Congressional Seminoles

The Florida State University by living — and learning — in close proximity to each other in residence halls across campus. Florida State’s “living-learning communities” and “honors common themes have been individually developed not only to provide a place to learn, but also to promote a sense of community. While each of Florida State’s living-learning programs is unique, they all share a basic emphasis on academics. Participants live in the same residence halls and enroll in specific courses that bring them together as a group. These arrangements are contributing to the overall success of students throughout their college career. Participants have been shown to earn better grades, graduate sooner and have a more satisfying overall college experience compared to their counterparts in the university’s general population, according to Rita Moser, director of University Housing.

“Students really get more fully engaged in campus life if they live in any of our residence halls,” Moser said. “The living-learning communities are really special because of their diverse subject range and how well developed they are. Students really enjoy being a part of them.”

Florida State professors direct the programs, regularly bring in guest speakers for colloquia, and teach special in-house course sections only open to community members. In order for a student, usually a freshman, to be placed in any of the living-learning communities, he or she must apply for a space in a program. Each hall has different requirements based on its academic emphasis and they all have a limited enrollment.

Institute encourages black men toward full potential

By Jeffery Seay
Editor in Chief

When Florida State University senior Joseph Morgan, 23, transferred from Tallahassee Community College in the fall of 2007, he set out to make the most of his college experience. As a social science major with a concentration in political science and economics, Morgan is planning on a career in government. To that end, he works part time in the Office of the Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education and has the Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education has established the Black Male Institute to help students assimilate into both the university community and the professional world beyound. In other words, to help students become involved in something bigger than themselves.

For a go-getter like Morgan, life at a university did not seem to be the impossible monolith that some minority students find. Still, he appreciates the extra support and “push” to get involved that the Black Male Institute provides.

“I joined the Black Male Institute to improve my campus life, for social networking opportunities and to develop leadership skills,” Morgan said. “It is designed to assist black males with academic and social integration.

“Thus far, I have had an opportunity to interact with faculty and staff members in out-of-class experiences,” he said. “It’s an excellent way to meet students and make new friends, and learn how to work with diverse people. The Black Male Institute provides.

continued on PAGE 6

Laura Laskey

continued on PAGE 15

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Remembering Paul A.M. Dirac

By Gary Fineout

Today’s students who walk across the campus of The Florida State University may only know the name of Paul Adrien Maurice Dirac from the name that graces the front of the science library that also bears his name.

But to those who worked at Florida State when Dirac was alive, the Nobel Prize winning physicist was an ever-present reminder of the wonders of physics and science.

And even though Dirac had a reputation for being taciturn, his colleagues in the physics department still got a glimpse at the human side of the man who spoke lovingly of the “beautiful mathematics” that lies within physics.

He was the kind of man who would insist on walking everywhere, including to and from his home, located near the western edge of campus. He enjoyed long walks in the woods. Or he could be a daredevil who would take a long swim in a local lake in the dead of winter.

His intellectual curiosity was always in full force, as on the day he spent nearly an hour talking to a fellow physicist about quarks, or when he asked about football, a game foreign to him. “People told him that’s not very American,” recalled John Albright, a former colleague of Dirac and a physics professor. “He asked about football, a game foreign to him.”

But Dirac did come, working at the Science Museum, London, in 1928. His lecture was quite a demonstration of Dirac’s prowess. “The discovery of new productive forms of atomic theory.”

After sitting through Dirac’s lecture, Albright said, “He knew where he was going and he wasn’t going to stop.”

He was the kind of man who would walk up to him and then insist on walking everywhere, because he would have to think about the physics. “The reason he didn’t want to drive a car back and forth was because he would have to think about driving,” Albright said. “But when he was walking he could think about physics.”

One constant with Dirac during most of his time at Florida State was his daily commute from his house to his office on campus. Even when weather was bad, Dirac would insist on walking. It wasn’t that Dirac didn’t know how to drive. He told Albright he preferred walking because it gave him time to think.

“The reason he didn’t want to drive a car back and forth was because he would have to think about driving,” Albright said. “But when he was walking he could think about physics.”

Albright recalls how one day he was able to give Dirac a ride to a neighboring Florida A&M University for a lecture, but only after engaging in a bit of trickery. After Dirac asked an fellow Florida State professor if they could give him directions to the FAMU campus, Albright came up with endlessly complicated directions in an effort to dissuade him from walking.

But Albright’s ploy didn’t last. After sitting through Dirac’s lecture, he walked up to him and then offered to take him home.

“He looked at me and smiled and said ‘I’m going to walk home,’” Albright said. “He knew where he was, he wasn’t going to get lost.”

A new biography of Paul A.M. Dirac delves into his complex personal life by discussing the hatred he felt toward his father, the suicide of his brother, and the possibility that he had Asperger syndrome, a mild form of autism.

The Strangest Man: The Hidden Life of Paul Dirac, Quantum Genius, written by Graham Farmelo, senior research fellow at the Science Museum, London, is helping to establish Dirac in the public consciousness as a pioneer in quantum mechanics — one of the top two or three physicists of the 20th century, the greatest British physicist since Isaac Newton and an equal with Albert Einstein.

Paul A.M. Dirac of the University of Cambridge, England, and Erwin Schrödinger of Berlin University, Germany, shared the 1933 Nobel Prize in Physics for “the discovery of new productive forms of atomic theory.”
**'Miracle on the Hudson' lands at Florida State**

On Jan. 15, 2009, Reenee Williams was scheduled to fly back to Tallahassee from a business trip to New York City. Her flight, U.S. Airways 1549, took off as scheduled from LaGuardia Airport, but was interrupted shortly after takeoff when several Canadian Geese were sucked into the jet’s engines, rendering them useless. The plane’s pilot, Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger, made a crash landing into the Hudson River. Fortunately, all 155 people on board survived.

Reenee Williams

The traumatic experience, along with what she was wearing that day, led Williams to make a pivotal decision in her life. “When I saw the picture of myself wearing my Florida State sweatshirt, after we were rescued, I realized I was going back to school at Florida State. It was then that I knew I was going back to school at Florida State.”

Williams, 24, a publicist for 360 Music Studio, re-enrolled at Florida State in February and is starting this summer as a creative writing major with a focus on business.

“I always knew I wanted to go back to school, but I didn’t know when it was going to happen or what was going to prompt me to go back,” she said. “The experience definitely made me a stronger person, and I have a different outlook on life because I know what I need to do. This made me realize that, ‘Yeah, I want to be in school.’

“I was enrolled in 2002 with scholarships, which I thankfully still have,” she said. “I just didn’t have the balance in my life. My career in the music industry was taking off, so I wanted to do that for a little while and get some hands-on experience.”

**Building for a rainy day**

Waiting out a lightning storm is no way to conduct a team practice. That is why the Florida State University Department of Athletics and Seminole Boosters have embarked on a fundraising campaign to build an indoor practice facility. Not only would all of the university’s sports teams be able to beat Mother Nature at her own game, but they would have the same guaranteed practice ability of schools such as Louisiana State University and the University of Alabama, and Northern schools that must contend with snow.

Florida State’s general student population also would benefit. “We would use the facility not only for intercollegiate athletics but also for intramurals, band practice and even physical education classes,” said Randy Sperman, Florida State’s director of athletics.

The facility even would be used on rainy game days for pregame revelry. Sperman recalled how inclement weather had curtailed the fun on Langford Green prior to last year’s match-up against Florida. Roughly $3 million in pledges have been received toward the facility’s $25 million price tag. The Seminole Boosters board of directors has decided that construction will not begin until a match-up against Florida.

**Doctoral program for nurses**

Beginning in fall 2009, the Florida State University College of Nursing will offer a new graduate program leading to a Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) degree. The professional clinical doctorate will prepare highly qualified nurse experts for advanced positions as practitioners or administrative leaders in the health care industry. “We are so pleased that the Florida Board of Governors and the university support the advancement of nursing education to help meet our state’s health care needs and the growing demands on our health care system,” said College of Nursing Dean Lisa Pellowe. “It is essential that Florida remains on the forefront of nursing education... The graduates of this new doctoral program at The Florida State University will be well qualified to help solve many of the system issues we face in health care today and meet the changing needs of our patients, their families and the communities nurses serve.”

The D.N.P. program has been designed for nurses with Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BS.N.) or Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) degrees. Students will choose one of two tracks — either Family Nurse Practitioner (F.N.P.) or Health Systems Leadership. About 16 students will be admitted to the D.N.P. program for 2009. Admissions are expected to increase in each subsequent year, with up to 70 students by 2013.

**FSU in NYC ‘09**

The university’s annual fine arts exposition to the Big Apple — known as “Sight, Sound & Motion: Florida State University in New York City” — will take place May 4-6.

**Flying High home shows and summer camp**

This spring, the Florida State University Flying High Circus (www.circus.fsu.edu) will treat the public to “Spectacular,” a series of new and spellbinding performances that put a contemporary spin on classic circus themes. The home shows will take place Friday, April 3, at 7 p.m.; Saturday April 4, at 2 and 7 p.m.; Sunday, April 5, at 2 p.m.; Friday, April 10, at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, April 11, at 2 and 7 p.m.

**Circus Camp**

What’s more, the Flying High troupe will present a summer camp under its Big Top on the Florida State campus for Tallahassee-area children ages 7 to 17. During any one of eight weeklong sessions that begin June 22, campers will have the opportunity to learn everything from juggling to flying on the trapeze, all taught by Florida State students. The campers will be able to display their circus craft during a showcase performance at the conclusion of the camp. To learn more, call (850) 644-4874 or visit www.circus.fsu.edu/camp.html.

**Looking for friends of John S. Parrott**

John S. Parrott, who studied mathematics and Chinese at The Florida State University from 1961 to 1964 and died in 1965 while serving in the Peace Corps, is the subject of a biographical novel being written by his first cousin, Timothy C. Parrott of Iowa City, Iowa. Parrott is hoping to interview Florida State alumni who knew his cousin.

To contact Parrott, send an e-mail to timparrotta@aol.com.

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Artists’ rendering of proposed indoor practice facility.
Global Pathways Certificate receives national recognition

The new Florida State University Global Pathways Certificate program has been selected as a national winner in the NASPA Excellence Award recognition process. The NASPA Excellence Awards recognize the contributions of the members of NASPA—Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, who are transforming higher education through outstanding programs, innovative services and effective administration.

The Global Pathways Certificate received the Bronze Award for its international programs.

“For the Global Pathways Certificate program to receive such a prestigious award in its first semester is a great triumph,” said Global Pathways Certificate Coordinator Cadence Kidwell. “NASPA has recognized that a dedicated group of FSU faculty and Student Affairs staff have designed a program that benefits our entire campus community and beyond as our students take their international and cross-cultural efforts into their respective fields.”

To date, there are 150 students enrolled in the certificate program, and four have graduated in the six months it has been running. Forty are expected to graduate this spring.

The Global Pathways Certificate, an initiative of Florida State’s International Center, was designed by the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs and is supported by the Claude Pepper Center for International Dialogue. The certificate maximizes the rich cultural learning experiences available to students on campus, in the community and abroad.

Students can choose a certificate theme based on their interests and goals, take related academic courses and a language, and participate in international and cross-cultural experiences and events to enhance their theme. Such active learning and reflection, together with cross-cultural interaction, dialogue and service, help provide the invaluable skills and competencies needed to be a global-ready graduate.

Faculty planning lectures and student groups planning events with international themes are using the Global Pathways program to gain a larger audience for their events. Students participating in the program frequently report that they are now involved in activities that they previously knew nothing about. The international exchange program is now revitalized with faculty and student interest.

The Global Pathways Certificate is one of the few global competency certificate programs at higher education institutions that combine co-curricular activities with academic course work. This option takes into account students’ time and financial constraints and helps to integrate international students into domestic students’ learning experiences and vice versa. Options for service and research abroad also are unique among global competency certificate programs.

To learn more about the Global Pathways Certificate, visit www.global.fsu.edu.

**True tales from Audition Land**

In 1997, Florida State alumnus Julio Agustin Matos, who was living in Los Angeles at the time, was auditioning in New York for “The Capeman,” the tragic tale of a 16-year-old Puerto Rican gang member.

Because Matos is of Puerto Rican descent, he thought he had a reasonable shot at winning a part. However, when the casting director asked him if he could be “more Puerto Rican,” Matos replied with tongue firmly planted in cheek: “No, I literally cannot be any more Puerto Rican!” Everything happens for a reason, as the saying goes. Afterward, Matos literally went next door and nailed an audition for famed theater director Susan Snoman, who was casting “Steel Pier.”

Julio Agustín Matos

**Global Pathways: Broadway veteran helps students become professionals**

By Jeffrey Seay

The dream of achieving celebrity in showbiz is realized only by the lucky few. So, too, is realizing the dream of finding steady work as an actor. Over the past 15 years, Broadway veteran Julio Agustin Matos — an alumnus of The Florida State University — has been able to do just that, transcending the “struggling actor” stereotype to be able to rely on the steady paycheck of a bona fide professional.

His simple secret: being prepared. “I’ve always considered myself lucky in this business,” said Matos, who earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Florida State’s Music Theatre program in 1990. In addition to being a working actor, he is the deputy chairman of the Department of Theatre and Speech at City College of New York.

“Luck is when opportunity and preparation meet,” Matos said. “The little things matter, like showing up on time. A lot of it sounds like common sense, but often there is very little that is common about common sense.”

Matos’ philosophy for maintaining career momentum has paid huge dividends. He has performed with the original Broadway casts of Steel Pier (1997), Fosse (1999) and Never Gonna Dance (2003). He has performed in the Broadway revivals of Chicago (2000 and 2007) and “Bells Are Ringing” (2001). He also performed with the national Broadway tour of “Kiss of the Spider Woman” (1996).

In addition to the shows themselves, Matos has worked with some of Broadway’s most prominent leading ladies. He performed with Chita Rivera in “Kiss of the Spider Woman,” with Faith Prince in “Bells are Ringing,” and with Bebe Neuwirth in “Chicago.”

For “Fosse,” he was choreographed by Gwen Verdon and Ann Reinking.

Early on, Matos found that being a halfway decent talent in order to break into New York’s tightly knit theater community. “Once you’re in, you’re in,” Matos said. “When I first moved to New York City, I was going to auditions, singing and dancing, and I was really good at listening to what they wanted. I would get down to the very end, but I wouldn’t get hired.”

“I wasn’t until I got one lucky break out of town that the Broadway directors started calling the person who I worked with to find out what kind of person I was,” he said. “They knew I had the talent, but they wanted to find out what I was like as a person to work with. When I heard that, I was really shocked. But they want to know if they can trust you.”

Matos advises on making his share of mistakes, but more importantly, learning from them and moving on. He has created The Transition Workshop (www.TheTransitionWorkshop.com) to help college students navigate the move into the professional world and, though they are still in school, begin to think of themselves as professionals.

“In part, it’s about working backwounds,” he said. “You need to know what your goals are and actually put them into words.”

Coming out of a stage door to a throng of adoring fans or seeing their names up in lights starts with smart money management and making solid connections within the industry.

Through his workshops, Matos encourages perseverance and the setting of realistic goals.

“Keeping your career moving is a matter of looking for the next job, even when you’re working,” he said. “It’s a matter of surrounding yourself with people who are doing what you want to do. It’s a matter of thinking of yourself as a working professional even when you’re not working.”

After I teach my workshop, people tell me that they didn’t realize so much went into working.”

Despite performing under the white-hot lights of Broadway, Matos remains most passionate about helping others to succeed. In addition to his teaching duties at City College of New York and teaching his Transition Workshop, Matos has twice returned to Florida State as the Marcus Bailey and Betty Graves Sheller Emergent Scholar Chair in Music Theatre. He was the first person to occupy the chair in 2000.

“Even though I went to Penn State for my master’s degree in directing, and I am very grateful for everything I got there, my alma mater will always be Florida State,” he said. “Kate Gelbert (Theatre associate professor) and Gayle Seaton (Music Theatre program director) are the teachers who cared about me. They are why I go back.

“For the past year and a half, I’ve had an overwhelming sense that I’m living my dream in every way,” he said. “I’m happy and I’m doing something important with my life — helping others to reach their dreams, step by step.”
Raising young readers: WFSU-TV strives to positively affect young lives

By Bayard Stern
Managing Editor

What letter does the word "Florida" start with? What color is a banana? Encouraging young children to think about such concepts like these can pay big dividends in their future reading success.

The PBS Kids Raising Readers program has partnered with WFSU-TV to participate in the nationwide effort, which is designed to improve the literacy of children by introducing them to fun, modern and carefully researched ways to think about reading and words.

WFSU-TV was one of only 20 stations selected out of 354 Public Broadcasting Service member stations across the country to participate in the Raising Readers program.

"A big part of the project is to expose kids to really innovative content that promotes all-around literacy," said Kim Kelling, director of educational services at WFSU-TV. "We are promoting the Raising Readers program by going out into the community to reach the kids directly in any way we can. We visit schools, sponsor educational activities and give out reading materials. We also let their teachers know about educational Web sites like PBS Kids Island (www.pbskids.org) and let them know about the great programming, like the new "Electric Company.""

Kelling said that WFSU-TV was chosen as a partner in the Raising Readers program because of its 45-year history of success in broadcasting public radio and television, and its many strong ties to the community and other PBS stations in the region.

"As one of the first stations in the country to make the commitment to be a part of PBS's Ready to Learn initiative, we've been getting children prepared to enter school for decades," said Patrick Keating, general manager of WFSU. "I'm always meeting successful adult mentors who tell me that they learned their numbers, letters and colors by watching "Sesame Street" on WFSU-TV when they were kids. Today we have expanded our efforts with a real emphasis on literacy."

WFSU-TV, part of Florida State's Division of University Relations, is a PBS affiliate serving 20 counties in North Florida, South Georgia and Southeast Alabama.

A major goal of the Raising Readers program is to reach a specific demographic of children who come from low-income families and the adults in their lives.

"We also are educating the parents, teachers and caregivers who see the kids every day," Kelling said. "These are the people who can really make a difference in how they talk to the kids about reading and being interested in words to help them be prepared for a lifetime of learning."

WFSU-TV is focusing on specific areas selected by ZIP code that were at or below the federal guidelines for poverty. In these areas, there are a little more than 10,000 families with children who are between the ages of 2 and 8, which is the target audience. WFSU partners with schools, offers curriculum materials and PBS media content and pairs them with all sorts of activities. It also lets families know what programs are available, such as the new show "Super Why!" and the PBS Kids Web site (www.pbskids.org).

"We're working in North Florida in areas that include Gadsden County, Quincy, Ga.; Leon County," Kelling said. "We're trying to reach them through a very different type of approach, and that is to create messaging content where these families live, and to think out of the box on how to do it. So, yes, we're airing great content on our WFSU station designed to help these kids, but if they don't know about it, they won't access it. That is why we're partnering with Cumulus radio and Comcast to deliver literacy messages directly to our target audience. We want to bring many new, fun and educational reading tools to as many kids as we can."

PBS Kids is a national literacy initiative that uses dynamic, research-based multimedia content designed to help meet the urgent literacy needs of children, according to Kelling. The project is part of the Ready to Learn initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS and the Ready to Learn Partnership.

Institute encourages … continued from page 1

Institute provides a more balanced collegiate experience than solely attending class and studying.

More than a year ago, Student Program Coordinator Josi Nathans, who works with the youth outreach programs of Florida State’s Center for Leadership and Civic Education, noticed that there were few black male students at Florida State taking part in opportunities to serve as mentors to Tallahassee elementary and middle school students. She also noticed that many of the children who needed mentoring were black boys who had been held back not one or two times, but three times.

"Josi started working with some other staff members to come up with some kind of program to get black male students at Florida State more interested in doing community service," said Eric Weldy, an associate vice president for Student Affairs. "That’s what sparked the idea for the Black Male Institute, and I was drawn into the effort."

In the summer of 2008, a pilot program was conducted with 40 first-year black male students recruited through the university’s Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement Program (www.fiu.edu/~care) to help them get involved in community service.

"One way we’ll be able to achieve our mission is to get our students really interested in community service," Weldy said. "They will have an opportunity to learn about all the different resources available on campus that relate to doing community service for the Tallahassee community. What I have found in my experiences in the Black Male Institute, that is that many students want to go back to the local community but they really don't know where to start."

Members also receive mentoring from Florida State faculty and staff members, as well as alumni and professionals in the Tallahassee community.

What’s more, membership can participate in activities, such as "rap sessions," that help them gain confidence in order to thrive as students and become productive members of the community. The rap sessions let them just talk to each other about whatever is on their minds.

"This gives the members an opportunity to take ownership of the program," Weldy said. "They really begin to talk amongst themselves and with men who have graduated and gone on into the work force about things like how to get into graduate school, how to handle relationships, what it means to be a black man in today’s society."

As a continues, the institute will "put a face" on young black men who are seeking to contribute to and become leaders of society, according to Weldy.

So far, Morgan has found that his experiences in the Black Male Institute have lent themselves to making him more marketable upon graduation.

"I’ve learned about what life is like for an African-American male from a practical perspective," Morgan said. "Last but not least, membership in the Black Male Institute has been an opportunity to learn more about myself."

WFSU-TV was one of only 20 stations selected out of 354 Public Broadcasting Service member stations across the country to participate in the Raising Readers program.
By Dave Fiore

Dave Plentt, a Florida State University assistant strength coach, had convinced himself that his dream was dead. His vision for applying world-class training techniques to young athletes had never found enough traction to become a sustainable business venture.

That was until he met a couple of former Florida State star athletes who would join him in his quest to upgrade the athleticism of our youth and become the leadership core of what is now Titus Sports Academy.

The concept for Titus, which is based in Tallahassee, started while Plentt was coaching at the University of Texas in Austin.

“The athletes were highly skilled in their sport, really good at their craft, but simple things like running and jumping — the basics of fundamental athleticism — were missing,” he said. “We need to increase athleticism at a younger age. At our early camps, I could see the dramatic improvement in these areas and felt that we could meet a real need.”

Plentt met former Florida State shortstop Adam Faurot (B.S. ’97, Sociology), who just had his professional career ended by a torn knee ligament and was looking for an opportunity to work in the sports field in some capacity. It was a perfect fit, especially since Plentt has other full-time responsibilities.

“At first, I was a hands-on coach, but I soon became more of a mentor and consultant,” Plentt said. “The great thing about also working at FSU is that the new models of training, testing and evaluating happen here. I can apply research of the highest level. The results were incredible in what I do at the university can be applied at Titus. These kids will have the option to be better than the last generation.”

If it was Plentt who brought the training and knowledge to the table, it was Faurot who brought the passion and energy to make it happen.

“I always had a dream of doing this,” Faurot said. “Dave has worked with world-class athletes and Olympic champions at the highest levels. I wanted and listened to him on training and how it relates to playing sports, and I know young people could benefit from this.”

“One is crucial to the next generation of athletes to graduate from Florida State. Since fiscal year 2005-2006, state of Florida revenue available to support universities and other state initiatives has fallen about 18 percent. Florida State has already reduced its budget by $21 million, or almost 6 percent. The special session of the Florida Legislature in January reduced our budget by another 4 percent, and there is every indication that the next fiscal year will be worse.

In short, it is becoming clear that we can no longer depend on state funds in order to remain a university.

Private support from our alumni and other groups is what will help keep this university great.

Florida State has already benefited from the generosity of our alumni and friends — as evidenced by the success of our last capital campaign, “FSU Connect.” But we are now looking to the next generation of alumni, this group of 70,000 recent graduates, to take the reins of Florida State’s future.

One way the university is addressing this core group is through the Gold Ring Program. Gold Ring (Graduates Of the Last Decade) and the Gold Ring Development Fund.

The Gold Ring was established in the fall of 2001 to recognize those who have graduated in the last 10 years and contribute $250 or more annually to the university. To help build and strengthen their connection to Florida State, members receive subscriptions to the Florida State Times and invitations to special events.

The Gold Ring Development Council held its first meeting in the fall of 2002. Composed of alumni from around the country, council members share a vision to educate fellow recent graduates on the need for philanthropic support of Florida State.

“Focusing our efforts on connecting our young alumni and friends to the university is like building the foundation of a house,” said Alex Mullineaux (B.S. ’02), outgoing chairman of the council. “The stronger the foundation, the stronger the overall structure. Our mission is to foster support from recent graduates early so they can enjoy a lifetime of involvement with FSU.”

Recently, the council elected Sean Thomason (B.S. ’93), as its new chairman. In his new role, Thomason will spearhead efforts to identify, cultivate and educate his fellow recent graduates on the pressing financial needs of the university.

“The Gold Ring is a great opportunity for us to help recent graduates feel like they are still connected to the university and that their contributions are valued,” Thomason said. “No matter how far they are from Tallahassee, they are still an important part of the mission of Florida State.”

The other members of the Gold Ring Development Council are Jean Arcuis (B.S. ’92), James Cole (B.S. ’06), Michelle Dahlke (B.S. ’96, M.S. ’07), Willie Jackson (B.S. ’70), Christopher Koci (B.S. ’95), Clinton Mayo (B.S. ’05), Robin Smith (B.S. ’00) and Diane Standaert (B.A. ’01).

In addition to the alumni members of the council, JB Chandler, the 2009 senior class president, serves as a student representative.

Each spring in Tallahassee, the azaleas and dogwoods bloom. The city’s annual Springtime Tallahassee parade welcomes the warmer weather. And azaleas and dogwoods bloom. The city’s another dead end.”

said. “Adam listened to me and said

With a few athletes at Tallahassee
camps, I could see the dramatic
improvement in these areas and felt
that we could meet a real need.”

Plentt met former Florida State
shortstop Adam Faurot (B.S. ’97,
Finance) at Tallahassee church
and went out to watch him work
with a few athletes at Tallahassee
Community College.

“I had shelved the idea for Titus,
but after seeing Adam work with the
athletes he was training, I decided to
share my vision one more time,” Plentt
said. “Adam listened to me and said
it was a great idea, but he had kind of
a blank stare. I thought it was just
another dead end.”

Plentt’s story had more of an impact
on Faurot than the阶层-free response
conveyed, however.

“Adam called me at midnight that
night and said he couldn’t sleep,”
Plentt said. “He said, ‘Let’s do it.’” And
in 2001, the Florida version of Titus was
born.

Within a year, Faurot would meet
up with former Florida State
wide receiver Ketz McKinney (B.S.
‘99, Sociology), who just had his
career ended by a torn knee ligament and was looking for an opportunity to work in the sports field in some capacity. It was a perfect fit, especially since Plentt has other full-time responsibilities.

“At first, I was a hands-on coach,
but I soon became more of a mentor
and consultant,” Plentt said. “The
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have the option to be
better than the last generation.”

If it was Plentt who brought the
training and knowledge to the

It was Faurot who brought the
passion and energy to make it happen.

“I always had a dream of doing
dthis,” Faurot said. “Dave has
worked with world-class athletes
and Olympic champions at the
highest levels. I wanted and
listened to him on training
and how it relates to playing
sports, and I know young people
could benefit from this.”

“Titus is in elite version of training
and developing talent, working on
different abilities trained at different
times,” he said. “I have almost
a regretful passion because I could
have been so much better. We are
bridging the gap in the ability to be
competitive, making young people
more capable and con
dent. I really could have
used that.”

Faurot, who was born in
Blountstown, Fla., grew up going
to Florida State baseball games and
dreamed of one day being a Seminole.
His time playing at Dick Howser
Stadium set the bar high, he said.

“FSU spoiled me — it was first
class,” Faurot said. “We developed
a sense of pride and tradition that
not everyone experiences. I came
from somewhere special. It was an honor
to play here.”

McKinney also set his sights on
Florida State after attending the
Booby Bowden football camps with his
high school teammates from Pasco,
Miss.

“My goal was to earn a scholarship
and play here,” McKinney said. “At
my second camp, I was offered
a scholarship on the spot and came
to FSU without being highly ranked,
but I was a good student and a
decent player.”

McKinney was a four-year starter
for the ‘Noles, and his highlights
are still playing on YouTube.

After graduating, McKinney played
three years for the Detroit Lions,
then played in NFL Europe and in
Canada before moving back to Tallahassee.

“I knew I wanted to stay in sports,

and I was super-interested in what
they were doing at these camps,”
McKinney said. “I learned Dave’s training process and
really didn’t know as much as
I thought I did. But I was born to
be a coach and teacher. It is what I
do — develop young people. I get

rush in seeing young people
enjoy the programs as I did playing.”

At Titus, everyone is a part
of the same team — even when
they are playing different sports,
McKinney said.

“They all are working toward
a certain level of excellence together,”
he said. “We work hard and expect
to be successful. Just like Coach Bowden did
for us.”

Titus now operates programs in
four public school systems, one for
law enforcement, and has offices in
Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Fl., Jackson-
son, Tenn., and Wilmington, Del.

A sampling of professional
athletes who have trained at Titus:

FOOTBALL
Anquan Boldin (Arizona Cardinals)
Peter Boulware (Baltimore Ravens)
Corey Simms (Tennessee Titans)
Paul Irons (Cleveland Browns)
Greg Jones (Jacksonville Jaguars)
Alex Barrett (Los Rams)
Bryan McFadden (Pittsburgh Steelers)
Crashonhos Thorpe (New York Giants)
Emile Sims (Duran Lima)
Antonio Cromartie (San Diego Chargers)
Kameron Wimbly (Cleveland Browns)
Lorenzo Booker (Philadelphia Eagles)

BASEBALL
Buster Posey (San Francisco Giants)
Cole Figueroa (San Diego Padres)
Shane Costa (Kansas City Royals)
David Ross (Cincinnati Reds)
Jeff Mathis (Los Angeles Angels)
Justin Lord (Pittsburgh Pirates)
Zach McCallen (Kansas City Royals)
Xavier Paul (Los Angeles Dodgers)
Matt Paul (Los Angeles Dodgers)
Brandon Jones (Kalamazoo College)

MOTORCROSS/SUPERCROSS
Davil Millsaps (Supercross Champion)
Travis Pastrana (X Games Champion)
Austin Stroupe
Martin Davalos
Brian Johnson
Ben Larmay
Chad Charbonneau
Florida State University alumni Valdehe Butler "Val" Demings and Jerry Demings have made history as the leaders of two major Florida law enforcement agencies. Val Demings was appointed the first female chief of police for the city of Orlando in 2007, and Jerry Demings was appointed the first African-American sheriff of Orange County in 2008.

Because they serve as sheriff and police chief of the same county, their legal lives extend across the county, each being the youngest sibling of a large family. Each worked his or her way up the chain of command from patrol officer to police department at that time. Jerry Demings' family lived along with his wife, Val, in Orlando, the position his wife, Val, serves as the sheriff of Orange County. Jerry Demings had a long career as a police officer, rising through the ranks to become the police chief of the same county. He is a 1985 graduate of the 23rdsession of the FBI's National Executive Institute. Val Demings is a 1986 graduate of the FBI's National Executive Institute.

"I'm absolutely honored to serve as the Orlando police chief," she said. "I've been here since Feb. 12, 1984. I've been assigned to many different jobs at this agency, and that experience makes a big difference in helping me command. I have the respect from the men and women here, and I respect them. I've grown up with them, and we have worked together in many capacities. So it's been a natural progression for me, and I have had a great transition into the role of chief of police.

"I'm very proud of Florida State University and the wonderful academic program that the university has," she said. "But Florida State also does a lot of good things for the community. I'm very proud to be a Seminole."

CRIME-FIGHTING DUO: Husband and wife keep Orange County safe

By Bayard Stern
Managing Editor
Florida State University alumni Valdehe Butler "Val" Demings and Jerry Demings have made history as the leaders of two major Florida law enforcement agencies. Val Demings was appointed the first female chief of police for the city of Orlando in 2007, and Jerry Demings was appointed the first African-American sheriff of Orange County in 2008.

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Students get up-close view of political process

By Jeffery Seay
Editor in Chief
When the youth of Florida look for the best place to learn the ropes of politics or begin a career of public service, they look to The Florida State University.

At only four blocks from the Capitol, Florida State gives its students the advantage of proximity to a real-word classroom of legislative experiences in the capital of the nation’s fourth most-populous state. In February, Florida State President T.K. Wetherell hosted a reception for a group of highly motivated students who are taking part in Florida’s Executive Office of the Governor Internship Program.

Among those in attendance was Brian Dundes, 20, a junior from Jacksonville, Fl., majoring in political science.

"This program was the reason why I wanted to come to Florida State," Dundes said. "I worked for the Governor’s Department of Budget. I’m not allowed to talk a great deal about it, but we do the governor’s day-to-day scheduling, and it’s a lot of fun. I’ve met and had the opportunity to talk with many different constituents, with representatives, with ambassadors from around the world — people I would never get an opportunity to talk with otherwise."

Val Demings
Jerry Demings
Looking for success in Hollywood? Begin at Florida State

By Dave Fiore

From the beginning, the students at the Florida State University College of Motion Picture, Television and Recording Arts have experienced dramatic success in learning and applying the art of filmmaking. But like a stunning movie twist that takes its audience by surprise, the college’s graduates have become a major force to be reckoned with in Hollywood and beyond.

In just 20 short years, The Film School — as it is better and more practically known — is placing nearly 100 percent of its students in the industry and building a significant network of influential alumni. In addition, its students are winning student film awards at unprecedented rates.

How is this happening to a school created only in 1989 by the Florida Legislature and located in the beautiful but unhollywood-like Florida Panhandle?

The answer is simple, according to Film School Dean Frank Patterson. Do everything differently.

“The creators of the school took a truly original and inventive approach to education,” Patterson said. “The model has always been to get all the people who want to be filmmakers from the very small number of students and a faculty to break the educational process — the making of a film being wrapped around the curriculum,” Patterson said.

Students make films every semester, rotating responsibilities so they can learn all aspects of the filmmaking process. The nonstop production offers another benefit, Patterson said.

“It is the repetition of the creative problem-solving exercise that is the key,” he said. “We are much like music teachers adding layers every semester. Students get to work on all the components every semester with faculty in their related field. It is a process I wish I could have gone through. We are like a conservatory with collaborations, and no one else is doing that. It is truly the only way for a little school in Tallahassee to compete with schools like the University of Southern California and New York University.”

And compete it does. Its students have won more than 800 awards, honors, prizes and featured screenings at both national and international festivals and competitions. The results are especially impressive considering the size of the other schools, often one has 10 times the number of students, and the fact that elsewhere students’ personal finances can give them a distinct advantage.

“But when the students at the other schools pay for their own films, sometimes from considerable wealth, they often hire professional crews to help,” Patterson said. “At Florida State, it is all done by the students with professional faculty at their side. The students do it all.”

While he appreciates the awards, Patterson said they are not the focus.

“The awards are great, but the real reward is in learning and having the professionals helping solve problems,” he said. “In reality, we are not paying for films, we are paying for the classrooms.”

When students leave Florida State after earning a Bachelor or Master of Fine Arts degree, almost all enter the field, but even more impressive is how many stay there.

“Our success as a school is really measured in two ways,” Patterson said. “One is the success of our students and their creative work, and the second is the extent to which our graduates have successful careers in the industry. In addition to having essentially 100 percent heading into the industry and landing a job within the first 12 months, we reached 70 percent of our graduates in 2004, and 93.6 percent were employed in the film and television industries.”

That statistic is partly attributable to the school’s extensive mentorship program, Patterson said.

“We work so intimately with our students that when they graduate, they are very koyal,” he said. “When they become successful, we quickly ask them to give back through mentoring. We find a mentor for every graduate, who commits to being available 24/7 for one year, meeting one on one at least every two months. In the big world of filmmaking — filled with Goliaths — they are like little Davids sticking together.”

They may still consider themselves the underdog, but that status will be difficult to maintain much longer. The Hollywood Reporter recently named Patterson one of the nation’s top mentors to a generation of Hollywood filmmakers. A special, Aug. 28, 2008, edition of the major trade publication listed Patterson among the 12 most influential film school professors in the United States.

It is all adds up to a new and prominent feather in Florida State’s cap, Patterson said.

“Our alumni can take pride in our film school and the art at Florida State,” he said. “In addition to producing talented filmmakers, we are developing young men and women with excellent character who understand the power of the medium as an opportunity to make a difference.”

In February, Florida State University alumnus Nathan Levine-Heaney (M.F.A. ’08), standing at left, discussed the craft of cinematography with current Florida State students on a soundstage at The Film School. Levine-Heaney has been honored by the American Society of Cinematographers with the 2009 Burton “Bud” Stone Student Heritage Award, given for outstanding artistic achievement in student cinematography.

Prominent Seminole in Showbiz

Jonathan King (M.F.A. ’92)

Formally at Sony Pictures, where he co-produced the Academy Award-winning 2006 motion picture “Dreamgirls,” King now serves as executive vice president for production of narrative fiction films at Participant Media, a leading provider of socially conscious documentaries (including another Academy Award winner, Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth”).

Melissa Carter (M.F.A. ’96)

Carter earned both story and original screenplay credits on the 2004 motion picture “Little Black Book,” which co-starred Britany Murphy, Kathy Bates and Holly Hunter.

Barry Jenkins (B.F.A. ’03)

Jenkins, one of IndieWire magazine’s “New Faces of Independent Film for 2008,” landed a coveted job at Oprah Winfrey’s Harpo Films immediately after graduating, then traveled the country and settled in San Francisco, where he and fellow Film School alumni Justin Barber and Cherie Sauter formed a multimedia production collective, Strike Anywhere Films. Their first project, a Jenkins script called “Medicine for Melancholy,” received widespread praise from critics and has been an audience favorite at film festivals. The film also garnered Jenkins a nomination for a prestigious Gotham Independent Film Award in the Breakthrough Director category.

Ali Bell (B.F.A. ’99)

The independent reporter named Bell one of the top film industry executives under the age of 35. She is the vice president of production/development for Ivan Reitman’s production banner, The Montecito Picture Company. The company recently produced the film “D距sturbia” and is in pre/post-production with a slate of films that include such talents as Atom Egoyan, Jason Jones, Michael Keaton, Carol Burnett, Elizabeth Banks, Jason Sudeikis and Rainn Wilson.

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Like all of the greats, Bowden succeeds on his own terms

The legend of John Henry vs. the Steam Hammer is the best kind of story because it's true. John Henry was the greatest of all the steel-driving men, and after him there were no more like him.

There are, I think, comparisons to be drawn between John Henry and Bobby Bowden. John Henry saw the steam-powered hammer as a soulless contraption to steal the livelihood of hard-working men and he challenged it. Bobby Bowden has watched college football grow more corporate and less forgiving, sometimes indifferent to the virtues the game is supposed to teach.

This will be the thirty-fourth spring of the Bobby Bowden Tour and thirty-four years is a long time. More than 70% of all the alumni who have ever graduated from Florida State — going all the way back to 1851 — have received their degrees since Bobby Bowden became Head Coach here. He has already coached the sons of some of his Seminole players: Ponder, Piurowski, Simms on this team alone.

Eighty years is also a long time, and Bobby Bowden will be eighty years old this fall. He had already been the Head Coach at three other universities before he returned to FSU in 1976.

The way things used to be, and the way it was for a long time, has changed. The steam hammer has been replaced by a steam-powered contraption to steal the livelihood of the steel-driving men. Bobby Bowden has watched college football grow more corporate and less forgiving, sometimes indifferent to the virtues the game is supposed to teach.

When Bowden first began coaching in 1954, an assistant coach didn’t have to be much more than a head coach. A well-liked coach had a job for life, even if he didn’t win many more than half of his games. There wasn’t so much money on the table then; there weren’t so many frightful financial consequences at stake as there are today.

Bowden saw the introduction of complex strategy and offenses built around the forward pass. Bill Peterson is credited with introducing the pro passing game to college, and Bobby Bowden was his receivers coach. Bowden was a Southern boy who saw the dawn of integration and was smart enough to understand its potential and move beyond the culture. He learned how to motivate student-athletes rather than simply yell at jocks. Eventually, he embraced the value of a professionally managed recruiting program and became an excellent closer.

There is simply too much money on the table now. For the coaches and for the universities that employ them, the financial rewards for winning and the consequences of losing are too great. The game will never again see a Head Coach with the tenure of a Bobby Bowden or Joe Paterno.

As little as ten years ago, football coaches would tell you that no one goes into the business for the money, but that seems no longer to be true. Now there is so much money in the game that the profession has begun to draw men who might otherwise become trial lawyers or corporate CEOs.

This modern breed of coaches is more apt to construct a business model for their football programs. They stay abreast of all the latest technology: They text, they Facebook, they Twitter. They hire recruiting coordinators and personnel directors to assist in evaluating recruits. They hire proven professional assistant coaches and require each one of them to be a relentless recruiter.

Assistants who don’t coach their position players to success, who don’t evaluate and recruit their positions effectively, are dismissed. Good assistants want to become coordinators, and good coordinators want to become Head Coaches. The faster route is to work for a winning program with its attendant television and Internet exposure. Good assistants don’t expect to stay on a championship staff; they expect to get noticed and then move out, and up. The world of college football has changed. The steam hammer has arrived.

Many things contribute to the soaring cost of college athletic programs. Title IX expenditures are mandated by law, NCAA academic normal progress rules require student-athletes — even A students — to go to classes 12 months a year rather than nine; so the cost of scholarships seems to increase exponentially. Add to those things the costs of energy and maintenance of first class athletic facilities.

We demand winning and winning has its price. Seminole Boosters are always concerned about the price. Your generous gifts provide the money to meet that challenge. We depend on our fans and our friends to supply the money that winning requires.

Two sports make money, and so it is upon the backs of football and basketball that intercollegiate athletics budgets are balanced. Top coaches command top money, but top coaches can also bring in millions of dollars to pay for the entire skein of men’s and women’s sports.

John Henry challenged the steam hammer to a contest, to preserve a way of life. You remember that he beat the infernal machine, but you also know the sad ending of the story. You and I want very much for Bobby Bowden’s story to have a great ending.

Bobby Bowden is the living proof that character does count. For all the good he represents, for all the values and virtues that he’s instilled in generations of Seminole players and fans, we want to see him stand on the champions’ platform again.

Emerson mused about the nature of great men more than one hundred years ago: “When nature removes a great man, people explore the horizon for a successor; but none comes, and none will. His class is extinguished with him...”

So, come join us at one of the Bobby Bowden banquets this spring, or play in the Bobby Bowden golf tournament. Come shake the hand of a great man while you can; a man who has swung the hammer better and longer than just about anyone.
1970s

Marsha L. Lyons (B.D. ‘70) is now a member of the Bankruptcy Bar of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, where she is handling bankruptcies, foreclosures and other commercial matters at Lyons and Farrar.

Miranda Franks Fitzgerald (B.S. ‘72, J.D. ‘76) has been selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers of America, a publication that has been honored by Corporate Counsel magazine as “the most respected referral list of attorneys in practice.” Fitzgerald works for the firm Liddell, Odom, Doster, Doster and Reed, PA, and practices in the areas of administrative law, environmental law, land use and zoning law and real estate law.

Joanna Barron Hayes (B.A. ‘72) received the Excel Award for Excellence in Teaching, awarded by the Foundation for Excellence in Education, in the area of motivating high achievers. She received a cash award, a cruise for two and a behind-the-scenes look at NASA, and attended a dinner hosted by former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, with speaker Debbie Phelps.

Ronald D. Blumer (B.A. ‘72), president of Riner Consulting Group Inc., has formed a joint venture and been awarded a construction consulting and auditing advisory service contract with the Panama Canal Authority. The authority is undergoing a seven-year, $5 billion capital expansion program that includes a third set of locks and will effectively double the number of vessels that can navigate the canal each year.

Capt. Winston E. Scott (B.E.M. ‘72), a former astronaut, has been named dean of the Florida Institute of Technology College of Aeronautics.

Capt. Lonnie N. Gevet (B.S. ‘75, J.D. ‘76) was reappointed to the board of directors of the Boys and Girls Club of Volusia and Flagler counties. He is currently with the law firm Stearns, McIntosh, Colbert, Whittemore and Parlow in Deltona, Fla., and he also serves as legal counsel to the club.

1980s

Robert M. Breslau (B.S. ‘81, M.S. ‘83) has been promoted to president of real estate investment services at Siler Corporation, based in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where he is responsible for the development and acquisition of all projects and properties for the company and its partners in the Southeastern United States.

Debbie A. Gilley (B.S. ‘81, M.S. ‘89) has been appointed to the National Regulatory Commission Advisory Committee on the use of medical isotopes. She is an environmental manager with the Florida Bureau of Radiation Control.

Allison M. Lewis (B.S. ‘81, M.A. ‘88) has won the 2008 National Distance Learning Week Outstanding Online Instructor award.

1990s

Molly J. Tasker (B.D. ‘73) was elected to the Melbourne City Council in Melbourne, Fla., representing District 5, population 80,000.

David P. Wicks (B.S. ‘73) received the Rockwood School District Outstanding Service to Education Award. He has been teaching the blind and visually impaired since graduating from The Florida State University, and he provides consultative and direct education services for nearly a dozen school districts in Missouri.

John H. Hickey (B.A. ‘76) was named a “Top Lawyer” by the South Florida Legal Guide.

Diahann W. Thomas Lassus (B.S. ‘76) is the owner of the Providence, R.I., wealth management firm Lassus Wherley, which has received national certification as a Women’s Business Enterprise by the Women Presidents Educational Organization, a regional certifying partner of the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council.

Michael R. D’Onofrio (B.S. ‘77, J.D. ‘80) joined Whigham and Parlow in Deltona, Fla., and practices in the areas of business, finance, taxation, real estate and corporate law.

Charles E. Hackett (B.S. ‘77) was awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Assessment Administration by the International Association of Assessing Officers. He serves as the Manatee County, Fla., property appraiser.

William L. Harvey (B.S. ‘77) is the chief financial officer of Interval Leisure Group, a leading provider of membership services to the vacation ownership industry.

Susan Beth Hassmiller (B.S. ‘79) has been selected for inclusion in the 2009 edition of The Best Lawyers in America. She is currently a shareholder at Lewis, Longman and Walker, Tallahassee, Fla.

Dennis North (B.S. ‘77) is the chief financial officer for foods for the Poor, the foremost international relief organization in Florida, operating in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Michael H. Stone (Ph.D. ‘77) was presented with the Distinguished Faculty Award in Research at East Tennessee State University. He has led the initiative for the university’s new Center of Excellence for Sport Science and Coach Education, a faculty designed as a model for developing, conducting and supporting sport science research, education and service in the field of sport performance and coach education.

Florida Sen. Steven A. Geller (B.A. ‘79, J.D. ‘82) was featured as the luncheon keynote speaker at the fourth annual Florida Gaming Summit at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Fla.

Anne Longman (J.D. ‘79) has been selected for inclusion in the 2009 edition of The Best Lawyers in America. She is currently a shareholder at Lewis, Longman and Walker, Tallahassee, Fla.
Thomas M. Ramsberger (B.S. ‘84) has been named by AmeriBank as president of all banking activities in Leon and Wakulla Counties, Fla.

Andra C. Douglas (B.S. ’92), owner of the New York Giants women’s football team, was honored by a proclamation from U.S. Rep. Anthony Weiner of New York. She presented her jersey to John Urban, president of the Sports Museum of America, and this jersey will be the first woman’s tackle football item to be permanently displayed at the museum, which also houses the Heisman Trophy.

Emmet Schall (B.S. ’92) relinquished command of the 5th Brigade, 1st Armored division, Army Evaluation Task Force, in a formal ceremony at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Norma Stanley (B.S. ’82) has relinquished her position as director of Florida State University’s Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Security and Public Safety in Tallahassee, Fla.

Michael Burgett (B.S. ’90) was ranked No. 18 in Conde Nast magazine’s “Top 25 Entrepreneurs.” He is the founder, president and managing partner of CID Partners.

John W. Forehand (B.S. ’90) has been selected for inclusion in the 2009 edition of Best Lawyers in America. He is currently a shareholder at Lewis, Longman &Walker, PA, at its Tallahassee, Fla., office.

Marc L. Joseph (B.S. ’90), owner of the new real estate company Marc Joseph Realty, has started Foreclosure Tour R Us, a bus service in Fort Myers, Fla., that shuttles bargain-hunting potential homeowners to foreclosed houses in the area. The service has been featured in news segments on NBC, ABC and Fox, and has received international attention from European and Japanese buyers.

Juan M. Ortiz (B.S. ’90) has been named chief financial officer of Navarro Discount Pharmacies, where he will be responsible for all financial operations of the 31-store chain as well as for the company’s administrative, information technology and human resource functions.

Col. Charles H. Wilson III (B.S. ’90) has been promoted to colonel in the Army and selected to be the next U.S. Army attaché to the Czech Republic.

Robbie Ann Castellano (M.S. ’98), associate professor of theology, has been awarded the J. Vernon McGee Chair of Biblical Studies at John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Ark.

A. Forest (B.S. ’98) is an associate at White and Allen, PA, a North Carolina law firm.

Frank Martella (B.S. ’98) became a National Board Certified Teacher as he entered his 20th year in Volusia County, Fla. He also passed the Florida Educators Leadership Exam, earning certification in educational leadership.

Robert M. Gutierrez (B.S. ’99) has been selected as a member of the West Thompson Publishing Co. editorial advisory committee in Social Security law. West Thompson is the largest legal research company in the United States.

In addition to his full-time practice of law and mediation services, Thayer is starting his 11th year as an adjunct professor of law at Stetson University College of Law in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Richard D. Combs (B.S. ’85) was promoted to the position of senior director, product sales engineering for First Data.

Gary Wilson (B.S. ’85) has been elected by his peers for inclusion in the 2009 edition of Best Lawyers in America.

Greg McBride (B.S. ’86) is a screenwriter in Los Angeles and has sold a dramatic series, “Over the Rainbow,” to MTV. He also has a bestselling book about his dramatic 205-pound weight loss titled “Just Stop Eating So Much.”

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State University College of Medicine, has become an expert in cancer research, practicing emergency medicine and staffing emergency rooms in Perry, Fla., Apalachicola, Fla., and hospitals in North Florida and South Georgia.

Melissa Helen Boyes (B.S. ’02) was named men’s designer for Pacific Sunwear Corporation in Anaheim, Calif.

Jeffery L. Smith Sr. (M.S. ’04) is now the manager of the Vinik Park Branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library System.

Dr. Nathosa D. Cantz (M.D. ’05), a member of the first class of students to graduate from the Florida State University College of Medicine, has become a full-time practicing physician. Cantz currently practices family medicine in Panama City, Fla.

Jeremy R. Cloud (B.S. ’05) passed the Georgia Bar Exam and has joined the Atlanta office of national law firm Jones Day.

Sandra M. Cook (Ph.D. ’06) is the first female to be elected superintendent of schools for Washington County, Fla.

Dr. Shyala L. Gray (M.D. ’05), a member of the first class of students to graduate from the Florida State University College of Medicine, has become a full-time practicing physician. She now practices family medicine in Madison, Fla.

Dr. Alex Ho (M.D. ’05), a member of the first class of students to graduate from the Florida State University College of Medicine, has become a full-time practicing physician. He practices emergency medicine at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital in Tallahassee, Fla., and is a past member of the Florida State College of Medicine faculty.

Kristine E. Good (B.S. ’06) is the co-owner of Sweetch Waffles Boutique, a fashion-forward clothes for children under six.

Jeffrey J. Nagel (B.S. ’06) graduated from the U.S. Naval Institute Recruiting Center in Cape May, N.J. During the eight-week training program, Nagel completed a vigorous training curriculum consisting of academic and practical instruction in areas including water safety and survival, military customs and courtesies, seamanship skills, first aid, fire fighting and marksmanship.

Patricia R. Raub (B.S. ’06) received the designation of Certified Public Accountant and worked at James Moore & Co., a regional firm specializing in financial statement audits, reviews and compilations, business and individual tax preparation and planning, software and technology consulting, business evaluation services and a variety of bookkeeping services.

Cathleen T. Connolly (Ph.D. ’07) earned the distinction of Certified Consultant by the Association for Applied Sport Psychology, the professional organization of sport and exercise psychology.

John B. Mason III (M.M. ’07) serves as organ scholar and assisting music director at the Cathedral of St. Peter in St. Petersburg, Fla.

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Got News? To submit items for Alumni News Notes, e-mail stryens@fsu.edu. Please write “Alumni News Notes” in the subject heading of the e-mail.

State University College of Medicine, has become an expert in cancer research, practicing emergency medicine and staffing emergency rooms in Perry, Fla., Apalachicola, Fla., and hospitals in North Florida and South Georgia.

Melissa Helen Boyes (B.S. ’02) was named men’s designer for Pacific Sunwear Corporation in Anaheim, Calif.

Jeffery L. Smith Sr. (M.S. ’04) is now the manager of the Vinik Park Branch of the Miami-Dade Public Library System.

Dr. Nathosa D. Cantz (M.D. ’05), a member of the first class of students to graduate from the Florida State University College of Medicine, has become a full-time practicing physician. Cantz currently practices family medicine in Panama City, Fla.

Jeremy R. Cloud (B.S. ’05) passed the Georgia Bar Exam and has joined the Atlanta office of national law firm Jones Day.

Sandra M. Cook (Ph.D. ’06) is the first female to be elected superintendent of schools for Washington County, Fla.

Dr. Shyala L. Gray (M.D. ’05), a member of the first class of students to graduate from the Florida State University College of Medicine, has become a full-time practicing physician. She now practices family medicine in Madison, Fla.

Dr. Alex Ho (M.D. ’05), a member of the first class of students to graduate from the Florida State University College of Medicine, has become a full-time practicing physician. He practices emergency medicine at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital in Tallahassee, Fla., and is a past member of the Florida State College of Medicine faculty.

Kristine E. Good (B.S. ’06) is the co-owner of Sweetch Waffles Boutique, a fashion-forward clothes for children under six.

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They call it the Disney Wonder. So we were wondering, what if you scheduled a Disney cruise on the night of the Florida State-North Carolina football game and downlinked the broadcast live on the large screen TV at poolside — while we were sailing for Nassau, Bahamas?

What if the ship sailed on the 10-year anniversary of our 1999 football national championship, and we were joined on board by quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner Chris Weinke? Weinke will be on board to celebrate the 1999 national championship.

We'll spend the summer evaluating additional programming, such as faculty lectures, that are appropriate and interesting for our Florida State travelers, including field events that square off various class years on the Saturday Port of Call at Disney’s private island, Castaway Cay Island.

What if we created a new 10-year reunion and invited the classes of 1999 and 2000 to join us? Well, we can stop wondering, because the world just got a lot smaller. On Oct. 22, the FSU Alumni Association will host a travel reunion and invited the classes of 1999 and 2000 to join us?

We look forward to seeing you on this magical voyage of a lifetime aboard the Disney Wonder®.

Another member benefit from the Florida State University Alumni Association

Preferential SEMINOLE treatment

- 55% discount on all interstate and intrastate moves
- Instrastate services provided by and under the authority of Atlantic Relocation Systems in Florida only
- Free full value coverage up to $50,000 on relocations
- Guaranteed on time pick up and delivery
- Personalized attention from start to finish
- Sanitized Air-ride Vans

Contact Tom Larkins (The Chief Relocator) for details on this program 1.800.899.2527 or e-mail him at tom.larkins@atlanticrelocation.com
The Bryan Hall Learning Community (Bryan Hall) was the first living-learning community on campus, started in 1997. Bryan Hall’s learning community isn’t major-specific, but its theme is “curiosity and the desire to learn.” The students are offered a choice of liberal studies classes, as well as small group tutorials known as mentoring groups and weekly colloquia.

"FSU has won national recognition for our innovative approach to developing a broad range of living-learning programs," said Karen Laughlin, dean of Undergraduate Studies. "Any student who is serious about an academic major wants to be fully engaged with both the academic and the social life of the campus would be well served by a learning community. This is a rich way to start off the college experience, and I encourage any student who is looking at options for living on campus to explore the living-learning communities very carefully."

Located in the heart of campus, across from Landis Green and Strozier Library, Cawthon Hall houses two living-learning communities. All of the living-learning communities are housed either in completely renovated or new residence halls that feature a pair of two-person bedrooms and a shared bathroom, which is referred to as suite-style housing.

Classrooms and practice spaces are located on the ground floors and are equipped with multimedia capabilities, and all buildings are hardwired for broadband Internet connections.

The Music Living-Learning Center (Cawthon Hall) provides first- and second-year music majors with access to courses taught by professors and other music professionals.

"I really enjoy living here," said Laura Laskey, a music therapy major from Tampa, Fl., who plays the cello. "It has been easy to make friends, and I find it really inspiring on those days when I don’t feel like practicing. I’ll just walk down the halls and hear someone practicing in their room, and then I’ll suddenly want to practice."

The Women in Math, Science and Engineering Living-Learning Community (Landis Hall), known as WIMSE, is committed to the success of women who are studying in areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM fields. WIMSE’s Research Experience Program provides its students with the opportunity to participate in current research applicable to their studies.

The Pre-Health Professions Learning Community (Reynolds Hall) is sponsored by the College of Human Sciences and brings together students pursuing careers in allied health, athletic training, dentistry, medicine, physical or occupational therapy and other health-related professions.

"Our students are exposed to various speakers and professional training throughout the semester," said Angela Sehgal, director of the Pre-Health Professions Learning Community and director of athletic training education. "Then the students go shadow a professor in the field they are interested in to decide if they really want to pursue that profession. So early on, we immerse them in real-world experiences."

The Social Science and Public Affairs Living-Learning Community (DeGraff Hall) is designed for students with an interest in the social sciences and the world around them.

"The living-learning community trains tomorrow’s civic activists and political leaders," said Philip Steimberg, geography professor and director of the social science community. "It’s an environment where hallway discussions center on topics covered in classes, where the daily political views of classmates spill over into classroom debates and vice versa."

"After I graduate, I want to work for the United Nations and be a translator, and so does my roommate," said Moshtayeen Ahmad, who goes by Mahi. "It’s nice to just go downstairs and be in class. Then I can just go back upstairs and keep talking about what was said in class with my roommate."

"Being a part of this community has added a lot to my college experience," said Zachary Harrison, another DeGraff Hall resident and a Russian and Eastern European studies major from Cape Coral, Fl. "Our classes held here are really in-depth, and the professors get to know us well. It’s a good environment for me. We all get to know each other, hang out, have fun, and we actually talk about issues that are going on in the world."

The Social Justice Living-Learning Community (Wildwood Hall) is designed for students of all majors who have a desire to understand and practice social justice. Approximately 40 first-year students learn about social activism, social change and the philosophical foundations of justice.

The Nursing Learning Community (Wildwood Hall) is limited to students who have declared their intent to select nursing as their major. The community allows pre-nursing students to establish a connection to the College of Nursing as freshmen so that, long before they’re formally admitted and begin their nursing courses, they can benefit from the resources of the college and build relationships with faculty and nursing students.

"Landis is a great place to be," said Allison Kearns, a meteorology and math major from Miramar, Fla. "There are a lot of nice study lounges and they enforce quiet hours, as we found out," Kearns said, laughing with her roommate, political science major Amy Gutierrez of Jacksonville, Fl. "Everyone’s really nice here, and they care about learning.

For information about the living-learning and honors communities at Florida State, visit the Web site: www.housing.fsu.edu

For all the blood, sweat and tears...
In 1988, Dina Titus thought about running for the Nevada Senate were all philosophical. At the time, Titus had more than a decade to her credit as a professor of political science at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. She reckoned that a run was feasible because she had spent her entire working life studying political science, writing about politics and, as a self-avowed political junkie, she enjoyed the experience. Besides, whether she won or lost, she would have a lot to tell her students.

Then the race began, and all thoughts of engaging in a mere academic exercise evaporated.

"Once I signed on the dotted line, I forgot all about that intellectualizing—I was 'in it to win it,'" said Titus, who earned her doctorate in political science from the University of Nevada in 1976. Titus won her first race in 1988, and three subsequent senatorial races in 1994, 2000 and 2006. Now, after a 22-year career in the Nevada Senate, including 16 years as minority leader, and with more than 30 years to her credit as a political science professor at UNLV, Titus has a new excitement to share with her students—that of U.S. representative.

"It is very exciting and very humbling to be even a small part of such a historic moment," Titus said of the sheer thrill of being elected to Congress. "I can't imagine a better time to be here with the changes that are taking place in our country, with the new president, and with an opportunity to serve in the majority." Titus brings to Washington her expertise on the history and policies of nuclear power, weaponry and waste. Despite her high office, she remains a teacher at heart.

"Teaching is what I enjoy doing," Titus said. "I've always had a lot of student interns in my Nevada office, and I plan on having student interns here in Washington. I'm also a student myself. I learn something new every day, even though I've been teaching about Congress for over 30 years. I'm going to pursue an agenda that I worked on in the state legislature," she said. "A big aspect of that is education, because it's what I do. Another aspect is renewable energy. I think that is another key to the future." Titus' college career began with uncommon promise. After having performed exceptionally well in a summer program for high school students at the College of William and Mary in Virginia, she was admitted full time for — without a high school diploma. After earning a bachelor's degree from William and Mary and a master's degree from the University of Georgia, she enrolled at Florida State as a doctoral student.

"I was part of Florida State's political science department at a time when it was ranked third in the nation in terms of the research productivity of its faculty," Titus said. "I studied under the best. Faculty like Tom Dye and Norm Lamberg — people with national reputations — were on my (doctoral) committee. I received great academic training while I was there."

She made a lasting impression on the faculty with whom she studied.

"Dina Titus was one of our most outstanding students to come through the Ph.D. program in political science at Florida State," said Thomas R. Dye, professor emeritus of political science (1968 to 1990). "She breezed through her academics, and she impressed everyone with her character and charm. We expected great things from her. I'm not really surprised to see her end up in Congress. I'm very proud of her. I think that all of us who taught her in the 1970s would be very pleased to know that she has gone on to Congress."

Through long days on the campaign trail, Hagan said, she enjoyed the experience. Besides, whether she won or lost, she would have a lot to tell her students.

"I really enjoy people," she said. "During the campaign, I can't tell you how many thousands of miles we put on our van — stopping at tobacco farms, small businesses, university research centers. This was when gas prices were at their highest. While we were filling up at gas stations, we got the chance to talk to the citizens of North Carolina and, literally, share their pain at the pump!"

"Just as campaigning for her father and uncle had been a family affair, Hagan's three subsequent senatorial campaigns in her run for the U.S. Senate. "My son, Tilden, took off the whole year," she said. "My younger daughter, Carrie, took off half a year, and my older daughter, Jennifer, who is earning her Ph.D. in geology in California, was able to spend quite a bit of time campaigning as well. They did many of the same things that I did as a child, because they were older than I was, they really contributed in a major way."

Hagan began her academic career at Florida State as a dance major before switching to American studies. She lived in Jennie Murphree Hall and became a sister of the Chi Omega sorority. She even spent a semester abroad at Florida State's London Center, from where she and her roommates would strike out across Europe on weekends and breaks.

"Hagan's Jennie Murphree roommate, Bev Meadors — with whom she has remained friends — attended her U.S. Senate swearing-in ceremony. "Now in her second term, Castor admits there is much that she wants to accomplish in the House. She says that she relies on the skills she learned in law school, and she attributes her ability to solve problems and interpret legislation to her legal education and practice.

"When Florida State comes to Greensboro for the ACC tournament, my husband, T.K. Werberll, who is the airport and, even though Castor didn't attend FSU, she loves to welcome the Seminoles to town. We very much roll out the red carpet when Florida State comes to Greensboro, which is where our home is."

Kay Hagan
By Jeffery Seay
Editor in Chief

By Christie Morgan
College of Law

Kathy Castor
By Christie Morgan
College of Law

Kathy Castor has been busy since her election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006. Her inaugural term representing the residents of the Tampa Bay area began with her being the first freshman to speak on the House floor and ended with the growing economic crisis. Along the way, Castor — a 1991 graduate of Florida State University College of Law — focused on health care, energy and education, and was especially proud of her work to increase the value of Pell Grant scholarships.

When talking with the congressional one, one gets the impression that it is a strong affinity for her hometown that guides Castor's service in the House. "It is such a privilege and an honor to be the advocate for my neighbors in my hometown that I love, on issues that really matter to them," she said. "I think coming from local politics helped — it has taught me a lot. You have to keep your focus on what is happening at home and in people's lives and how we can help them or stay out of the way."

Castor's love for the area she represents — which includes parts of Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee counties — runs deep. When she is in Washington, D.C., she misses her excellent Cuban cuisine, especially roast pork sandwiches, black beans and rice, and cafe con leche. She also roots for Tampa's sports teams from afar when Congress is in session. She loves football and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, but as one who prefers basketball, she admires the University of South Florida Bulls games with her family when she is in Tampa. And no matter where she is, she also roots for the Florida State Seminoles.

The lifestyle of a U.S. representative is not for everyone, but Castor learned from her parents at an early age the importance of serving. "I always loved public policy, from when I was young," Castor said. "My parents were very involved in Tampa in public service. My father, Judge Don Castor, was a county court judge for 30 years, and my mother, Betty Castor, was a trailblazing female politician in the Tampa Bay area and then the state of Florida."

In 2002, 30 years after her mother was elected to the Hillsborough County Commission, Castor was elected to the same body. She had not aspired to run for national office prior to 2005, but with her term on the county commission ending and the House seat she now holds opening, the timing was right for Castor to make a change. "I just thought at that time, and I still do even after being here, that the folks up here are so off track; they are just not in touch with what is happening back home," said Castor, who as an Emory undergraduate interned for Lawton Chiles when he was a U.S. senator.

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