Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees
June 19, 2012

SUBJECT: Naming: Holmes Hall Faculty and Staff Lounge the “Dr. Susan M. Blanchard Faculty and Staff Lounge”

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Approve naming.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On April 17, 2012 the FGCU Board of Trustees approved this agenda item for recommendation to the Board of Governors. Subsequent information provided by the Board of Governors indicated that since the naming is not for a building or facility – but rather for a faculty and staff lounge within a building – the Board of Governors does not need to approve it.

The FGCU Board of Trustees has the authority to approve the naming, and thus it is being returned to you for action on June 19, 2012.

Supporting Documentation Included: (1) Resolution and Materials from April 17, 2012 Meeting of FGCU Board of Trustees

Prepared by: Chief of Staff & University Spokesperson Susan Evans

Legal Review by: N/A

Submitted by: President Wilson G. Bradshaw
Subject: Resolution to Name Holmes Hall Faculty and Staff Lounge the “Dr. Susan M. Blanchard Faculty and Staff Lounge”

Proposed Board Action

Adopt resolution to recommend approval by Board of Governors

Background Information

Since 2005, Dr. Susan M. Blanchard has served first as the founding director of the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering, and, since August 2011, as the founding dean of the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering. During this time FGCU has established four Engineering degree programs (Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Bioengineering, and Software Engineering), designed and constructed Holmes Hall, and achieved ABET accreditation (for three of the four degree programs). Just seven years after its creation as a School within the Lutgert College of Business, enrollment in the College of Engineering today stands at nearly 700 students. Dr. Susan Blanchard will retire on June 30, 2012. To honor her significant contributions in leading the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering, the University proposes to name the Faculty and Staff Lounge in Holmes Hall as the “Dr. Susan M. Blanchard Faculty and Staff Lounge.”

The naming recommendation is presented in accordance with FGCU Policy 1.011 “Namings of University Buildings and Facilities.” Pursuant to section “Non-Gift-Related Naming – A.3” of the Policy, the building or facility naming for an active member of the State University System (faculty, staff, student, or trustee) must be approved by the Board of Governors.

Supporting Documentation Included: (1) Pinnacle Story regarding Dr. Blanchard & Whitaker College of Engineering, & (2) Resolution for Recommended Action

Prepared by: Associate Provost for Planning and Institutional Performance
Paul Snyder

Legal Review by: N/A

Submitted by: President Wilson G. Bradshaw
A Resolution of the
Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees

WHEREAS, in 2005 Dr. Susan M. Blanchard was selected to serve as the Founding Director of the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering within the Lutgert College of Business at Florida Gulf Coast University – and ultimately served as the Founding Dean of the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Blanchard’s leadership of the U.A. Whitaker College of Engineering has been marked by exceptional growth and achievement; and

WHEREAS, the College under Dr. Dean Blanchard’s leadership witnessed myriad accomplishments including growth in student enrollment from 0 to nearly 700 Engineering students; the recruitment and hiring of an outstanding cadre of faculty and staff; the creation of four Engineering degree programs; the design and construction of Holmes Hall, and the achievement of ABET accreditation for the civil, environmental, and bioengineering degree programs; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Susan M. Blanchard has announced her retirement from Florida Gulf Coast University effective June 30, 2012;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees wishes to recommend to the Board of Governors approval of the naming of the Faculty and Staff Lounge within Holmes Hall as the “Dr. Susan M. Blanchard Faculty and Staff Lounge” in lasting tribute and recognition for Dr. Blanchard’s exceptional contributions to Engineering education for generations of students to come at Florida Gulf Coast University.

DULY ADOPTED THIS 17th DAY OF APRIL IN THE YEAR 2012.

SIGNED:

___________________________________________
Larry D. Hart, Chair
Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees
Like the structures its graduates will build, the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering has grown from a modest foundation to a grand edifice. The $24.4-million Holmes Hall, which officially opened in January, has provided the University’s engineering faculty and students with a state-of-the-art home of their own for the first time since the program began in fall 2005.

Less than four years later, the school's enrollment totals 500 students—80 percent in engineering (divided among civil, environmental and bioengineering) and 20 percent in computer science. And, in yet another sign that the program has come of age, the first 20 engineering majors graduate May 3.

“We developed our engineering programs based on the latest pedagogical research that supports the benefits of active and collaborative learning and on recommendations from the National Academy of Engineering for what it takes to be a 21st-century engineer,” says Susan Blanchard, founding director of the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering. “Before, anytime we wanted to talk to the professors, we had to make that long trek. Now they are right down the hall.”

That’s become logistically easier to do with the completion of the 70,000-square-foot Holmes Hall. Prior to its opening, faculty had offices in modular units on one end of campus while classes and labs met in the library, Academic Building 3, Lutgert, Griffin, Reed and Whitaker halls. The school now has a four-story structure dedicated to, and specifically designed for, its programs and projects.

“I didn’t have much contact with the students before,” says Blanchard. “Now I see them all the time. It’s much more personal.”

Students think the new facility is a perfect fit.

“It means so much to the faculty and students to finally have a building we can call our own,” says Jessica Sharpe, a senior majoring in environmental engineering. “Before, anytime we had to make that long trek. Now they are right down the hall.”

Highlights of the new building include:

• A two-story laboratory, known as a high bay, with a bridge crane that enables students to move heavy equipment and materials such as concrete and steel, in order to build tall test structures indoors.
• Thirty-six offices for engineering faculty, staff and academic advisers as well as 10 carrels for graduate students
• Fourteen teaching spaces containing studio lab classrooms, teaching labs, computer labs and design studios
• A walkway from the Ginn Clubs & Resorts Arrium connects it to Lutgert Hall, home of the Lutgert College of Business, a tangible symbol of the University’s commitment to an interdisciplinary approach to both the engineering and business curricula.

It’s a building with facilities designed for the exacting and highly technical work engineering and computer science require as well as study areas tailored to collaborating and lounges that encourage socializing.

“We tried very hard to think about where students were going to be when they’re not in class,” says Blanchard, who was intimately involved in every phase of the building’s development.

Where possible, the designers used green technology, such as motion-sensitive lights in common areas that shut off when there’s no one there. Clerestory windows bring natural light into areas that would otherwise be lit solely by electrical sources. Labs are built one on top of the next on each floor, allowing for the stacking of time-honed and installation of a more efficient air handling system.

FGCU’s engineering program was launched with a $5-million lead gift from The Whitaker Foundation to build Holmes Hall. It is named in honor of G. Burtt Holmes, chair of the foundation, and his wife, Ruth Whitaker, daughter of U.A. Whitaker.

Through their life’s work and affiliation with The Whitaker Foundation, the Holmeses have made substantial philanthropic contributions to FGCU and other institutions throughout the nation in support of scientific research and education. Those funds were matched by the state and other capital funding.

“Support from generous donors and the state made it possible to design and build Holmes Hall with all of the features needed to help the U.A. Whitaker School of Engineering move toward achieving its vision of being internationally recognized for excellence in interdisciplinary engineering and competing education,” Blanchard says.

The building architects were Schwosh, Twitty & Hanser (STH Architectural Group). The builder was Kraft Construction Company. The goal of the school is to educate the next generation of engineers who will be able to tackle the many aspects of construction, technological advancement and environmental protection a developing area like Southwest Florida requires.

Bioengineering major Stephanie Mooney of Fort Myers enjoys being one of the program’s pioneers.

“The first class makes it a whole different world,” she says. “At many universities, you have classes with a hundred people in them. We have