest Florida residents and expand service to the community. Already WGCU public radio and television play major roles in the lives of Southwest Floridians. With support from the campaign, WGCU will expand services and programs of the station's already successful, award-winning programming. Further, FGCU's service-learning program will continue to grow its network of businesses and organizations throughout the region to provide meaningful community service opportunities for FGCU students.

Scheduled to conclude on the university's 20th anniversary in 2017, a successful campaign will be transformative – not just to the university but to the lives of FGCU students and to their goals as they move forward in life.

Chris Simoneau, vice president for University Advancement, emphasizes the importance of the campaign in this way: "The region and the university together have accomplished great things," he says. "Our growth has been remarkable. Our goal for this campaign is to continue the incredible trajectory of the past 17 years. If we can do that for another 17 years, FGCU will take its place among the finest public universities in the country."

—Ken Schexnayder

[BY THE NUMBERS]

A warm welcome

The Margaret S. Sugden Welcome Center often is the first stop on campus for visitors and prospective students. In addition to providing guided tours of campus by appointment, the Welcome Center team offers directions, brochures, admissions information, historical information regarding FGCU and tips on places to eat, shop and stay near campus. The building was named in 2002 for a donor who, with her husband Herbert, made generous donations to FGCU to build the center as well as the clock tower on the student union. A later gift from the Sugdens established the Resort and Hospitality Management degree program and helped finance construction of the academic building that bears their name.

20

Student tour guides work out of the Welcome Center.
Three additional students do data-entry work and another does photography and graphic design alongside the four full-time Admissions staff members at the center.



Phone calls received in 2013-14. The center also responded to 9,211 email questions and sent out 56,244 pieces of "snail mail."

69,776



7,291

Miles driven in 2013-14 by the Welcome Center bus during campus tours. That's a lot of trips around campus for the two bus drivers who ferry visitors to and fro.

988

Campus tours conducted in 2013-14. A total of 20,270 visitors, including 5,812 prospective students, checked in at the Welcome Center. A tour group typically consists of about 26 visitors.

105

Duration in minutes of typical campus tour. Actual times vary depending on the loquaciousness and pace of the tour guide as well as the number of questions visitors ask.

6,000

Estimated number of people who attend the two Eagle Expo open houses offered each year.



UPFRONT

"short shorts"

[WHERE ARE THEY NOW]

Keith Doxie '00

Air Force veteran-turned-teacher copes with his loss by helping fellow vets.

WHEN PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN KEITH DOXIE MOVED HIS family back to Fort Myers from Los Angeles in 1994, the Air Force veteran decided to finish the bachelor's degree he'd begun in 1980.

The degree in liberal studies Doxie earned from the fledgling Florida Gulf Coast University in 2000 – along with several inspirational professors he met there – enabled him to launch a career teaching music in the Lee County School District. The future looked bright for him, his wife, Gail, and son, Miles.

But in 2006, Miles, the couple's only child, died in a car accident just two weeks before beginning Air Force basic training. He was 17.

As a tribute to Miles, who Doxie says "was always smiling," he and his wife created the Miles of Smiles Foundation, an equine-assisted psychotherapy program for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The Doxies began planning the nonprofit in 2007, purchased a 20-acre rural tract in North Fort Myers three years ago, and on Veterans Day 2013, officially opened Miles Ranch.

"We wanted to honor him," Doxie explains. "Here, there's a connection between the horse, the military and Miles." Marshall, the horse Miles loved, is one of two therapy horses used in the program.

The VA estimates that 20 percent of America's 2.3 million Iraq and Afghanistan veterans suffer from PTSD; 68,000 veterans live in Lee County.

Early every morning, before classes start at Lexington Middle School, Doxie



Keith and Gail Doxie run the Miles of Smiles Foundation in honor of their son.

cares for the horses at the ranch.

The clients work with his wife, Gail, who earned a degree in mental health counseling. They plan to bring in more horses and increase the number of secluded oak hammocks where the vets ride, undergo therapy and spend quiet time. They hope eventually to have small cabins where participants can spend weekends with their families.

The Doxies carry on their work with the help of volunteers, some who grapple with PTSD themselves, and donations of money and labor. Gail Doxie divides her time between her counseling practice and selling real estate.

The ranch now has 15 to 20 clients, but the Doxies expect that number to grow as word spreads and they add horses.

Gail Doxie begins by letting clients choose the horse they most relate to

and then asks each veteran to guide their animal around, through and over obstacles. She's mainly the observer, with the interaction between the massive animal and the veteran often a metaphor for what's going on in the client's life.

The Doxies maintain close ties with FGCU, with students performing some of their service-learning hours there. Veterans who are also students are finding their way to the program to seek help as well.

It's a program from which everyone benefits.

"We could have become bitter," Gail Doxie says. "We chose to get better."

– Sue Beard

FOR MORE INFO

To contact the Miles of Smiles Foundation, email miles_ranch@aol.com, call (239) 851-0621 or visit their website: milesranch.org

“We bake for a cause. It's kind of a thank-you to organizations that are doing good service in the community.”

- EBOLI GONZALEZ, SENIOR

[COLLECTIVE WE]

These students really take the cake

Cake Cause members bake as a way to thank those helping the elderly and the dying.

EBOLI GONZALEZ WHISKs TOGETHER SOFTENED BUTTER and confectioner's sugar in a large mixing bowl, pausing every now and then to catch her breath and rest her arm. Whipping up frosting from scratch for dozens of cupcakes isn't, well, a piece of cake, Gonzalez is learning.

“I Googled how to do it,” the senior biology major from Naples says. “I kind of have a little experience baking. Whenever I get bored, I randomly decide to cook something. Little by little, I'm learning how to cook from scratch.”

There's nothing random, on the other hand, about Cake Cause's mission. The student organization exists to bring cheer to local nonprofit organizations like Hope Hospice and the Care Club of Collier County, which provides day care for people with Alzheimer's disease and other memory disorders.

“We bake for a cause. It's kind of a thank-you to organizations that are doing good service in the community,” Gonzalez says.

Cake Cause consists of about 15 active members who gather every couple of weeks in one of the residence hall kitchens to bake cupcakes, brownies or cakes that brighten the days of workers and families who may need a ray of sunshine. Some bakers have

Upper right: Stephanie Bentley and Rose Ho whip up a batch of cupcakes.

Right: Cake Cause members spread brightly colored icing on their creations.



never cracked an egg before, while others have cooked as kids or, like Gonzalez, picked up experience piecemeal.

“I did some baking with my mother when I was younger,” says Stephanie Bentley, a senior biology major from Port Charlotte. “I wanted to do something to give back.”

Gonzalez asks Bentley to taste the icing she's been mixing to see if it's too sweet. Then she adds some food coloring to turn it Barbie-doll pink. Later in the day, another shift of members will come by to frost and decorate the

cupcakes with sprinkles and holiday-themed candies. There will be frosting squirted into mouths, of course.

“It's fun,” says Rose Ho, a Mobile, Ala., native who graduated in December with a biology degree. “I don't really cook at all. Baking is kind of new to me.”

- Drew Sterwald





The power of

HATRED

**Professor teaches about
history of genocide
in hopes of preventing
future atrocities.**

Southwest Florida's cerulean skies and talcum shores can make the Holocaust and its horrific history feel a world away. But at the FGCU Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, the Holocaust and other such senseless massacres remain in sharp focus.

Directed by Paul Bartrop, an FGCU history professor who is a leading scholar on the subject, the center's purpose is to increase knowledge and understanding about the Holocaust and other genocides.

By Betsy Clayton

Bartrop, an affable 59-year-old with an Aussie accent and a Donald Duck wristwatch, has taken the university-focused academic institution that was established in 2005 to a new level since 2012, when he joined this campus community some 9,650 miles from his hometown, Melbourne.

Born to a homemaker mother and a World War II disabled veteran father, Bartrop in fifth grade declared he'd have a career as a historian. He did most of his teaching in Australia, a country in which the British established penal colonies during the late 18th century. His great-great grandfather, James Bartrop, was among the first arriving convicts.

Between 1997 and 2011 he taught at – and headed up – the Department of History at Bialik College, Melbourne. In 2011-12, he was the Ida E. King Distinguished Visiting Professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Richard Stockton College in New Jersey. One winter was enough. "Kangaroos live in hot climates," he quips.

Wherever he's lived, he's written. A dozen of his works stand between bookends on his FGCU desk; more volumes are shelved in the tidy office. Save for a photo of his wife of 23 years, Eve Grimm, the rest consists of books about genocide – those that took place in Armenia, Cambodia, Rwanda and elsewhere. His most recent work, "Modern Genocide: The Definitive Resource & Document Collection," is due out this year and may be pre-ordered on Amazon.com. Those who want a 192-page primer can pick up his "Genocide: The Basics."

With the help of intern Danielle Drew, Bartrop spent much of the fall focused on a Jan. 24 International Holocaust Remembrance Day event as well as a 2016 conference on the 80th anniversary of the Berlin Olympic Games

the U.N. Convention on Genocide 1948, any one of a number of acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group."

Pinnacle magazine talked with Bartrop about the subject to which he's dedicated his life.

Q: What does the Center do?

With education as its primary mission, the Center conducts events that relate to the commemoration of the Holocaust and other genocides. These events include lectures and appearances by leading scholars from around the world who address university audiences on their areas of expertise. We hold academic conferences, seminars and workshops, such as a major international conference in March 2014 on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Holocaust in Hungary, and last September marking the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. Nearly all Center events are open to the general public as well as the university community. As the Center's director, I also engage in extensive research activities in areas relating to the Holocaust and genocide. The Center's work is student-focused, and as such I strive to encourage students' interest through

opportunities to involve themselves in all Center activities.

Q: Who is your target audience with your books?

They are education and reference works – encyclopedias, dictionaries and textbooks. Some are for general audiences, though, like "Australia and the Holocaust" and "Surviving the Camps: Unity in Adversity During the Holocaust."



Paul Bartrop has devoted his life to teaching about genocide.

that's to be modeled after the successful 2014 FGCU conference, "The Holocaust in Hungary, 70 Years On."

The professor has a specific definition of "genocide," which is derived from the Greek "genos" (tribe, nation) with the Latin suffix "-cide" (killing). It is: "As defined by

Q: How difficult is it to be concise yet comprehensive when writing about this?

I'm a person who begins by writing more than is needed. I enjoy editing my work to bring things down to distilled essence. It's hard to summarize detail. I learned early on the necessity of writing with care, and with this topic – the Holocaust – even more so. There are so many people out there – anti-Semites, Holocaust deniers – so you must check everything to make sure it's as accurate as possible to ensure inconsistencies are reconciled before conclusions are drawn.

Q: What do students ask that makes you feel more understanding is needed?

They look at Germany in the 1920s before the Nazis came into office and then at the Nazi period, and they say, "How was this possible? How did it happen so quickly?" They become terrified. What they take away from my courses is that the Nazis bypassed the older generation and said, "The future is the youth; they'll be the ones we'll target for propaganda." My students – the majority of whom are from Southwest Florida – say, "I would never be like that." I get to the point where I don't ask them to consider, "What would I have done in that situation?" It's, "What should I have done?" That's the question for the adult, intelligent, literate human being.

Q: Describe student awareness of post-Holocaust genocides.

Not much. For example, 2014 was 20 years since Rwanda – 1 million people killed in 100 days, a speed three times faster than the Nazis. But 20 years ago for people today may as well have been 100 years ago. Another example: Bosnia-Herzegovina was 20 years ago, and many of my students didn't know there was a war in Europe then. They think of World War II only.

Q: Of the post-Holocaust genocides, which would you select for people to know about?

The most recent one – whatever that is at the time. That's because we have a responsibility to be aware of what's going on. This year (2015) is replete

with anniversaries. We are 100 years post Armenia. And 1945 was the end of World War II, the liberation of the camps and the start of the Nuremberg Trials. It will be 40 years since Pol Pot and the Cambodian genocide. And 40 years since the start of East Timor genocide – within three years, one-third of the East Timorian population was gone. Remember, 1995 was the end of the Bosnian war. After the 1994 Rwanda genocide, we heard talk of "never again, not on my watch." But in 2003 the new crisis was in Darfur – a Rwanda in slow motion, a half-million people.

Q: Why don't we as a global society do something about these atrocities?

There's an answer but not a solution. Change is possible, but somebody has to want things to change, and as a community of nations there is not sufficient commitment. To follow through on a commitment of that kind would take boots on the ground to stop them, and international law doesn't allow for that. A lot of countries know that to go to war means the possibility of defeat, and they don't go there.

There is something called the Responsibility to Protect – or R2P. Until that becomes enshrined in international law, no obligation exists to get involved in an awful situation.

Q: R2P? Tell us more about that.

The Responsibility to Protect initiative is based on a hope that the leaders of an increasing number of states (countries) see a role for the state to play in the future. It considers that state sovereignty carries obligations that require states to protect their populations from mass atrocity crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing — and that, if they do not, other states should have a right to intervene in their internal affairs in order to ensure that vulnerable populations are looked after.

Q: What can individuals do?

That's probably the hardest question of them all. Education is really the only solution. To develop awareness that it's wrong but can be recognized and combated.

Q: What should someone take from our conversation?

I would request that anyone reading this article handle hate carefully. It's such a powerful emotion, and the places it can lead – make it the last place you go. Make the extreme the extreme; make it the last place you visit rather than the first. ■

I would request that anyone reading this article handle hate carefully. It's such a powerful emotion, and the places it can lead – make it the last place you go."

— Paul Bartrop,
*Professor of History and Director of
The Center for Judaic, Holocaust,
and Genocide Studies*

Q: Aren't genocides happening now?

The world is still confronted by genocide. Between 2003 and 2010, at least half a million people were killed in the Darfur region of Sudan, while ongoing crises in Syria, northern Iraq and the Central African Republic are not receiving the attention that should be demanded by everyone in the aftermath of the horrors of the 20th century. Unfortunately, state interests still predominate in many countries (including the United States), meaning that countries will be selective when it comes to stopping the killing.

Q: How do you stay resilient personally when your life is immersed in such facts?

Donald Duck – my watch, my five grandchildren. A student once was visiting my home library and looked at the shelves and said, "Where are the happy books?"

FOR MORE INFO

To learn more visit www.fgcu.edu/hc/
– The Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies at FGCU.



Saving - THE - Seagrass

Underwater plants, critical to maintaining a healthy environment, face multiple threats.

Story by RICK WEBER / Photos by BRIAN TIETZ

Seagrass probably isn't what you think it is. It is not the smelly, slimy stuff that clings to your leg as you emerge from a swim in the Gulf or washes up on the sand and gets even smellier as it decomposes. That's seaweed – marine macro algae, plant-like organisms, which are not true plants because they didn't evolve from land plants.

Seagrass is a plant that lives underwater, has roots, flowers, seeds and pollen, and provides vegetation and habitat. It enhances an environment that otherwise would be unproductive sand and can live where nutrients are scarce. Where there is an excess of nutrients from pollution – like runoff from fertilizers and farms or from sewage and septic tanks – seaweed takes over for seagrass.

Seagrasses are extremely important indicators of the health of an ecosystem. They help maintain water clarity by trapping fine sediments and particles. They provide shelter for fish and crustaceans. And they serve as food (along with the organisms that grow on them) for marine animals and water birds.

And they're being threatened in Southwest Florida, which is why James Douglass, an assistant professor in FGCU's Department of Marine and Ecological Sciences, is spending a great deal of time and energy investigating them.

Douglass is studying seagrasses in the Caloosahatchee and Matlacha estuaries aided by technician Christina Kennedy, graduate students Shannan McAskill and Thomas Behlmer, and undergraduate interns Spencer Hilbert, Alexandra Rodriguez, Stephanie D'Orazio, Manuel Coffill, Andrew Eiseman, Lisa Rickards and Rachel Margalus.

"We care about seagrasses because they help clean the water and they take nutrients out of the water, and as long

Opposite: Shoal grass, *Halodule wrightii*, is a form of seagrass found in the Caloosahatchee Estuary.

Right: Right: FGCU Assistant Professor James Douglass records data while student intern Andrew Eiseman surveys seagrass.

as there are not too many nutrients, the seagrasses can deal with them," Douglass says. "They can also take sediments out of the water, just like a brush or comb can scrub. Just like a filter takes dust out of the air in your house, seagrasses take dirt and dust out of the water."

They also perform the vital task of removing carbon dioxide from the water, storing it in their roots and leaves.

"So it's sort of the reverse of what we usually do," Douglass says, "which is take petroleum out of the ground and burn it and put carbon dioxide in the air."

So, in other words, seagrasses help combat global warming?

"Yes," he says. "Because seagrasses absorb and sequester carbon dioxide, they can partially offset the buildup of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, thereby reducing global warming. Of course, when an existing seagrass bed dies, it releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and worsens climate change. So we need to protect the seagrass beds we still have as well as to restore the seagrass beds that were lost to human impacts in the past."





There are believed to be about 52 species of seagrasses worldwide, but only seven are found in Florida's marine waters, and they're declining for a variety of reasons: worsening water quality; direct physical disturbance, such as scars from motorboats or dredging; climate change; and changes in the food chain.

"Salinity (the salt content of the water) is a really big issue around here because it's affected so much by releases of water from Lake Okeechobee," Douglass says. "Salinity is not staying constant even in one particular spot of the estuaries. It's going up and down from the wet season to the dry season. When we release water, it gets fresh, and when we hold back water, it gets much saltier than it's supposed to be. This is what I call the 'Rainbow of Death.' There is no variety of seagrass that can deal with such a wide variation."

"The 'Rainbow of Death' is because of the way we've managed or changed the water flow. It used to flow from up around Orlando and the Kissimmee River into Lake Okeechobee and then gradually through the Everglades into Florida Bay. This was a gradual flow and not such a drastic change from the wet and dry season because the wetlands would sponge up the flow and release it



Top: Technician Christina Kennedy, left, readies an electronic instrument to measure water quality while James Douglass checks water clarity and Andrew Eiseman records data.

Above: Christina Kennedy uses an optical refractometer to measure salinity.

gradually, but now that we have all these canals and dams, we've sent a lot of water from Lake Okeechobee out through the Caloosahatchee Estuary, and that's really messed up the ecology."

Douglass' research has analyzed salinity conditions and the amount of seagrass at various places along the estuary.

On a late-October morning under a

cloudless, azure sky, Kennedy and Hilbert took a 16-foot skiff into the water. They threw into the four-feet-deep water a "quadrat" – pieces of PVC pipe with string in a grid of 25 squares, each measuring 20cm x 20cm. Then they put on snorkels and counted the seagrasses in about 25 areas of two distinct sections.

"I like the ecological aspects of seagrass," Kennedy says. "It's so important. It's a good indicator of the ecosystem's health. If seagrass is doing badly, then the water quality is probably fairly poor, because seagrass needs fairly good quality to survive."

The results so far?

"In the upper estuary, we've lost a lot of freshwater seagrass species, so we have an unpleasant bottom that is mostly barren and there's not a lot of food for manatees, and the few blades of freshwater grass are sparse and short," Douglass says. "In the middle estuary, the water is very murky and seagrass is sparse. In the lower estuary, there's a lot of seagrass, but it's covered with a lot of algae, probably because of excess nutrients coming from Lake Okeechobee. We can't entirely blame Lake Okeechobee because there are a lot of nutrients in the water from Fort Myers and Cape Coral."

He recently presented his results to a meeting of scientists and managers working on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and recommended that to stop killing seagrass in the Caloosahatchee Estuary, water managers should do whatever is necessary to control freshwater releases from the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam in Olga.

"It's clear from our data that freshwater flow less than 450 cubic feet per second leads to too-salty conditions that kill freshwater tapegrass in the upper estuary, while flow exceeding 2,800 cubic feet per second leads to too-fresh conditions that kill seagrasses in the lower estuary," he says. "Even when we get the freshwater flow right for the Caloosahatchee, we may still need to give the seagrass and the tape grass (freshwater plant) some help to get re-established. We're recommending and supporting efforts to replant some

areas in the estuary and to protect them with fences until the seagrass grows thick enough to be self-sustaining. The fences are needed because if you plant seagrass where there's no other seagrass around, it will attract all the grazers in the area and they'll eat it before it gains a foothold."

Douglass is finishing up his work for the South Florida Water Management District – the main agency running the Everglades restoration plan – which provided two grants of \$50,000 for one year. Lee County

James Douglass and Andrew Eiseman walk toward the mangroves of Starvation Key as they survey seagrass with a PVC quadrat.

is supporting him through next summer at \$28,000 a year as he does a baseline survey of seagrasses in Matlacha Pass.

"I'm looking for new funding sources," he says. "I'd like to do something to address boat propeller scars in Estero Bay. Funding is difficult. You just have to continue to be productive, get papers published and do the right kind of networking to look for new funding sources. Today, Lee County. Tomorrow, the National Science Foundation."

Douglass and his students have already gained the respect of members of the FGCU community.

Last year, the Repertory and

Performance class led by Lynn Neuman was interested in staging a production for National Water Dances Day. After Douglass spoke to the class, the students chose to call the production "Monami" – Japanese for "grass waves." Douglass was astonished when he saw the performance at the Sidney and Berne Davis Arts Center.

"They ended up with this really nice dance, all inspired by seagrass and the conservation of seagrass," he says. "It was very artistic. Not that I had a great role in it, but that was one of the coolest things that I've been able to do with seagrass studies, because we crossed over." ■



BOUND BY HONORS

Growing program fosters individual development within a tight community of high achievers

Story by DREW STERWALD

Just a year after graduating from Florida Gulf Coast University, Morgan Nadlman ('13, Nursing) already works at her dream job as a bone-marrow transplant nurse at the renowned St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis. The critically ill youngsters she treats and comforts typically face grim odds – less than 5 percent chance of survival – but she loves her work.

"I absolutely always wanted to do pediatric oncology," she says. "I told everyone I wanted to work at St. Jude before I was even accepted into FGCU's School of Nursing. A lot of people said 'That's going to be really hard.' "

The already intensive nursing coursework and the challenge of scheduling upper-level classes would leave her little time for elective studies or extra projects. But Nadlman shrugged off suggestions that she drop out of the Honors Program. It was part of what drew her to FGCU and ultimately helped put her on the path to her dream job.

"I was taking my deposit for the University of South Florida to the mailbox, and I found a letter from FGCU in the box. They were offering me a President's Gold Scholarship, and if I accepted I would be in the Honors Program. It pretty much paid for my college education. I'm really grateful for the experience and skills I got in Honors. They helped me get a job as a nursing assistant at (Lee Memorial) HealthPark, which really helped my resume."



Photos by BRIAN TIETZ



Belen Rodriguez, a senior at Golden Gate High School, already takes Honors classes at FGCU through the Accelerated Collegiate Experience program.

Success stories like Nadlman's have proliferated as FGCU has aggressively grown the Honors Program in size and depth in recent years. Honors students are securing grants from the likes of the National Science Foundation and landing internships with NASA and embassies in Washington, D.C. Honors alumni are winning full scholarships for doctoral programs and working for cutting-edge companies such as Algenol Biofuels.

As of last fall, 513 students were active in the still-growing program. Efforts to involve undergraduates in research have expanded and are engaging high-achieving young scholars who have their pick of schools. Although groundwork is being laid to expand the program into a college, funding will be needed to support additional administration and faculty as well as more scholarships, programs and travel opportunities for students.

"Within a handful of years, we will have an Honors College. It will be another jewel in the crown," says Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ronald Toll. "We now have students who are academically qualified to be admitted to the University of Florida. We must respond to the greater intellectual curiosity and intellectual development needs of these students."

Retention rate high

The Honors Program, which offered its first classes in 1998, recruits exceptionally motivated students and helps them advance their academic, professional and personal development while delving deeper into disciplines and experiences that interest them. In addition to Honors sections of general education and



interdisciplinary courses, the program encompasses advanced labs, travel abroad experiences, independent studies, readings, leadership training, research opportunities and service projects that intensify the challenges and rewards of higher education.

The program empowers students to create an individualized education. To help ensure that participants transition and flourish in the program, faculty and peer mentors and Honors residential

Junior Santiago Yori, top, freshman Cassandra Ellis, left, and sophomore Taylor Power get hands-on experience in research principles and lab technique through the "Honors Virus Hunters" course.

communities create an informal but tight-knit support network. Honors students have written their own constitution and code of conduct and share governance of the program with faculty.

Despite the extra time and work involved – some students produce a thesis before graduating – 92 percent of students remain in Honors and earn a golden sash to wear at commencement.

"It's a transformative program," says Sean Kelly, an associate professor in the Department of Communication & Philosophy who directed the program from 2007 to 2014, when he stepped down to pursue research opportunities. "It's a whole culture. We design the curriculum as experiences – cultural exploration, professional development, leadership through service. It's not simply about taking harder classes."

During his tenure, Honors soared from 86 to 440 students – in spite of elevating requirements for college board scores.

"When standards go up, it's more attractive to these students," Kelly said.

He also boosted recruiting efforts with Admissions and bolstered incentives like the President's Gold Scholarship.

"Sean did a fantastic job adding programming, increasing spending to be commensurate with the national average and developing an environment of undergraduates involved with research," Toll says.

The recent rapid growth will continue, according to Nicola Foote, an associate professor of Latin American history who's serving as interim director until a permanent appointment is made. Longer-established Florida universities serve about 5 percent to 7 percent of students in honors programs, she said; FGCU has reached about 3.5 percent participation.

Carly Hessler analyzes data from NASA's Kepler spacecraft in the Egan Observatory. Last summer, she had an internship at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif.

"We want to be inclusive but not grow to the point that we lose individual mentorship – that's one of the big attributes of the program," Foote says. "Establishing an Honors College would help us recruit on a national level. The perception of an Honors College is that it has more resources and opportunities than a program. It raises the academic credentials of the university as whole, which benefits everyone."

Hands-on research

Students in "Honors Virus Hunters" hunch over Bunsen burners, petri dishes and microscopes in a lab classroom in Academic Building 7. A mix of lower- and upperclassmen, they are growing viruses and practicing loading them into cell-phone-sized grids in preparation for a trip to the University of Florida, where they will examine the viruses under an electron microscope. Providing hands-on research opportunities early in college is one of the ways that Honors stands apart from traditional programs, where students usually have to wait until they're juniors or seniors.

Acting as teaching assistants, junior Santiago Yori and sophomore Taylor Power help classmates master their technique with pipettes and forceps.

"This is a great way to learn real scientific procedures," says Yori, a biology major who graduated from Cape Coral High School with an International Baccalaureate diploma. "Honors has a lot of IB and Advanced Placement students who could get into big-name schools. I was accepted into the UF Honors Program, but when I visited there I didn't feel connected to it. Here, I had a meeting right away with the director and got personal attention."

Yori has also gotten the priceless experience of presenting at a national conference involving Ivy League schools and other high-profile universities. Last summer, he and Power were selected to give an oral presentation at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Maryland on a virus that they and their classmates isolated, named, sequenced and analyzed. FGCU was the only first-year school participating in the institute's nationwide genomics project that was selected to do



more than a poster on its work. Their findings are now part of an international database.

"FGCU is getting recognized," says Power, a biotechnology major from Houston. "Honors is my favorite part of being at FGCU. It's made me more ambitious, less afraid to be a leader and go after something that's hard. You learn more in depth, which helps your understanding of the subject."

In addition to dedicated classes like "Virus Hunters," Honors students engage in one-on-one collaboration with faculty.

Carly Hessler, a senior software engineering major from Moore Haven, has been working with Whitaker Eminent Scholar Derek Buzasi to analyze data from NASA's Kepler spacecraft involving the rotation and activity of stars and how that relates to the presence of nearby planets. Last summer, she had an internship at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., during which she tested flight software for a near-space balloon observatory.

"Basically, I was trying to break software NASA engineers made," jokes Hessler, who entered FGCU through the Accelerated Collegiate Experience for high school students. "I found three errors in the system total. It was really awesome."

During her 10-week internship, the self-described "nerdy software engineer" found that she could hold her own with students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She's accustomed to having peers in Honors who keep each other on their toes intellectually.

"Being around people doing really well drives you to do more," Hessler says. "I like to be around people who are willing to discuss things and think deeper and higher – people you can go to no matter what their major is."

Honors students also tend to raise the level of discourse and learning in the classroom – an extra reward for faculty who invest additional time and personal attention in Honors students.



"I like a challenge, too," says Buzasi. "They ask questions you might not have thought of. It's always fun to see people learning."

Diverse reach

For those outside the program, Honors may be wrongly perceived as being all pre-med students and science geeks. In actuality, it intersects with the whole range of disciplines, programs and degrees in the university.

There's Lucy Leban, a senior majoring in political science and philosophy, who studied sustainable food systems and ecological restoration in Costa Rica, and who received a National Science

Briana Stiehl receives her Honors cord from mentors Sasha Wohlpart and Kris De Welde before graduating in December.

Foundation grant to do graduate-level research on conflict management and peace studies. The president of FGCU's Amnesty International chapter, she plans to attend graduate school and work in international relations.

There's Megan Shindler, a sophomore majoring in political science and theater, whose performance in FGCU's "Laramie Project" production earned her a spot in the competitive Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. An active volunteer for voter registration, she's considering law school and work in human rights.

"This school has given me a big canvas to develop my passion," says Shindler, who came to FGCU from Cincinnati. "I wanted to learn unconventionally – do more than learn from books and lectures. Honors has linked me to the community and to advocacy."

GIVE2FGCU

Ensuring student success is one of the priorities of FGCU's \$100 million fundraising campaign. By supporting programs like Honors, you can make a difference in many students' lives. For more information, go to www.fgcu.edu/Foundation or call (239) 590-1067.

Indeed, civic responsibility is one of the core institutional pillars of Honors. Students who choose the Honors Service Experience program commit to double the number of service-learning hours required for non-Honors students. They learn leadership by organizing campus fundraisers, such as the annual St. Baldrick's Day head-shaving campaign that raised \$15,000 this fall for childhood cancer research, and the Trails for Tails run to Key West that generates awareness and money for wildlife conservation.

As an undergraduate, FGCU Hall of Famer Andres Machado ('14, Political Science) was active in the movement to support in-state tuition for all high school graduates regardless of immigration status – a cause close to his heart as a Colombian immigrant who spoke no English when his family arrived. Gov. Rick Scott signed it into law last year.

A first-generation college student, Machado used persistence to persuade the Colombian embassy in D.C. to hire him for a summer internship in 2013. He won a slew of FGCU awards for service-learning, research and business and was named College of Arts and Science 2013-14 Student of the Year.

Last summer he was awarded a scholarship to study international politics and economics at the prestigious London School of Economics, where he is applying for graduate school. For now, he works as a college access counselor at Grace Place in Naples, where he encourages good students from low-income families to consider and prepare for higher education.

Using skills he honed through Honors, Machado is inspiring the next generation of college students with his story. "Dream big," he tells them.

"The opportunity to go to college changed my life," he says. "Through Honors I was able to experience things beyond my expectations. It takes initiative, but if you get involved it can make a big difference. It's a one-of-a-kind program." ■



Honors is all in the family for Gormans

The Honors Program instills a strong sense of community through mentoring, residential life and group service projects. Some would say it's like one big family.

Sisters Catherine ('12, B.A., '14 M.A., English) and Claire Gorman ('14, Business Management and Communication) left their mark on the program and the campus. Catherine developed and coordinated the Honors Mentors program after seeing the need for transitional assistance as a transfer student at FGCU. She and Claire helped develop Honors Ambassadors (now Eagle Ambassadors) to provide volunteers who would represent the university well at public events. Both also were part of the team of the "Honors Foundations of Civic Engagement" class that launched the St. Baldrick's Day head-shaving event in 2011 to raise money for children's cancer research.

Now part of the FGCU Undergraduate Studies staff, Catherine continues to coordinate Honors mentors, while Claire

went from an internship to a permanent job in public relations for Algenol Biofuels in Bonita Springs.

"The skill sets I gained as a member of Honors I apply every day at work," Claire Gorman says. "You had to learn to communicate effectively and engagingly not just to peers, but to the director of the program, to professors, to outside community partners. When I interviewed for the internship and then for this position, one of the first things I brought up was my Honors experience."

The Gorman era in Honors began a new chapter this fall: Their brother Sean enrolled as a music major.

"FGCU has been very good to my family," Catherine Gorman says.

And vice versa, you could say. ■

As a student, Catherine Gorman ('12, B.A., '14 M.A., English), left, helped launch the St. Baldrick's Day fundraiser for childhood cancer research. She now works at FGCU.



Photo by Kevin Sites

The making of a **WAR CORRESPONDENT**

Story and photos by ALEX PENA '11



t was about 2 p.m. on a Friday, mid-July 2013, when the earth shook at Combat Outpost Soltan Kheyl, in Wardak Province, Afghanistan.

PFC Bryan Wintering, with Bravo Company's 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, was playing the game Temple Runner on his iPhone on the back ramp of a heavily armored vehicle when the glare from the sun threatened to ruin his high-scoring game.

The 21-year-old stepped back into the hull of the vehicle to deflect the sun, passing Specialist Shannon Kelley as he stepped out of the vehicle for a smoke break.

Both were part of a Quick Reaction Force team based at the outpost.

In the dry heat and calm of the early afternoon, the mortar round struck with a deafening blow, rocking the base for yards.

"I went to the ground because I felt a little shrapnel hit my neck. I heard him screaming for a doc, or a medic," Wintering said. "It took me a second to just jump out there. It was still smoky, lots of dust. He was laying face down on the floor holding his face and I just picked him up. I was like, 'we gotta go, man!' I took him to the aid station and that's all I really remember."

I remember where I was when the Taliban attacked that day. I was walking back from lunch as the ground shook beneath my boots, piercing my ears with the fearsome blow. I jumped and ducked – a weird combination. These soldiers were professionals, trained to react; I was

Previous page: Journalist Alex Pena on joint patrol with U.S. and Afghan National Army troops in Afghanistan's Regional Command East in July 2013. Behind him, a U.S. Army soldier serves as security for the troops as they walk from village to village, assisting the Afghan army.

Right: The Explosive Ordnance Detachment with the 162nd Ordnance Company, 84th Ordnance Battalion, demolishes unexploded ordnances in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan.







not. I'm no good with guns. As a reporter embedded with their unit, I grabbed the weapon I knew best: the camera laced around my neck.

Still confused in the early chaos of the attack, I figured hiding deep in a concrete bunker would be my best choice. Instead, I put the camera to my face and began to track the wounded soldiers with my lens as they scrambled towards help.

Kelley was pressing his hand tightly against his neck, holding one of his wounds as blood streamed down his head from another. Wintering propped him up as they squeezed through the aid station's small plywood door.

Reality sets in

This was the life I had chosen – war correspondent – at the time for the famed Stars and Stripes military newspaper, and previously as a freelance correspondent. I was a short time out, but a long way from FGCU.

My attraction to journalism started innocently enough as I honed my camera skills while making skate videos with my high school crew, Sofia Sliderz, and editing the school's weekly news program with my newfound skills. I became fascinated with visual storytelling, and to me nothing was more visual than war. I'd be lying if I didn't confess to some initial romantic notions of exotic and dusty locales, delivering war zone dispatches that circled the globe from a makeshift satellite feed somewhere in the Middle East.

I can say with confidence all that vaporizes when the first bullet cracks overhead, or the siren signaling incoming mortar fire wakes you from a cold night of sleep. It's frightening and not in the least romantic. That's also when you realize how important what you are doing is: telling humanity what's happening to humans, and hoping that they will care.

After graduating from college with

Syrian refugees Esmaa Ali Ismira and her daughters have lived at the Baqa'a Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan for 18 months after fleeing their home because of the ongoing civil war. They are among a growing number of Syrians who have moved into established camps originally designed to house Palestinians.

the goal of telling other people's stories, I knew I would have to think entrepreneurially. The last time I checked, national news outlets weren't jumping at the opportunity to support an inexperienced 22-year-old as he traversed the world's most dangerous locales.

I graduated in December 2011, with one of FGCU's first journalism degrees. Ten days later, using what little money I had, I was on a one-way flight to Nairobi, Kenya, the heart of East Africa, which would be the starting line of a very dangerous few years.

One of my first stops would be the volatile border regions of the world's

newest country, South Sudan. I had teamed up with a freelance journalist from Spain, Natxo Marcet, as we both attempted to hustle our way to the country's front line.

In 2012, the former rebels and now legitimate army of South Sudan, referred to as Southern People's Liberation Army (SPLA), had begun making movements on oil fields they claimed were illegitimately taken by their fractious neighbor to the north, Sudan. The recently divided countries were caught in a peculiar predicament after their breakup. South Sudan had the oil, while Sudan had the pipelines for export. They bickered over who should get what like a divorcing couple at a settlement hearing, only with AK-47 rounds and billions of dollars in oil revenue at stake.

As journalists we wanted to document the ragtag team of soldiers as they marched north into new territory – but we'd have to get there first. With locals on the ground capitalizing on the economic bubble created by foreign journalists and NGO workers that flood into conflict zones, prices for gas and drivers were exorbitant.

While network and staff reporters were paying upwards of \$400 a day to be ushered to the front line – an area called Panakuac – Natxo and I took a more “college kids on taco-Tuesday” approach. We walked up and down the dirt streets in a tiny and nearly abandoned military town called Bentiu. The side of the road was littered with ashy burnt out craters made by bombs, many of which killed civilians caught between the clashing governments.

We spoke as loudly as we could in English. This is a reasonably good tactic for finding other English speakers in a small village where Juba Arabic is the official language. It is not such a good tactic for personal safety – but it worked. We caught

Above, right: Alex Pena reports from the South Sudan/Sudan border town of Panakuac.

Right: This sign on the dashboard of vehicles enroute from Kenya to the Somali border indicates there are journalists onboard and no weapons, declaring their status as noncombatants.

the attention of some mechanics who said they knew a guy, who knew a guy, who could talk to a guy who had a school bus. He told us this driver speaks some English and for about \$100 a day he would drive us to the front line. We agreed, and arrived at the front of one of Africa's deadliest wars in a rundown school bus driven by a guy who lied about speaking English.

We picked up a few hitchhiking SPLA soldiers on the way, who told us their commanders left them with no fuel to get to the fight. We spent the afternoon leaping over foxholes and tanks, patrolling through the bush with this bedraggled group of South Sudanese soldiers.

While on that front line, SPLA Sgt. Abdeldak Akech caught our attention,



stopping us in our tracks. He reached down to the ground, filling his fist with the purest black patch of soil he could find. His AK-47 stood steady in his other fist.

“You see this dirt? It is the color of my skin,” he said valorously, as he let it fall from his hand back to the earth, as if he were being filmed for a Hollywood movie. “It belongs to me, and I’m here to fight for it, to defend it.” It was a powerful moment, which was subsequently ruined by my realization that his enemy, just a few kilometers north, more or less shared the same color skin and by that logic also had legitimate rights to the land over which they fought.

Another day, another war

Later that year I would find myself bouncing around the Syrian border in Jordan with a group of exiled Syrian smugglers trying to find a route into a country that was quickly spiraling out of control and into today’s most violent and complicated civil war. I also embedded with the Kenyan Defense Forces in Somalia, as they began their incursion across the border in an attempt to halt a long string of terror attacks in their country that stemmed from the Al-Qaeda linked group Al-Shabaab.

And I would make a much-needed return to Mexico, where it all started for me.

I had taken my first trip to the drug- and gang-ravaged town of Ciudad Juarez, Mexico in December 2009, while still a student at FGCU, and had returned periodically since. In doing so I watched a city that couldn't stop bleeding bandage its wounds and attempt to start over.

While a few drug-related murders a week might not seem like something to boast about, in Ciudad Juarez it's a vast improvement from the nearly eight murders a day that occurred back in 2009 and 2010. If you ask government officials, they'll tell you it's because of diligent police work that the murder rate dropped so dramatically.

If you ask the hit men, which I did in 2012, they'll tell you it's because they've killed all their enemies. The truth falls somewhere in the middle, with one cartel gaining enough turf to create a vacuum of relative peace. Mexico's narco violence is like a game of Whac-a-Mole along its northern border. When it leaves one city, it pops up somewhere else, and the remnants of violence leave deep scars in the people it has left behind.

I have formed a rather strange and dark

**I was the beloved
photographer so many of us
enjoy being in calm times.
But when blood started
flowing, that all changed."**

— Alex Pena, '11

relationship with the city whose images of violence have given me nightmares, and I've returned at least once a year since I first crossed the border in 2009. I tell myself it's for the award-winning stories I've produced there, but more likely it's for the good friends and tequila.

My life has become a whirlwind of crumpled airline boarding passes, sleepless nights tucked tightly into the corners of faraway and exotic airports, and a dusty backpack that I wish could talk to ease the often lonely road. All to capture the sights and sounds of war and their effects on the people involved.

It's important, and I care, which brings me back to that small combat outpost in the middle of a remote Afghan village.

Keeping focused

"Get out! No photos!" yelled one of the medics as he stretched the wounded soldier across his table. I could see they had already begun bandaging Kelley up, as another was questioning Wintering on what had happened. He was clearly in shock.

"We're with the press," we said. I was joined that day by a colleague and mentor, Kevin Sites of VICE Magazine, an experienced war correspondent.

"No photos!" was the response, still.

Just one day prior we had spent a beautiful Afghan summer morning photographing soldiers as they walked through golden wheat fields, answering calls to "photograph this," or "did you get this shot?" I was the beloved photographer so many of us enjoy being in calm times.

But when blood started flowing, that all changed.

Sites and I made our way out of the medics' station and found a small corner near the side of the plywood hooch that we hoped was sufficiently out of the way for us to go unnoticed. The soldiers began to prep a small cart to drive Kelley out to the helicopter-landing zone for an emergency medivac procedure.

The same medic made his way out of the station's side ramp, staring us down as we continued to snap away. I understood his glares.

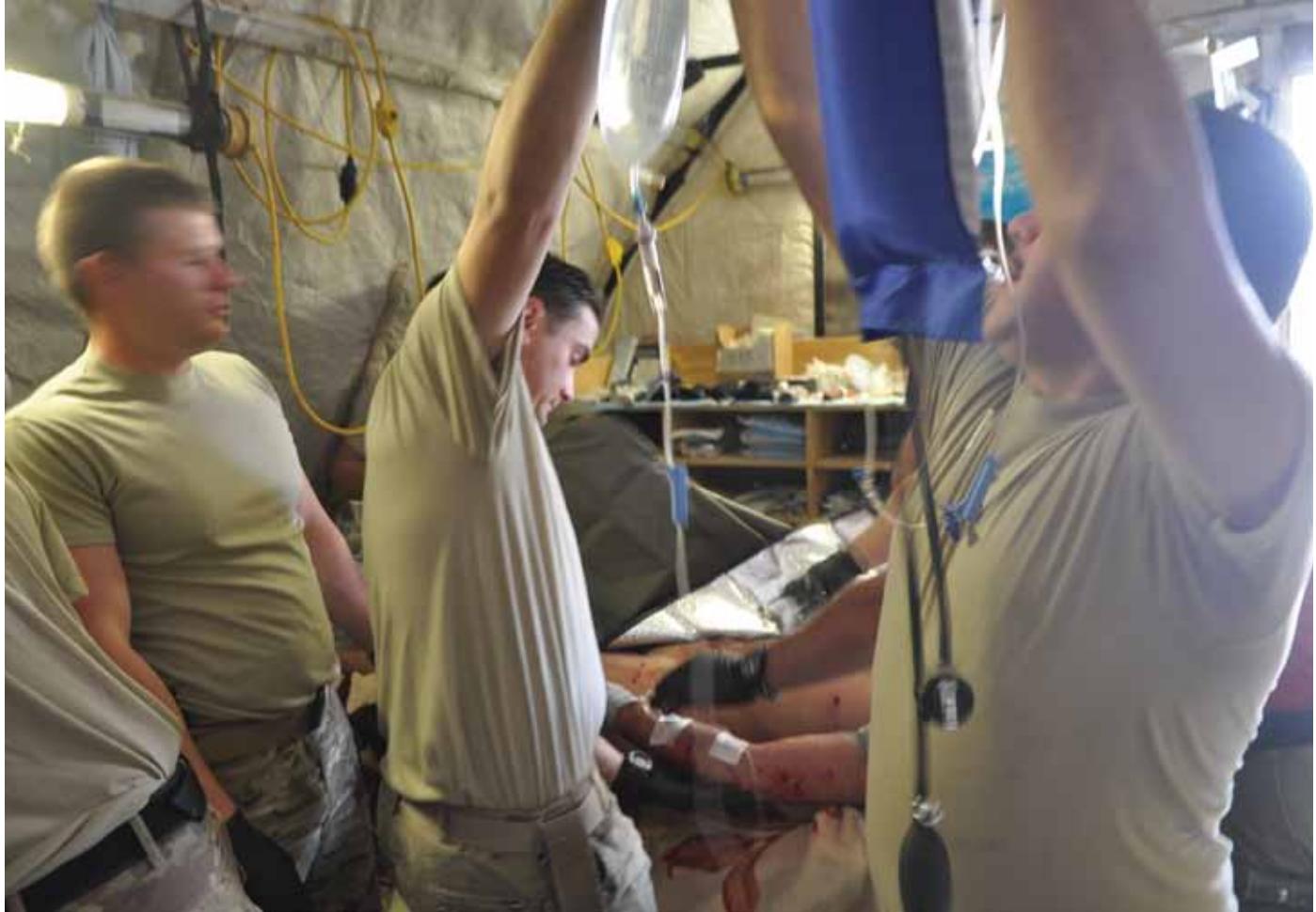
From his perspective, it made my stomach churn to photograph in such a situation – an embarrassment really. From my perspective, this was journalism, and the face of a war that was still raging after 13 years, despite the well-structured message from the military that the Afghan army had taken the lead, and the United States and its international partners were on their way out.

It was also a reminder that war doesn't miss a beat.

I didn't know it at the time but an A-10 Warthog fighter jet, loaded with a 500-pound bomb, had been deployed to attack the Taliban foot soldiers who had launched the mortar round at the U.S. base.

"We were able to identify two of the insurgents firing at us," said First Lt.





Opposite page: Soldiers from the Kenyan Defense Forces with an armored vehicle on patrol in southern Somalia as they attempt to eliminate the terror threat from the Al-Qaeda-linked group Al-Shabaab.

Above: The 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Security Force Advise Team 5K, works to save the life of an Afghan police officer wounded by shrapnel from an improvised explosive device placed by Taliban insurgents in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan.

Zachary Peterson, the fire support officer with Bravo 3-15. "We did a follow on them with our assets and were able to trace them back to a historical staging area."

The Taliban insurgents escaped that aircraft, a most certain death from above had they not. Wintering and Kelley

survived their close call with death that day, too.

The unit lost three soldiers just five days after the mortar incident while on patrol just outside the base in Soltan Kheyli city. A suicide bomber riding a donkey approached their patrol and detonated himself.

First Lt. Jonam Russell, 25, of Cornville, Ariz.; Sgt. Stefan M. Smith, 24, of Glennville, Ga., and Spc. Rob L. Nichols, 24, of Colorado Springs, Colo., were killed in the attack.

Later that afternoon as the trail of the Taliban went cold, Sites and I sat down with Wintering to talk about what had happened. Perhaps as an experienced conflict reporter, Sites had learned to manage the glares of soldiers as we

captured images of their wounded or worse friends. I had not, replaying their judgmental glances in my head as the often slow-moving days of war ticked on.

Wintering, who was just 6 months into his deployment, began to open up to us.

"You hear about it all the time, but you don't expect it to be you. Why me? It's crazy," he said.

And then he gave us a vivid and solid reminder of why we do what we do.

"Would you mind getting me those photos? I don't remember a thing." ■

FOLLOW ALEX

Keep up with Alex Pena's work on Twitter: @Alexandermpena

SENSE OF PLACE

MEN'S BASKETBALL
LOCKER ROOM

A gym dandy

Men's basketball locker room gets a cosmetic rebound.

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT A MEN'S BASKETBALL LOCKER room, some of the sights – and smells – that come to mind aren't pretty.

Until Coach Joe Dooley's arrival before the 2013-14 season, the men's nest at Alico Arena fit that odiferous reputation. "Nasty," is the way senior guard Bernard Thompson remembers it. "Showers didn't work, not enough storage for personal stuff. I'd have given it a three."

Today, the Eagles' former mess of a place to dress has improved to a sparkling nine on Thompson's 10-point scale. He can use the wingspan on his 6-foot-3 frame to easily access new storage space above his locker, leaving plenty of room to stash pairs of shoes below, including his beloved flip-flops. And best of all, ah yes ... the water is always hot.

The makeover is the work of Dooley, who not only has continued to build a winning mid-major hoops program on top of the foundation he inherited, but has more tangibly built a dressing destination in which his players now congregate and bond as a team.

"The first time he got a look inside this place," said Jason MacBain, who arrived as director of athletics communication about the same time Dooley did, "he turned to (former Director of Basketball Operations) Joey (Cantens), handed him his personal credit card and told him to get to work on fixing it."

Since then, Eagles' boosters Jim and Donna Sublett helped Dooley pick up the tab by donating funds for the overhaul. As a result, Stunk City inside Dunk City has been transformed into yet another shining example of the sweet smell of the Eagles' success.



① NOW THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

The team can analyze game and practice videos on a giant 72-inch TV monitor – not to mention play Xbox 360 on a state-of-the-art setup. Thompson says the players' game du jour these days is "FIFA World Cup Soccer."

② SEEING IS BELIEVING Visual reminders of success and what it takes to reach it begin with huge, adhesive cutouts of Dunk City's stars and exuberant fans in the hallway leading to the room's

entrance (not pictured) and continue to the quote by legendary football coach Vince Lombardi painted on the far wall: "Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence."

③ TO WINNERS GO THE SPOILS

Snacks and drinks to which players must have access per NCAA rules include Coca-Cola products.

④ SHOWERED WITH SUCCESS

Wild West saloon-style doors swing open



to cleaner, brighter restroom facilities and, to Thompson's delight, an endless stream of steaming water.

5 QUITE THE STASH The cabinets above the locker stalls beneath the ribbon of Dunk City artwork (also new) give players twice the personal storage space.

6 MORE MOTIVATIONAL MESSAGES At the back of each almost-4-foot-wide locker, Dooley has placed placards containing a single word

that represents a stepping stone to team success, such as "vision," "intensity" and "focus."

7 INTO THE FOLD Stools in front of each locker have been replaced by cushioned folding chairs emblazoned with the logo.

8 RUGGED GROUND An attention-grabber is new carpeting – a clean, comfy spot for the Eagles to put their best feet forward.

9 CIRCLE OF PROGRESS The wood-grain sphere with the team logo in the middle of the room is more than just a centerpiece. It's ground zero for Xbox 360 warfare. "Players have to stay inside the circle," Thompson said, describing a gaming fight pit not unlike a boxing ring or mixed martial arts cage, with game controllers substituting for fists. So who's the champ? "Jamail's probably the best," Thompson said, giving props to fellow senior guard Jamail Jones with a nod to the empty locker next to his. ■

[ART]

Art Gallery director stretching FGCU's canvas

Loscuito launches artist-in-residence program and more ArtLab programming.

In his first year as director, John Loscuito has reframed the image and aspirations of the FGCU Art Galleries.

Soon after his appointment last spring, he dove into plans to create an artist-in-residence program, cultivate FGCU's burgeoning permanent art collection and elevate public awareness of the university as a cultural resource. Within months, he established ties with other art gallery and museum directors in the area and was invited to serve as juror for an annual exhibition at the Lee County Alliance for the Arts in Fort Myers.

"We want to make our presence known in Southwest Florida," he says. "A lot of great people have made huge strides at FGCU. The groundwork is laid for success."

Loscuito joined FGCU after eight years at the Haggerty Museum of Art at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis. With an MBA from Marquette as well as bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, he brings both artistic sensibility and business savvy to gallery operations.

Coming from an institution that was not connected to an art department but geared toward engaging theology and philosophy students, he has been impressed with the depth of FGCU's program.

"With FGCU I saw how powerful that connection could be," Loscuito says. "I'm surprised at how ambitious the art program is considering it's a B.A. program. It's easily bachelor of fine arts level programming. The skill level you see in the student shows is very high."

The Haggerty opened in 1984, but Marquette's 5,000-item collections date



John Loscuito is teaching as well as curating.

to 1889 and span an encyclopedic range, according to Loscuito. With FGCU's comparatively brief history and fledgling collection, he has the opportunity to shape a more purposeful mission. The primary challenge at this point is finding a place to keep it, he says. Lack of storage space could limit the scale and volume of the permanent collection.

"A collection has to have a main focus," he says. "The faculty here mainly teaches contemporary art practices, so the gallery needs to collect contemporary art. I see us collecting two-dimensional art, video and smaller-scale works. As our aspiration and collection grow, we hope to inspire donors to support growing the facilities."

The Main Gallery's first fall exhibition, "Harvey Littleton: No Secrets,"

showcased a significant gift to FGCU by the artist's daughter, Carol Littleton Shay. Harvey Littleton (1922-2013) was best known as a pioneer in glass art but also developed vitreograph printmaking, which involves pulling prints from glass plates. Littleton Shay has pledged to donate to FGCU more than 70 prints by her father and other artists who worked at Littleton Studios.

With a background that includes managing an experimental theater company and producing performance events, Loscuito also hopes to expand collaboration among multiple disciplines – art, music, theater, dance, language arts, even sciences – to promote the Bower School of Music & the Arts brand.

"The more we can link departments together, the more it makes our presence greater and more relevant," Loscuito says.

– Drew Sterwald

“ As our aspiration and collection grow, we hope to inspire donors to support growing the facilities.”

- JOHN LOSCUITO, GALLERY DIRECTOR AT FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

[THEATER]

Dancers take the plunge with original work

A DOZEN DANCERS AND ACTORS WILL IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN THE aquatic world – sometimes literally – when they perform “Disphotic Twilight Zone” in February.

A mashup of contemporary dance and “The Twilight Zone,” according to choreographer and director Lynn Neuman, the work represents the first original, fully staged dance production at FGCU, she said. After auditions last fall, Neuman and the students began improvising on themes and movement that were initiated by Neuman and evolved through eight weeks of evening rehearsals. In addition to collaborating on the choreography, they’ve been sharing sections of the dance via video with Joshua Davis, a composer in Pennsylvania who will perform original music live during the performances.

“For students to have the experience of being part of the creative process is super-educational. A lot of them have never had that experience,” said Neuman, an instructor in the Bower School of Music & the Arts who also is artistic director and cofounder of Artichoke Dance Company in New York City.

GO

What: “Disphotic Twilight Zone”
When: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 13, 14, 20 and 21;
2 p.m. Feb. 15, 21 and 22
Where: Theatre Lab, Arts Complex
Tickets: \$10 at theatrelab.fgcu.edu

“It’s really fun,” dancer Lisa Consolazio ('14, Communication) said during a December rehearsal. “We didn’t really know what to expect. In the beginning we just did movement. It’s sort of like a puzzle. We learned one section at a time. It’s just starting to click.”

With undulating arms and lilting torsos, the dancers’ sequential movements suggest rippling currents, spiraling gyres and floating sea creatures. In the work’s title, disphotic refers to the “twilight” zone of the ocean where the extreme depth allows scant sunlight to penetrate and where many of the creatures are bioluminescent. The dancers will enter the stage under ultraviolet light and wearing iridescent colors.

A short water tank 23 feet long and 20 inches wide will sit between the stage and the audience, and at least one performer will be making a splash.

A literal connection to “The Twilight Zone” comes from snippets of dialogue from the television series that are combined with original text written by Neuman. Three actors – who may represent individual characters or three facets of the same character – perform the script, which makes oblique references to memory, déjà vu, nightmares and ghosts.

It was all still a work in progress when Pinnacle went to press.

“Thematically, what’s emerging is ideas about perception and reality and memory ... our understanding of boundaries and borders,” Neuman said. “In the creative process, you start somewhere and never know where it’s going to take you.”

— Drew Sterwald

► ARTS CALENDAR

2/22 **SUNDAY**

“The Beauty of the Cello”

3 p.m., Concert of music by Beethoven, Strauss and other composers that highlights the instrument. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building. \$10

2/26 **THURSDAY**

“Reunion: Baker, Gerhard, Heubeck”

5 p.m., Gallery talk and reception for exhibition featuring alumni Lauren Baker, Ehren Gerhard and Philip Heubeck. Runs through 3/19 in ArtLab.

3/12 **THURSDAY**

“The Voice of the Piano”

7:30 p.m., Concert by pianist Rebecca Penneys of the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, N.Y. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building. \$10

3/17 **TUESDAY**

“A Night at the Opera”

7:30 p.m., Concert featuring Jeanie Darnell, soprano, and Michael Baron, piano, performing arias, duets and staged scenes from classic operas. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building. \$10



3/19 **THURSDAY**

17th Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition

5 p.m., Opening reception and awards ceremony for juried show featuring sculpture, drawing, digital media, printmaking, painting and ceramics. Runs through 4/12 in Main Gallery, Arts Complex.

3/20 **FRIDAY**

“Mr. Perfect”

7:30 p.m., Comedy revolving around a chance meeting between an actor who records audiobooks and a makeup artist who loves to listen. Continues at 7:30 p.m. March 21, 27 and 28 and 2 p.m. March 22, 28 and 29 in Theatre Lab, Arts Complex. \$10

3/26 **THURSDAY**

Jerzy Sterczynski, piano

7:30 p.m., Concert of Polish piano music of Chopin and Szymanowski performed by the Polish pianist and faculty member of the Chopin University of Music in Warsaw. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building. \$10

SPORTS PAGES

compete, excel



Teams have promising fall seasons, looking forward

Basketball teams shooting for NCAA Tournament berths in March, while those with spring seasons are working toward bigger, better results as well.

[BASKETBALL]

Both the men's and women's basketball teams started off with a bang this year, although the men have struggled after starting the season 8-1.

The men have an 11-7 record; the women are 15-2 as of Jan. 15, coming out on top in both the U.S. Virgin Island Paradise Jam and the Hawk Classic at St. Joseph's University.

With four of five starters back from last year's tournament squad, the FGCU women's team has designs on posting its first NCAA tournament victory.

The FGCU men also hope to make national news – two years removed from their famed NCAA Sweet 16 appearance.

The women are fueled by last year's gut-wrenching, first-round NCAA Tournament defeat to Oklahoma State. The Eagles had a 10-point lead with 10 minutes remaining in the game. It marked the third straight postseason FGCU was unable to hold a late lead in the tournament.

Two-time Atlantic Sun Conference Player of the Year Sarah Hansen was a key player on last year's squad, but she graduated. Guard Whitney Knight, a 6-foot-3 redshirt junior who finished second on the team in scoring

Above: The women's basketball team at this year's season opener against George Washington.

Right: Men's basketball's senior Bernard Thompson



Photos by James Greco

behind Hansen last year, and junior guard Kaneisha Atwater are working hard to fill the void.

The Eagles beat Harvard 68-58. "We are fortunate that in the last six and a half minutes we played really well and were able to steal the win," FGCU coach Karl Smesko said.

The FGCU men, meanwhile, are using an offense built around senior guards Brett Comer and Bernard Thompson. Many pundits have picked FGCU to win the Atlantic Sun Conference and reach the NCAA tournament this season.

Mercer and East Tennessee State, two fellow semifinalists from last season's A-Sun tournament, left for the Southern Conference this year. FGCU coach Joe Dooley, who took over the program after its famed April 2013 run in the NCAA Tournament as a No. 15 seed, said he would like the Eagles to have more of a killer instinct.

"We have to learn not to take our foot off the gas," Dooley said.

[VOLLEYBALL]

The FGCU women's volleyball team once again made it to the A-Sun championship semi-finals this year. And, for the second year, the team saw its season end at the hands of Jacksonville University.

Jacksonville beat FGCU 3-1 in the Atlantic Sun Conference Championship semifinals on Nov. 22. Jacksonville posted the same score against the Eagles last year. This season's defeat was particularly crushing for FGCU's four seniors: Olivia Mesner, Jessica Barnes, Gigi Meyer and Whitney Masters. Mesner ended the regular season with 368 kills and 46 digs, while Barnes ends with 360 kills and 75 digs. Meyer finishes her career with 1,817 assists and Masters finishes with 498 digs.

FGCU senior Gigi Meyer goes for the ball in the game against Jacksonville.



► SPORTS PAGES

(continued from previous page)



"I don't think we played anywhere near good enough to beat a Jacksonville team that is playing really well right now," first-year FGCU coach Matt Botsford said.

[SOCCER]

Another year, two more oh-so-close NCAA tournament games for the FGCU men's and women's soccer programs.

After a historic season in which it posted 17 victories, the FGCU women's soccer team fell to Auburn 1-0 in a first-round tournament game. Five days later, the FGCU men suffered the same gut-turning 1-0 defeat to Coastal Carolina. The Eagle men and women were trying to become the first soccer teams at the university to post NCAA tournament victories.

"I'm very proud of our team and the season that they had," FGCU women's coach Jim Blankenship said. "Program record 17 wins and they played six teams in the top 30 and I'm just proud of it."

You saw the product of that schedule."

Only FGCU softball and the famed 2013 FGCU men's basketball Dunk City teams have posted NCAA postseason victories since the programs became Division I. The FGCU men's soccer team made the university's 10th overall NCAA postseason appearance among FGCU's seven team sports.

The FGCU men's soccer defeat concluded a year that saw the Eagles crack the national top 25 rankings after a 2-0 season-opening win at South Florida.

"I'm proud of this group and what they've done and how they've played a very difficult schedule," FGCU men's coach Bob Butehorn said. "But in all honesty I'd be lying if I told you I felt good about this. It was great to be back in the NCAA Tournament, but I want this program to take the next step and start winning these games, and that's something we're certainly capable of doing with a little bit more work in the offseason."

FGCU junior Felipe DeSousa playing against Stetson last October.

[TENNIS]

The FGCU men's and women's tennis teams used the fall season to improve their respective singles and doubles teams.

The goal was to be in tip-top shape for the spring A-Sun conference season.

FGCU men's coach C.J. Weber was pleased with his team's performance, which ended with the Dick Vitale Intercollegiate Clay Court Classic at the Lakewood Ranch Country Club. FGCU junior Eduardo Alfonzo lost to Oklahoma State's Nicolai Ferrigno 6-1, 6-4 in the singles consolation semifinals.

"I'm constantly complimented about this group being warriors on the court and gentlemen off the court," Weber said. The team picked up a trio of single wins opposite No. 45 Texas Christian University during the FGCU Spring Invitational in January.

After competing in three previous fall tournaments, the FGCU women ended their fall season in the same Dick Vitale Intercollegiate Clay Court Classic. Freshman Julianna Curtis had the highlight of the day by nearly upsetting Marta Morga of Memphis, the tournament's No. 2 seed. Morga ended up beating Curtis 7-6(5), 6-2.

"We now go into the offseason and will continue to work on different aspects and areas of where we need to grow in order to prepare for the regular season," FGCU women's coach Courtney Vernon said.

[GOLF]

The FGCU men's golf team ended its fall campaign on a high note.

The Eagles' fifth-place result at the Homewood/Hilton Garden Airport & FGCU Classic was just the type of performance head coach Eric Booker wanted to see. The Eagles will try to build off the finish as it trains in the offseason for the spring season.

FGCU started the fall season with last-place finishes at the 16-team St. Mary's Invitational at Seaside, Calif., the eight-team Gridiron Golf Classic at South Bend, Ind., and the 14-team Sagamore Fall Preview in Noblesville, Ind.

"We're starting to show some improvement as a team and some of the individuals had some decent rounds," Booker said. "Now we've got a few months to train, and we'll be doing a lot of fitness-related activities and also working on the short game as well to get ready for the spring. We want to win the conference and the guys have the talent to excel."

The FGCU women's team also plans to focus on offseason training as it prepares for the spring season. The Eagles struggled for most of the fall, finishing eighth out

of 11 teams at the Sunflower Invitational in Kansas and 13th out of 15 teams at the Johnie Imes Invitational in Missouri.

"In the offseason, we need to find a way to eliminate silly mistakes and let that competitive fire burn inside of us," FGCU women's coach Sarah Trew said. "If we can do those two things we will be ready for the spring."

[CROSS COUNTRY]

The FGCU men's cross country team made history at this fall's NCAA South Regional meet, finishing in a program-best 17th place.

The women runners did well, too, finishing in 24th place in their first appearance in the championship event.

The team runs made FGCU cross country coach Cassandra Goodson happy. She watched the team improve throughout the season, peaking at the top meet of the year. Earlier in November, the Eagles performed well at the A-Sun Conference Championship meet to earn the NCAA South Regional invitations. The men finished in fourth place in the A-Sun meet, while the women took third.

"I'm very proud of what both teams accomplished this season," Goodson said. "The women have made an incredible

overall improvement, a testament to their hard work and dedication. The same goes for the men as they constantly push themselves to excel."

[SWIMMING]

FGCU's swimming and diving team continued to make national headlines this fall, posting victories over Miami and finishing third out of seven teams at the All Florida Invitational in Gainesville.

The fall performances helped the Eagles get ranked in a top-25 national poll for the first time in school history. SwimSwam.com NCAA Women's Power Rankings ranked the Eagles swimming team as the 24th best in the nation in its Nov. 18 poll.

FGCU coach Neal Studd was pleased with his team's fall season, and promising start to the spring with wins against Liberty, Campbell, Central Connecticut and Nebraska. The pinnacle of the spring season is the February Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association Championships, which feature 13 teams from the A-Sun, Big South, Mid-Eastern Athletic and Southern conferences.

"The team had numerous lifetime bests, and I am excited to see what we can do this spring," Studd said. ■



FGCU's swimming and diving team was ranked in a top-25 national poll for the first time in history.

PHILANTHROPY

"The results ... are always beyond calculation"

President's Scholarship Luncheon brings donors, recipients to the table

Annual event pays tribute to those who make education possible.

THE NUMBERS ARE IMPRESSIVE: MORE THAN 1,100 SCHOLARSHIPS awarded in 2014-15, totaling close to \$2 million. Looking out over a full-to-brimming ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point on Nov. 21 for the 15th annual President's Scholarship Luncheon, the impact of that giving took human form.

The event brought scholarship donors and recipients together for a chance to get acquainted and allowed the students an opportunity to thank donors for their generosity. The luncheon was sponsored by Wells Fargo, which surpassed \$1 million in philanthropic support with this event.

Miller Couse, chairman of the FGCU Foundation, addressed the donors, saying, "It is your gifts that fortify academic excellence, help deserving students through their academic journeys and support challenging, innovative programs that bolster student success and create the leaders and workforce for the future."

Illustrating the life-changing impact of scholarships, FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw said, "If it were not for scholarships, I would not be where I am today. I was fortunate to receive scholarships throughout my college years. As a first-generation college student, I know how transformative scholarships are."

He told the recipients in attendance that their scholarship sponsors want them to succeed, that they have made investments to encourage and support the students during this important phase of their lives.

"After you graduate and go on to accomplish your goals and dreams, please send us a letter to pass along to them," he said. "Let them know you think of them



still and appreciate and recognize the value of their kindness."

Fort Myers resident Roshonda Knight thanked the FGCU Alumni Association for her scholarship. A first-generation student, she began attending the university as a junior in high school through the Accelerated Collegiate Experience, a dual enrollment program. She is now a junior majoring in biomedical engineering and hopes to pursue a career in the medical field.

"I would like to express my thanks to the alumni who have supported the FGCU Alumni Association Scholarship," she said. "Their generosity is so admirable. I hope to one day give back to this scholarship and help a student in need as I have been helped."

While \$1.9 million awarded to 1,200 students seems like a lot, the demand



for aid far exceeds the money available. In an effort to assist a greater number of students, the university hopes to raise \$40 million for scholarships over the next three years as part of its \$100-million fundraising campaign.

— Karen Feldman



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1. Donors and scholarship recipients fill the Hyatt Regency ballroom.
2. Roshonda Knight
3. Andrew Kunkle
4. Tomislav Balenovik
5. Wells Fargo officials Derek Jines, Jeff Ospina and Monette Regis with FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw.
6. President Bradshaw, Dakendo Michel and Jo Anna Bradshaw

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23rd Founder's Cup nets \$116,000 for scholarships and programs

The sun and the spirit of generosity were shining Oct. 10, as Florida Gulf Coast University celebrated the 23rd annual Founder's Cup Golf Tournament at Pelican's Nest Golf Club in Bonita Springs.

The annual fundraiser for the FGCU Foundation netted more than \$116,000 – a 50 percent increase over last year – for student scholarships and scientific, educational and charitable programs related to the mission of the university that are not supported by state funds. One of FGCU's most fruitful single-day fundraisers, the tournament has raised more than \$1.3 million since its inception.

"The 23rd Founder's Cup was another success," said Chris Simoneau, executive director of the Foundation and vice president for University Advancement. "In addition to hosting 208 golfers on a beautiful day at Pelican's Nest, the tournament generated significant resources that will be immediately put to use in supporting students, faculty and programs at the university. It is the commitment of our great sponsors and supporters that enables us to further advance FGCU as it has for the past two decades. The momentum of FGCU continues to build."

Golfers played the Tom Fazio-designed courses at Pelican's Nest. Following tournament play, they returned to the clubhouse to enjoy a dinner buffet, bid on donated silent-auction packages and receive awards for their play.

Low gross on the Gator Course was Johnson Controls. Low gross on the Hurricane Course was GATES Construction.

Major sponsors of this year's tournament included Service Painting of Florida, Arthrex, Estero Bay Chevrolet, B&I Contractors, Johnson Controls, Maddox Construction, Manhattan Construction, Naples Daily News, Office Furniture & Design Concepts, Taylor Rental - Naples, United Mechanical, Wayne Wiles Floorcoverings, CORT Furnishings and Wright Construction Group. ■

GATES Construction foursome (Low gross winner on Hurricane course) with Chris Simoneau (center), executive director of the Foundation and vice president for University Advancement.



Photo by Bob Klein

► PHILANTHROPY

(continued from previous page)

Night at the Nest draws sellout crowd in support of athletics program

WHEN FGCU SOCCER STAR MELISSA ARNOLD ASSUMED THE PODIUM AT THE Night at the Nest gala, she thanked her teammates for being her “sisters,” talked about how student-athletes in many other sports on campus had embraced her and lauded her coaches for being there when she needed to talk.

Then she expressed her gratitude to Athletics Administrative Assistant Trish Blankenship and her husband, Jim, the head soccer coach, for being parental figures before her parents moved to Southwest Florida from New Jersey.

And that’s when Trish Blankenship could no longer contain her emotions, dabbing with a napkin at the tears flowing down her cheeks.

FGCU could not have picked a more fitting representative to speak at the annual athletics fundraising gala. Not only because Arnold helped lead the soccer team to three NCAA tournaments in four years or served two years as Eagles Council president, but because she put a face on the scholarships she’s trying to help FGCU expand through funding generated by the gala.

“I thank all of you because you made my experience at FGCU what it is with your support, coming to the games and getting to know me as a person and not just a student-athlete,” she said. “Thank you for everything you’ve done for me and will continue to do for student-athletes in the future. If you feel led to give to the school fund, know that whatever you give is going to impact student-athletes like me.”

Preliminary net revenue from the night was \$465,000 – a record for the five-year-old event, exceeding last year’s \$295,000



– aided by a sellout crowd of 700 people, 230 auction items and the spirited work of auctioneer Jay Severson, the former NBC2 sports director, and master of ceremonies Kellie Burns, NBC2’s evening news anchor.

“Almost 20 years ago, I thought, ‘There is no way this place is going to be anything other than a commuter school,’ ” Burns said. “And now I am so proud to say, ‘I was wrong.’ I was wrong! This is a world-class university.”

FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw also had high praise for the turnout and the athletics program, saying, “It’s amazing how it’s grown. And it’s grown because of the strong support all of you have for FGCU. We have been so fortunate to be a part of this phenomenon.” ■

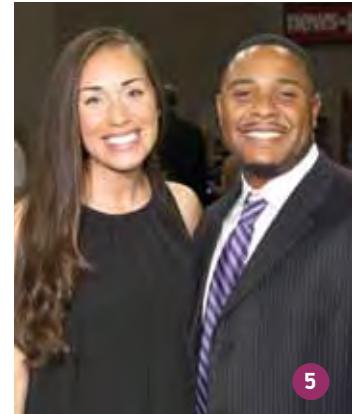




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1. A sellout crowd filled Alico Arena for the fifth annual Night at the Nest.
2. Todd Schusterman
3. Amy Sanford, Andrew Siconolf, Stephanie Ink and Rob Wilson
4. Dustin Goegle and President Wilson G. Bradshaw
5. Cross country Coach Cassandra Goodson and Terrell Harbin
6. White Sox pitcher Chris Sale, Brianne Sale, women's basketball Coach Karl Smesko and Elena Ruiz
7. Men's basketball Coach Joe Dooley, Night at the Nest Chairman Dr. Bob Ryan Jr., and Athletics Director Ken Kavanagh
8. Auctioneer Jay Severson
9. Basketball player Jaime Gluesing

PHILANTHROPY

(continued from previous page)

Art collection gift pays tribute to glass pioneer

70 prints become part of FGCU's permanent art collection.

CAROL LITTLETON SHAY'S FATHER FOUND SPLENDOR IN THE GLASS.

Harvey Littleton (1922-2013) rose to prominence in the early 1960s as a pioneer of the American studio glass movement – introducing the medium as a fine art distinct from factory production and developing a course of study for future artisans to transform molten glass into fragile polymorphic sculptures. Littleton was also a printmaker who developed a process of printing from glass plates – called vitreography – which he shared with other artists who came to his Littleton Studios in North Carolina, including the now-famous glass artist Dale Chihuly.

In the same spirit of generosity, Littleton's daughter has donated more than 70 prints by her father and other Littleton Studios artists to Florida Gulf Coast University. This gift to FGCU's permanent collection was highlighted last fall in an exhibition at the Main Gallery, "Harvey Littleton: No Secrets."

"I wanted to help promote the process and possibilities of this medium for the next generation," Littleton Shay said. "It's his legacy. These works need to be seen in order to be known and remembered."

Littleton artworks are in museum collections all over the world, according to Gallery Director John Loscuito, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Museum of Modern Art in New York, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution and the Victoria & Albert Museum in England.

"This is a significant gift and establishes the FGCU Art Galleries as collecting artworks by world-renowned artists," he said.

The gift to FGCU has personal as well



Carol Littleton Shay with some of her father's works at FGCU.

as academic significance for Associate Professor Andy Owen. Just out of graduate school, he was hired by Littleton as a master printmaker in the early 1990s and they remained friends until Littleton died in December 2013. Owen hopes to have the resources someday to add vitreography to the other printmaking techniques he teaches at FGCU, but in the meantime students will benefit from being able to study the Littleton collection.

"It's a really, really valuable teaching tool to have the opportunity to share this work with students via an exhibit but also to have access to the works on a regular basis," Owen said. "These artists deal with a broad range of content. It's a rich resource for students."

Though he started in ceramics, Littleton may have been destined to shatter conventional limitations of glass. He was born in Corning, N.Y., and his father was director of research at Corning Glass Works and a developer of Pyrex glass kitchen and lab products.

Glass plates offer advantages over traditional metal plates,

according to Owen. Roughly 3/8ths of an inch thick, they hold up well under printing compression and last longer, allowing the artist to produce more prints. Images are sandblasted into the glass, and the textured surface holds ink effectively until it's transferred to paper.

"For the viewer, there's a purity of color that comes off glass," Owen said. "The ink doesn't oxidize like with metal plates. It's not going to replace traditional printmaking methods, but it's another tool."

—Drew Sterwald

Fort Myers couple fund exercise science, accounting scholarships

BETTE AND BOB BATSON HAVE LONG SUPPORTED FLORIDA GULF COAST University, taking a particular interest in its student-athletes.

The Fort Myers couple recently established the Theodore Siegel Exercise Science Scholarship Endowed Fund, in honor of Bette Batson's father. The scholarship will be awarded to full-time students with a minimum GPA of 3.0, with preference going to seniors, student-athletes and those who receive limited or no scholarship support.

The couple met at the University of Florida and have established scholarships there in honor of their mothers, but Bette Batson wanted to create one in memory of her father, whom she described as "a simple man, a hard worker. He wasn't educated. He drove a taxi cab."

The Batsons believe that a scholarship is a meaningful way to remember him.

"We think educating young people is the best thing you can do to affect the world and we try in our small way to do that," says Bob Batson. "Young people are our future."

They support FGCU because "it is our local university and it's important for our area," Bette Batson says.

Student-athletes are of particular interest to them because "of the challenges they face in academics because of the time they must commit to their sport," says her husband. "If we can help a student-athlete financially, it a good thing."

Bob Batson is a retired CPA who has also served as a women's basketball coach at area high schools and, since 2008, with Ave Maria University. Bette Batson taught middle and high school math, was a stay-at-home mom for a while then directed pension administration for her



husband's firm, Batson, Carnahan & Co., for 23 years.

In honor of their successful business, the couple also created a charitable fund agreement that will establish the Robert and Bette Batson Accounting Scholarship Endowed Fund. The scholarship will be awarded to a full-time accounting major

with a 3.0 GPA or higher. Preference will be given to seniors and those who receive limited or no scholarship support.

The Batsons also support current-use scholarships for exercise science students and have been supporters of FGCU athletics since the program's inception.

— Karen Feldman

PHILANTHROPY

(continued from previous page)

State legislators create scholarship honoring Reagan

FOUR LOCAL LEGISLATORS HAVE CREATED AN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP fund that will be awarded annually to the president of the university's Republican Club.

The Ronald Reagan Leadership Award Scholarship Endowed Fund was created by Republican state representatives Matthew Caldwell, Dane Eagle, Heather Fitzenhagen and Raymond Rodrigues, with funds remaining from their successful re-election campaigns.

Three of the four have FGCU connections. Caldwell earned a bachelor's degree in history here in 2004, while Eagle earned an associate's degree and Rodrigues is employed as the College of Arts and Sciences budget manager.

Rodrigues suggested they team up to create a scholarship, as state law allows the donation of unused campaign funds to non-profit causes.



Matthew Caldwell



Dane Eagle



Heather Fitzenhagen



Raymond Rodrigues

"At the end of each campaign cycle, I make sure I have a little something left over to donate," says Caldwell. "This is certainly a worthy cause."

Rodrigues agreed, saying, "The end of a campaign is an opportunity to give money to charities and to invest in the future of our students. It's also a way to honor President Reagan, who is a hero to all of us."

Fitzenhagen recalls that President Reagan said, "We must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of

the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women."

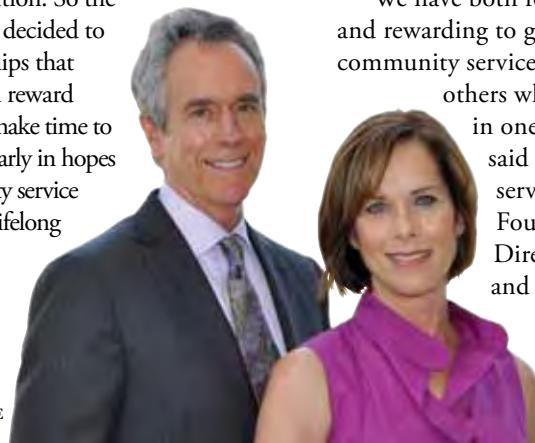
"This scholarship," she says, "recognizes the moral courage of our young leaders and encourages enduring moral strength in the face of ideological challenges from those who would supplant our American Dream."

The recipient of a scholarship himself during his time at FGCU, Eagle said, "It's rewarding to be part of an endowment. It's nice to be able to give back and I look forward to meeting our recipients." ■

Hansch gift helps encourage student service to community

DENNIS AND LIZ HANSCH REALIZE THAT COLLEGE STUDENTS CAN EASILY get caught up in their course work, part-time jobs and other activities that compete for their time and attention. So the Naples couple decided to fund scholarships that encourage and reward students who make time to volunteer regularly in hopes that community service will become a lifelong pursuit for the recipients.

Their gift of stock to



Dennis and Liz Hansch

FGCU established the Dennis and Liz Hansch Community Service Scholarship Endowed Fund. It is earmarked for students who have demonstrated a strong commitment to serving others and who demonstrate financial need.

"We have both found it so important and rewarding to get involved in community service and be able to help others who may be struggling in one way or another," said Dennis Hansch, who serves on the FGCU Foundation Board of Directors. "Volunteering and helping others

may provide an even deeper and more meaningful personal education for students."

With the endowed fund, they also wish to ensure that financial challenges don't deter students from pursuing higher education – an opportunity that Hansch said his parents did not have.

"They knew, and always impressed upon me, the importance of obtaining the best education possible. Higher education is so important because it opens one's eyes to possibilities and creates so many options that would not be available otherwise," he said. "Scholarships help lessen the burden for anyone who has the dream, desire and initiative to pursue their education." ■



Scholarship provides assistance for sex trafficking survivors

LOWELL AND SALLY SENITZ HAVE BEEN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES FOR 30 years, traveling to Romania, Haiti, Kenya, Sudan and other troubled countries to help save child victims of human trafficking and exploitation.

When they came to Florida, they thought they were retiring. But it wasn't long before they discovered that children are sexually exploited in the United States as well and Florida ranks third in the nation for the number of victims.

They discovered that there was no safe house in Florida for minors who are rescued from traffickers and need counseling and care to recover from the trauma. So they started one in Lee County. Their not-for-profit organization, Wings of Shelter, operates a home that cares for four girls at a time for as long as a year in a gated residential neighborhood, providing mental health counseling, private school education, tutors, health care and volunteer big sisters from FGCU.

But the couple wanted to do

something more for the girls who reach 18.

"Many don't have parents to support them," Sally Senitz says. "They may be brilliant, but they need help to afford an education so we established a college scholarship fund to help these overcomers succeed."

They established the Wings of Shelter Scholarship Fund, which will be awarded to FGCU students who have been victimized by human traffickers.

"It's for girls and boys," says Lowell Senitz. "The exciting part for us is that we can reach other kids, not just those in our program. It gives them a chance to step up. When they turn 18, it's hard for many of them to make it."

Travis Pope, a Wings of Shelter board member, donated the money to create the scholarship fund, in part because of his devotion to caring for those who are victimized and in part because of his admiration for the Senitzes.

"When you meet two people who give up their lives for mission work, it's not only the importance of what they are doing but their level of selfless giving

From left, Peter Ndiang'ui, Travis Pope, President Wilson G. Bradshaw, Lowell Senitz, Sally Senitz, Winnie Ballinger and Doug Ballinger.

that's very moving," he says.

The Senitzes and Pope are hopeful that people who care about this widespread and growing problem will lend their support to the cause, both at FGCU and elsewhere around the country, just as they hope others will set up safe houses and programs similar to Wings of Shelter.

"A lot of this is not talked about," Pope says. "It's not comfortable dinner conversation. But once you get into the trenches and see how lives are being changed, I think that as a human being, it becomes your responsibility." ■

HOW TO GIVE

To donate to the Wings of Shelter Scholarship Fund, contact Bill Rice, FGCU director of Gift Planning, at (239) 590-1077 or brice@fgcu.edu.

► PHILANTHROPY

(continued from previous page)

Michael Scheidemann inspired family, friends

Scholarship in his memory will do the same for others.

MICHAEL SCHEIDEMANN WAS A BRIGHT, LOVING PERSON WITH A HEART of gold and wisdom far beyond his years.

Born with a visual impairment, he compensated with a keen sense of hearing and an amazing memory.

His life ended Jan. 6, 2014. He was 24.

My brother's memory lives on, however, in the hearts of his family and friends and through the Michael E. Scheidemann Inspirational Scholarship Fund for Florida Gulf Coast University, established by my parents and me to help others with physical disabilities pursue their education.

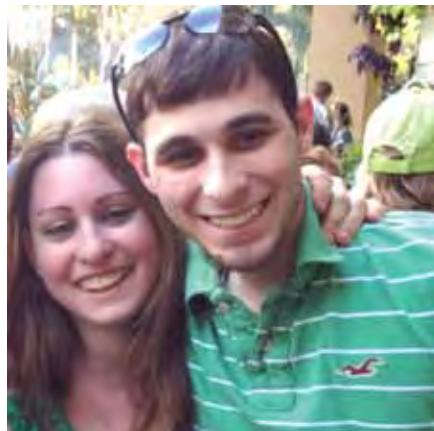
As his sister – we were less than a year apart and the best of friends – and a fellow Eagle, I'd like to share with you what made my brother special.

Michael's favorite word was "Integrity" – being honest and having strong moral principles. He was assigned the word in an elementary school show. Afterwards, he put up the sign over his bed because he believed in it so much.

He was also the family comedian. He could always make us laugh.

Mike worried about other family members, especially when we were sick or hurt. When our mother, Josephine, had a backache, he brought her a back massager. When I was in middle school, I fractured my hip when I slipped and fell on black ice as I ran to catch the school bus. Mike helped carry me home. Later, as I struggled with crutches to get around, he helped me figure out an efficient way to go up and down the stairs in our New Jersey home.

Despite his visual limitations, he loved to serve as videographer in our high school TV production class and, once in the studio, enjoyed being the director. He challenged himself in all of his academics



Alyssa Scheidemann with her brother Michael.

and graduated with honors with a GPA of more than 4.0 from Barron Collier High School in Naples.

Mike loved FGCU. My mom and I drove him to campus for classes. We would all get together for lunch at Gulf Coast Town Center when our schedules allowed it. Michael and I also attended FGCU concerts together. Those were times we will always hold dear.

My father, Ernest Scheidemann, cherishes the overnight camping trips he and Mike took to the Delaware Water Gap where they would fish, sit by a campfire and hike in the mountains. What dad misses most, though, are the powerful hugs Mike liberally dispensed.

If anyone needed help, Mike was ready to step up. He organized our home offices and

garages and was just as happy to help people he didn't know. Two years ago, he worked as an intern at the Lighthouse of Collier, Inc., a nonprofit organization for people with vision loss. He taught others who had vision issues how to use computers.

Michael became sick in December 2012. Eventually the doctors figured out it was Hodgkin's lymphoma, a cancer of the lymph nodes. Research indicated that treatment for this form of cancer had a high success rate, particularly for someone as young as he was. Michael remained tough, brave, and focused through it all, including his chemotherapy. Even before his final treatment, he declared himself a survivor. After six months of treatment, he was declared in remission. It was a happy day.

My brother taught me – and so many others – to live life to the fullest, with no regrets. A positive outlook and your best effort are what are required to face challenges and inspire others.

About a month after being declared in remission, Mike began experiencing heart complications caused by the treatment. He continued to be strong and brave, assuring the rest of us that this was just another obstacle he would overcome. But it was not to be. After fighting so hard for more than a year, he passed on that January.

Michael was a senior at the time. On May 10, I proudly accepted his bachelor's degree in political science posthumously on his behalf at a beautiful ceremony.

It is my family's hope that the Michael E. Scheidemann Inspirational Scholarship Fund will allow many more promising students to experience the joy of learning as Michael did and, in that way, keep Michael's memory alive.

— Alyssa Scheidemann, '11
(Communication)

► FOR MORE INFO

To contribute to the fund, send a check to Florida Gulf Coast University Foundation, Attn: Chris Simoneau, Re: Michael E. Scheidemann Inspirational Scholarship Endowed Fund, 10501 FGCU Blvd. S., Fort Myers, FL 33965.

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CLASS NOTES

This world is but canvas to our imaginations

►'13

Brandi Harrison

National Watermelon Queen enjoys the royal treatment.

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY HAS GRADUATED MANY high-achieving students since 1997, but only one has reached the lofty status of queen, as far as we know.

Brandi Harrison ('13, Communication) has proudly donned the 2014 National Watermelon Queen sash since last February when she won a pageant during the 100th Annual National Watermelon Convention in Savannah, Ga. Until her reign ends in February, she continues traveling coast to coast, engaging supermarket shoppers and fairgoers and working with industry leaders to promote watermelon production and consumption for the National Watermelon Association, which spans 30 states, Canada and Central America.

It is the crowning achievement for someone whose family boasts deep, if not royal, bloodlines in the watermelon field.

"My grandparents were huge in the watermelon industry," says the 23-year-old native of Newberry. The agriculture-rooted town of about 5,000 in northern Florida's Alachua County has held an annual watermelon festival since 1946. This homespun event set Harrison on her path to tiara-wearing status when she won the Newberry Watermelon Queen title as a high school senior.

"I got to go to the state competition. I didn't place, but I enjoyed the experience and meeting people. It just wasn't the right time," Harrison says. "After I graduated from FGCU, it was the perfect time to go back and



Brandi Harrison promotes watermelon consumption from coast to coast.

see if I could win and I did. I was mature enough then to understand it could be a steppingstone to my career, too. When I was younger it was all about the crown. Now, it's about seeing the world and giving back to an industry that gave me a lot."

Harrison claimed not only the rhinestone-studded national crown this year, but also the title of Miss Jubilee – the pageant's equivalent of Miss Congeniality. The communications skills Harrison learned at FGCU, along with the poise and confidence she gained

while working at events as an undergrad assistant in the Office of Alumni Relations, have helped this small-town sweetheart succeed in competition and in life as a globe-



trotting ambassador. Friends and family follow her dizzying itinerary on Instagram.

"Going to Japan this year – that was huge," Harrison says. "I attended Caroline Kennedy's Fourth of July party at the American embassy there. Meeting her was the coolest thing."

Along the way, Harrison also has reaped insider knowledge about farming, the commodities trade and food issues. She already has a full-time job lined up in the industry after she crowns her successor.

"Walking into this, I was oblivious to so many things," she says. "Now I realize how important it is to push buying local and buying from the U.S. and knowing where food comes from. My scope has gone beyond watermelon."

Her seed-spitting skills have improved, too.

"You have to do that at the state competition, but it doesn't count for anything," Harrison says. "I've gotten a little better."

—Drew Sterwald

[WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS AND BIRTHS]

'05

Darrin Wallace, (Liberal Studies), and **Kimberly (Williams) Wallace, '06** (Communication '09) (Master's, Counseling), welcomed their first child, Kaitlyn Elizabeth, on Sept. 1. She weighed 7 pounds, 5 ounces and was 20.5 inches long. Darrin is a basketball coach at Canterbury School and Kim is the director of alumni relations at Florida Gulf Coast University.



'06

Michelle Frania, (Liberal Studies), and **Mike Claman,** (Sports Management) became engaged on Sept. 12. Michelle is completing a doctoral degree at Nova Southeastern University College of Pharmacy. Mike is a biology teacher and the boy's golf coach at Estero High School. They live in Fort Myers.



'07

Kurt Hutchings, (Finance), and **Lindsay Hutchings,** (Marketing), welcomed their daughter, Jane Hutchings, on May 10. She weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces. They live in Fort Myers.



Krystle R. Jones, (Biotechnology), and Timothy Farmer announced their engagement in August. Krystle is a board certified family medicine physician and a sports medicine fellow. They live in Fort Worth, Texas.

'10

Francesca da Silva Osborn, (Music Education), and Alex Osborn welcomed their first child, Elena Nicole, on Oct. 2. She weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces and was 20.75 inches long.



'12

Elizabeth Booker, (Communication), and **Brandon Booker,** '13 (Environmental Studies), married in April at White Orchid at Oasis in Fort Myers. They live in Charlotte, N.C., where Brooke is pursuing a master's in Communication Studies and works as a graduate assistant for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Brandon is a treatment plant operator for Charlotte-Mecklenburg County.



'13

Joel LONDONO, (Communication), and **Natalie Graddy,** (Social Work) became engaged on Aug. 1 on Anna Maria Island. They plan to marry in August 2015.

[NEWSMAKERS]

'99

Mary Evans, (Liberal Studies-History), was elected Aug. 26 as a judge in Florida's 20th Circuit Court.

Steven Kissinger, (Accounting), has been appointed executive director for the Immokalee Foundation. He has 15 years' experience working with local nonprofits that focus on children. Steve is a board member of Bonita Springs Assistance Office and Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land & Water Trust. He resides in Bonita Springs.



Kristi Newhouse, (Human Services), is a licensed clinical social worker, and recently pursued her dream of opening her own private practice where she provides individual, couple and family therapy. Her practice is in Cape Coral.



'00

Christine Elaine King, (Criminal Justice), is a partner with The McQuagge & King Law Firm. Christine received her Juris Doctorate from Ave Maria School of Law and is a member of the Florida Bar. Before joining the firm, she served as director of leadership giving for the American Cancer Society of Lee County and as a senior news producer with Fox-4 News. She lives in Fort Myers.

'01

Salvatore D'Angelo, (Master's, Public Administration), is the head of the Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District. He is working on his doctoral degree in public administration at Florida Atlantic University. He is married with two children.

'03

Brad Cozza, (Management), is the owner of Evolution Model Management in Miami Beach. He has coordinated photo shoots for top brands such as Tommy Hilfiger Jeans, Macy's and Perry Ellis.

'04

Bruce Barone Jr., (Liberal Studies-History), has been named director of donor relations and marketing at Immokalee Child Care Center and acting director of development and public relations. He is also the principal and managing director of The Barone Group with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Realty. He lives in Naples.

CLASS NOTES

(continued from previous page)

'05

Joey Lamielle, (Management), is a real estate agent with RE/MAX Alliance Group who has earned the Accredited Buyer's Representative designation for providing outstanding service for real estate buyers. He has been a Sarasota resident for 25 years and is a member of the Lee Brewer Team.

Tessa LeSage, (Master's, Public Administration), has joined the Southwest Florida Community Foundation as director of social innovation and sustainability. She recently worked as a sustainability programs manager for Lee County.

'06

Lori (Soule) Miller, (Master's, Physical Therapy), is working at the Chilton County YMCA in Alabama, where she provides physical therapy to patients who would otherwise have to drive quite a distance to the hospital for medical care. She helps patients regain balance, and recuperate from athletic injuries.

'07

Denise Williams, (Master's, Accounting and Taxation), has joined Taylor Elevator Corporation as chief executive officer. Denise is actively involved in the Take Stock in Children program through the Education Foundation of Collier County and is a member of the Young Professionals of Naples and the United Arts Council of Collier County.

'08

Damian Hanley, (Marketing), started a multi-media production and design company called Damian Hanley Inc. in Fort Myers. The company represents businesses, charities and clients who want unique multi-media production. He lives in Fort Myers.

Jon Ledbetter, (Anthropology), joined the Bainbridge Island Police Department in Bainbridge Isle, Washington. Prior to accepting this position, he worked for the Naples Police Department. He took his oath of office in August.

Jill Rhone, (Master's, Social Work), accepted a position as the director of admissions at Bishop Verot Catholic High School. She lives in Fort Myers.

'11

David Plazas, (Master's, Business Administration), is the new lead engagement editor at The Tennessean in Nashville. He is responsible for community engagement efforts, writing editorials and building audiences.

Prior to taking this position he was the digital engagement editor at The News-Press in Fort Myers.



'12

Cristian Alfaro, (Finance), has accepted a position with Hertz in the Revenue Management Department as a contribution strategist. He lives in Fort Myers.



Kiara Feliciano, (Theatre), has earned her Master of fine arts and now teaches at FGCU. She starred in several FGCU productions including "Agamemnon" and "Faustus Burns Brightly."

Luis Leon, (Finance), has accepted a position with the Southwest Florida Community Foundation as controller. Luis serves as president of Sigma Phi Epsilon's Alumni Chapter. He lives in Cape Coral.

Marina Nassif, (Accounting), is a new staff member to the local CPA firm, Leslea Ellis, LLC, in Fort Myers, where she'll be responsible for a variety of tax and accounting functions.

Melanie Thomas, (Master's, Business Administration), is CONRIC PR & Marketing's new marketing assistant. She will assist in the development of digital marketing, and communication strategies and will help to build client relationships, write press releases and control social media accounts.

'13

Daniela Georgieva, (Accounting), is the newest addition to the Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Company, P.A. tax team in Fort Myers. Daniela is fluent in both Bulgarian and English.

Tyler Hosch, (Finance), was accepted into the Disney Post-Graduate program upon graduation. Out of the 14 individuals in the program, Tyler was one of the two chosen to continue to work permanently with the company. He now serves as the financial analyst for the capital analysis and reporting team. He lives in Clermont.



Kaitlin Major, (Social Work), received the Lee County Homeless Coalition's Dean Blietz Award for her efforts in helping Medford Silas, a man who spent his days on a bench outside of McCollum Hall in Fort Myers. She is employed by Community Cooperative Ministries Inc. in Fort Myers.

Jessica Montoya, (Management), has joined Allyn International Services Inc. where she will gather and communicate information on shipments and projects, as well as providing logistics support and consulting. She lives in Cape Coral.

'14

Jessi Drummond, (Environmental Studies), received an internship with the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land & Water Trust (CREW) after volunteering with the organization throughout her FGCU experience. She has studied in Ghana and Costa Rica, and worked at the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium. She resides in Fort Myers.

Mike Nixon, (Environmental Engineering), joined McKim & Creed Inc. as an engineer intern in Sarasota. He provides technical and design services in support of water, wastewater, reclaimed water and stormwater infrastructure.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

2/19-21 THURSDAY-SATURDAY

FGCU ALUMNI WEEKEND

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SEND US YOUR NEWS

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

►'09

Jason Becker

Alum's new business helps golf-loving retirees plot winning course.

In 2003, Jason Becker was a passenger in a van on Interstate 40 in Tennessee when a driver crossed three lanes to get to an exit and caused an accident that changed the course of his life. He was 23.

Becker, now 34, and three friends were returning to their homes in Michigan from a trip to Naples when he was hurled from the van's back window and sent skidding down the road. Recovery took months. Becker was working in engineering for General Motors and thought his life needed to change.

So he moved to Southwest Florida and became a PGA apprentice, then one of two golf professionals heading the program at a Boca Raton club. He was one of the first students in FGCU's professional golf management program in 2005, graduating in 2009. That year he also obtained his Class A PGA card.

Becker then began taking classes at FGCU toward a master's degree. A paper was due in Professor Thomas Valesky's educational leadership course. Perfecting a golf swing had been Becker's go-to topic. But surely his professors were getting tired of reading about that, he thought.



Naples and Fort Myers alone are home to roughly 165 golf courses and so many of them are private, Becker thought. Their membership rates run anywhere from \$8,000 to \$285,000, and their characteristics and amenities vary widely. Most restrict access to their websites to members. Many clubs can be

joined by invitation only. How were potential new part-time Southwest Floridians finding not only the right club, but the right neighborhood and the right residence?

A consulting firm – Golf Management Associates – could be the answer.

It became the topic of his paper. Then Becker took a business plan to his PGA mentor, Lynn Josephson. "And he looked up after reading it and said, 'Nobody's doing this?'" Becker said. Josephson became co-founder of the company.

Although not yet a year old, it has amassed 24 equity partners and a list of 16 consultants on everything needed for a golfer's move south, from real estate agents to financial advisers and others – all of whom "speak golf," Becker said.

The company holds informational meetings at northern clubs, then works with people seeking retirement homes here to find the right fit for the player and often the non-golfing spouse. Clubs pay referral fees of about \$2,500 per new member, but Becker does not restrict potential club choices to those with whom he has agreements, he said. Wherever players land, they have to be happy. So he puts in a little work before they come here to play.

– Dayna Harpster

P.S.

The obstacle is the path

Bubble soccer



THE WILDLY POPULAR GAME OF BUBBLE SOCCER CAME TO FGCU this fall, allowing teams of students clad in inflatable bubbles to compete. It's played much like regular soccer except there's no goalkeeper, you can't use your hands and bumping, bouncing, rolling, flipping over and smashing into other players are tactical parts of the game and highly encouraged. Scoring is tougher than it looks. So is getting up once you are knocked down. Photographer Molly Grubbs captured some of the fun at Alico Arena. ■

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



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