

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

# Pinnacle

MAGAZINE

DEC. | JAN. 2008

**Probing  
cultural  
divides** page 8

Building an  
army of  
green crusaders

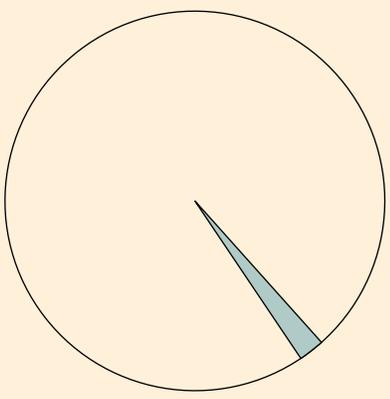
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FLORIDA  
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**On the cover:** Assistant Professor Sachiko Tankei-Aminian explores cultural differences.

Photo by Ed Clement

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John Biedenbarn

University's third president quickly gets to work

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## University reach spans the world

It's widely known, and oft repeated, that Florida Gulf Coast University was established to serve the educational and employment needs of Southwest Florida. And, for a decade, it's done that, adding ever more programs along the way.

FGCU graduates are taking their places in the region's work force as much-needed teachers, health-care professionals, computer scientists, advertising executives and entrepreneurs.

But something else has happened in the University's first decade that no one could have foreseen: FGCU has increasingly extended its reach, stretching far beyond its regional boundaries and aspirations and making its mark on the world.

If that sounds like overstatement, consider the stories that appear in just this single issue of Pinnacle:

- A team of FGCU computer science students was the only American group named to the top nine in an international Web design competition.
- Associate Professor Charlie Mesloh's Weapons and Equipment Research

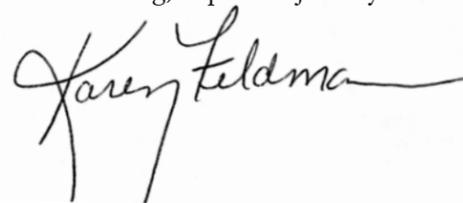
Institute serves as a Consumer Reports type agency for the U.S. Department of Justice, assessing equipment for the nation's police officers and seeking more effective ways to enforce the law with less lethal impact.

- Environmental advocate Ricky Pires has spread her green message to thousands of schoolchildren who have helped deliver it to thousands more people through Wings of Hope, the program she founded and runs at FGCU.
- Alumnus John Biedenharn has taken his expertise in public administration and waste management first to Australia, then Guam and now Arizona.

- Millions of travelers who pass through Southwest Florida International Airport in the coming months will see the artwork of FGCU faculty and staff on display there.
- Cutting-edge artists from China are bringing their works and their talents to FGCU for a rare exhibit of contemporary calligraphy. They'll also present workshops and talks for the University community and local schools.
- Assistant Professor Sachiko Tankei-Aminian, an autoethnographer, employs her insights as a Japanese woman attempting to fit into American society to challenge her students' cultural beliefs.

That's just a sampling of the ways in which this University is changing life here in Southwest Florida and the lives of people all over the globe. FGCU's influence can only continue to grow as the area's population expands, the University matures and ever more graduates venture forth into the world armed with the knowledge and sense of civic responsibility they gain in their time here.

The possibilities are as limitless as the world itself. See for yourself in the pages that follow. And join me in future issues that will chronicle this exciting, important journey.



**Karen Feldman**  
Pinnacle Editor



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## Art faculty's works on display at airport

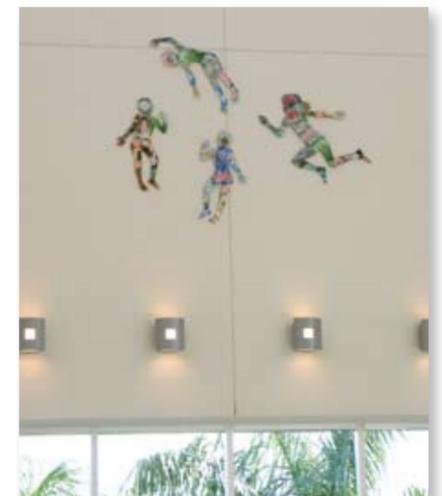
More than 7 million travelers are expected to pass through Southwest Florida International Airport in 2007, which means that a lot of people are going to see the works of seven Florida Gulf Coast University faculty and staff members.

The exhibit is part of the Lee County Port Authority's Art in Flight Program.

"We feel the travel experience at the airport will be enhanced with the addition of new, local works of art throughout the terminal," said Robert Ball, the port authority's executive director. "We are happy to partner with our neighbors at Florida Gulf Coast University as they celebrate 10 years of education and the arts in Southwest Florida."

Assistant professor Scott Snyder, FGCU's Gallery director, said, "It is very exciting that so many visitors will be introduced to the creative spirit of Southwest Florida and to Florida Gulf Coast University through artwork created by fellow FGCU art faculty and staff."

On display are works by Patricia Fay, associate professor; Geoffrey Hamel, adjunct instructor; Andrew Morris, Art Gallery studio manager; Morgan Paine, associate professor; Carl Schwartz, instructor; Anica Sturdivant, Art Gallery assistant curator; and Mary Voytek, assistant professor.



Clockwise from left: Blackware ceramics by Patricia Fay; Anica Sturdivant with her adobe sculpture; acrylic painting by Carl Schwartz; and metal sculpture with image transfer by Mary Voytek are among the FGCU works on display at the airport.



## University's third president quickly gets to work

President Wilson G. Bradshaw arrived on campus Nov. 13 and immediately began introducing himself to the Florida Gulf Coast University community.

His first act was to share a still-warm apple crisp he'd baked that morning with his staff. He followed that up with endowment signings, met with educators from around the region, attended the Administrative Services Thanksgiving luncheon, spoke with students in a Senior Seminar class, addressed the Faculty Senate and began introducing himself to area political figures.

At his first address to the FGCU faculty and staff, he said, "We are at a very critical place and time for FGCU – with a need to carefully plan the institution's next decade."

"As we look ahead, I believe managed growth will be an important element of our vision."

He noted that the state's freeze on freshman enrollment will require creative ways to manage growth and that the University must ensure that a proper mix of programs and services are in place to meet the needs of the students and the region.

Bradshaw also called for weaving the University's environmental mission into all aspects of operation.

"There is no question that Florida Gulf Coast University is an unparalleled success," he said. "There is no question that we will be called on to do more and serve more as we look ahead. Our task ... is to find ways to be better each and every day in all ways."

President-elect Wilson G. Bradshaw addresses faculty and staff, at left. Below, he and his wife, Jo Anna, talk with FGCU students.



BELOW PHOTOS BY GARTH FRANCIS



# The write stuff



## Prose takes center stage at annual authors' conference

BY MELISSA BABINS

Love of writing drew 90 aspiring authors to the 2007 Sanibel Writers Conference to glean tidbits from the pros on the art and business of their craft.

The second annual event, which took place Oct. 4 through 7 at BIG ARTS on Sanibel Island, was sponsored by Florida Gulf Coast University and featured writing workshops, panels and readings.

Daily activities began at 7 a.m. with writing exercises led by Florida International University creative writing professor John Dufresne, who authored "The Lie That Tells a Truth," a book about fiction writing.

Amy Ortolano, an FGCU student who attended the conference, found

these sessions helpful, saying Dufresne "has a delicate way of having you write a sentence that you don't realize will become anything until you fill in the rest of the details and then you have a story."

This year's keynote speaker was Robert Olen Butler, who won the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for fiction for his collection of short works, "A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain." At the Sanibel conference, he read from two of his works.

Some speakers addressed the business of writing, explaining the roles of freelance writers and literary agents.

Those who attended got the chance to share their own writings on the final day.

Attendees were inspired by the advice and guidance offered by the presenters, and the presenters were impressed with the talent of those who attended, said FGCU instructor Tom DeMarchi, who organized the conference.

"I couldn't have been happier about how everything unfolded," he said. "The students and presenters were professional and the weather was beautiful. Everything went off without a hitch."

— Melissa Babins is a senior at FGCU majoring in English.



Top left: Novelist John Dufresne meeting with Marylou Hess (and dog Landis) to discuss her manuscript.

Top right: Robert Olen Butler surrounded by fans.

Above: Journalism panel with, from left, moderator and FGCU assistant professor Karen Tolchin, authors Susan and Martin Tolchin, and FGCU assistant professor/journalist Lyn Millner.



Makeshift bookstore

# Community Day

Thousands of people turned out Oct. 27 for FGCU's Community Day, a celebration of the University's 10th anniversary. The event began with an address by President Wilson G. Bradshaw, followed by concerts, lectures, tours, exhibitions and games that showcased the wealth of educational, cultural and social opportunities available. The day's festivities also included Eagle Expo and Family Weekend, which offer potential students and their families a taste of life FGCU-style.



Since September 11, 2001,  
America's public spaces  
have become increasingly  
militarized... Racial profiling  
operates behind the guise of  
protecting national security.  
(Norman K. Denzin, 2003)



PHOTOS BY ED CLEMENT

Flags © iStockphoto.com/watersagen



## Professor hones in on cultural identity, power and oppression

BY ROGER WILLIAMS

**W**hen she steps into a classroom and turns on the light, it seems to come from within her, with a high-wattage intensity that is both illuminating and uncomfortable for her students.

That is as she intends.

Her first name is Sachiko, which rhymes roughly with Satchmo (the Louis Armstrong tag). Her last name used to be Tankei, the Japanese family name she inherited in her homeland, where she was raised in the same house the Tankeis have inhabited for nearly a century, in Konan City in the Aichi Prefecture, on the main island south of Tokyo.

Then, two years ago, she married an Iranian man named Farshad Aminian.

So now she is Sachiko Tankei-Aminian. She's 35 years old, and her title, as of fall 2007, is assistant professor in the Department of Communication and Philosophy at Florida Gulf Coast University. Her husband is a visiting instructor in film studies at FGCU, specializing in the lively, and sometimes persecuted, world of Iranian cinema.



Her expertise, loosely put, is cultural adventure, especially if those words are taken in their literal Latin sense: “adventure” means to come to something. And “culture” – related to the word cultivate (to cut) – is a set of habits ploughed or cut into the behavior of human beings.

More precisely, Sachiko Tankei-Aminian is an autoethnographer, someone who studies culture through herself.

“Whenever I teach intercultural communications, I’m always up front about what will happen,” she says. “The students think, ‘Oh, this must be a class of learning about other cultures – food, music, clothing – especially when the teacher is international faculty.’

“But I tell them, ‘I am not focusing on that side of other cultures. I’m going to focus on your own culture. In this class experience, I am going to *take out your floor from under your feet* – I’ll challenge your belief system.’”

It’s her revealing variation on the classic American expression – pulling the rug from under your feet.

She intends to do much more, however, than simply pull the rug out from under her students and their expectations. She aims to change their views of themselves and their places in the world, completely – to pull the whole floor out from under them, which is the nature of autoethnography.

She calls that experience “the discomfort of truth,” which she illustrates with the fable of the fish.

“I start with this fable,” she says. “A young fish in the ocean asks the elder fish, ‘What does the ocean look like?’ The fish is in the ocean, but asking the elder one what it’s like, because the young fish is immersed, so he or she cannot see the nature of the whole.”

Tankei-Aminian knows firsthand what it means to be the young fish suddenly taken outside and shown the great ocean.

The first time she flew in an airplane, for example, she was in

her late 20s. On that day she flew more than 6,300 miles west from Japan, landing at Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport and traveling to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where she had been accepted as a graduate student.

There, several momentous events would take place: She would spend several years working toward a Ph.D. (she is now in the final stages, completing her dissertation while teaching at FGCU); she would experience first joy, then confusion and frustration at her treatment in the surrounding, mostly Anglo-American culture; she would write, direct and produce what is now her highly feted and often performed one-woman play, “On Becoming Japerican;” and she would meet her future husband, who holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from Southern Illinois.

It was terrifying and exhilarating, she recalls.

“I vividly remember the enormous excitement, that I could test my English in an English environment with every single small thing – I could ask at the airport what time it was, or where was my exit, my gate. That simple task that I actually could do, that produced enormous joy.

“Also the smell – the smell of coffee, the smell of cheese pizza and popcorn and stuff. Especially when I go back to Japan and come back, the smell of coffee makes me realize I am in a foreign land.”

But those things would rank among the least of her adventures in the American culture, about which she remains passionately inquisitive.

“One of my favorite things is the way she experiences learning about the world, with this real openness,” says Amy Kilgard, a fellow graduate student at Southern Illinois who is now a professor of performance studies at San Francisco State University. Kilgard lived with Tankei-Aminian for three years in Carbondale.

“She takes great pleasure in her learning,” Kilgard says. “We would tease her, and she would tease us, about very bizarre words in English, or funny expressions. She’d teach us something equivalent in Japanese.

“And one day we had a tasting party, and

we tried fermented soybeans. It’s a very unusual substance, not like anything I’ve tasted in this culture. Or any culture. It has the consistency of a Rice Krispees treat, but it’s soy. Then we took pictures of each one of us trying it.”

What makes those photos so funny and revealing, says Kilgard, is that nobody looks comfortable – except perhaps Tankei-Aminian. But she had her turn, too.

“The one thing she can’t stand in this culture is blue cheese,” Kilgard says. “So we had this funny trade. But she will eat absolutely anything else.”

A funny trade became less amusing as time wore on for the woman increasingly estranged from her own culture, but more than ever aware of her alienation from this one.

She uses her performance in “On Becoming Japerican” to describe her transition, marked by stages of understanding.

“I start with that excitement – I was just excited about living in a different country,” she says.

Especially a country whose culture had so dominated the dreams of her working-class girlhood, when she adored Tom and Jerry cartoons, American sitcoms, her first American movie, “Superman,” and the arrival in Japan of Disney World, when she was a schoolgirl first studying English, she recalls.

She had never met an American at that point.

“Then in my performance I shift to the challenges I faced,” she says. “At the beginning (in Illinois) I thought, ‘If I improve my English, if I get rid of my accent, and if I get accustomed to American ways of living, I’ll be fine. I’ll be OK. I’ll get used to it. If I work hard, then I’ll be welcome here as a fellow.’ That was my naive

“One of my favorite things is the way she experiences learning about the world, with this real openness.”

– Amy Kilgard

“I choose these days to talk about the discomfort of truth.”

– Sachiko Tankei-Aminian

## Facts of life

- **Who:** Sachiko Tankei-Aminian
- **Family:** Husband, Farshad Aminian
- **Achievements:** Wrote, directed and produced the acclaimed one-woman play, "On Becoming Japerican."
- **On teaching:** "When I taught in Japan, I thought, 'Make the classroom as fun as possible, instead of tedious. Learning is a pleasure.' I was believing in that. And I still believe that learning should not be just only hardship and no fun. It has to be creative engagement. But at the same time, what I realized through these experiences, and especially teaching cultural issues, is that trying to make it just fun is not meaningful. I choose these days to talk about the discomfort of truth."



**"Her willingness and ability to teach through performance is astonishing – she embraces and brings her experience to life in an important way."**

–Amy Kilgard

mentality then. I really believed that at the beginning."

But evidence to the contrary began to collect around the edges of her experience, like grains of sand. "That label 'Asian' – I kept hearing it, and I began to realize it had some kind of negative connotation. That was the first time I starting exploring issues of identity. And for the first time, I was really out of my own cultural box."

That proved to be a good thing, which is why she teaches discomfort to American students now, she says.

She began to notice that cashiers in restaurants or stores, and people elsewhere, would not make eye contact with her, or give her the same kind of smiles they gave each other.

And finally, she spotted a sign on the SIU campus directed to international students placed there by other international students, that said, "Speak English all the time, even with your friends at home, if you hope to be successful at SIU."

In that moment, everything changed for her, she says.

"It was well-intentioned," she recalls, "but it hurt me so much." They were asking her not to be

herself – they were asking her to perform, in her view, an act of self-destruction.

She refused, and began to look more deeply at herself and her experiences – and at Americans. In the first production of her play at Southern Illinois, she included five or six Japanese actors who played the various stages of her evolution.

But anthropology Professor Scott Clark of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Indiana saw the play, and encouraged her to create the one-woman tour de force that it became. The experience, he says, caused him to become a strong supporter of the woman and her work, just as her friend and colleague, Amy Kilgard, had.

"Her willingness and ability to teach through performance is astonishing – she embraces and brings her experience to life in an important way we all have access to, even though we don't have the experiences," Kilgard says.

The discomfort such learning requires is something Tankei-Aminian continues to embrace in her own life. In December, for example, she had plans to travel with her husband to Iran for the first time.

All of it will become grist for her mill – at least her friends hope it will.

"This additional layer of her being married to an Iranian man – this is fascinating," Kilgard says. "I'm going to strongly advocate for a performance to come out of this trip."

But Tankei-Aminian is not optimistic about the effects of the education she can offer students, either in class or in performance.

"I sometimes have to wonder, 'Is this teaching doing anything at all?' I hear about hate crimes, and I wonder if any of this is effective. I wonder if my students will even change. And sometimes I ask them, 'What do you think?'"

"Some have told me, 'Sachiko, you shouldn't underestimate us.'"

– Roger Williams is a freelance writer based in Alva.



# Weapons of **less** destruction

Researcher fired up about preventing injuries

BY KAREN FELDMAN

As a former police officer, Charlie Mesloh knows how it feels to carry a loaded gun and a wooden baton knowing he might have to use them.

As an associate professor in FGCU's Division of Justice Studies and director of the Weapons and Equipment Research Institute, he devotes his time to testing weapons he hopes will be just as effective but pose less of a hazard to law enforcement officers and those with whom they interact.

At a University that prides itself on its environmental commitment and cutting-edge technology, an Institute such as Mesloh's may at first appear out of place.

But a second look reveals that the assortment of implements in and around Mesloh's office, and those he plans to test in the future, mesh well with both aspects of the University's mission.

Many of the devices he evaluates and reports on to the National Institute of Justice – a subgroup of the U.S. Department of Justice – could potentially keep people and the environment better protected.

Ken Millar, dean of the College of Professional Studies, says, "Dr. Mesloh's research with less lethal weapons makes these weapons safer and more effective for the law officers employing them and ensures that the weapons, when used, do indeed have a 'less lethal' outcome."

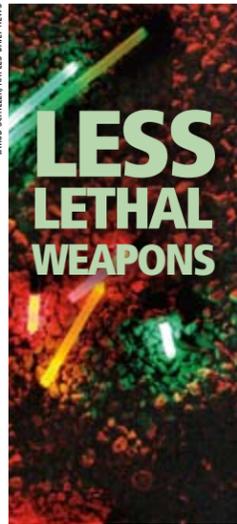
Why devote so much time and effort to testing less lethal equipment?

"I saw a void in the research, that very little was being done that was then applied," says Mesloh, who founded the Institute in 2004. "You can very quickly establish yourself in the field. There are a great deal of opportunities. If I went into more traditional areas, I'd be competing against every criminal justice officer on the planet."

Mesloh estimates his Institute brought in \$700,000 to \$800,000 in grants in the past year. Proposals for another \$1.5 million are under review.

ED. CLEMENT





# LESS LETHAL WEAPONS

- A. Single shot 37mm grenade launcher
- B. Remington 870 less lethal shotgun
- C. Multi-shot 37mm grenade launcher
- D. FN Tactical Police Shotgun
- E. FN303
- F. 37 mm beanbag projectiles
- G. 37mm wooden baton projectiles
- H. Expandable baton
- I. Side-handled baton (PR-24)
- J. X-26 TASER
- K. M-26 TASER



Above: A series of electrical and chemical light sources that associate professor Charlie Mesloh tested as alternatives to traditional flares. At right: Mesloh with some of the weapons he's used in his research.

He selects the items he tests based on what he believes will be valuable in real life, even if it may seem like something from a science-fiction film, such as grenade launchers that shoot bean bags or guns that expel nets instead of bullets.

"If it's something that's going to be positive, if the findings can be applied, that's my big deciding factor," he says.

One project with immediate and significant value in the field involved highway flares.

Conventional flares contain highly toxic materials and can start brush fires, a particular hazard in drought-parched Florida.

Add to those concerns that few agencies have policies on what to do with used flares.

"Most of the time, they end up kicked off onto the side of the road or, a best-case scenario, into a garbage can, but most officers aren't going to pick up a hot melted flare," he says. "It's going to get all over the car."

The experiments he and his research assistants conducted using beacons, strobing lights and rechargeable devices determined which would be effective replacements and might solve both environmental and safety problems.

"It's very easy to deploy them on the roadway and you don't have to monitor them to make sure they don't start a brush fire," Mesloh says.

He and his team spent months working with and researching the use of Tasers, devices over which there's long been controversy, but which

Mesloh considers important tools.

"The deaths people are associating with Tasers are generally drug related," he says. "That does not mean there aren't cases out there that aren't, but every case we've looked at has had a drug link. Obviously, shocking somebody with a Taser does not enhance their well being, but we can't find why it would cause them (permanent) physical harm. And it is an alternative to shooting."

Although many people believe Tasers should only be used when deadly force is required, Mesloh says law enforcement officers look at it as a first-strike tool, something to de-escalate a confrontation so as to avoid the use of deadly force.

"I know it goes contrary to what the ACLU and other groups are saying, but they haven't looked at the data, or have looked at it from a very superficial standpoint," Mesloh says. "If we wait and use it later, we're going see many more

suspects injured or even killed."

Most of the research conducted through Mesloh's Institute, however, involves more benign materials.

Over the past semester, he and a group of students experimented with night-vision equipment, spending muggy, mosquito-infested nights on the darkened campus testing 11 infrared beacons to determine the limitations of each and how they can best be used. The devices have a variety of applications, including marking evidence so an officer can come back later with night-vision equipment and retrieve it.

In the process, the team developed a canine tracking harness on which an infrared beacon can be mounted without interfering with the dog's ability to work so officers in search-and-rescue operations can keep track of their canine partners.

The canine harness – tested on Mesloh's German shepherd, Caya – has led to yet another project: using the harness to carry a video camera.

"It allows us to have better documentation of what's occurring in the field," Mesloh says.

That's important because of the plethora of lawsuits involving police dogs.

"You have a suspect that resists and you use a police dog to track him down and the suspect's bitten," Mesloh says. "The officer writes that the suspect continued to fight the dog. Then the person speaks to an attorney and starts to see dollar signs. He says 'I was handcuffed and not resisting and they sicced the dog on me, the dog was completely out of control.' That's where the civil litigation begins."

Settlements can cost millions of dollars and legal fees to defend the dogs and officers can be expensive, too. With a visual and audio record, cases will be more clear cut.

Mesloh, who earned a master's degree in Public Administration at FGCU, then a doctorate in Criminal Justice at the University of Central Florida, returned to FGCU to teach and operate his Institute because of the entrepreneurial mindset of the place.

"It didn't have customs and rules that



Photographed through a night-vision scope, Komaal Collie, 24, left, and Brandon Wargo, 22, both graduate research assistants, use night-vision scopes to track Mesloh, who is hiding in a clump of forest on the FGCU campus during a demonstration. Collie and Wargo are part of Mesloh's research team, which is testing ways to improve law-enforcement equipment.

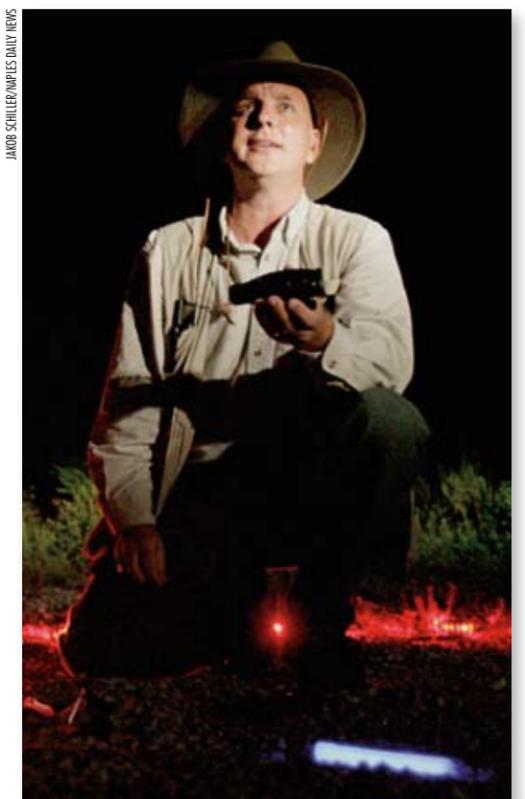
prevented certain types of research," he says.

An added benefit of the Institute's existence is the research experience students gain.

"A significant aspect of Dr. Mesloh's research is his active engagement of his students in his research activities," Millar says. "These students leave FGCU with advanced knowledge of less lethal weapons, sophisticated research skills and, frequently, one or more publications with Dr. Mesloh. This has led, in turn, to quick entry into law enforcement work and/or graduate studies."

Komaal Collie, '07 (Criminal Justice) is one of Mesloh's current research assistants. Collie, who is from Miami, had originally planned to go into law enforcement as a field agent. Now, as a result of working with Mesloh, he plans to devote himself to research.

"He's doing things to help solve problems officers confront in the field," Collie says. "He's trying to solve problems people face on a daily basis. It's important and it's interesting."



Mesloh shows students how to use a night-vision scope.



# Call OF THE Wild

Ricky Pires aims to teach  
the world to go green



INTERIOR PHOTOS BY TED CLEMENT

BY ROGER WILLIAMS

It's a classic, if unconventional, tale of success through true grit: Florida state champion baton twirler turned dental assistant and mother goes back to school and finishes her degree at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Then she and a couple of professors convince the University president to hire her before some other lucky outfit gets her, so he comes up with the money and she's employed.

Finally, she decides to save the world one person and one creature at a time with kindness, education and activism, going at it with a vengeance.

Her name is Ricky Pires, roughly pronounced Pierce. At 56 years of age, her energy level registers somewhere in the stratosphere, which is fortunate because she created (as a student) and now heads (as the director) the Wings of Hope program at Florida Gulf Coast University.

While she hasn't saved the entire world yet, she's working on it.

As she's driving home after another 80-hour work-week, not long before Thanksgiving, her cell phone rings, just as she finishes a jelly doughnut.

"It's benign," Pires announces animatedly into the phone. "I am so relieved. I don't have time for cancer. Some

people go celebrate with a drink, but I have a jelly doughnut. I shouldn't, because I have high cholesterol, but tonight I don't care!"

A great bubbling laugh, like uncorked champagne, froths up out of her.

None of that will surprise her students or her colleagues and mentors at FGCU. Except, perhaps, the part in which a potential illness could ever slow down so vital a soul.

This time it hasn't, although as she reveals this information, she sobers quickly. Her mother — who lives in the Naples area and helps her significantly in University projects as a volunteer — has just completed treatment for breast cancer.

Lynn Garcia, executive secretary for the Department of Language and Literature in FGCU's College of Arts and Sciences, has nothing but praise for Pires.

"This woman would give you the shirt off her back," she says. "She's just that kind. She's the panther lady — and she'll do anything for anybody. Working with her is the best because she gives 100 percent of herself — no, 110 percent — every day to this cause."

It's a cause Pires has championed since 2000, securing grants and organizing the massive Wings of Hope effort to reach children throughout Lee and Collier counties, with the

**Working with her is the best because she gives 100 percent of herself — no, 110 percent — every day to this cause."**

— Lynn Garcia

Above: Images captured with cameras mounted in prime panther habitat in Collier County.

Left: Casting of land otter paw

Below: Ricky Pires, left, and FGCU student Nicoletta Gallo show Poinciana Elementary School pupils the camera used to photograph panthers. Children donate change that's used to buy the infrared motion cameras.



Top: Ricky Pires created and runs Wings of Hope.  
Bottom: Brenda Brooks leads school children on a tour of CREW.



assistance of FGCU students.

"This started in a class she took with me as an undergraduate nine years ago," says

Maria Roca, chairwoman of the Department of Communication and Philosophy, who considers Pires one of the finest



students she's ever had.

"This is the kind of student who makes my career worth it," Roca says.

"She turned my class into a panther habitat. When we came out of that class, I said to her, 'This is a model for environmental education. We should be teaching this in the schools.' So we went to then-President (William) Merwin, with (Professor) Win Everham, and said, 'What do you think, can you hire her?' He loved the idea, and gave us the money."

Pires' Wings of Hope is a masterpiece of impassioned logistics designed to teach people how to save living things. Nowadays the program offers service-learning credits to University students from all academic disciplines (they must complete 80 hours to graduate) – 210 students this semester.

Under Pires' direction, they reach area children one on one, showing them how to live "green," or protect bird habitats, or conserve water, or save endangered panthers, as part of the high-profile Panther Posse. Since 2000, the program has reached more than 100,000 children.

"We educate thousands of kids this way," Pires explains. "We get everyone talking to everyone – I'm trying to bring back the notion that we're all sitting on the front porch, and we should be talking to each

## "The big picture is caring for everything around you."

– Ricky Pires

other about important things, like people used to. It's working, too. I have a little boy who educated his grandma back in Italy. They're talking to their moms or families. I tell the kids, 'the man at the 7-Eleven needs to know.' A lot of kids want to help, but they just don't know how."

That is, they don't know how until they meet Pires and her students. In the case of the Panther Posse, for example, she divides FGCU students into teams of five. She trains them then assigns each team a school or project. Finally, the children pay a visit to FGCU, many of them beaming with excitement at being on a college campus for the first time.

The children rotate through five stations in which FGCU students teach them about panther kittens, panther research and radio collars, wildlife tracks, panther history and water conservation.

The children get to look at a bookstore,



Above: FGCU student Pablo Riera instructs the Pinewoods Elementary Panther Posse on how to use a Global Positioning System device at CREW.

Below: Ricky Pires teaches children about plants, wildlife and habitat at CREW.

Top left: FGCU student Kelly Sheriff shows children a video of panther kittens in a den.

Bottom left: Wings of Hope assistant director Sarah Davis explains panther history.

### Facts of life

- **Who:** Ricky Pires
- **Born:** Enid, OK (moved to Miami, then Naples as a youngster)
- **Education:** Naples High School, FGCU
- **Position:** Director, Wings of Hope
- **Favorite book:** "Any Harry Potter. I like to read what the kids are reading. And, 'Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder,' by Richard Louv. I keep trying to re-read that."
- **On girlhood:** "We didn't have environmental education. I fished a lot with my dad. And now it breaks my heart to go fishing – people can kill so many other things when they do. I'm a vegetarian now. I don't want to hurt creatures. They're just another species like me, trying to live life."
- **Mission:** "Building bridges of hope for wildlife and the environment and the human community, and doing it by using University students to teach kids."
- **Mentor:** (Former FGCU assistant professor) "Bill Hammond, who has put so much of his life into being kind to nature."
- **Family:** Husband, Tony; son, Colin; daughter-in-law, Kim; rescued Labrador retrievers, Prancer and Zoe
- **Special award:** Florida Wildlife Federation's 2006 Environmental Educator of the Year
- **Legacy:** "I'd love to have the staff to expand Wings of Hope to other colleges and universities. Wings of Hope will be my legacy."



Top left: Sasha Wohlpart, FGCU Ecological Studies instructor, guides students at CREW.

Top right: FGCU students Dan DiNicolla, second from right, and Melissa Aracha, far right, work with Poinciana Elementary students.

Middle: Panther Posse participants fill out their scientific journals.

Bottom: Melissa Aracha shows castings of animal tracks.



or classrooms, or other places where University students gather. They also get to share in what FGCU students are thinking about their careers and lives.

"It can change them completely," Pires says.

And then they experience the Panther Posse, through which they gain insight into what's involved in saving a single species from extinction.

In Pires' view, becoming familiar with a single animal or bird is humanizing and invaluable, and something she aims for in her education of both University students and young children.

"I've felt in my heart that one person can make a difference," Pires says. "If we're all positive, if we're kind to each other, and if we connect to

wildlife – that is, if one child or person can connect to one animal

– then we can save ourselves, and maybe the animals, too."

Pires believes that introducing people to any creature or environment other than their own changes everything for the better.

There is also a hard-core pragmatism in her notions. "I don't want my grandkids to have to say, 'Florida panther,' and be able to find it only in old photos online," she says.

So she uses most of her waking hours trying to prevent that nightmarish scenario from occurring.

Part of the Panther Posse requires both school kids and University students to travel to the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land & Water Trust (CREW) east of Naples, where 60,000 acres of prime panther habitat exist. The director of CREW, Brenda Brooks, is also an FGCU student now pursuing a master's degree, and Pires' friend.

**"When my students are through with this, they'll be kinder to the earth. They'll be kinder to other people."**

– Ricky Pires

At CREW, young students learn about panther behavior on the ground and get a firsthand look at the habitat in which they live.

The program only works, she says, because of all those who supply money and manpower, including: the Collier County Audubon Society, CREW, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Panther Team (including panther biologist Mark Lotz), FGCU students, staff and faculty, the Florida Wildlife Federation, the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge, Sen. Burt Saunders, South Florida Water Management District and the Woodward, Pires and Lombardo law firm. The University pays her salary, but Pires has spent \$15,000 of her own over the years on the program.



She's grateful for all the support and determined to use it sagely.

"I look at the big picture," she explains. "I love all the critters, all the water and all the land, but the big picture is caring for everything around you. The earth nourishes us



every day, and we take it for granted. I say, 'Open your eyes. Look around and sit down. Get off your cell phones.'

"When my students are through with this," she says, "they'll be kinder to the earth. They'll be kinder to other people."

– Roger Williams is a freelance writer who lives in Alva.

Top: Ricky Pires, right, talks with Poinciana Elementary students at FGCU.

Bottom left: FGCU student Christopher Grimes leads a water conservation demonstration.

Bottom right: Panther Posse members with stuffed toy panther kittens.



## “The Living BLOG”

Professor melds media to explore apocalypse

BY KAREN FELDMAN

Drama professor Barry Cavin is giving a 21<sup>st</sup>-century cyber-spin to a Depression-era concept.

“The Living Blog,” scheduled for 10 performances starting Feb. 13, takes the Works Progress Administration’s Federal

Theatre Project, the largest federally sponsored effort to produce theater events and employ members of the industry, and adapts it to the media of today.

Cavin, chairman of FGCU’s Department of Visual and Performing Arts, is the creative force behind this undertaking.

“The Federal Theater Project produced some works classified as ‘The Living Newspapers,’” Cavin says. “Plays were written by researchers who researched the papers of the day and created a play centered around the themes of the day.

“My idea is that newspapers are trying to stay alive, but are being adapted in some ways by the Internet. We have a lot of blogospheres, blog writers who are creating news product right alongside newspapers.”

Based on themes he saw emerging on the Internet, he’d originally intended to create one play with five themed acts: scandal, elections, war, environment and, finally, apocalypse. The material would come from blogs, with the five acts presented online and on stage.

But he eventually shifted his thinking.

“It’s way too big a piece to tackle in one evening of a performance,” he says, “so we’re going to do the last act first because it tended to radiate into the other subjects.”

The idea of apocalypse as the central focus appeals to Cavin.

“Its literal meaning is

‘unveiling’. It rests in counterpoint to what most people think of as apocalypse as a world-ending event,” he says.

The production will be multi-layered, that is, it will incorporate live actors on stage with video displays to create a montage, which, he believes, is the way people have come to see the world.

“Everything’s layered,” he says. “The brain adapts to whatever stimuli is given it. There’s evidence that the brain physically adapted to montage and needs to have that. To reach a younger audience in live performance it’s interesting to try to layer it so they have various things to look at. What you don’t see on the Internet and television is that these multiple layers can talk to each other and that conversation is interesting.”

### Show time

- **What:** “The Living Blog”
- **Who:** Written, designed and directed by Barry Cavin
- **When:** Feb. 13-17 and 20-24, curtain 8 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday
- **Where:** The Theatre Lab, FGCU Arts Complex
- **Cost:** \$10 general admission; \$5 for FGCU students, faculty and staff with ID. Tickets available starting Feb. 4.
- **Information:** Call (239) 590-7268.

## Arts Calendar



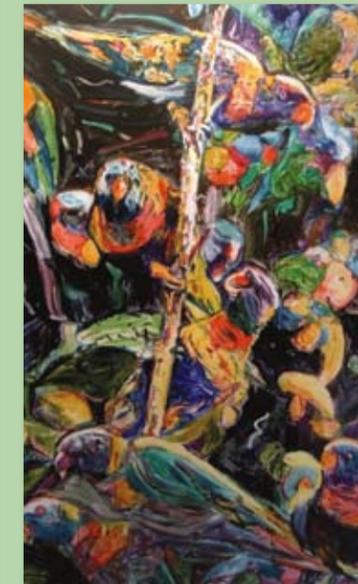
### “I Am in It: Contemporary Chinese Calligraphic Expressions”

Jan. 10 – Feb. 16

Opening reception: Jan. 10, 5-8 p.m.

Arts Complex Gallery

Guest curated by Yiguo Zhang, director of Nankai University’s Art History Center, this exhibit will showcase a new cultural phenomenon in China brought about through an influx of Western influences. The works are by leading contemporary artists from the People’s Republic of China drawing on their personal experiences and experimenting with departures from traditional calligraphic style.



### “Where the Wild Things (Still) Are: A Wildlife Art Exhibition and Fund Raiser for CROW and the FGCU Art Gallery”

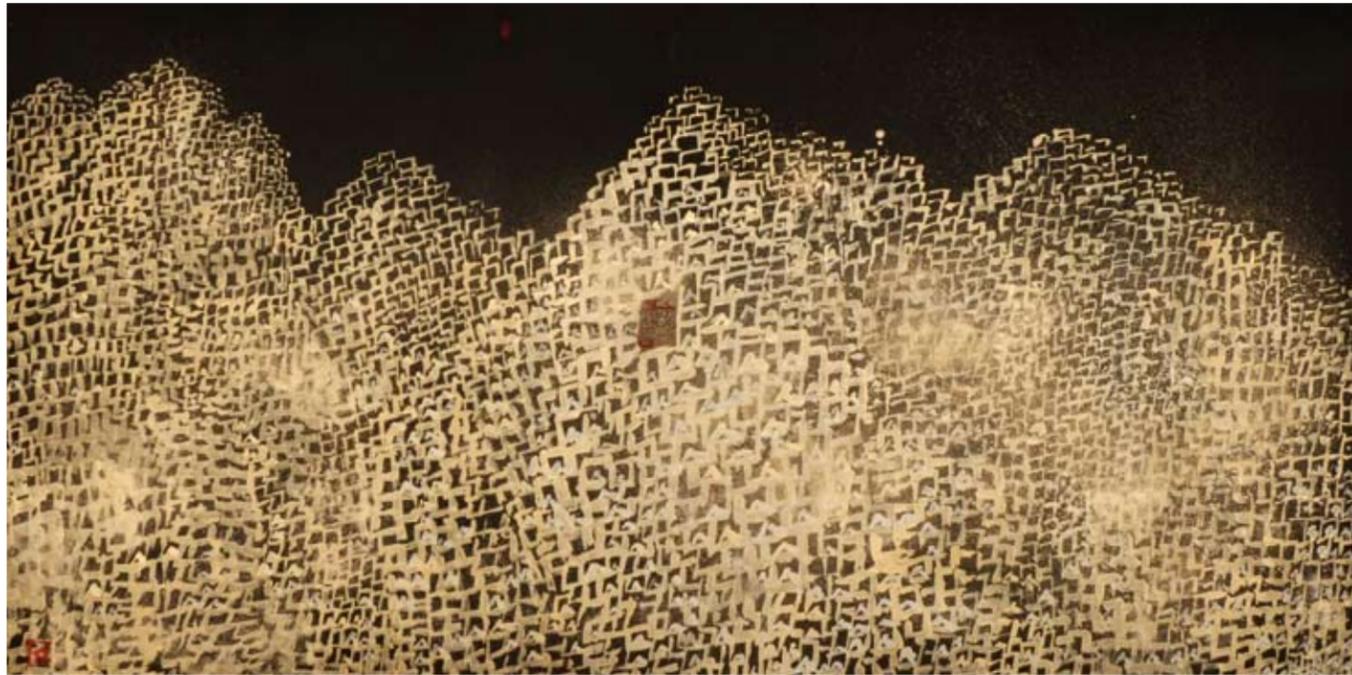
Feb. 28 – March 28

Opening reception/preview party: Feb. 28, 5-8 p.m.

Closing party/silent auction: March 28, 5-8 p.m.

This exhibition/silent auction benefits both culture and creatures of Southwest Florida. CROW (Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife, Inc. on Sanibel Island) and The Art Gallery at FGCU have partnered to bring this intriguing exhibition/fund raiser to heighten awareness of wildlife and the need for its protection. A few of the international and local artists participating are Romero Britto, Josef Raffael, Marilyn Manson, Bernard Pras, Andy Browne, Ken Hoffman, Barbara Hoffman and Sherry Rohl.





"Prisoners," 2006 by Yiliao  
(Private Collection)

## Beauty of the *brush stroke*

### Chinese artists find modern expression through ancient technique

BY NANCY STETSON

Contemporary Chinese artists are exploding the traditional art form of calligraphy, re-examining it and, in the process, turning it inside out.

With radically different styles, they're melding the ancient art with modern Western abstract sensibilities.

From Jan. 10 through Feb. 16, the Florida Gulf Coast University Art Gallery exhibits the work of four Chinese artists in "I Am in It: Contemporary Chinese Art Expressions." The participating artists include Shao Yan (Shandong Province); Yiliao (Henan Province);



Yiguo Zhang

Lan Zhenghui (Guangdong Province); and Pu Lieping (Sichuan Province).

Many of the works are quite large.

Shao Yan's work, "Be Genial, Sage and Quick" (1997), is nine feet tall. On a narrow strip of white rice paper, Shao Yan painted large, thick

characters. As they near the bottom of the page, they grow increasingly larger, until the page is filled with the blackness of a character, with only small windows of white peeking through.

The work is as stark and bold as a Franz Kline and would be very much at home in New York's Guggenheim Museum or Museum of Modern Art.

"Contemporary Chinese art is so popular," says Yiguo Zhang, executive professor, director of Nankai University's Art History Center and guest curator for the FGCU Art Gallery. "You can see the sales at Christie's and the art auctions. The prices are so high, it's incredible."

Scott Snyder, FGCU Art Gallery director and assistant professor, says, "This exhibition is a

wonderful opportunity for FGCU students and the Southwest Florida community to see large-scale works that exemplify the power and rhythm of masterful brushwork; all from a small sampling of artists that are part of the dramatic cultural shift going on in today's China."

For Zhang, contemporary Chinese artists fall into two categories: those who study Western art in China, then come to the United States and study Western art here, and those with a strong foundation in traditional Chinese art who then study Western art in China. The four artists he chose for this exhibit belong to the latter category.

"Each of the artists is a key player in the field, and each artist represents different approaches," he says.

Zhang, who is himself a calligrapher, says calligraphy is a high art, the most typical of

Chinese traditional art.

"At the same time, people think calligraphy has some kind of elements of modern art," he says. "It's very dramatic. We appreciate the beauty of the stroke, of the line. A calligrapher has their own style of the abstract quality: line, brush stroke, construction, rhythm, ink, all of the artistic elements."

Work of this type is seldom shown in the United States. In the late '90s, Zhang curated an exhibit for Columbia University in New York City. The catalog for the exhibit, "Brushed Voices: Calligraphy in Contemporary China," is a best-seller in its field.

"This is the first type of show of this new kind of art," Zhang says. "Most of the pieces are modern, new classical calligraphy. This has never been done before."

Shao Yan, for example, "has the great foundation of Chinese tradition, and he has a particular way to re-interpret our tradition," Zhang says. "He was awarded many prizes in classical Chinese calligraphy, but he transcended. To depart is not easy, but he departed dramatically. In each period, his work shows big differences."

Yiliao bases his work in Buddhist tradition and Zen taste.

"Very simple, very strong, very powerful," says Zhang. Lan Zhenghui uses heavy ink and strokes, while Pu Lieping's work reflects his passion for both music and calligraphy.

The four artists will give workshops and talks for FGCU students and the public, and will visit schools in the region.

"The show is making me so excited," Zhang says. "In this one, there are no gaps between the West and the East. People can appreciate Chinese contemporary art, because it is all abstract art. They're reinterpreting Western art. This is a dialogue between the East and the West."

— Nancy Stetson is a freelance writer who lives in Cape Coral.



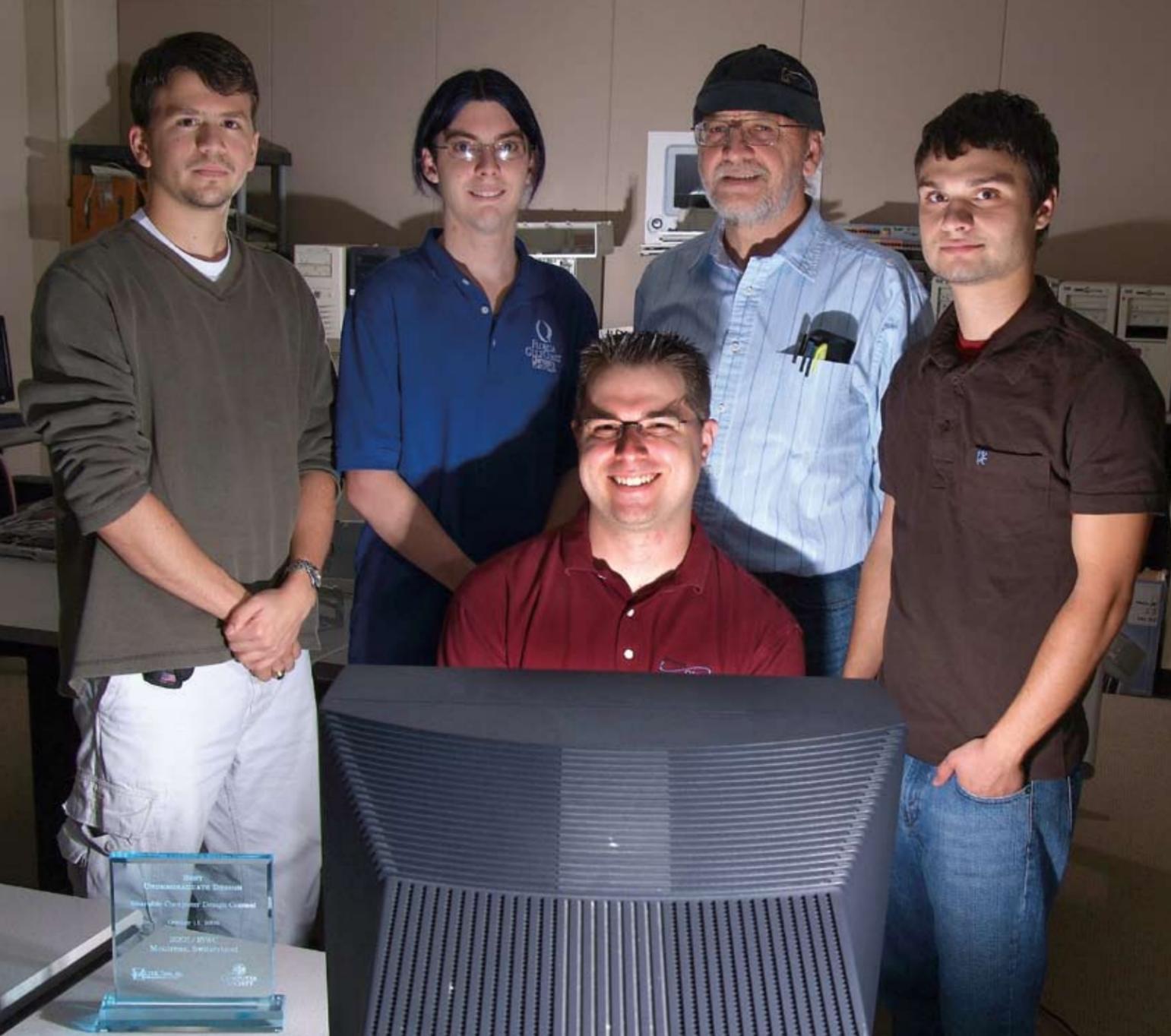
"Hanging Curtain," by Shao Yan  
(Private Collection)

#### Show time

- **What:** "I Am in It: Contemporary Chinese Art Expressions"
- **Where:** The FGCU Art Gallery
- **When:** Jan. 10-Feb. 16
- **Opening reception:** Jan. 10, 5 to 8 p.m.
- **Gallery hours:** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday (closed on University holidays)
- **Admission:** Free
- **Information:** Call the Gallery at 590-7199.

**"It's very dramatic. We appreciate the beauty of the stroke, of the line."**

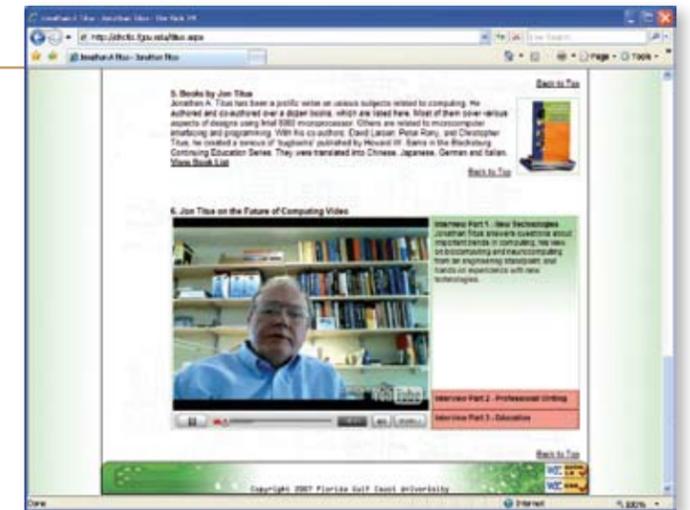
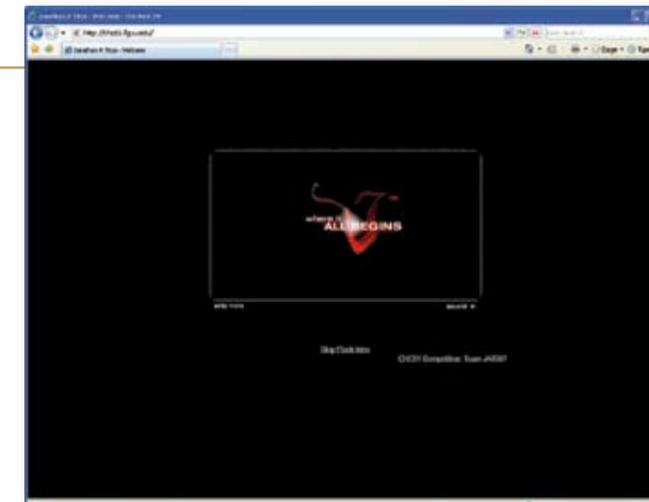
— Yiguo Zhang



PHOTOS BY ED CLEMENT

# WORLD-WIDE WIN

Computer Science team garners top international honors



Top left: This flash introduction comes up as soon as the user goes to the site.  
 Top right: This page about Jonathan Titus features a bio, text interview and video interviews.  
 Bottom left: Describes the lesson section. When a user puts a mouse over one of the lesson boxes, a brief description of the section is displayed. The lessons pages are for students and others to learn more about microcomputing.  
 Bottom right: This time line shows the advancement of Jonathan Titus' Mark 8 in comparison with other advancements in the computing industry.

BY JAY MACDONALD

It takes talent, teamwork and dedication to build the perfect machine. It takes all of that, plus a touch of obsession, to build a recognized computer science program. But in just two years, a handful of Florida Gulf Coast University Computer Science majors have taken the University's Computer Science program from obscurity to international acclaim by placing high in collegiate competitions sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, or IEEE.

This year, Rick Szatkowski, '07 (Computer Science), led the all-senior team of Victor Elci, Jonathan Eren and Ryan Firtell to a top nine finish in the IEEE Computer Society Web Programming Competition (referred to as CHC) by building an educational Web site about computer pioneer Jonathan Titus. FGCU was the only U.S. team to rank in the top nine.

The highlight of the Titus project: a video interview with Titus himself about his groundbreaking Mark 8, the first retail kit computer that hit the hobbyist market in the mid-1970s.

"That was very cool," says Szatkowski. "I was surprised that he was still as active as he is today,

Left: Jonathan Eren, Victor Elci, Rick Szatkowski (seated), Janusz Zalewski and Neven Skoro with award

# WWW WIN



About us: This page gives information about the team work, educational value, Web site attractiveness, historical accuracy and the project objectives.

“As cell phones get retired and sent to other places, they can be used to access automated information banks to learn Business 101 skills,” Szatkowski explains. “You could use just text automation from a call center and not even need an Internet connection.”

still jumping into things and playing around with hardware. Back in 1975 was a long time ago. Our team wasn’t even born until 10 years later.”

The team was even able to obtain a vintage Mark 8 on eBay, for which Titus generously donated a set of circuit boards. Making that relic work will likely fall to a future Computer Science class. (Learn more about this computing pioneer at the team’s tribute site: <http://chc61.fgcu.edu/home.aspx>).

Last year, Szatkowski also led FGCU’s team to a top 10 finish in its first CHC international competition with a Web site about the history of computing in Poland.

The awards don’t stop there. The team of Szatkowski, Eren, Elci and senior Neven Skoro last year won first place for best undergraduate design in an international wearable computer competition sponsored by Altered Think and IEEE. Their design: a system that enables people in remote areas without computers to access business training via automated voice and text using their cell phone, iPod or PDA.

On the local level, Skoro won a \$1,000 Innovation Leadership Award from the Economic Development Council of Collier County this year, primarily for his programming work with two robots. One was an obsolete fixed-arm assembly robot that he reanimated, the other a wheelchair-looking mobile unit that he programmed for Bluetooth wireless control.

While the fixed-arm robot was challenging (Skoro had to scour the Internet for documentation since the manufacturer had long ago ceased operations), the mobile unit continues to feed his love of robotics. In addition to expanding its range from a few feet using an infrared TV remote control

to 300 feet with Bluetooth radio frequency control, he has customized it to pay attention to its surroundings.

“I programmed it so it would think about its environment. If I put it on a table and ordered it to do things, it wouldn’t fall off the table or hit an object because I equipped it with five sensors,” he says. “You could implement this stuff on a car or a wheelchair or a bomb detector. I’m pretty sure in the near future we will see cars that will not hit anything.”

During their four undergraduate years together, these budding programmers have formed a bond and pushed FGCU onto the international stage at the urging – heck, let’s call it the insistence – of Janusz Zalewski, their taskmaster and (tor)mentor, known fondly as “Dr. Z.”

“I would point out multiple deficiencies whenever they thought it was good,” he says. “That was my contribution.”

An electrical engineer by training, Zalewski inherited a fledging program when he arrived at FGCU from the University of Central Florida in 2002.

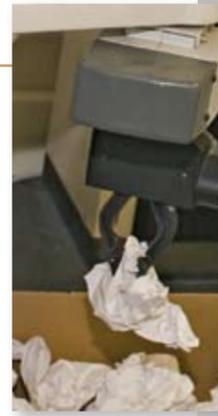
Computer Science began in the College of Arts and Sciences, and eventually was moved into the Lutgert College of Business. There, it was combined into a single department with Computer Information Systems, with which it has little in common.

Zalewski believed the

“I try to motivate them to think bigger, to shape their own careers.”

– Janusz Zalewski

Close-up of the robot’s claw picking up a piece of paper.



program needed to be revamped.

He set about putting in 12-hour days to build a new core curriculum. He also recruited two new faculty members, Dahai Guo and Milan Soklic. Next fall, Computer Science will take its rightful place in the School of Engineering, a move Zalewski hopes will be followed by funding for a hardware lab the Computer Science program so desperately needs.

Key to his strategy of building a prestigious program is competition: local, state, regional, national, international – maybe someday intergalactic. Don’t laugh: an FGCU Computer Science team is currently hard at work designing a 10-centimeter-cube satellite for a NASA competition. Zalewski concedes this is his way to not only put FGCU on the computer science map, but to introduce his young charges to broader possibilities and what it takes to make it in the field.

“They all think they want to program computer games, which is far from reality,” he says. “I try to motivate them to think bigger, to shape their own careers. To do that, they need to know who they are competing against.”

His award-winning graduates now appreciate his tough love. Szatkowski works for a Naples Internet startup called



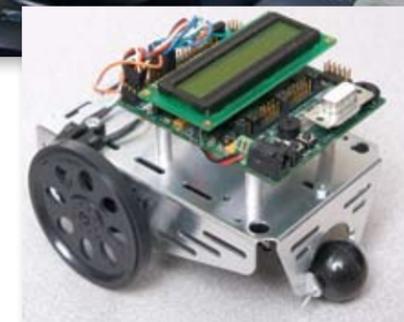
InternetOffice.biz; Elci works for a company that provides stock quotes and Firtell works for the technical advisory group of a construction company called Arial Companies, programming sensors for land survey.

Skoro predicts that when he graduates, those all-nighters inspired by Dr. Z’s endless questions will prove invaluable in the real world.

“He pushes us to the limit,

but it’s a good experience,” says Skoro. “We think he’s tough, but what do we know? We don’t know what it’s like out there.”

– Jay MacDonald is a freelance writer who lives in Austin, TX



Neven Skoro with robots

# Sweet Success



Ana Kokanovic



Above: Brooke Youngquist, Top right: Whitney Hendry



BRIAN TIEZ

BRIAN TIEZ



## Eagles hold their own in the big leagues

BY CARL BLEICH

The Florida Gulf Coast University women's volleyball promotional poster may have stated it best.

"We're just happy to be here is for losers who are just happy to be here," the poster reads in big blue letters. "So make no mistake, while it may not happen overnight, this is about winning."

The poster was wrong about one thing, however: The winning did happen overnight.

The FGCU volleyball team turned in one of the best seasons in school history this past fall, finishing 23-3 overall and 10-1 in Atlantic Sun conference play. The Eagles won the regular season conference championship and would have been the No. 1 seed for the Atlantic Sun Championship tournament had the Athletics department not been in the NCAA reclassifying stage because of the move to Division I, making the team ineligible for post-season play.

The Eagles did not lose a home match all year and had winning streaks of 14 and nine matches this season on two separate occasions. In their 26 matches this season, the Eagles lost just 13 games, eight of those in conference play.

At the end of the season,

FGCU junior Ana Kokanovic was named the Atlantic Sun Conference Player of the year. Teammate Roberta Santos also made the first team while Brooke Youngquist earned second-team honors.

The Atlantic Sun also named FGCU volleyball head coach Jaye Flood as 2007 Coach of the Year.

"Our student-athletes really accomplished something special," FGCU Athletics director Carl McAloose said. "No one in the world was thinking that they could do something like this."

Here are some highlights from other FGCU teams' first season in Division I:

- The women's soccer team, also in its first year of play, finished with a 7-4 record in



Lindsay Haw



BRIAN TIEZ

Atlantic Sun conference play and an overall 11-7 record. The Eagles finished third in the conference and would have qualified for the Atlantic Sun Championship had they not been ineligible because of the NCAA reclassifying period. After losing starting goalkeeper Emily Barrett to an injury midseason, freshman Kirsi Keenan filled in and allowed just 14 goals in the Eagles' final 12 games. She was even named Atlantic Sun Player of the Week for the week of Oct. 15.

- The men's soccer team, in its first season, finished with an 8-10-1 record and 3-5-1 Atlantic Sun record on the season – good enough for seventh place in the conference. In its three conference victories, the squad outscored University of South Carolina Upstate, Mercer and Lipscomb by a combined score of

Adam Glick

"Our student-athletes really accomplished something special!"

— Carl McAloose



Ben Foerstner and Jonathan Koshko in white

6-0. It also pulled a shocking victory over Coastal Carolina, which at the time was ranked No. 36 in the nation. What may have been most impressive about the Eagles' season was the fact that the team had just four players who were not freshmen.

- The women's cross country team's season is highlighted by a win at the West Florida Invitational Sept. 29. Megan Thies, Angela Hegge, Cadie Sly and Taylor Cooke finished in the top four spots, bolstering the Eagles to a 22-point victory over second place West Florida. The squad finished seventh out of 12 teams at the Atlantic Sun Championships on Oct. 29. Hegge turned in a time of 19 minutes, 36 seconds while Thies finished in 19:40, good enough for 18th and 19th place, respectively. The Eagles accomplished all of this with just two seniors on their roster and four freshmen.
- The men's cross country team was also full of young and upcoming runners in its first season competing in the Atlantic Sun. The squad had

six freshmen this past season and one senior. Freshman Ian McParland paced the team to an eighth-place finish out of 12 teams at the Atlantic Sun Championships Oct. 29. He placed 30th with a time of 27:30. The Eagles also had a great showing in the Stetson Hatter Invitational on Oct. 12. There, the team finished fifth out of 16 teams.

- The women's golf team hosted and won the FGCU Fall Invitational played Sept. 29, at Miromar Lakes. The team also made an impressive showing in the Stetson Hatter Invitational to close out the season, finishing third out of nine teams.
- The men's golf team closed the season out with a victory at the Stetson Hatter Invitational. The team topped second place Bethune Cookman by 25 strokes. Freshman Daniel Mazziotta was the Eagle's top finisher, turning in a 218 (two above par).
- The men's basketball team started its season off on the right foot even if it doesn't count in the wins and losses column. The Eagles blasted St. Thomas 98-77 on Nov. 3 at Alico Arena behind Casey Wohlleb's 23 points and Adam Liddell's 16 points and nine rebounds. The Eagles will play a full Division I schedule this year including home games against Butler (Dec. 22) and Penn (Dec. 29), both teams that made the NCAA Tournament last season.
- The women's basketball team is full of new faces this season. After going 34-1 and making it to the Division II National Championship game last season, the Eagles will now be relying on forwards Delia De La Torre and Adrienne McNally. They are the team's returning leading scorers and rebounders. The Eagles added plenty of talent and height in the off season and now sport



JASON F. SMITH

Taylor Cook



PETE FOURNIER

- a roster with four players taller than six feet.
- The women's swimming and diving team won its first meet Oct. 27. The team cruised to a 231-62 victory over Tampa at the FGCU Aquatics Center. Victoria Hyddmark won the 100-yard backstroke for the Eagles. Hyddmark, a freshman, topped a Georgia Tech swimmer by more than a second to win. The biggest swimming event on campus this season will be Jan. 5 at the Aquatics Center. The Eagles will host the FGCU Invitational beginning at 9 a.m.

McAloose was thrilled with the way all the teams performed in the fall and is looking forward to watching the swimming and basketball teams compete this winter.

"This says a lot about the caliber of student athletes we bring in," McAloose said. (Basketball and swimming) will do a great job representing FGCU."

— Carl Bleich, a student at FGCU, is a freelance writer who lives in Fort Myers.

# Sports Calendar

For details, contact Matt Fairchild at (239) 590-7061.

### Thursday, Dec. 20

Women's Basketball vs. Texas Pan-American  
7 p.m., Alico Arena

### Friday, Dec. 21

Women's Basketball vs. Memphis/Loyola  
Alico Arena

### Saturday, Dec. 22

Men's Basketball vs. Butler  
7 p.m., Alico Arena

### Saturday, Dec. 29

Men's Basketball vs. Penn  
7 p.m., Alico Arena

### Saturday, Jan. 5

Women's Swimming  
FGCU Invitational  
9 a.m., FGCU Aquatics Center

### Friday, Jan. 11

Men's Basketball vs. Stetson  
7:30 p.m., Alico Arena

### Saturday, Jan. 12

Women's Basketball vs. Stetson  
7 p.m., Alico Arena

### Thursday, Jan. 17

Men's Basketball vs. Mercer  
7 p.m., Alico Arena

### Saturday, Jan. 19

Women's Basketball vs. Kennesaw State  
5 p.m., Alico Arena

Men's Basketball vs. Kennesaw State  
7:15 p.m., Alico Arena

### Monday, Jan. 21

Women's Basketball vs. Mercer  
7 p.m., Alico Arena

### Thursday, Jan. 31

Men's Basketball vs. Lipscomb  
7 p.m., Alico Arena



Fans show their spirit during the FSU game. Bottom photo: Chelsea Dermeyer, Ashley Haegle, Amanda Pierce and Delia De La Torre in green

## FGCU partners with Conservancy for vital environmental education program



From left: Nicholas G. Penniman IV, board chairman, Conservancy of Southwest Florida; J. Dudley Goodlette, board member, Conservancy of Southwest Florida; Richard Pegnetter, former FGCU interim president; Andrew McElwaine, president and CEO, Conservancy of Southwest Florida; Donna Price Henry, dean of the FGCU College of Arts and Sciences; and Aswani Voley, FGCU chair of Marine and Ecological Sciences.

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida and Florida Gulf Coast University are teaming up to establish an innovative program aimed at coordinating and expanding environmental education for people of all ages.

The Environmental Education Partnership's mission is to expand environmental education programming, improve curriculum and develop innovative programs in Southwest Florida.

The new initiative is made possible through two gifts to the Conservancy, which will be donated to FGCU. A \$1 million gift will be eligible for a 75 percent matching grant through the State of Florida's matching gifts fund. The resulting \$1.75 million will create an endowment that will sustain the program. The second gift of \$100,000 comes from an anonymous foundation in Ohio. That money will provide operating funds FGCU may use to jump start the program. Within five years the program is expected to be

sustained by the endowment fund.

Conservancy supporters Ed and Edith Andrew gave the \$1 million gift because of their belief in the importance of environmental education.

"The gift to FGCU would not have been possible without the support of Edie and Ed Andrew," says Andrew McElwaine, president and CEO of the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. "The gift, combined with the educational clout of FGCU, will improve environmental education across the region."

According to Edith Andrew, "I think a partnership like this will get more bang for our buck. Putting people together who teach about the environment will help the Conservancy do an even better job of educating future generations."

It's a program tailor-made for FGCU, with its commitment to serve the region and to further environmental awareness.

"The gift will allow us to add new partnerships with regional environmental education organizations that have done a good job with their environmental education offerings," says Richard Pegnetter, former FGCU interim president.

A new faculty member will be hired for FGCU's Department of Marine and Ecological Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences. That person will be responsible for coordinating the environmental education and outreach program and will work closely with both organizations to create a regional "K-to-Gray" program.

College of Arts and Sciences Dean Donna Price Henry believes it's a good match.

"The College of Arts and Sciences has had a longstanding informal relationship with the Conservancy," said Price Henry. "The joint faculty position will strengthen that relationship" as well as provide in-service teacher education, which will enhance environmental learning in the schools.

idea photo ©istockphoto.com/afgial

## Endowed funds take aim at solving mysteries of red tide

Red tide has plagued and perplexed coastal communities for decades, causing periodic blooms of organisms that are toxic to fish, birds, marine mammals and, on occasion, people. Researchers have long labored to figure out what causes the microscopic algae to infest coastal waters in an effort to develop a way to eradicate it.

To help in that effort, Red Tide Relief, founded by Quinn Ruelle, has established an endowed fund at Florida Gulf Coast University for student research projects on red tide.

The initial contribution of \$20,000 creates the Red Tide Relief Endowed Fund that will be used to fund undergraduate and graduate student research projects on red tide.

In addition to the endowment, Red Tide Relief made a \$30,000 donation to help create wet labs at the new FGCU Vester Marine Science site in Bonita Springs.

The founder of Red Tide Relief, Ruelle got involved with red tide after experiencing its effects first hand in 2003. Consequently, he established the Ecological Research and Action Foundation, also known as Red Tide Relief, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness and promoting the prevention of red tide. The organization works to support research on the causes of red tide and to develop appropriate prevention measures and interventions to mitigate or prevent red tide. The group seeks to establish partnerships with like-minded organizations to support education programs and projects.

"Red Tide Relief recognizes the commitment



From left: Darlene McCloud, FGCU director of Major Gifts; Aswani Voley, FGCU chair of Marine and Ecological Sciences; Donna Price Henry, dean of the FGCU College of Arts & Sciences; Richard Pegnetter, former FGCU interim president; donor Quinn Ruelle, founder and president of Red Tide Relief; his wife, Heiki Ruelle; and Donna Perry, director for Red Tide Relief.

of FGCU to marine biology research and Dr. Aswani Voley's ongoing commitment to environmental projects like the acclaimed oyster bed reseeding projects. They have proven they are the best partner to make an impact on the Southwest Florida aquatic environment. Their latest Bonita Springs facility will provide them direct access to monitor and analyze the local bays and estuaries," says Ruelle.

Voley, FGCU chair of Marine and Ecological Sciences, sees many benefits to come from the gift.

"The donation provides continuing funds for student research in the areas of red tide and marine research as well as augmenting the infrastructure at the FGCU Vester Marine and Environmental Sciences field lab," he says. "Funds from the donation are being used to enhance the sea water systems used to conduct experiments on the impacts of red tides on marine organisms including ecologically and economically important species such as oysters, clams and recreationally important fish, as well as raising shellfish for restoration projects.

"On behalf of the students and faculty from the Marine and Ecological Sciences, I extend sincere thanks for the generosity of Quinn Ruelle and his organization."

Red Tide Relief is supported through donations of various overstocked consumer electronics that are sold below cost. The proceeds are then donated to partners such as FGCU that further the goal of improving the Southwest Florida aquaculture. Visit [www.redtiderelief.org](http://www.redtiderelief.org) for more information about how to donate and to visit the online thrift store.

"(FGCU has) proven they are the best partner to make an impact on the Southwest Florida aquatic environment."

— Quinn Ruelle

EDUCATION

## Electric company demonstrates belief in giving back to its supporters

**T**ier Electric is not only helping to construct the buildings now rising on the Florida Gulf Coast University campus, it's also helping University students build their futures.

The company has donated \$100,000 to create the Tier Electric Endowment Scholarship Fund, which will award scholarships to Lee and Collier

county students with financial need. The state will provide a \$50,000 match, making the gift worth \$150,000.

"We like to do business with people who do business with us," says John Cammarata, who is one of the company's owners, along with Dennis Lawton (formerly of Collier Electric), Rick Newton and Dale Quick.

When the Naples firm needed new Jeeps, for example, the owners opted to travel to Palm Auto in Punta Gorda, despite the distance, because the dealership had previously hired Tier.

"It's the same with the University," Cammarata says. "The University has always been there as part of the Tier Electric team. We thought what's better than putting our resources back into those who helped our company grow?"

Tier, which has been in business since 2003 and employs 78 people, has been involved in the construction of several University buildings, including campus laundry facilities and the central energy plant. The company is now at work on a five-story housing structure expected to open in fall 2008.

"FGCU is honored that Tier Electric has created an endowed scholarship fund at FGCU," says Darlene McCloud, FGCU director of major gifts. "It is especially meaningful that a business that has been working to help build our campus facilities has chosen to make this investment in our students. This scholarship will benefit students for generations to come."

Cammarata says that there will be at least three scholarships of \$2,500 awarded each year at FGCU "so we'll at least touch three lives every year."

Tier Electric owners, from left: Rick Newton, Dennis Lawton and John Cammarata at FGCU construction site. Not pictured: Dale Quick



## Founder's Cup raises more than \$80,000 for FGCU Foundation

**M**ore than \$80,000 was raised by a full field and sponsorships during the 16th annual Florida Gulf Coast University Founder's Cup Golf Tournament at Mediterra, Bonita Bay Group's master-planned community in North Naples.

The total boosts the amount generated by past tournaments to more than \$750,000 – three quarters of \$1 million – for the Florida Gulf Coast University Foundation.

Low gross winner on Mediterra's North Course was the foursome from Johnson Controls. The Lutgert Companies/Premier Properties of Southwest Florida team was the low gross winner on Mediterra's South Course.

"We are fortunate and thankful to have such a supportive business community," said Richard Pegnetter, former FGCU interim president. "The money raised from the full field on the two Mediterra courses provides funding to enhance vital programs in the sciences, education and athletics."

Along with Bonita Bay Group, other major sponsors of the 2007 tournament included Blue results, hole-in-one; AJAX Construction Company, silent auction; Chico's, luncheon; Five County Insurance, shirts; Florida Community Bank, photographs; Johnson Controls, pins; Kraft Construction, program; Service Painting, golf carts; Wayne Wiles Floor Coverings, beverage cart; University Housing Service, driving range; and Graef, Anhalt, Schloemer & Associates, hats.

"Bonita Bay Group has supported this tournament since 1991, before the University had a name," said Brian Lucas, vice president of Business Development/CIO of special projects for Bonita Bay Group. "So it gives me great pleasure to announce that the 17th Annual Founder's Cup will return to Mediterra on Oct. 13, 2008."

For more information regarding the 2008 FGCU Founder's Cup or to request an invitation, call (239) 590-1074, e-mail jedens@fgcu.edu, or visit [www.fgcu.edu/foundation](http://www.fgcu.edu/foundation).



Johnson Controls' team was the low gross winning team at Mediterra's North Course during the 16th annual FGCU Founder's Cup golf tournament held in October. From left: Bryan Mehaffey, Rich Yovanovich, Shawn Simpson and Matt Harris.



Richard Pegnetter, former FGCU interim president, congratulates The Lutgert Companies/Premier Properties of Southwest Florida's low gross winning team at Mediterra's South Course. From left: Pegnetter, Bruce Howard, Mike Hoyt, Scott Wilbrett and John Counsell.



The women's low gross winners were from the Fort Myers marketing firm Gravina Smith and Matte. From left: Laurel Smith, Sharon Arnold, former interim president Pegnetter, Amy Gravina and Tina Matte.

## Donations create income streams for older donors

Dating back to 1843, charitable gift annuities have provided valuable gifts to charities, while providing guaranteed income streams for older donors. Sometimes called “win-win” gifts, charitable gift annuities

are simple contracts between the Florida Gulf Coast University Foundation and donors, usually outperforming money market funds.

They are part gift and part annuity, providing each donor with a fixed interest rate, guaranteed income for life and several tax benefits, including a handsome charitable deduction. Interest rates for charitable gift annuities are higher for older donors.

Naples resident Mary Hull supports FGCU through a charitable gift annuity.



Moreover, a charitable gift annuity is an effective way for donors to support their favorite programs at FGCU. The remaining gift portion of each charitable gift annuity can be assigned to a donor’s favorite academic program, scholarship, research initiative, or sport, for example. Over the years, several donors have written multiple charitable gift annuity contracts, cashing out low-interest-earning money market certificates as they mature in favor of charitable gift annuities featuring higher interest rates and charitable causes.

For more information, visit [www.fgcu.edu/foundation/plannedgiving](http://www.fgcu.edu/foundation/plannedgiving) or call Pete Lefferts at (239) 590-1077.

### Money Market Fund

Value: \$100,000  
Interest rate: 3 percent  
Annual return: \$3,000

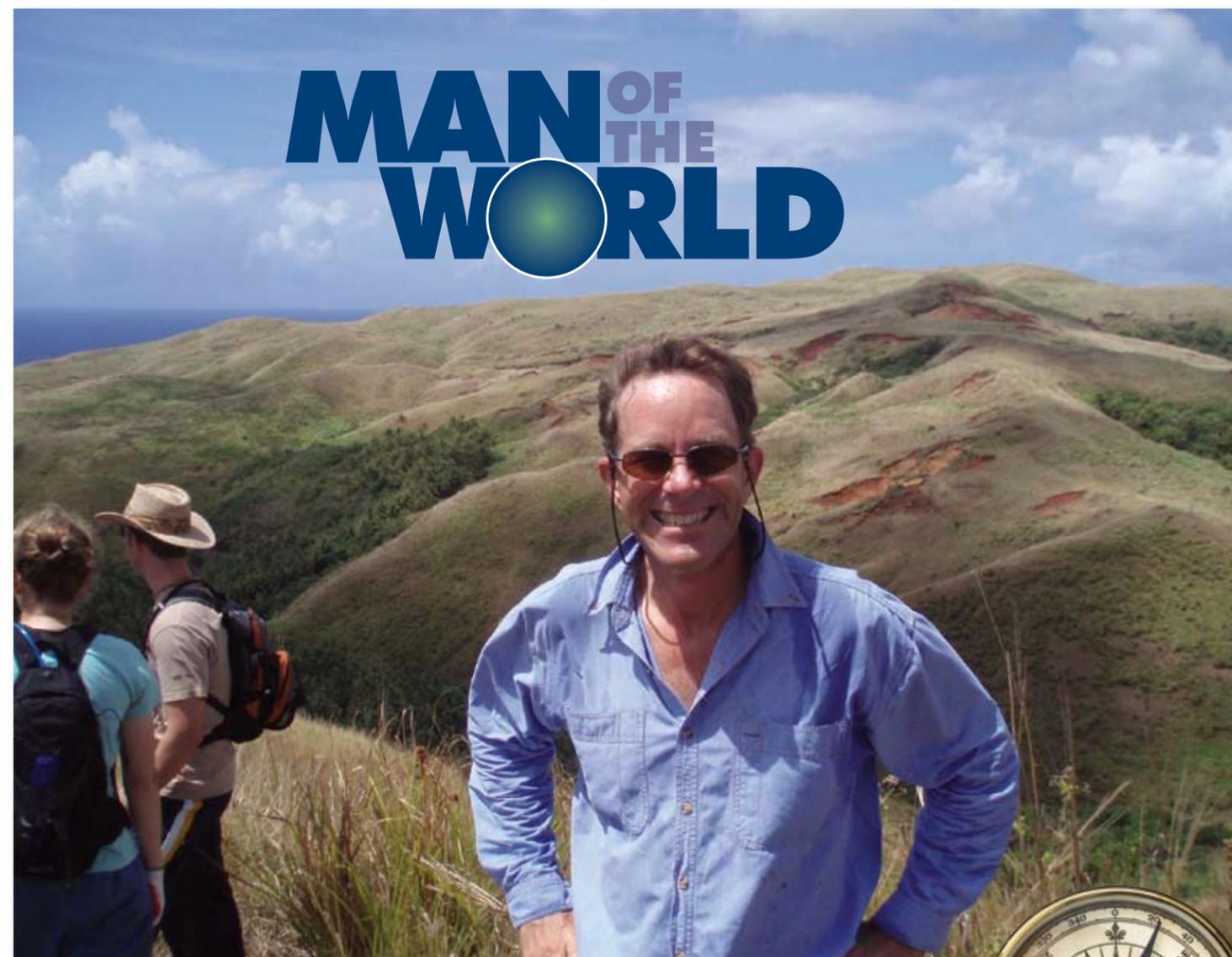
**3%**

### Charitable gift annuity (age 65)

Amount: \$100,000  
Effective annual rate: 7.78 percent  
Annual income: \$6,000  
Charitable deduction \$38,539

**7.78%**

## Alumni



## Globe-trotting alumnus finds success, adventure in far-flung locales

BY CATHERINE KING

When John S. Biedenham finished high school, he had grand plans. He and his friends would play the board game Risk late into the night and make

predictions about their futures.

“I remember saying I was going to be an astronaut or a world-traveling oil geologist, and then retire to a life of ease in Australia or the South Pacific,” he says.

At 49, he’s come close.

Biedenham grew up traveling the world. He has continued that lifestyle professionally. The master’s degree in Public Administration he earned from Florida Gulf Coast University in 1999 helped him do it.

He has worked in the United States, Saudi Arabia, Australia and Guam. He recently came back to the United States to become the solid waste manager for Coconino County in Arizona.

“Getting a master’s from FGCU widened my academic horizons beyond my career in waste management, and gave me the ability and opportunity to widen my professional horizons as well,” he says.



Biedenham in Sasalaguan, Guam

The President’s Celebration 2008 - A Decade of Distinction is the signature fund-raising gala for FGCU. This year the event will be a celebration and reflection of the success and growth the University has accomplished over its 10-year history. An evening of dining and entertainment, the Celebration will continue its tradition of being like no other.

## Save the Date

Saturday, February 9, 2008  
The Ritz-Carlton, Naples  
6:30 pm

Reception, Silent Auction, Entertainment, Dinner and Dancing  
Proceeds support continued quality and growth at Florida Gulf Coast University  
Contact the Advancement event staff at 239.590.1074 or visit [www.fgcu.edu/Foundation/events](http://www.fgcu.edu/Foundation/events) for more information regarding The President’s Celebration. Secure your 2008 sponsorship today!

Two years after graduating from FGCU, the former Collier County solid waste director and environmental compliance coordinator and his wife, Diane, took a three-week vacation Down Under. They fell in love with Australia.

"It looked like paradise," he says. "Everywhere we went, our

new mates dropped subtle hints like, 'We'd love to have you working for us.'"

Biedenharn and his wife couldn't shake the call of Australia; within two years they had moved to Queensland, where Biedenharn took a job as the coordinator and then manager of the City of Thuringowa's new Waste Business Unit. He managed two landfills, three transfer stations and the council's waste and recycling collection programs.

Along with the

job came the Australian standard five weeks of vacation per year and three-day weekends every other week. For two years, the couple traveled throughout Australia, often on diving trips to places such as Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands.

The couple felt an allegiance to the United States, but they also loved Australia so much that they both took Australian citizenship in 2005, and are now proud citizens of both countries.

"How good is that?" he says. "My country extends from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean – and I've got great diving from one side of the planet to the other."

While in Australia, Biedenharn wanted to broaden his horizons further, so he began a master's degree in Natural Resources Management at James Cook University (JCU) in Townsville, focusing on sustainable development in the Southwest Pacific. His paper, "Evolution of Aid Strategies in Melanesia," was published in the Proceedings of the August 2006 Sustainable Economic

Growth in Regional Australia Conference in Tasmania. He earned a Graduate Certificate in Science then put his studies on hold in 2006, to take a waste management job with the U.S. Territorial Government of Guam

in Micronesia. He was the territory's special projects coordinator and first professional landfill manager.

"Guam is a beautiful island," he says. "It's prettier than Hawaii in some ways."

It also has some breathtaking dive sites, he says.

"They call it 'America's Pacific Paradise,' and they're not kidding," he says of the Mariana Islands, which are south of Saipan and not far from Palau and Bikini Atoll.

As beautiful as the region was, however, Biedenharn readily accepted his current job last fall for a variety of reasons.

"My position with the government of Guam – which may have been about to be terminated for lack of funds – was becoming increasingly frustrating due to a continual shortage of funds, materials and equipment," he says.

While he had a lot of responsibility, he found he had no actual authority to accomplish many of the tasks with which he was charged.

His new job, based in Flagstaff, gives him "a significant increase in actual authority, greater professional opportunity, the chance to make a greater difference in the environmental welfare of the place I live, and a nice increase in pay and benefits," he says.

In Coconino County, there are more people, a government that runs smoothly and a larger tax base than in Guam, combining to allow him to do



Biedenharn at the Grand Canyon

the job for which he was hired.

With all those benefits comes a bit of discomfort – a chillier climate, which includes snow, and a vastly different environment.

"Getting off the plane from Guam felt like stepping out onto the surface of Mars, but with trees!" he says. "Of course, there's some spectacular scenery here, too."

And there's another plus, one he believes many Americans take for granted.

"It's a pleasure to be back in a working economy. I'm not sure the folks here appreciate how good they have it. Maybe I have a different view because I've been 'over the fence' and know that the grass is not always greener over there. Mind you, I wouldn't have traded the opportunity to see it for myself for anything. And yes, I miss Australia very much."

Biedenharn came by his itch to travel honestly. His parents worked for the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco), and so he traveled the world often as a child. He attended high school in Naples and then studied geo-engi-

neering at the Colorado School of Mines. The cold winters drove him back to Florida, where he earned an associate's degree, and then a Bachelor of Science in Geology.

Later, as an oil exploration geologist, he worked in New Mexico, Texas and then in Saudi Arabia until the world oil glut of 1984 brought his and many of his colleagues' careers to an early end – but he didn't quit. He kept taking courses and soon ended up working in waste management, becoming a nationally certified professional manager by 1998.

"I'm an Australian-American who's been an exploration geologist in Arabia and New Mexico, a science teacher and private investigator in Florida, coordinator and director of Collier County Solid Waste, manager of Thuringowa's Waste Business Unit in Queensland, and a special projects coordinator and landfill manager for a U.S. territorial government ... (while also being) a scuba-bum in the South Pacific in my spare time," he says.

Moving to the American Southwest was his next goal and

he's realized that ambition. He'd like to stay in one place long enough to teach college courses in government occasionally, while still taking diving holidays three to four times a year.

"I might still retire to Australia," he says. "It's a beautiful place, and I've missed it very much."

Biedenharn's time at FGCU plays an important part of his history. "FGCU only had a few buildings on its campus when I first started classes back in the old days of 1999," he says. "The classes were really interesting and it was a real pleasure to be able to relate studies in government to my interests in waste management and to be sharing classes with so many government professionals. We had a lot to talk about."

The hours he once whiled away playing Risk are now taken up with reef diving in the South Pacific and games of "Civilization IV" on his computer when it rains.

To current and future FGCU students he says: "You really can achieve whatever you put your mind to, and are willing to work for. I made it to the South Pacific, didn't I?"

– Catherine King is a freelance writer who lives in Fort Myers.

**"It's a pleasure to be back in a working economy. I'm not sure the folks here appreciate how good they have it."**

– John Biedenharn

Facts of life

- **Who:** John Biedenharn
- **Age:** 49
- **Family:** Brother in Fort Myers; former wife in Queensland, Australia
- **Last books read:** "The Sky People," by S.M. Stirling and "A Salty Piece of Land," by Jimmy Buffett
- **Favorite movies:** "Casablanca," "Donovan's Reef," "2010," "Love Always" and "Bride and Prejudice"
- **Role models:** "None I'm consciously following, but I've always liked Teddy Roosevelt, Robert A. Heinlein and Carl Sagan."



Biedenharn at Rocky Bay on Magnetic Island, on the Coral Sea offshore of Townsville, Queensland

## FGCU alumni now have online community

We used to rely on printed yearbooks to capture and recall our school days through photos and scribbled messages from friends. But in this age of cyber-sophistication, it's possible to create a living, ever-changing montage of memories that can be shared with friends and classmates near and far. In short, the online community is the new yearbook.



In October, the FGCU Alumni Association launched Eagle Entourage, a secure online community where alumni can post photos, find old friends, send messages and network. It's a natural fit with the University's focus on online learning and communication.

This new online network service delivers features demanded by young alumni and valued by Eagles well into their careers. Eagle Entourage's network delivers features similar to Facebook and LinkedIn. The difference is that Eagle Entourage is pre-programmed with alumni names, graduation years and degrees. The information cannot be changed by the user so that those who register cannot pretend to be someone else.

To register, alumni must provide their first and last names, birth month, date and year to unlock the new, FGCU alumni-exclusive

service. A high-security Web site protects private information while giving users control to set preferences that tailor the online experience to suit their needs and interests.

Accessible from the [www.fgcu.edu/alumni](http://www.fgcu.edu/alumni) Web site or directly at <http://fgcu.affinity-circles.com>, alumni can click on the profiles of friends, colleagues, classmates or business contacts and invite them to join their personal network, making it easy to enjoy social time or enhance business connections.

With more than 7,000 alumni, the FGCU community has grown, along with the diversity and interests of its alumni. Eagle Entourage allows participants to join the various special interest groups that have been established or to start their own and make them open to the public or by invitation only. Graduates can establish groups based on geographic location or specific careers and can collaborate and share information in a safe online environment by using the Eagle Entourage services.

So put away the dusty yearbook and see how your classmates have evolved. Register for Eagle Entourage today.

### EAGLE ENTOURAGE FEATURES

- Free FGCU Alumni-only exclusive service
- Easy to get started and use
- Built-in job search and posting service
- Photo galleries add fun to sharing pictures
- View friends as a list or map links to them
- Powerful search tools to locate friends
- User-controlled messaging and alert preferences
- Can be used as professional networking asset or social planner

## Multi-tasking mom wins Alumni Association scholarship

BY ALLISON ALLIE

At age 24, Jessica Davie has a lot on her plate. She's a wife, mother of a toddler and a full-time Florida Gulf Coast University graduate student with a 3.96 GPA.

The Fort Myers native is also the recipient of the 2007-08 FGCU Alumni Association Scholarship.

Davie grew up in Fort Myers, graduated as salutatorian from Estero High School and headed off to the University of Florida in 2001. But she wound up following her heart and returned to her hometown to marry her high-school sweetheart, Adam, transferring to FGCU in the process.

She graduated summa cum laude in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing then worked as a registered nurse in HealthPark Medical Center's medical intensive care unit.

In May 2006, the Davies celebrated the birth of their daughter, Kiley Grace.

Now Davie is pursuing a master's degree in Nursing and expects to graduate in April 2009. She plans to become a nurse anesthetist and return to work for the Lee Memorial Health System.

"I was inspired to become an anesthetist by my mother-in-law who works at Naples Community Hospital," says Davie, who also finds time to serve as president of the Student Organization of Nurse Anesthetists.

The program requires students to attend full-time for 28 months, which meant she had to give up her job in order to pursue her dream.

"My family has made the transition from a two-income household with no tuition expenses, to a single-income family with a greatly increased expense of tuition and books," she said, noting

that the Alumni Association scholarship will help ease that financial burden.

In return, she plans to use her training to give back to her community, which sorely needs more nurses. Some day she hopes to do some missionary work and return to FGCU to train future nurse anesthetists.

Her willingness to make financial sacrifices to pursue training she'll use in her hometown impressed the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

"She obviously is a strong student with a high GPA and made the sacrifice of giving up an income to achieve this education," says Cynthia Bennett, '99, FGCU Alumni Association president.

Davie will receive \$700 in scholarship money to use for books and tuition.

The scholarship is funded by contributions from FGCU alumni and other donors to the Alumni Association. The current balance of the FGCU Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship stands at more than \$27,000.

"I would like to thank the alumni and friends of FGCU who have contributed to the FGCU Alumni Association Scholarship Fund ... for your thoughtfulness and generosity in helping not only a fellow graduate achieve her dreams, but also the lives of many people through the services that I will be able to provide in the Fort Myers community," says Davie.

To contribute to the FGCU Alumni Association Scholarship Fund, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at (239) 590-1016.

— Allison Allie is the FGCU director of Alumni Relations.



Cynthia Bennett, '99, and Jessica Davie, '05

"(Davie) made the sacrifice of giving up an income to achieve this education."

— Cynthia Bennett

## Class Notes

### Weddings, engagements and births



Jeff Faramo and Rachel DiSalvo

**Rachel DiSalvo**, '05 (Communications), and **Jeff Faramo**, '04 (Marketing), announced their engagement in October 2007. Both were student leaders at FGCU and plan to continue to stay connected as alumni. The couple live in Arlington, VA.



CJ Piszczko and Ashley Elliott

**Ashley Elliott**, '05 (Communications), and **CJ Piszczko**, '05 (Theatre), are engaged to be married. Ashley is employed at International Game Technology as a system operations trainer. She travels around the world training casino marketing departments on marketing software and patron tracking software. CJ is a technical recruiter for TekSystems. The couple reside in Las Vegas.



Caitlin Hustrulid and Jan-Erik Hustrulid

**Caitlin Hustrulid**, '04 (Communications) and **Jan-Erik Hustrulid**, '03 (Computer Information Systems) will celebrate their first wedding anniversary on Dec. 27. The couple were married at La Playa Beach & Golf Resort in Naples. They live in Bonita Springs.

**Michael McCabe**, '00 (English), and Elizabeth Berens were married Nov. 2 at Selby Gardens in Sarasota. Michael is a practicing employment law attorney at Rissman, Barrett, Hurt, Donahue & McClain, P.A. in Orlando.



Joshua Golden and Amber Pharis

**Amber Pharis**, '07 (Nursing) and Joshua Golden have announced their engagement. The wedding will be held Jan. 19 in downtown Fort Myers. Amber is a registered nurse at Health-Park Medical Center in the Progressive Care Unit. She plans to pursue her master's degree in Nursing at FGCU.



Luke Jamison Willis

**Amy Willis**, '05 (Elementary Education), and **Chad Willis**, '05 (History), announced the birth of their son Luke Jamison Willis on July 10. He weighed 9 pounds and was 21 inches long. The Willises live in Naples.

### Newsmakers

'00 **Susan Jukins Hudson** (Nursing) is a mother of five. She works in the Infection Control Department at Naples Community Hospital. She is a licensed health care risk manager with the state of Florida and also works part-time as a legal consultant.

'02 **Deborah Elias** (Master's, Public Administration) is a hair dresser at Felix Andrew Salon in Naples. She enjoys oil painting and recently traveled to Portugal for a painting holiday.

**Rachel Kremski** (English) has joined a promotional product company, Boundless Network in Chicago. The company offers creative services, high quality products and customer service.

'03 **Roberto Lee** (Finance) is the owner of Mr. Clean Carpet & Tile. He lives in Cape Coral.

**Amber Rish** (Sports Management) is the community investment coordinator for the Memphis Grizzlies.

'04 **Wende Hoag** (Master's, Health Science) is the owner of Willow Corporation, a long-term, in-home care and companionship service for seniors in New Port Richey, FL. The company's services include housekeeping, home maintenance, errands and transportation. Hoag also provides case management.

'05 **Tracy Colleran** (Marketing) is the owner of Straighten Up, Inc. in Naples. The company offers professional organizing services for homes and home offices in Southwest Florida and is a part of the National Association of

Professional Organizers. Straighten Up specializes in paper waste management, creating efficient filing, bill-paying and bookkeeping systems for small business owners.

**Jo Crandall** (Nursing) is the director of Emergency Services at Eureka Springs Hospital in Eureka Springs, AR.



Jonathan and Victoria Ellison

**Victoria Ellison** (Accounting) is pursuing a Master's of Science degree in Accounting and will graduate from FGCU in December. She has recently been promoted to senior accountant at Data2Logistics, a freight bill processing company. Victoria and her husband, Jonathan, will celebrate their one-year anniversary Jan. 28.

**James Lewis** (Master's, Business Administration) is the inside sales manager for Fischer International Identity, a computer software company. He lives in Bonita Springs.

**Amber Scanlon** (Marketing) has been promoted to vice president and sales development manager for Fifth Third Bank (South Florida) Retail Division. Amber is also pursuing a Master's of Business degree in



Amber Scanlon

Administration with a concentration in Finance and will graduate from FGCU in December. She serves on the Board of Directors for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Southwest Florida, and is on the Development Committee for the Naples Zoo and the Budget Review Committee for United Way of Collier County.

**Krista Tesseyman** (Communications) is an admissions representative for Hesser College in Concord, NH. Hesser College is part of a network of more than 70 schools nationwide and is connected with Kaplan Higher Education Corporation.

**Jennifer Valliere** (Special Education) is a special educator for the School Board of Broward County, FL. She lives in Hollywood, FL.

'06 **Joshua Johnson** (Marketing) has accepted the position of vice president of marketing at Florida Style Windows & Doors Inc. in Fort Myers.



Joshua Johnson, left

**Terry McKyton** (Master's, Business Administration) has been promoted to director of e-marketing for Bonita Bay Group. McKyton will direct the creative and technical development of the company's Web sites and Web marketing programs.

**Lee Waller** (Environmental Studies) is enjoying working as a senior program specialist for Lee County's environmentally sensitive land acquisition program Conservation 20/20. He lives in Alva.



Lee Waller

'07 **Jaclyn Burks** (Athletic Training) passed the National Athletic Training Board of Certification Exam in September. She is now a certified athletic trainer and is enrolled in graduate school at FGCU for Physical Therapy.

**Michelle Giordano** (Resort & Hospitality Management) is the assistant director of Alumni Relations at Drew University. She lives in Verona, NJ.

**Danielle Paull** (Elementary Education) is the recipient of the 2007 Elizabeth Breathwaite Student Leadership Award. This honor is presented to students who have shown evidence of leadership and participation in professional, social, school and civic activities; interest in teaching or child-related occupations; and participation in Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) activities. Paull serves as president of the FGCU ACEI student branch.

## Tell us where you are and what you're doing.

Alumni are encouraged to share their news about new jobs, promotions, relocations, weddings, births and other milestones. Send items to the Office of Alumni Relations, [alumnirelations@fgcu.edu](mailto:alumnirelations@fgcu.edu) or mail entries to Office of Alumni Relations, Florida Gulf Coast University, 10501 FGCU Blvd. South, Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565.

## Director's Message

### Your Alumni Association: Your new best friend



Dear Fall 2007 Graduate,  
Congratulations on the successful completion of your Florida Gulf Coast University degree requirements and welcome to our worldwide family of more than 7,000 FGCU alumni.  
Are you looking for opportunities with jobs, internships or graduate school? The FGCU Alumni Association can help. The Alumni Association is your avenue toward career and social networking, valuable discounts and privileges and a way to stay in touch with friends and the FGCU campus. To celebrate your graduation and the start of your career, the FGCU Alumni Association is presenting you with a free annual membership through Dec. 31, 2008.  
To take advantage of your free membership, visit [www.fgcu.edu/alumni/contact-us.asp](http://www.fgcu.edu/alumni/contact-us.asp) to update your FGCU alumni record and request an official FGCU Alumni Association membership card. As a member, you will be eligible for a host of programs and services that touch nearly every aspect of your life including: discounts on testing services for the GMAT and GRE, seminars through the Small Business Development Center, clothing and gift items at the University Store, programs through the Renaissance Academy, car rentals and tickets to FGCU athletic events and more. Visit the Membership Benefits page at [www.fgcu.edu/alumni](http://www.fgcu.edu/alumni) for a complete listing.

Now that's something to get excited about!  
Alumni are vital parts of the FGCU tradition. I hope you will make it your tradition to show your Eagle pride and loyalty by renewing your Alumni Association membership at the end of December 2008 or joining as a Lifetime Member. You'll stay connected to the University and your classmates and support FGCU students for the years to come.

If you have any questions, call me at (239) 590-1016, or e-mail [alumnirelations@fgcu.edu](mailto:alumnirelations@fgcu.edu).

Stay connected to FGCU and enjoy your free membership!

From one Eagle to another,

Allison N. Allie, MBA, '06  
Director of Alumni Relations

## Alumni Association Happenings

**Jan. 11:** Fill the Stands - FGCU Men's basketball game vs. Stetson (televised) 7:30 p.m., Alico Arena FGCU campus, Fort Myers  
Gather friends and family to fill the stands of Alico Arena and cheer on the Eagles. Wave to the television cameras from your seat and enjoy a free hotdog, popcorn and drink, compliments of the FGCU Alumni Association. Free concessions coupon for all alumni.

**Jan. 31:** Eagle Alumni Networking Night 6:30 p.m., 55 Degrees Cool Wine and Cheese Gulf Coast Town Center (next to Borders), Fort Myers  
FGCU alumni and friends are invited to join President Wilson G. Bradshaw for a private night of networking and wine sampling. Free for Alumni Association members, \$15 for non-members. Reservations required.

**May 2-4:** All Alumni Weekend FGCU campus, Fort Myers  
An inaugural all-years reunion takes place May 2-4, 2008. Graduates from all classes are invited to return to campus and celebrate with an alumni dinner, campus tours and family activities. The weekend will also pay special tribute to the Classes of '98 and '03 in honor of their 10th- and fifth-year celebrations, respectively.

For up-to-date Alumni events listings, visit [www.fgcu.edu/alumni](http://www.fgcu.edu/alumni). For event details contact: Allison Allie, Director of Alumni Relations, at [aallie@fgcu.edu](mailto:aallie@fgcu.edu) or (239) 590-1016.



## Alumnus' art work featured in Chicago Red Bull exhibit

Jeffrey Scott Lewis, '04 (Liberal Studies - Art), was among the artists whose work was selected for this year's Red Bull Art of Can competition at Chicago's River East Art Center. In all, 39 pieces went on display.

As the name implies, all works had to include at least one Red Bull can. Lewis far exceeded that requirement: He used 174 cans of the popular energy drink to create a piece he called "Body & Mind."

The piece is composed of two eight-foot-tall steel rods threaded with the cans, some crushed, some flattened, some intact. His most important tool in creating the work: his foot, with which he stomped the cans as needed. The only other implement he used was a drill press.

He describes the work by saying, "One rod represents Body, the other Mind, with a single can connecting the two structures."



### Cheer 'til You're Blue in the Face!

FGCU alumnus Gary Page, '99 (Master's, Business Administration) and his wife Jane received VIP treatment during the Alumni Association's event, Cheer 'til You're Blue in the Face. Alumni and friends gathered in Alico Arena's VIP suite to cheer on the women's volleyball team in its game against USC and the opening night of Eagle basketball's Tip-Off Madness.



### Alumni celebrate 10 years

President Wilson G. Bradshaw visited with alumni at FGCU's Alumni Association tent at Community Day. The event was a campus-wide open house celebrating the University's first decade. Pictured in back: Peter Lechler, '07 (Communications). Front from left: Tracy Fisher, '99 (Elementary Education), '01 (Educational Leadership); Allison Allie, '06 (Master's, Business Administration); President Bradshaw; Linda Guerrine, '06 (Management); and Bryan Fuller, '05 (Criminal Justice).



### Eaglepalooza draws alumni

FGCU alumnus Nathan Cooner, '05 (Management) and Joey Deer socialized at FGCU's Alumni Association tent during Campus Recreation's Eaglepalooza. The annual event featured recreational activities, an assortment of food and a concert starring Yung Joc.

A Gift to be Proud of...FGCU Brick Pavers  
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Entries for Professional Briefs are compiled from the PERFORMANCE E-newsletter of Professional Accomplishments. Employees of FGCU are encouraged to submit their outstanding accomplishments at <http://itech.fgcu.edu/newsletter/form1.asp>.

Vol. 6, Issues 1 and 2, September and October, 2007

## Awards or Recognitions

**Paul Asfour**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, JD, MBA, Participant in two Florida New Motor Vehicle Arbitration Board Hearings, Florida Attorney General, Sept. 14 and Oct. 18; interviewed on Fox 4 TV about proposed City of Cape Coral Charter amendments, Nov. 4.

**Pamella Seay**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, JD, LL.M., elected vice chair, Charlotte County Airport Authority, Sept. 20.

**Patricia Washington**, CSWE Annual Program Meeting, College of Professional Studies, Social Work, Ph.D., Mentor Recognition, Council on the Role and Status of Women in Social Work Education, Oct. 23.

## Book Publication

**Diane Kratt, Ethan Martinez**, College of Education, Undergraduate Studies, Master's in Child Development, "Connecting the Pieces: The Discovery of Early-Onset Bipolar Disorder," Trafford Publishing, pp. 100.

**Megan C. McShane, Victoria Charles; Joseph Manca; Donald Wigal**, College of Arts & Sciences, Visual and Performing Arts, Ph.D., "1000 mesterverk: malerkunsten fra 1200 til 2000," Messel Forlag, ISBN: 9788276310894, Oslo, Norway, pp. 543.

## Grant Awards

**Jo Stecher**, College of Health Professions, Nursing, MA, \$1,000, North American Transplant

Coordinator's Organization, "The Lived Experiences of the Spouses of Transplant Recipients," Aug. 1.

## Professional Presentations

**Mark Bradshaw Busbee**, College of Arts & Sciences, Humanities and Arts, Ph.D., "A Sleeping Spell in Beowulf?" 33rd meeting, Southeastern Medieval Association, Wofford College, Spartanburg, SC, Oct. 5.

**Lisa Crayton**, College of Education, Undergraduate Studies, "Scrolls, Sleuths, and Scribes: Vocabulary Expository Literacy Circles," Florida Reading Association 45th annual conference, Orlando, Sept. 6-9.

**Duane Dobbert**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, Ph.D., "School Bus Drivers: The First Line of Defense Against Sexual Predators," Oregon Association of Pupil Transportation, Oregon State Department of Education, Portland and Grants Pass, OR, Aug. 15-17; "Educators and School Bus Drivers: The First Line of Defense Against Child Predators," ninth annual Oklahoma State Superintendent's Safe and Healthy Schools Conference, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma City, OK, Oct. 29.

**Elizabeth Elliott**, College of Education, Undergraduate Studies, Ph.D., "Connecting Classroom Activities to Learning Outcomes," Early Childhood Association of Florida Annual Professional Development Day, Orlando, Sept. 26-30.

**Elizabeth Elliott, Elia Vazquez-Montilla**, College of Education, Undergraduate Studies, Ph.D., "Voluntary Prekindergarten Forum (VPK Forum)," 52nd annual Early Childhood Association of Florida, Orlando, Sept. 26-30.

**Nicola Foote**, College of Arts & Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Ph.D., "Indigenistas, Scientists and Afro-Centrics: Intellectuals, the State and the Racialisation of the Ecuadorian Nation 1900-1950," Latin American Studies

## Professor measures elusive asteroid



Michael Fauerbach, associate professor of Physics and Astronomy, has conducted research at FGCU's Egan Observatory that sheds light on a distant celestial body.

Assisted by junior Scott Marks and Thomas Bennett, '06 (Math), Fauerbach spent weeks observing an asteroid in order to find out

more about these rocky objects. Their findings were published in *The Minor Planet Bulletin*, Vol. 34, Number 3.

The star-like objects are irregularly shaped, resembling a giant peanut or potato, and rotate in space, reflecting varying amounts of sunlight.

"When you measure the amount of light they reflect toward you, you see small changes in the light and from this you can tell the rotational period of these asteroids," Fauerbach says.

Why is that important?

"Remember dinosaurs?" Fauerbach asks. "One reason we think they went extinct was that the Earth was hit by either a comet or asteroid. We need to understand more to see what threat they might pose."

While this particular asteroid isn't a threat, "if we understand these better, then we can understand the ones that may interact with Earth, too," he says.

He chose to study this particular one, called 503 Evelyn, because he "thought it might be a nice tribute to our benefactor, Mrs. Evelyn Egan. She has passed away, but I think she still would have liked that."

By the way, the Evelyn asteroid is 60 kilometers in diameter – that's a bit more than 37 miles.

Association Annual Conference, Montreal, Canada, Sept. 5-8.

**Scott Karakas**, College of Arts & Sciences, Humanities and Arts, Ph.D., "Lessons from the Ether: Using Technology to Facilitate Learning in a Large-Enrollment Online Introduction to the Visual and Performing Arts," Southeastern College Art Conference, Charleston, WV, Oct. 17-20.

**Barry Lipton**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, "Antemortem Dental Coding in NCIC 2000," NCIC Dental Coding

Workshop, FBI CJIS Division, Clarksburg, WV, Sept. 29-30; "Your Forensic Dental Consultant," FBI ERT Training, FBI, Tampa Region, Tampa, Oct. 19; "An In-Depth Review of Forensic Dentistry," Kornberg School of Dentistry, Continuing Education, Temple University School of Dentistry, Philadelphia, Oct. 24.

**Melih Madanoglu, Kyuho Lee**, College of Professional Studies, Resort and Hospitality Management, Ph.D., "Performance of Franchising and Non-Franchising Restaurant Firms: A Preliminary Study," International Council

on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) Conference, CHRIE, Dallas, TX, July 25-29.

**Melih Madanoglu, Ersem Karadag**, College of Professional Studies, Resort and Hospitality Management, Ph.D., "Determinants of CEO Pay Sensitivity in the Restaurant Industry," International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) Conference, CHRIE, Dallas, TX, July 25-29.

**Pamella Seay**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, JD, "Changes in the Ethics Rules: It's All the Same, Just Different," 10th Annual Land Use Law Conference, CLE International, Tampa, Sept. 17.

**Pamella Seay, Sergio Botinha, Aziz Salibha, John Adams Hodge**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, JD, "Presiding Judge," Coladri 2007, Conferência Latino-Americana de Direito e Relações Internacionais, UFMG Universidade Federale Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, Sept. 7.

**Pamella Seay, Roberta K. Flowers (Stetson University College of Law)**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, JD, "The Ethical Environment of International Law," Legal Issues in International Environment and Energy, The Florida Bar, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Sept. 3-4.

**Jo Stecher**, College of Health Professions, Nursing, MA, "The Argument for a Designated Spousal Transplant Coordinator," North American Transplant Coordinators Organization Annual Meeting, New York City, Aug. 12-15.

**Tunde Szecsi**, College of Education, Undergraduate Studies, "Play activities in our culturally and linguistically diverse world: A global perspective," 52nd Annual Early Childhood Association of Florida, Orlando, Sept. 27-29.

**Roberta Walsh**, College of Professional Studies, Public Affairs, Ph.D., "Managing Diversity in the Provision of Housing: The Interaction of Local Government with Social Networks," European Group of Public

Administration, National Institute of Public Administration, Madrid, Spain, Sept. 19-22.

**Janusz Zalewski**, Lutgert College of Business, Computer Information Systems and Decision Sciences, Ph.D., "A Model for Educating Real-Time Software Engineers On-Demand," International Multiconference on Computer Science and Information Technology, Polish Information Processing Society and IEEE Computer Society, Wisla, Poland, Oct. 15-17.

**Janusz Zalewski, Andrew Kornecki, Henry Pfister**, Lutgert College of Business, Computer Information Systems and Decision Sciences, Ph.D., "Bayesian Belief Networks for Safety Analysis and Their Enhancement with Rough Sets," Risk, Quality and Reliability Conference RQR'07, Technical University of Ostrava, Ostrava, Czech

Republic, Sept. 20-21.

## Publications

**Kevin Aho**, College of Arts & Sciences, Humanities and Arts, Ph.D., "Simmel on Acceleration, Boredom, and Extreme Aesthetics," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, Vol. 37 Issue 4, pp. 445-460.

**Peng Feng, Menaka Navaratna**, College of Arts & Sciences, Mathematics and Science, "Modeling Periodic Oscillations During Somitogenesis," *Mathematical Biosciences and Engineering*, October 2007, pp. 661-673.

**Steve Fraser**, Lutgert College of Business, Finance and Accounting, Ph.D., "Minor League Teams and Minor League Cities: Evidence from the ECHL," *Sport Marketing Quarterly*,

Vol. 16 Issue 3, pp. 147-160.

**Johnny McGaha, Nola Theiss**, College of Professional Studies, Justice Studies, Ph.D., "A Global Response to the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) and the Annual Trafficking in Person's Report (TIP) of 2006," *The Forum on Public Policy*, Spring Edition 2007, pp. Migration: 3rd Paper 1-26.

**Eric Otto**, College of Arts & Sciences, Humanities and Arts, Ph.D., "Approaches to Teaching Pohl and Kornbluth's *The Space Merchants*," *SFRA Review*, pp. 22-24.

**Carl Pacini, Brett Hood**, Lutgert College of Business, Finance and Accounting, Ph.D., J.D., "The Role of Qui Tam Actions Under the False Claims Act in Preventing and Detering Fraud Against Government," *University of Miami Business Law Review*, Vol. XV Issue 2.

## English professor explores Latina identity

The title of FGCU English professor Myra Mendible's new book may be enough to make it a best seller. "From Bananas to Buttocks: The Latina Body in Popular Film and Culture" (University of Texas Press), is a catchy title for a serious and rarely explored issue: How body shape and appearance mold cultural perceptions.

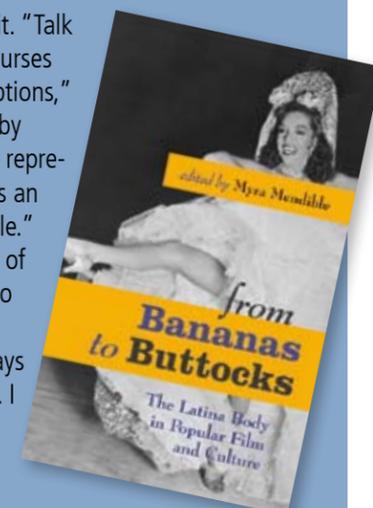
"Most titles are so difficult, I struggle with them," says Mendible. "Other times the titles just pop into my head and ... that's how it happened with this one."

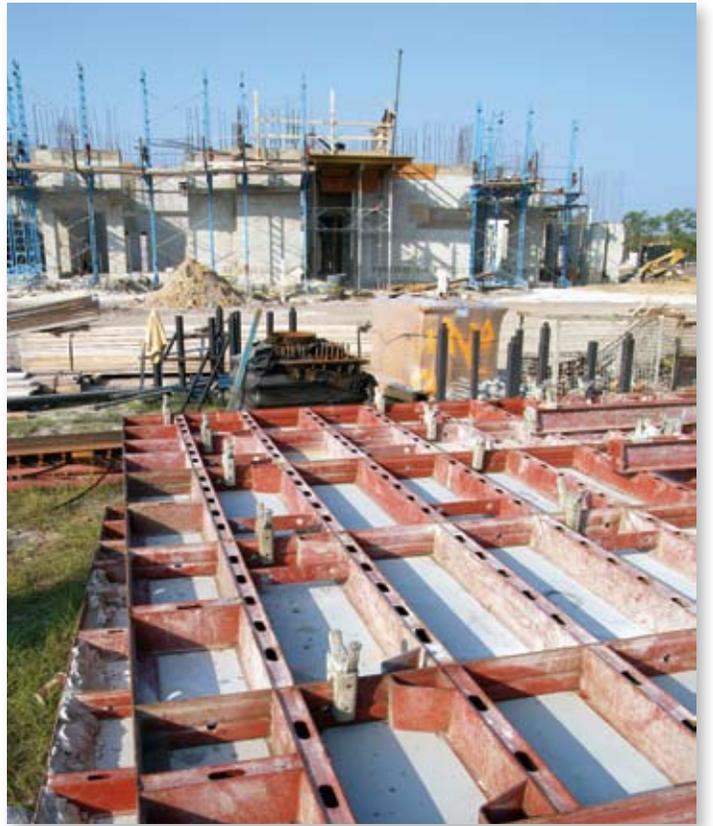
The title's bananas refer to the fruit-topped turban that was a trademark of the ebullient Brazilian singer and actress of the 1930s and '40s, Carmen Miranda. The buttocks, of course, refer to the much-discussed portion of contemporary singer and actress Jennifer Lopez' anatomy.

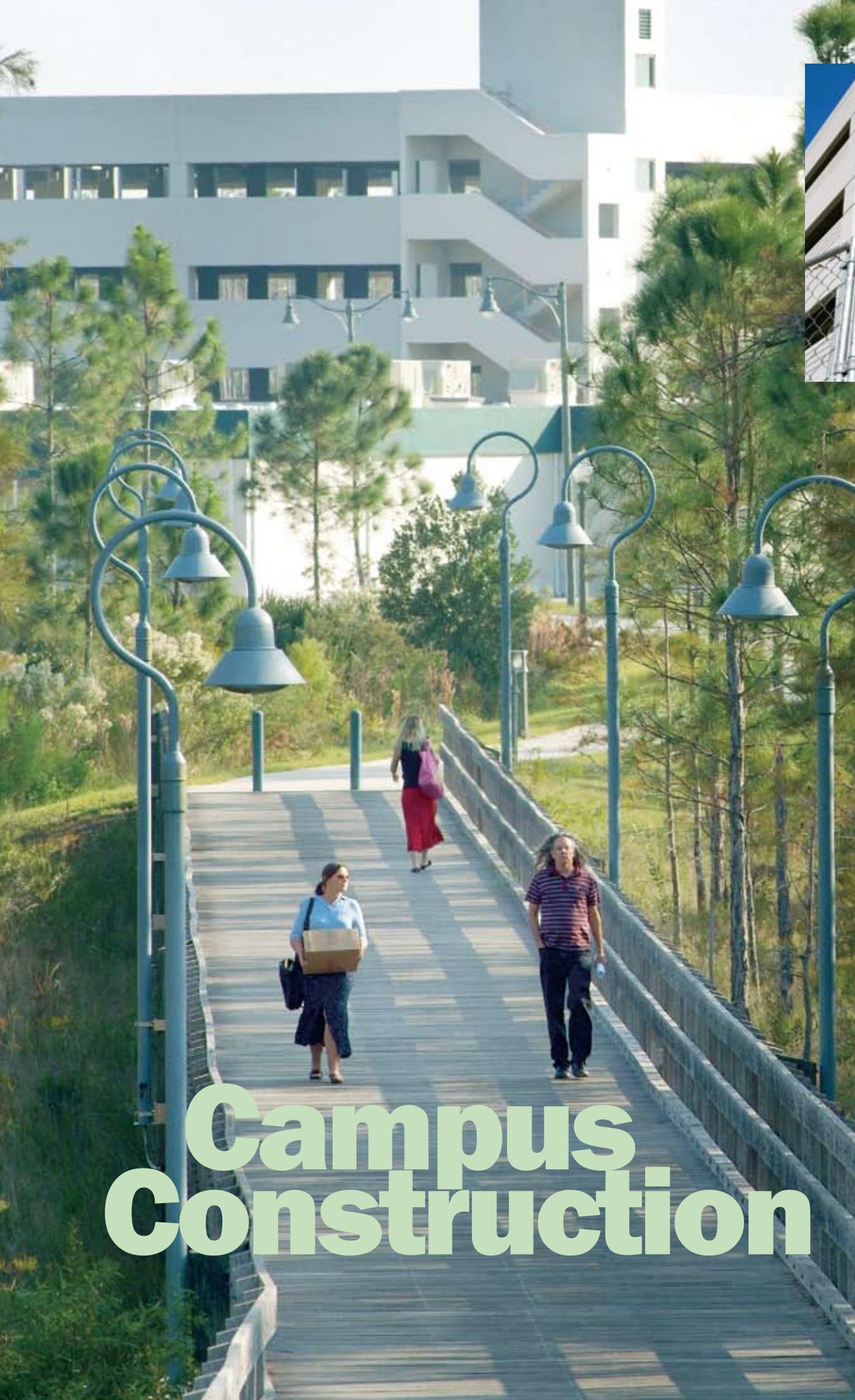
While the title is meant to amuse, there's also an irony to it. "Talk about both bananas and buttocks are related to broader discourses that are very powerful in shaping certain attitudes and assumptions," says Mendible. "No group of people can be identified entirely by certain traits. We need a more complex understanding of these representations so that maybe we won't just resort to stereotypes as an easy way of having some knowledge of the world and its people."

The book is a series of interdisciplinary essays by a variety of experts, including social scientists and film scholars and aims to make readers explore their beliefs.

"Any fixed notion we have about anyone's identity is always suspect," Mendible says. "We can question these a little more. I think that would be a good thing."







Above and left: Parking Garage 2 is expected to open sometime this spring.

Opposite page: Lutgert Hall, future home of the Lutgert College of Business, and Holmes Hall, which will house the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering, are under construction side by side. Lutgert Hall is expected to be ready for occupancy next fall, as is the Herbert J. Sugden Hall, which will house the Resort and Hospitality Management program. Holmes Hall is expected to be completed in time for the winter semester in January 2009. Not pictured, but also under construction, are a 408-bed residence hall, which should be ready in August, as well as the Athletic Building and Soccer Field, both of which should be completed this spring.

# Campus Construction



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