President Bradshaw takes stock at 5 years ▶ Chris Sale on life in big leagues
Wetlands guru heads new research park ▶ Student musicians love all that jazz

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FGCU student Quincy Hosey helps paint the Gulf Coast Humane Society building in Fort Myers during Make a Difference Day.
ON THE WEB

- Catch up with classmates: Read about fellow alumni and enter your own news item.
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- The President says: Learn what President Wilson G. Bradshaw has on his mind.
- Photo galleries: See pictures from recent FGCU events.
- Roll ‘em: View videos of events and behind-the-scenes stories about FGCU.
- The big story: Read about the people and programs that make the university so dynamic.
- Sports: Get the latest news on FGCU’s sports teams.

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Q: What do you consider the major high points of your first 5 years at FGCU?

A: It’s been an exciting time of growth and expansion so it’s hard to narrow it down. I’d include the implementation of the first two doctoral degrees (in education and physical therapy), the establishment of the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering as a stand-alone academic unit, the increase in fund raising that provides much-needed scholarships for our students, the installation of the solar field – which currently saves us $400,000 per year in energy costs, the institution of the Planning and Budget Council with cross-university representation, and the successful transition to NCAA Division I athletics. The increase in enrollment – with more than 4,000 additional students receiving access to higher education – is noteworthy, particularly in light of the reduction in state funding during the same period. Among the significant changes involving students are the increased diversity, the rise in the number of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) majors, and the increase in the number of students living on campus.

All three of those numbers more than doubled over the past 5 years. We’re seeing a growing number of students from outside the five-county Southwest Florida region. Overall, the name recognition of the university has improved. People know our reputation for quality better than ever.

Q: What about the university’s impact on the region?

A: A 2010 study (the most recent available) shows that FGCU’s annual economic impact has been substantial, with $345 million in expenditures, 3,119 jobs created, and $144 million in labor income. At a time when our region has experienced a serious economic downturn, FGCU’s contributions helped a great deal, particularly in the construction industry. Almost no one was building, but the university completed a number of new structures, including Lutgert Hall, Holmes Hall, Marieb Hall, the Music Building, the expansion of the Cohen Center, and all of South Village student housing.

Q: What are some of your current concerns?

A: Overall, my concern is how do we manage our resources in a manner that does not have a negative impact on the quality education our students expect and deserve? I am proud of what FGCU’s faculty and staff have done to continue offering students an excellent education despite repeated cuts in state funding. While we now have 4,082 more students than 5 years ago, FGCU received $14.7 million less in General Revenue state funding this year than 5 years ago. We’ve become even more efficient, but we’ve also had to raise tuition and increase class sizes. Still, it is gratifying to see that 4,208 students now live on campus, up from 1,984 in 2007.

Q: What are your goals for the coming 5 years?

A: I think we’re entering into an exciting phase of enhancement and fine tuning.
We’re not spreading our roots as wide; instead, we’re now going deeper. We must continue to focus on student success to insure that students graduate on time. In the long run, that saves money. The creation last year of the Office of Dean of Undergraduate Studies is helping us enhance how we create synergy between the classroom and the social aspects of the university experience. I think positioning faculty fellows and holding classes in the residence halls as we are doing for our freshmen students helps maximize use of the facilities and enhances campus life and student success.

We also will examine how we can expand the use of technology to offer more of our courses and degrees online. Currently we offer a number of graduate degrees online including the Master’s in Business Administration, the Master’s in Public Administration, and the Master’s in Health Science, among others. While many of our undergraduate students also take courses online, our focus has been on providing online programs for working adults. I believe we will be doing more of this in the future.

Q: What about future construction?

A: I’m hoping that this year the state legislature will approve a second appropriation for the Innovation Hub (IHUB). When we can construct the building (a research facility to be located on the property just north of the university on Alico Road), we’ll be able to expand and showcase our renewable energy programs and research. It will give us a way to bring together public and private sector partners in creative and important ways.

Students have voiced strong support for a new recreation and fitness center. Our existing center was constructed when we had far fewer students, and we’ve outgrown it. With more than 4,000 students living on campus and a student body of roughly 13,500, there’s a need for a larger facility.

As enrollment grows, we’ll need additional classrooms, residence halls and other buildings. We’ve come a long way, but we’re not there yet. 

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

(continued from previous page)
A toast to diversity

LOOKING AT THE ARTICLES CONTAINED IN THIS ISSUE OF PINNACLE, I AM REMINDED OF a glass of fine wine.

Or, to be more precise, the elements responsible for producing that glass of wine.

Terroir is the mystical, not-quite-describable quality that causes a glass of chardonnay from France to taste completely different from that produced in California. It starts with the soil in which the grapes are grown, but it also encompasses the minerals that soil holds as well as the influences of altitude, climate, geography and even the age of the vines. All of those factors come together to create something that seems greater than the sum of its parts.

As I page through the magazine, it occurs to me that a similar process is taking place at Florida Gulf Coast University. As the university grows, it attracts a more diverse population, enhancing the educational experience in the process.

This year, for the first time, the number of students coming from outside Southwest Florida is just about equal to the number from within that five-county area. They bring with them a fresh perspective as well as customs and talents that are new to us. Among these are swimmers Danielle Beaubrun and Karen Vilorio, from St. Lucia and Honduras, respectively, who competed in this year’s summer Olympics in London.

We also have theater students who can, among other things, craft startlingly realistic wounds from makeup, a talent that proved invaluable during the recent disaster drill at the Southwest Florida International Airport.

A similar range of talents and experiences can be found among the faculty and staff.

We welcome our first Juliet C. Sproul Chair for Southwest Florida Habitat Restoration and Management Bill Mitsch, who brings with him a wealth of wetlands knowledge, which will likely enhance the quality of our waters and help inspire the environmental scientists of tomorrow.

Then there’s the Vester Station and its many marine resources, which attract researchers from all over the world.

Add to that the rich cross-cultural experiences of our Fulbright scholars, who have lived and worked among people in far-flung lands such as China, Tunisia and Croatia. Surely those experiences inform their perspective and teaching practices when they return to Fort Myers.

I believe that all these unique individuals enhance the university in much the same way as sun, rain and other forces of nature affect the soil in which wine grapes grow. While our region may never win over discriminating oenophiles, our increasingly complex university is already making a name for itself well beyond the boundaries of our own terroir.

Karen Feldman  
Editor  
kfeldman@fgcu.edu
Hunt like a Calusa Indian

Picture your average-Joe Pleistocene hunter heading out to bring home the bacon and encountering a meaty 14-foot mammoth. "Holy smokes!" he grunts. "I need to get me some backup."

So Homer Erectus rounds up his posse, and they all creep back to spear their ginormous quarry using their trusty atlatls. That's one mammoth meal for the village.

A precursor to the bow used to shoot arrows, the atlatl (at-LAT-ul) is an ancient tool that uses the force of leverage to propel a spear much faster and farther than it could be thrown by hand alone. Early humans in the Americas wielded the primitive weapon some 11,000 years B.C., according to the World Atlatl Association; archaeologists have unearthed them at ancient Calusa Indian sites at Marco Island.

"It's really easy to use," says Melissa Timo, outreach coordinator for the Florida Public Archaeology Network's Southwest Region, which is based at FGCU. "You don't need to have a lot of strength. It's kind of an equalizing tool – women and children can use it. It takes a whole community to kill a mammoth."

Timo demonstrated for Pinnacle's cameras, aiming at a target instead of prehistoric megafauna. A spur at the end of the 2-foot-long atlatl supported the 5-foot dart she loaded on top of the wooden shaft. Like a tennis player serving, she thrust her arm forward, snapping her hand to release the dart, which wobbled a bit through the air before hitting the target (or the grass surrounding it).

"Anyone who gets a chance to shoot a spear feels that primeval power," Timo says.

– Drew Sterwald
[ HOT TOPIC ]

New pantry nourishes students’ bodies and minds

SOON AFTER THE NEW FGCU CAMPUS FOOD PANTRY OPENED IN AUGUST, a student stopped in to find out if he’d be able to pick up some food about two weeks hence. He still had enough tuna and soup to supplement his meal plan for a few more days and declined to take any food, but he returned when he was down to bread, lettuce and tomatoes.

It is for students like him that an on-campus food pantry opened Aug. 13. Operated two days a week by FGCU volunteers, it occupies a small room in the Music Modular building.

Shelves are stacked with canned goods, ramen noodles, cereal, rice, frozen meats, fresh produce and even diapers. To help students add variety to their meals, the pantry offers recipes from a book called “Fun with Ramen Noodles.”

The FGCU pantry is part of a trend nationwide. Other schools operating pantries include the University of Arkansas, the University of Georgia, Oregon State and Utah Valley University.

“Most people don’t realize that middle-class students who once survived on loans, small scholarships and family support can no longer depend on their families for financial assistance,” says Debora Haring, FGCU assistant director of Graduate Studies and a member of the Campus Food Pantry steering committee. “Their parents could send extra money each month to help pay for food and other necessities, but many parents can no longer afford to assist their students because they are unemployed.”

The idea for a food pantry came about when rumors of students going hungry began to make the rounds. Jo Anna Bradshaw, wife of FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw and the board chairperson of the Harry Chapin Food Bank, had served on the Southwest Florida Hunger Task Force with Debora. With the help of Michele Yovanovich, FGCU dean of students, they surveyed 867 students and discovered 55 percent knew of at least one FGCU student who was missing meals because of finances.

A steering committee composed of administrators, faculty, staff and students spent the better part of a year putting everything in place.

The FGCU Campus Food Pantry is a partner agency of the Harry Chapin Food Bank, which allows recipients to secure donated canned foods, meats and fresh produce at no charge. If they choose to participate in a food purchase program for staples, they can do so at prices lower than at supermarkets. All funds raised by the FGCU Cares Team of students, faculty and staff through the annual hunger walk (which takes place Jan. 19) benefit the campus effort.

Why set up a food bank on campus?

It is, Bradshaw says, “our way of helping those in our front yard,” meaning it’s a problem that should be at the forefront of our minds, rather than out of sight.

Haring adds, “If we can help our students as a stopgap measure so they can complete their education, everything changes for them.”
State of excitement
Alumni find political arena challenging, rewarding.

At Florida Gulf Coast University, students learn about the intricate workings of government. After graduation, a growing number of alums are going to work in that government, helping craft legislation and serve constituents.

Mike Nachef, ('10, Political Science), is a legislative aide for state Sen. Garrett Richter, R-Naples. The 24-year-old, who also graduated from Naples' Lely High School, learned a lot about leadership while at FGCU, in part by spending 2 ½ years as a student assistant to President Wilson G. Bradshaw. That helped prepare him for part of his job — constituent services. "I learned to be a good listener," Nachef says. "As a political science major, I learned the ins and outs of how to draft policy."

He splits his time between Tallahassee and Southwest Florida, helping Richter draft legislation, manage his Lee County office and guide bills.

Amanda Fortuna, 29, began working for state Rep. Trudi Williams, R-Naples, in 2006, after graduating with a degree in political science the previous year. "Some days can be your typical eight-hour work day while other days (especially in Tallahassee) can be 12-15 hours," Fortuna says. "During committee weeks and (the legislative) session, my main focus is working on legislation that my boss has filed. So my job can include research, speaking to committee staff and interested parties about any issues or feedback they have on our bills, drafting press releases or garnering support for the legislation in the House. After session we really focus on constituent issues."

She recalls her first trip to the state Capitol. "Walking into the House chamber is a very humbling experience," she says. "You're walking through history and you are standing where a lot of great men and women stood before. You realize you are a part of something a lot bigger than yourself."

Kim Diaz, ('11, Communication), served as president of Student Government and worked for Eagle News, the FGCU student newspaper. She's now working with Rep. Joseph Abruzzo, D-Wellington, in his run for the state Senate. Diaz says her duties are the "day-to-day functions of the campaign." That includes arranging meetings with groups in the district and organizing financial matters. Her job takes her all over the district, from rural communities such as Belle Glade and Pahokee, into urban settings like West Boca Raton.

She's discovered running a campaign is not a 9-to-5 Monday-through-Friday job. "You truly have to love it to stick with it," Diaz says. "And I surely do."

Ron Angerer, ('09, Political Science), is interning this fall with the Florida Supreme Court. "You truly have to love it to stick with it," Diaz says. "And I surely do."

"I've had my heart set on being a lawyer since high school," says Angerer, who attends Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville. He has a 3.84 GPA and went on a legal internship in Washington, D.C., last summer. Angerer wants to be a trial lawyer when he graduates. He interned this fall with the state attorney's office in Fort Pierce and will intern next summer with the Florida Supreme Court. Angerer says he has always loved law and politics. "I like working with people and I like the idea of winning," he says.

"If I didn't do this I would just be a lawyer," Angerer says. "I'm so excited to be doing this. It's an absolute dream come true."

"I've had a good education here. FGCU is a good school. It's a solid school," Angerer says. "If you put in the work you're going to get a good education here."

"It's a very challenging field, and it's very different from a corporate job," Angerer says. "You have to be very good at public speaking and at writing."

"I don't know what I would be doing if I didn't do this," Angerer says. "You learn a lot about yourself and you learn a lot about people. You learn a lot about society."

"It's a very rewarding field," Angerer says. "It's very hard work, but it's very rewarding work."

"I've been doing this since I was eight years old," Angerer says. "I've been doing this since I was eight years old. It's been a dream of mine since I was eight years old."
KEVIN PIERCE is host and producer of “The Florida Environment” on WGCU-FM and other Florida public radio stations. He lives in Fort Myers.

ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME
NEWS ITEM — La Lola Loca, a food truck, offers a new late-night food option at FGCU.

Among the events every parent should track as their progeny’s age is proceeding: The miraculous moment a midnight snack replaces their 2 a.m. feeding.

SPELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT
NEWS ITEM — FGCU students have formed a group to play Quidditch—the fictional game popularized in J.K. Rowling’s novels, which requires both wizardry and the ability to fly.

Apart they stand, like oil and water, the younger and the older sort: one plays with brooms like Harry Potter; one brays and fumes like Voldemort.

OWNER’S REMORSE
NEWS ITEM — A new service provides by-the-hour car use from the FGCU campus.

They cram for exams to own what is known and to memorize facts monumental. But when pressed with the test, and they’ve essayed and guessed, they’d have passed it with barely a rental.

MORNIN’ AFTER PILL
NEWS ITEM — In addition to its strong political activities for the November election, FGCU now has an alumnus and a staff member in elected office.

Wish it could last? Or pray it undone? Depends on if your guy lost or won. Warmed by the outcome? Or needing defrost? Depends on if your guy won or lost. Need a new battle? Need a new friend? Depends on if your guy’s still yours at the end.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE, PART II
Among FGCU alumni to find stimulating government work is Brad Piepenbrink (’08 Public Relations/Marketing), who serves as an assistant to Gov. Rick Scott. Pinnacle was unsuccessful in contacting him for this story but plans to follow up for a future issue.

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Raymond Rodrigues

Budget manager now serves as state representative, too.

AS A 10-YEAR-OLD GROWING UP IN THEN-PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER’S HOME STATE, Raymond Rodrigues discovered he was the only fifth-grade student to vote for Ronald Reagan in a Brunswick, Ga., mock election in 1980. The show of hands proved it.

Today, Rodrigues, 42, has a photo of Reagan on his office wall at Florida Gulf Coast University’s College of Arts and Sciences, where he serves as budget manager.

Reagan inspired him to become a Republican, through his “commitment to conservative values, unwavering optimism and his strong belief in the American people,” Rodrigues says.

It inspired him to run for office himself. In August, he won the Dist. 76 Florida House seat in the Republican primary, defeating Chauncey Solinger and Mike Grant. No Democrats ran.

As Rodrigues juggles his new role as a state representative with his FGCU duties, he plans to emulate Reagan’s values and continue his active role on campus, where he also advises the FGCU College Republicans club.

“There is meaning to this job,” says Rodrigues, who arrived at FGCU in 2006 after working for General Electric and Bill Smith Appliances and Electronics Co. in Fort Myers. “We know we are impacting the lives of students for the better, and that impact has a ripple effect. People with college degrees are more likely to volunteer in their community, give to charities, have good health – and they’re less likely to need government assistance.”

He knows about volunteers. Some 96 people donated 1,400 hours to his campaign. His Aug. 14 victory and swearing in Nov. 20 show the results of grassroots efforts, he says.

The House seat comes with two full-time staffers, and Rodrigues balances daily university and governmental duties by planning meetings after work or on weekends. During the legislative session in March and April in Tallahassee, he’ll take unpaid leave from FGCU, turning the budgetary duties over to his cross-trained staff of Norm Walker and Tina Pollock.

The 2012 election was Rodrigues’ fourth office run. He lost a 2004 bid for Lee County Elections Supervisor and a 2008 Lee County School Board bid. He won a 2006 election to the Stoneybrook Community Development District, where he lives in Estero. He served as vice chair of the Lee County Republican Executive Committee 2010-12.

“I’ve always been interested in public service,” says Rodrigues. “I’ve worked at the grassroots level, and I think I can help in Tallahassee.”

— Betsy Clayton
Melody Lynn: Clearing the air

New lungs allow her to resume the dance of her life.

Melody Lynn has learned to breathe again. A lung transplant gave her the gift of her “new gems.” The woman with cystic fibrosis now breathes in and out with her diaphragm, no longer gasping up and down for air. A physical therapist held her by her ribcage until she learned the motion. Such support has inspired the 2011 resort and hospitality management graduate to apply to the university’s physical therapy doctoral program because, she says, “I know what it’s like to be the patient.”

Her call came at 5:01 a.m. July 12. Her father put down his bowl of cereal and picked up the phone. Tampa General Hospital was on the other end: “We think we have new lungs for you.” The Lynns hit the road by 5:30.

There was no traffic on the road. Exiting the highway, a Carrie Underwood song came on the radio: “Jesus, Take the Wheel.” Melody turned to her mom, “There’s your sign.”

The phone call, the drive, the blood work went fast. Then the woman who put off her transplant last year so she could walk for graduation had 10 hours to sit with her thoughts. The new lungs looked good on paper. Would the donor’s tissues be torn? Would her organs be bruised? Would this be a dry run?

Lynn sat in a room with a digital clock. Each hour, each minute, each second illuminated. Her pulmonologist walked in and patted her on her head. “These are excellent. They’re pretty pink lungs,” he said.

Her family huddled around her outside the operating room doors. The orderly pushing her bed stood aside. He let everyone step up and kiss her, tell her it was going to be OK. Then he rolled her away.

The surgeon replaced her lungs one at a time, first her right, then her left. At 4 the next morning, he told her parents the surgery went beautifully and they could see her soon. Initially, they could get no closer than looking at her through a sliding glass door. She could not lift her arm to wave, so she gave them a flap of her hand.

The next day she was on a stationary bike. Three days later, she was walking down the hall. Two months later, she was dancing again. Now she’s blowing up balloons.

As Pinnacle goes to print, Lynn’s lungs are functioning at 98 percent, the best her pulmonary function has ever been. She’s running her dog around the block. She’s racing her Grandma down department-store aisles. She’s going on dates and planning her travels, her scars underneath her shoulder blades, like wings.

“I’ve got to make my life so much bigger because it’s not just me,” the 27-year-old says of her donor. “She missed out, so I’ve got to do everything ten times bigger, not just for me, but for her.”

Cystic fibrosis no longer keeps Melody Lynn from dancing.

“Where’s the bookstore?” is probably one of the first questions asked by visitors on their first tour of any university campus. Who doesn’t want a university T-shirt or other logo-laden souvenir? FGCU’s bookstore began as a modest space in a modular village before moving to Howard Hall and finally to an 8,000-square-foot section of the student union, now called the Cohen Center. The building’s 2011 expansion added 4,000 square feet. Bookstore Manager Laura Jensen compiled some interesting numbers for Pinnacle.

Logo a go-go

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1,426 Assorted textbooks selected by FGCU faculty for use in Fall 2012.

842,637 Dollars students saved in Summer and Fall 2012 terms through used books, rental and digital options. Nearly 650 required textbooks were available for rent this fall.

43 Online textbook orders processed for Fall 2012.

4,486 Digital textbooks sold from January through October 2012. Manufactured by Pure Country Weavers in Lynn, N.C., the dual-layer woven throw measures 48 inches by 69 inches and costs $56.

209 FGCU afghans sold from January through October 2012. The 9 ½-inch mascot toy comes dressed in a blue basketball jersey bearing the FGCU Athletics logo. It sells for $18.
Different ways of making a difference

FGCU, Wells Fargo team up to help area organizations.

FGCU students ducked under spider webs, eyed abandoned snake skins and stepped around piles of wildlife scat to clean up trails at Bonita Nature Place on Make a Difference Day.

None of the natural hazards ruffled Tatiana Rodriguez, a freshman business management major from West Palm Beach, who joined a team of volunteers to help rake trails, prune overgrown plants and pull weeds. Bonita Nature Place provides a setting for outdoor activities, learning and volunteerism while encouraging environmental stewardship and building awareness of local natural history.

“I don’t mind – I really enjoy it,” she said. “Anyone can make a difference. You don’t realize how much you can learn while doing this.

“This is a really unique place. You can hear the urban sounds, but it has all these different environments.”

Rodriguez was one of nearly 200 volunteers from Florida Gulf Coast University and Wells Fargo who gathered Oct. 27 to help out at six area organizations on national Make a Difference Day. They gardened, painted, packed groceries and walked homeless dogs at organizations in Fort Myers, Bonita Springs and Naples.

Volunteers at the Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida packed about 7,000 pounds of cucumbers and squash to be distributed to local food pantries. The agency processes about 15 million pounds of food a year, President and CEO Al Brislain told volunteers.

“The food you packed today is going out to 160 nonprofits that serve 30,000 people a month,” he said. “Fresh produce has a limited shelf life. Having volunteers to pack this food really makes a difference.”

FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw as well as Wells Fargo regional president Carl Miller, area president Laura Worzella and national manager for volunteerism Melissa Buchanan made the rounds of the sites, pitching in and thanking volunteers for their efforts.

“Service is part of our DNA at Florida Gulf Coast University,” Bradshaw
said. “Our students have given more than a million hours of service to the community in the past 15 years. Service is not just what we give, but also what our community receives.”

Worzella talked about how the two organizations’ symbols – FGCU’s eagle and Wells Fargo’s stagecoach – were linked to each other and to the purpose of the day. “They are two symbols of American history that give people something to believe in,” she said. “Our organizations are getting together and making a difference in our community. Today is the day you are giving people something to believe in.”

At Bonita Nature Place, FGCU marine and ecological sciences instructor David Green led volunteers through trails that university students have been working on for three years. Green serves on the board of directors of the nonprofit Friends of Bonita Nature Place, which helps maintain the park owned by the city of Bonita Springs.

The center’s trail meanders through a patchwork of oak hammocks, pine flatwoods, riverine forests and aquatic areas just east of Interstate 75.

“This creek bed used to be connected to the Imperial River,” Green told volunteers. “People changed the habitat and the way the water flows to suit development.”

He gingerly lifted an orb-weaver spider’s web — without disturbing the super-sized arachnid — to allow volunteers to pass under. He pointed out native plants like wild coffee and beautyberry and showed how resurrection ferns tuck themselves into the elbows of oak trees.

Then they got down to work. Erika Kamen, a junior biology major from Fort Lauderdale, had never used a rake or a hedge trimmer before. Most of her volunteer efforts and service-learning credits have come from fundraisers, not physical work.

“It was awesome,” she said. “I didn’t know this place existed. I think service learning is great. Otherwise, you don’t know all the things that need to be done in the community. There are so many places where you can help out.”

— Drew Sterwald and Karen Feldman

Above: FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw, left, and Wells Fargo area president Laura Worzella help pack produce at Harry Chapin Food Bank. Left: A team member helps paint the Gulf Coast Humane Society.

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Above: FGCU President Wilson G. Bradshaw, left, and Wells Fargo area president Laura Worzella help pack produce at Harry Chapin Food Bank. Left: A team member helps paint the Gulf Coast Humane Society.

[ CUTTING EDGE ]

Annual dialogue focuses on role of food in sustainability

Food will play a critical role in the planet’s future, a panel of environmental advocates told those gathered recently at the annual Terry Tempest Williams Student Dialogue at Florida Gulf Coast University.

The theme of this year’s dialogue was “Sustainable Food to Nourish the Mind, Body, and Soul.” Sponsored by the Center for Environmental and Sustainability Education, the annual event commemorates the environmentalist’s visit to FGCU in 2004 and brings home the philosophy she expresses in her book, “Open Space of Democracy,” in which she writes: “To commit to the open space of democracy is to make room for conversations that can move us toward a personal diplomacy…a flesh-and-blood encounter with public process that is…grounded in real time and space with people we have to face in our own hometowns.”

Kris De Welde, FGCU associate professor of sociology and director of general education – undergraduate studies, said, “The way we eat contributes more to climate change than what we drive or how much electricity we use.”

Kelly Walsh, an FGCU environmental studies major, president of FGCU’s Food Foresters and the service learning coordinator for FGCU’s Food Forest, an edible garden, urged those in attendance to “look at nature and look at your community and see how all our knowledge can be implemented to better support both. The community needs the environment and the environment needs the community.”

John “Doc” Edwards, a local chiropractor and real food advocate, addressed the effect of our food choices on our bodies. He advised people to eat “the clean 15,” foods that retain little or no pesticide residue, such as onions, avocados, sweet corn and mangoes.

Panelists also challenged the audience to “plant a seed” and make new and better choices about food.

— Mary Walch is an assistant professor in FGCU’s Department of Communication and Philosophy.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
DOUGLAS HARRISON
TEACHES AMERICAN
literature and culture at Florida
Gulf Coast University. A longtime
blogger about Southern gospel music
(www.averyfineline.com), Harrison recently
wrote “Then Sings My Soul: The Culture
of Southern Gospel Music” (University of
Illinois Press, $28). Here he talks about what
draws him to this musical form.

Q. What is it about the genre that so
intrigues you?

A. Finding an answer to that question is
a big part of why I started the blog and
what was behind the research for the
book. Partly, of course, it’s not terribly
complicated: for most
of us, our musical
tastes are heavily
influenced by the
music we knew and
loved as kids. I grew
up in a devoutly
religious family – my
father is a Baptist
preacher – where gospel was what I
heard at church and on the radio and
what my family sang at home. It’s been
an enormously powerful and gratifying
presence in my life. More deeply, though,
gospel serves as what I call an emotional
Rosetta Stone for a lot of people (me
included). What I mean is that gospel
has this capacity to translate some of our
most profound experiences, intuitions,
beliefs and values into a language of
feeling that helps us make more sense
of the world. For me personally, that
straight-and-narrow fundamentalist
preacher’s kid grew
up to be a gay secular
humanist academic,
and gospel music has
been pretty much the
one constant through
it all. So the book’s
not autobiography or
memoir, but it is the
result of my taking
that question – why
am I still captivated
by this music? – and
turning it outward
into a scholarly study of lived religion
in America.

Q. Where did you find people
to interview?

A. I say in the acknowledgments that
I’ve been preparing to write this book
most of my life, which means I have an
embarrassment of riches in knowing
gospel singers, performers, producers,
songwriters, arrangers and all types of fans.
The blog helps too. When I want to test
a hypothesis or tap into the hive mind of
Southern gospel, I have thousands of daily
readers who readily respond.

Q. Who do you view as the audience?

A. I’d like to think that the audience could
be just about anybody who wants to know
more about this music and a part of the
world that is all around us and yet nearly
invisible outside of the Southern gospel
industry. But realistically, I wrote the book
with two main audiences in mind: scholars
of American religion and culture who have
historically either ignored or not known to
look for the importance of white
gospel music, and non-academics
who either participate in Southern
gospel music or are just curious
about one of the oldest forms
of professional music making in
North America.

Q. What message would
you like readers to come
away with?

A. At some level, I guess, the book is
a plea to both academia and
the world of Southern gospel to set aside
what they think they know about each
other and be open to the possibility of new
knowledge about the other side. It’s telling
that it took an English professor (albeit one
who studies American culture, but still,
I’m not a musicologist) to write a book
about why Southern gospel music matters.
For a lot of academics, Southern gospel
amounts to nothing more than derivative
holy hillbilly music. This attitude promotes
a fundamental ignorance of entire swaths
of the world that most Americans deal with
all the time. And within the fundamentalist
Christian world of Southern gospel, there is
too often a tendency to disdain the pursuit
of greater knowledge about the world
from non-religious perspectives. So I’ve
tried to write a book that has something
enlightening to say to academics and
Southern gospel fans alike about the
value of taking each other seriously. So
I hope the message gets through, but
I’ve been more concerned with working
hard to model the kind of conversation I
think we can all benefit from in terms of
understanding each other better. The rest
is up to the reviewers.

Harrison
[ COMMUNITY ]

Theater students bring drama to disaster drill

NANCY GOLDBERG CHECKED OUT HER HEAD WOUND in a hand mirror and smiled.

"You did a great job," she told Samantha Madeo, an FGCU junior who had just finished crafting the oozing injury.

Goldberg, from Cape Coral, and Madeo, a theater major from Fort Lauderdale, were among the many volunteers who took part in a disaster drill at Southwest Florida International Airport on Oct. 23.

The Federal Aviation Administration requires airports to run a mock disaster drill every three years. FGCU students are invited to bring some visual realism to the event by adorning the faux victims with fractured legs, lacerated arms and head wounds for emergency personnel to treat.

No matter that they must be ready to work at 6 a.m., long before the sun rises.

About 15 theater students took part this year, applying realistic looking injuries to about 100 people who served as the disaster victims.

"It's great because it gives them some hands-on experience," says Anne Carncross, an FGCU assistant professor of theater who served as technical director. "It's not the classroom where we talk about the theory. There's no value that can equal it in terms of what you can teach in a classroom or put in a video. It is intentional. Look at what these guys are going through – their struggles are much more difficult than climbing. Their challenge is lifelong."

According to Villiers, "It's not something you can teach in a classroom or put in a video. There's no value that can equal it in terms of the classroom where we talk about the theory. Showing how it's done closes the loop."

— Daniel Compo is a program coordinator for the FGCU Student Support Services program.

Engineering students learn ins, outs of roller coasters

IVE FGCU ENGINEERING STUDENTS RECENTLY GOT AN UP-CLOSE LOOK AT THE science behind the wild gyrations of Busch Gardens' roller coasters.

The students in FGCU's Student Support Services STEM Program spent the day at the Tampa amusement park, where they rode on them to feel it themselves and they had a chance to ask questions of the people who designed them in the first place.

Romeo Durandisse, a sophomore majoring in software engineering and mathematics, said the experience was valuable to him. "It helped me understand the things you have to think about before you build something, all the forces that apply to nature that you have to consider," he said.

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Moving mud and mountains for worthwhile causes

An FGCU professor and two alumni are challenging forces of nature to raise money for worthy causes.

Stefanie Ink-Edwards ('08, Marketing) and her husband, Dustin Edwards, are devotees of an emerging pasttime known as a mud run. They are channeling that passion into the South Florida Mud Run, a benefit for the Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida, set for Jan. 12 and 13 at the Red Neck Yacht Club in Punta Gorda.

The hospital was an obvious choice because both of their children spent time in the neonatal intensive care unit.

"The Children's Hospital is in the middle of a capital campaign to build a new tower," says Ink, a financial advisor for Alliance Financial Group. "Mud runs don't cost a lot to put on and people are willing to pay to participate. We plan to raise a bunch of money and help out."

Meanwhile, Mari DeWees, an assistant professor of sociology, and her husband, Andy Bravo ('98, Accounting), are preparing to climb 20,561-foot-high Chimboraz in Ecuador in June.

They hope to raise $35,000 for a sports and tennis program for residents of Justin's Place at St. Matthew's House in Naples. Exercise is therapeutic for men struggling to overcome addiction and rebuild their lives, but there's more behind the mission than that.

"A mountain is the ultimate metaphor for facing addiction and homelessness," says DeWees, who serves on the St. Matthew's House board. "It's going to be challenging. That's intentional. Look at what these guys are going through – their struggles are much more difficult than climbing. Their challenge is lifelong."

Meanwhile, members of the FGCU tennis team, several honors students and others have held tennis clinics and other programs for the Justin's Place residents, who have welcomed them enthusiastically.

Learn how to help at the RAZOO fundraising site (www.razoo.com/story/Aiming-High).

Anyone can take part in the mud run, including children 4 and older. For details, go to www.southfloridamudrun.com.
Fulbright grants open doors to international understanding and life-changing experiences.

More than 10 years after spending a summer in Morocco on a Fulbright grant, Pamella Seay’s eyes still widen when she describes how young girls in the largely Islamic nation were just beginning to take classes alongside boys. An outgoing, animated, accomplished woman, Seay had grown up with a dynamic role model in her civically active mother, who served as mayor of Trenton, Mich., a small suburb of Detroit.

Seay earned a bachelor of fine arts degree in graphic design, a juris doctorate and master of laws in international law on the way to becoming a licensed attorney, an FGCU professor and chair of the Division of Justice Studies.

“In Morocco, girls were being passed over in education,” Seay recalls. “It’s a male-oriented society. Girls are expected to cook and have babies. All the time I was thinking about how different it was for a girl growing up there. The role models they had were so vastly different, as were the opportunities for education and careers.”

By DREW STERWALD
While observing the Moroccan education system and researching Islamic law, Seay gained a better understanding of Arabic culture. She also came to see how essential it is to be able to adapt to other cultures in the global business arena.

“We try to measure them by our standards, but that’s the wrong way to look at it,” Seay says. “We need to understand it’s different – not bad – just different. Programs like Fulbright allow us to gain that perspective, to know why others live the way they do.”

Seay is part of a still small and select group of people who have been awarded Fulbright grants while working at FGCU.

Countless other faculty and staff members brought the Fulbright experience with them when they joined the university. Because of their opportunities to engage in international teaching and research, they’ve seen the world through someone else’s eyes, developed new curriculum, collaborated on research and publishing or built international exchange programs that will benefit students and faculty for decades.

Fulbrights enhance careers and change lives. But they do not come without challenges. The application process tests patience and persistence; travel logistics and foreign resources can be sketchy; and culture shock can strike even an open-minded traveler.

For a still maturing university, having Fulbright scholars confers prestige in the academic world while enhancing the global perspective that scholars bring to the classroom as teachers or students.

University administration actively promotes international experiences like the Fulbright and offers assistance in developing proposals, according to Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ron Toll. The Fulbright program is highly competitive, he says, and provides valuable networking opportunities around the world.

“We consider it a win-win situation,” Toll says. “We’re very proud of these faculty members. The Fulbright program attracts very broad interest and many applications, so those faculty that are successful bring great credibility to themselves and, by extension, great credibility and an elevated reputation to their home institutions. I would encourage all faculty at some point in their careers to seriously consider this type of opportunity.”

Having faculty and staff with Fulbright experience can also be a recruitment or marketing tool, according to Director of International Services Elaine Hozdik, who was the university’s first Fulbright recipient when she traveled to Germany in the 1999-2000 academic year to study the national education system.

“It puts FGCU on the map one individual at a time,” she says. “It also helps grow our academic programs when we have people with this experience. It helps students identify the quality of a program when you can list people with Fulbrights. It can also lead to longer-term relationships with other institutions.”

Hozdik’s three-month program in Germany was short but intense, she says, with activities, travel and meetings lined up 24-7. Other Fulbright programs last a semester or a year, and sometimes longer. Grants are available in a wide range of disciplines; FGCU’s Fulbrights have completed programs in special education, economics and business, art history, anthropology, law and justice.

Established in 1946 by legislation introduced by Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the Fulbright Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES). Funded by Congress, which appropriated $273.4 million in the 2011 fiscal year, the quasi-diplomatic program aims to increase mutual understanding between Americans and people in other countries.

Each year, the program awards about 8,000 new grants in 155 participating countries. Since its inception, more than 120,000 Americans have been sent abroad and more than 198,000 international students and teachers have come to the United States on Fulbrights.

FGCU’s most recent recipient, anthropology Professor Michael McDonald, returned in July from a six-month teaching engagement at the University of Zadar in the Republic of Croatia. He first applied for a grant when he was a graduate student but was turned down. Even after another recent rejection, Fulbright administrators encouraged him to keep applying.

“I’ve always wanted to be a Fulbright,” McDonald says. “It’s a prestigious award. It’s an appealing idea using scholars and students for diplomatic exchange. I’m very proud to have done it. It’s an honor to be selected.”

Such exchanges also help fulfill FGCU’s mission to pursue cultural diversity.

“Some universities promote the number of Fulbright scholars they have – it’s a source of bragging rights,” McDonald says. “If you’re interested in internationalizing a
university, this is a good way to do it.”

With his research specialty being food anthropology, McDonald delved into the foodways of Croatia, which lies at the crossroads of Central Europe, the Balkan Mountains and the Mediterranean coast. Food customs and ingredients vary from one region of the country to another and are heavily influenced by Greek, Italian and other Mediterranean cuisines. Between classes he taught – “Anthropology of Food” and “Ethnology of Africa” – McDonald was introduced to local customs such as peka, a form of barbecue that involves a bell-shaped cooking dome.

“Every house had one,” he says. “They put meat or fish and potatoes and vegetables in a pan, cover it with the dome-shaped lid and place it in an oven or grill.”

Such communal food rituals serve as a way to show hospitality and bring people together, McDonald says – like the Fulbright itself, which helps build a sense of community among students and colleagues from different cultures.

“The most concrete benefit was that we made good connections,” McDonald says of the experience. “They are eager to have people come and study there. They’re interested in developing a relationship with FGCU. If an exchange develops it could result in Croatian students coming here.”

Fulbrights help take FGCU out into the world; they also bring the world to FGCU. Associate Professor of Art History Megan McShane curated a 2011 exhibition at FGCU featuring contemporary avant-garde artists from China – three of whom traveled from the People’s Republic to serve as artists-in-residence for 10 days. The collaboration grew out of a relationship McShane has cultivated since her 2006-07 Fulbright at Zhongshan University in Guangzhou, China. She taught graduate-level courses in art history, methodology and American art and lectured throughout the country.

It was an eye-opening experience for her as well as her Chinese students, whose exposure to the art of the outside world was stunted by a national history of cultural and political repression.

“Western art was illegal in China during the Mao years,” which ended in 1976, McShane says. “Avant-garde, which is my area of specialty, is considered agitational.”

One day, lecturing and running a slide show before 700 students, she experienced an epiphany when an image of Michelangelo’s “David” flashed on the projection screen.

“It was like a rock concert,” McShane says of the students’ reaction to the sculpture. “The room erupted in wonderment. It kind of made me look at the artwork again, made me think, ‘I’ve got to do this justice.’ ”

The importance of her role – and the experience of serving at one of the premier art academies in the world – really sank in. McShane still returns to China four or five times a year and continues to foster relationships with the avant-garde artists she has known since her Fulbright days. As she says, she imports Western art history into China and exports contemporary art from China.

“I had amazing experiences and formed lasting friendships,” McShane says. “It completely changed my life in ways I couldn’t have imagined. We’re part of a group that will move together into the future.”

Art history isn’t FGCU’s only connection with China. The Lutgert College of Business’ Institute of Chinese Studies was established in 2005 to develop international education programs through partnerships with leading Chinese universities. Dan Borgia, a former FGCU finance professor and director of the Institute of Chinese Studies, taught finance in 2002-03 at Nanjing University on a Fulbright grant.

“My Fulbright was made financially possible by the fact that I was given a sabbatical and supported strongly by former Dean (Richard) Pegnetter,” Borgia recalls. “It had an elemental impact on my life and career.”

Borgia left FGCU in 2010 and now is an associate finance professor and acting assistant dean at Nottingham University Business School in Ningbo, China.

After his Fulbright, Borgia started looking for research on the outcomes and benefits of Fulbrights and found very little available. And not all of it was encouraging.

“Missing the Boat: The Failure to Internationalize American Higher Education” (Cambridge University
Press; 1991), a book based on research commissioned by CIES, decried barriers to faculty participation in international programs: dwindling government funding for the Fulbright Program and other overseas educational opportunities; faculty advancement policies that don’t reward international work; changing household demographics that made traveling economically difficult for faculty. The book also revealed a surprising prevalence of American academic arrogance that questions the value of overseas experience.

On the positive side, a later study commissioned by the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs found strong evidence that the Fulbright Program effectively helps scholars build knowledge and long-term relationships with foreign colleagues and enriches and inspire scholars.

Borgia embarked on his own research for a paper published in 2007 in the Journal of Economic and Finance Education. He surveyed Fulbright business scholars, who generally described positive experiences and believed the program was well run. He wrote of a ripple effect that continued well after the end of a Fulbright experience. “For many grantees, connection with their host country did not end upon the completion of the grant assignment. Many reported developing faculty and student exchanges and most reported encouraging students to learn more about international issues and to engage in international programs or other international travel.”

From China, Borgia added via e-mail, “It’s a great program that might not be around forever and is, in my opinion, ideally combined with a sabbatical. I would encourage anyone with an interest in expanding their lives and careers to consider applying for one.”

INFO
For more information about the Fulbright Program go to fulbright.state.gov.

Qatar experience inspires career, life changes

Brenda Lazarus is living proof that Fulbrights change lives.
A founding FGCU faculty member, the education professor took a sabbatical to live and work as a Fulbright scholar in Qatar for the 2003-04 academic year. She taught, conducted research, led workshops and helped Qatar University develop a post-baccalaureate program to prepare teachers to work in special education settings.

One year turned into two years. After returning to FGCU for 2005-06, she resigned and moved back to Qatar to work for two more years. Now semi-retired in Chapel Hill, N.C., Lazarus works as an independent education consultant. She revisited her Fulbright experience for Pinnacle.

BY BREND A LAZARUS
I have no doubt that the Fulbright experience transformed my life, both personally and professionally.
It was very exciting to live in Qatar as the country was beginning an extensive period of education reform at the K-12 and university level.
A young Qatari assistant professor, Asma Al Attiyah, became my guide to access to schools and institutions. She helped me with the culture and understanding the ways of the university. Through her introductions, we visited more than 20 school, hospital and clinical sites that serve children with special needs.
People I interviewed poured out their hearts about the situation of special education at their site. It made me feel that our committee had to make a difference for the children and families of Qatar.
I came to understand that the Qatari people take a long time (in American terms) to make up their minds about a “foreigner” in their midst. I was the only Western, non-Arabic person on the committee studying inclusive schools.
Being on a committee may seem like a small thing, but I have come to learn that it is a large honor to be named to such a post and that it shows the respect of the people.
During my time there, I gained a great understanding and appreciation for the Qatari people. My knowledge of the culture of the Arabian Gulf and of Islam increased 100 percent. The experience of living and working in an Arabic Islamic country made me view the current events in the Middle East from a different perspective than is often presented by the U.S. media.
When I returned to FGCU in 2005-06, I was much more focused on working across colleges and departments at the university. I published a book in Arabic on teaching children with learning disabilities, published a journal chapter and two book chapters as a result of collaborations.
OLYMPIC DREAMS

FGCU swimmers compete in race of a lifetime at London summer games.

Karen Vilorio, FGCU swimming coach Neal Studd and Danielle Beaubrun

It’s next to impossible to describe what it’s like to compete in the Olympics, but here’s one statistic that helps convey its momentous nature: When FGCU swimmers Danielle Beaubrun and Karen Vilorio swim in the university’s pool, a maximum of 500 spectators may fill the stands. In London in July, they stepped up to swim in front of more than 15,000 spectators. And that doesn’t count fans worldwide tuned in via television or computer.

Vilorio, a 19-year-old sophomore majoring in finance, swam the 100-meter backstroke for Honduras.

“It distracted me a little,” she says of the large crowd. “You can’t imagine it until you’re there.”

By RICK WEBER

Photo by ED CLEMENT
Beaubrun, a senior bioengineering major who swam the 100-yard breaststroke for St. Lucia, had the advantage of having experienced the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

Nonetheless, she says, “It’s definitely nerve-racking. I tried not to think about it. I tried to just get in my zone.”

Although they didn’t bring home medals this time, they treasure the Olympic experience, a rich tapestry of memories they will carry with them forever.

Beaubrun was particularly moved by the saga of competitor Felix Sanchez, who won gold in the 400 hurdles at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, but didn’t make the 2008 finals after learning in Beijing that his grandmother – who had raised him – had died. Despite his grief and subsequent injuries that derailed his progress, Sanchez came back to win gold in London at age 34, racing with a picture of his grandmother pinned beneath his race bib, and the word abuela – Spanish for grandmother – scribbled on his yellow spikes.

“The media were hard on him, saying he would never again be where he was,” Beaubrun says. “After he won the gold, he cried the entire time on the stand. It was touching to see.”

Beaubrun also had a chance encounter with tennis superstar Serena Williams at the food court during lunch.

“I had some fried plantains on my plate, and she asked me, ‘Where did you get those?’” Beaubrun says. “I said, ‘Go to the Caribbean-African section,’ then I introduced myself.”

Vilorio rubbed elbows in the
dining hall with 11-time Olympic swimming medalist Ryan Lochte, as well as Serena and Venus Williams and Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic, who has won five Grand Slam singles titles.

But the highlight came at the Opening Ceremony, when she spotted Los Angeles Lakers forward Pau Gasol on the infield after he had served as Spain’s flag bearer.

“I saw Pau and said, ‘Oh, my gosh, can we take a picture?’ ” she says. “So I had a picture taken with him and we spoke in Spanish. It was amazing. The whole night was amazing. The feeling you get once they call your country … there’s clapping and cheering for you. I thought it’d be memorable, but once I got there, it was more than memorable. I’m never going to forget that moment or that whole experience. It was one of the best experiences of my life.”

Beaubrun, who qualified for London by winning the consolation final of the 2011 Pan American Games, swam 1:11.12 in her qualifying heat in the 100-meter breast and finished 36th overall, but she did improve by more than a second on her 2008 time in Beijing.

Vilorio, who qualified last May when she posted a personal best of 1:06.18 in a Gulf Coast Swim Team meet at FGCU, won her heat in the 100-meter backstroke in 1:06.38, but it was not fast enough to advance to the semifinal round of the top 16 swimmers. She finished 41st out of 45 swimmers.

Both women hope to be in Rio de Janeiro for the 2016 Olympics, the first ever held in South America.

Beaubrun, who will graduate in December, says: “I don’t know where I will be in terms of school and work. Do I want to go to grad school? School comes first. Hopefully, I can stay around this area.”

Vilorio, who struggled with some health issues this fall, plans to be there, too.

“I know that if I hadn’t come to FGCU and I wasn’t training with Neal (Studd), I wouldn’t be in the same place,” she says. “I feel like I’ve grown so much here. Now I look to 2016.”

A COACH’S PERSPECTIVE

“T...
Thirty-seven years after earning his doctorate at UF and embarking on a teaching career largely spent at The Ohio State University, Mitsch has returned to Southwest Florida to live, teach, research and head FGCU’s new Everglades Wetland Research Park in Naples. He was appointed in October as the first Juliet C. Sproul Chair for Southwest Florida Habitat Restoration and Management -- a position made possible by an endowment from Sproul, a Naples developer and philanthropist.

“I’m kind of returning to Florida,” said Mitsch, 65. “The wetlands here are a big reason. If you were an oceanographer you would live near the ocean. If you’re a wetland scientist, you should live here. The Florida Everglades are a great resource. A lot of good wetlands science is being done down here.”

Scientists as well as undergraduate, master’s and doctoral students already have begun using the facility for research on Everglades marsh and mangrove forest restoration and carbon mitigation and methane emissions in local ecosystems. As the program develops, teaching, research and outreach opportunities will grow.

The EWRP’s mission and location highlight FGCU’s continuing commitment to sustainability, according to Donna Price Henry, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“The Greater Florida Everglades provide priceless ecosystem services for Southwest Florida, serving as the habitat for some of the richest biodiversity on the planet while protecting our coastline water quality and the economic viability of our shoreline and Gulf,” she said. “Most important, our new research program is perfectly attuned to the vision set forth by FGCU when it was established 16 years ago.”

By DREW STERWALD
Photo by BRIAN TIETZ
Mitsch joined FGCU after 27 years at Ohio State in Columbus, where he was Distinguished Professor of Environment, Natural Resources and Ecological Engineering. As one of his last activities at OSU, he organized this fall’s International EcoSummit 2012, a conference on sustainability and ecosystem restoration that drew more than 1,500 premier scientists from 75 countries. He presented research at the conference, as did FGCU scientists Michael Savarese, Aswani Volety and Li Zhang.

Mitsch is a founding member of the group of ecology journal editors that organized the first EcoSummit conferences in Copenhagen in 1996, Halifax, Nova Scotia in 2000, and Beijing in 2007. “EcoSummit was one of the best assemblages of ecologists that will ever meet,” Mitsch said. “It was more about fixing the planet than describing the problems. The emphasis was on restoration, ecological engineering and political solutions. It was about what we can and should do.”

EcoSummit also served informally as a weeklong reunion and farewell of sorts for Mitsch, who was continually circled and embraced by international scientists with whom he has collaborated and former students he has mentored – some of whom have followed him to work at the Naples research park.

Longtime friend Sven Erik Jørgensen, a Danish ecologist and chemical engineer who has collaborated with Mitsch on several books and shared the 2004 Stockholm Water Prize with him, said Mitsch has a gift for working with others and explaining scientific issues in ways that even non-scientists can understand.

“That’s one of his strengths,” Jørgensen said. “Bill has contributed a lot to many good papers. He’s an excellent collaborator.”

Mitsch’s book “Wetlands,” now in its fourth edition, is considered the definitive text on the subject. In addition to 18 books, he has written or co-authored more than 300 peer-reviewed papers and other publications and founded the journal Ecological Engineering.

“His curriculum is used all over the world,” said Ulo Mander, professor and head of the Department of Environmental Sciences at the University of Tartu in Estonia. “He’s the grand man of ecological engineering. His book is the Bible of wetlands.”

Introducing him at a plenary presentation, Mander jokingly likened Mitsch’s renown in the ecology world to that of Johnny Depp in film.

Benefits of wetlands

Ribbing aside, Mitsch takes ecology and wetlands seriously. In a video produced by Ohio State, he referred to wetlands as among the most valuable pieces of landscape left on Earth.

“We call them nature’s kidneys,” he said. “They clean up water, they minimize flooding downstream and they’re the best habitat on the planet.”

In addition to consulting on engineering projects and lecturing in Africa, Asia and Europe, Mitsch has served on advisory panels for wetlands restoration and research in the Louisiana Delta, the Florida Everglades and the Pantanal in Brazil – one of the world’s largest wetlands. In Ohio, he led the creation of the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park with the development of 50 acres of wetlands in an abandoned cornfield adjacent to Ohio State. Established in 1994, the project has yielded valuable information about how wetlands work and how they could be restored and managed to benefit humans, wildlife and the environment.

On a larger scale, the Everglades provide fertile ground on which to test and implement ways that created wetlands can benefit water supply and quality, filter excess nutrients and pollutants, mitigate flooding from storms and climate change and enhance wildlife habitat.

Research that Mitsch presented at EcoSummit 2012 shows that created wetlands such as the Stormwater Treatment Areas that are part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project are significantly reducing phosphorus in water that flows south into the Everglades and Florida Bay. In another symposium, he discussed how effectively wetlands serve as “carbon sinks” to help reduce carbon dioxide, thus offsetting the negative effects of the methane greenhouse gas that wetlands release into the atmosphere.

“This is not rocket science,” Mitsch told scientists at the conference. “Created wetlands are the most

WILLIAM J. “BILL” MITSCH

Director, Everglades Wetland Research Parl; Juliet C. Sproul Chair for Southwest Florida Habitat Restoration and Management; Editor, Ecological Engineering.

EDUCATION: B.S., Engineering, University of Notre Dame; M.E., Environmental Engineering Sciences, University of Florida; Ph.D., Systems Ecology, University of Florida.

RECENT POSTS: Distinguished Professor of Environment and Natural Resources and Director of the Wilma H. Schiermeier Olentangy River Wetland Research Park at The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

SELECTED AWARDS: 2010 Einstein Professorship, Chinese Academy of Sciences; 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award, Society of Wetland Scientists; 2007 Fulbright Senior Specialist, Harry Oppenheimer Okavango Research Centre, Maun, Botswana; 2004 Stockholm Water Prize.
reasonable approach for solving this problem.”

Heart in his work

“This is not rocket science” would likely make the list of “Mitsch-isms” that former students attribute to their mentor. Another: “Don’t just stand there—measure something,” a verbal prod for those frozen by inaction or indecision.

Mitsch has advised more than 80 master’s and doctoral candidates at Ohio State and earlier at the University of Louisville and the Illinois Institute of Technology to completion of their theses and dissertations. Many have gone on to academic positions and government agencies all over the country.

Amanda Nahlik, a graduate teaching and research associate under Mitsch from 2003 to 2009, has written a half-dozen papers with him and now works as a research ecologist for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Corvallis, Ore.

“He’s done a lot to get me where I am,” she said. “He puts his whole heart into everything, and it rubs off on his students. You see him get excited, and you get excited. He has incredible knowledge to share, and he’s so well known around the world in wetland biogeochemistry. Having those connections to use is invaluable.”

With his departure from Ohio State, it’s now FGCU’s budding ecological scientists who will have Mitsch’s knowledge and resources to draw upon. The EWRP will attract scholars from around the world, Mitsch said.

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“When you say Everglades, the scientists will come,” he said. “At the research park, we seek to understand how wetlands, rivers and watersheds function and if and how we can restore those systems. What better place to establish a center for wetland restoration than in Naples on the edge of one of the greatest wetland complexes in the world—the Florida Everglades?”

FGCU’s new Everglades Wetland Research Park (EWRP) at the Naples Botanical Garden is poised to become a hub for research, teaching and outreach related to aquatic ecosystems. Already more than a dozen faculty, staff, students and visiting scientists are active there.

Why wetlands?

They comprise about 7 percent of the Earth’s terrestrial surface, but their value surpasses their volume. Wetlands naturally clean and retain water, help prevent flooding and provide habitat and food for wildlife. New research by EWRP Director Bill Mitsch also points to their role in mitigating climate change because of their ability to sequester carbon. If they had not been drained and replaced, coastal wetlands could have provided buffer systems to absorb tidal surges such as those seen with Hurricanes Sandy and Katrina.

Mitsch hopes to restore a former mangrove swamp at the southern edge of the garden and reconnect it to Naples Bay. At 100 acres, the project would be twice the size of the wetlands he developed with The Ohio State University on the Olentangy River in Columbus, Ohio.

“Right now it’s an isolated brackish marsh that receives runoff from the garden and some groundwater and rain,” he says. “It could be a demonstration model for wetland restoration. We want to make it a beautiful mangrove swamp. It could then help protect the gardens from hurricanes. They need a buffer zone.”

As research park staff members investigate the possibilities, they’ve already installed water quality monitoring devices. The park also has launched its first community outreach program, “Moonlight on the Marsh.” The lecture series features distinguished scientists from Mexico, Denmark and the United States sharing expertise on renewable energy, wildlife conservation and other ecology topics.

“This series is designed for students and faculty but especially for the general public,” Mitsch says. “Our invited speakers can relate well to general audiences. Think of them as live versions of the interviews you see on the Discovery Channel or National Geographic Channel.”

For more information about the lectures or the research park go to www.fgcu.edu/swamp.

Park could offer model for wetlands restoration

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Lab technician Hilary Thompson tests gas samples for levels of methane at the research park.
Waterfront wonderland

In a lab or on a boat, science anchors programs at Bonita center.

The Vester Marine and Environmental Science Research Field Station isn’t just a really cool waterfront spot for scientists to study the reproductive habits of oysters. Located 12 miles from campus with busy Bonita Beach Road buzzing in the background, Vester is a valuable resource for the entire university. Of the 3,000 students who visit each year, roughly three-quarters are not marine science majors, according to Professor Aswani Volety, director of the center.

The complex of three buildings provides faculty, visiting marine researchers and students access to diverse habitats such as mangroves, oyster reefs, mud flats and sea grasses.

In 2008, the station was dedicated to Norm and Nancy Vester, who sold the property to FGCU at significantly less than market value. The property on Little Hickory Island is a multi-faceted jewel that makes possible research in onsite labs as well as nearby waters.

1. **AN 80-GALLON** tank holds broodstock oysters. Graduate students are studying the effects of natural and manmade stressors on larval-stages shellfish and fish.

2. **A CHILLER** keeps water temperature in the holding tank at 20-22 degrees Celsius. When it’s time for the oysters to spawn, the temperature is raised to 28 degrees – warmer water spurs reproductive activity.

3. **FOUR SPECIES** of different-colored algae are grown to feed the oysters.

4. **LAB MANAGER** Rheannon Ketover peers into a microscope to examine oyster embryos for abnormalities.

5. **THE VESTER STATION** is equipped with all the components to introduce students to aquaculture – the cultivation of aquatic organisms. Redfish are used because they are hardy and easier to raise than many marine species.

6. **THE ANALYTICAL LAB** is used by graduate students and visiting marine researchers to study fish and shellfish.

7. **LAB MANAGER RHEANNON KETOVER**, left, and grad student Emily Nickols assess the water quality in tanks holding newly hatched oysters.

8. **HOLDING TANKS** for fish or shellfish are located in the open-air aquaculture lab underneath the apartment building.

9. **CLAMS** grow to maturity in tanks filled with temperature-controlled water pumped in from the bay through a system of pipes and filters. The wet labs, flow-through sea-water system and hatchery can be configured in many ways to accommodate diverse research projects, such as examining the effects of red tide on shellfish.

10. **EIGHT APARTMENTS** are maintained in this former resort complex, which enables visiting marine research scientists to stay on the premises. Underneath the stilt structure, research projects involving oysters, clams, green mussels and redfish are ongoing.

11. **THE “FISH HOUSE”** includes a shellfish hatchery, analytical laboratory, office space and conference room for graduate students and visiting research scientists.

12. **THIS BUILDING** contains a classroom, mud room and laboratory.

13. **THE TIKI HUT** by the pool is used as an outdoor classroom for FGCU colloquium and general education classes.

14. **SEVEN BOATS** and two dozen canoes and kayaks transport scientists and students to field study sites in Estero Bay, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caloosahatchee River.

For the next 20 minutes, they start and stop, working out segments of the score until they agree upon the best tempo and the musicians in each section achieve the same dynamics.

“I think we could use a little more bass here,” Chesnutt says at one point, stopping the players with a wave of his hands. “Close but no cigar.”

A moment later, he scats a rhythm, “Bada-ba-ba-ba-BOW! I think that could swing a little bit more.”

Once a week, about 20 student musicians gather with Chesnutt to practice for two hours in the music building’s Marilyn Bower Koret Rehearsal Hall. It’s not a class, so they earn no credits. Only a few members aren’t music majors or minors, but anyone can audition for the limited number of slots. The ensemble presents concerts twice a year, but sometimes players form smaller combos and book their own gigs for fun or money.

“They do it because they want to do it,” says Chesnutt, head of Instrumental Studies and associate professor in the Bower School of Music. “There’s still a strong affinity to that music. There’s more freedom to express themselves musically.”

Yes, these children of the ‘90s are giving up their free time to play tunes their grandparents jitterbugged to in another century. It’s a way to enjoy music outside the confines of the conservatory repertoire.

“It’s fun to play,” reasons student leader Ben Woessner, a senior music education major from Coral Springs. “To play an instrument and have fun with a smaller ensemble – there’s more freedom. It’s more communal, less formal. There’s improv. It opens your ears to new things.”

In this case, new things are standards made famous decades ago by the likes of Glenn Miller, Count Basie and Frank Sinatra. Jazz ensemble players are keeping the old big-band and swing legends alive by introducing classics like “Pennsylvania 6-5000” and “Begin the Beguine” to a new generation of players and listeners.

As Chesnutt says, there’s not much contemporary jazz band music available for them to play anyway.

“We have done some tunes written for Wynton Marsalis’ Jazz at Lincoln Center
Orchestra,” he says. “There are things happening. It’s just not the mainstream. Jazz takes a certain amount of intellect that today’s pop music doesn’t.”

It wasn’t until the 1960s that college and university music programs began recognizing the legitimacy of jazz and integrating it into their programs, according to Chesnutt. Now in its fourth year, FGCU’s Jazz Ensemble is still young but then the Bower School has only existed since 2006. It now offers an array of ensembles, including Wind Orchestra, String Orchestra, University Choir, Chamber Choir, Symphonic Band and Chamber Winds.

“The music program is continuing to grow and diversify,” Chesnutt says. “This is the best Jazz Ensemble we’ve had yet.”

The group comprises a fairly standard instrumental lineup for jazz groups: five saxophones, four or five trombones, four or five trumpets and a rhythm section of piano, bass, drums and guitar. Woessner plays bass, which he picked up in seventh grade, although trombone is his primary instrument academically. Since coming to FGCU, his interest in jazz has risen off the charts.

“It’s the majority of what I listen to,” he says. “I like improvisation a lot. It’s deep in me.”

Nevertheless, making ad-libs work within the framework of an ensemble requires a thorough understanding of the music – the key, the tempo, the chord changes – and practice. One false move can derail the “A-Train.”

“The first time everything lines up, it’s exciting,” Woessner says. “You’re building on what’s done and trying to keep moving forward. You try to do it better every time. When it’s good, you can see on the faces of the audience that they’re having a good time. We’re an orchestra – more of a whole than individuals.”

– Drew Sterwald

**ARTS CALENDAR**

11/29 **THURSDAY**
“Finals: Fall 2012 Senior Projects”
5-7 p.m., student composers and performers. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Bower School of Music, FGCU campus.

11/30 **FRIDAY**
String Orchestra concert
7:30 p.m., U. Tobe Recital Hall, Bower School of Music, FGCU Campus. Free

12/2 **SUNDAY**
University Choir concert
3 p.m., U. Tobe Recital Hall, Bower School of Music, FGCU Campus. Free

12/15 **SATURDAY**
“Thistletoe Cabaret”
7 p.m., reception and silent auction; 8 p.m., curtain. Third annual holiday entertainment showcase to raise money to send students to theater festivals. $25 (on sale 11/15).

1/23 **WEDNESDAY**
“Vernissage”
4 p.m., gallery talk; 5-7 p.m., closing reception. Main Gallery, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. Opens 1/9 and runs through 1/23.

1/28 **MONDAY**
“Raising Awareness: The Use of Recycling in Art”
4 p.m., gallery talk; 5-7 p.m., reception. Graphic artist Ken Andexler has collected 10,000 pieces of debris from local roadways to assemble in an artwork. ArtLab, FGCU campus. Runs through 2/15.

1/31 **THURSDAY**
“German, French and American Art Song”
7:30 p.m., Guest artist baritone Kurt Ollmann with music professor Michael Baron. U. Tobe Recital Hall, Bower School of Music, FGCU Campus. $7

2/7 **THURSDAY**
“JRs: Rauschenberg, Rivers and Rosenquist”
4 p.m., gallery talk; 5-7 p.m. opening reception. Main Gallery, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. Runs through 3/14.

2/13 **WEDNESDAY**
“Fool for Love”
8 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. Two lovers battle in a cheap Mojave Desert hotel in this Sam Shepard play. TheatreLab, Arts Complex, FGCU campus. Runs through 2/24. $7

2/14 **THURSDAY**
Wind Orchestra/Symphonic Band concert
7:30 p.m., Cohen Center Ballroom, FGCU Campus. Free

2/24 **SUNDAY**
President’s Kaleidoscope Concert
2 and 4 p.m., U. Tobe Recital Hall, Bower School of Music, FGCU campus. Free

3/19 **TUESDAY**
“Artistic Discovery and Inspiration”
Art Lab, FGCU campus. Vitelli Discovery Grant recipients display work inspired by an alternative spring break trip. Runs through 4/5.

Last year, the Vitelli Discovery Grant recipients went to New York City
Chris Sale's office doesn't have a desk, phone or computer. Instead, there's dirt, grass, one mound and four all-important bases. It's a work environment that suits him perfectly.

Over the past two years, the former Florida Gulf Coast University baseball player has seen his career take off like one of his 90-plus-mph pitches over home plate.

The left-handed starting pitcher for the Chicago White Sox is one of the best, working for the second-place team in the American League Central. The Sox finished the season just three games behind division winner Detroit.

Sale pitched a shutout inning in the All-Star Game in July. He's appeared on David Letterman's show as a participant in the popular “Top10 List.” He ranks among the best pitchers in baseball in key statistical categories such as wins (17), strikeouts (192) and earned run average (3.04).

Only two years ago, he was an Eagle. This year, he was an invaluable starting pitcher for the White Sox, and was even talked about for a time as
a contender for the Cy Young Award, which is bestowed each season on the best pitcher in each league.

Sale, like most professional players, isn’t comfortable talking about individual accomplishments. He’d rather focus on the team.

“From here on out, every pitch, there’s something riding on everything,” Sale said in late September.

When Sale reports to work, he steps atop a pitching mound, 60 feet, six inches away from some of the best hitters in the world. He does it in front of tens of thousands of people in stadiums and millions more on television.

Most big-league starters pitch only every five days. In between, they work out. Sale spoke with Pinnacle magazine not long after a leg workout that included running stadium steps.

He wasn’t sure how far he ran, but he knows when to stop.

“When your legs feel like Jell-O,” Sale said.

The 6-foot-6 lefty can throw baseballs faster than 90 mph.

Senior catcher Mike Reeves played with Sale and recalls a scrimmage when he batted against him.

“I saw three pitches,” Reeves said. “See ya.” Sale now is nearly as dominant in the big leagues as he was in college.

Opponents this season batted only .235 against him. How significant is that? Only five pitchers in the American League had lower opponent batting averages.

Statistics such as that explain his spot in the All-Star Game in July. He pitched the sixth inning and didn’t allow a run.

During that momentous game, he shared the locker room with veterans such as 38-year-old New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter, who broke into the majors in 1995, when Sale was 6.

He recalls playing a baseball video game featuring the famous Yankee.

“It was crazy,” Sale said. “It’s kind of intimidating at first playing with Jeter.”

One of the things Sale has learned is that although he plays a game for a living, it’s also a job. He said he needs to be professional on days he pitches and the ones in between.

Such hard work led to the All-Star Game, which led to his Letterman appearance.

“It was kind of nerve-racking,” Sale said. “It’s a huge show. You get butterflies. He asked me to fake a sneeze.”

That was clearly just fun and games. But when he was on the mound, Sale was deadly serious and highly effective, qualities that contributed to the talk of the Cy Young nomination.

Unfortunately, that won’t happen this year.

Nonetheless, Sale is glad to be playing and he’s also happy to be playing a part in spreading the name of FGCU.

“A lot of people haven’t heard of it,” Sale said. “They don’t know the location. It’s been great publicity for the school.”

FGCU is where he met his wife, Brianne, the mother of his 2-year-old son, Rylan Allen Sale.

The Naples resident headed home after the season, where he planned to prepare for the 2013 season and serve as the featured speaker at “Night at the Nest,” the university’s annual athletics fundraiser on Dec. 2.

“I wouldn’t miss that,” Sale said.

Meanwhile, Sale’s name recognition continues to grow.

“I’m always getting asked by teachers ‘Oh, you play baseball. Do you know Chris Sale?’” FGCU pitcher Ricky Knapp said. “I mess with them and say ‘I never heard of that guy.’”

Knapp was joking, of course. More people know about Chris Sale and, because of him, about FGCU, than ever before.

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**CHRIS SALE**

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**Wins:** 17 (fourth in AL)

**Earned run average:** 3.04 (fourth)

**Strikeouts:** 192 (ninth)

**Opponent batting average:** .235 (sixth)

**WHIP (walks and hits per inning):** 1.14 (fifth)

*Note: 2012 season statistics*

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former Eagle players know what it’s like standing in a batter’s box with Sale firing baseballs.

Current Eagle Sean Dwyer didn’t play with Sale, but during an off-season workout last winter, Sale threw a bullpen session. Dwyer was told to stand in the batter’s box.

“I stood in thinking ‘this guy is a big-leaguer. He won’t hit me,’ Dwyer said. “Boy, third pitch in. Fastball right on the knee. I didn’t have time to react. I wanted to cry.”

Current and former Eagle pitcher Ricky Knapp said. “I mess with them and say ‘I never heard of that guy.’”

Knapp was joking, of course. More people know about Chris Sale and, because of him, about FGCU, than ever before.
HE SEASON MIGHT HAVE STARTED SLOWLY, BUT THE FGCU VOLLEYBALL TEAM soon returned to its winning ways. The Eagles, who started the year 4-7, finished the regular season with an impressive 20-8 overall record and 15-1 in Atlantic Sun Conference play. The current team benefitted from last year’s play.

“This is a carryover from last year when we started four freshmen and finished second in the conference,” FGCU coach Dave Nichols said. “Now our players are experienced and they understand their roles. We have great chemistry and our level of maturity has increased.”

Their record means they clinched a berth for the 2012 A-Sun Championships, which were set for Nov. 15-17 in Nashville, Tenn.

Instead of pointing out impact players, Nichols credited the team’s balance and depth for its winning streak. Nichols called the team’s upset of three-time defending A-Sun champion Lipscomb on Oct. 12 the biggest victory for the program in years.

“Lipscomb has had this huge mental edge over us and for us to sweep them showed our level of maturity,” Nichols said. “I play a rotation of nine players and this is the most balanced team I’ve had in years and definitely the most balanced team I’ve had here at FGCU.”

Sophomore Olivia Mesner slams the ball for a 3-1 win over Florida A&M, earlier this season.
Strong goal tending key to winning streaks

The men’s and women’s soccer team claimed their third consecutive Atlantic Sun regular season crowns in early November and were looking excitedly toward NCAA postseason play.

Despite a roster of 13 freshmen and a slew of injuries, the FGCU women’s team clinched a conference postseason spot with several games left on its regular-season schedule. By Nov. 4, the team was 14-3-3 overall and 7-1-1 in conference play as it advanced to the NCAA tournament for the second straight year.

Freshman goalie Brittany Brown is one of several college rookies who have stepped up for the Eagles this season. Brown ranked first in the Atlantic Sun Conference with five shutouts. But it was freshman Ally Kasun who scored the winning goal in overtime to defeat Mercer 1-0 in the final game of the regular season.

The FGCU men also beat Mercer 1-0 in their final regular season game with sophomore Santiago Echeverri delivering his first career game-winning goal. They ended the season 9-5-2, with 6-1-1 in conference play.

Coach Bob Butehorn said his team was inspired after a key, double-overtime road victory over Jacksonville.

“We rolled up our sleeves and worked collectively to earn an important road win,” he said.

He was happy with the final game’s outcome, too.

“They’ve come a long way in a short time,” he said. “They’ll enjoy this night but their sights are set on the next prize.”

Tournament play was set for Nov. 7-11.
[SWIMMING]

The four-time defending Coastal Collegiate Swimming Association champions are once again dominating the pool and diving board.

The FGCU women's swimming and diving team placed third at the All-Florida Invite in September, finishing behind Florida and Florida State and ahead of Miami. In October, the team lost to Florida State but defeated archrival University of Miami.

At the Nov. 3 Tri-Meet at Georgia Tech, the Eagles beat their host and ACC foe Georgia Tech 161-139. In the first-ever meeting, Virginia Tech defeated FGCU 175-125.

Coach Neal Studd is confident his team will compete for another CCSA championship in February.

[CROSS COUNTRY]

The FGCU men's and women's cross country teams had impressive fall seasons.

The men placed in the top five in all but one of their six races, including a first-place victory at the FGCU Invitational.

The women, who placed second at the FGCU Invitational, have also posted strong results. They captured third place in the 27-team Walt Disney Classic in Orlando and finished among the top seven teams in all but one of their races.

For the first time, FGCU hosted the Atlantic Sun Conference Championships, with the men's team placing fourth in a 10-team field and the women earning a seventh-place finish.

On the men's team, junior Chris Rudloff, who finished 14th with a time of 25:28.9, ran the second fastest time ever at FGCU, behind junior Argeo Cruz's time of 25:20.64, set earlier this year.

Among the women, junior Kelly Perzanowski (18:00.8) finished 13th and senior Barrie Cohen (18:16.7) finished 17th, running the fastest and second-fastest times, respectively, in 5k history at FGCU.

At press time, both teams were headed to the NCAA Southeast Regional Championships, set for Nov. 9 in Tallahassee.

[GOLF]

FGCU's golf teams had some bright moments this fall, with the women finishing second at the LPGA Invitational in Daytona Beach and the men capturing the Cobra PUMA Invitational in Fort Myers. Freshman Edward Figueroa has been the story of the fall as he broke the school's 54-hole scoring record at the Cobra

Freshman Edward Figuero broke the school's 54-hole scoring record.

Junior Chris Rudloff ran the second fastest time ever at FGCU.
HE FGCU WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM HAS NEVER BEEN THIS YOUNG.
Seven freshmen are among the squad’s 15-player roster, and at least two of the greenhorns could start. It’s a prospect that scares and excites 11th-year coach Karl Smesko, who rode the shooting of five seniors to the school’s first NCAA Tournament appearance last year.

“Having this many freshmen brings challenges, but we’re just going to try to teach them as much as we can in a short time,” Smesko says. “We have the talent to be a pretty good team. We just have to make a lot of progress in the first part of the season.”

Basketball teams shooting for NCAA heights this season

PUMA tournament.
With the fall season ended, the women’s golf team will have some time to prepare for the 2013 championship spring season. They open the spring campaign Feb. 4-5 with a trip to Coral Gables to compete at the Hurricane Invitational, hosted by the University of Miami, at the Deering Bay Yacht & Country Club. On those same dates, the men will compete in the Sea Best Seafood Invitational in Jacksonville.

At press time, the men’s team was set to close out its fall season Nov. 5-6 at the Stetson Invitational at Victoria Hills Country Club.

[ TENNIS ]
FGCU women’s tennis freshman Elizabeth Means isn’t wasting much time making an impact.
Means posted three fall singles victories, including winning the Flight D singles championship at the University of Central Florida Invitational. Means also advanced to the consolation final of the Miami Invitational in October. Her sister, sophomore Sarah Means picked up one of the biggest singles wins in the program’s Division I history at the USTA/ITA Southeast Regional held at the University of South Florida, defeating Georgia’s Lilly Kimbell in straight sets in the consolation bracket.

The FGCU men’s tennis team also registered a strong fall, which was highlighted by victories in the singles and doubles championships at its own Fall Classic. Over the four-tournament fall schedule, the FGCU men had seven singles wins over BCS foes and three doubles victories against BCS tandems.

— Chris Duncan

“With all the seniors we lost, I thought it was important to add someone who can step in right away,” Smesko says. “Betsy is a great shooter and we lost some of that in the senior class.”

The men’s team, meanwhile, returns with its entire starting lineup from last year. Seniors Sherwood Brown and Eddie Murray, junior Chase Fieler and sophomores Brett Comer and Bernard Thompson played as a unit in FGCU’s trip to the Bahamas this August.

The Eagles played three games against professionals in the Bahamas. The NCAA allows teams to play overseas in the summer once every four years, and FGCU coach Andy Enfield says his squad benefited from the trip.

“We shot the ball well and our transition offense was excellent,” he says. “Our assist totals were very high, which I liked.”

FGCU added a key newcomer in the offseason when they signed 6-foot-3 German guard Alexander Blessig, a member of the under-16 German national team in 2009.

The Eagles can use the added depth early in the season as they are set to play Miami, Virginia Commonwealth and Duke in the nonconference.

“Our schedule is very challenging, but it’s nothing we can’t handle,” Enfield says. “We just need to compete each game and not look ahead.”

— Chris Duncan
The Founder's Cup Golf Tournament was raising money for Florida Gulf Coast University long before the institution opened its doors.

The tournament began 21 years ago, as Southwest Floridians began fundraising for the region’s first state university. This year, proceeds and in-kind contributions to the event topped $75,000. Cumulatively, the event has raised more than $1.1 million for the FGCU Foundation, which provides funds to enhance scientific, educational and athletic programs related to the mission of the university, but which fall outside the scope of state funds.

“Funds from the Founder’s Cup Golf Tournament continue to be extremely important to the projects of the FGCU Foundation,” said Linda Lehtomaa, interim vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the foundation. “We thank all of the teams that make this tournament such a success each year.”

Held in October at Pelican’s Nest Golf Club in Bonita Springs, this year’s tournament attracted 192 people comprising 48 teams. On a flawlessly sunny day with a light fall breeze, the teams competed on the Tom Fazio-designed golf course, vied for auction items, enjoyed lunch, dinner and an awards ceremony.

Low Gross on the Gator Course was Morton Wasmer Abraham Construction Managers, LLC. Low Gross on the Hurricane Course was the team from Coleman, Hazzard & Taylor PA.

The Gator and Hurricane courses are certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. The courses offer 36 holes of fun-filled challenges for players of all skill levels. The New York Times and Florida Golfer ranked Pelican’s Nest Golf Club among the best courses in Florida.

FGCU Foundation Chairman John Fumagalli, left, and Provost Ron Toll, right, with the winning Estero Bay Chevrolet team of Tom Lehnert, Mike Keelan, Tyrone Bates and Milburn Pearson.
MEMBERS OF THE MARCO ISLAND SHELL CLUB TURN SHELLS INTO crafts and crafts into money that supports scholarships for deserving Florida Gulf Coast University students who study shells.

The club has created the Marco Island Shell Club Competitive Research Scholarship Endowed Fund, to be awarded to a student conducting research on mollusks or issues related to the water in and around Collier County.

Last year, the club funded an endowed scholarship for students in marine science, environmental sciences or environmental studies. With the addition of two restricted scholarships the club also supports, it has donated $53,000 to FGCU.

“Florida Gulf Coast University received its first gift from the Marco Island Shell Club in 2001,” says Linda Lehtomaa, interim vice president for University Advancement and executive director of the FGCU Foundation. “Since that time, it has made numerous donations to benefit FGCU and its students. This continued generosity is especially appreciated by all of us at the university.”

The group is made up of those who like to make shell crafts, those who are interested in the scientific aspects of shells and, of course, those who like both, says Carolyn Ginther, scholarship and grant committee chair.

MEMBERS OF THE GREATER FORT MIERS MYERS WOMEN IN BUSINESS Committee recognize the importance of helping one another advance professionally. They also understand that women aspiring to satisfying careers sometimes need a helping hand, too.

That’s why at the committee’s monthly networking meetings, the members hold raffles that raise money for the scholarship they fund at Florida Gulf Coast University. They generate still more money from periodic live auctions.

The Greater Fort Myers Women in Business Scholarship is awarded to non-traditional students with financial need with preference given to single, divorced or widowed women applicants. This year the committee awarded four scholarships.

“Our mission is to inspire and mentor women to reach their fullest professional potential,” says Kimberly Royal, scholarship chairman for the committee that operates under the auspices of the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce. “The scholarship is a way to empower them and we feel we’re really changing lives.”

The Fort Myers Women’s Network established the fund in 1997. When the network ceased operations, the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce Women in Business Committee took over to support it.

BUILDING A LEGACY
Ajax Building Corporation Operations Manager Andy Wallace, left, and President William “Bill” Byrne represented the firm in its recent sponsorship commitment. The company has been a sponsor of the Founder’s Cup Golf Tournament, the President’s Celebration, Athletics, the President’s Scholarship Luncheon and First Generation Scholarship Program. Since 1998, the company has donated more than $375,000 to FGCU and has built four parking garages and the Library addition.
ARGUERITE “MEG” HUTCHINS WAS NO ACCIDENTAL TOURIST meandering from one landmark to another as she traveled the world. Free-spirited, curious and fearless, she immersed herself in the native cultures of countries great and small – China, Kenya, Peru, Papua New Guinea to name a few – and sat side by side with the locals.

During summer breaks from teaching, she rode the Orient Express to Mongolia and sailed the Panama Canal. In retirement, she motored across America in an RV with her two poodles to absorb the history and culture of Quaker, Amish and American Indian communities. “Everywhere she went she tried to go beyond the ‘tourist’ experience to interact with the local people,” recalls her sister, Marie Foley of Santa Barbara, Calif. “I believe that is how her interest in local arts began to take hold. She not only collected art objects but tried to get the story behind each one.”

Now, museum studies students will have the opportunity to learn from her cultural adventures. Hutchins, who died in January, donated some 85 ethnographic pieces to FGCU to be displayed and used in classes. Valued at more than $33,000, the gift spans the globe and the spectrum of artifacts: Indian ceremonial masks from the Pacific island of Papua New Guinea, Maasai tribal ornaments from Kenya, Chinese bronzes and porcelains and Miccosukee Indian beadwork from South Florida.

Museum Studies Program Leader Noemi Creagan says the diverse collection will help students learn how to research objects and design exhibitions around them.

“She takes us on a trip around the world,” Creagan says. “The collection is interesting because of its variety. You could do an exhibit on masks or focus on a country or a time period.”

It seems appropriate that Hutchins will continue helping others learn even after her death. She taught in Charlotte, N.C., and Bonita Springs schools for 35 years and always tried to spark student interest in local history, the environment and international cultures. She earned master’s degrees in pastoral theology and teaching English as a second language as well as a doctorate in education. At FGCU, she taught ESL and took painting classes.

Noemi Creagan says the diverse collection will help students learn how to research objects and design exhibitions around them.

“She was one of those lifelong learning people who just never show their age,” says Interim Art Gallery Director Anica Sturdivant. “Entwined with her intellectual, artistic and spiritual pursuits was a passionate belief in social justice that drove Hutchins to march in support of the Coalition for Immokalee Workers. The community-based organization fights to improve wages and living conditions for Southwest Florida farm laborers.

“It was her way of living out her religious beliefs in caring for the marginalized, not just by donating money but by helping people realize their own goals,” says Foley. “Hers was a life well lived, full of adventure and activism and strong convictions.”

– Drew Sterwald
Warner endowment benefits journalism students

LIFELONG JOURNALIST
DANIEL WARNER AND HIS WIFE, JANET, HAVE endowed a fund that will help hone the talents of the next generation of journalists.

The couple made a gift of $22,402 to establish The Daniel and Janet K. Warner Journalism Endowed Fund. Proceeds from the endowment will be used to help maintain news media accountability in the community through forums, debates, seminars, research, guest lecturers and other activities.

Dan Warner led the Lawrence, Mass. Eagle Tribune to a Pulitzer Prize for news reporting prior to his retirement and the couple’s subsequent move to Southwest Florida.

After speaking with Lyn Millner, FGCU associate professor of journalism, and conducting a presentation in one of her classes, “I was extremely impressed with the program and the idea of having aware and educated consumers of news,” Warner says.

“We are very grateful to Dan and Janet Warner for this gift and for their profound commitment to truth in media,” says Millner, who serves as Journalism Program leader. “These funds create a rare opportunity in our area – a program that brings together people with opposing views and provides a forum for civil discourse. It’s a huge win for FGCU and for Southwest Florida.”

Among possible uses for the money would be holding a forum through which reporters and those about whom they write could explore points of view in an effort to make journalists more sensitive to their subjects’ perspectives and to improve objectivity.

“We want the money used to further journalistic ethics. Academia is a neutral voice in this,” Warner says. “I hope they’ll maintain that for the cause of a more ethical press.”

Follett Corporation aids First Generation students

The Follett Corporation has contributed $10,000 to Florida Gulf Coast University’s scholarship fund. The money will help students who might otherwise have been unable to afford a college education.

The contribution by the company that runs FGCU’s bookstore has been applied to the university’s First Generation Scholarship Program, in which donations are matched dollar-for-dollar by the state of Florida, bringing the value of the contribution to $20,000.

These scholarships are awarded to students who have financial need and whose parents do not have baccalaureate degrees. In this case, 20 students were awarded $1,000 scholarships for the 2012-2013 academic year.

“This scholarship program is breaking the cycle of poverty, and we are pleased that Follett’s contribution can help our students in this way,” said Judie Cassidy, senior development officer for Advancement.

The contribution was presented to President Wilson G. Bradshaw by Helene Foster, Follett Corporation’s regional manager.

FineMark names Lutgert Hall classroom

Joe Catti, president and CEO of FineMark National Bank & Trust,stands in front of a Lutgert Hall classroom named for his company. The room was named as part of a $100,000 commitment from FineMark to support five years of sponsorship of the President’s Celebration and the Founder’s Cup Golf Tournament.
PHILANTHROPY
(continued from previous page)

OAK celebrates 30 years with donation

WEN-AMES-KIMBALL HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTING BUILDINGS IN SOUTHWEST Florida for 30 years. The company recently donated $7,151 to its endowed scholarship for engineering students, bringing the fund’s value to $30,000, in honor of the company’s 30th anniversary.

Besides the endowed scholarship it funds, the company has been a long-time supporter of Florida Gulf Coast University, donating to a number of university-related causes, including the Founder’s Cup, the President’s Celebration, Wanderlust, Eagles Club and the Whitaker Challenge/Building Fund. In addition to the endowed engineering scholarship it supports, the company has also endowed a scholarship for employees and their dependents who attend FGCU.

The company’s last construction project on campus was the Music Building, home of the Bower School of Music.

Student Government establishes endowed scholarship fund

HEN THEY WERE CAMPAIGNING TO LEAD FGCU’S Student Government for the 2011-12 academic year, Lauren Schuetz and Justin Carter proposed to establish an endowed scholarship fund as a way for SG to give back to its peers. Last spring, they fulfilled that pledge before their terms ended as president and vice president, respectively.

The FGCU Student Government Scholarship Fund was established with a $10,000 donation to start the endowment and $1,000 to support the initial year’s awards.

“With the way the economy is and rising tuition costs, we decided that this would be the perfect opportunity to create this scholarship,” said Schuetz, a senior communication major from Naples. “Not only were we able to tell students that we understand how difficult it can be to be a struggling college student, but we were able to show them that Student Government wants to help them in any way we possibly can.”

The scholarship will be awarded to students who have completed their freshman year and excelled in following the guiding principles of the university and the mission of Student Government.

The endowment reflects student leaders’ understanding of the importance of scholarships, said Dean of Students Michele Yovanovich.

“They know that by recognizing leadership, scholarship, service and diversity they are helping to build not only a better student body but also a better society for the future,” she said.

Scotland in reach through St. Andrew’s scholarships

FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HAVE the opportunity to study in Scotland because of support from the St. Andrew’s Society of Southwest Florida Inc., Naples.

Since 2009, the society has awarded annual scholarships that have enabled FGCU students to study at universities in Scotland with the hope that the scholarship recipient would develop an appreciation for the country, its citizens and culture.

The St. Andrew’s Society of Southwest Florida Scholarship Enhancement Fund supports these trips, which are awarded to students through FGCU International Services.

“The generosity of the St. Andrew’s Society has been significant in making study experiences in Scotland financially possible for students, immersing them in the culture, history, customs and contemporary experiences of the Scottish people,” says Elaine Hozdik, director of FGCU International Services.

The arrangement has worked well for the society as well, says William Paterson, chair of the society’s scholarship committee.

“Our relationship with FGCU has been invaluable in two respects: identification of qualified students, and management of our funds. We have been very impressed with the professionalism of our FGCU contacts.”

From left: David Dale, president, Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.; Sherry Schreier, board member and vice president of administrative services; and Suzanne Maurice, manager of marketing and public relations.
Mother honors son’s memory with book scholarship

BRUCE R. GEYER LOVED MUSIC FROM THE MOMENT HE PICKED UP the accordion his mother insisted he learn to play as a youngster. Over the years, he taught himself the guitar, violin and other string instruments, performing in bands throughout his life for the sheer pleasure of it.

After music, he loved education, both receiving and imparting it.

“He was a musician and an excellent student who loved school,” says his mother, Jean Swangren, of Fort Myers.

“He was a wonderful person and was extremely talented.”

Geyer died of cancer at age 55. To honor his memory in a meaningful way, his mother created a scholarship.

Since 2006, Swangren has donated $5,000 a year to help Florida Gulf Coast University students purchase textbooks. This year, she gave $10,000 to establish an endowed fund that will continue to assist students in perpetuity.

The Bruce R. Geyer Memorial Book Scholarship Fund will be used to purchase texts for full-time students who are residents of Lee County, can show financial need and have at least a 3.0 grade point average. Preference will be given to students majoring in music or education.

Geyer served in the Air Force, enrolling in college afterward. He went on to earn his doctoral degree, but Swangren recalls that he and his wife struggled to pay for his education, especially textbooks. Although he had hoped to become a teacher, he eventually took a job with the government to better provide for his wife and two daughters, Swangren says. Still, education and music always remained his passions.

“Jean Swangren recognizes that textbooks are often a surprise expense for students,” says Judie Cassidy, FGCU senior director of Advancement. “The Bruce R. Geyer Memorial Book Scholarship is intended to bring joy and relief, and it does. For education and music majors whose free time is limited by student teaching and performance requirements, this award changes tears to cheers.”

Burnette gift builds on business legacy

AROLYN M. AND H.J. BURNETTE HAVE LONG SUPPORTED FGCU AS IT SHAPES TOMORROW’S business leaders through rigorous education and entrepreneurial inspiration.

In 2008, the Lehigh Acres couple established an endowed graduate scholarship fund for deserving Lutgert College of Business MBA candidates.

Their most recent gift, to the college’s Fund for Educational Excellence, will ensure that academic opportunities grow and students flourish well into the future. The $10,000 endowment provides for faculty research stipends to enhance scholarship, covers travel for faculty and students to gain exposure at national academic conferences and pays for software and hardware needs to ensure state-of-the-art educational programs.

“We consider it an honor and a privilege to be able to contribute in this small way to the enhancement of the Lutgert College of Business and Florida Gulf Coast University,” says Carol Burnette, who retired as an associate dean in the college.

In recognition of the Burnettes’ generosity, the university has designated the Carol and Jim Burnette Student Lobby within the BankUnited Academic Advising Suite in Lutgert Hall.

“The Burnettes have been part of the fabric of the Lutgert College of Business since its inception,” says Dean Hudson Rogers. “By contributing to the Fund for Educational Excellence, Carol and Jim are helping advance our mission of providing quality education, scholarly endeavors and connectedness to the local and global business community.”
CLASS NOTES

'T07

Levi Pancake
Pastor maintains close physical, spiritual ties to alma mater.

T'S UNLIKELY THAT ANY FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY GRADUATE EVER LANDED AN off-campus job any closer to the school than Levi Pancake did in 2007. Pancake went to the main entrance, hung a left on Ben Hill Griffin Parkway and drove 3,000 feet, arriving at Summit Church, where he now serves as college pastor. He remains close to FGCU today and not just geographically. One of his primary jobs is to lead the Ignite College Ministry, which is in its 10th year on campus. It features worship on Tuesday nights and 26 small groups that meet throughout the week.

"I enjoy the opportunity to influence college students who are making these decisions that have an impact for the rest of their lives," says Pancake, 28, who graduated with a communication degree and subsequently married FGCU alum Julie Swanson ('08, Nursing).

"It's unique. College students take God's word and want to believe it," he says. "They're not weighed down with the baggage of this world. To think that we can help influence them on making godly decisions -- wise decisions in choosing a spouse and the career paths they take -- it's cool to be on the front end of that. It's almost like preventative care."

For now, it's hard for Pancake to envision ever being very far from FGCU. "We have support from the faculty and staff," he says. "They recognize that if someone is spiritually healthy, they will be a healthy community participant in FGCU. It's fun to pour back into this university. My wife and I love this university."

– Rick Weber

Alum gets chance to play pro hockey

AS A STUDENT, JOSH MARTIN, '12, WAS AN AVID member of FGCU's hockey club. He recently had the chance to play as a pro when he was invited to suit up for the Florida Everblades' pre-season games against the Orlando Solar Bears. As a defenseman, Martin did not allow an opposition's goal in either game, helping the Blades in both wins. Everblades Assistant Coach Brad Tapper said, "Josh is a great kid who works extremely hard and has a good shot from the point. Defensively, he doesn't make any mistakes."
Louise Skelly
Real life trumps reality show for golf pro.

It sounds like the plot for a reality television show - a golf pro in laid-back Southwest Florida moves to glamorous Los Angeles and winds up working on - wait for it - a reality TV show.

That's the unlikely path Louise Skelly followed after graduating from Florida Gulf Coast University in 2009.

Skelly has been golfing since she was five years old, growing up on courses around her Maryland home. At FGCU, she majored in resort and hospitality management and was the first woman to go through the school's prestigious golf management program.

During her senior year, Skelly worked at Tiburon Golf Club in Naples. But adventure beckoned.

"I knew I wanted to go out to California," Skelly says. "I wanted to get in with a big golf company, like a Titleist."

Skelly worked at a golf equipment company, then taught golf to developmentally disabled children. Then, in one of those dramatic plot twists you see on TV, Skelly's cell phone rang.

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Skelly headed back to Southwest Florida - closer to her snowbird parents, her alma mater and the region's fabulous golf scene.

Today, Skelly is an assistant golf pro at the Country Club of Naples, where she uses the people and management skills she mastered at FGCU. She gives lessons, helps run tournaments and shares her love of golf with equally golf-centric club members.

"I definitely made the right decision," she says. "Going to California and getting to experience the craziness of living out there was fun, but I'm really happy to be back. I love it here."

― Chris Wadsworth

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- Levi Pancake, ('07, Communication)

WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS AND BIRTHS

'09

Louise Skelly
Real life trumps reality show for golf pro.

The work was fun but decidedly unglamorous. The bulk of the video with the "housewives" had already been shot, so Skelly spent most of her time buzzing around a big warehouse - tracking down videotapes for editors, running errands and picking up lattes at Starbucks.

"You hear horror stories - that you are at the bottom of the totem pole and don't get treated really great, but the producer I worked for was great," says Skelly.

Ultimately, Skelly's story line led her back to her first love.

"TV was fun, but it wasn't what I was going to do for the rest of my life," Skelly says. "I was still teaching golf during my TV tenure. It was tiring and tough, but I wanted to keep my PGA card. I worked so hard to get that card and I didn't want to lose it."

So after half a season with the "Real Housewives," Skelly headed back to Southwest Florida - closer to her snowbird parents, her alma mater and the region's fabulous golf scene.

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'07

Andrea Rassi, (Education), and Christopher DeVita were married Feb. 4 at the Naples Botanical Gardens. Rassi is an elementary school teacher and graduated with her master's in reading curriculum at Grand Canyon University in 2010.

'B09

Bobbie Jo Akenson, (Management), and Joey Crouse have announced their engagement. They will marry in July. Akenson is the general manager of Great Cravings. They live in Alexandria, Va.

Ronald Angerer, (Political Science), and Stephanie Munnell, '10 (Marketing), were married in Jacksonville on May 18. Angerer is in his last year of law school at Florida Coastal. Munnell is employed with Marks Gray, P.A. They live in Jacksonville.

Katherine Liebl, (Master's, School Counseling), and Josh Hammond announced their engagement. Liebl is a school counselor at Caloosa Middle School.

Bobby Zandstra, (Bioengineering), and Kimberly Vincent have announced their engagement. Zandstra is a systems architect engineer with the U.S. Army, Dover, Del. An August wedding is planned.
[WEDDINGS, ENGAGEMENTS AND BIRTHS]

’10
Emily Borcherding, (Criminal Forensic Studies), and Benjamin Young are engaged. They are planning a June wedding.

’11
Blake Callahan, (Master’s, Business Administration), and Ashley Goff announced their engagement. Callahan is employed at Merrill Lynch. They will marry in October.

’12
Jeff Aaron, (Master’s, Business Administration), and Chelsea Kesner, (Marketing), announced their engagement May 21. He proposed to her underwater while scuba diving in Cozumel, Mexico. They live in Fort Myers.

[NEWSMAKERS]

’99
Janice Jong-a-Kiem, (Accounting), has joined the accounting services department at Myers, Bretholtz & Company, P.A., Certified Public Accountants and Business Consultants.

Linda Biondino, (Management), is an accountant for Southwest Property Management. She is also the president of the Naples Quilters Guild.

Fred Price, (Marketing) and Tony Price, ’03 (Marketing), owners of Priceless Realty, have expanded their real estate and finance business with the opening of Omega Title Florida in Cape Coral. Omega Title Florida coordinates real estate and finance closings and issues title insurance policies to protect property purchases.

’00
Kimberly Elias, (Psychology), is the program director for Medical Weight Loss Solutions in Prescott, Ariz.

’03
Lenore Benefield, (Master’s, Curriculum and Instruction), was promoted to director of assessment and accreditation management systems at FGCU.

David Breitenstein, (Master’s, Educational Leadership), was named to Gulfshore Business 40 under 40. He is the higher education reporter for The News-Press Media Group.

Maureen Flavion, (Art), is employed with Lifetouch in the photographic development and training department in Minnesota. She is also actively involved with the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

’05
Harry Casimir, (Computer Information Systems), was asked to partner with the Safe America Foundation, a global emergency preparedness initiative, for an international safety summit in Washington, D.C., in June. Casimir launched Rele Anmwe, a 411 information telephone service, after the earthquakes in Haiti. He is also the co-owner of Atius, a web design company.

Marc Devisse, (Marketing), and Zachary Eaton, (Management), have opened a new Jimmy John’s on University Drive near FGCU. Devisse is the owner of Tri-Town Construction, which is building the new location. Eaton is the owner of Jimmy John’s.

Kris Scheppe, (Environmental Studies), and his team sailed in the Blind Sailing National Championships in Newport, R.I.

Victor Tejera, (Master’s, Social Work), completed his doctor of education in organizational learning and leadership with a specialization in human resource development. He graduated in May from Barry University’s Graduate School of Education. Tejera also finished a 200-hour yoga teacher certification through the Himalayan Institute in Honesdale, Pa., this summer.

’07
Danilo Baylen, (Master’s, Elementary Education), was awarded tenure and promoted to the rank of full-time professor (Instructional Technology) in the Department of Educational Innovation, College of Education at the University of West Georgia in Carrollton, Ga.

Cassady Curtin, (Marketing), has been named to WCI Communities’ sales staff at Hampton Park at Gateway. She is also a licensed real estate professional in New York and Florida and served as a real estate agent in Manhattan, assisting with luxury apartment sales and rentals.

Kristi Lester, (Communication), was appointed to the Board of Directors at Collier Child Care Resources, Inc. She is employed by the Collier County Sheriff’s Office as a public information officer apprentice.

Zachary Katkin, (Liberal Studies), published his newest book, ”Business Web Design Guide: Everything a Business Owner Must Know to Navigate the World of Web Design.” It covers everything you need to know to develop a website as a business owner or entrepreneur. It is the first installment of a two-part series covering web development and internet marketing.

’09
Kaylie Brown, (Master’s, Business Administration), is the senior autoship specialist at the Home Shopping Network in St. Petersburg.

Tiffany Esposito-Kittinger, (Communication), a member of the Southwest Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA), recently earned professional public relations accreditation and received the designation of Accredited in Public Relations (APR). She currently serves as the communications manager at the Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce.

Susan Hamley, (Nursing), has graduated from Nova Southeastern University with a master’s in science in health law. She has been accepted into Barry University’s doctor of philosophy in nursing program.

Krista Johnson, (Psychology), is the exhibition coordinator for the Alliance for the Arts in Fort Myers. She also paints and is the singer/songwriter for the pop rock group, The Bettie Page Boys.
Tiffany Logan, (Communication), has been named the executive director of the Downtown Lakeland Partnership, a member-based marketing organization that promotes downtown businesses.

Baden Mudge, (Management), has been promoted to branch manager of Enterprise Holdings for the Marco Island office and the Marco Island Airport.

Rachel Wise, (Communication), is an online producer at Knoxville News Sentinel in Tennessee.

’11

Corey Grant, (Finance), has joined Moran Edwards Asset Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors as a client associate. He will be responsible for building and maintaining client relationships, handling inquiries and concerns, and providing support in all other aspects of client services.

Kelsey Thompson, (Master’s, Accounting and Taxation), has recently passed the American Institute of CPAs exam and met the requirements to become a licensed certified public accountant in Florida. She is employed with Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Company and is a member of the firm’s Litigation, Forensic Accounting and Mediation Services team.

’12

Ryan Carroll, (Civil Engineering), has recently been hired by Waldrop Engineering to work in its civil engineering department.

Sarah Reaves, (Communication), is the special programs and events coordinator for the Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce.

Reinaldo Valdés, (Management), is a financial representative for Northwestern Mutual in Fort Myers. He will be associated with Northwestern Mutual The Glenn Black Group.

[IN MEMORIAM]

Anthony Acri, ’01 (Master’s, Business Administration), died in April from brain cancer.

Jesse Dylan Strouse, ’07 (Communication), died April 2 at Cape Coral Hospital of complications from the flu. He is survived by his parents, Robert and LuAnne Strouse, and his girlfriend, Carol Poist. Strouse was a founding member of Kappa Alpha Order and was involved with Student Government. He loved music, cars and animals.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

2/7-2/9 THURSDAY-SATURDAY

Alumni Weekend
Join fellow Eagles for this annual tradition, which includes reunions for the classes of 2008, 2003 and 1998. Activities include:

2/7 Etiquette Dinner: Learn proper etiquette for business meals with employers. Etiquette expert Nonnie Owens will discuss ways to leave a lasting impression. Enjoy a five-course meal while networking with current students and fellow alumni. Space is limited. 5:30 p.m. Airport Holiday Inn, 9931 Interstate Commerce Drive, Estero.

2/8 Alumni Open House: Stop by for special campus discounts and lunch catered by Jimmy John’s. Noon, Alumni Center, Campus Support Complex.

Redeckor Campus: Find out what’s new at FGCU. Meet at the Sugden Welcome Center for a guided walking and bus tour. 2 p.m., Welcome Center.

Eagle Night Out: Let’s take over Tipsy Tarpon in this exclusive Eagle party. Enjoy music, giveaways, extended happy hour and free appetizers at this kick-off celebration. 7 p.m., Tipsy Tarpon, Miromar Outlets.

2/9 Alumni Basketball Game: Return to the court to cheer on your favorite former FGCU basketball players and cheerleaders as they reunite for an exhibition game against current students. 2 p.m., Alico Arena.

Green and Blue Tailgate: Enjoy food provided by local restaurants, activities for the whole family, and Eagle giveaways, 3 p.m., outside of Alico Arena.

FGCU Men’s basketball vs. USC Upstate: Wear your colors and help us fill Alico arena for this much-anticipated game. 5:15 p.m., Alico Arena.

FGCU Women’s basketball vs. USC Upstate: Wear your colors and help us fill Alico arena for this much-anticipated game. 6:30 p.m., Hospitality Suite, Estero.

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

SEND US YOUR NEWS
Email to alumnirelations@fgcu.edu or mail to: Florida Gulf Coast University, Attention: Alumni Relations, 10501 FGCU Blvd. S., Fort Myers, FL 33965-6565
GCU GRAPHIC DESIGNER BOB KLEIN CAPTURED THIS DRAMATIC IMAGE while walking across campus in October 2010. It recently beat out four finalists from around the country to become the cover of USCampus Guide, an international education magazine. He took it with a Nikon D-90 using the 18-105-millimeter lens with the ISO set at 250. He created three exposures (1/160 of a second, f/6.3; 1/320 of a second, f/9; and 1/80 of a second, f/4.5). Using the software program Photomatrix, he blended the three images using high dramatic range to achieve the bold effect.

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.
Weekend Alumni Feb. 7-10, 2013

It's time to come home to FGCU to celebrate Alumni Weekend. Join fellow Eagles for this annual tradition. While we are at it, let's honor the five-, 10- and 15-year reunions of the classes of 2008, 2003 and 1998!

For more info: www.fgcu/alumni
My hospital

...is now a Mayo Clinic Care Network member.

Working together. We think that’s the key to better healthcare for you and your family. And now the doctors and specialists at NCH and Mayo Clinic are sharing everything from first-hand experience to a wealth of knowledge. You now have access to Mayo Clinic’s expertise for solving the hard-to-solve medical problems. For you that means peace of mind and the finest healthcare available. Right here at home. NCH and Mayo Clinic...working together to make your hospital even better.