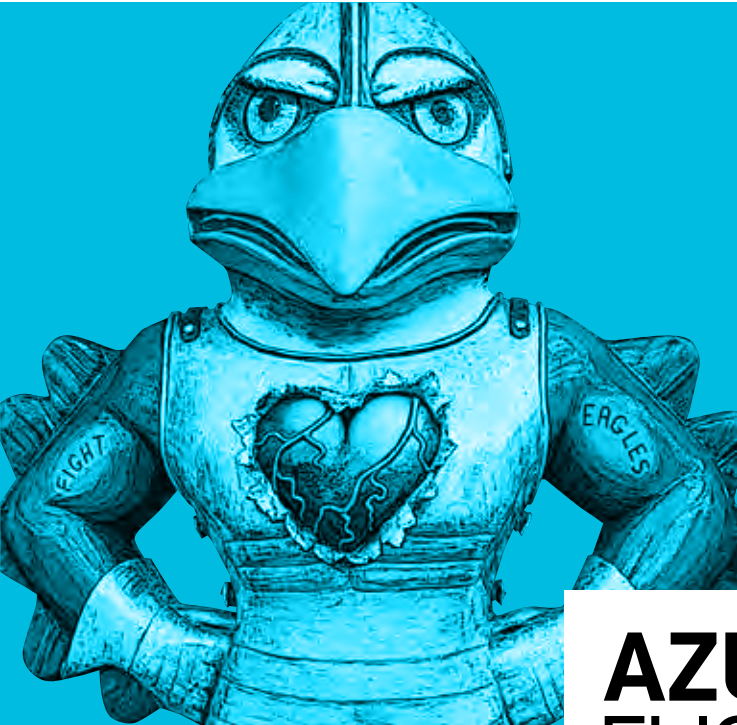


Graduates filling ranks of region's workforce ▶ New website features all things FGCU
Donors step up to support fundraising initiative ▶ Professor dispels ecological myths

▶ FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY

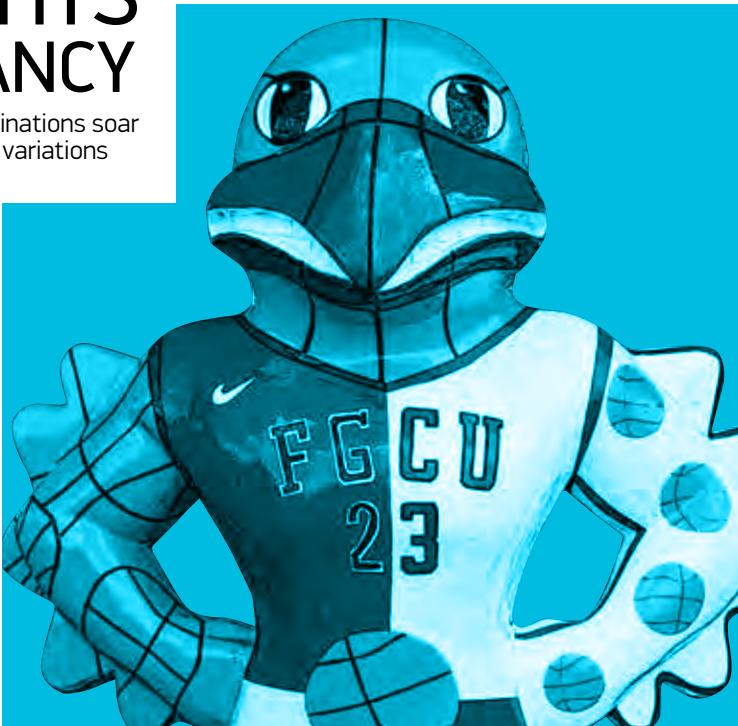
PINNACLE

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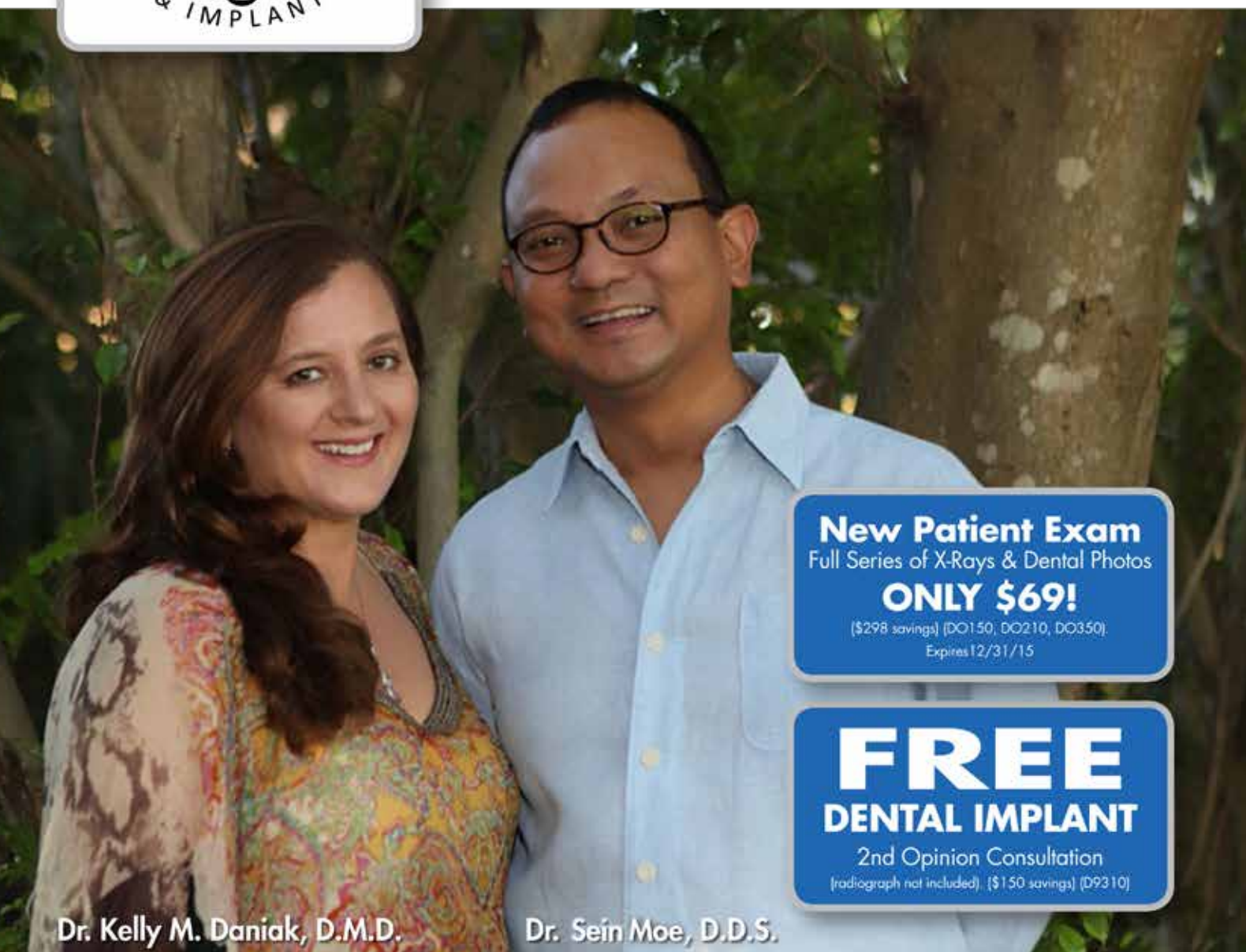
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by Geoffrey Stephens



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“FGCU’s Emergent Technologies Institute will serve as a showplace”

Facility’s cutting-edge research aims to inspire, educate students and region.

Q: We recently broke ground on our new Emergent Technologies Institute (ETI). Can you tell us about the new facility?

A: We are excited about FGCU’s ETI, which will serve as a showplace for innovative technologies in support of research related to renewable and alternative energy. As part of the Innovation Hub, the 25,000-square-foot ETI will house classrooms and research laboratories to facilitate learning and cutting-edge research. The site also will encompass a 2.5-acre energy park that will serve as a teaching and research laboratory, as well as an educational park for visitors. We broke ground last December, and it should be ready for occupancy in December of this year. Like the Small Business Development Center and the Vester Marine and Environmental Science Research Field Station, the ETI is another example of how we partner with the region to address community needs and promote research and economic development.

Q: You mentioned the Innovation Hub. Can you explain the connection between the ETI and the Innovation Hub?

A: The Innovation Hub — or I-Hub as we call it — is a planned research and development park located just a couple of miles from campus. John Backe and Rich Galvano proposed the development of the I-Hub, which will serve as home to more than 30 research, product development and



“**Like the Small Business Development Center and the Vester Marine and Environmental Science Research Field Station, the ETI is another example of how we partner with the region to address community needs and promote research and economic development.**

— *President
Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D.*

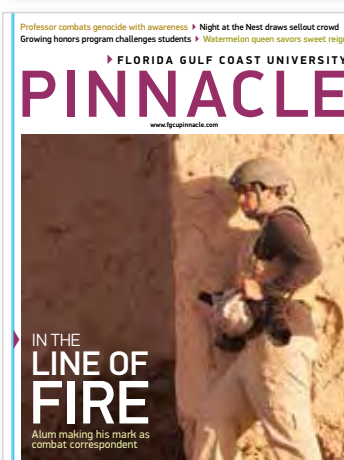
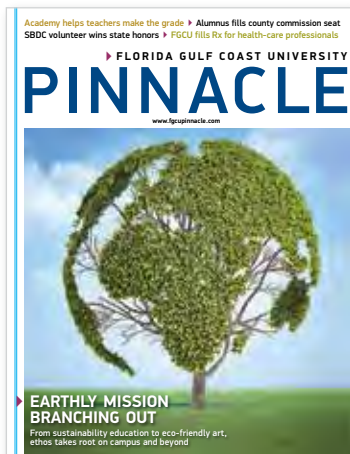
manufacturing companies, primarily focused on renewable and alternative energy. In 2009, Mr. Backe made a gift of \$1 million to establish the Backe Chair in Renewable Energy at FGCU. (We then recruited Professor Joseph Simmons for that prestigious position.) Along with that generous commitment was a gift of 6.5 acres of land at the I-Hub on which the university could construct its own research facility. This facility is the ETI.

Q: What is the benefit to FGCU of constructing the ETI at the I-Hub rather than on campus?

A: The idea of the I-Hub is to create an environment that fosters collaboration among the various companies conducting research and development on new initiatives in renewable and alternative energy. For FGCU and its researchers, being in close proximity with other leaders in emerging energy technologies research facilitates partnership opportunities. It potentially can create synergy in working toward solutions to some of society’s energy challenges.

Q: What do you see as the primary focus of the institute?

A: The initial work will focus on topics that are central to the research already under way at FGCU, and that impact regional businesses, promising growth in local employment in Southwest Florida. Of course, I’m talking here about renewable and alternative energy. But we are not limiting our work to



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

Florida Gulf Coast University invites you to participate in a readership survey for its magazine, Pinnacle. Tell us your opinion of the magazine and the format in which you wish to receive it. Responses are confidential and you could win a \$100 gift certificate to the FGCU Bookstore by providing your email address.

Fill out survey at fgcu.edu/pinnaclesurvey

Deadline: August 3 *One entry per person, please.*

Those who wish to fill out a paper version may contact editor Karen Feldman at (239) 590-7093.

Q&A: PRESIDENT WILSON G. BRADSHAW
(continued from previous page)

those areas. We also are focusing on storing and distributing solar energy, on electric vehicle research, on refining sea water to freshwater using solar technology, and on the use of renewable energy for agriculture.

Q: How do you see the ETI supporting and complementing FGCU's other academic and research initiatives?

A: I see the possibility of important intersections between the work at the ETI and that of others at the university. New programs at the ETI will be developed in collaboration with each of our colleges. Our research and development initiatives will be focused to serve Southwest Florida. Our programs will support education, while collaborating with local industry, government and other universities in the state system. An additional focus of the institute will be to engage the community in our work and thereby increase regional development, workforce training and employment in the area.

I see the ETI as a vibrant center of excellence at FGCU. The activities at the institute will address some of the most important issues of our time while involving our Southwest Florida neighbors in the work of the university. Recruiting Professor Simmons as the Backe Chair was a first step in creating the center of excellence. The ETI will bring together the critical components to make that a reality. ■

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We want to hear from you

FOR MORE THAN 7 YEARS, PINNACLE MAGAZINE HAS BROUGHT YOU NEWS about Florida Gulf Coast University. We have featured stories about inspiring professors, remarkable students, successful alumni, outstanding athletes, generous donors and exciting events.

These stories have formed a tapestry that illustrates the impact this university has had on the lives of the students who are enrolled here as well as the influence it has had on the larger community as FGCU has grown, expanding its cultural offerings, research efforts and civic engagement programs.

We've brought you stories of music students who teach at-risk preschoolers to play the violin; legal studies majors who lead victims of domestic violence through complicated court proceedings to new lives free of fear and pain; and occupational therapy students who devised ways to enhance the capabilities of children with autism.

We have profiled alumni-turned-entrepreneurs, starting businesses that help grow the economy, as well as those who became teachers and nurses and engineers and even one who chose the life of a war correspondent.

Articles have covered research conducted by FGCU faculty, including work that seeks a treatment for dengue fever; multiple projects aimed at assessing the area's environmental health; and a unique effort by forensic studies professors and students to build a national database on serial killers.

We have chronicled all manner of cultural and athletic events, most notably the triumphant rise of Dunk City as the men's basketball team captured

national attention, and this season's proud moments as the women's basketball team stomped the Oklahoma State Cowgirls who had beaten them a year earlier in the NCAA Tournament.

There was the memorable solo concert by pianist Priscila Navarro at Carnegie Hall and the FGCU Chorus' European concert tour as well as countless intriguing art shows and theater performances.

We have brought you the happy moments of life as submitted by members of our growing family of alumni and reported on the generosity of our donors, who have contributed some \$400 million since the university opened in 1997.

Now we are asking you for something in return: Please tell us how we are doing at delivering those stories to you. We have crafted a brief survey that seeks to determine how you like what we do, and the format and frequency with which we do it. Please fill it out so that we can ensure that the magazine meets your needs and expectations.

Just go to: **fgcu.edu/pinnaclesurvey** and give us your opinions. We'll take it from there.

There will be no fall issue of Pinnacle so that we can take some time to reflect on the survey's results and revamp the magazine accordingly. Meanwhile, check out all the news about the university at 360.fgcu.edu.



Karen Feldman
KAREN FELDMAN
Editor
kfeldman@fgcu.edu

UPFRONT

[COLLECTIVE WE]

Culture club

Caribbean Student Association brings island ways to campus through fun and games.

IF EATING JERK CHICKEN, PLAYING CARIBBEAN-THEMED FAMILY FEUD AND LEARNING island dances is considered a history lesson, then the Caribbean Student Association (CSA) is teaching while also providing culturally rich fun.

This might not be the typical way to learn history, but it's what keeps 25 association members coming to meetings held twice a month.

"We host fun events and activities to inspire students to learn about Caribbean cultures," says Deidre-Ann Murray, the group's president.

CSA exists to provide social, cultural and educational activities for its members to immerse themselves in a variety of Caribbean cultures by way of crafts, cuisine and dancing.

Everyone is welcome to attend to learn about Caribbean ancestry, regardless of their background. Eighty-five percent of CSA's current members are of Caribbean descent, including Murray, who's an exchange student from Jamaica.

"There aren't that many Caribbean students at FGCU," says Jessica Williams, a club member and the president of the Programming Board. "I'm Guyanese, so it's a great way to come together and have a family away from home."

A typical club gathering might feature a Caribbean potluck consisting of baked macaroni and cheese and plantains, a hands-on activity — such as "Know Your Flag" where students are grouped together to create a flag that describes their ancestry — and the occasional dance



Members of the Caribbean Student Association celebrate the festival of Holi.

instruction. With the help of FGCU's Haitian Student Organization, CSA has taught its members the basics of kompa, zouk, merengue, bachata and palanca.

"We try to target each meeting to different Caribbean cultures," Murray says.

She and other CSA officers research different cultures prior to each meeting and create events based on specific celebrations held throughout the Caribbean.

Each spring semester, the organization hosts Holi — an India-originated festival of color and love celebrated throughout Caribbean cultures.

"Holi is basically like a paint party," Murray says. "We provide students with

shirts and packets of paint powder."

In addition to throwing paint on one another, attendees learn about the history of the festival.

Other events include a celebration of Bob Marley's birthday, a Caribbean Christmas in which attendees donate gifts to the Toys for Tots Foundation and contribute to the annual Riddim Runway Caribbean music and fashion show held at FGCU.

"I see a lot of growth for this club," says Murray. "It helps to promote the Caribbean culture on campus and throughout the community."

— Aubrie Gerber

FOR MORE INFO

Send an email to csafgcu@gmail.com.

[HOT TOPIC]

FGCU360

New website showcases university news, events

“ I DIDN'T KNOW FGCU DID THAT.” HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HEARD THAT response when telling someone about an innovative program or newsworthy achievement at Florida Gulf Coast University?

We hear it plenty.

That's a big part of the reason University Marketing & Communications launched a new website this spring called FGCU360. Its mission: to provide an all-encompassing, 360-degree perspective of FGCU by showcasing innovative learning programs, cutting-edge research, lively campus activities and more. Through stories, pictures, video and social media, FGCU360 reflects the many dimensions of the university.

The website, 360.fgcu.edu, complements the university's other communication outlets, filling the gap between brief social media posts and the longer, more complex articles published in Pinnacle. The new web hub allows FGCU to enhance the volume, breadth and timeliness of pertinent stories that can be shared with people interested in university news.

Visitors to the site can register to receive monthly e-mail updates linking to new FGCU360 posts on the latest developments in academics, arts and entertainment events, athletics, community involvement and alumni success stories. The site also features a calendar of university activities of general interest and a place to pitch stories and share pictures with UMC staff.

— Drew Sterwald

[BY THE NUMBERS]

Renaissance Academy

FGCU's Office of Continuing Education creates and delivers lifelong learning – personal enrichment, professional development and training – for residents of Southwest Florida through the Renaissance Academy, which offers a variety of lectures, day trips, computer and mobile device classes, film series, discussion groups and travel abroad. The office also provides on-site training and organizational solutions for the private, public and nonprofit sectors as well as skills enhancement and training workshops for working professionals.

11,159

Participants registered in 2014 programs. The 954 classes were held at 11 locations throughout Charlotte, Collier and Lee counties. Among its popular topics are tablet/smartphone instruction, writing classes, history, civics and the arts.

Lecturers in the past year. Individuals from diverse walks of life share their experiences, insights and reflections: hobbyists and enthusiasts; current and retired university professors; retired CEOs; a symphony conductor; published authors; actors and directors; nationally renowned experts in wine, art and culture.

167



20

Average number of people on a Renaissance Academy Travel Abroad excursion. Hundreds of community members have visited locales as far-flung as China, Cuba, Brazil, Italy and Croatia. Trips are scheduled this year for Eastern Europe and Iceland. Cuba and the Panama Canal are destinations for 2016.

51

Southwest Florida businesses, government agencies and nonprofits that sought on-site contract training and organizational solutions in 2014. Continuing Ed designs programs to address the unique needs and culture of medium and small manufacturers, retail outlets and service businesses.

132

Workshops conducted for Florida Institute of Government. The unit also provided technical assistance for a dozen local government agencies, schools and nonprofits to help them improve their effectiveness.

20



Skills enhancement/professional development workshops held in 2014. Enrollment in these classes ranged from 7 to 25 students and included topics such as computer fundamentals, social media, supervisory skills, process improvement, lean manufacturing, project management, pet care certification and personal fitness training certification. Additionally, in conjunction with national curriculum providers, Continuing Ed offers hundreds of online courses for working professionals nationwide.

[WHERE ARE THEY NOW]

Robbie Spencer '12

Team of alums joins forces to launch online media company.

ROBBBIE SPENCER HAD COMPLETED HIS HISTORY DEGREE AND WAS working on a second major in business when he realized he wasn't doing what he loved — writing. So he scheduled a meeting with Lyn Millner, assistant professor of journalism. She said simply, "Do it."

He switched from business to a journalism minor, began writing for Eagle News, graduated in 2012 and nabbed jobs at various local papers. Today he and several other FGCU grads are again taking the "do it" approach. They comprise the staff of NaplesHerald.com, a new online media company designed to offer free national and local content to readers, an alternative to the Naples Daily News, which offers limited online access to non-subscribers.

A risky venture? Perhaps. "When I was approached about Naples Herald, it was obviously a very ambitious project. But it took me back to what Dr. Millner told me: 'Just go do it,'" says Spencer, whose hometown is Naples.

Or put another way, "I believe I got a phenomenal education at FGCU" and can do this, says Jason Levine, '11, a marketing major with a minor in advertising. He's NaplesHerald.com's president of sales; Spencer is executive editor. Other Eagles at NaplesHerald.com include Brett Diamond, ('12, Business Management), a board adviser; Joey Panepinto, ('06, Environmental Studies), content editor; and staff writers Tiara Brown ('14, Journalism) and RJ Roan ('14, Economics). The publisher and founder is Sasha Bogojevic, who is not an alum.



Robbie Spencer is executive editor of NaplesHerald.com.

The site launched officially Feb. 2, offering Associated Press stories, local staff and freelance contributions and a modern look. "News should no longer be information paid for by the reader" is the philosophy, Spencer says.

This spring and summer, Southwest Floridians will begin to notice NaplesHerald.com in sponsorship and outreach roles at special events. Heavy marketing is planned. Advertising revenue from this site and other sites Bogojevic owns will buoy the business.

Spencer is proud of the time he spent in traditional media — the Naples Daily News, Breeze Newspapers and Sanibel's The Islander. But the new product

appealed to him.

"I immediately got to work building the editorial infrastructure, recruiting writers, utilizing advisers and contacts I've picked up from every local news outlet to create our own local brand of content.

"What motivated me personally was a lack of opportunity for local journalists," he says. "There is plenty of freelance work, but not many full-time positions that give you at least some job security."

The former poker dealer from the Naples-Fort Myers Greyhound Track also thought the online project would test his skill set. He calls it an "opportunity to build the New York Times from the ground up, but in a modern, energy-efficient way."

— Betsy Clayton

[FACES]

In the sweet spot

Tara McKenna makes grass greener for golf management students.

TARA MCKENNA HAS A LIFE MANY WOULD ENVY — MAKING A LIVING PLAYING and teaching a game she loves.

But for McKenna, an assistant professor and director of FGCU's PGA Professional Golf Management program, it's not just about teaching love of playing golf; students come with that, along with the 12-or-less handicap required for acceptance into the program. McKenna helps students learn how to become the future guardians and growers of a \$76 billion industry in which they'll make their biggest impact behind the scenes.

"When they leave here, they're qualified to become Class A professionals," McKenna says.

That work is done in Sugden Hall, the building devoted to resort and hospitality education, which includes a golf shop and up-to-date laboratories.

"I think that's the biggest improvement since I've been here, the development of our labs," says McKenna, who became director of the PGA-accredited program, one of just 19 in the country, in 2010. It is in these labs — with equipment ranging from nets in which to hit balls in front of video cameras to sophisticated machinery on which to build and adjust golf clubs to simulated tournament scoreboards on which to practice calligraphy — that students learn to manage the business side of the game, not to mention the art of the first impression.

"We have a strict dress code for our students," McKenna says. "Clean-cut with appropriate attire. And we stress the



Tara McKenna says golf management offers great opportunities for women.

social skills ... this isn't a career for the shy or withdrawn."

McKenna got hooked on golf at a relatively late age.

"I didn't really take it up until I was 13 or 14," says McKenna, a native Californian who moved east as a child, first to upstate New York then to Massachusetts. "All the McKennas played golf, and I soon learned if I wanted to spend any time with my father on the weekends, it would have to be on the

golf course."

By the time she was 15, she was beating the other McKennas and was the women's champion at her country club. She went on to a four-year golf scholarship and psychology degree at James Madison University before graduate school at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, where she resurrected a discontinued women's Division I golf program and coached it while earning a master's in exercise and sports science with a concentration in sports psychology. She then worked at Massachusetts clubs before relocating to Florida.

McKenna is one of just 900 or so women certified as a Class A professional with the PGA of America and LPGA Teaching and Club Professional Division. She was recently appointed to the PGA's national Committee for Diversity and Inclusion.

While there is no shortage of women players, female club professionals and qualified teachers still are uncommon. McKenna says women students who follow in her footsteps — there are 15 among the 145 students in FGCU's program — "hold the golden ticket." "There are 15,000 golf clubs offering internships, and 12,000 of them would love to hire a female intern," McKenna says.

— Keith Gibson

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[IN THE NEWS]

Eighth grader wins state science fair award

FGCU professor and student serve as mentors, inspiration.

THERE AREN'T MANY EIGHTH GRADERS WHO HAVE CONDUCTED research in a university laboratory. And there are fewer still whose research subsequently wins both regional and state awards for excellence.

But Caylee Hill can claim all three distinctions. The Murdock Middle School student's project won her the Best of Fair Junior Division Award at the 58th Thomas Alva Edison Regional Science and Inventors Fair this spring and then went on to win the best of fair award at the state Science and Engineering Fair in Lakeland in April. The 14-year-old Port Charlotte girl isolated and extracted the anti-cancer drug, vincristine, from periwinkle leaves, then created a poster detailing the process she used and the results.

Caylee had help from FGCU Assistant Professor Gregory Boyce and rising senior Jessica Yazarians, a biochemistry major, in conducting the experiment to determine how the amount of vincristine in local periwinkles compared to that found in species in other countries.

The project began with a family shopping trip to Goodwill, where Caylee found a book that explored plants and medicine, including vincristine, which is used to treat non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and some types of leukemia.

"It talked about how to use it to make teas," Caylee says. "I decided to extract those alkaloids. My dad and I sent emails

to several universities looking for help."

Although Boyce already puts in extra hours working with his organic chemistry college students in the lab, he decided to take on the project.

"Community outreach is something FGCU likes," says Boyce. "And it overlapped with what I do already."

When Caylee found out what was

loved it. It was awesome."

The project involved picking thousands of periwinkle leaves — which she and her dad, Jim Hill, did — then bringing them to the lab and crushing them, isolating the vincristine from the other elements and measuring how much they had extracted, which turned out to be just a minute amount derived from two very large bags of leaves. The process required using multiple pieces of lab equipment and about a month of after-school sessions in the lab.

"I'm glad we did it," says Boyce. "Seeing how much of an impact it made on Caylee even without the awards was very gratifying."

Yazarians, who worked as a sales manager in a jewelry store and as a personal banker for several years before enrolling at FGCU to study her first love, science, was equally happy about the project.

"I liked the idea of teaching and, at the same time, I was learning while I was doing it," she says. "I am so proud of Caylee. And the experience made me realize just how important it is to inspire young people. A lot of people are intimidated by science, math and engineering so it's important to show them it may be challenging, but it's not impossible. The more literate we are in STEM fields, the better our world will be."

She may already have her first recruit. "Because of them I am thinking of making a career in chemistry," Caylee says. ■

— Karen Feldman



Jessica Yazarians, Caylee Hill and Assistant Professor Gregory Boyce celebrate Caylee's science fair win.

involved in the research, "I didn't want to do it because it was really complicated," she says. "I only knew a little about chemistry. But once I started doing it, I

SENSE OF PLACE

ENGINEERING HIGH BAY





Engineers reach new heights

High bay enables work and research on a larger scale.

THE WHITAKER COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING'S HIGH bay, a double-height space used for class

Hall is where students assemble model steel bridges and surprisingly lightweight concrete canoes for competition.

interaction, student projects and hands-on lab research — is one roomy element of an interactively designed set of learning and working spaces that is unique to FGCU. A classroom connected on the left holds modular seating for lectures and group activities that may move back and forth to the high bay, and an expansive concrete pad outdoors allows open-air work on large-scale projects. The arrangement encourages more intimate group learning. Used primarily by the civil and environmental engineering programs, Room 141 in Holmes

1 HEAVY DUTY A two-ton overhead gantry crane is used to carry heavy equipment, assemble and move machinery and hold beams of concrete or steel. Students typically use it for larger projects like boat construction.

2 ON THE LOOKOUT Second-floor windows allow students, faculty and campus visitors to observe the work being done in the room.

3 UNDER PRESSURE A pressure chamber is used by students to test mixtures and strength of

Recycled Concrete Aggregate (RCA) to determine the feasibility of using it as a substitute for virgin aggregate in civil engineering applications.

4 TRUE BLUE A collapsible canopy used for shade when working outdoors.

5 GOING MOBILE Only mobile work tables are used in the high bay because permanent furniture could limit space flexibility for large-scale projects such as the 20-foot cardboard boats created for the annual Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta.

6 PLAY IT SAFE Students use a fume hood when heating asphalt, which is a petroleum-based product. Exposure to such fumes can cause headaches, skin rash, fatigue or throat and eye irritation, according to the U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration.

7 CONCRETE CANOE Civil engineering majors Jason Subadan, left, Justin Booth, Christopher Mentch and Justin Subadan work on a concrete canoe for competition at the American Society of Civil Engineers Southeastern Student Conference in Chattanooga. It was eventually painted to mimic Lego blocks to illustrate the theme “Building Blocks to the Future.”

8 EASY BAKE One of several industrial ovens used to create real-world conditions for testing asphalt. Gyratory compactors also are used to simulate the effect of traffic on the pavement. Both help FGCU meet specifications of the Superior Performing Asphalt Pavement System (Superpave) developed to improve and standardize the process for mixing and testing asphalt binder and aggregate materials such as sand and gravel. ■



Jessica Peer



Story by Betsy Clayton

In Good Company

Johnson Engineering was present at FGCU's groundbreaking in 1997; the Fort Myers-based firm had helped with planning and development, surveying, water resources and landscape architecture. Since that time, Johnson Engineering has continued to lead the university's environmental consulting and civil engineering needs.

And today, 8 percent of the firm's workforce of 103 employees comprises FGCU grads.

"We've hired employees from FGCU to work in many various roles here," says Juli-Anne Kern, marketing director.

"We have an ecologist, a marketing coordinator and civil engineers who will help design communities, housing developments, retail developments, roads, utilities and water management systems. We've been working on projects at FGCU since its inception, and it's great to see it all coming around full circle."

Photos by Brian Tietz

**FGCU SERVES
AS INCUBATOR
FOR WELL-TRAINED
WORKFORCE FOR
REGION'S
COMPANIES.**



**COMMUNITY &
REGIONAL IMPACT**

FGCU CAMPAIGN INITIATIVE



Glenn Black and Jesse Bouchard

The scenario at Johnson Engineering is echoed throughout Southwest Florida, as FGCU has become an incubator for well-trained personnel needed by local companies. Along with Johnson Engineering, those that have found it a particularly good fit include Gartner Inc., Wells Fargo Advisors, Lee Memorial Health System, Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance and Financial Services, Arthrex Inc., Wasmer, Schroeder and Company and The Ritz-Carlton, Naples.

“There is a strong partnership between Southwest Florida’s business community and the university. They work together to meet the needs of the community,” says Gary Jackson, the recently retired director of the Regional Economic Research Institute (RERI) and economics faculty member at FGCU. He is well known for his regional

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“FGCU is an asset to the community in that it provides personnel needed by local companies.”

— **Glenn Black**
owner, Northwestern Mutual, the Glenn Black Group

economic studies and ability to articulate the landscape of the local workforce.

An FGCU priority that university officials stress to companies in Southwest Florida is that the university is a training ground for the professionals they need to staff their businesses. For example, FGCU positioned itself for the community’s needs by providing programs and degrees in subjects that the community indicated it needed, such as resort and hospitality management, golf management, engineering, environmental

science, business, education and more.

Jackson points to examples such as internships and advisory boards. The boards — made up of business and community representatives — provide the latest information to meet the demands. Such boards may indicate, for instance, that more people with well-honed communications skills are needed, or that additional engineers of a specific type are needed. “They can help the university understand the overall needs and the university can adjust through time,” he says.

Glenn Black, who started his career at Northwestern Mutual in 1986 and became managing director in February 1996, has watched FGCU evolve in the community. Black's passion for his community — he likes to talk about “helping one person, one family and one business at a time to meet their financial goals” — is evident in his enthusiasm for the partnership between FGCU and his company. Simply put, he loves to help develop individuals in a career with Northwestern Mutual, which today employs a significant number of Eagles at The Glenn Black Group.

“FGCU is an asset to the community in that it provides personnel needed by local companies,” says Black, whose development director is FGCU grad Jesse Bouchard ('07, Marketing).

Bouchard says the firm hires five to eight FGCU grads as interns or full time employees annually.

“We work with FGCU, helping to evolve the business curriculum to improve students' skills and their comprehension of the working world of financial planning,” Black says.

At Northwestern Mutual the Glenn Black Group, Black notes not only do they bring on FGCU interns to the team, but they pay attention to FGCU alumni that they recruit as full-time financial representatives and advisors.

“The university is an incubator for raising up the workforce of the new

generation, and organizations like mine are reason enough for alums to want to stay in Southwest Florida and have a prosperous future,” he says.

The Naples investment firm of Wasmer, Schroeder & Co. has found FGCU to be an asset when it comes to employees as well.

“It's a win-win,” says CEO Martin Wasmer. “We have found very capable, very willing students, several of whom evolve from internships into full-time employees. They have

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“Too many times a financial advisor will make recommendations without gathering important information first from the client. I have found that listening and gathering information then doing the right research will work in classes at FGCU and in the office at Wells Fargo Advisors.”

— Shad White ('03, Communication)



Shad White

worked everywhere in the firm — operations, client services, research, even administration with the idea that on some level you'll get some exposure to the business of money management."

One currently runs portfolio and performance analytics while another is an assistant portfolio manager. Both served in other capacities and worked their way up, he says.

The firm works regularly with the Lutgert College of Business, with which it's had an ongoing relationship, hiring interns for specific projects or for summer jobs. Right now the firm employs six FGCU graduates full time and one part time in addition to two interns.

"It's great to have such a strong university locally," Wasmer says, "to have the talent here. We could get summer interns from anywhere but having them come from FGCU means they are generally inclined to stay."

Lee Memorial Health System officials take note of the partnership between the university and their organization on an almost daily basis.

"We work closely with FGCU, constantly evolving the health services curriculum to promote a rich learning environment and improve students' nursing skills as well as their understanding of the standards of quality care we expect from professionals in the field," says Jon C. Cecil, the system's chief human resource officer.

Innovative, hands-on curriculum not only prepares them to exceed today's standards, it also gives them a deep understanding of the inner workings and culture of their work environment, how to practice safely, and how to develop caring relationships with patients, he says.

"This unique opportunity provides the community with highly qualified nurses, reduces training time after hire, and helps to retain a high-quality workforce as we continually strive to develop and grow in order to meet future demand."

Although Lee Memorial Health System doesn't track information on which schools it hires new graduates from, it does know 31 new FGCU-graduated nurses were hired in 2014. The system

has 11,200 employees.

But it's not just about nurses and medical staff. FGCU's reach is extensive. Jessica Carter Peer ('09, Human Performance) is an elected member of the Lee Memorial Health System Board of Directors. Now a real estate agent, she is a former Lee Memorial exercise physiologist who worked at the Cape Coral Wellness Center.

"As a student in the human performance program, we were always taught to be the change agent in our field, whatever the path was that we decided to choose," she says. "When I attended FGCU from 2006 to 2009, I was able to grow and learn in an intimate setting with small class sizes, as it was still a small, growing college."

Today Peer enjoys serving as the Community Health and Wellness liaison and Governance Chair for the board of directors.

When Shad White ('03, Communication) goes to work daily as a financial advisor at Wells Fargo Advisors in Naples, he is among Eagles. FGCU served him well, he says.

"As a communication major I had the fortune of working with great professors like Maria Roca, Glenn Whitehouse and Dean Davis to name a few," he says. "Maria led an international listening association and conference while I was her student. She spent time with us on the importance of listening in communication. I think this skill is taken for granted and is most important in being a financial advisor and doing a financial plan for a client."

"Too many times a financial advisor will make recommendations without gathering important information first from the client. I have found that listening and gathering information then doing the right research will work in classes at FGCU and in the office at Wells Fargo Advisors."

Across Southwest Florida from the hospitality gurus at The Ritz-Carlton, Naples to tech giant Gartner Inc., an information technology research and advisory company, FGCU alumni and their experiences enrich workplaces.

Sometimes they are only a fraction of the workforce — Gartner, for example, has 6,600 associates, including more than 1,500 research analysts and consultants.

Jeff Faramo ('04, Business Management and Marketing) is managing director for healthcare and education at Gartner, where he says he's been promoted six times in 10 years. His Eagle experience helped him excel with the international company — and kept the Naples native in his home region.

"As a Board of Trustees member and the Student Body President I was able to refine interpersonal communication skills and public speaking," Faramo says. "I learned to make tough budget decisions that were focused on the mission critical priorities of the university."

Gartner is constantly rated as one of the best places to work (by glassdoor, LinkedIn, PCMag) and that's a point of pride for Faramo. "I've represented Gartner and trained our sales executives in Tokyo, Sydney, London and almost every city in the U.S. I get to work with incredible people all over the world and can raise my family in Southwest Florida."

Arthrex Manufacturing Inc., a Southwest Florida-based orthopedic medical device manufacturer, also has global impact with FGCU grads comprising a segment of its workforce.

The company recently was named one of the 2015 Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For in the country. And when Gov. Rick Scott last visited Arthrex to recognize it for contributing to job growth and technical programs, he gave a shout-out to an FGCU grad-turned-Arthrex data coordinator. University officials are quick to mention the company's support of the engineering college in a growing way.

"FGCU is a valuable presence in the Southwest Florida region, significantly increasing the number of qualified local entry-level professionals to the workplace," says Mike Boose, human resources director.

FGCU students have interned with Arthrex in both its corporate



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“We’ve hired employees from FGCU to work in many various roles here. We’ve been working on projects at FGCU since its inception and it’s great to see it all coming around full circle.”

— Juli-Anne Kern
Johnson Engineering marketing director

and manufacturing offices, as well as completing co-op opportunities. Boose characterizes the FGCU engineering program as “very strong,” commenting it has produced key hires for the company.

Additionally, Arthrex employs graduates of the hospitality, finance, accounting and human resource fields.

“President Bradshaw and the FGCU team, including the Engineering, Business and IT departments, are very supportive of understanding the needs of business and evolving curriculum to continue to enhance the competitiveness of FGCU graduates for highly sought after positions within our organization,” Boose says.

Such comments are not unusual, says Jackson. “The university certainly has responded to the needs of the region and is an asset to the community.”

At Johnson Engineering, hiring students from FGCU is beneficial because they are already familiar with the area, the community and the culture, marketing director Kern says.

The firm wants to make sure it gives back to the university community beyond local hires, though. In 2005, it established the Johnson Engineering Scholarship Endowed Fund, benefiting FGCU students majoring in civil or environmental engineering. The lobby of the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering in Holmes Hall bears the company name in honor of its contributions supporting higher education.

“Many FGCU students have interned at our firm during their summer breaks, and most are hired as full-time employees once they graduate,” Kern says. ■

GIVE2FGCU

Creating community and regional impact is one of the priorities of FGCU’s \$100 million fundraising campaign. By supporting important initiatives such as this, you can make a difference in the lives of FGCU’s students as well as residents throughout the region. For details, go to www.fgcu.edu/Foundation or call (239) 590-1067.



[IN THEIR OWN WORDS]



ECOLOGICAL MYTHS OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

BY WIN EVERHAM, PH.D.

**“THIS IS A VERY BIG PLACE, AND I DO NOT KNOW HOW IT WORKS,
NOR HOW I FIT IN. I AM A MEMBER OF A FRAGILE SPECIES,
STILL NEW TO THE EARTH....WE ARE ONLY TENTATIVELY SET IN PLACE,
ERROR PRONE, AT RISK OF FUMBLING, IN REAL DANGER AT THE MOMENT
OF LEAVING BEHIND ONLY A THIN LAYER OF OUR FOSSILS...”**

In that passage from his book “The Fragile Species,” Lewis Thomas was writing as a medical doctor, but he could have been an ecologist.

Thomas understood how much we still don’t know and that question of how we fit in is the essence of the science of ecology.

Ecology is a young science — only 100 years old. Ecologists are concerned with where species are found and why, and the structure and function of ecosystems. These are complex questions. Ecology is not rocket science; it is much more complicated than that.

If you think we will run out of water or land, that the exotic species we move over the planet are all bad, that saving endangered species is critical, or that we can solve our problems with better engineering and better science, the science of ecology tells us you may be wrong.

MYTH 1: WE WILL RUN OUT OF WATER

In Southwest Florida the ecology is all about water: where it is, how long it stays there, how clean it is, how humans have changed all that. But water is a renewable resource. We have the same amount as we did 4 billion years ago. The hydrologic cycle of evaporation, precipitation, runoff and underground flow cycles water continuously over the planet and has an inbuilt purification step. Each time water evaporates, or is pulled up by the sun through the stomata of leaves, the impurities are left behind. We should always have water.

Ecologists created a concept called carrying capacity, which identifies the maximum number of a species that can be supported indefinitely in a given environment, based on the average need per individual. Following this concept, it turns out, our water resources in Southwest Florida can support about 98 million people, or 80 times more than we have today.

However, carrying capacity relates a single resource to a single species. To reach that target we would need to capture every bit of rainfall, have the whole region covered with impervious surfaces leading to cisterns, no plants except what we want to grow, no ponds for fish where some water would evaporate, and no runoff to the estuaries.

Before we arrived on this landscape every bit of water was used by the plants and animals that were already here. Each new person alters the magnitude and timing of what historically were the flows of water across this landscape, and that has a cost.

What we will run out of is cheap water. The issue will be who absorbs the cost and how much we can spare for the plants and animals that share this landscape.

MYTH 2: WE WILL RUN OUT OF LAND

Unlike water, land is a finite resource, but like water it can be reused. We can continue to build up, condemn some of those coastal mansions and build apartment buildings, at least until sea level rise floods those sites. Like water, we will run out of cheap land. Perhaps

we already have. In 1967, in “The Population Bomb,” Paul Erlich spun out the scenario that if the human population continued at its then rate for 900 years, we would then have 60 million billion people on the planet (6 followed by 16 zeros). He claimed we could house those people with a 2,000-story building with the top floors dedicated to hydroponics and heat dissipation. Each person would have about 3 to 4 square yards. He guessed that before we reached that density, disease or hunger would stop our growth. I think before we got to that many people we would run out of people who would want to live here!

Majorie Stoneman Douglas once stated “the Everglades are a test. If we pass it we get to keep the planet.” Respectfully, I would say she was wrong. Either way we keep the planet; we just might not want it anymore. If we fail to guide the growth on our landscape, we will run out of people who want to live here. Then who do we share the land with?

MYTH 3: EXOTIC SPECIES HAVE NO VALUE

We tend to think all exotic species are bad. That is not necessarily true. It’s interesting to note that all citrus — including Key lime — and most of what we eat, are exotic plants. So are most of the animals we eat. Exotic-infested ecosystems continue to serve an ecological function, capturing solar energy and sequestering nutrients. Further, exotic species increase the diversity of the systems they invade, at least initially. The issue is balance.



We need to focus on the species that dominate their communities and ultimately cause a loss of diversity. This happens in about one in 10 species that become naturalized, and only about one in 10 of the species that are introduced into the ecosystem become naturalized. There are about 2,000 plants native to South Florida and more than 20,000 species that are grown here for agricultural or horticultural reasons. Without the checks and balances found in their native lands, these invasives can explode across the landscape and damage native biodiversity.

Humans are exotics to this landscape as well. By most measures we would also have to be considered invasive. But

I have hope for our species. Through natural selection or the act of the Creator (or both), we have minds that allow us to both reshape our environment and consider our actions. If we view this power with its associated responsibility and have the will to do so, we can plan for the future and control our impacts.

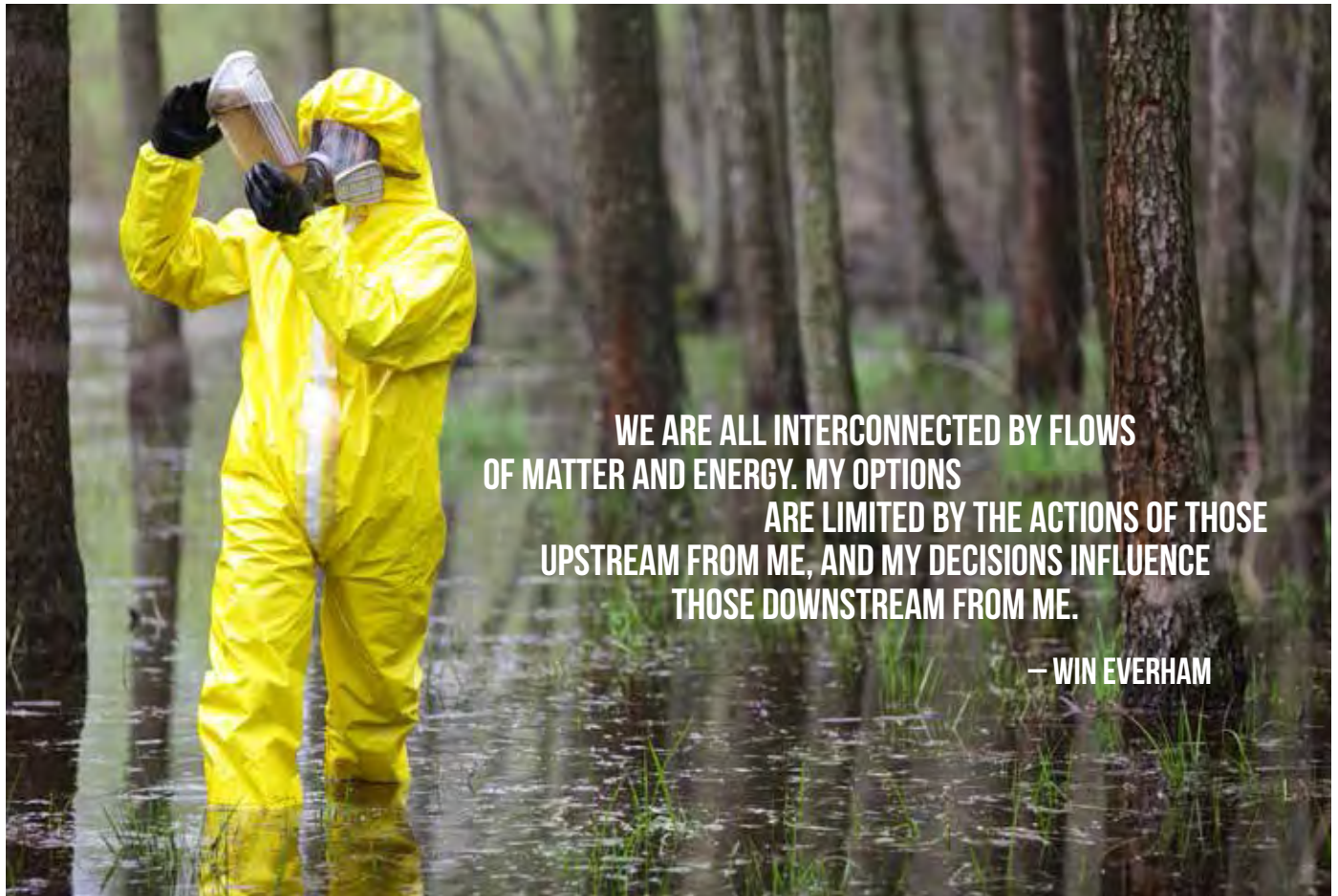
MYTH 4: ENDANGERED SPECIES HAVE CRITICAL ECOLOGICAL ROLES

So, what if we lose our last panther? The answer: It's unlikely to cause a devastating ecological cascade.

So why should we protect endangered species? Perhaps the justification should not be ecological; it should be moral or ethical. The Book of Genesis in the King

James version of the Bible, Chapter 1, verse 26 reads: "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

This version of the Bible was translated within a cultural context of the feudal system, where "dominion" was derived from the domain of the lord, who had responsibility for maintaining the health of the people and the productivity of the land. I believe if the Bible was translated in our current cultural context, that word would be "stewardship." If this is a moral issue to protect God's creation, then we



**WE ARE ALL INTERCONNECTED BY FLOWS
OF MATTER AND ENERGY. MY OPTIONS
ARE LIMITED BY THE ACTIONS OF THOSE
UPSTREAM FROM ME, AND MY DECISIONS INFLUENCE
THOSE DOWNSTREAM FROM ME.**

— WIN EVERHAM

don't need to try to put a dollar value on protecting biodiversity.

Still, it may also be an ecological issue. Experimental data is accumulating to show the resilience of ecosystems is directly related to their diversity. Aldo Leopold wrote, "To save every cog and wheel is the first principle for intelligent tinkering." We need, both morally and ecologically, in our ignorance, to save "every cog and wheel," as we continue to "tinker."

MYTH 5: THE SOLUTION IS BETTER ENGINEERING

Another word for "tinkering" is engineering. In her book "Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.," Cynthia Barnett

stated that virtually every large-scale engineering effort to manage water has had unanticipated consequences. When she visited our campus she said she was wrong — every engineering fix has!

In 2001, I helped lead a trip to the Peruvian Amazon. While there, we heard a presentation of how people farmed the flood plain, moving down into the rich flood lands after the water recedes, building temporary housing, raising a crop, then moving back to the highlands before the next floods. It occurred to me that if we had similar water flow across our landscape, we would build dikes and dams to hold back or control the high water, but then we would disrupt the natural flood cycle that provided the

nutrient-rich bottom lands to farm. We similarly tried to control the Everglades watershed, and we find ourselves a few decades later trying to replicate the natural flow of water over the land.

Certainly part of the solution to our environmental challenges will be better engineering, but we also need to understand natural systems and natural cycles to work with them rather than against them.

MYTH 6: THE SOLUTION IS BETTER SCIENCE

As a teacher and a scientist, I believe it is my calling to try to understand the world and communicate that understanding, and in doing so, help make the world a better place. But

scientists are not objective arbitrators of the truth. We are human. We have egos. We are invested in our ideas, and we don't like to be wrong.

Yet we are probably wrong more often than we are right.

The public often mistakes the results of science for science, memorizing what we discovered a generation ago and missing the point that at the edge of our understanding it is always messy and error-prone.

I think the process of science is like a courtroom. The sides on any scientific debate pile up their arguments and their evidence — data — and the larger scientific community ultimately determines who is right. The peer review process is rigorous. It takes time, but it works.

Today, we have a deeper understanding of the universe and greater access to technology than ever before. We are important. We shape the landscapes within which we live. We often determine which species are found where. We are the preeminent ecological force on the planet. Yet, as I consider my cell phone with Internet access and my email, which makes it easier for me to carry my work wherever I go, I wonder if my life is better?

MYTH 7: IT IS NOT LIKE IT USED TO BE

For much of its first century, ecology was dominated by a paradigm proposed by Fredrick Clements, that ecosystems move toward a climate-driven, self-sustaining “climax.” Ecosystems could be disturbed, but would return to their stable climax through predictable pathways of ecological succession. Everything that I know about ecological systems tells me Clements was wrong, in the longer-term. The illusion of stability is driven by our limited temporal experience with the land. Ecosystems have internal forces of mutation, competition that drives natural selection and evolutionary change of

their component species, the players change as new species are introduced (at a much faster rate recently due to the actions of our species). They also have external abiotic environment changes: CO² content varies, the planet warms and cools, sea levels change, every once in a while an asteroid hits us. Stability is ephemeral; the only constant in ecological systems is change.

An important caveat: The fact that CO² and sea levels have changed in the past should not leave us complacent to the human-driven changes that are occurring right now. CO² levels are increasing in the atmosphere. We are burning irreplaceable fossil fuels and releasing CO². The seas are rising. Our climate is changing. Historically similar changes have resulted in extinctions. These are all facts. Some are still debating the degree to which the changes we see are human-driven. This debate is only important in the context of our response. Change is coming. We need to talk about how to respond to that change, not pretend that it isn't happening.

MYTH 8: I HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO MY OWN THING

American culture was founded in part on the desire to protect individual rights. Our European ancestors came to these shores seeking freedom. Our African ancestors were dragged here, but ultimately found freedom. Unfortunately, we are often unwilling to grant our neighbors the same rights and freedoms we demand for ourselves. I think there needs to be an alternative acronym to recognize this. We all know NIMBY — not in my backyard, but we also practice NINBY — not in my neighbor's backyard.

Ecologically this is nonsense — no human is an island. We are all interconnected by flows of matter and energy. My options are limited by the actions of those upstream from me, and

my decisions influence those downstream from me. This is true whether we think in terms of watersheds, airsheds, food chains, other energy flows or economic systems.

MYTH 9: DEMOCRACY DOESN'T WORK

This myth is self-fulfilling if we choose to believe it. What we require is an educated community committed to something larger than individual selfish needs. Democracy is hard work!

There is debate in our state right now about the role of higher education. Some wish to shape our colleges as places of “training” for employment. The root of “liberal arts” is liber (also the root for “liberty”) and this type of education is intended to meet the needs of a free people. In a world where education is limited to a privileged few, knowledge is power. In a democratic society, that knowledge needs to be universal.

Ecology teaches us that we are all connected. Democracy demands that we accept the reality that we are all in this together. The changes that will occur across our region in the coming decades will either engage us all as educated citizens of our landscape, or they will not.

In “The Journey Home,” Edward Abbey wrote, “Human bodies and human wit, active here, there, everywhere, united in purpose, independent in action, can still face the machine [our current ‘technoindustrial juggernaut’] and stop it and take it apart and reassemble it — if we wish — on lines entirely new. There is, after all, a better way to live. The poets and the prophets have been trying to tell us about it for 3,000 years.” Perhaps the science of ecology can help point us in the right direction. ■

—Win Everham is a professor of marine and ecological sciences at FGCU who specializes in the impact of disturbance, including exotic invasions and the activities of man, on forest communities and ecosystems.



ALL THE WORLD'S A CLASSROOM

Child and Youth Studies major
has new teachers thinking beyond
traditional school structure.

LEARNING CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE so why limit the experience to a traditional classroom? That seems to be the logic attracting undergraduates to FGCU's Child and Youth Studies program.

The curriculum track includes all of the expected preparatory classes for teachers — fundamentals of reading, growth and development, managing discipline, teaching for special needs and others — but it also offers courses such as social work, health professions and business. The students' senior year consists of an internship and a capstone project that advance the program at the internship site in measurable ways.

Graduates then go on to nontraditional teaching jobs or graduate study with the aim of working with youngsters in fields with education components, such as mental health counseling, occupational therapy, pediatrics, social work, family law — nearly anything involving young people.

"A lot of students don't know what they want for their majors," says Elizabeth Elliott, professor of early childhood education and program director. "So when they find out they can work with children in nontraditional teaching jobs without a teaching certificate, they are interested."

Story by DAYNA HARPSTER

Photos by BRIAN TIETZ



Kelsey Zeller teaches in an after-school program at the Heights Foundation in Fort Myers.

Child and Youth Studies, introduced in 2012-13, offers two tracks that focus on children and their interactions in the home, school and community. It's not just about the child, but the child's relationship to his environment and the people in his life.

"Students are looking at the child's behavior, about learning, about teaching in nontraditional environments," she says.

Those settings include after-school programs, museum programs and those that serve children who don't attend traditional school because they are homeless or in shelters.

By fall 2014, the program had 46 graduates. Twenty earned degrees at spring commencement. "And the hiring rate is incredible," says Elliott.

Most students in the program are glad to earn degrees in the College of Education but want a career free of standardized tests, hall passes, school lunches and regulated class periods. They are attracted to programs such as that at the Heights Foundation in Fort Myers. Education there is less formal. One afternoon in March — on a "Fun Friday" — groups of kids learned fundamentals of soccer, played educational games in the center's

computer lab and made up board games. Three Child and Youth Studies seniors were interns there.

The senior internships to which students are matched occur in diverse environments conducive to education — places such as the Golisano Children's Museum, the Edison-Ford Winter Estates, Naples Shelter for Abused Women and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bonita Springs.

"So they run the gamut but their focus is on children, youth and families," says Elliott.

Elliott approached the university administration in 2006 about fashioning a program similar to one she had seen at the University of Tennessee, where she earned her doctoral degree in human ecology and child development.

The FGCU program is the result. Students still amass all the prerequisites needed to take the teacher certification exam. Ryan Hennessey, '15, for one,

intends to do so. He interned for the Florida Department of Children and Families' after-school program at the Heights Foundation in Fort Myers.

The Boyne City, Mich., native plans

to take the state test to be a special education teacher in a classroom setting. But the value of what he is doing as an educator at an after-school program is also clear to him.

"I love working with kids. Ever

since I was 15 I have been babysitting or working at some kind of camp with kids," Hennessey says. "I remember growing up and going to campus or after-school programs and I always found a counselor that I looked up to and idolized and I want to be that for someone else."

The point is for education graduates to have choices, Elliott says. Just as the



Joshua Werthum interned at the Heights Foundation.

traditional school structure may not be the optimal setting for some smart kids, it may not be the best possible setup for adults who would be good teachers.

Joshua Werthum, '15, of Bradenton also interned at the Heights Foundation. He tried working in an elementary classroom, but with the lesson plans, standardized test preparation and early hours, "It was too much," he says. "I do not want to be in a classroom setting. I prefer the after-school program because it gives me a chance to be a little more creative with the learning activities."

Kelsey Zeller, '15, also worked with Heights Foundation children and had an innovative way of teaching them about fitness and nutrition.

She enlisted members of the foundation's culinary class, most in their 40s to 60s, to work with the youngsters on designing and preparing healthy, easy recipes. "Not only are the kids benefiting from it, the culinary students are, too," she says.

"In this setting, I think I am able to connect with the kids more," Zeller says. "We can have a more personal relationship because there are not so many things that have to be done. I still work with them on science and reading and other subjects. But it's not just what's in the book."

Program coordinator Mary Broomfield supervises interns at the Heights Foundation site. "Everyone brings something to the table. We find out what their strengths are. And every time I throw a wrench into things, they pick it up. If I said, 'OK Kelsey, today you were supposed to do science. Can you fill in on fitness instead?' And they can do it."

About half of all the interns are hired at their sites after graduation, Elliott

says. At the Heights Foundation, Kelly Perzanowski, '14, joined the staff after interning a year ago.

Alexandria Arenberg, '13, finished an internship at the children's museum in Naples, then left to teach at a preschool for a couple of months before deciding that the museum was a better fit. Her supervisor, Kelsey Johnson — an FGCU

graduate who earned a master's in education in 2007 — worked in school systems in Hong Kong and Japan as well as in this country, before choosing education on a different level.

"I loved the idea of being at the children's museum," says Johnson, who lives in Naples. "In the classroom I used to say that 'within my four walls' I could make a difference. At the museum, I feel like what I do has a much wider effect."

Similarly, "I knew the classroom wasn't really my calling," says Arenberg, who lives in Estero. She originally was inspired by a meeting with a child life specialist in a medical field, as part of her Palm Harbor high school curriculum. The specialist's approach to teaching was active and

interactive, and Arenberg recognized it as a way she learned. "I've always been a visual learner," she says. "I didn't really take to things presented on a screen, but if teachers had me actively doing something, I got it." Now, she works with toddlers, first- and second-graders mostly, in museum summer camps, open museum nights when kids from area shelters and foster homes visit, with field trips and programs like toddler story times.

National statistics suggest that teachers who leave the classroom can find that the grass really is greener outside.

Of the 3,377,900 U.S. public school teachers of kindergarten through 12th grade during the 2011-12 academic year, 8 percent left the classroom when summer arrived. "Personal life factors" was the most common reason (chosen by 38.4 percent). Among teachers with one to three years' experience, 7 percent left the classroom after 2012-13, according to the same report by the National Center for Education Statistics. Ninety percent left voluntarily.

Former teachers found new jobs significantly more satisfying when it came to salary, opportunities to make a difference, professional prestige and work/life balance.

Count Arenberg among those happy "leavers." "I had to do it all 'by the book' and I wanted to be more hands-on," she says. "It just wasn't where I was meant to be." ■



Allie Arenberg decided the Golisano Children's Museum was a better fit than a classroom.

NON-CLASSROOM JOBS FOR TEACHERS

According to a 2012 report by the job search and advice site Career Builder, teachers who want an alternative to the classroom have a range of education-related options, in addition to the fields in which some instruction is involved. Among those are:

Instructional coordinator/curriculum specialist
Corporate trainer • Private tutor • School administrator
Standardized test developer
Educational program director • Textbook author

THE ARTS

► "Expressing the inexpressible"

[ART]

Art and science meet at Crossroads

New residency program offers common ground for research and creative expression.

ARTS AND SCIENCES OFTEN ARE COUPLED IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS, but is such a union a marriage of organizational convenience or a mutually beneficial and collaborative partnership?

With the introduction this year of the Crossroads of Art and Science Artist Residency, FGCU's College of Arts and Sciences makes a case for the latter scenario. The first resident artist, Joe Griffith of Tampa, produced a multifaceted ArtLab Gallery exhibit in January that was inspired by ongoing studies at FGCU's Vester Marine and Environmental Science Research Field Station. He created sculptures, drawings and paintings during a two-week stay at the Bonita Springs facility.

It might have been briefer than most residencies, but it laid the path to common ground where art and science can meet and mingle.

"This year is a trial year to figure out how it should work in the future," said Gallery Director John Loscuito. "Maybe it'll be three weeks next year. The idea is to create a unique opportunity for an artist to take advantage of the specifics of a location or equipment or research. This site has immediate access to unique ecosystems, and researchers there are gleaned information from that environment."

The breadth of scientific topics and visual inspiration at the marine station provides abundant opportunities for artistic exploration.

"There's an incredible amount of research going on here that you can create



Joe Griffith's art explores the presence of mercury in seafood and humans.

a narrative from, from the microscopic to the landscape. This place is the star of this thing," Griffith said.

After consulting with FGCU faculty and staff at Vester, Griffith narrowed his focus to the cyclical movement of mercury through humans and the environment. His exhibition, "Mercury Switch," explored the element's presence in seafood and in humans, as well as in commercial products such as fluorescent light bulbs and household thermostats.

Some dental fillings contain mercury that vaporizes into the atmosphere during cremation, so he fabricated 3-foot-tall molars that were displayed on the campus lawn and attracted visitors to the exhibit. To make the project interactive, he invited the public to send pictures of their mercury-amalgam dental fillings and displayed them in ArtLab.

Along the way, Griffith learned something a lot of artists don't know, he said: Scientists are creative, too. Discovering new knowledge, developing conclusions, conveying scientific information to others — it all requires outside-the-box thinking.

"Trying to communicate to students, I'm like a comedian that's trying out

jokes," quipped Marine Science Professor Darren Rumbold, director of the Vester Center. "Every year I change the course to try to tell the story better. With this residency program, it's communicating using art as the hook to get people interested in science."

Loscuito already was interested in cross-curricular programming when he chanced into a conversation with former Arts and Sciences Dean Aswani Voley. He learned about the Vester facilities, Rumbold's mercury research and studies being done on red tide, seagrass loss and myriad other topics into which



At the Vester Center, Joe Griffith carves plaster casts that will form giant teeth for his exhibit.

artists-in-residence could dive. With support from Volety's successor, Robert Gregerson, as well as donors Dean and Alice Fjestul, housing and exhibition costs were covered and Griffith was offered a small stipend.

Recommendations from Gallery Coordinator Anica Sturdivant and Jade Dellinger of the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery in Fort Myers led Loscuito to the multimedia artist. A 1994 graduate of Parsons The New School for Design in New York, Griffith has shown solo projects nationally and internationally and founded Experimental Skeleton Inc., an artists' collective in Tampa.

Once the residency program is firmly established, the selection process might entail a national search and attract



Griffith painted several studies for the teeth before casting them in plaster.



interest far beyond Florida. Whatever direction it takes, Crossroads signals a new point of interdisciplinary collaboration for FGCU.

"Art is as vital a form of communication as any other form, like movies or music. It's not just for decoration," Loscuito said. "Art can provide a quick entry into a deeper discussion. Crossroads is a way to say, 'yes, artists can work with scientists to bring meaning to the surface.'"

— Drew Sterwald

ARTS CALENDAR

8/19 WEDNESDAY

FGCU Faculty Exhibition

10 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays, until 7 p.m.

Thursdays. View a range of subjects and techniques at this intriguing exhibition composed of works by FGCU faculty. Runs through Sept. 24 in Main Gallery, Arts Complex. Reception and meet the faculty Thursday, Sept. 3, 5-7 p.m.

9/10 THURSDAY

A Feast of American Songs

7:30 p.m., Soprano Jeanie Darnell and pianist Michael Baron perform an evening of American songs that pay homage to innovators of early American music and build a connection to contemporary composers. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building.

9/12 SATURDAY

24-Hour Festival

8 p.m., The ninth annual festival features works by students given a premise at 6 p.m. Friday. They then have 24 hours to create the best stage play, film, music or artwork they can and then submit it at 6 p.m. Saturday. At 8 p.m., the public is invited to view the results followed by the award presentations. In Theatre Lab, Arts Complex.

9/17 THURSDAY

Capturing 24-Hours, 2015

This exhibition features a selection of works from Theatre Lab's 9th annual 24-Hour Festival, including video, music, visual art and theatre performance. Runs through Oct. 1 in ArtLab.

9/19 SATURDAY

The Beauty of the Oboe

7:30 p.m., Judy Christy, principal oboe of the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra, and pianist Michael Baron present masterpieces from the oboe repertoire. Philharmonic violist Lisa Mattson joins them to perform "Rhapsodies" by Charles Loeffler. 7:30 p.m., U. Tobe Recital Hall, Music Building.

10/1 THURSDAY

Xanadu

8 p.m., This Tony-Award-winning musical adventure is about following your dreams despite limitations others impose upon you. Presented in collaboration with TheatreZone. Continues 8 p.m. Oct. 3, 8-10; 2 p.m. Oct. 3 and 11; and 7:30 p.m. Oct. 4 and 11. Tickets, \$40-\$45, available at www.theatrezone-florida.com.

THE ARTS

► "Expressing the inexpressible"

[ART]

Creativity takes flight in Azul statue contest

Artistic mascots help promote school spirit.

THE EAGLES HAVE LANDED. FIVE VERY CREATIVE PEOPLE WON THE opportunity to produce their own unique visions of the FGCU mascot through "Azul's Flight Tour," a contest sponsored last spring by Student Government and the FGCU Foundation as an opportunity to foster school spirit.

Student Government Vice President Cory Mentzer came up with the idea.

Winning designs earned each artist \$1,000 and were unveiled at the Veterans Pavilion. Since then, they have taken up residency around campus. Roughly 6-foot-2-inches tall and weighing in at about 150 pounds — before the designers added layers of drywall compound, fabric and paint — the fiberglass statues presented some creative challenges for the artists. They included students, alumni and a local fan of Eagle basketball.

1 Scott Guelcher ('05, Liberal Studies and Art; '07, Master's in Education)

► **Title:** "Azul Flies Around The Bases" (On display at Alico Arena) and "Graduation Azul" (Sugden Welcome Center)

► **Inspiration:** After his baseball-inspired entry was chosen as a winner,

the Lehigh Acres-based artist was commissioned to produce another Azul in graduation cap and gown. His signature painting style incorporates abstract backgrounds and vivid color.

► **Challenge:** Guelcher added 45 yards of fabric to his statue using Monster Mud, a drywall compound mixed with latex paint, to create a flowing graduation gown for Azul. He even decorated the top of the mortar board with a message, as many graduates do at commencement. "Painting underneath the gown was

hard — you never know if somebody's going to look underneath. I really built a relationship with my birds. It was a lot of fun."

Geoffrey Stephens (FGCU senior, Journalism major)

► **Title:** "Peaces of the Nest" (On display at the bookstore)

See photo on page 1.

► **Inspiration:** His Azul is covered with a mosaic of small photographs of people and places on campus that collectively create the color tones of the eagle costume. "The statue represents all of the small pieces and individuals that it takes to make the big FGCU nest/home, a strong FGCU spirit and the peacefulness

amid it for all. I went for a play on the words 'piece' and 'peace.'"

► **Challenge:** "It was ambitious as hell. Going out and getting all the photos. Working out all the wrinkles," says the native of Spring Green, Wis. "It was a race against the clock."



2 Colleen Solomon

► **Title:** “We Bleed Green and Blue” (Marieb Hall)

► **Inspiration:** Sparked by the fighting spirit that fires up Alico Arena during basketball games, Solomon decked out her Azul in painted-on armor from head to talon and painted words from the FGCU fight song on his wings as tattoos.

► **Challenge:** More accustomed to painting on a flat canvas, the Cape Coral artist did a lot of crouching and crawling to get into the statue’s nooks and crannies. “I’ve never done a statue before – it was a real growing opportunity. The hardest part was giving him a tough look with those big round eyes. I gave him a scowl.”

3 Diana Rochez (FGCU junior, Biology major)

► **Title:** “Dunk City Azul” (Alico Arena)

► **Inspiration:** “I was so happy about Dunk City. I really wanted to pay tribute to that. One day, they’ll be able to go back (to the NCAA Championship).” The Fort Myers resident is a biology major but enjoys expressing her creative side with art.

► **Challenge:** “Painting the basketball court on the base of the statue. It’s very detailed.”

4 Andrew Corke (’12, Art)

► **Title:** “Never ‘Tired’ of Winning” (on display in the FGCU Library)

► **Inspiration:** The Fort Myers artist’s eco-friendly design involved cutting used bicycle tires into feather shapes, gluing them to the statue’s surface and then painting them — a technique he uses in his wildlife artwork. He grew up on Sanibel with an environmentally conscious mindset, but he says his experiences at FGCU influenced his approach to art and living. “FGCU really made it apparent to me why we should be sustainable.”

► **Challenge:** “Fiberglass doesn’t have the pores that foam does that make it stick, but I managed to get a good stick.”





Courting success

Women's team has historic season; men rebuilding as Dunk City members depart.

[BASKETBALL]

The buzzer had barely signaled the end of a 60-43 dismantling of Northern Kentucky in the Atlantic Sun Conference women's basketball championship game at Alico Arena on March 15 when Vernon Knight rumbled down the aisle toward the goal at one end of the floor. His daughter, Whitney Knight, was celebrating the Eagles' third league title in four years and their guaranteed spot in the NCAA Championship Tournament with her FGCU teammates and jubilant family members, friends and fans.

Oblivious to the celebration, he stepped toward the goal, jumped with all the loft his big frame could muster and swiped at the net his daughter and her teammates weren't cutting down.

Walking back toward the free-throw line, he shook his head. "I know Whitney can dunk it," he said. "She did it twice before she tore her ACL. I don't know why she won't do it."

So here was Vernon Knight — father of one of the Eagles' franchise players, the 6-foot-3 guard from Winston-Salem, N.C., who had just scorched Northern Kentucky for a game-high 21 points and added seven rebounds on her way to being named the A-Sun Tournament most valuable player — still focusing on a goal unmet.

For her part, Whitney, a rising redshirt senior and one of 14 players returning to the Eagles for 2015-16, dismisses her dad's dunk talk as fatherly bragging. "I can touch the rim ... that's about it," she said with a smile during the post-



Whitney Knight

championship bedlam.

Whitney Knight's father's high expectations are only natural. She's one of the faces of a women's basketball program created, nurtured

and unleashed on the conference it dominates by Coach Karl Smesko. The team raises its own bar every year, this past season claiming the A-Sun's first NCAA Division I women's tournament win, a 65-57 triumph over No. 10 Oklahoma State as a No. 7 seed. The win was sweetened by the fact it avenged a one-point overtime loss to those same Cowgirls in the 2013-14 tournament.

The historic season would feature more top NCAA Division I numbers — a 31-3 record, 25-game winning streak, No. 21 national ranking in the USA TODAY Coaches' Poll and an athletics' program-best 13 rating in the NCAA's Ratings Percentage Index (RPI) — before FGCU ran into another team that was unbeaten at home in 2014-15 (the Eagles were 16-0 before their adoring Alico Arena crowd) and lost to Florida State 65-47 at the Tallahassee regional.

The message that Smesko and the Eagles are sending is clear: They're coming soon to at least a Sweet Sixteen, the same spot where the meteor that was the 2012-13 FGCU men's team landed in its only shot to date in the NCAA basketball tournament, leaving in its wake the legacy that is Dunk City.

"I'm very proud of this team," said Smesko, who earned his sixth A-Sun coach of the year award. "They worked very well together and reached many of the goals we set."

The Eagles will return all but two players from this championship team. One of those departing is graduating senior and team captain Jenna Cobb. A transfer from Indiana's Butler University, Cobb's greatest impact wasn't statistical — she was fourth in team scoring, second in assists and third in rebounding — but as an extension of Smesko on the floor. That leadership was recognized when Cobb was named to the Women's Basketball Coaches Association's "So You Want to Be a Coach" Class of 2015, an honor offered to players identified as potential coaching stars of tomorrow.

"If I hadn't transferred here from Butler, I never would've gotten the chance to play for a championship," said Cobb, a communication major from New Holland, Ohio, and the daughter of Glen Cobb, former Ohio State linebacker and 1981 Buckeyes team captain. "The best decision I ever made was to come to FGCU."

The 2015-16 team will be blessed with



Jenna Cobb

Stephanie Haas, a rising senior who was the A-Sun Women's Basketball Scholar-Athlete of the Year, a distinction earned by the criminal justice major's most impressive statistic, a conference-leading 3.94 GPA. Add in redshirt sophomore Taylor Gradinjan, who fought back from two ACL injuries to make the conference All-Freshman Team in her first full season, and no less than 10 other returning players, and FGCU remains the team to beat in the A-Sun.

As for the FGCU men's team, winning 22 games in each of the past two seasons meant post-season play in the National Invitation Tournament, where the Eagles lost 58-53 to Florida State in the first round in Tallahassee to end the 2013-14 season; and most recently the Collegeinsider.com Postseason Tournament, where this past season ended on the Alico floor in a 75-69 first-round loss to Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

But even before that loss suffered by a team depleted without leading rebounder, third-leading scorer and second team A-Sun pick Jamail Jones, a senior whose career was ended one game early by an ankle injury, the Eagles had fallen a free throw short of their own expectations — and certainly those of the fan following created by the rise of Dunk City — when they lost a 63-62 A-Sun semifinal game to USC-Upstate.

"The last two years hurt more because of what we accomplished our sophomore year," graduating senior Brett Comer said quietly after the USC-Upstate loss. "But I couldn't be prouder of my career. I'm

plenty of returning experience, most notably its top three scorers: Knight, the A-Sun Player of the Year (15.1 ppg); rising senior Kaneisha Atwater, an A-Sun First Team selection; and

thankful for everything."

Comer should be proud. His departure and that of fellow senior Bernard Thompson, is a literal passing of the guards as the last major players from Dunk City's Cinderella boys depart the FGCU program. Both Comer and Thompson stand 6-foot-3, but their figurative reach and impact on the program are far longer — and much greater than the numerous A-Sun and National Association of Basketball Coaches honors they collected during their decorated careers as Eagles.

Comer, from Winter Park, took his



Bernard Thompson



Brett Comer

game to the prestigious Portsmouth Invitation Tournament, a showcase for top professional scouts, after ending his FGCU run as one of the greatest playmakers in NCAA history, ranking 24th on the all-time assists list with 845, shattering the A-Sun record by an astounding 200 or so. Thompson is FGCU's all-time leading scorer with 1,835 points, ranking him 14th on the A-Sun scoring list, with a team-high 13.8 ppg this season to go with 160 rebounds, second on the team. The Conyers, Ga., native was the only player in NCAA Division I this past year who had at least 1,800 career points, 600 career rebounds and 250 career steals.

"You get very few opportunities to coach kids you really love," said FGCU Coach Joe Dooley, who has guided the Eagles to a 44-24 record in two seasons. "You look back and say what a privilege it was to coach these kids."

— Keith Gibson



Nick Rivera

Spring fever

Athletics teams celebrate triumphs, learn from mistakes during spring play.

[BASEBALL]

FGCU's baseball team had its ups and downs this season, scoring wins against some big schools, and winding up one of three teams left playing for a championship but ultimately falling to top-seeded North Florida. The team finished the season 30-26-1 (11-9 in the A-Sun).

Junior first baseman Nick Rivera turned in some strong performances. The Eagles cleanup hitter went on a tear in March, registering five multi-hit games in eight contests. Rivera went 3-for-5 with two home runs in an 8-1 road victory over No. 13 Miami. It was FGCU's

first win over a ranked opponent since Feb. 27, 2014, when the Eagles downed No. 23 Florida on the road. The team also beat Fordham, Western Michigan, Bethune-Cookman and University of Massachusetts this season.

FGCU opened A-Sun Conference play by taking two of three games against North Florida, the league's first 20-win club. It ended the A-Sun Championship falling to UNF 8-2 in a game that was delayed five hours and 26 minutes by lightning, a problem that occurred more than once toward the season's end.

"It felt like our games were always affected by lightning or a rain delay so it

just seemed like a long week and we just ran out of gas," said coach Dave Tollett following the conclusion of the A-Sun Championship. "They played their butts off and we were right in it at the very end but couldn't come up with that extra hit. But that's baseball."

The Eagles' improved offense can also be traced to college baseball's decision to move to a new, flatter-seamed ball used professionally. The change was meant to bring back some offense to the game after the 2011 decision to reduce the trampoline effect in bats for safety reasons. The change has helped boost scoring and home runs nationwide in the NCAA.

[SOFTBALL]

With the largest incoming freshman class of the A-Sun Conference, FGCU softball coach Dave Deiros knew his club would have to overcome inexperience and jitters this season.

The Eagles surmounted rookie mistakes to muster a solid campaign against an elite schedule, which featured games against No. 3 Alabama and No. 11 Tennessee. Nonetheless, it proved to be a tough season for the team, which finished 23-30 (5-15 in conference play), ranking seventh in the A-Sun.

“From the season’s perspective, obviously it didn’t end the way we wanted it to,” said FGCU softball coach Dave Deiros. “We will take a step back and figure out which way we want to go. (But) our group of four seniors – Amanda Byers, Christine Marino, Shelby Morgan and Kelsey Carpenter – has done a fantastic job of representing us in the community, classroom and on the field.”

The team had 13 freshmen on the roster, many of whom played key roles. The upperclassmen – ace pitcher Morgan, last season’s batting average leader Carpenter and junior outfielder Makensie McAvoy – helped the rookies acclimate to life in the competitive world of NCAA Division I softball.

A high point of the season included winning a three-game series against Northern Kentucky in March. The Eagles won two of the games by 9-1 and 15-1 margins. The latter game featured a grand slam by freshman Brittany McGuire and a complete-game victory by junior pitcher Ashley Dobson.

[GOLF]

Spearheaded by consistent, strong play from junior Jake Sherwin, FGCU’s golf team improved toward the end of its spring season. Sherwin went on to

compete in his first-ever NCAA Men’s Division I Golf Championship, tying for 65th place.

In late March, he registered a career-best second-place individual finish as the Eagles took fourth place at the Florida Atlantic University Slomin Autism Championship at The Fountains Country Club in Lake Worth. The Eagles were in a five-way tie for second place heading into the final day of action and finished with a three-round 880 total, four shots behind second-place Connecticut. Central Florida won the 20-team tournament with an 863 total.



Jake Sherwin

The men finished the 2015 season in fifth place in the A-Sun.

“The guys are disappointed about their finish,” said FGCU coach Eric Booker, “but they’re looking forward to improving their games this summer and getting back at it next year.”

The FGCU women’s team showed improvement, finishing third in the conference. Freshman Madison Easterbrook led the team in several tournaments, giving the squad a potential

glimpse into the future. She played three consistent rounds with scores of 77, 77 and 76 in the three-day John Kirk Panther Intercollegiate in Stockbridge, Ga., where FGCU placed tenth.

“I think the future is very bright for FGCU golf,” said coach Sarah Trew.

[TENNIS]

Upperclassmen helped lead the FGCU men’s and women’s tennis teams to strong spring seasons. The Eagles men’s campaign became historic, ending the year among the nation’s top-75 teams in the ITA poll for the first time in program history.

The FGCU men’s tennis team concluded the distinguished season with a 17-6 record, setting an FGCU Division I record that included a perfect 6-0 record in the A-Sun and an 11-match win streak, winning the division’s regular season title, the 2015 A-Sun Championship and an appearance in the NCAA Championship, where it ultimately lost to UCLA.

Senior co-captains Jordi Vives and Tianyu Bao and senior Michael Beiler led the team all season. A Barcelona native, Vives ends his collegiate career as FGCU’s winningest tennis player.

Despite the loss to UCLA, FGCU coach CJ Weber said, “This is a great milestone for our program. We plan to grow the program more and more each year. I’m a very proud coach right now.”

On the women’s team, Sarah Means and Candela Munoz Giron each won her last respective home regular season match. They moved on to the A-Sun Championships as the third seed, falling to North Florida and ending the season with a 10-12 record.

“We are grateful for the investment the seniors have made and women’s tennis looks forward to being a part of their lives in a new way now that they will be alumni,” FGCU coach Courtney Vernon said.

SPORTS PAGES

(continued from previous page)

One player who can help replace the performances of Means and Giron next year could be junior Johanna Sterkel. The German native was a strong force in the middle of the Eagles' lineup this spring, clinching wins over opponents from Central Florida, No. 61 Georgia State, No. 59 South Florida and No. 9 Miami.

[SWIMMING]

FGCU's swimming and diving team perennially dominates the Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association Championship meet, but this year the Eagles took things to an unprecedented level.

FGCU not only won this spring's CCSA championship for the sixth time in seven years, but the Eagles registered the most dominating championship performance in meet history. FGCU recorded 1,575 points – 688 more than the most in CCSA Championship history. FGCU had the previous CCSA point-record of 887 set in 2009. By comparison, Liberty won last year's championship with 732.5 points, snapping FGCU's five-year consecutive run.

"Just a great feeling to win again," FGCU coach Neal Studd said. "The

girls deserve this. They have had an outstanding year. They stayed focused all year and worked so hard for this."

The team also marked its mid-major best 26th place at the 2015 NCAA Championships, accumulating 37.5 points during the fastest meet in the world of collegiate swimming, the most ever for the program and surpassing their total of 22 points in last year's meet.

[SAND VOLLEYBALL]

The Eagles sand volleyball team ended its spring campaign on a high note by winning two matches before the start of A-Sun Conference play.

FGCU swept Eckerd in April at Estero Community Park. Senior Olivia Mesner and sophomore Madi Wilcox have proved to be the team's most successful pair on the sand. Next year, Wilcox will help lead a team that will have FGCU's first sand-only signed scholarship players in Kellie Pernula and Katherine Puisis.

"We've stressed our first and second contact all season long and we firmly believe if we're going to make any progress it's going to be related to those things," FGCU coach Matt Botsford said.

-- Compiled by Chris Umpierre



Chris Sale and family

Chris Sale's jersey first retired

Former FGCU Baseball standout and current Chicago White Sox ace Chris Sale became the first former student-athlete in FGCU Athletics history to have his jersey retired.

The ceremony honoring No. 41 took place at the FGCU home men's basketball game versus Northern Kentucky on Jan. 31.

Sale is one of only six players in Major League Baseball history to play in the big leagues the same year he was drafted. He was selected 13th overall in 2010 following his junior season at FGCU. Since moving to the White Sox starting rotation in 2012, Sale has been an American League All Star every season, earning a victory in the 2013 All-Star game after pitching two perfect innings.

"For me it's kind of mind blowing to think about this," Sale said. "You don't think this kind of stuff is going to happen when you're starting out or when you're going through it. But what an honor. It's very humbling."

While at FGCU, Sale — who lives in the area in the offseason and remains a great supporter of FGCU — was named the Collegiate Baseball National Player of the Year in 2010 after posting a perfect 11-0 record with a 2.01 ERA over 17 games.

"Chris Sale has exemplified everything we want our program to be about on and off the field," head coach Dave Tollett said. "All throughout his career he has proved the doubters wrong, starting with all the schools that didn't recruit him. He has always done it the right way. I'm excited for him and I'm extremely proud to have been a part of his career." ■



Madi Wilcox

[TENNIS]

Many happy returns

Transferring to FGCU served tennis player Jordi Vives and the Eagles well.

FOR A YOUNG SPANIARD WHO SPOKE LITTLE ENGLISH WHEN HE decided to pursue higher education and a higher level of tennis in the United States, the University of Southern California would seem a great choice, especially after your freshman year culminates in an NCAA team championship.

For Jordi Vives, though, it wasn't the right fit.

"The number one and two players, they get the best scholarships," said Vives, who wound up making a limited contribution to the USC championship season: three wins at No. 6 singles and a couple more at No. 3 doubles. "It was never going to happen for me there."

Where it could happen is at a university such as Florida Gulf Coast, where a young head coach, CJ Weber, was quickly turning a program of perennial Atlantic Sun Conference bottom feeders into predators.

It was at the 2011-12 NCAA championship tournament in Athens, Ga., where then-Trojan assistant George Husack, now Alabama head coach, introduced Weber to Vives. The meeting turned out well. Weber was named 2014-15 Wilson/ITA Southeast Region and A-Sun Coach of the Year after guiding the Eagles to a volley of program firsts: undefeated conference season (6-0), A-Sun championship and NCAA Tournament bid on the strength of a 17-6 record.

At the forefront was Vives. His lanky, 6-foot-4 frame is topped by an easy smile and relaxed manner. He's a lover



Jordi Vives ranks among the nation's best tennis players.

of Italian food, chill music and Spanish-version prison movies ("Escape From Alcatraz" is a favorite).

Vives' decision to become an Eagle and bring what Weber calls "a great defensive game and the best slice in the country," led to a three-year record of 123 wins (47 doubles, 76 singles), including becoming the winningest singles player in FGCU Division I history with those 76 victories at the prestigious No. 1 slot. His 19-2 singles and 16-3 doubles record this year included a perfect 6-0 in A-Sun play, which earned Vives conference Player of the Year honors after two seasons on the all-conference team.

He credits much of that roll to his coach. "From day one, Coach gave me a lot of

confidence," Vives said. "I owe him a lot."

The only fault in an almost-flawless senior season might be that Vives, who entered 2014-15 ranked No. 35 nationally by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association, was unable to play enough top-ranked opponents in the spring to qualify for this year's separate NCAA singles tournament. In 2013-14, Vives won the first NCAA singles match in school history and reached the round of 32.

"It really didn't matter," said Vives, whose command of English has grown with his court game at FGCU, where he flourished as a communication major with a minor in marketing and advertising as a two-time A-Sun Academic All-Conference selection. "We made the NCAA as a team, which is most important. That's all I really cared about."

— Keith Gibson

President's gala celebrates strength of bond between university and community

Major gifts add to momentum of \$100-million campaign.

THE PRESIDENT'S CELEBRATION HAD PLENTY TO CELEBRATE THIS YEAR. The signature gala not only highlighted many of the qualities that make Florida Gulf Coast University special, it also paid tribute to \$4 million in giving.

That generosity was part of the \$100 million capital campaign currently under way to help promote five important FGCU initiatives: academic excellence, scholarships, student success, intercollegiate athletics and community and regional impact.

"Securing funding for these five priorities will ensure the continued momentum of growth of FGCU," said Miller Couse, chair of the FGCU Foundation Board. "Campaign success means serving the region and well beyond through advancements in science, engineering, health, business, education and the arts."

President Wilson G. Bradshaw thanked everyone who has supported the university, making special note of the generosity of members of the Order of the Majestic Eagle, the highest honor accorded top donors.

"The Majestic Eagles have changed the face of this university," he said. "The generosity from all the Majestic Eagles adds up to more than 1,400 acres of property donated to the university, 10 buildings, well over \$100 million, and their support has funded more than \$3.3 million in scholarships for our students. Thank you for your ongoing support of Florida Gulf Coast University."

New gifts celebrated that evening included \$1 million commitments by both Dean and Janie Shreiner and Jim



and Donna Sublett. Both gifts will benefit the Alico Arena expansion.

A unique element was a short performance by the Bower School of Music Percussion Quartet, followed by an audience participation piece led by Associate Professor Rod Chesnutt in which guests used their hands or feet to take part in a four-part rhythmic piece.

Couse, Bradshaw, Vice President and Provost Ron Toll and Vice President for Advancement Chris Simoneau also performed using a variety of rhythm instruments.

The point of all the percussion, said Simoneau, was to illustrate that "When we all joined in, the performance gained energy, depth, additional expertise and it gained everyone's attention. This is what happens when a community and a university work together. What was strong becomes stronger. What was good becomes great. Working hand in hand, we transform the community."

He likened the capital campaign to a musical ensemble, varying in volume and pace but taking on a life of its own as more people become engaged. ■



4



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6

1. Lise Laviolette, Beverly and Roy McTarnaghan, Marc Laviolette
2. Arden and Jacke McCurdy
3. James Winton, Linda Lehtomaa and Charles Winton
4. Jim and Lynn Knupp, Claudia and Thomas Corcoran
5. Michael Murray, Elizabeth Means, Azul, Ben Hill Griffin III, Emma Svensson and Debra Griffin
6. Chris Simoneau, Ron Toll and President Wilson G. Bradshaw
7. Pat and Bill Barton
8. George and Rebecca Fogg
9. Ray Rodrigues
10. Margaret Antonier, gala Grand Sponsor
11. Marc and Cheryl Giattini, Robbie and Jeff Roepstorff



7



8



9



10



11

Guigons receive foundation's highest honor

Couple motivated to help future generations make a difference.

WHEN JOHN GUIGON JOINED THE FGCU FOUNDATION Board of Directors in 1998, the university consisted of just a handful of buildings. But he and his wife, Dorothy, could see beyond the modest beginnings of Florida's 10th public university. They envisioned the promise of a better life and a better world that higher education could deliver for generations to come.

"That was the beginning of our love affair with FGCU," John Guigon recalls.

"It is important for young people to get an education – they are our future," Dorothy Guigon adds.

Through scholarships and other giving, the Bonita Springs couple help ensure education and a future for many FGCU students. Earlier this year, they consolidated their endowed funds to provide scholarships based on academic merit and pledged a deferred gift that will help the university attract and retain the most promising students in perpetuity.

In recognition of their generous support, the Guigons will be inducted in the Order of the Majestic Eagle, the FGCU Foundation's highest honor.

"Dorothy and John are great friends of the university, great fans and great supporters," says Chris Simoneau, FGCU Foundation Executive Director and Vice President for University Advancement. "FGCU is extremely fortunate that they have chosen to invest in the future through our students and programs."

The Guigons' legacy of learning goes well beyond the awarding of scholarships at FGCU. John served on the Board of Trustees of New Jersey City University until 1991, when he retired as vice



Dorothy and John Guigon

"The university has been an important factor in the growth of Lee County."

— John Guigon

president and general counsel for the pharmaceutical firm Schering-Plough. They also established a memorial at John's high school in honor of his best friend.

Dorothy was involved with environmental causes, including the Center for Environmental and Sustainability Education. More recently, she has been an advocate for FGCU's

new music therapy degree and is working with a partner to establish a program at The Terraces, a retirement community in Bonita Springs, which includes independent living, where the Guigons live, as well as assisted living, memory care and skilled nursing. Music therapy has been shown to be effective at engaging people with memory loss or Alzheimer's disease.

"We've really become enmeshed with FGCU and are pleased with what we see happening and what we hear when we talk to students on campus and at university functions," Dorothy says.

"The university has been an important factor in the growth of Lee County," adds John. "To continue that growth, interest and investment in FGCU has to continue." ■

Avid basketball fans contribute \$1 million for arena

DEAN AND JANIE SCHREINER ARE STRONG SUPPORTERS OF FGCU Athletics, funding scholarships for student-athletes and cheering on the teams as season ticket holders for both men's and women's basketball.

This year, they pledged \$1 million toward the \$7 million Alico Arena expansion and enhancement project. Their gift will be used for an expanded sports medicine area.

"Participation in student athletics is an invaluable experience," says Dean Schreiner, "and we strongly believe that sports are an essential preparation to a person's character for the working world."

His wife, Janie, says, "We are proud to support the expansion of the sports

medicine building as part of the Alico Arena expansion, and most importantly the talented Eagle student-athletes."

The couple became active members of the Eagles Scholarship Society, the highest annual giving designation for FGCU Athletics, when the men's basketball team made history in 2013, becoming the first No. 15 seed to make it to the NCAA Tournament Sweet 16. They created the first Schreiner Family Scholarship shortly thereafter. This year, their scholarship recipient was women's



Janie and Dean Schreiner

basketball player Taylor Gradinjan.

"We are indeed blessed to be the beneficiaries of Dean and Janie's unbelievable generosity," said FGCU Director of Athletics Ken Kavanagh. "Through this tremendous gift, we are afforded invaluable resources to further support our current and future student-athletes."

Those interested in donating to the athletics campaign should contact Graham Diemer at (239) 590-7117, or gdiemer@fgcu.edu. ■

Longtime supporters step up to fund Alico improvements

JIM AND DONNA SUBLETT HAVE AGAIN STEPPED UP TO ENHANCE THE student-athlete experience, committing \$1 million toward the expansion of Alico Arena.

The gift is earmarked for construction of a strength and conditioning facility exclusively for FGCU's 250 student-athletes. Their gift is part of the Department of Athletics' \$12 million capital campaign.

"Donna and I consider it an honor to be of assistance to the university," said Jim Sublett. "Many FGCU

student-athletes will continue to bring honor and recognition to the university, partially because of the excellent new facility to fine-tune their bodies, skills and talents. We feel blessed to be able to do this. Go Eagles!"



Donna and Jim Sublett

The Subletts have supported FGCU Athletics since the inaugural Division II season in 2002-03, when they donated their first scholarship and purchased one of Alico's skyboxes.

They have been active members of the Eagles Scholarship Society — the highest annual giving designation for

FGCU Athletics — and have donated several men's and women's basketball scholarships, in addition to funding enhancements to the men's basketball locker room multiple times.

The couple also funded the men's basketball hallway wrap, which lines the walls outside the team's locker room and prominently features indelible images of Dunk City's run to the Sweet 16 in 2013. They are floor-level, center-court season ticket holders for men's and women's basketball, and often travel to support the programs on the road as well.

"We are humbled to have such continued tremendous support from our wonderful friends Jim and Donna," said Director of Athletics Ken Kavanagh.

To learn more about the athletics capital campaign, visit FGCUAthletics.com/capitalcampaign. ■

Lesters provide additional support to Athletics department's expansion efforts at Alico Arena

LONGTIME FGCU SUPPORTERS BERNIE AND ELAINE LESTER HAVE stepped forward once again to assist the Athletics department, this time with its effort to expand and renovate Alico Arena.

The couple, who live in Lakeland, are basketball season ticket holders, Eagles Club members and previously have established an endowment that awards scholarships to students in Athletics and the Lutgert College of Business.

Bernie Lester has been closely associated with the university since its inception. He was one of the initial appointees to the FGCU Board of Trustees, serving until his term ended in January 2010. He was also a charter member of the Lutgert College of Business Advisory Committee. Currently,



Elaine and Bernie Lester

he is a member of the FGCU Foundation Board and the FGCU Financing Corp. Board of Directors.

The couple's most recent generous gift will go toward the expansion of Alico Arena. Asked what motivated them to give again, Elaine Lester said simply, "They needed it."

Her husband added, "We continue

to be impressed with the quality of the staff and the student-athletes, the way the whole program operates. How many programs are there where student-athletes' GPAs consistently exceed those of the student body while the teams achieve admirable win-loss records?"

The staff of the Athletics department has proven "they are good caretakers of the money we donate," he said.

In addition, the way in which the coaches all get along so well and work together appeals to them.

Athletics Director Ken Kavanagh said, "We so appreciate the support the Lesters have provided over the years. This recent gift will assist us in making Alico Arena a higher quality venue in which to hold events and train our student-athletes. We thank them for their continuing generosity." ■

Softball-loving family donates funds for video scoreboard

WHEN IT COMES TO SOFTBALL, THE HERTZOG FAMILY IS a devoted group, particularly when one of their own is on the field. Leo and Jean Hertzog's three granddaughters play the sport at Barron Collier High School in Naples. Next season, the eldest, Morgan Sutherland, will be a freshman at FGCU and will be joining the Eagle team.

Her grandparents are looking forward to seeing her compete at the Division I college level and hope to see her twin sisters follow in her footsteps.

The Naples couple, who involve themselves in a number of charitable

activities that benefit children, recently made a generous gift to the FGCU women's softball program. That gift will enable the FGCU Athletics program to purchase a video scoreboard for the softball stadium.

"We enjoy contributing to something worthwhile," says Leo Hertzog. "We give to a number of charities and this seemed a worthy effort."

The couple, who ran a packaging and shipping business in New Jersey prior to retiring in Naples, like the idea of having a university so close to their Florida home, especially one their grandchildren



Leo and Jean Hertzog

can attend so that they will still be close enough to visit often.

"We've been amazed by the development," says Jean Hertzog. "And we love women's softball. It's such a pure form of the game."

They anticipate taking in all of the Eagles' softball games, just as they have the high school games at Barron Collier.

Athletics Director Ken Kavanagh says the Hertzogs' gift "is so generous and will result in upgrading the softball experience both for the players and the fans. We are so grateful for the Hertzogs' support and look forward to hearing them cheer on the team next season." ■

Williamsses' gifts advance faculty development

MUSIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION HAVE LONG BEEN PILLARS of Myra N. and Van Zandt Williamses' philanthropic initiatives. Through their endowed scholarship fund for piano performance majors, they have helped FGCU's Bower School of Music to grow and to cultivate promising young artists such as Priscila Navarro, the international competition winner who performed a solo recital at Carnegie Hall.

Earlier this year, the Naples couple expanded their commitment to faculty development and academic excellence at FGCU by establishing funds for the Myra N. Williams Ph.D. Eminent Scholar in Science and the Myra & Van Williams Distinguished Professorship in Music. The funds will provide the means to pay for travel, research and other activities that benefit faculty and, ultimately, students.

"Certainly bricks and mortar are important to an institution, but the crucial elements for long-term success are the quality of the faculty and the quality of the students," Myra Williams says. "Top students will not attend unless they are confident that the faculty will be knowledgeable and inspirational. An endowed position assists in the recruitment and retention of talented faculty."

Michael Baron, founding professor of music and head of keyboard studies, is the first recipient of the distinguished professorship. He has an active career as a concert artist as well as a teacher, performing all over the world and frequently providing master classes to young musicians wherever he travels.

"Michael's outstanding recruitment has resulted in a number of fine piano performance students attending FGCU,"



Van Zandt and Myra N. Williams

Myra Williams says. "He is recognized not just for his talent as a concert artist and for his teaching ability but for his dedication to his students as well."

The Williamses' generosity will help ensure the continued success of the program, according to Chris Simoneau, FGCU Foundation Executive Director and Vice President for University Advancement.

"Myra Williams believes in our music program, and is investing to make sure it remains outstanding," he says. "Both Myra and Van know well the value of an investment in higher education, and we're grateful they have chosen FGCU to support."

The Williamses' shared passion for science inspired them to establish their

eminent scholar endowment. Myra earned a doctoral degree in molecular biology and biophysics at Yale University and spent her professional career as an executive in the pharmaceutical industry.

Van received a doctorate from Yale in physical organic chemistry but spent most of his career in charge of development at Princeton University.

They will work with FGCU to define the scientific focus of their endowment when it is fully funded, and it's likely to involve more than one field of study, Myra Williams says.

"We have been involved in diverse fields and recognize the synergy that results when tough problems are addressed through an interdisciplinary approach," she says. "Many of the most exciting discoveries are being made at the interfaces of multiple disciplines." ■

CLASS NOTES

► This world is but canvas
to our imaginations

[ALUMNI AWARDS]

Alumnus of Distinction

County Commissioner Brian Hamman proud to be an Eagle.

A WEEK AFTER RECEIVING FGCU'S 2015 ALUMNUS OF DISTINCTION ON A COLD February night, Brian Hamman had the award displayed in his office at the Lee Justice Center and a warm feeling in his heart. "It's the only award I'm displaying," says Hamman, who represents District 4 on the Lee County Commission, which sets the direction for a county of more than 650,000 people. "It really means a lot for me to win that.

"It's hard for me to talk about myself. It's not something I'm used to doing too much," he says. "I can certainly talk about my policies and platform like I did last year when campaigning. But to see that your school — the folks who trained you, taught you and sent you out into the world — is that proud of what you've done and what you've given back, that means a lot."

Winning the award — the highest honor bestowed by the Alumni Association — churned up some powerful memories for Hamman of his undergraduate days, which culminated in 2004 when he graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in communication.

For him, FGCU wasn't just a place where he became more educated.

"I remember robust debates in the classroom during the time when America was trying to decide whether or not to go to war in Iraq for a second time," he says. "I was a communication major and in public speaking we were being tasked with such assignments as debating the pros and cons of war.



Brian Hamman learned valuable skills at FGCU he still uses today.

"I remember for the first time being at a place where we could discuss our opinions and disagree, but in a respectful manner. It was the first time when truly I could listen to other people having different opinions and it was all OK that we had different opinions. We were

all given the same opportunity to share those differing opinions and ultimately learn from each other."

Hamman, a former news video-journalist at WINK-TV and news anchor at FOX 4 in Fort Myers, has been extremely active in the community, serving on the boards for United Way, YMCA Fort Myers and Champions for Learning in Collier County, and the executive committee of Cape Coral's Council for Progress.

He'll teach his 4-year-old daughter, Rebecca, all about community service when the time comes. For now, he's teaching her all about FGCU.

"She has a toddler-type basketball hoop," Hamman says. "She was playing other day and said, 'Daddy, I'm going to play for Dunk City someday.' I'll tell you what, I was so proud.

"I just can't even imagine what the school's going to look like by the time she's ready to start thinking about colleges. I certainly hope FGCU will be in her future."

— Rick Weber



President Wilson G. Bradshaw, Roy Brown, Advancement Vice President Chris Simoneau

Soaring Eagles Society

The FGCU Alumni Association recently inducted four graduates into its Soaring Eagles Society. Those honored have dedicated their time and resources to their communities and excelled in their professions within a decade of earning their degrees. These awards complement the Alumni of Distinction Society, which has been honoring graduates since 2004.

CASEY MOORMAN

Age: 28

Hometown: Tucson, Ariz.

Degree: B.A., Special Education with ESOL endorsement, 2009; M.Ed., Reading Education, 2013

Career: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher at Bonita Springs Middle School

Proudest moment: "This would be part of it, and being nominated for the Golden Apple by my students after only knowing me for a few weeks, and becoming a finalist."

What FGCU means to her: "It means a lot of things. I came here because it was small school at the time. This is where I grew. I was a very shy, quiet student when I was younger. (FGCU) brought

the best out of me. I got involved in everything. I was in Student Government and did a lot of volunteer projects. It helped me grow as a person and as a teacher."

Why she was nominated:

Fellow Eagle Rachel Mortimer nominated her because of her many contributions to the community. Mortimer writes, "She worked in Immokalee for three years. She taught English and reading to students with specific learning

ROY BROWN

Age: 31

Hometown: Naples

Degree: B.S., Marketing, 2007

Career: Acting lieutenant in the Bonita Springs Fire Control & Rescue District

Proudest moment: "This is definitely one of them. Besides this, reaching Eagle Scout. I didn't realize how really important that was at the time."

What FGCU means to him: "Basically, it was spreading my roots and finding out what kind of person I was. You really learn a lot about yourself, going through the whole process, what kind of person you are."

Why he was nominated: His brother and fellow Eagle, Gregory Brown, cited his dedication to area charities, including the Muscular Dystrophy Association. He wrote: "My brother inspires me through his dedication, discipline and hard work."

What award means to him: "Pretty phenomenal. I almost can't believe it still. It hits deep. I guess it means you're going down a good road. You're doing good things and helping some people along the way. I knew Soaring Eagles existed, but I didn't realize how few there are. It's an honor."

disabilities. (Then) she taught English in China for one year for The Walt Disney Co., returning to Immokalee to continue working with students with learning disabilities. She continues to work with underprivileged kids in Bonita Springs. She is the sole ESOL teacher for the middle school and is amazingly passionate about what she does."

What award means to her:

"I guess it's recognizing me for my work and the education that I got here. I was surprised. It's just a big surprise."

Casey Moorman



CLASS NOTES

(continued from previous page)

SHANE YOUNG

Age: 25

Hometown: Hackettstown, N.J.

Degree: B.A., Political Science, 2012

Career: Teacher at Goodlett Elementary School in Memphis; founder of Empower Memphis, a consumer-advocacy group that provides financial advice; and founder/president of Memphis Inner City Rugby, a free sports program for at-risk kids

Proudest moment: “Bringing kids with no guidance in their lives to the point where they can be motivated by a sport and dream bigger than where they come from, and to believe in themselves enough to go to college and beyond because of a sport they had never played before.”

What FGCU means to him: “It’s the foundation of when I became a leader.

It was all about becoming a leader in Student Government, public speaking as a tour guide, being challenged by great professors, being exposed to all kinds of people, places and things.”

Why he was nominated: His mother Donna Young nominated him, saying “Majoring in political science, Shane had to overcome the challenge of learning how to be a teacher while founding a nonprofit that would eventually impact hundreds of kids in Memphis and inspiring people around the sports world. He has truly embodied what it means to be a social servant as an advocate for economically disadvantaged kids in a city he had never been to before moving there.” And, she added, his legacy lives on at FGCU in the form of the rugby club he founded in 2011.

What award means to him: “It means a lot. It means that my school recognizes alumni who go on to do more than what’s expected — reaching above and beyond and making a difference in other people’s lives, which is the ultimate example of leadership.”



Arts and Sciences Dean Robert Gregerson, Shane Young, and his parents, Donna and Stephen Young.

JESSICA PEER

Age: 27

Hometown: Ocala

Degree: B.S., Human Performance, 2009

Career: Lee Memorial Health System board of directors, licensed Realtor, and personal trainer

Proudest moment: “I’ve been on a few committees with the health system, and it’s great being a part of the transition for preventative health and

wellness for the changes coming with healthcare. I think this is a pivotal point, especially with the generation I’m from and having a voice in this process.”

What FGCU means to her: “I came down on a softball scholarship.

To be a part of a winning program and such a great university, to have that opportunity and take advantage of that played a huge role in how I became the leader I am today.”

Why she was nominated: Mitchell Cordova, dean of the College of Health Professions and Social Work, submitted her name after working closely with her in her role on the Lee Memorial Health System Board of Directors, where he serves as a community consultant. “I have been impressed by her knowledge of Lee Memorial Health System’s needs, as well as the healthcare needs of the community,” he writes. “She is a very honest person who strives to be the very best she can. And she is a young publicly elected official who has earned the respect of our community and corporate leaders.”

What award means to her: “It’s an honor and I’m very humbled. It was a shock to me.”

Jessica Peer



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[WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS AND BIRTHS]

'08

Jennifer Dion, (Communication) married Nathan Bruce in October in Tallahassee. Jennifer works for Florida State University's Office of Research. Nathan works for Medicaid.

Ryan Kowadla, (Master's, Business Administration), and his wife, Brooke, welcomed their first son, Alexander Kowadla, on March 12. He weighed 7 pounds, 15 ounces and was 21 inches long. Ryan is a portfolio advisor for Merrill Lynch in Naples and a member of the FGCU Alumni Association Board of Directors.

'12

Elizabeth Booker, (Communication), and **Brandon Booker**, '13 (Environmental Studies), married in April 2014 at White Orchid at Oasis in Fort Myers. They live in Charlotte, N.C., where Elizabeth is pursuing a master's in communication studies and works as a graduate assistant for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Brandon is a water treatment plant operator for Charlotte-Mecklenburg County.



'14

Ryan Pickering, (Management), married Emilie Rosenberger in September. The couple live in St. Augustine.

Danielle Von Behren, (Master's, Educational Leadership), and **Keith Von Behren**, '10 (Master's, Business Administration), welcomed their second child, Kolton Jacob Von Behren, on Oct. 2. He weighed 8 pounds, 11 ounces and was 20 inches long. Danielle is a math coach at Edgewood Academy in Fort Myers and Keith is a revenue officer for the U.S. Treasury. They live in Cape Coral.



[NEWSMAKERS]

'99

Lorraine McCann, (Master's, Counselor Education), received the Advocate of the Year award at the Florida Mental Health Counselors Association's annual conference. The award is given to individuals who demonstrate passion and action in advocating for the mental health counseling profession. She is the chair of the Gulfcoast Mental Health Counselors legislative committee and co-chair of the Florida Mental Health Counselors Association. She lives in Naples.



'01

Amy English, (Human Services), was promoted to director of sales and marketing at The Terraces at Bonita Springs. She was a sales counselor for the past three years. She lives in Estero.

'02

Nola Theiss, (Master's, Public Administration), was selected as one of WGCU Public Media's "2015 MAKERS: Women Who Make Southwest Florida." She is executive director of Human Trafficking Awareness Partnerships. Honorees are chosen based on their lasting impact upon the arts, business, education, environment, health/wellness, politics and social justice in Southwest Florida. She lives in Fort Myers.

'03

Jorge López, (Master's, Business Administration), received the annual Special Recognition Award by the FGCU Athletics Department for providing a superior level of service and support to student-athletes in their pursuit of academic and athletic success. He has contributed his time and talents as both a member of the NCAA Certification Review Steering Committee and as the chair of the Athletics Equity & Diversity subcommittee. He is



FGCU's director of student financial services.

Christy Thrasher, (Art), is a senior designer at Louey/Rubino Design Group in Santa Monica, Calif., specializing in branding, visual identity and communication for international luxury hospitality brands. She recently completed a project, Rosewood London, that received honors by Virtuoso as the 2014 Luxury Hotel of the Year.

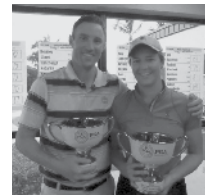
'04

Kevin Price, (Communication), was appointed by Florida Gov. Rick Scott to the FGCU Board of Trustees. He is a sales leader of technology information and consulting at Gartner. He lives in Estero.

'05

Victor Tejera, (Master's, Social Work), was published in the MedCrave Online Journal of Public Health. His article, "Field-based Action Learning Capstone Project: Work-Life Balance and Mental Health Professionals," and was a component of his doctorate of education in organizational and human resource development at Barry University. He lives in Miami.

Chris Trout, (Management), and **Brittany Bertilson**, '06 (Resort & Hospitality Management), won the South Florida PGA Mixed Team golf tournament with a score of 66. The event featured 27 teams each consisting of one male and one female competing in an 18-hole, four-ball format. The couple are engaged and plan to marry this year.



'06

John Reilly, (Applied Science), received the Chief Fire Officer designation from the Center for Public Safety Excellence. Of the roughly 3 million U.S. firefighters, only 3,000 have earned this accreditation. He lives in Naples.

Nelson Stephenson, (Master's, Educational Leadership), was selected by the City of Cape Coral's Charter School Governing Board as the new superintendent. He and his wife, Rosica, have two children and live in Cape Coral.

CLASS NOTES

(continued from previous page)

'07

Carolyn Greene, (Communication), recently starred in "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf" at the Black Box Theatre at Florida SouthWestern State College. She was one of eight women, each identified by wearing a different color, to represent various aspects of the same woman. She played the Lady in Purple. The play is a series of poems that express a woman's journey to find self-love and creativity. She is the community outreach specialist in the Office of Diversity and Community Outreach at FGCU.

Michael Ilcyszyn, (Environmental Studies), was appointed the assistant city manager in Cape Coral. He is pursuing his master's degree in public administration from FGCU.

Gabriela Marquez, (Psychology), is the new assistant director of aquatics and instructional programs in the Department of Recreational Sports at Virginia Tech. She lives in Fancy Gap, Va.



'08

Jennifer Hamilton, (Communication), was nationally recognized by PR News and named a Rising PR Star Under 30. She was honored during PR News' awards luncheon in December at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. She is an account supervisor in the Tampa office of Hill + Knowlton Strategies, a global public relations firm.

'09

Megan Kennedy, (Health Science), has joined Discovery Village at Naples as executive director. Previously she was the executive director at Memory Care of Naples. She lives in Bonita Springs.

Angela Lopez, (Master's, Social Work), was promoted to clinical supervisor for Outpatient Services at the David Lawrence Center. She is licensed by the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work and is fluent in English and Spanish. Lopez has been a member of the David Lawrence Center team since 2010, working as an admissions and outpatient clinician. She lives in Naples.

'10

Steven Shelfer, (Master's, Health Services Administration), was recently appointed by Gov. Rick Scott to the Clinical Laboratory Personnel Board as a committee member to serve 2014-2016. He is employed by Florida Hospital in Tampa as a clinical lab technologist.

Kara Siefert, (Marketing), was promoted to vice president-account director at Pearl Brands. She joined the company in 2012 as an account executive and has expanded her role and responsibilities to her current position. She is in charge of all account management at the branding agency. She lives in Fort Myers.



'11

Adam Molloy, (Master's, History), is one of six teachers who received the prestigious Golden Apple award in Lee County. In his position as a history teacher at Fort Myers High School, he engages students by using song, dance and poetry to capture their interest. Each recipient receives a \$3,000 cash award, a membership in the Academy of Teachers, and an invitation to Collegium for the Advancement of Education.

'12

Tiffany Esposito, (Master's, Business Administration), recently joined the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce as the chief of staff. She also serves as a member on the FGCU Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Justin Helmus, (Master's, Business Administration), is one of the 2015 30 under 30 Honorees announced by REALTOR Magazine. The honorees demonstrate some of the best traits the real estate industry has to offer. He is a broker/owner with Gulf Life Realty Group. He lives in Largo.

Jennifer Joyce, (Child and Youth Studies), accepted an internship at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn. This will complete her final semester in the master's of public administration program.

'13

Ritisha Hall, (Resort & Hospitality Management), graduated from Army National Guard basic training at Fort Jackson, Columbia, S.C. She is working toward opening a massage clinic for low-income families. She lives in Jacksonville.

'14

Sara Foley, (Master's, Family Nurse Practitioner), has joined Physicians' Primary Care of Southwest Florida as an advanced registered nurse practitioner. She will assist pediatric physicians in the Lehigh Acres and Cape Coral offices.

[IN MEMORIAM]

'11

Melody Lynn, (Resort & Hospitality Management), died Jan. 13. She was 29. She was a Florida Everblades cheerleader, taught dance at the Competitive Edge Dance Studio in Cape Coral, and was a mentor at the Gulf Elementary School Drama Club. After a lung transplant in July 2012 necessitated by cystic fibrosis, she enjoyed more than 2 years of vastly improved health and made the most of it. She said, "The only thing I've ever wanted to do was to inspire somebody, whether it be through dance, school, whatever, I want to inspire people to do what they want to do... to go further than they thought they could." She is survived by her parents, Ginger and Michael Lynn, as well as her grandparents, and other family members.



'14

William James Detyens III, (Finance), died Feb. 14 in Charleston, S.C. as the result of a car accident. He was 23. He was the son of William James Detyens II and Pamela Allison Detyens Blanchard. He loved boating, scuba diving, fishing, hunting and football. He was a member of the Kappa Alpha fraternity.

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Attention: Alumni Relations, 10501 FGCU Blvd. S., Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565

►'05

Tony Korson

Alum building league of his own for sports-minded youngsters.

TONY KORSON IS PASSING ON HIS PASSION FOR SPORTS TO THE NEXT generation, along with a healthy dose of camaraderie, fair play and team spirit.

A 2005 FGCU graduate, Korson is the founder and CEO of Koa Sports, a nonprofit in the Washington, D.C. area that offers sports programs for kids between the ages of 6 and 18.

It's a natural progression for Korson, who played baseball as a youngster and was a left-handed pitcher on FGCU's first-ever baseball team. He heard about FGCU through a college advising program, visited the campus and fell in love with the weather, the baseball program, his teammates and his professors. His degree in finance has served him well as a business owner.

Korson, 32, returned to the Washington area where he grew up and founded Next Level Baseball, which trained and placed nearly 30 high school ball players in universities around the country.

But while baseball was his passion, Korson says it was difficult to make a living on one sport.

He remembered the vital role his coaches and mentors played in his life and wanted to pass that on to other youngsters.

Koa aims to "shape kids' lives through sports" using four core attributes — Positive, Dedicated, Team First and Fun — and runs the leading sports leagues in the nation's capital and Montgomery County, Md., an area with a population of nearly 1.7 million.

With four sports to choose from —



Tony Korson, far right, runs a nonprofit sports program for kids in Washington, D.C.

baseball, girls' field hockey, flag football and basketball — Korson says his players learn not only about sports, but about life.

"With all the video games and iPads out there, it's difficult for kids to build relationships," he says. "That's what we're all about."

Koa handles registration, scheduling, uniforms, coaching and administration using a paid staff of nine and 200 part-timers, most of them coaches. "Most youth leagues use volunteers and parents as coaches," he says. "Ninety-five percent of our staff is trained and paid."

The organization derives its income from registration fees.

In addition to league play, Koa — the Hawaiian word for strength — offers

well-attended summer camps, skills clinics, all-star games and tournaments.

Korson has maintained close ties to FGCU. He's hired several FGCU students as coaches for his summer camps, and in the past three summers, five FGCU baseball players have participated in Koa's collegiate team. Korson finds them host families and doesn't charge them to participate.

He hopes his sports program will be around for generations to come, just like the baseball league that taught him teamwork and sportsmanship when he was a youngster.

"We've seen a lot of success stories, and they only continue to grow."

— Sue Beard

FOR MORE INFO

Visit www.koasports.org.

Runway Earth



IN WHAT'S BECOME SOMETHING OF AN ANNUAL TRADITION, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MARY Voytek's art students offer a creative approach to the spring Earth Day observance with "Runway Earth: Fashions for a Sustainable Planet." The objective: create and model garments crafted from recyclable, natural or industrial materials. Photographer James Greco captured some of the outfits. The Earth Day celebration, held in early April, also featured a farmers market, a cooking demonstration using ingredients from the FGCU Food Forest, a poetry reading, a tree planting and other green activities. ■

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



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