

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



June 15, 2013 - August 15, 2013

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June 10, 2013 - August 15, 2013

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Partnership Friction: Private and community colleges offer four-year degrees

Private colleges question the plunge by community colleges into baccalaureate programs.

By Mike Vogel
FLORIDATREND.COM

In 2001, St. Petersburg Junior College, as the public community college in Pinellas County was then known, won permission to move beyond its traditional two-year degree offerings and confer four-year degrees.

Allowing community colleges to confer four-year degrees would open access to such degrees to more Floridians — especially working adults — and meet employer needs in a convenient and affordable way. Since then, Florida has embraced the concept like no other state in the nation. In Florida, 23 of the 28 institutions in what's now the state college system can confer baccalaureate degrees; nationally only 31 other colleges do so. In March alone, four colleges won approval from the Florida Board of Education for more four-year programs; the board has now approved 152 degree programs.

Students have flocked to the cheaper programs. More than 19,000 students in Florida (six of the 12 state university institutions have fewer students than that number) are working on a baccalaureate degree that will be conferred by a community or state college.

Baccalaureates account for just 2% of state college degrees, but the share is growing. At Florida State College at Jacksonville, baccalaureate enrollment is growing 22% a year, albeit off a small base. At Broward College, a bachelor's in supervision and management is one of the top 10 programs by number of students. "Florida's looked at as one of the bellwether states, and by bellwether I mean trendsetter," says Dale Campbell, a University of Florida education professor and authority on community colleges.

But a critical voice is emerging against the baccalaureate juggernaut — the state's private colleges and universities. For years, the private institutions have partnered with community colleges: Accepting community college two-year degree holders into their programs to complete a bachelor's without losing any credits and offering bachelor's degrees on community college campuses. Private Flagler College in St. Augustine, for example, offers bachelor's degrees in business, accounting, elementary education and exceptional education at

Tallahassee Community College.

The collaboration "has been highly successful," says Flagler President William T. Abare Jr. For those students who qualified for the state's Florida Resident Access Grants — the state gave \$2,150 this year to Florida private school students — the cost of a Flagler bachelor's at Tallahassee worked out to no more than the tuition for another two years of community college. "A terrific deal," Abare says.

Pros and Cons of Expanded Offerings

» Proponents: Proponents say community college bachelor's programs widen access to higher ed, are more affordable for students, cheaper for taxpayers, relieve pressure on overburdened public universities and meet employer needs, especially in applied degree fields — specialty jobs that once took only an associate's degree now require a four-year degree, specialties that universities don't have experience in or want to invest in offering.

» Opponents: Opponents of four-year degrees say the offerings dilute community colleges' two-year degree mission, mean higher-cost faculty, labs and libraries and raise issues of quality and outcomes — a community college bachelor's isn't cheaper if a student doesn't complete it in a timely way.

Those partnerships, however, have diminished as community colleges' own baccalaureate programs have increased, says Ed Moore, president of the Independent Colleges & Universities of Florida. The number of sites where private colleges offer baccalaureates on state college system campuses fell 43% from 2004 to 2011, according to ICUF. "We're not huge fans," Moore says.

Private Saint Leo University, for example, ended its elementary education baccalaureate at public St. Petersburg College after St. Petersburg won approval to confer its own degree. Enrollment overall has been reduced across other Saint Leo programs offered at community colleges.

Partnership Friction: Private and community colleges offer four-year degrees....

continued

Private colleges account for 26% of the state's undergraduate degree production — and 25% of degrees to minority students. That's an important contribution in a state trying to boost its low ranking in degree holders, and the private schools say they're at a price disadvantage to the new programs. Saint Leo's tuition per credit hour, after the state financial aid grant to private students, still is \$160 compared to \$100 at the community colleges.

Private college presidents tread carefully as they raise their concerns, saying they have more than their parochial interests at heart. "It's an important subject, and it's a delicate subject," says Arthur F. Kirk Jr., Saint Leo's president.

In essence, they argue that with Florida public universities and state colleges already living on lean funding, Florida is mistaken to allow such a shift by state and community colleges into the baccalaureate business, diluting emphasis and resources available for the traditional two-year degree mission. They add that recent Florida history shows higher education administrators, boards and their elected representatives will engage in empire building, an expensive endeavor in a state college system with 66 campuses and 181 sites.

The cost is staggering, Abare says. Instead, the state should come up with a master plan, perhaps designating a handful of colleges to confer baccalaureates. ICUF wants to see the state retain FRAG, its grant program for Florida residents who attend in-state private schools. Increasing FRAG aid to its former level of \$3,000 from a budgeted \$2,500 next year would be more a more efficient way to make baccalaureate degrees accessible than adding programs throughout the public system, ICUF argues.

The argument against "mission creep" isn't a new one, though it continues to rankle proponents — "like running your fingernails on the blackboard," says Beth Hagan, executive director of the Community College Baccalaureate Association, a national group based in Bonita Springs that advocates for state colleges conferring four-year degrees.

At Florida State College at Jacksonville, 2,550 out of 51,562 students are in 13 bachelor degree programs. Willis Holcombe, the school's interim president and the retired chancellor of the state college system, says it's

"absolutely consistent with our mission, which is to meet the employment needs of the community. In some cases, the most critical unmet needs are at the baccalaureate level. I think the employment needs of the state ought to drive the market. That from my point of view is not a mission creep."

Florida state college baccalaureate offerings don't dilute resources for two-year degree programs any more than any other new program does, Holcombe says. Community colleges, like the public universities, have been raising tuition to cover program costs. And he says the community college baccalaureates often help working adults who need a bachelor's at a nearby location to advance at their government or private employer.

Holcombe says he understands the private schools' concerns and sees how the community college baccalaureate programs threaten the flow of associate degree holders that historically transferred to public and private four-year institutions. But, he says, "I wouldn't lay the blame, if you will, on the fact we're offering degrees. I think it's largely an issue now of the affordability of postsecondary education."

Chart: Florida College System Ranked by Enrollment

FLORIDA TREND

Rank	Institution	Main Campus	Enrollment 2012	President
1	Miami Dade College	Miami	60,014	Eduardo J. Padron
2	Broward College	Fort Lauderdale	35,533	J. David Armstrong Jr.
3	Valencia College	Orlando	35,263	Sanford C. Shugart
4	St. Petersburg College	St. Petersburg	27,033	William D. Law Jr.
5	Florida State College at Jacksonville	Jacksonville	25,938	Willis N. Holcombe (interim)
6	Palm Beach State College	Lake Worth	25,902	Dennis P. Gallon
7	Hillsborough Community College	Tampa	24,060	Kenneth Atwater
8	Seminole State College of Florida	Sanford	17,522	E. Ann McGee
9	Indian River State College	Fort Pierce	13,510	Edwin R. Massey
10	Santa Fe College	Gainesville	13,464	Jackson N. Sasser
11	Daytona State College	Daytona Beach	13,262	Carol Eaton
12	Edison State College	Fort Myers	12,840	Jeff Allbritten
13	Tallahassee Community College	Tallahassee	12,698	Jim Murdaugh
14	Brevard Community College	Cocoa	12,501	James H. Richey
15	Pensacola State College	Pensacola	9,511	Charles E. Meadows
16	State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota	Bradenton	9,315	Carol Probstfeld
17	Polk State College	Winter Haven	9,184	Eileen Holden
18	Pasco-Hernando Community College	New Port Richey	8,134	Katherine M. Johnson
19	College of Central Florida	Ocala	7,421	James D. Henningsen
20	Northwest Florida State College	Niceville	5,824	Ty Julian Handy
21	St. Johns River State College	Palatka	5,098	Joe H. Pickens
22	Gulf Coast State College	Panama City	3,775	A. James Kerley
23	Lake-Sumter State College	Leesburg	3,648	Charles R. Mojock
24	Florida Gateway College	Lake City	2,119	Charles W. Hall
25	South Florida State College	Avon Park	2,050	Norman L. Stephens Jr.
26	Chipola College	Marianna	1,770	Gene Prough
27	Florida Keys Community College	Key West	1,012	Jonathan Gueverra
28	North Florida Community College	Madison	976	John D. Grosskopf

Florida oyster farm may be start of new industry

JENNIFER PORTMAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALLIGATOR HARBOR, Fla. — Under a brilliant blue sky, a wet-suit-clad Clay Lovel drops down into waist-deep water, groping in the cloudy jade brine.

He tosses away a predatory conch before his older brother Ben, on deck, grabs a hook, and together they haul aboard their Carolina Skiff what looks like an oversized fry basket. The men pry it open, and onto the boat's stern clatter dozens and dozens of *Crassostrea virginica* — the common eastern oyster.

It's the same type of oyster that grows wild in coastal waters from Canada, down along the East Coast to the Gulf of Mexico, including nearby Apalachicola Bay. But the Lovels' bivalves didn't start off here as an offering from nature. They came from a shellfish hatchery near Tampa, leftovers from an oyster recovery project.

Last summer, the brothers and their father, Leo Lovel, bought 10,000 pinkie-fingertip-size oyster seeds. In August they put them in cages and plunked them down here on their two 1-1/2 acre clam leases in the waters of Franklin County.

"We knew nothing about oysters," Clay Lovel said.

So the men studied oyster history. They experimented with enclosures and planting methods. The fishermen became farmers.

Nine months later, with some 150,000 pieces growing in 500 cages, their first crop is coming in — big, succulent 3-inch oysters that within a couple of hours on this late May day, will be in the family fish house cooler, ready to be served on the half shell to seafood lovers at the Lovels' Spring Creek Restaurant.

"They are snow white on the inside and so salty they will burn your lips," said Leo Lovel, a Tallahassee native who has owned the beloved Wakulla County seafood restaurant perched on the water's edge since 1977. "It's got a lot of people very excited. This could be the rebirth of the seafood industry in North Florida."

The Spring Creek Oyster Company is a Florida first. While about a half-dozen people in the state are cultivating farm-raised oysters and selling them in the shellfish trade, aquaculture officials say no one else has done what the

Lovels are doing — growing, harvesting, selling, serving and marketing to the public their own signature oyster.

It's too soon to say if the family will succeed in the long run, but their promising start has raised hopes for the burgeoning of a new coastal economy that could revitalize struggling fishing communities.

"I'm excited," said Kal Knickerbocker, acting director of Florida's Division of Aquaculture. "It's a new way. It appears to be a top-quality product, and right now, when you compare it to the natural set, there is none."

The Lovels' farm-to-table oyster venture comes amid trying times for the wild oyster population in Apalachicola Bay. The famed oysters naturally grew in abundance in the bay's fertile estuarine soup before back-to-back droughts and decades of outdated federal water regulations reduced the freshwater flow coming down the Apalachicola River last year to its lowest level in recorded history.

Oysters love salty water, but in the wild they need freshwater to provide nutrients and keep predators and diseases at bay. As a consequence — and compounded by over-harvesting in the shadow of BP's 2010 oil rig disaster — the oyster fishery collapsed last year.

From September to December last year, oyster landings in the state, of which Apalachicola's catch makes up 90 percent, dropped by nearly half, from about 152,000 pounds to roughly 80,000 pounds.

As state fishery officials work to compile the most recent harvest data, oystermen today are coming back from a day on the water with about two bags of oysters, a fraction of the 16 or 17 bags they would normally gather at this time, said Shannon Hartsfield, president of the Franklin County Seafood Workers Association.

"A lot of people are worried right now," he said.

For the last six months, bay oystermen have spent more time tossing empty oyster shells into the water to create new habitat than tonging up the mollusks for market. About 200 oystermen have been getting by with the temporary re-shelling jobs, but come July, money from a \$2.7 million Department of Labor grant runs out. While

oysters in the bay grow fast, those attaching to the oyster bars now are at least a year away from harvest.

Hartsfield doesn't know much about the Lovels' fledgling endeavor, but his curiosity is piqued.

"I'm hoping it works out. That's what we are going to have to do, trial and error," he said. "I don't see how it can hurt our bay. It may give an opportunity for a different way to harvest oysters. That's a plus in my book."

Florida tried to introduce oyster farming as part of a job-retraining effort about 20 years ago, but for a variety of reasons it failed. Unlike cultivating clams, which caught on and now has an annual economic impact of \$54 million, oysters proved too labor-intensive and costly to grow. And with wild oysters so plentiful, it just didn't make economic sense. State and local political decisions also played a role.

"Now that picture has changed a little bit," said Leslie Sturmer, a University of Florida shellfish aquaculture agent who works in Cedar Key, where clam farming has flourished. "There is increasing interest. With decreased supplies from the fisheries and higher prices, the economics may have changed."

State Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam points to the success of Cedar Key clamming as a model that could help Apalachicola Bay's oyster industry.

"Cedar Key is a remarkable example of how the willingness to try new things can save a working waterfront," Putnam said. "It's a tough adjustment to learn a new way to make a living on the water, but the ones that did have done well. This is a rich part of Florida's heritage, and we want to make sure it's not just part of our history."

Putnam is supportive of a request by the Lovels, to be heard this summer by the Florida Cabinet acting as the Board of Trustees, that would allow the family to grow their oysters in cages that float on the surface of their clam lease. Currently, shellfish only are allowed to be grown up to six inches from the sea bottom. Granting full use of the water column would benefit the growth of their oysters and other farmed shellfish they'd like to try, such as scallops, not now commercially cultivated in Florida.

"What we are doing now is the mule-and-plow method," Leo Lovel said. "If we can get on the surface, it will open it up to older fishermen."

Northeastern University assistant professor David Kimbro, a wild oyster ecology expert formerly with Florida State's Coastal and Marine Laboratory, called Alligator Harbor a "marginal habitat" for oysters. Because of its lack of direct freshwater sources and reduced flows into the bay, salinity has steadily increased in the last five years.

"There aren't many things as hardy as oysters," Kimbro said. "They love the variations of estuaries. It stresses them out, but it wipes the slate clean of predators."

Grown in cages, farmed oysters are more protected from marine predators, but a lack of freshwater can still make them susceptible to diseases.

"The same environmental conditions that would affect the wild resource would affect the cultivated product as well," Sturmer said.

Oyster spawn float in the water for two to three weeks, and Kimbro said it is unknown if, over time, those that are selected to favor saltier water will eventually impact the wild oysters on Apalachicola's reefs.

Others say the increase in spawn will help the natural production, improve water quality and attract other desirable marine species. There are pros and cons, Kimbro said. Like growing corn, farming oysters is a gamble. Still, he added, "People need some good news."

Allowing floating oyster cages on state-leased submerged lands also presents a resource management challenge. Balancing the desires of boaters and other water users can be tricky, but it is one Putnam and others say can be overcome.

"Aquaculture within the water column is something we should pursue on an experimental basis," he said. "Regulators need to be open about new ways to save the industry, and the industry needs to be open-minded about doing things differently."

Oyster cultivation is far more expensive and involved than harvesting what grows naturally, and history has shown that not all watermen are able to make the transition to farming.

"Instead of Mother Nature doing 90 percent of the work, you've got farmers doing 100 percent of the work," DAC director Knickerbocker said. "It's labor-intensive, to say the least."

If a new industry takes hold, Sturmer, who has been actively involved in state aquaculture efforts for decades, said early on there could be tension. But considering

the state's intransigent water war with upstream Apalachicola River system users, the prospects for wild oysters in the bay don't look great.

"It will be interesting to watch this," she said.

In neighboring Alabama, where water-column farming is allowed, as it is in other oyster-farming states, aquaculture officials have been working since 2009 to build a new oyster industry in their Gulf waters.

Bill Walton, an Auburn University assistant professor and extension specialist with the university's shellfish laboratory at Dauphin Island, said the effort there is in its "baby-step" stage, with two commercial oyster growers selling farmed boutique oysters to high-end restaurants in the region. But, he contends, there is room for more.

"A market has developed for these niche oysters," Walton said. "I know there is enough of a market for people to make money, but I'm not sure how much. All the numbers we've run suggest you can make a living doing this, but you aren't going to get filthy rich."

Chris Nelson, vice president of oyster procurement for Alabama-based Bon Secour Fisheries, tried to grow oysters 20 years ago. The oysters were great, but he couldn't make any money because of the high cost, extensive labor involved and the lack of a specialty market.

"What I did was build a business plan on too high a price," he said.

More and more customers today, however, aren't looking for the most oyster for their dollar. An increasing number are seeking out oysters with an "appellation" — one coming from a distinctive place with unique characteristics, like a fine wine.

Still, Nelson cautions against upstart oyster farmers having unrealistic expectations.

"The Gulf is going to come back. For whatever reason, nature smiles and the next thing you know you've got all these oysters and everyone was convinced the oysters were dead and gone," he said. "It is feasible, but you have to be prudent."

Farmed oysters, Walton said, never will be able to compete with the abundance of those in the wild. But cultivation allows a grower to develop a consistent, specialty product that can command a higher price — as much as \$2 apiece or more in some places — to cover higher production costs.

Growing oysters off the seafloor makes them cleaner and more uniform. They also can thrive in saltier water, he said — like that of Alligator Harbor — because they are able to mature before common diseases brought on by saline conditions can take hold.

"We are not trying to displace the traditional Gulf Coast oyster industry. What we are trying to do is add a new product," said Walton, who met with the Lovels last year. "I see it as an opportunity for the whole Gulf Coast. It provides as much opportunity for Florida as anywhere else."

Back at Spring Creek Restaurant, optimism abounds. At a tasting party last month, Wakulla County officials slurped the Lovels' oysters and mused about what the future may hold. The family also has applied for a new state lease out their back door, where a first-magnitude freshwater spring boils in the Gulf and clams don't grow well, but oysters might.

"This is huge," said Bob Ballard, head of **Tallahassee Community College's** new Wakulla Environmental Institute, which is under construction and will offer aquaculture training. "This could really be a game-changer for this area to make Wakulla the new oyster capital of the United States."

Wakulla County Commissioner Jerry Moore, who had to stop eating the oysters for fear of leaving none for others, said the Lovels' undertaking has "unbelievable possibilities."

"We don't do a lot of things until we get desperate," Moore said. "This is a new day if this system works. It's a way for us to produce a continuous supply of great oysters."

The Lovels are optimistic, but are keeping their heads, as are state aquaculture officials.

"These things look attractive now because the natural resource is in trouble," Knickerbocker said. "It might work great this year and next year, and the third year some condition might change and it could be a total bust."

But if anyone can make a go of it, Knickerbocker said, the Lovels can. The family is well respected, has a track record of seafood success and can showcase their product at their renowned restaurant. Their reverence for the North Florida Gulf Coast runs deep, as evidenced in Leo Lovel's folksy collection of outdoors essays, "Spring Creek Chronicles."

Leo said he and his sons are constantly reminding themselves that what they are doing now is farming — and it's a risky business.

"There can always be something that throws a monkey wrench into to," he said. "We are feeling our way."

The excitement, however, is contagious. The area's seafood industry has been depressed since the gill-net ban 20 years ago, and the recent wild oyster decline has dealt a further blow. While Ben Lovel said his family hopes and prays every day the oysters in Apalachicola will rebound, he believes what they've stumbled upon can help everyone and hurt no one.

"If something doesn't come along — and we think this is it — the culture and lifestyle of the seafood watermen in the bay is over," he said. "We aren't just excited about this for us, we are excited about this for the whole area. If this thing goes in the right direction, there is no way to talk about what we might be working on in five or 10 years."

'M-List' Recognizes Institutions Preparing Workers to Industry Standards in Advanced Manufacturing

NSF-funded advanced manufacturing education projects are well-represented at institutions receiving Manufacturing Institute's seal of approval

The Manufacturing Institute recently announced the charter members of the M-List, a designation recognizing excellence in manufacturing education. M-List members are institutions that are preparing students to industry standards in advanced manufacturing, with students earning credentials that are in the NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System

Manufacturing has evolved in recent decades, and today's manufacturers require a highly skilled workforce. The M-list provides a service for both employers and students, connecting them to an environment that develops skilled welders, machinists, production workers, and other key positions essential to manufacturing.

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Advanced Technological Education program (ATE) aims to strengthen the skills of technicians, whose work is vitally important to the nation's prosperity and security, through grants to community colleges. Through ATE centers and projects, community colleges have a leadership role and work in partnership with universities, secondary schools, business and industry, and government agencies to design and carry out model workforce development initiatives. Almost every institution on the M-list has or has had NSF funding through ATE, representing technician education in fields ranging from renewable energy to engineering technology to aerospace.

"ATE has a lot of models for successful interaction between academe and industry," said ATE lead program director Celeste Carter. "Institutions have leveraged the use of NSF funds to build the infrastructure and capacity of their institutions to be responsive to both students and emerging trends in industry."

"The Manufacturing Institute is proud to recognize schools that are providing the highest quality manufacturing education," said Jennifer McNelly, president of the Manufacturing Institute. "We are pleased to see so many ATE centers included on this list, and look forward highlighting additional ATE institutions as they incorporate NAM-Endorsed certifications."

INSTITUTIONS ON THE M-LIST FOLLOW:

California

California State University, Chico
College of the Canyons
Reedley College

Florida

Brevard Community College
Broward College
College of Central Florida
Florida Gateway College
Florida State College at Jacksonville
Hillsborough Community College
Pensacola State College
Polk State College
St. Petersburg College
State College of Florida

Tallahassee Community College

Illinois

Harper College
Indiana
Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana

Iowa

Des Moines Area Community College
Kirkwood Community College

Kansas

Wichita Area Technical College

Michigan

Kellogg Community College

Minnesota

Anoka Technical College

Dunwoody College of Technology

South Central College

Nevada

Western Nevada College

North Carolina

Cape Fear Community College

Central Carolina Community College

Central Piedmont Community College

Cleveland Community College

Forsyth Technical Community College

Halifax Community College

Randolph Community College

Ohio

Cuyahoga Community College

Lorain County Community College

Pennsylvania

Community College of Allegheny County

Lehigh Career and Technical Institute

South Carolina

Florence-Darlington Technical College

Texas

Alamo Colleges

Washington

Shoreline Community College

Wisconsin

Gateway Technical College

Colleges combat workforce shortage with training, certification

Stefanté Randall

St. Petersburg College and eleven other Florida state and community colleges are implementing a new project -- the Florida TRADE (Transforming Resources for Accelerated Degrees and Employment) in Advanced Manufacturing. Its purpose is to help address the growing skilled workforce shortage faced by Florida's manufacturing industry and related industries.

The colleges include St. Petersburg College, Broward College, Daytona State College, Florida State College at Jacksonville, Gulf Coast College, Hillsborough Community College, Indian River State College, Palm Beach State College, Pasco Hernando Community College, Polk State College, [Tallahassee Community College](#), and Valencia College.

With the combination of resources from local workforce boards and organizations throughout the state of Florida, they will train workers who lost their jobs, or whom may be at risk to losing their jobs. The participants will receive short-term certification training giving them credentials in Associate in Science degree programs. An internship, and then a job, will be the end result within six months.

The Federal Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training program will assist the colleges with \$15 million grant.

Over 2,600 participants are expected to benefit from the Florida TRADE project.

Trustees give high marks to Jim Murdaugh

TCC president since 2010 is praised by trustees

Doug Blackburn

The trustees at Tallahassee Community College charged with evaluating President Jim Murdaugh needed a thesaurus to come up with additional superlatives to describe the performance of the former law enforcement official.

They even talked during a subcommittee meeting about giving Murdaugh a raise. He politely but firmly declined, pointing to a clause in his contract that says he will not see an increase in his \$272,000 salary until raises are provided for all staff and faculty at TCC. That last happened in 2011, when 4-percent raises were given.

"I feel like nobody does this work alone. They pay me well and, quite frankly, I could not feel good about myself if I took a raise. I don't accomplish much of anything by myself," Murdaugh said moments before Monday's board meeting, the final trustee meeting of the academic year.

The contracts and salaries for the presidents of Florida's 28 colleges are on Gov. Rick Scott's radar, but not because of anything happening at TCC. In the wake of large settlements given recently to the presidents at Edison and Jacksonville colleges, the governor's inspector general reviewed the contracts for every president in the Florida College System.

That review required TCC to change a policy that called for executive administrators to receive 120 hours per year of sick-leave time, 30 more than allowed in statute. Murdaugh's contract, which expires in October 2014, four years after he was hired, says he will receive the same leave time as his senior staff.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education is in the process of assembling a work group to study the contracts for the presidents at Florida's colleges. TCC is one of only five that still offers only associate degrees.

"There are some areas where consistency is going to be easy, but communities differ," Murdaugh said. "At the end of the day, I believe we'll have greater consistency and transparency than we have today, but you're never going to get to a place where a cookie-cutter approach will work. I don't think you'd want to be, either."

The contracts and salaries for the presidents vary greatly. Eduardo Padron, the president at Miami Dade College, the largest "community college" in the nation, receives \$367,731 for his annual salary with a total compensation valued at \$630,157. Murdaugh's contract, with a total compensation of \$369,109, places him at No. 11 among the 28 institutions. His predecessor, Bill Law, is at No. 7 and receives \$330,000 (\$449,000 total) at St. Petersburg College.

Murdaugh, who will begin a two-year stint in October as chairman of the board of the Economic Development Council, is as visible as any elected official in Leon County. That doesn't go unnoticed by TCC's trustees.

"Jim is fully engaged, not just in the education community but in the broader community. I think that's what a community college should be," Trustee Allison DeFoor said. "I think he's delivering on all cylinders."

Dana Callen, concluding her one-year term as chair of TCC's board, was equally effusive.

"I think he's a leader with a heart and soul. Jim has some kind of magic about him. He listens to other people," she said. "He doesn't have to always be the smartest guy in the room."

"If all the leadership books are right, that you are supposed to find your passion, well, I think he's found it," she added. "I think we're incredibly lucky at Tallahassee Community College."

TCC to offer evening welding program

Tallahassee Community College has announced the second offering of its postsecondary adult vocational (PSAV) certificate program in Applied Welding Technologies—beginning August 26, 2013.

Students in the inaugural class of the program will have completed 50 percent of the program by 2013 fall semester and the College wants to extend the opportunity to train in this occupation to more individuals.

The Applied Welding Technologies program targets adults who are interested in upgrading their current skills or acquiring a different skill set for a new occupation—while affording them the opportunity to remain employed during the day. Another plus for students is location. While classroom delivery will take place on TCC's main campus, the welding lab will be held at Lively Technical Center's state-of-the-art welding laboratory. Additionally, eligible students may receive federal financial aid.

State of Florida employment data reflects that welders statewide will have positive growth and earned a mean wage of \$17.86/hour and an entry level wage of \$12.60/hour. According to the US Department of Labor, welding is classified as a "green occupation" and future employment opportunities are expected to grow rapidly over the next several years.

TCC's program will prepare students for employment as welders, pipefitters, cutters and welding machine operators. Students who complete the certificate program will be eligible to receive a 10-Hour 1926 OSHA Card, apply for industry recognized certifications (National Center for Construction Education and Research) and sit for industry recognized welding exams leading to certification (American Welding Society).

The five-semester program, totaling 1,170 contact hours, begins August 26 and will be offered from 6-10 p.m., Monday through Thursday. A limited number of seats are available.

For more information on this program, please contact TCC Trades Program at (850) 201-8760 or e-mail trades@tcc.fl.edu.

Top-notch student from Kenya finally finds a home at TCC

Doug Blackburn

Cephas Kaburu earned straight-A's at his high school in Meru, Kenya, about two hours from the capital city Nairobi. He took to computer technology like a fish to water, and found part-time work assisting others.

He desperately wanted to go to college in the United States, but paying for it seemed impossible. His parents were unemployed farmers who needed to provide for Cephas' twin younger sisters.

Kaburu's fortunes changed in a heartbeat when a businessman in his town agreed to sponsor Kaburu, who was admitted to Tallahassee Community College and had an uncle living nearby to offer him a place to land. There are scores of international students at TCC (203 in 2011-12, or 9 percent of the student body), representing more than 80 nations. Kaburu knew he would fit right in.

"It was like a miracle," Kaburu, 22, said.

And then it almost unraveled.

Two weeks after arriving in Tallahassee — his first visit to the United States — Kaburu learned his sponsor had been found dead in a ditch, an apparent murder victim. Just like that, his funding source was gone.

That was when TCC intervened, as Betty Jensen, who oversees the international programs, and Robin Johnston, president and CEO of the TCC Foundation, conspired to create the Global Horizons Scholarship Fund with Kaburu its first and, to date, only recipient.

The end result: Kaburu is on target to graduate in December and intends to transfer to Florida State where he wants to major in science and information technology.

His grade point average was a perfect 4.0 this spring, with a cumulative 3.96 GPA. His only non-A came during his first semester when he received a B in American history.

"It was when I learned about my sponsor — a very stressful time," he said. "Come to my country and let me test you on Kenyan history after six weeks."

Johnston, at the foundation, credits a gift from local dentist Russell Rainey for initiating the scholarship. He also believes Kaburu was the ideal candidate for the scholarship.

"He's a great student. Cephas does everything we could want any student to do. He's extremely studious. He carries himself very well," Johnston said.

Kaburu also has found employment at TCC. He works as a computer technician in the Learning Commons, located in the college's library.

"Cephas does a great job. He is probably one of the best workers I have," said Bob Crowdis, Kaburu's supervisor. "He seems to enjoy getting out there and helping the students when they have questions."

Many of the international students at TCC gather every other Thursday on campus, part fraternity, part support group. Kaburu lives with a student from China; one of his closest friends is Kevin Matungwa from Tanzania.

There are other Kenyans at TCC, but Kaburu said he is closer to several of his fellow countrymen living in Tallahassee who are not TCC students. He was delighted to meet the Kenyan prime minister last year when he came to Tallahassee.

The international students regularly gather for pot-lucks or to go to restaurants, their status as international students their common ground.

"TCC is very diverse," Matungwa said. "There are a lot of international students here. I'm not sure everybody is aware of this."

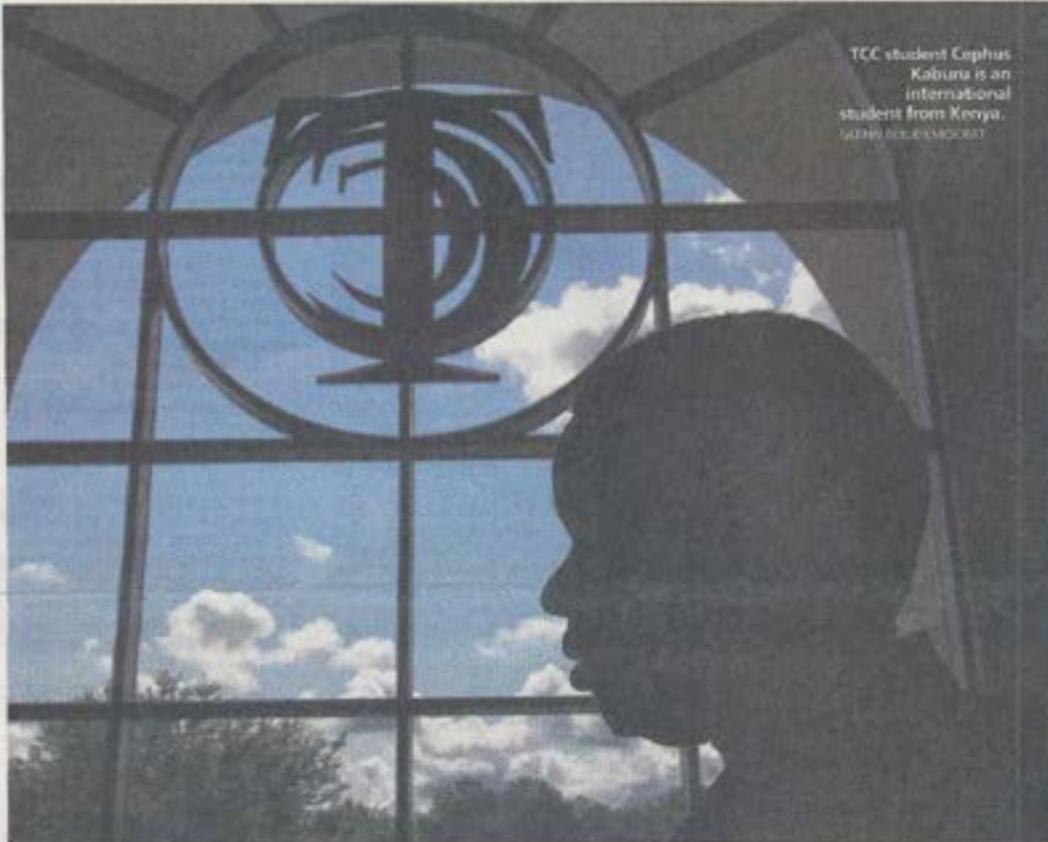
Kaburu has not been back to Kenya. He misses his family and friends. He misses the foods of his childhood, particularly chapatti, a type of fried bread usually served with pan-fried beef or chicken.

He knows he will return to Meru at some point, but his plans are a work in progress.

"It all starts with my education," he said. "I want to be able to help my family. It's too early to say what the best way will be to do that."

Kaburu's incredible journey

Top-notch student from Kenya finally finds a home at TCC



TCC student Cephus Kaburu is an international student from Kenya.
SUNSHINE PHOTOGRAPHY

By Doug Blackburn
Democrat senior writer

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See KABURU » 2A



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Continued » 1A

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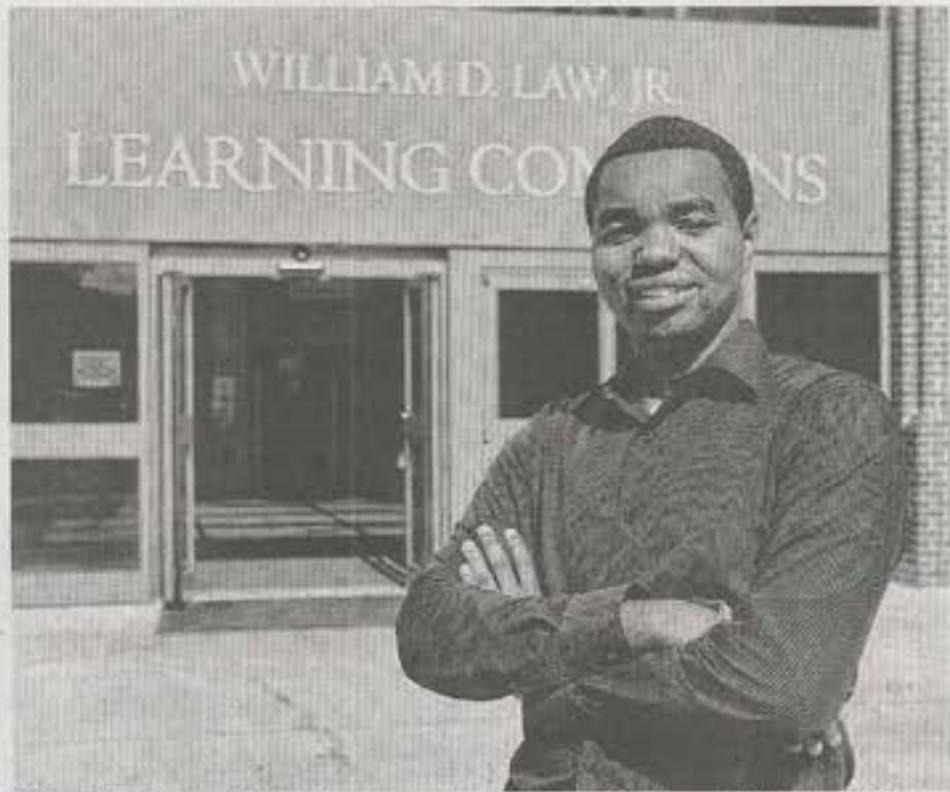
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TCC student Cephus Kaburu, is an international student from Kenya. He has benefited from a scholarship established by the TCC Foundation. GLENN BEIL/DEMOCRAT

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Two-year college students face more money stress

Kylie Lacey

UNIVERSITY BUSINESS

Learning how to better manage money may help aid in community college student completion. Nearly one in five get so worried about finances, they think about dropping out, according to the "Inceptia National Financial Aptitude Analysis" report. Only 7 percent of four-year students experience such intense stress.

Two-year students typically work more hours than four-year students and may have families to provide for, says Kate Trombitas, vice president of financial education for Inceptia. "This means a more complicated financial life."

Bill Spiers, director of financial aid at Tallahassee Community College (Fla.), says two-year students sometimes handle loans poorly because it's the first time they've had such a large sum of money. "Many students come into my office asking specifically about loans because they need to financially assist their family."

At Tallahassee, a required "college success class" includes information on budgeting. During entrance interviews, students also learn about how loans impact their credit and what default is.

The key is for students to understand the consequences of borrowing. More educated borrowers are more likely to make smart financial choices and feel less stress, Spiers says.

"When a student asks to borrow more than 50 percent of tuition and expenses, we require he come to the financial aid office and explain why. It's important for students to understand the consequences for overborrowing and only take out the loans they really need."

Tallahassee [Florida Trend]

(Florida Trend Via Acquire Media NewsEdge) For decades, Tallahassee's economy revolved around the football season and the legislative session. Civic leaders touted the city's small-town feel and an economy that was less susceptible to the booms and busts of bigger cities with more robust private sectors.

But when former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush began a push to downsize state government in 1999, eliminating more than 15,000 positions over eight years, it was a wake-up call to Tallahassee's business community, which realized it could no longer rely on state government to keep its economy stable.

Civic leaders began an effort to diversify the economy, expand tourism behind the football season and encourage more young professionals to stay while also launching a campaign to portray Tallahassee as the ideal spot for Baby Boomer retirees.

Diversification takes time. Tallahassee's private sector is still dominated by small businesses, and state jobs still fuel the economy, with about 30% of Tallahassee's workforce employed by federal, state or local governments. Business leaders pitch the reliance on state-funded jobs as one of Tallahassee's unique strengths.

But in the last decade, a half-dozen companies from a diverse array of industries have been recruited to Tallahassee, bringing more than 500 jobs. Bing Energy arrived from California to manufacture parts for hydrogen fuel cells; law firm Kaye Scholer brought administrative jobs from other out-of-state locations; Danfoss Turbocor decided to make its air compressor technology in Tallahassee instead of Canada.

In addition, the area is taking better advantage of the thousands of highly educated students pumped into the workforce each year by Florida A&M University, Florida State University and **Tallahassee Community College**. In the past, these graduates typically went in search of jobs in Tampa, Orlando and Miami. But recent efforts to plug the brain drain appear to be working. From 2005 to 2010, the number of 25- to 34-year-olds living in Tallahassee grew by 20%, attracted by the city's quality of life, jobs and more social opportunities.

Reflecting the presence of more young professionals, the city's Midtown area now has new bars, restaurants and upscale shops. The city invested in sidewalk and lighting improvements along Gaines Street, which runs between Florida A&M University and Florida State University, to make it pedestrian friendly, which led to development of a major

new mixed-use residential project. The 12-acre Cascades Park on the fringes of downtown will open later this year and has an amphitheater for live music events. And a group called "Imagine Tallahassee" is raising \$200,000 from the private sector to increase economic vitality in the city. This plan will be offered in conjunction with an effort to dedicate 15% of the proceeds from an upcoming sales tax extension to economic development projects.

Business leaders say there is an awareness now that the oft-repeated mantra of its a great place to raise a family," doesn't work for every young professional. Yet there is also recognition that Tallahassee offers a different lifestyle to employers and their workforces than Miami or Orlando, with good public schools, affordable housing, low crime, short commutes, Southern hospitality and the energy of a city striving to reinvent itself.

Population & Demographics > Population: 182,965 > Population growth: 20.4% since 2000 > Demographics: Non-Hispanic white Tallahassee ... 53.3% Statewide ... 57.9% Black Tallahassee ... 35 Statewide ... 16 Hispanic Tallahassee ... 6.3 Statewide ... 22.5 Foreign-born Tallahassee ... 8.0 Statewide ... 19.2 > Youth > Students enrolled at Florida State University (41,000) and Florida A&M University (12,000) comprise almost 30% of Tallahassee's population.

> Reflecting the large student population: Nearly 75% of the population is between 18-64, compared to just 61% statewide.

> More than 46% of Tallahassee residents have a bachelor's degree or higher vs. 26% statewide.

> Homeownership is much lower than the statewide average: 42.6% vs. 69% statewide. And more than 40% of Tallahassee's housing units are apartments vs. about 30% statewide.

> Income Levels > Median worker income: \$20,932 vs. \$26,045 statewide > Median household income: \$38,972 vs. \$47,827 statewide . Notable > Black-owned firms: 16.3% vs. 9.0% statewide > Per capita retail sales: \$17,186 vs. \$14,353 statewide > Travel time to work is much shorter than state averages, about 18 minutes vs. 26 minutes statewide.

> The Tallahassee area is home to the largest collection of antebellum plantations in the country, with 71 plantations and 300,000 acres between the city and Thomasville, Ga.

> Tallahassee is closer to Texas than to Key West.

Tallahassee [Florida Trend]

continued

> Employment > Compared to statewide averages, relatively fewer people in Tallahassee are employed in manufacturing, construction, wholesale trade and transportation.

> Relatively more people work in educational services, health care and public administration.

> Where They Live Many executives live in the gated northeast Tallahassee community of Golden Eagle, which has an 18-hole golf course and some of the city's most luxurious homes. Compared to south Florida, a Golden Eagle home is a bargain at a median list price of \$462,500. But in Tallahassee, that's pricey, considering the median price of a home is \$175,600. The relaxed Indianhead neighborhood of mostly 1950s-era homes is a favorite of FSU professors. There is no strict homeowners' association, and front yards might feature elaborate gardens, art sculptures or FSU regalia. At a median list price of \$132,900, it's a more affordable option and is a short bike ride to downtown.

> Political Landscape City commissioners skew toward the old guard political structure, including former Mayor and Democratic Party Chairman Scott Maddox, who returned to the city commission last year. Current Mayor John Marks, who was cleared of state ethics charges earlier this year, says he hasn't decided if he will run again. At the county level, the makeup of the commission has changed in recent years, with Mary Ann Lindley, a former Tallahassee Democrat newspaper columnist, winning a seat last year. Former FSU football player and NFL running back Nick Maddox was also elected to the Leon County Commission three years ago.

Economic Backbone & Business Infrastructure Education More than 67,000 students attend Tallahassee's three largest education institutions - Florida A&M University, **Tallahassee Community College** and Florida State University, which together employ nearly 20,000. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Barry University, Saint Leo University and Flagler College also offer courses and degree programs in Tallahassee, along with for-profit Keiser University and Lively Technical Center.

> FSU's 17 colleges offer more than 319 degree programs to 41,000 students. The school is establishing a strong business focus: President Eric Barron has encouraged entrepreneurship in both technical and non-technical disciplines, creating "entrepreneurs in residence" in every college. He has named "The Entrepreneurial University" as one of the school's "Big Ideas." > Among Florida A&M's 12,000 students are citizens of more than 70 other countries.

FAMU offers 54 bachelor's degrees and 28 master's degrees and has 12 doctoral programs, including pharmaceutical and environmental sciences and engineering degrees in six specialized areas.

> Tallahassee Community College is fourth in the nation for the number of associate of arts degrees awarded by a community college. Nearly 75% of TCC graduates continue studies in Florida universities.

The decision by law firm Kaye Scholer to move its administrative offices to Tallahassee this year, creating 100 jobs, was the biggest economic development job gain the city has had in seven years. Scholer is transferring most of its jobs from New York, where it will keep its headquarters. The Tallahassee location will hold the firm's accounting, human resources and marketing divisions. About 10% of staffers are expected to relocate from New York and other sites, with the rest of the hires coming from within Tallahassee, says Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Sue Dick. The talent flowing from Tallahassee's state universities helped clinch the deal, Dick says.

FSU's Business Focus Under President Eric Barron and Caryn Beck-Dudley, dean of the College of Business, FSU is taking an aggressive role in Tallahassee's business life. In addition to creating a student business incubator called the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship, Barron has established funds to support new startup companies through campuswide competitions, along with a program that pairs chemistry majors who have potential new products with business majors looking for ventures.

Beck-Dudley serves on the boards of the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee/Leon County and the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce and on the advisory board of the Knight Creative Communities Institute.

Meanwhile, the institute, housed within the business college, has established a program called North Florida Outreach. The Outreach effort brings well-known business leaders and entrepreneurs to Tallahassee to speak to the local business community. It also offers local established business owners the opportunity to meet in groups with other businesspeople from non-competing businesses and share insights, confidentially, on issues of concern. The Moran Institute also conducts a small-business executive program that offers nine business enhancement sessions to classes of 25 businesspeople who must apply and be selected for a the program.

Tallahassee [Florida Trend]

continued

> Health Care The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation ranked Leon County eighth in health outcomes among Florida's 67 counties when measuring factors such as healthy habits, life expectancy and access to health care.

The area's health care-related institutions include: > Capital Regional Medical Center, an HCA hospital with 1,140 employees, including 505 physicians; it also operates eight clinics plus a Gadsden County emergency facility. Last year, the center added two floors to its hospital and was named one of the nation's top performers on key quality measures by the Joint Commission, a accreditor of health care organizations.

> Capital Health Plan, recognized among the top health plans among commercial HMOs by the National Committee for Quality Assurance, serves about 126,000 members in seven regional counties, employs 435 and works with 130 primary-care physicians. It was one of the pioneers in developing electronic patient health records that are available to providers throughout its network.

> Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare is a private, non-profit health care system with a 772-bed acute-care Tallahassee hospital, the eighth-largest hospital in Florida, plus five family medical clinics located in five neighboring counties. TMH has a medical staff of 570 physicians and total employment of 3,500.

Neuroscientist Jacob VanLandingham recently patented a neurosteroid drug and launched a company, Prevacus, at Tallahassee's Innovation Park. VanLandingham, an assistant professor at FSU and an adjunct professor at the University of Florida, developed the drug to help prevent and treat concussions. Prevacus now has 10 employees. Clinical trials, expected to begin next year, will be conducted in Tallahassee, where VanLandingham also is research director for the Memory Disorder Clinic.

Greg Frost, a 20-year law enforcement manager for the Tallahassee Police Department, is trying to revive a once-important agricultural business for which Leon and Jefferson counties were at the epicenter. The product, tung oil, is produced by tung nut trees and used for wood finishes, paints, rust protection, ink, cosmetics - and now biofuel. Frost and many agricultural experts are predicting a U.S. tung oil resurgence. Frost has 50 acres planted and pending agreements for more ["Tallahassee Tung," page 38].

Coton Colors, a family-owned designer and manufacturer of handcrafted pottery and creative gift ware, was founded in

1995 by artist and FSU graduate Laura Johnson and now sells its products in 3,000 stores across the country and online. Last year, Coton Colors added 449 retailers, a new location in Tampa and posted a 105% increase in online sales. The company plans to double the size of its Tallahassee corporate office and design center, add a Las Vegas showroom and unveil 550 new artistic offerings.

> Technology Leon County has 461 high-tech establishments, with 4,723 employees, or 3.4% of the total workforce, according to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. That's close to the overall state figure for high tech of 3.6%.

> A number of technology-oriented businesses have located at Innovation Park, a 208-acre research park managed by the Leon County Research and Development Authority. Companies headquartered at the park include Danfoss Turbocor, Bing Energy and Sunnyland Solar. The park also is home to the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory, FSU's Aeropropulsion Mechatronics and Energy Center and numerous FSU research programs.

> "Research in technology is very important to the economy, bringing lots of dollars to the universities and employment in research," says County Commissioner Kristin Dozier, who chairs the Leon County Research and Development Authority, the Innovation Park governing board. "I think we're poised to have an even greater impact on the future community than in the past." Dozier points to increased collaboration among universities and community colleges and more resources to encourage entrepreneurs.

> Among other tech companies are defense-related businesses. General Dynamics Land Systems operates a facility that builds and assembles electronic units for tanks and other infantry-fighting vehicles.

Unlike regular laptops and tablets, a "rugged" computer is more resistant to drops, vibrations, spills or extreme temperatures. Tallahassee-based G5 Engineering Solutions has carved out a niche developing rugged devices for clients such as Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics. One of its devices can be held under three feet of water for 30 minutes, says co-owner Jason Pernell. The company was founded in 2006 and employs 24. G5 opened a 10,000-sq.-ft. Orlando office. Co-owner Craig Kirkland says the company could be headquartered anywhere but stays in Tallahassee because "it's a great place to live." > Government > State government provides jobs for more than 44,000 in the

Tallahassee [Florida Trend]

continued

Tallahassee metro area. Local government accounts for another 16,100, according to Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. The city is home to numerous law practices, lobbyists and business-related associations, along with statewide organizations, including Leadership Florida, Florida TaxWatch, the Florida Chamber and the Florida Bar.

> The city of Tallahassee, governed by a five-member city commission that includes the mayor, owns and operates the regional airport, city utilities, public works and StarMetro transit system. Last year, the American Public Power Association named the city's power utility the No. 1 public utility in the nation.

> Electric Debate For a city that prides itself on its low cost of living, the cost of electricity is a sticking point. It is such a sensitive issue that Steve Stewart, a Tallahassee businessman, ran for mayor in 2010 on a platform of lowering electric bills by spending reserve funds. He lost to current Tallahassee Mayor John Marks. Since then, the city has established a smart grid system that allows residents and businesses to monitor how much electricity they use - even from their mobile devices.

> Transportation Tallahassee Regional Airport has a 32% share of air passenger traffic among northwest Florida airports. American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Silver Airways and U.S. Airways Express fly in and out of the airport. Connections to many parts of Florida are problematic and expensive, however Almost 685,000 passengers passed through the airport last year, up from almost 634,000 in 2011.

> Tourism > Last year, Leon County had 2.6 million visitors, accounting for \$580 million in direct spending, according to Visit Tallahassee. Tourism-related jobs in increased 11.5% in 2011 to 12,228.

Visitors include those who come to the city for the annual legislative session along with those attracted to the area's ecological features. Sports-related events that attract visitors include both intercollegiate football and basketball games and non-collegiate contests, including regional and national softball and gymnastics events.

Lake Iamonia, Lake Jackson, Lake Talquin and the Wacissa River are popular fishing holes, while the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge - the nation's oldest wildlife refuge - attracts numerous bird watchers. In the city, Mission San Luis is a living history museum that re-creates a mission from Florida's Spanish colonial era.

> Food and Lodging > Hotel Duval, which opened in 2009 on the edge of downtown, is a favorite stop for business conferences and out-of-town guests. It was renovated by local private equity firm Hunter & Harp Holdings and is also popular with local residents, who like to frequent the hotel's roof-top bar called Level 8 ["Touching All Aspects of Tourism," page 126]. The nearby Aloft hotel, a Starwood-brand that opened in 2009, has also become a popular choice for business guests. Doubletree, a Hilton brand, is just two blocks from the state Capitol. It is a favorite of Tallahassee regulars and is undergoing a renovation.

> Popular power lunch and dinner spots include Andrew's Capital Grill & Bar and 101, both of which sit in the shadow of the state Capitol. Avenue Eat & Drink offers upscale downtown dining. For quick lunch stops, sandwich shops Goodie's and Metro Deli are a mainstay for politicians. Outside downtown, deals are done at established favorites such as Italian restaurant Bella Bella, Asian fusion restaurant Masa and Cypress, which offers upscale American cuisine. But new arrivals are popular, too, such as Shula's 347 Grill, Joe Mama's Wood-Fired Pizza and Southern seafood restaurant Front Porch, which is in the heart of Midtown.

> Art > The city's arts scene includes more than a dozen venues, including the LeMoyné Center for the Visual Arts in a historic downtown home; the Tallahassee Automobile Museum and the Museum of Florida History.

Leadership > Big Fish, Small Pond > Tallahassee's size creates opportunities for professionals who want to become civically engaged, and newcomers say they're welcomed by established business leaders. Yet there is a sense that although the elected officials within the city and county are diverse, there isn't the same diversity among the leadership of the traditional business community. Last year, attorney Sean Pittman created the Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce to support minority-owned small businesses. "I noticed that minority and women-owned businesses that are small and trying to grow their footprint didn't have a place to go," Pittman says.

> Economic Development > The Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce is the heavyweight for business expansions and relocations and also oversees the Economic Development Council for Tallahassee/Leon County. Nearby counties, such as Wakulla and Gadsden, have their own chambers and economic development agencies, though there has been an effort to work together to pitch the region to prospective employers.

Tallahassee [Florida Trend]

continued

Sue Dick Sue Dick is like a lot of Tallahassee residents. Raised in Miami, she came to Florida State University for college and met her husband there. She returned to Miami for several years but decided she preferred the quality of life and professional opportunities in Tallahassee. "It was a place where you could put down roots," Dick says.

As president and CEO of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce for 14 years and president and CEO of the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee/Leon County, she has watched the private sector evolve from being dominated by small business to include bigger employers recruited to the city and an emphasis on entrepreneurship.

Dick says it can be challenging to pitch Tallahassee to businesses outside the state. "They tend to go immediately to south or central Florida," she says. "They don't fully understand the amazing amenities that are in north Florida," Dick says.

Sean Pittman Visitors arriving at Tallahassee's airport will notice several prominent advertisements for Pittman Law Group, a law firm founded by Florida State University law school grad Sean Pittman. "The airport is a place where 80% of the folks who I need to know about Pittman Law Group go in and out of," Pittman says.

Originally from Riviera Beach, Pittman is known for his influence among lawmakers, including the black caucus in the state Legislature and at times has been hired for his ability to sway their votes. His clients include local governments and large corporations such as AT&T and HCA Healthcare. Pittman's influence extends into Tallahassee business circles, as he also lobbies at a local level and is the founder and chairman of the new Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce.

> Young Professionals > In 2006, the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce launched a young professionals group called Access Tallahassee. For \$75 a year, members get access to networking events and job listings geared to young professionals. The Tallahassee Network of Young Professionals - its motto is "Live. Play. Stay." - has focused more on social events. There's also Connect Florida, a group for under-40 professionals that is part of Leadership Florida.

In addition to networking groups, the Knight Foundation awarded the Tallahassee Community College Foundation a \$570,000 grant to create an initiative called the Knight Creative Communities Institute. The role of KCCI, headed

by Executive Director Laurie Hartsfield, is to launch projects that make Tallahassee a better place for young professionals and the creative sector. The group is responsible for creating the Tallahassee Film Festival and Sustainable Tallahassee, encouraging the city's burgeoning food truck scene by finding a more scenic location for the trucks and improving the design of the Cascades Park amphitheater. "The conversation of 'How do we make our city a great place to live, work and play,' has really changed," Hartsfield says.

> Notable Contacts > DuBose Ausley: Former chairman of Ausley McMullen law firm; director, Capital City Bank Group and TECO Energy > Fred Baggett: Managing shareholder, Greenberg Traurig > Eric Barron: President, Florida State University > Tom Barron: President, Capital City Bank > Donny Barstow: President, MCCI > Caryn Beck-Dudley: Dean, College of Business, Florida State University > Matt Brown: President/Tallahassee market, Premiere Bank > J.T. Burnette: Principal, Hunter & Harp Holdings > William Butler: President, Real Estate InSync > Richard Campbell: Owner, Applied Fiber > Scott Carswell: Owner, The Moon entertainment club > Kevin Cate: CEO, Cate Communications > Brian Cook: CEO, Capital Regional Medical Center > Lee Daniel: Executive director, Visit Tallahassee > Sammie Dixon: President/CEO, Prime Meridian Bank > Laurie Dozier: President, Mad Dog Construction > Steve Evans: Retired, IBM North America; mentor/consultant > David Faulkenberry: President, FBMC Benefits Management > Mike Fields: State president, Bank of America > Shawnta Friday-Stroud: Friday-Stroud Dean, School of Business and Industry, Florida A&M University > Sunil Harman: Director of Aviation, City of Tallahassee > Laurie Hartsfield: Executive director, Knight Creative Communities Institute > Chip Hartung: President/real estate broker/owner, Coldwell Banker, Hartung and Noblin > Lucy Ho: Owner, Azu and Masa restaurants > John Hogan: CEO, Capital Health Plan > Rev. R.B. Holmes Jr.: Pastor, Bethel Missionary Baptist Church; publisher, Capital Outlook newspaper > Yuh-Mei Hutt: President, Golden Lighting > Chad Kittrell: Principal, Hunter & Harper > Mark Llewellyn: President, Genesis Group > John Marks: Mayor, Tallahassee > Julie Moreno: President/publisher, Tallahassee Democrat Susie Busch Transou /Tripp Transou The couple own Tri-Eagle Sales, an Anheuser-Busch distributorship located just outside of Tallahassee. Tripp is the CEO, though he jokes that Susie is the real boss. (The "Busch" in her name comes from being the great-great-granddaughter of Anheuser-Busch founder Adolphus Busch.) Last year, they bought the Ocala distributorship, expanding the company's footprint to 14 counties in Florida. Tri-Eagle Sales has diversified its

Tallahassee [Florida Trend]

continued

portfolio, offering more than 100 beers, including craft beers with names such as "Hop Devil" and supplies waters, teas, energy drinks and milk products.

Both are active in the business community, with Tripp a former head of the economic development council and Susie serving on the board of trustees for Florida State University.

Ed Murray As the founder and president of commercial brokerage NAI TALCOR, Ed Murray is credited with playing a big part in reviving the city's Midtown area.

Murray and his business partner bought an old furniture and office building in Midtown, turning the property into the "Manor at Midtown," a pedestrian-friendly retail space that is now home to a coffee shop, a workout facility, an Irish pub and a 1920s-era speakeasy bar, as well as several other stores. "We took a chance," Murray says. "We had a great lender that helped us and great architects," Murray says.

Murray and his partners own other commercial spaces in Midtown and helped broker and lease the deal to get Whole Foods Market to open a store in that neighborhood. He's also involved in the College Town apartments and other retail projects in the Gaines Street area.

He's chair-elect of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce and sits on a special sales tax committee that will pick economic development projects for the city to invest in.

Jim Murdaugh Tallahassee Community College earns high marks from local employers for its ability to respond to workforce demands. Many credit President Jim Murdaugh, who was hired in 2010 to oversee the more than 12,000-student community college. Murdaugh had worked at the college since 1999 and received his bachelor's and master's degrees from FSU.

Under Murdaugh's tenure, TCC has opened a 85,000-sq.-ft. medical training center between Tallahassee's two major hospitals and has broken ground on an environmental institute in Wakulla County.

"Our mission as a comprehensive college is built on the workforce needs of our region," Murdaugh says. "It's a very fundamental difference in vision from universities,

which prepare knowledge workers to basically go anywhere in the world." Murdaugh is the chair-elect of the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee/ Leon County and is on numerous local boards, including the new Big Bend Minority Chamber of Commerce and the Imagine Tallahassee group charged with making the city a better place to live. "My goal is to make sure students have places to go to work," Murdaugh says.

> Karen Moore: CEO, Moore Communications Group
 > Kim Moore: Vice president, Workforce development, Tallahassee Community College
 > Jason Naumann: Owner, Naumann Group Real Estate
 > Mark O'Bryant: President/CEO, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare
 > Gary Ostrander: Vice president for research/president, FSU Research Foundation
 > Michael Parker: Director, economic and community development, city of Tallahassee
 > Daryl Parks: Attorney, Parks & Crump; one of the attorneys who represented the family of Trayvon Martin
 > Gloria Pugh: President/CEO, AMWAT Moving Warehousing & Storage
 > Andrew Reiss: Owner, Andrew's Capital Grill & Bar
 > Kim Rivers: President, Inkbridge; founder, Imagine Tallahassee initiative
 > Brian Rowland: Owner, Rowland Publishing
 > Ron Sachs: President/CEO, Sachs Media Group
 > April Salter: President/COO, Salter Mitchell public relations firm
 > John Schrowang: President, Red Elephant Pizza
 > Bill Smith: Chairman/president/CEO, Capital City Bank Group
 > Steve Vancore: President, VancoreJones Communications
 > Mike Vasilinda: CEO, Mike Vasilinda Productions
 > Jim Wacksman: Owner, Association Studios
 > Jon Williamson: President, Honey Lake Plantation
 Eight-acre Orchard Pond Organics in the Red Hills of Leon County grows everything from beets to squash to berries. The venture was started five years ago by Mary Phipps. It fills vegetable and fruit orders weekly or in alternate weeks to more than 100 families signed up for regular pickup; the produce is also sold at New Leaf Market.

For four generations, Bradley family members have been making and sharing their own home-seasoned and cured sausage, sold today from their 1927-built Bradley's Country Store on Centerville Road. The family produces some 100,000 pounds of sausage a year, along with stone ground grits, hogshead cheese and other products, sold locally and shipped to customers as far away as Alaska and Hawaii.

Florida college system leads national rankings

Special to The News

WAKULLA NEWS

For the eleventh year in a row, the Florida College System (FCS) ranks among the top associate degree producers in the nation according to Community College Week. Florida, which ranks fourth in population, awarded more associate degrees and one-year certificates than the larger states of Texas and New York.

"The Florida College System is proud to serve as the primary access point to higher education for nearly a million Floridians," said FCS Chancellor Randy Hanna. "These findings build upon our access mission by highlighting the success of our students. I commend all colleges on this accomplishment."

Community College Week's Top 100 Associate Degree Producers report identifies Florida as a leader in a range of categories using data from the National Center for Education Statistics. Highlights of the 2013 report include:

Seventeen Florida colleges are among the top 100 producers of associate degrees. Broward College, Florida State College at Jacksonville, Miami Dade College and Valencia College are in the top 10;

Fifteen Florida colleges are ranked in the number of associate degrees awarded to African American students. Broward College, Florida State College at Jacksonville, Miami Dade College and Valencia College are in the top 10;

Ten Florida colleges are ranked in the number of associate degrees awarded to Hispanic students. Broward College, Miami Dade College and Valencia College are in the top 10;

Eight Florida colleges are ranked for associate degrees awarded in the area of nursing. Broward College, Florida State College at Jacksonville and Miami Dade College are in the top 10;

Six Florida colleges are ranked for associate degrees awarded in the area of health professions and related clinical sciences; and

Nine Florida colleges are ranked for one-year certificate production in all disciplines.

"With an array of programs and services, the Florida College System's 28 institutions serve individuals, communities and the state with low-cost, high-quality education and job training," said Chancellor Hanna. "I am extremely proud of all colleges for their commitment to providing meaningful credentials for our students that help them get jobs."

For more information and to view the rankings, visit Community College Week's Top Associate Degree Producers Report, 2013.

Voting 2.0

By Lauren Ingeno
INSIDE HIGHER ED

What if registering to vote as a college freshman were as commonplace as attending orientation or signing up for classes?

This is what the creators of TurboVote — an up-and-coming tech startup that strives to make voter registration as easy and “awesome as renting a DVD from Netflix” — are hoping could happen in the near future.

The nonpartisan nonprofit has launched The New Standard for Campus Voter Engagement, an initiative to “institutionalize voting in the class registration or freshman orientation process of every college in America by fall 2014.”

Ten college and university presidents and 47 student body presidents have signed on, with the presidents pledging that their institutions will make an effort to provide all students with all the information and materials they need to vote in every election.

Colleges can partner with TurboVote (co-founded by Harvard University graduates Seth Flaxman and Katy Peters two years ago), in order to make reaching that goal possible.

After signing up (for free) on TurboVote, users fill out voter registration forms or vote by mail forms online. TurboVote prints the filled-out forms and mails them along with pre-stamped envelopes addressed to each user’s local voting election board. TurboVote also sends users texts and e-mail reminders when an election at any level of government is approaching — from the presidential election to a local school board race.

It costs \$1.60 per form, but if a student attends a college that partners with TurboVote, the institution pays the mailing fee and a small fixed sum that helps cover other costs.

Last year 58 colleges partnered with TurboVote. The startup is in the process of renewing those partnerships and hoping to reach 100 by September. In May the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation announced it would invest \$1 million in TurboVote over three years.

“What’s very exciting about the technology is that it

drastically lowers the barriers of institutionalizing voter registration,” said Sam Novey, who is the director of partnerships at TurboVote.

Around 11 million eligible voters ages 18 to 24 are in college, about a quarter of all eligible young voters, according to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University. Voters from ages 18 to 29 represented 19 percent of all those who voted in the 2012 presidential election according to the early National Exit Poll conducted by Edison Research, an increase of one percentage point from 2008.

Sometimes registering to vote can present the biggest hurdle for young people. Or, if a student is registered in his or her home district, sending absentee ballots can be inconvenient and complicated. There are different rules from state to state, forms can be difficult to find online, and it is easy to miss deadlines

“In many cases if you have to navigate the labyrinth of forms to vote absentee, that can be enough of an impediment that you might not make that effort,” said Lewis Duncan, president of Rollins College in Florida, which partnered with TurboVote last year.

Last year Rollins registered 20 percent of students for TurboVote by setting up tables with laptops and iPads at new student orientation and listing it on the online check-in for students, said Micki Meyer, the director of community engagement at Rollins.

TurboVote’s new challenge, and what the New Standard advocates for, is going beyond tabling to integrate voter registration into a “bottleneck process,” like course registration, where registering will be the default, and students will have to “opt out” of it rather than “opt in,” Novey said.

Novey envisions colleges implementing TurboVote into freshman orientation, similar to the way programs such as AlcoholEdu or Sexual AssaultEdu are used on many campuses. Freshmen are required to complete the online education programs or they may risk grades being held.

Voting 2.0....

continued

If colleges around the country can institutionalize alcohol education programs, they can also institutionalize the “90-second process” of signing up for TurboVote, Novey said.

Of course the spread of alcohol education programs has been in part by colleges making them obligatory. Duncan said he would never make signing up for TurboVote mandatory. But college are taking the steps to ensure every student at least knows about the option.

The first step administrators can do to make this happen is to appoint a staff member to be responsible for supporting institutionalization effort, Novey said.

At Miami Dade College in Florida — one of the first institutions to introduce TurboVote on campus — that person is Josh Young. Young, the director of Miami Dade College’s Institute for Civic Engagement and Democracy, said his efforts last year taught him that voting registration needs to be embedded in key processes like admissions. Around 3,000 Miami Dade students registered to vote through TurboVote last year. But with 174,000 students — making the eight-campus community college the largest in the nation — that number is relatively small.

“What TurboVote has been telling us is that you can do presentations, pass out fliers, hold events, but the key is really to make this a part of the process that students pass through when engaging with institutions on the web,” Young said.

Young received approval from Miami Dade President Eduardo J. Padrón to meet with the college registrar about embedding TurboVote into college websites. For instance, after finishing the online admissions process, there may be a pop-up window prompting students to sign up, Young said.

In two weeks, each of Miami Dade’s direct-entry students from high school will receive an e-mail from the college encouraging them to sign up for TurboVote.

“And those are things that all colleges can do and more and more are doing it,” Young said. “This is kind of what’s been missing in the past — using technology to make the whole voting process easier.”

Along with Duncan from Rollins and Padrón from Miami Dade, the other presidents who have signed

the pledge are from Dominican University, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Nova Southeastern University, Roanoke College, Tallahassee Community College and Virginia Western Community College.

Read more: <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/07/03/tech-start-helping-colleges-institutionalize-voter-registration-campus#ixzz2akiC7fHy>

Inside Higher Ed



A valuable **partner** to employers.
A **life-changer** for students.
A major **contributor** to Florida's economy.



The Florida College System impacts Florida's economy.

- We annually add \$26.6 billion to Florida's economy.
- For every \$1 students invest in the system, they receive a cumulative \$6 in higher future income over the course of their working careers.
- 88% of our graduates are placed in jobs or continuing their education within one year of graduation.
- The average starting salary for associate in science degree graduates is \$44,095. The average starting salary for bachelor's degree graduates is \$46,186.
- 54% of juniors and seniors in the state university system transferred from our system.

The Florida College System is smart business.

- We awarded 105,798 degrees and certificates last year.
- 93% of our graduates remain in Florida and contribute to the state's economic growth.
- For every dollar of support, taxpayers see a cumulative return of \$2.90 over the course of students' careers.
- Our associate degrees and workplace certificates are targeted to the workforce needs of the areas we serve.
- Our bachelor's degree programs are created with input from local business and industry to ensure we meet workforce needs.
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Daytona State College
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Florida Gateway College

Florida Keys Community College
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Gulf Coast State College
Hillsborough Community College
Indian River State College
Lake-Sumter State College
Miami Dade College

North Florida Community College
Northwest Florida State College
Palm Beach State College
Pasco-Hernando Community College
Pensacola State College
Polk State College
Santa Fe College

Seminole State College of Florida
South Florida State College
St. Johns River State College
St. Petersburg College
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota
Tallahassee Community College
Valencia College

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879,948 students **28 colleges** **68 campuses**

HOW DOES THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM IMPACT FLORIDA'S ECONOMY?

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WHY IS THE FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM SMART BUSINESS?

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Learn more about how the Florida College System is impacting Florida business at www.fldoe.org/fcs.



- Broward College
- Chipola College
- College of Central Florida
- Daytona State College
- Eastern Florida State College
- Edison State College
- Florida Gateway College
- Florida Keys Community College
- Florida State College at Jacksonville
- Gulf Coast State College
- Hillsborough Community College
- Indian River State College
- Lake-Sumter State College
- Miami Dade College
- North Florida Community College
- Northwest Florida State College
- Palm Beach State College
- Pasco-Hernando Community College
- Pensacola State College
- Polk State College
- Santa Fe College
- Seminole State College of Florida
- South Florida State College
- St. Johns River State College
- St. Petersburg College
- State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota
- Tallahassee Community College
- Valencia College



879,948 students

28 colleges

68 campuses

Within 30 miles of every Floridian, the Florida College System serves as a gateway to high-quality education that leads to high-paying jobs. Together, our 28 colleges, state colleges and community colleges serve a diverse and growing number of students.

Our system provides the primary point of access to affordable, high-quality education. Our workforce certificates and associate degrees are targeted to the workforce needs of the areas we serve. And our bachelor's degrees – many which will be offered for \$10,000 or less – are created with local business and industry input.

So what happens after our students graduate? They get jobs. Right out of the door, associate in science graduates earn an average of \$44,095 and bachelor's degree graduates earn \$46,186. And our job placement and continuing education rates for fields like teacher preparation, business and nursing are over 85 percent.

Florida's business community shares in the successes of the system, including a more skilled workforce, community improvements and economic activity. Last year our system pumped an additional \$26.6 billion into the economy. And with 93 percent of our graduates staying in Florida to work, we're bolstering our local employers with home-grown talent.

When business and industry leaders need skilled workers, they can count on the Florida College System to deliver. Because connecting talented people with companies that need workers isn't just good for our students, it's good for business. That's why "The Florida College System: Smart. Business." is our motto.

- John Grosskopf, Chair of the Florida College System Council of Presidents

Fla. man sentenced in ID theft involving TCC

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI (AP) - A South Florida man has been sentenced to more than seven years in federal prison in an identity theft and tax fraud case involving names stolen from a community college.

The sentence was imposed on 29-year-old Charlton Escarmant of Miami, who was convicted of four fraud and ID theft charges in March. Co-defendant Arthy Icart pleaded guilty and was sentenced in April to more than five years behind bars.

Trial testimony showed that the pair filed false tax returns using names stolen from Tallahassee Community College's financial aid office. Authorities found more than 3,200 names from the college on Escarmant's computer.

About 400 fraudulent tax returns were filed seeking \$3.3 million in refunds from the Internal Revenue Service. They had the refunds loaded onto prepaid tax debit cards.



4B » WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2013 » TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

| NEWTON POLICE OFFICERS SPEAK AT TWO-DAY EVENT |



E.E. Eunice, executive director of Tallahassee Community College's Florida Public Safety Institute, speaks on Tuesday.
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL SCHWARZ/SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT



The crowd listens to a speaker Tuesday at Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy in Havana.



Lt. Christopher Vanghele, left, of the Newtown Connecticut Police Department listens.

Law enforcement summit looks at safety in schools

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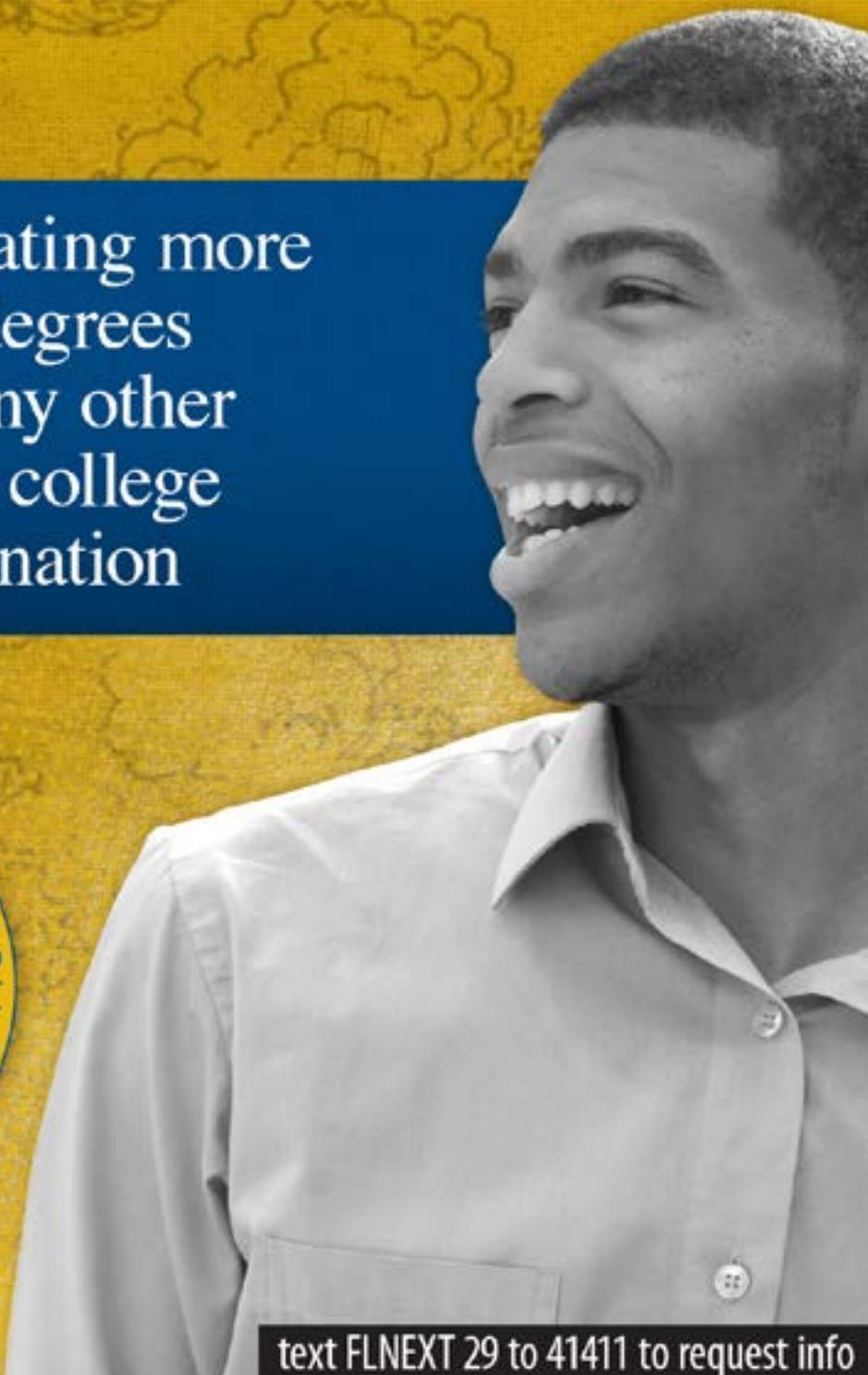
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Florida colleges among most affordable nationally

STAFF REPORT

Despite rising tuition costs across the country, 19 Florida College System (FCS) institutions landed at the top of a list of public, four-year colleges with the lowest tuition rates. The U.S. Department of Education's (USED) College Affordability and Transparency Center released lists identifying college costs to help students make informed choices about higher education.

Gov. Rick Scott said, "The news that Florida colleges are the most affordable in the nation is a testament of our efforts to fight tuition and fee increases, as well a testament to the hard work of our college leaders and educators in expanding opportunities for students. Every one of Florida's colleges that offer four year degrees stepped up to the plate and took the \$10,000 degree challenge, which will provide families with even more opportunities to get a great education and pursue their dreams.

Local Students Build Rockets and Solar Cars

By Lanetra Bennett
WCTV.TV

Tallahassee, FL - Students at FAMU Developmental Research School may be scientists in the making.

Thursday morning, the sixth through eighth graders showed off what they've learned over the past two weeks by launching rockets in the air.

The students made the rockets during a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) summer camp.

Along with rockets, the students also made solar cars and robots.

The goal was to expose kids to, and get them excited about those areas of learning.

Jakyah Hayes is going to the sixth grade. She says, "I have learned different things such as science, how to use the tools. It's been pretty fun. It's different. I usually go to acting theaters in the summertime, but, I'm happy I came here."

An instructor, David White, Ph.D., says, "That makes me feel absolutely fabulous when they get it. That's why we teach. When they get it, there's not other better feeling."

The high school students in the camp got to work on animation and music mixing.

This is the fourth year FAMU D.R.S. has done the camp.

It's a program called GEAR UP funded by the Florida Department of Education and administered through Tallahassee Community College with a partnership with FAMU's College of Education.



Gunnels Announces Retirement From Capital City Bank

Justin Forehand to Step In As President of Jefferson/Madison Mark

EMAILWIRE.COM

Monticello, FL -- Capital City Bank President of Jefferson and Madison counties Bill Gunnels has announced that after 30 years of service to the Bank and its clients, he will retire August 31. Justin Forehand will succeed to the role upon Gunnel's retirement.

Gunnels began his banking career nearly 37 years ago at People's Banking Company in Boston, Ga. As president for Capital City Bank, Gunnels was charged with overseeing operation of the Capital City Bank offices in Madison and Monticello and further strengthening the Company's position in Jefferson and Madison counties.

"Bill has been with us for many years," said Bill Smith, Capital City Bank Group chairman, president and CEO. "He is a skilled banker with a long career in the industry and is well-respected by folks both inside and outside the walls of the Bank. With a deep knowledge of the community and long-established relationships with business partners and clients, he has been a great leader for our teams in Jefferson and Madison counties."

Justin Forehand has been selected to fill the vacancy upon Gunnels' retirement. After managing one of Capital City Bank's Tallahassee offices early in his career, Forehand returns to the Company to guide efforts in the Jefferson/Madison market. With a career history spanning over two decades and a background in financial services that includes office management, commercial and consumer lending and credit analysis roles, Forehand brings a broad knowledge base to his new position.

"It was important to us to find a candidate who could fill Bill's shoes, both in terms of business knowledge and community relationships," added Smith. "Justin has a vast and varied background in the industry and has lived and worked most his life in the Big Bend area – two factors that I am confident will contribute to a smooth transition."

A native of the Big Bend area, Forehand obtained his Associate of Arts degree from Tallahassee Community College and completed his undergraduate studies at Illinois State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in politics and government. Thereafter, he attended the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University. Forehand has lived in Jefferson County

for more than 10 years and currently resides in Lamont, Fla., with his wife and three children.

Gunnels plans to spend his retirement outdoors in his favorite pastimes: fishing and golfing.

About Capital City Bank Group, Inc.:

Capital City Bank Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: CCBG) is one of the largest publicly traded financial services companies headquartered in Florida and has approximately \$2.6 billion in assets. The Company provides a full range of banking services, including traditional checking, savings and loan services, asset management, trust, mortgage banking, merchant services, bankcards, data processing and securities brokerage services. The Company's bank subsidiary, Capital City Bank, was founded in 1895 and has 66 full-service banking offices and 71 ATMs to serve 25 communities in the greater Tallahassee, Fla., Gainesville, Fla. and Macon, Ga. areas.

Member FDIC.

Corporate Headquarters

217 North Monroe Street

Tallahassee, FL 32301

For Information Contact:

Brooke Hallock

Hallock.Brooke@ccbfg.com

850.402.8525

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Former employees: Superintendent told staff who to talk to, what to say and who to 'Like

by Teresa Eubanks, Journal Editor

CLJNEWS.COM

"I've dedicated many years here only to be pushed out the door," says Jason Fowler, 35, who served as technology supervisor and special assignment teacher for the Liberty County School District until he decided it was time to go.

He left his position May 22. The next day, he started working at Tallahassee Community College.

Fowler and new School Superintendent Gloria "Gay" Uzzell clashed soon after she took office last October. It was no secret that he supported the incumbent School Superintendent.

At that time Fowler, who was in charge of the school's email system, was surprised in December when Uzzell changed the password on a current employee's email account "not knowing they had blocked her out of the account for a reason."

And while employee emails are public record, it concerned him that Uzzell was personally monitoring communication between staff members without the school board's knowledge.

"I didn't agree with her leadership style," Fowler said. "She told me who to talk to and what I should say when people asked how she was as a superintendent."

He said many other employees got that message as well.

Something as casual as clicking "LIKE" on a friend's Facebook post could result in an angry call from Uzzell, as was done when employee Joan Hall congratulated Fowler and his wife on their anniversary on their Facebook page, he said. Hall addressed the issue at the last school board meeting.

Uzzell contacted the sheriff's office in an effort to have trespass warnings issued against Fowler and others. "She's made posts on Facebook that I had stalked her and called her on a number she said I wasn't supposed to have, which is a flatout lie," Fowler states emphatically. "She tried to have criminal charges brought against me on June 3, nearly two weeks after I resigned."

He decided to resign on May 17 and wanted to tell her personally. He said he called the office at 4 p.m. to schedule a meeting with the superintendent. He and his wife were about five minutes away in their truck, heading home, but planned to stop and speak with Uzzell. He was told she had just left to go to Hosford School. When he drove by the school board office, he saw her and another school employee leaving the parking lot in separate vehicles.

Fowler said he continued on to his home to collect the items he needed to turn in, which included computers and keys. He returned to the office to hand in his letter of resignation and the school property to Gay Lewis, Director of Instruction.

He left a voice mail with the superintendent's secretary to let Uzzell know the items had been handed in.

As he drove down Pea Ridge Road on his way home, he saw Uzzell's car at her parents' house. He made a second call to Uzzell's office and left another voice mail with her secretary in which he pointed out that although he had been told a few minutes earlier she was going to Hosford, she was actually already home.

Uzzell later gave the voice messages to the sheriff's office as proof when she accused Fowler of stalking and harassing her.

Even though he's got a new job, Fowler says his problems are not over. "She's sent me a message that she would contact my new employer and report 'my misconduct.'" He said one of her "many allegations" against him was that he had withheld a corrective action plan required by the Department of Education. "I didn't even write it," he said. "That was another employee's responsibility." After she found out someone else wrote it, he said Uzzell dropped the issue.

"A lot has been thrown out with my name in it," he said. "I have never stalked or harassed anyone, and am grateful that the sheriff's office performed their duties with due diligence and refused to file criminal charges against me; there is a laughable lack of evidence of any of the things she's said about me. I've never had an issue with

Former employees: Superintendent told staff who to talk to, what to say and who to 'Like....

continued

anyone, and hope to never have to deal with anything like this again. Folks ought to be allowed to have an opinion without being persecuted by their employer."

.....

The superintendent says she's the one being bullied, not the employees.

In a lengthy message posted on Facebook last weekend, the embattled superintendent said she and her family had "endured the unthinkable" with "gangs showing up at public meetings to intimidate us, having nails put in our driveway and flattened tires, numerous hateful anonymous letters, phone calls and emails from fake accounts, employees threatening and cursing my assistant and me at work...."

She called the June 4 school board meeting a "witch hunt" and "public stoning." At that meeting, School Board Chairman Kyle Peddie questioned her at length on over more than \$12,000 she charged to a county credit card that she had issued to her office without consulting the board. It included thousands of dollars charged to clothing shops, hotels and restaurants as well as online stores.

The credit card charges included several days at Tallahassee hotels, where she was scheduled to attend a two-and-a-half day conference for new superintendents.

"I was yelled at, accused, and even quoted scripture by the school board chairman for nearly an hour and a half. He even quoted the verse about "If your right hand offends you, then cut it off" at a public school board meeting, which is a violation of church and state, along with several other instances of scripture quoting and mudslinging that night."

She described the chairman as "...lifting his hand as if to hit me while he quoted scripture to me and yelled at me during a public school board meeting."

After refusing to explain her long list of purchases made at Dillard's to the board chairman, Uzzell asked for a restroom break and left in the middle of the meeting.

In her lengthy Facebook post, she wrote that she was intimidated that "over seven deputies came in one-by-one in five minute intervals," during that meeting, which

was standing-room only.

She made it clear that she didn't want one of the newest members of the sheriff's office at the meetings, speaking about Sgt. John Summers, son of former Superintendent Sue Summers. She wrote, "...our board chairman had Mr. Summers show up in uniform at the past three school board meetings to maintain order. I didn't call and request for him to be there, nor do I want him there. The people elected ME as Superintendent, and I arrange for a deputy to attend our meetings."

When she called the sheriff's office to charge an employee with stalking her, she pointed out that Summers was the officer who responded.

"All I want is to be able to run Liberty County School District without constantly being bogged-down with issues from former employees and their families and our school board chairman who clearly is on a mission to destroy my career, my reputation, and attempt to take over the school district (he is now visiting our offices and schools at least three times a week, micro-managing our personnel, which is crossing the line in his duties as a school board member. I am the Chief Executive Officer and in charge of operations and personnel at LCSB)," she wrote on her Facebook page. "I simply want to do my job."

She asked her Facebook friends, "Why do you think the school board chair is making such a big deal out of a credit card?" Then she gave her answer: "Because he wants a distraction from all the things I've uncovered that have been going on for years in the school district!"

While she gave no specifics of wrongdoing, she said people would be shocked at what was in school board email. "I'm talking sex, lies and evidence of improper bids, conflict of interest and failure to report at least one teacher's misconduct," she wrote.

"I can't effectively run a school district with these continued attacks, out of control school board meetings, and continued stalking and harassment...School starts in just over a month, and I have a lot to do."

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School Board Finance Officer Stephanie Hofheinz left the

Former employees: Superintendent told staff who to talk to, what to say and who to 'Like....

continued

job last December after an angry Uzzell argued with her at a football game in front of witnesses.

In January, Paula Parrish agreed to quit her state job and take a pay cut to work at home.

The cut turned out to be deeper than she had expected. The job was supposed to pay \$65,000, but after she was hired she said Uzzell told her she would be making \$12,000 less because she didn't have a degree.

There was another surprise. Before accepting the job, she asked about insurance. She was paying \$30 a month through her state job for family coverage. The superintendent told her the insurance would be \$50.

But when she got there to fill out the paperwork, she was told, "We don't have \$50 a month insurance." When she asked what it would cost to cover her family, she found out she would be paying \$900 a month.

"I couldn't afford it," she said, so the four months she worked there, her family was uninsured. She said it was a shock, because she had given up her job after more than 21 years with the Department of Revenue.

There were other issues she declined to discuss but she finally decided to quit after realizing, "It was too unstable for me and I'm not comfortable in this environment."

She said employees knew to be careful about who they talked to. "She did tell us we were not allowed to talk to the previous finance officer," she said.

She applied for her old job back with the state and when she was hired, she gave the superintendent her two weeks' notice. That same day, Director of Administration Kathy Nobles called to let her know that would be her last day.

Although she was able to return to her state job a few days earlier than planned, the abrupt end to her position with the district office cost her a week's pay. She said the superintendent had told others that she had not given two week's notice.

Parrish was surprised to see in the school board's published minutes that she had thanked Uzzell for allowing her to leave without giving two weeks' notice.

Students rally against Supreme Court decision to strike down Section 4 of Voting Rights Act

By Angelica Martinez
FSUNEW.COM

Tallahassee college students rallied on the steps of the Florida State Capitol on Friday, urging legislators to take action against the Supreme Court's recent strike down of Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The No Vote No Voice rally invited community leaders and students from Florida State University, Florida A&M University and Tallahassee Community College to march from the Civic Center to the Capitol.

The movement protests the Supreme Court's June 25 decision to strike down a key section of the Voting Rights Act. Protestors argued that eliminating this section of the law leaves certain groups vulnerable to voter discrimination.

"We are imploring congress to stop ignoring one of the most important demographics: college students," said Eugene Butler, a student senator at FSU and the event's chief organizer. "We recognize that this strike down can, at worst, disenfranchise millions of minorities in America."

The strike down of Section 4 defers formerly federal voting procedure discretion to individual states, which opponents of the decision say will give states more power to influence voting procedure and impose greater voting restrictions.

The Voting Rights Act was recently used in Texas and South Carolina to prevent the imposition of voter identification laws and has increased minority voting in several states.

Butler emphasized that while this recent decision disproportionately affects minorities, it is generally "an American issue." The movement intends to transcend racial boundaries and rally-goers spoke strongly of their goal to make this a national issue.

Butler organized the event with the hope that Congress will reconsider the Supreme Court's decision in light of the pronounced response to the decision.

Janel Robinson, an FSU student, joined Butler at the Capitol. She cited social activism as the main reason she

chose to take part in the movement.

"People know a law gets passed, but they don't always see the reactions of those affected by it," Robinson said. "I'm here to show I have a voice not as a woman of color but as a college student in America."

Jean Tabares, political action chair of FSU's Hispanic/Latino Student Union Political Action Chair, stated that the elimination of Section 4 is a step in the wrong direction.

"Striking down this section of the Voting Rights Act feels like we're turning the clock backwards for minorities," Tabares said. "The SGA came out here to show support, to show this isn't a black issue or a white issue. This is an American issue, and it's important for us to get our voices heard."

Butler said the rally aims to promote social awareness within the state, urging college students to literally start trends in social media circles by taking photos with tape over their mouths, hash tagging "No Vote No Voice" on Twitter and Facebook.

| ASSOCIATE DEGREES |

TCC No. 1 in national ranking of colleges

By Doug Blackburn

Democrat senior writer

There's a reason why U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan elected to start a Florida tour at Tallahassee Community College last year.

Actually, there are multiple reasons why Duncan chose to recognize TCC as a top-performing institution, and they were reinforced with rankings released recently by the publication Community College Week.

TCC was No. 1 in the nation for associate degrees awarded in the liberal arts, based on data from the 2011-12 academic year, and the college placed high in a number of other categories. TCC awarded 3,006 A.A. degrees — the degree required to be able to go on to a four-year school — during that academic year.

"These numbers help quantify the great things happening at TCC. We're thrilled to see these rankings because they confirm that students at TCC are reaching their goals — graduating with a degree or certificate and moving on to a university or directly into the workforce," TCC President Jim Murdaugh said.

Community College Week is to two-year schools what US News & World Report is for four-year institutions in terms of national rankings, except that it bases its lists solely on numbers while US News

See TCC » 2A

Students organize protest after Zimmerman verdict

Hundreds of students from FAMU, Florida State University, Tallahassee Community College and other members of the community answered the call to protest the verdict at the Florida Capitol

By line David Schick, USA TODAY Collegiate Correspondent
USA TODAY

Shortly after the not-guilty verdict was announced in the George Zimmerman trial, Gina Cherelus heard "four or five gun shots" outside her apartment.

Moments later she received a text message from the emergency broadcast system of the Florida A&M University Police Department that read: "Physical disturbance occurred near our campus. Please stay indoors until further notice."

Then "cops started whizzing by my apartment," recalls Cherelus, a senior at FAMU.

The next text from FAMU PD read: "Student and faculty please use caution in ref to the Zimmerman verdict if you notice any activity please notify the police. (850) 561-3256."

Robert Grasso, public information officer for the Tallahassee Police Department, confirmed that one shot was fired in close proximity to the FAMU campus area, adding that nobody was injured.

"It was not related (to the Zimmerman verdict)," he said, noting that it was "just a large party."

The threat of danger subsided when FAMU PD texted that the campus was calm and that FAMU students were preparing for a peaceful march at 11:30 p.m.

Asia Johnson, secretary of communications for the FAMU Student Government Association, said in an e-mail that the group met on campus so FAMU's interim president and FAMU PD could "provide students with safety tips and urge them to keep protests peaceful."

"Our school's Twitter page started posting tweets asking students to meet at our Eternal Flame, which is kind of like the center of our campus, to do a peaceful protest," says Cherelus. "But it looked like the whole city decided to go to the Capitol instead."

Hundreds of students from FAMU, Florida State University, Tallahassee Community College and other members of the community answered the call to protest the verdict at the Florida Capitol.



Michael Sampson, one of the organizers of the event and a member of the Florida State University student organization known as Tallahassee Dream Defenders, spread the message through social media.

"It was a proud moment to see over 300 people, in less than an hour, organize and gather," says Sampson.

The protesters met at the Leon County Civic Center at midnight and marched for several blocks before reaching the Capitol. In remembrance of Trayvon Martin, half of the march took place in silence. The rest of the way, participants chanted and sang hymns.

Other protesters wore hoodies and held signs that read, "Racism Is Not Dead," and "Who's Next?"

At the Capitol, Cherelus says that some people got on a megaphone and made comparisons between "how (Michael Vick) was convicted for killing dogs and Zimmerman got off for killing a human being."

The majority of people who spoke to air their grievances were students, she says.

Cherelus says she was shocked and disappointed by the verdict.

"I did not think he was going to walk away free," she says.

"To hear about this not guilty verdict was definitely shocking, but it wasn't surprising because we see

Students organize protest after Zimmerman verdict...

continued

injustice happening everywhere," says Sampson, "It's clear ... there's obviously no justice for black and brown youth."

Sampson says his next step will be to organize another protest — tentatively on Tuesday — to ensure that their voice is heard.

With added time and preparation — and the passion that spurred about 300 people to congregate in less than hour at midnight — Sampson thinks they'll be able to move "hundreds, if not thousands," for Tuesday's protest.

"It's up to the power of organizing ourselves to make changes within our system to see that no more Trayvons happen," Sampson says.

Down on the Farm: Area duo traded to new homes on same day

By Brad Milner
NEWS HERALD

Brandon Jones and Kyle Nichols celebrated Fourth of July with hot dogs, fireworks and news they needed to pack their bags.

The pair of veterans were involved in separate trades July 4 to and from teams in different Independent leagues. Jones left Kansas City of the American Association and Nichols went to the same Missouri team in what is an extension of his 13th professional baseball season.

Jones, a Wewahitchka product who also played for **Tallahassee Community College**, was traded to New Jersey of the Can-Am League after playing in 44 games for Kansas City. The outfielder finished with a .206 average, two home runs and 15 RBIs for the T-Bones, who he also played for last season. He's hitting .318 in 22 at-bats with his new team.

Nichols has been on a hot streak with the T-Bones, hitting .345 with a homer and eight RBIs in 29 plate appearances. He hit .260 with 10 homers, 43 RBIs and 29 runs scored with the San Angelo (Texas) Colts of the United Baseball League before being traded.

Nichols, playing primarily in the outfield this season, entered the pro ranks in 2001 out of Erskine College as an undrafted free agent with Arizona. He played prep baseball at Mosley.

The 35-year-old hasn't played with a Major League Baseball-affiliated team since 2005, when he was in Philadelphia's and Cincinnati's organization. He reached as high as Triple-A with 14 homers in his final season in the Reds' minor-league system. He's since played in five Independent leagues.

Wild ride: Former Chipola College standout Steve Clevenger was traded a day before Jones and Nichols and is currently back on the disabled list with a strained left oblique.

Clevenger came out of spring training on the Chicago Cubs' roster but only made it through eight at-bats. The catcher was traded to Baltimore with pitcher Scott Feldman for hurlers Jake Arrietta and Pedro Strop shortly after a 15-game rehabilitation assignment with Triple-A Iowa.

Clevenger hit .327 with three homers and 11 RBIs in the rehab stint. He hasn't played since June 21 and was placed on the disabled list for a second time this season three days after the trade. The Baltimore, Md., native is in Sarasota receiving treatment for his injury and will report to Triple-A Norfolk, Va., when healthy.

DEMOCRAT » OPINION

| OUR OPINION |

Upward trend

TCC moves to No. 1 in associate degrees

Being located in the same city as Florida State and Florida A&M universities, Tallahassee Community College is well situated for its mission of providing an education to students who chose not to take the direct plunge into a four-year university.

It's clear that students attending TCC are enrolling with a focus, whether it's young students taking courses in majors that will help get them an advantage in the work place launch them toward a four-year degree, or older, more mature students seeking a setting in which they can broaden their academic backgrounds with further studies.

And people are taking notice, which not only is a good sign for TCC, but also another selling point for Tallahassee.

TCC President Jim Murdaugh and faculty are celebrating the national *Community College Week*

designation ranking TCC No. 1 in graduating students with associate of arts degrees.

The recognition from the national publication is important in that it recognizes TCC as a top institution based on its numbers of graduates in the 2011-12 school year. TCC awarded 3,006 associate degrees, according to the publication. It was ranked No. 4 in the country for associate degrees awarded during the 2010-11 school year.

But that's not all. The publication also noted ranked TCC:

» Fifth among community colleges last year in awarding degrees to African-American students, with 705.

» Eleventh in degrees awarded to nonminority students, at 1,913

» Fifteenth in the number of degrees awarded in human sciences, with 57

» Seventeenth in the country in awarding degrees to all minor-

ity categories, with 1,214.

The national ranking comes as TCC is expecting a 5-percent decrease in enrollment this fall, based on credit hours. That is being attributed to, among other factors, the perceived upswing in the economy, meaning that more people are seeking work rather than returning to school, and the fact that graduation rates in Leon, Gadsden and Wakulla counties also have fluctuated in recent years. TCC considers the tri-county area its primary service region.

This community can be brought of the academic achievements of students enrolling at TCC. As noted in Monday's story in the *Tallahassee Democrat*, the college graduated 582 more students in the 2011-12 school year than it did in the previous year.

This year-to-year comparison is impressive, and the national ranking is well-deserved.

Protesters occupy Capitol, seek meeting with Scott

Stand Your Ground opponents demand special session, law change

By Karl Etters

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Student activists Tuesday marched on the Capitol, protesting George Zimmerman's not-guilty verdict and demanding the governor call a special session of the Legislature to change Florida's Stand Your Ground law.

Gov. Rick Scott was in New York and New Jersey on Tuesday. Initially, more than 50 Dream Defenders protestors said they would stay put until the governor returns and addresses their concerns, occupying the Capitol's plaza level overnight.

MORE PHOTOS: Trayvon Martin Sit-in

Zimmerman on Saturday was acquitted of second-degree murder and manslaughter charges when a six-woman jury found him not guilty in the 2012 death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin. A 2005 law changed Florida's standards for the justifiable use of deadly force. One juror during a national interview cited Stand Your Ground as a factor in the jury's decision.

Dream Defenders member Michael Sampson, who attended a similar rally at the Capitol following the verdict on Saturday, said there was a difference in the two protests.

"What's different about today is we're translating that initial anger, that initial frustration, to put pressure on the governor and on our legislators to change laws and actually address issues that create George Zimmerman and leads to the death of people like Trayvon Martin."

Tuesday evening, as the Capitol doors were locked at 5 p.m., members of the group lay mats and blankets and gathered in song ahead of the night before them.

Scott, through a spokeswoman, said he does not think the law needs to be changed.

"As the governor has said, as a father and a grandfather, his heart goes out to Trayvon Martin's family and all those affected by his death," said Melissa Sellers, Scott's communications director. "We are grateful that people across our great nation have the right to assemble and share their views."

Sellers said the governor convened a task force on the

state's stand-your-ground law following Martin's death. It held public meetings around the state and concluded with a recommendation that the law not be changed. Scott, Sellers said, agrees.

No public schedule had been released for Scott late Tuesday evening. An earlier announcement from Senate President Don Gaetz said Scott is scheduled to be in Pensacola this morning at 8 a.m.

Protestors were undaunted by the governor's absence.

"We're here for the long haul," said Dream Defenders Director Phillip Agnew as he addressed more than 75 people who packed into Scott's outer office Tuesday morning. "Let's keep the energy going."

Members of the Dream Defenders met around 8:30 p.m. Tuesday to discuss plans for managing the second day of their live-in protest. While the 27 people who would be spending the night ate pizza from earlier in the day, plans for individual assignments, food arrangements and social-media management were made.

Members hoped their demands for time with Florida Gov. Rick Scott on Tuesday would be answered and they were already planning to push him for a special session.

The remaining protestors rested their head on the floor of the Capitol, while a whittled-down staff of Capitol Police kept watch. There wasn't much to patrol. The protestors, as they had during the day, remained peaceful.

After 10 hours in Scott's outer office, Dream Defenders Political Director Ciara Taylor said "I'm still here because I'm motivated. I believe in what we're doing and I believe in why we're here."

This morning, Taylor said the group will still be waiting for Scott to come and address their concerns.

"Whenever Gov. Scott wants to come out of hiding and meet our demands, then that's when we're going to leave, but we're not going to leave a minute before that."

Protesters occupy Capitol, seek meeting with Scott...

continued

Plessinger also said that after that time, there would also be no food deliveries allowed to the building. She added that the group has remained peaceful and there had been no complaints from anyone in her office.

Florida State University Dream Defenders member Whitney Sigall, who was in Sanford when the not guilty verdict was delivered, said she was in the governor's office to stand in solidarity with her friends and to show support for the Martin family.

"I was more surprised by the shock I felt (after the verdict)," she said.

Protestors said they're committed.

"This isn't just a one-time, 30-minute action. This is going to be a long sustained effort," Sampson said, adding that "it's not surprising that he's (Scott) never here, but soon hopefully we can garner enough support and he'll have to be here."

Dorothy Inman-Johnson, who served as Tallahassee mayor in 1989, and subsequently on the city commission until 1994, mirrored the sentiment that Tuesday's rally was only the tip of the iceberg.

"I know that one rally, one demonstration, one sit-in at the governor's office is not going to change things," Inman-Johnson said, "but I am a veteran of the civil rights movement and we don't give up and we don't give in."

Nathaniel Wallace, a member of the Dream Defenders and the FSU group Students for Justice in Palestine said the peaceful protest aimed "to show that we can be here in solidarity and not do the things that people said were going to happen. There's good reason to be upset and indignant, but I think it's the solidarity of message and the unity to show what this means and the larger issues of inequality in America today."

Tallahassee Community College student Delaitre Hollinger said the non-violent actions of those demonstrators in Tallahassee shows the character of the students who choose to express themselves.

"We practice non-violence. We will be peaceful," Hollinger said. "Violence does not solve our problems, and I think that's a testament to this up and coming generation."

The group is also planning demonstrations at the U.S. Department of Justice this week, part of what Dream Defenders FSU president Brian Marshall called "a week of action," as he studied for a mid-term exam. "A lot of people say they don't have time to participate in things like this, but you have time if you make time."

Taylor traveled from Jacksonville to be at Tuesday's rally. She was active in the Tallahassee Dream Defenders when she was a student at Florida A&M University.

Taylor pledged to stay in the governor's office until action is taken.

"This is no spinning of the wheels, we not only think that we can get a special session, but we know we can," Taylor said. "We're here. We're committed to seeing this thing through."

Race Discussions At Home Post-Verdict

By Julie Montanaro

WCTV.TV

Tallahassee, FL - The not guilty verdict propelled many into the streets, but many others are digesting it at home, and having difficult discussions about race, guns and the justice system.

Van Wilson, father in Tallahassee, FL: "Here's this kid just going to the store, something that's so everyday, you know coming home and all of a sudden this happened, you know, how does this happen?"

Van Wilson tried to watch as much of George Zimmerman's trial as he could.

He wasn't surprised by the not-guilty verdict, but is increasingly troubled by the comments of Juror B-37 and wonders now why Manslaughter didn't prevail. He also wonders what it all means for his 19-year old son and other young black men.

Van Wilson, father in Tallahassee, FL: "It's a sinking feeling and you feel for them and you do, you do have some fears that could this happen to your child. We are in the same state with the same laws so you worry about that if your kid should end up in a situation like that."

Wilson's son-- 19 year old Van II, is a student at Tallahassee Community College.

Van Wilson II, student at TCC: "It was shocking how it all came out ... "

He says the deadly confrontation between George Zimmerman and Trayvon Martin reinforced advice he's grown up with... Always watch who you're hanging out with, how you're dressed and don't leave home without your identification.

Van Wilson II: "People look at you as suspicious and you just have to... Basically-- just don't look out the ordinary... In a way it is kind of unfair, you know? Everybody should be treated the same way."

The Wilsons say they are optimistic about race relations in this state and country and hope people will use the Zimmerman case to re-evaluate their own perceptions of young black men.

Van Wilson II: "I hope it brings everyone together. Just talk about it-- see what we can do differently next time to prevent things like this from happening.

A town hall meeting next Monday July 22nd, at Godby High School will give everyone a chance to voice their hopes, fears and concerns. It starts at 6pm.

Contreras and SGA support student activism of FSU Dream Defenders

Student government stands with protesters after Zimmerman verdict at Capitol

By Blair Stokes

FSVIEW & FLORIDA FLAMBEAU

As soon as Rosie Contreras heard the not guilty verdict in the George Zimmerman trial, her phone rang. Kristen Bonner, an organizer for the campus civil rights group Dream Defenders, was on the other end, extending an invitation to the Florida State University student body president, asking if she would attend an emergency action march to the Capitol.

Contreras agreed, and within the hour she was in the Leon County Civic Center parking lot, ready to rally as an FSU student, tacitly representing the Student Government Association, her presence a statement in itself.

"We wanted to show our solidarity with Dream Defenders and the work that they do," Contreras said of SGA. "It's important to support the spirit of activism, and the most tangible way to do that is by showing up."

The jury ruled Zimmerman was acting in self-defense when he fatally shot teenager Trayvon Martin. Dream Defenders are opting for peaceful activism to defend Martin and seek justice for his death after Zimmerman's July 13 acquittal.

Contreras was among the mourners, showing Student Government's support for student activism at Florida State. Contreras said that she attended as an individual stating that her personal views on the verdict were secondary to the Student Government Association solidarity her presence represented.

"I was just there as an FSU student in support," Contreras said. "We want to make sure SGA remains nonpartisan regardless of individual officer views. As Student Body President, I'm tremendously proud of the spirit of activism on FSU's campus. It's tremendously telling that in less than an hour Dream Defenders were able to coordinate over 350 to march to the Capitol."

Within the week, SGA will be working with the Black Student Union and possibly the respective student governments of both Florida A&M University and Tallahassee Community College to continue the discourse on the Zimmerman verdict. Contreras said that SGA will be hosting further debates and discourse for students to be heard in an "open and

safe space."

SGA as an umbrella organization was not explicitly involved in the planning of the march, although Contreras was joined by Student Body Vice President Sara Saxner, former SGA President Rueben Stokes and other campus officials. Contreras said the event owes its success to the work of the Dream Defenders.

"We planned Sunday's rally within a couple hours of the verdict," said Brian Marshall, president of FSU's Dream Defenders chapter. "We felt the verdict was unjust, and we knew the community of Tallahassee was ready to show support for Trayvon Martin in any way they could."

Grieving together at a march to protest the not guilty verdict, Florida State University's chapter of Dream Defenders called, texted, tweeted and utilized Facebook to attract upwards of 350 local students and community members to demonstrate on the steps of the Capitol early Sunday morning.

"Dream Defenders is something new," Marshall said. "Dream Defenders focuses on making change in forgotten communities, primarily those of color. Dream Defenders work focuses primarily on the school to prison pipeline and fighting systematic racism that plagues our communities."

As a statewide civil rights group formed in response to Martin's death, FSU's chapter took to social media as a means of later taking to the streets for the "EMERGENCY ACTION MARCH," as it was termed in Facebook statuses and group texts.

Contreras noted that the proactivity of the Dream Defenders and similar organizations is a tradition among FSU students. She said it is a tradition of student activism she takes pride in.

"These students are voting with their feet and not just updating a status or tweeting something," Contreras said. "We have a student body that identifies issues that they don't necessarily agree with and they go out and try to fix those issues. I'm glad to know that we're not just students who complain about things but students who try to fix things on the ground. It's a unique part of our culture at

TCC Ranked No. 1 in the Nation in Producing A.A. Degrees

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF TALLAHASSEE

Community College Week has released its annual Top 100 analysis, and among 2-year colleges, Tallahassee Community College is ranked No. 1 nationally in graduating students with A.A. degrees, also known as transfer/general studies degrees. The report, based on the 2011-2012 academic year, again shows that Tallahassee Community College remains one of America's top associate degree producers—demonstrating TCC's commitment to student success.

federal financial aid—located in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. To be Title IV eligible, an institution must be accredited by either a regional or specialized accreditation agency that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

To see Community College Week's complete report, visit their website at www.ccweek.com.

"These numbers help quantify the great things happening at TCC," said **Dr. Jim Murdaugh, president of TCC**. "We're thrilled to see these rankings because they confirm that students at TCC are reaching their goals—graduating with a degree or certificate and moving on to a university or directly into the workforce."

In the 2013 report, TCC earned a national ranking in multiple categories alongside other 2-year institutions:

Ranked 1st in the nation in Associate in Arts (A.A.) Degrees (degree used to transfer to 4-year institutions)—referred to as "Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies, & Humanities" degrees in the report. TCC awarded 3,006 A.A. degrees.

Ranked 5th in awarding associate degrees to African American students. TCC graduated 705 African American students.

Ranked 11th in awarding associate degrees to non-minorities students. TCC awarded 1,913 associate degrees to non-minority students.

Ranked 15th in awarding degrees in Family & Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences. TCC graduated 57 students in the human sciences area.

Ranked 17th in awarding associate degrees to all minority categories. TCC awarded 1,214 associate degrees to minority students.

The data are collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Set (IPEDS) completions survey.

The analysis is limited to institutions that are eligible for participation in Title IV programs—which encompass all

Protesters crowd Gov. Scott's office for second day

POSTONPOLITICS.COM

A couple dozen protesters Wednesday continued to crowd the lobby of Rick Scott's Capitol office Wednesday urging the out-of-town governor to take action against Florida's stand-your-ground law in the wake of the George Zimmerman verdict.

The protesters, some from as far away as Miami, began gathering a day earlier and insisted they intended to stay until they drew a response from Scott. The governor was in New York most of Tuesday and is spending Wednesday at a series of events in the Florida Panhandle.

"Tell Rick Scott to come back, we've got some Skittles for him," said Dwayne Campbell, 31, a Tallahassee Community College student, citing the candy 17-year-old Trayvon Martin carried with him when shot by Zimmerman during an altercation.

Some of the protesters, whose number had swelled to more than 100 on Tuesday, spent the night on the marble-floored hallway outside the governor's office. Organizers said others were expected to arrive Wednesday, but many at the scene said they planned to be there for the long haul.

"We're serious. We don't plan to leave," said Shamile Louis, 21, a sociology student from the University of Florida who used a computer tablet to lead an internet discussion from the governor's office.

Louis said the group has been contacted by supporters across the country and even from Ireland. Among the groups gathered at the Capitol were representatives of Dream Defenders, whose leader, Ciara Taylor, is from Jacksonville, and PowerU Center in Miami.

The protesters have called for a repeal of Florida's stand-your-ground law. More than two dozen states have such measures that allow people to use deadly force if they think their life is being threatened.

The role that law played in the Martin shooting is in dispute — with Zimmerman's defense team not having used the law as the basis for their arguments. But U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, in a speech this week to the NAACP, said the laws encourage gun owners to seek confrontation rather than avoiding it.



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Sit-in at Scott's office continues; lawmaker urges Gov to 'come home'

By John Kennedy
POSTONPOLITICS.COM

A sit-in at Rick Scott's office ended its third business day Thursday with some three-dozen protesters pledging to stay at Florida's Capitol until the governor addressed their concerns about the state's "stand your ground" law.

Scott has been out of town the length of the protest, led by a statewide organization, Dream Defenders.

"This is only more motivating," said Dwayne Campbell, 31, a Tallahassee Community College student.

Earlier in the day, Rep. Alan Williams, D-Tallahassee, joined with a local minister, Rev. R.B. Holmes, Jr., to urge Scott to call a special session of the Legislature to repeal the 2005 law. The measure has gained renewed focus with Saturday's acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of 17-year-old Travon Martin in Sanford.

Zimmerman did not use the stand your ground defense. But it has emerged as a lightning rod, drawing the anger and frustration of many in Florida's minority community over the verdict.

Scott's absence also is drawing heat.

"Come home, Governor," Williams said Thursday at a news conference at a church just a few blocks from the Capitol. "Come home to speak to these citizens."

TCC hosts project management course

TCC's Division of Workforce Development has announced a new project management program. The program targets supervisors, mid-management and administrative staff interested in familiarizing themselves with the most common terminology and current practices of project management.

Participants in the Fundamentals of Project Management program will learn how to conceptualize their projects with goals and vision statements, identify phases of a project life cycle and enhance their ability to sell ideas and make presentations. The program is offered in classroom sessions as a three-part series for \$199 per class, or in an online format for \$895. For more information contact TCC Workforce Development by phone (850) 201-8760 or email workforce@tcc.fl.edu.

HIV/AIDS course at TCC

TCC is offering a new HIV/AIDS and blood-borne pathogens course for those who offer direct care for Persons with Disabilities (APD) and other human service workers. The course is designed to teach participants about a variety of blood-borne pathogens, modes of infection, safety procedures to be observed when dealing with possible blood-borne pathogens, how to counsel people infected with blood-borne pathogens and more. The self-paced online course is offered at \$25. For information on registering visit www.apdtcc.com.

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Report: Florida colleges among most affordable in nation

By News Bulletin Contributor

TALLAHASSEE— Despite rising tuition costs across the country, 19 Florida College System institutions nearly top the list of public four-year colleges with the lowest tuition rates.

The U.S. Department of Education's College Affordability and Transparency Center released lists identifying college costs.

Among public, four-year institutions, the center identified 19 Florida colleges for the bottom 10 percent for tuition and fees. The FCS's average for tuition and fees in public, four-year institutions is \$2,792 — well below the mid-point of the \$7,135 national average. The FCS's average for tuition and fees for public, two-year institutions is \$2,727 — below the national average of \$2,905.

The U.S. Department of Education opened the center in 2011 to help track 4,000 institutions' costs and provide data to help students discern higher education options.

Public, four-year colleges with lowest tuition

Palm Beach State College: \$2,324

College of Central Florida: \$2,365

Broward College: \$2,446

Santa Fe College: \$2,457

Pensacola State College: \$2,540

Saint Johns River State College: \$2,556

Indian River State College: \$2,634

Florida State College at Jacksonville: \$2,708

Edison State College: \$2,728

Gulf Coast State College: \$2,765

Northwest Florida State College: \$2,851

Valencia College: \$2,972

St Petersburg College: \$2,988

State College of Florida-Manatee-Sarasota: \$3,074

Chipola College: \$3,100

Polk State College: \$3,114

Seminole State College of Florida: \$3,131

Daytona State College - \$3,134

Miami Dade College - \$3,164

Source: U.S. Department of Education College Affordability and Transparency Center.

For more information about the Florida College System, visit <http://www.fldoe.org/fcs/>.

AGAINST THE ODDS

Woman's brush with cerebral aneurysm has life-long repercussions

By Jordan Culver
Democrat staff writer
@JordanCulver on Twitter

A severe, weeks-long headache might just have been the best thing for Ashley Arnold-Crofford's health.

Arnold-Crofford, 27, had no idea what was causing her chronic headaches nearly a year ago, but it didn't take her long to start searching the Internet for answers. Things peaked when she went to a festival in Atlanta with some friends — Arnold-Crofford said a headache hit her so hard she ended up in the emergency room.

See ANEURYSM p. 18

"I knew the symptoms and I had every one of them."

ASHLEY ARNOLD-CROFFORD
LETTING ANEURYSM GO



SYMPTOMS OF A RUPTURED ANEURYSM

- Nausea and vomiting associated with a severe headache
- A drooping eyelid
- Sensitivity to light
- Change in mental status or level of awareness
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness

ONLINE



• Video: Hear more about Ashley Arnold-Crofford's story and see how Dr. Matt Lawson treats aneurysms.
Tallahassee.com/aneurysms

Ashley Arnold-Crofford survived a brain aneurysm and received her G.E.D. from Tallahassee Community College. She was the speaker at the school's graduation ceremony in June.

PHOTO BY AP/WIDEWORLD FOR THE DEMOCRAT

Against the Odds....
continued

Aneurysm

Continued » 1B

When Arnold-Crofford told doctors she thought she had a cerebral aneurysm, they were a little skeptical at first.

"They asked, 'Well how do you know?'" she said. "I said, 'Because I can read.' I knew the symptoms and I had every one of them. Sure enough, when they told me that's what it was, it just scared me."

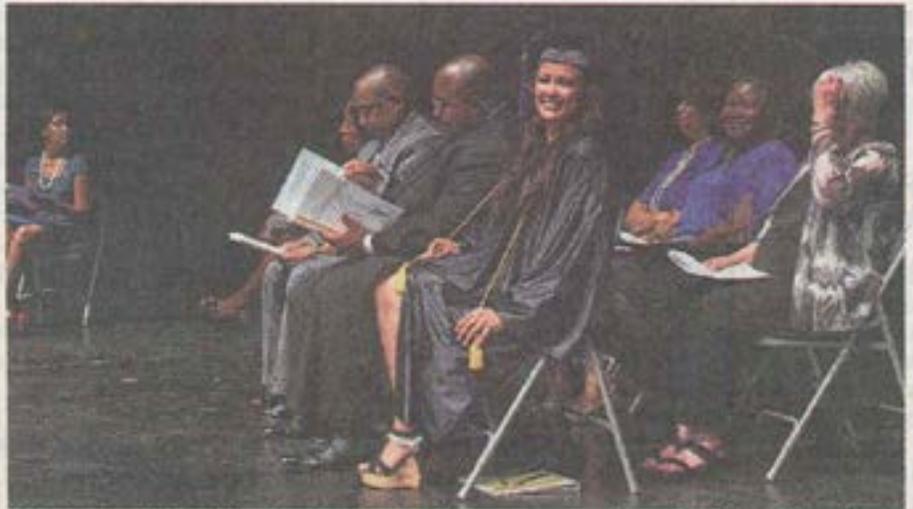
Cerebral aneurysms happen when arteries in the brain swell. The swelling creates a balloon effect, typically leading to ruptures that cause severe brain bleeds. Large unruptured aneurysms cause symptoms like loss of feeling in the face or problems with the eyes — two things Arnold-Crofford had to deal with.

Early detection is extremely important when dealing with aneurysms. Arnold-Crofford received treatment to repair the aneurysm in her brain and avoided a potential life-ending rupture. Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare neurosurgeon Dr. Matt Lawson said once an aneurysm ruptures there's a 50 percent chance of death.

The 50 percent who do survive are typically left with crippling brain damage. Lawson said there are about 75 ruptured aneurysms every year in this region.

"In general those who have the greatest risk of brain aneurysms are those with high blood pressure and smokers," Lawson said. "It's also associated with vascular diseases in general. Anyone with those kinds of diseases is at risk."

Aneurysms can occur in any-



Ashley Arnold-Crofford survived a brain aneurysm and received her G.E.D from Tallahassee Community College last year. HARRIET ABRAMS/SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

one and at any age, reports the National Institute for Neurological Disorders and Stroke. They are slightly more common in women than in men. Lawson said a main problem with aneurysms is they're extremely hard to detect until they've ruptured. Typically, finding an aneurysm early via a brain scan requires luck.

"We find (unruptured aneurysms) by accident," he said. "They're usually asymptomatic but we treat them to prevent the rupture."

Lawson said in general there are two treatment types when dealing with brain aneurysms. The first is open surgery, or cutting directly into the head to remove the aneurysm. The second involves inserting a catheter into the body through the wrist or femoral artery in the inner thigh. Lawson can then repair an aneurysm using shunts, wiring and tubes.

Arnold-Crofford still has coils in her brain to deal with her aneu-

rysm. When her condition was at its worst, her face became swollen to the point where she couldn't see out of one eye. Now she needs to visit the doctor every three months for checkups, which has put a strain on her finances.

She counts herself lucky though — she survived her brush with brain surgery and has since received her G.E.D from Tallahassee Community College. She said she's hoping to go to college soon.

"I wanted to go back to school and better my life," Arnold-Crofford said. "Right now I'm working on financial aid and different scholarships. I want to be in school — maybe for nursing or market management."

She has the full support of her grandmother, Katha Arnold.

"I really just express it," she said, adding Arnold-Crofford is her first granddaughter. "It's been a great blessing from the Lord to allow her to recover from that aneurysm. Now she's headed toward a better life."

Tallahassee Wrongful Death Lawyer Offers No Cost Consultation

PRWEB

The Florida-based Berman Law Group has announced no-cost wrongful death consultations are available in Tallahassee, FL.

They are committed to helping anyone who has been injured in a car accident, truck crash, or motorcycle wreck understand their legal options around wrongful death claims and what course of action they can take.

Tallahassee is the capital of Florida. It is the county seat and only incorporated municipality in Leon County, and is the 128th largest city in the United States. Tallahassee became the capital of Florida, then the Florida Territory, in 1824. In 2010, the population recorded by the U.S. Census Bureau was 181,376, and the Tallahassee metropolitan area is 375,371 as of 2012.

Tallahassee is home to several colleges and universities, notably Florida State University and Florida A&M University. Others include Tallahassee Community College and branches of Saint Leo University, Thomas University, Keiser University, Barry University, Flagler College, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

The Berman Law Group is not only serving the Tallahassee area, but also surrounding areas of Quincy, Havana, Monticello, Lamont, and Crawfordville, FL. If anyone is in any of these areas or surrounding Florida areas and has a wrongful death issue, contact the Law Offices of Berman and Berman at 1-877-529-8995 today and pursue justice.

At Berman and Berman, the Tallahassee, Florida, wrongful death lawyers strive to get their clients the best possible results. If a settlement cannot be reached, then they are prepared to take the case to trial.

To get in contact with the Law Offices of Berman and Berman, call 1-877-529-8995 or visit their website <http://lawyerinjuryaccident.com>. They are available 24 hours a day via email, phone, or live chat on their website. For help on any type of personal injury lawsuit in Florida, contact the Berman Law Group today.

King scholarship fundraiser on Saturday

The family of PFC Brandon Michael King is holding the third annual fundraiser on Saturday to support the Tallahassee Community College scholarship named in his honor. The fundraiser is from 4-8 p.m. in the clubhouse of Blairstone at Governor's Square Apartments, located at 501 Blair Stone Road. King, who had attended TCC, was killed on July 14, 2010, during an attack by enemy forces at Combat Outpost Nolan, located in the southern Kandahar Province of Afghanistan.

—Democrat staff reports

Dilbert Shows Dedication to Higher Education

BY Roderick Smith
CAPITAL OUTLOOK



Leader, mentor and role model Louis Dilbert has been an influential educator of the youth in the Tallahassee Community. His ability to captivate their eager minds has been his key to success.

Born in the heart of Miami, Fla, Dilbert is the youngest of nine children and a hopeful survivor of his parent's legacy. By no stroke of anyone's wildest imagination was he or his

family wealthy.

Originally from Honduras, his mother worked as a cashier for 30 years and his father worked in various trades. Despite their limited education, they always supported his endeavors and promoted education for him and his siblings.

His desire to dedicate his life to the advancement of education started long before he reached the highest of seven hills. While attending high school, he was elected as the senior class president. His leadership continued as he matriculated through Florida State University (FSU) where he served as president of the NAACP, student senate president, and president of the Iota Delta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. In 2002, he was elected homecoming chief.

Dilbert's original career goal was to be a pediatrician, but he realized what a deep impact his teachers had on his life and decided that he wanted to be an educator. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in the health education from FSU in spring of 2003, a Master's Degree in Educational leadership/administration from FSU in the spring of 2005 and is currently a doctoral candidate in educational leadership at Florida A&M University (FAMU).

On the road to becoming a college president, Dilbert is employed as the assistant state project manager for Florida GEAR UP, a collaborative

college readiness project between the Tallahassee Community College (TCC) and the Florida Department of Education.

Prior to returning to TCC, he was employed at FAMU as the coordinator of assistive technology and outreach at the center for Disability Access and Resources.

He worked at Tallahassee Community College for five years in various roles ranging from academic advisor within the counseling center to program specialist for Educational Talent Search.

"Always willing to extend a helping hand is what I can credit as being Mr. Dilbert's greatest strength. He is always willing to go the extra mile. He leads by example and that in itself makes him living proof," said Mark Smith, a former student of Dilbert's.

Dilbert believes that actions speak louder than words and wants to enrich the society around him.

"An issue that is a great concern for me is the plight of Black males in this society. Growing up, I did not have many Black male instructors and role modeling is important in shaping a young man's identity and perspective of himself. My dissertation topic focuses on the factors that impact the college aspirations in rural communities because of limited resources," said Dilbert.

Dilbert is active in the community, serving as the immediate past president of the Gamma Mu Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., president of the Board of Directors for Big Bend Cares and volunteer for Big Brothers Big Sisters. He also serves on the community improvement action committee for the City of Tallahassee.

Most importantly, he is an active member at Life Without Limits International Church, serving as the secretary of the Board of Directors.

"None of my blessings could have been received without faith in God and commitment to spiritual development. I'm blessed and honored to share life and love with my wife, Lee Felicia Dilbert," added Dilbert.

Pittsburgh man reported killed in Syria

By Betsy Hiel and Carl Prine

PUBLICATION

CAIRO — An American-Egyptian man born in Pittsburgh is missing in Syria and reported dead in fighting between Islamic militants and Kurdish militia.

If true, Amir Farouk Ibrahim, 32, would be the second American known to have been killed in Syria's civil war.

Family members said he traveled to Turkey in February or March and later crossed into Syria, where Syrian rebels and foreign Islamist fighters have battled government troops for more than two years.

Ibrahim told his parents that he was providing humanitarian assistance there, although his father said he did not believe that.

His Facebook page contains numerous references in support of radical Islamists.

Ibrahim's U.S. and Egyptian passports — and passports of 14 other men from several Middle Eastern countries — were recovered in northeast Syria after a battle between Syrian Kurdish militiamen and militants from al-Sham and the Islamic State of Iraq, a terrorist group formerly known as al-Qaida in Iraq.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a British-based Syrian opposition group, posted photographs of Ibrahim's passports on its Facebook page on Monday. The group said it did not know whether anyone survived an "intense" battle between opposing Syrian forces.

Contacted at their Cairo home by the Tribune-Review, Ibrahim's family said they were unaware of the Internet postings. They appeared shocked and devastated at the news.

One of his brothers later called a Trib reporter to say that a friend told him that Ibrahim was killed in Syria.

State Department, Homeland Security and other federal officials in Washington declined to comment or said they were unaware of Ibrahim's status or whereabouts.

'HE WANTED TO SPREAD THE DAWA'

Ibrahim was born Oct. 30, 1980, in Pittsburgh, according to his U.S. passport and his family.

His father, Farouk, worked for Pullman Swindell, a Pittsburgh-based steel-industry engineering firm now known as Swindell-Dressler. The elder Ibrahim attended the University of Pittsburgh, and the family had lived in Western Pennsylvania for 14 years, he said.

They moved to Saudi Arabia two years after Ibrahim was born, as the steel industry began to falter, and returned to Egypt eight years later.

Ibrahim lived with his parents and other family members in Heliopolis, a middle-class to upscale section of Cairo.

In 2003, he returned to the United States to attend Columbus State Community College in Ohio. He enrolled at Tallahassee Community College before transferring to Florida International University in Miami. In 2008, he received a bachelor's degree in business administration, according to school officials.

His father described him as intelligent — graduating from FIU with a 3.4 grade-point average — and as very involved in Islamic activities.

"He wanted to stay in Florida; he wanted to spread the Dawa," or the call to Islam, the elder Ibrahim said. "We played a trick on him and brought him back here."

In Cairo, he worked at an Islamic university, according to his mother, Fatimah.

'HE COULDN'T HURT ANYBODY'

Both parents described their son as kind, gentle, loving and respectful.

After he "met a couple of Turkish guys who wanted him to go into the software business," his father said, Ibrahim moved to Turkey about five months ago. He later told his family that he was in Syria, helping people to escape the fighting.

Angry and worried, Ibrahim's father said he refused to speak to his son whenever he called home, although other family members talked with him.

Pittsburgh man reported killed in Syria....

continued

"He was calling me and saying, 'Things are fine, and we are far away from the fighting,'" his mother recalled.

"He said he was doing a humanitarian job, that the people were very nice. If you see him, he couldn't hurt anybody — such a type of man couldn't hurt a fly," she said, crying.

Ibrahim's brother Rami said he never heard gunfire or explosions in the background during those phone calls.

"I don't believe it! I don't believe it!" his mother sobbed. "The last time I talked to him was the beginning of Ramadan," the Muslim holy month, on July 7.

She said his cellphones worked for about a week after that date, then switched off.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the identity documents were found at a base of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISIS) and al-Sham in the city of Ras al-Ein, in Syria's Hasakah province.

The two Islamist groups are loosely allied with other al-Qaida terror groups in the region.

"The documents were found after the ISIS retreated from the town after intense clashes last week with the YPG," the group stated. "We do not know the fate of the owners of these documents, whether they are dead or alive and still active in Syria."

The YPG — Yekineyen Parastina Gel, or People's Protection Units — is an armed wing of Syria's leading Kurdish party. A youth militia, it fights any outside groups, government or rebel forces trying to enter Kurdish territory.

'AL-QAIDA — OH, GOD!'

"I was expecting this," Ibrahim's father said of news that his son's passports were found. "Al-Qaida — oh, God!"

"He came to me and asked me if he can go to Syria. I told him, 'Over my dead body,'" he said. He recalled telling his son, "If you go, I don't want to hear about you at all."

In May, Syrian government forces killed Nicole Lynn Mansfield, 33, a Muslim convert from Flint, Mich., who was fighting with rebel forces.

Other Americans have been reported to be fighting in Syria.

Eric Harroun, an Army veteran, was indicted in June, charged with fighting for Al Nasrah Front, an al-Qaida-affiliated group.

In April, FBI agents at O'Hare International Airport near Chicago arrested Abdella Ahmad Tounisi, 18, as he allegedly tried to fly to Turkey to join Al Nasrah.

Citing federal privacy laws, officials at the State Department — which issued Ibrahim's passport on March 6, 2012 — and the Department of Homeland Security, the agency charged with blocking members of al-Qaida from American shores, declined to comment.

Officials at State did not return messages asking whether the U.S. government is treating Ibrahim as a missing person or is seeking Turkish, Syrian or Iraqi help to locate him.

Betsy Hiel and Carl Prine are Trib Total Media staff writers. Reach Hiel at hielb@yahoo.com. Reach Prine at cprine@tribweb.com.

Read more: <http://triblive.com/news/editorspicks/4415705-74/ibrahim-syria-syrian#ixzz2aA8BHddr>

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Della Campbell is the recipient of the Freshman Scholarship from the University of Pittsburgh in the amount of \$10,500, and she received the Steve R. Walker Scholarship which is funded by donations from former students and friends of the late Steve Walker.

The Tallahassee Community College District Board of Trustees acknowledges the importance of academic achievement and seeks to recognize the outstanding graduating seniors from the high schools within the tri-county district. To qualify a student needs at least a cumulative 3.0 grade point average and must enroll at Tallahassee Community College upon graduation. This award is a two-year tuition scholarship. This year's recipient is Mollie Edwards.

In addition, Mollie received the Tallahassee Community College Chattahoochee Women's Club Scholarship of \$500.00.

Family of fallen Tallahassee soldier holding scholarship fundraiser this weekend

WTXL ABC 27

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (WTXL) -- An event will take place this weekend to raise money for an education scholarship in honor of a Tallahassee soldier killed in action.

PFC Brandon King, 23 at the time, was killed in 2010 while serving in Afghanistan. He was stationed at Combat Post Nolan in the southern Kandahar province.

"Our family is extremely proud of our brave and heroic son who died as he fought for the freedom of others," said Carolyn A. King, Brandon's mother.

King's family has created a scholarship in his honor at Tallahassee Community College.

Through donations, the King family has raised more than \$10,000 in the past two years, awarding two scholarships.

One award was presented to a student named Uriel. He obtained his GED in 2011 and plans to attend Florida State University to pursue a MS Biomedical Engineering Degree. The second recipient was presented to a TCC student named Angel who hopes to transfer to UCF to pursue a B.S. in Computer Science.

"We are honored that such deserving students have received the Brandon M. King Scholarship and we need help to continue to provide opportunities for other students," said Mrs. King.

The Third annual Brandon King Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser will be held Saturday, July 27 at 4:00 p.m. at the club house of Blairstone at Governor Square Apartments.

To make a donation to the Brandon M. King Scholarship Fund, visit the TCC website at www.tcc.fl.edu/foundation and select the "donate now" button. Donations can also be mailed to the Tallahassee Community College Foundation , 444 Appleyard Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32304. Please indicate that your donation is for the Brandon M. King Scholarship on the check or envelope. All donations are tax deductible.

JUSTICE FOR TRAYVON: Dream Defenders Take the Lead

A group of young game changers are occupying Florida's capitol building—and they are armed with a mission

By Chris Williams
EBONYMAGAZINE

The story of the Dream Defenders begins in April of 2006. Florida A&M's then-Student Body President Ramon Alexander and Vice President Phillip Agnew* joined forces with Florida State University Senate President Gabriel Pendas and Student Body Vice President Ahmad Abuznaid and student leaders from Tallahassee Community College to non-violently protest against former Governor Jeb Bush's decision not to investigate the murderers of Martin Lee Anderson, a 14-year-old child.

Shortly thereafter, Agnew, Alexander, and others banded together to found a non-profit, The Student Coalition for Justice, Inc., to lead the charge in standing up for Anderson's civil rights. For three days in late April, their demonstrations alongside Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton made Governor Bush reconsider and call for an in-depth investigation of Anderson's murder.

This victory provided the adrenaline rush in Agnew, Pendas, and Abuznaid's veins to continue community organizing and activism work in Tallahassee, Florida. Upon graduating from FAMU, Agnew accepted a sales position at a pharmaceutical company in Charlotte, North Carolina, but remained in close contact with his activist comrades.

After the killing of Trayvon Martin, Agnew, Pendas, and Abuznaid reunited to lead a march from Daytona Beach to Sanford, Florida to demand the arrest of George Zimmerman. When they arrived at the Sanford Police Department headquarters, they peacefully protested much like they had for Martin Lee Anderson six years prior. Soon, the idea for the Dream Defenders was born.

In April 2012, the Dream Defenders applied for 501 (c) (3) non-profit status, further establishing themselves as an organization focused on building youthful social and community leaders for the 21st century. The triumvirate decided to move in together at a residence they dubbed "the Dream House" to brainstorm on the growth and outreach of the organization. From their planning sessions, they've been successful in establishing organizational chapters on nine different campuses in

Florida. They boast a membership base of more than 100 students, but can call on at least 250 members throughout the state at any given time.

The core leadership of the Dream Defenders includes Phillip Agnew, Executive Director; Ahmad Abuznaid, Legal and Policy Director; Ciara Taylor, Political Director, Curtis Hierro, Field Director and Steve Pargett, Communications Director. Together, these young activists represent the 'dream' of the Civil Rights' era and the nightmare of those who work diligently to keep people of color oppressed via legal means. Each member represents diverse industries ranging from social work, teaching, community organizing, and practicing law.

Over the past two weeks, they've occupied the Florida State Capitol to ask state legislators to hold a special session to vote in favor of a measure called "Trayvon's Law." The law would abolish "Stand Your Ground," confront racial profiling, and end the prevalent school-to-prison pipeline in various Florida communities. Their days consist of attending workshop sessions educating them on leadership, community organizing, social justice, and chanting songs and slogans of positivity. For their efforts, Governor Rick Scott met with them last Thursday to discuss their concerns. However, he has continued his support of "Stand Your Ground."

The Dream Defenders have promised not to leave the Capitol until a special session is held by state legislators.

Here are five things you can do to help the Dream Defenders right now:

- 1) Place outside pressure by contacting Florida State Representatives and tell them to make Governor Rick Scott convene a special session in the state legislature on "Trayvon's Law."
- 2) Get more Floridians to travel to the State Capitol to rally and protest with the Dream Defenders on Monday afternoon.
- 3) Donate to the Dream Defenders via their website to help with the cost of basic needs and goods. Follow @

JUSTICE FOR TRAYVON: Dream Defenders Take the Lead...

continued

DreamDefenders on Twitter for updates and share their work with your networks.

4) People can sign their petition to get Governor Rick Scott to convene a special session in the state legislature on "Trayvon's Law."

5) Live in a "Stand Your Ground" state? Take over YOUR capitol!

Chris Williams is an internationally-published writer. You can follow him on Twitter @CWmsWrites.

*A previous version of this article incorrectly identified Philip Agnew as a former Student Body President of FAMU and stated that the Dream Defenders had already received 501(c)(3) status

Read more at EBONY <http://www.ebony.com/news-views/justice-for-trayvon-dream-defenders-take-the-lead-304#ixzz2aXVfvNeF>

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Florida College Towns See Inflated Poverty Rates

By Bailey Myers

WCTV.TV

Tallahassee FL - New numbers tonight put Florida's Capitol City near the top in the state when it comes to poverty. Those numbers were just released by the US Census, and they may not be as accurate as they seem.

The poverty rate includes every person within the population. In Leon County, the poverty rate according to the US Census is 22.3%. Here's the issue: College students are included in that data, causing a problem in the estimate.

FSU student, Kendra Jones: "Having a break in-between classes and then going to work for six hours." Working six hours a couple of days a week is not a full time gig for Jones.

Jones plans to be a percentage of students graduating with her bachelors degree. Currently, however she's part of another number... The poverty rate rate for Leon County.

That's because Jones, like so many other college students, makes below poverty threshold considered in the US Census data.

Chief Research Council Florida Tax Watch Robert Weissert: "Wouldn't there be a difference from a community that does have a college or university in it and one that doesn't because University students tend to have incomes that would put them at the poverty lines because they are not employed so their income is basically zero."

Here in Leon County there are about 12,000 FAMU students, 14,000 Tallahassee Community College Students, and 40,000 FSU students. That means about 66,000 people in Leon County's population are students and may not have a consistent source of income.

With that many students, it's no wonder that when you take them out of the equation the poverty rate in Leon County decreases by 11.5 percent.

Jones later added, "I don't think it makes sense because as long as you're a college student, you are going to be considered beneath the poverty level with your income."

Leon County was one of two counties in the state of Florida to have a large concentration of college students considered aiding to an increase in their poverty rate. The other county was Alachua County-- where the University of Florida is located.

TCC wants Wards Lot for new campus

By Sandi Beare
Herald Correspondent

Representatives from Tallahassee Community College (TCC) visited Quincy's commission meeting Tuesday evening, July 23rd, to request consideration for the college to locate a TCC campus within city limits. The group is hopeful that they can, if approved, create the campus on city-owned property on King Street at Ward's Lot. They proposed continuing the green space park area that the community currently uses.

The current TCC facility, Quincy House on South Adams Street, has reached its maximum usable space for the college. "The current facility, though beautiful, is not adequate for all we want to do in Quincy," said TCC director of facilities Dave Watts. Watts said long-

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2013

Campus/from front page

range plans for TCC in Gadsden include working with Workforce Development, increasing academic programs, working with community partners to provide both school space and meeting spaces for organizations.

"We've spent two years looking for facilities that are available, accessible, meet transportation needs, and have the ability to expand for what we

need. We want a true campus with a true outdoor facility," said Watts.

Watts said they also want to help the county and its municipalities with economic development initiatives, as well, as he discussed the Ward's Lot area. "It's a win-win situation for everyone. We hope we can work with Quincy, the county commission and organizations," he

said.

Quincy mayor Keith Dowdell thanked the group for considering Quincy. "I remember back in the 1990s when we started trying to get businesses to come here. This is another tool that we can use to help us do that," said Dowdell.

Dowdell and the other commissioners asked the TCC reps to open dialogue with neighbors of the facility's location to listen to any concerns

they may have.

"I very much appreciate TCC House and what you've done in Quincy. It's paid big dividends to the citizens of Gadsden County," said Andy Gay, who also said that Ward's Lot provides the only green space in that district. "I want to be sure that the neighbors are comfortable with TCC as a neighbor," said Gay.

Dowdell asked TCC to hold a town hall meeting with the Quincy commis-

TCC wants Ward's Lot for new campus....

continued

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Dowdell asked TCC to hold a town hall meeting with the Quincy commis-

sioners. The matter was tabled until that meeting is held.

Quincy staff said that an expanded TCC campus would be very beneficial to the community. "It will provide the backbone for job training that businesses are seeking in deciding where to locate. Its location at the outskirts of downtown and adjacent to the historic district will help in the revitalization of downtown and bring much-needed businesses

to ensure the protection of the cultural and historic importance of Quincy," states a staff handout.

Puzzle Solution



A16 THE GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES • THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2013

TCC eyeing Ward's Lot

ALICE DU PONT
Times Editor

Tallahassee Community College's Director of Physical Plant, Facilities, Planning and Construction David S. Wildes laid out TCC's plan for expansion in Gadsden County during the July 23 regular meeting of the city commission.

It was unanimous that commissioners welcome the expansion, but they held up a stop sign for the plan.

The plan includes constructing a new building at Ward's Lot, which is located north

of Quincy City Hall. Wildes said TCC officials had looked at several lots throughout the city and found that Ward's Lot suited their purposes.

"We were looking for undeveloped land so we would have the true campus setting," Wildes said.

"I personally support you, but we have to see what the citizens think," said Mayor Keith Dowdell.

"That's a residential neighborhood. Have you talked with any of the people there?" asked Commissioner Larry Ed-

wards, adding, "I would like to have a public hearing with the citizens before I make any decision."

Commissioner Andy Gay told Wildes he approved of the TCC efforts but that he had already gotten calls on the project.

"That's the only green space that the city has to use," Gay said.

That's when City Manager Jack McLean informed commissioners the property is actually owned by the School Board and are ready to turn the property over to TCC.

Former City Commissioner Don Chesser, who lives directly across the street from the proposed site, asked if there were any stipulations placed on the property when it was given to the city by the Owenby family.

"I'm surprised that Carl Owenby Jr. isn't here tonight," said Chesser.

At the suggestion of Edwards, who recommended a joint meeting with the city commission, school board and citizens, no further action was taken.

TCC offering English for Academics

Tallahassee Community College's Division of Academic Support Programs has announced a series of courses on academic English language instruction.

The English for Academic Purposes program will begin on August 26, 2013, and is still open for student registration. The courses will offer quality English language instruction at an affordable cost, and will target international students and permanent residents of the United States. The intermediate and advanced level courses emphasize the English language skills necessary for participation in academic and professional settings.

Completion of the courses will guarantee acceptance to TCC's Associates in Arts degree program.

The courses will assist international students in improving their English and also overcoming classroom difficulties that may negatively impact their educational success. Students will learn academic vocabulary, accent reduction, academic writing skills and strategies for improving comprehension of academic lectures and participating in class discussions.

The new courses are as

Academic Listening/Speaking

- EAP 0420: Advanced Academic Reading
- EAP 0440: Advanced Academic Writing

"Academic English is a crucial skill to have in order to be successful while in college," said Sharisse Turner, associate dean of the Department of Developmental Communications and College Success. "We're happy to develop courses that meet the needs of international students and non-native speakers."

Among 2-year schools, TCC is the number one producer of A.A. degrees in the nation, and is also the number one transfer school to Florida State University and Florida A & M. Four-year degrees are also available on TCC's campus through university partners Barry University, Flagler College, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Saint Leo University and Thomas University.

TCC has supported international students and non-native speakers with a variety of programs and focuses, which also includes the existing Workforce Development English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. Students who have taken

ESOL classes are encouraged take the English for Academic Purposes program.

For more information, please contact Daniel Beugnet, lead faculty for the English Language Program at (850) 201-9667 or beugnetd@tcc.fl.edu.



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Pittsburgh-born man seduced by Syria's holy war

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Born in Pittsburgh 32 years ago, Amiir Farouk Ibrahim took a path to holy war in Syria increasingly traveled by tens of thousands of young Muslim men, counterterrorism experts tell the Tribune-Review.

American and Egyptian passports for Ibrahim, who grew up in Saudi Arabia and Cairo before returning for college in the United States, were discovered last week in a compound once held by Sunni Muslim militants from Al Sham and the Islamic State of Iraq. The group, formerly known as al-Qaida in Iraq, is a franchise of the terrorist organization once fronted by Osama bin Laden.

"In the Middle East right now, Syria is everything," said Clinton Watts, a senior fellow at Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, where he studies foreign fighters worldwide. Watts served as an Army infantry officer in Iraq.

"I call it the 'Second Foreign Fighter Glut.' The first was in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation. Today, the foreign fighters who were kicked out of Iraq and Afghanistan have reorganized, and they're drawn to Syria. It's the big stage."

The United Nations estimates that more than 100,000 people have died in Syria's ongoing civil war between the Bashar al-Assad regime and a diverse coalition of rebels. Many of them are Sunni Muslims drawn to wage jihad against a government seen as an apostate dictatorship.

"The war in Syria is being portrayed as that of non-Muslims in the Assad regime who have invaded Muslim territory, and that's a compelling narrative drawing a lot of young men to Syria," said Brian Fishman, a researcher at the Army's Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, and the New America Foundation in Washington.

Born in the United States

Ibrahim's Egyptian father spent 14 years in Western Pennsylvania, including engineering studies at the University of Pittsburgh. The family returned to the Middle East in 1982, about two years after Ibrahim's birth.

A 1980 telephone directory indicates the family lived in an apartment complex along Royal Drive in South Park.

The father, Farouk Ibrahim, told the Trib that he worked for Pullman Swindell, a Downtown industrial design firm.

Amiir Ibrahim returned to the United States in 2003, when he enrolled at Columbus State Community College in Columbus, Ohio, according to school transcripts. All three of the Ibrahim sons would attend U.S. colleges, their father said.

On Oct. 11, 2003, Columbus police officers arrested and charged Amiir with disorderly conduct when finding him at the Long Street Live nightclub shouting obscenities at the staff and others, according to the criminal complaint.

Ibrahim spent the night in jail and was later convicted of disorderly conduct in Franklin County Municipal Court. He paid a \$50 fine and was credited with time served.

He transferred to Tallahassee Community College in Florida, then he enrolled at Florida International University in Miami. In 2008, he received a bachelor's degree in business administration, according to school records.

Concerned that he was trying too hard to convert Americans to Islam, his family soon wooed Amiir back to Cairo. At the end of February or early March, they say, he left for Turkey, saying he was going to work in a software business. His father did not believe him.

Once in Syria, Ibrahim told his family that he was providing humanitarian aid.

His departure coincided with calls by Egyptian Islamists to wage holy war in Syria.

Ibrahim is missing and presumed dead because of the discovery of his abandoned passports by Kurdish fighters who overran an Islamic State of Iraq guerrilla compound in Ras al-Ein, a northern Syrian city across the border from Turkey.

"It's amazing how they could be brainwashed," said Farouk Ibrahim. "This is exactly what I saw from the beginning. It is the story I said would happen. Al-Qaida, oh God. It's a shame."

A 'golden passport'

It's not so much his radicalization that makes the younger

Pittsburgh-born man seduced by Syria's holy war.... *continued*

oh God. It's a shame."

A 'golden passport'

It's not so much his radicalization that makes the younger Ibrahim unique, but that he never used his U.S.-issued "golden passport" to fly here and cause trouble, said Michael Noonan, an expert on foreign fighters at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

That was not the case with Jose Padilla, Najibullah Zazi or David Headley, all American citizens tied to al-Qaida. All three were arrested before they could act.

Ibrahim did not go to Pakistan to link up with al-Qaida cells there or terror affiliates in Yemen or Somalia. Instead, he went to Syria.

Noonan cited the May death of Nicole Lynn Mansfield, 33, a Muslim convert from Flint, Mich., slain by Syrian government forces while fighting alongside rebels, and the June indictment of Eric Harroun, an Army veteran from Phoenix who took up arms with Jabhat al-Nusr, an extreme Sunni militia.

They followed a similar exodus of Americans of Somali descent to Africa in 2007 to fight alongside Al-Shabaab, an organization tied to al-Qaida. Dozens of Somali-Americans fought there, including three suicide bombers.

That, Watts said, begs the question: Is today's generation of radicalized American Muslims drawn to homemade domestic terror attacks like that of the alleged Boston Marathon bombers — Chechnyan brothers Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev — or to Syria, the bloodiest conflict arising out of the "Arab Spring" uprisings?

Watts said that al-Qaida's terror masterminds in Pakistan have little control over events in Syria and grow increasingly marginalized by groups like the Islamic State of Iraq that are competing for funds and foreign fighters with other al-Qaida offshoots.

What's "blurring a lot of lines" that once existed between Sunni terror groups in Syria and U.S. policies, Watts explained, is the American goal of ousting their shared nemesis, the Iran-backed Assad regime in Damascus.

Ibrahim's Facebook page decried a Dutch filmmaker who he believed insulted Islam, French forces fighting Islamist militants in North Africa and Israeli policies in Palestine,

but he didn't appear to post anything directly negative about the United States.

Nevertheless, New America Foundation's Fishman said it's vital for the United States and its allies to stop citizens like Ibrahim from journeying to Syria and Somalia to get training and combat experience. It's difficult to predict who may become hard-core revolutionaries set on destabilizing their nations.

"The danger with this scenario is that embedded in the Islamic State of Iraq are fringe elements who would want to exploit that 'golden passport,'" Fishman said.

Citing privacy laws, officials at the State Department that issued Ibrahim's passport on March 6, 2012, and the Department of Homeland Security — charged with barring potential terrorists from U.S. shores — declined to comment.

Officials at the Terrorist Screening Center told the Trib that they are forbidden by law from saying whether Ibrahim was on the government's terror watch list. Of about 500,000 people in the database with known or suspected ties to terrorism, only about 5 percent are Americans, the center said.

However, Terrorist Screening officials say any American who travels to Syria to aid, train or fight with known terrorist groups could be placed in the database and its related no-fly list barring them from returning home.

TCC's adults with disabilities program awarded Florida Department of Education grant

AMERICANTOWNS.COM

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (August 1, 2013) – A \$42,500 grant has been awarded to Tallahassee Community College by the Florida Department of Education for the Adults With Disabilities (AWD) Program. This grant will allow TCC to continue to provide therapeutic recreation and leisure activities for adults with disabilities in Leon, Gadsden and Wakulla counties.

The program is conducted through TCC in partnership with the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association (FDOA). Funding is made possible by an appropriation from the Florida Legislature.

The program's goals are to improve health and wellness, reduce risks of secondary health conditions that result from a sedentary lifestyle, teach vocational skills, facilitate mentoring relationships, and encourage participation in the community.

The project is the latest in a long history of collaboration between TCC and FDOA, which was founded in 1990 by David Jones, a TCC graduate who had been severely injured in a hunting accident. Jones established the association and its annual event, SportsAbility, to provide others with access to the recreational opportunities that he credits with helping him regain his place in society. SportsAbility is held at TCC, Ochlockonee River State Park and Miracle Field at Messer Park. Jones has additionally served as a director of the TCC Alumni Association and has been honored as a distinguished alumnus of the College.

"People who can overcome the barriers to recreation can develop the skills and esteem to attack the workforce," said Jones. "The Florida Disabled Outdoors Association is all about active leisure, quality of life, wellness and being part of the community."

Please visit www.FDOA.org to learn more about participating in this program and also to register online for participation at the SportsAbility event. Individuals interested in participating in this year's project may contact FDOA at (850) 201-2944, extension #3, or info@fdoa.org to register.

Chipola working with FSU and TCC on NSF project

CHIPLEY BUGLE

MARIANNA—Chipola College is collaborating with Florida State University and Tallahassee Community College in a National Science Foundation project to improve Information Technology education and employment.

NSF awarded Florida State University a \$844,825 grant to support a four year project, Assessing Information Technology Educational Pathways that Promote Deployment and Use of Rural Broadband.

The project is one of a number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) initiatives underway at the FSU College of Communication and Information. Dr. Charles R. McClure, the Francis Eppes Professor and director of the Information Institute will lead the project at the Principal Investigator. Dr. Marcia Mardis, Ed.D, Associate professor, and Ebrahim Randeree, Assistant Dean at CCI are Co-Principal Investigators as are Dr. Jim Froh, Dean of the School of Business and Technology at Chipola College and Kathryn M. Stewart, Dean, Technology and Professional Development at Tallahassee Community College.

The goals of the project are to strengthen the employee pool of IT technicians, and to improve broadband, telecommunications, and networks education for current and future IT employees in rural Northwest Florida.

The project will analyze current curricula at Tallahassee Community College and Chipola College and solicit faculty and employer feedback. Findings will include recommendations for improvement in IT training and economic development.

FAMU, TCC Receive \$2.1 Million Grant for Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program Partnership

PRESS RELEASE

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Florida A&M University (FAMU) and Tallahassee Community College (TCC) have partnered for a \$2,193,365 grant from the National Institutes of Health Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program in Biomedical Sciences.

The goal of the FAMU-TCC Bridges Program is to cultivate a program that increases the numbers of underrepresented minorities — African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans — attending TCC with the knowledge and skills necessary to attain an Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree, with the additional goal of these graduates obtaining an entry-level degree in the biomedical sciences at FAMU.

“I was very excited when I was informed that we earned the grant,” said Carl Goodman, FAMU professor of pharmacology and co-principal investigator. “There was a lot of hard work that went into writing the grant. It is going to do wonders in terms of giving more opportunities for the underrepresented population to garner careers in the biomedical sciences. When you look at the numbers of African Americans entering these fields, it is just low. This program is unique and will give students an opportunity to be exposed to the biomedical field.”

FAMU has strategically positioned itself as one of the few Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to not only serve as a traditional feeder program, but has become a relatively newcomer as a leader in graduating underrepresented minorities with baccalaureate degrees in the biomedical sciences (agriculture sciences and viticulture, biology and chemistry, environmental, chemical and biomedical engineering, environmental chemistry and health, and pharmaceutical sciences).

“I salute Dr. Carl Goodman and Dr. Sandra Suther, as well as their outstanding TCC collaborators for generating this highly competitive training grant,” said FAMU Vice President for Research K. Ken Redda. “This five-year project will provide Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program in the Biomedical Sciences and will increase the numbers of underrepresented minority students from TCC to obtain baccalaureate degrees at our institution. Dr. Goodman is not only a brilliant scientist and an astute

administrator but he also symbolizes excellence with caring. I have no doubt that this is going to be among the shining examples of a successful BRIDGE Program in the nation.”

TCC is fast approaching the status as a minority-majority institution of higher learning. It has an enrollment of 13,908 students and is culturally diversified with 47 percent minorities. **TCC has the highest percentage of African-American students among the 28 members of the Florida College System.** Among two-year schools, TCC is the number one producer of A.A. degrees in the nation. It is also the number one transfer school to FAMU and Florida State University.

TCC’s Dean for Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Calandra Stringer will be leading TCC’s participation in this new program. “This is a great opportunity for TCC to partner with FAMU in order to increase the pipeline of students who transfer to FAMU,” said Stringer. “We are extremely excited about the biomedical sciences program and we are looking forward to introducing the scientific experiences to our students.”

Some initiatives for the program include:

§ Establishing an innovative recruitment strategy to attract 150 science majors at TCC to the various biomedical science disciplines and research experiences at FAMU. Through the proposed program, there will be seminars, workshops and lectures that will take place on TCC’s campus throughout the academic year presented by FAMU biomedical science and research faculty;

§ Establishing a FAMU-TCC Biomedical Sciences Forum where 40 TCC students from the pool of 150 underrepresented minorities (URM) will be invited for an one-day orientation during the spring semester to tour FAMU and its biomedical programs as well as to gain information on the 10-week summer research internship program;

§ Providing a 10-week summer research internship at FAMU for 10 Bridges students during the first year and a total of 30 for years 2-5. Students will be matched with research mentors and conduct a meaningful research project that will be complimented with several research

FAMU, TCC Receive \$2.1 Million Grant for Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program Partnership....

continued

enrichment activities to include lectures and practical experiences on research and bioethics, laboratory safety training, computer and data analysis, power point poster preparation and presentation skills. Students will also transition into baccalaureate programs (from academic advisement to identifying financial resources to pay for school) and biomedical science seminars; and

§ Providing an academic research internship program during the academic year for seven Bridges students who wish to further their research training interests in the natural or biomedical sciences.

million for FAMU and \$7 million for the United Way. For the past seven years, they also have focused their attention on The Kinsey Collection, their national touring museum exhibit of African American art and history dating back to 1600.

NOAA to fund program at FAMU

FAMU College of Agriculture and Food Sciences (CAFS) will receive funding totaling \$72,724 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. CAFS was one of five recipients of the two-year funding. The program titled "From the Sky to the Sea: Investigating the Hydrologic Cycle in a Coastal Watershed, an Exemplary Pilot Program for K-12 Environmental Literacy," was submitted to NOAA's Gulf of Mexico Bay-Watershed Education and Training Program. It is an environmental education program that supports experimental learning through local competitive grants. The NOAA funding will be used to train science teachers at the FAMU Developmental Research School on hydrological and weather cycles.

Academic English classes at TCC

TCC is offering a series of courses on academic English language instruction. The English for Academic Purposes program, which begins on

Aug. 26, will target international students and permanent residents of the U.S. The intermediate and advanced level courses emphasize the English language skills necessary for participation in academic and professional settings. Completion of the courses will guarantee acceptance to TCC's Associates in Arts degree program. For more information, contact Daniel Beugnet, lead faculty for the English Language Program, at 201-9667 or beugnetd@tcc.fl.edu.

Aspiring female STEM students tour UF-NFREC

The University of Florida/IFAS North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy recently hosted a half-day session that focused on Women in Agricultural Sciences with the "WFSU Mag Lab SciGirls." Eighteen STEM middle-school students from around the U.S., many from Leon, Gadsden and Thomas counties, visited with UF female scientists who have active programs in agricultural-related sciences at UF-NFREC. These young students represent the next generation of potential female scientists in the work place. Before the session ended the students were taken on a tour of research laboratories, greenhouses and farm facilities at UF-NFREC in Quincy.

Campus notes is a weekly roundup that appears on Monday. To submit information, email senior writer Doug Blackburn at dblackburn@tallahassee.com

Training on human trafficking being held today

Human rights advocates and organizations will present Tallahassee Community Training on Human Trafficking today from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at the Turnbull Center on FSU's campus, 555 W. Pensacola St., room 208. Mayor John Marks will deliver opening remarks. Presenters include: Terry Coonan, the executive director of the FSU Center for the

Advancement of Human Rights, Tyson Elliott, human trafficking director with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, and Taylor Biro and Mike Mincy, street outreach advocates with Capital City Youth Services. Parking is available in the Turnbull Center Garage and at the Civic Center parking lot. Refreshments will be provided. For more information contact Vania Llovera at vllovera@admin.fsu.edu or 850-644-4551.

Alexander: A Life Filled with Inspiring Students

BY VINCENT MONTGOMERY
CAPITAL OUTLOOK



The innovative and intellectual Cherry Alexander is a ground-breaking educator who surpassed her call of duty to serve the Tallahassee community by following God's purpose. Most people find a career that suits them, but Alexander believes she was chosen to serve by

powers beyond her reach.

Born and raised in Tallahassee, Alexander was considered a hardworking and headstrong woman that loved to help others. It was this trait of servitude that followed her well into her adulthood and throughout her future career.

After receiving her high school diploma, Alexander enrolled at Tallahassee Community College. Upon starting classes, she began working as a librarian's assistant in the TCC library. She graduated from TCC with an associate's degree in English, and moved on to Florida State University where she would graduate with her bachelor's and master's degrees in library sciences and information technology.

Alexander retained her job as a librarian's assistant for the duration of her college education, and having obtained her degree was immediately named director of library services at TCC. She also periodically served as an adjunct professor at TCC and FSU as well.

A cheerful librarian, Alexander genuinely enjoyed her position.

"Working [as Library services director] allowed me to help others grow, and from a superior level," Alexander said about the library.

Alexander felt it her duty to help students that came asking for assistance, remembering that she was once in their shoes. While at TCC, Alexander became the advisor of the Black Student Union (BSU). It had come to their attention that there were no events on TCC's calendar planned for Black History Month in February.

Alexander and the BSU compiled a month's worth of cultural seminars, fairs, rallies and forums that celebrated African Americans as well as the diversity of TCC's campus. These events were a hit around campus and the success made black history month a school-wide celebration from that point on.

Alexander's pioneering steps led to the establishment of a tradition at TCC that still exists today. Now during black history month, TCC produces an open mic night, health fair, gospel extravaganza and "soul food fest" for its students and guests.

Additionally, two highlighted occasions of TCC's black history month are the annual political voting rally and Black History Month Calendar. Both initiatives were created by Alexander, who was alarmed at the voting illiteracy she saw from students while she worked at the college.

The black history month calendar grew to such popularity that it now includes an elegant program that unveils its new edition every year. In 2009, the calendar was named after Alexander in her honor and TCC founded the Cherry Hall Alexander Scholarship – a scholarship awarded for tenacious student leadership. With a resume full of accolades and accomplishments to last a lifetime, Alexander still says she owes it all to her Most High God.

"I believe that God places you where He wants you to be. Everywhere I've been, he's placed me to make a difference," Alexander says while thinking back on her life.

Nowadays Alexander is retired and spends her time traveling via RV with her husband (who is also retired), as well as caring for her 92 year old mother and her beautiful 2-year-old granddaughter. Yet and still, she

Alexander: A Life Filled with Inspiring Students....

continued

enjoys finding her way back to TCC's campus, offering her help in any way that she can.

Alexander accomplished many great things and did it in the name of servant hood. By attempting to help the younger generation gain knowledge, she unknowingly left a footprint on Tallahassee bigger than she could ever imagine.

From a librarian's assistant, Alexander became a pioneer for African-American students by identifying a need and being courageous enough to meet it. Alexander challenges all who she meets to have unshakeable faith in their personal goals, even when there's no tangible evidence to prove it.

When students and friends approach her with adverse circumstances, she admonishes them to trust in themselves, and leaves them with her favorite quote by Norman Vincent Peale: "Stand up to your obstacles and do something about them. You will find that they haven't half the strength you think they have."

TCC announces AMTC open house and upcoming classes

TCC NEWS

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (August 5, 2013) – On Tuesday, August 13, Tallahassee Community College's Advanced Manufacturing Training Center is hosting an open house from 3–7 p.m.

The community is invited to tour TCC's state-of-the-art facility, participate in hands-on activities with manufacturing equipment, and view interactive demonstrations of robotics, computer numerical control (CNC) machining and 3-D printing technology.

"We're inviting the public to come learn about careers in manufacturing and how TCC can help workers gain new skills and help businesses grow," said Bruce Batton, program director of the AMTC. "The event is great for all ages too, with opportunities for kids to learn about science and technology."

The AMTC is located on the southwest corner of the main TCC campus at 3958 West Pensacola Street.

The facility offers cutting-edge training for high-skill and emerging manufacturing processes. Registration is open now for AMTC's next set of courses, which begin in August and take from two weeks to two months to complete.

The schedule includes three evening courses:

Bronze-level Lean: Identifying and eliminating wasteful practices in a process-driven workplace. Prepare for the Society for Manufacturing Engineers Bronze-level knowledge certification. August 20–September 26, Tuesday & Thursday, 6–9 p.m.

Introduction to CNC Machining: Basics of computer numerical control (CNC) machining. Uses classroom discussion and hands-on manual machine training in the manufacturing lab. August 26–October 24, Monday & Thursday, 6–10 p.m.

CNC Machining 2: Prepare for the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) CNC Lathe Operator and CNC Mill Operator credentials. August 19–October 7, Monday & Wednesday, 6–10 p.m.

Two daytime courses will also be offered:

Electronic Systems Associate: Overview of electronics and the principles upon which modern electronic

devices (passive and active) operate. Introduction to basic concepts of electricity and magnetism, electronic circuits, and digital electronics. Prepare for the AC and DC parts of the International Society of Certified Electronics Technicians (ISCET) Electronics Systems Associate exams. August 26–October 2, Monday & Wednesday, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Surface Mount Technician: Prepare to work in a printed circuit board surface mount production facility. Successful completion awards student the IPC Solder and Surface Mount module certification. August 12–August 21, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Additional courses will be offered beginning in October and throughout the year.

The AMTC is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense and the Army Research Office.

For information about the open house or about registering for a class, contact the AMTC at (850) 201-9720 or amtc@tcc.fl.edu, or visit www.tcc.fl.edu/AMTC.

Re-education in Florida

By Mark Howard
FLORIDA TREND

The young Floridians who graduated from high school this spring all left with diplomas, but it has become a fact of life that the traditional diploma has become an empty vessel in terms of what it tells a college or employer. Other credentials — attendance at specialized magnet programs, for example, completion of the International Baccalaureate curriculum or industry certifications from Microsoft or other companies — say much more about a student's readiness for higher ed or the workforce.

Those needing evidence need look no further than the large numbers of recent high school graduates each year who've been required by the state's community colleges to take (non-credit) remedial courses before enrolling in real college classes. New students at community colleges must take readiness tests in basic algebra, reading comprehension and sentence skills and have been required to take remedial courses if their scores indicate they're not ready for college-level work. Most of those who end up taking remedial classes are older, returning students who've been in the workforce for years and whose academic skills need brushing up. Each year, however, many new high school grads have been shocked to find their high school education — diploma notwithstanding — hadn't provided even a basic level of preparation.

Collectively, the state's community colleges have been spending more than \$50 million a year on remedial classes for students fresh out of high school. The expenditure said something about the colleges' efforts to extend access and create success. But it also raised a big question: How could the state justify spending so much money in a college setting for non-college level work?

This year, the state Legislature decided that the community colleges can advise recent high school grads that they should take remedial classes but can no longer require them to take remedial courses — even if they need the help.

This shifts the burden for college preparation back toward the K-12 system, where it should be. But it also creates a huge challenge for the community colleges as they face a scenario in which large numbers of skill-

deficient kids not ready for college will sit in classrooms next to more-prepared peers.

Community college presidents and Randy Hanna, chancellor of the Florida College System, say the schools are focusing energy and money on counseling and tutoring to help those students stay afloat academically. Students also will be encouraged to plan better and define their career and degree pathways at an earlier age. The law, he says, encourages “degree-mapping — looking at where you want to go and setting up a way to get there.”

In the process, however, there will be plenty of pressure where the rubber meets the road — on community college instructors, who will have to coordinate their efforts much more with tutors and counselors, and then still face the prospect of failing a larger number of students than they, or administrators, may be comfortable with. Community colleges will have to work hard to avoid watering down their standards.

Meanwhile, Florida's K-12 system faces big changes and challenges as well. By 2014-15, it has to implement the Common Core system of standards and testing that Florida and 44 other states have adopted to create shared expectations about what elementary, middle and high school students should learn in English, math, history, social studies, science and technical subjects.

There are many things to like about Common Core. It establishes a level field on which Florida's students and teachers can compare themselves to those in other states.

It entrenches accountability further in the system. Not least, it will eliminate further teeth-gnashing over the FCAT, which will be phased out as Common Core phases in. There was nothing wrong with the FCAT (good schools, magnet and IB programs shrugged at it), but it had become a political football.

(My only reservation about Common Core is that Florida, going forward, will be satisfied with the Common Core's standards and not raise our state's standards even higher.)

Re-education in Florida....

continued

The good news in all this smorgasbord of change is that, slowly, the pieces of Florida's educational system are aligning more closely. The law eliminating required remediation focuses community colleges on their mission of providing real college-level education, and it should focus high schools on their mission of preparing students for college or work. Common Core, if complemented by a menu of vocationally oriented programs for kids who want to go to work rather than to college, should align the high school diploma more closely with the demands of either.

The ball moves slowly in education, but it's moving. Florida has an obligation to ensure that the young students who march proudly across the stage to receive their high school diplomas end up with more than a piece of paper.

GCSC Trustees Elect New Chair and Vice Chair

By Ken McVay
WMBB NEWS 13

Gulf Coast State College's District Board of Trustees recently elected new leadership for the 2013/2014 term. Ralph Roberson succeeds Denise Butler as Chair of the Board and Leah Dunn succeeds Dan Estes as Vice Chair, effective July 25, 2013. Roberson and Dunn were appointed by Governor Rick Scott in December of 2011 to the District Board of Trustees at the College.

"It has been an honor working with great board members and leaders like Denise and Dan," said Dr. Jim Kerley, GCSC President. "Both have been rock-solid supporters of the College, always willing to stand up and support our students and always willing to make tough calls on behalf of the College. They have demonstrated courage and steadfast leadership, whether in support of our game-changing technology center or keeping tuition low for students."

"Additionally, our new board leadership will be just as committed and dedicated to our students. Mr. Roberson and Ms. Dunn are outstanding individuals and each brings unique skills to keep this college moving forward," said Kerley.

Roberson, of Port St. Joe, is a certified public accountant and has been the owner of Roberson and Associates P.A. since 1997. From 1993 to 2001, he served on the Board of Trustees of Gulf Coast State College. Roberson has been a member of the Apalachicola Bay Chamber of Commerce since 1987, the Gulf County Chamber of Commerce since 1986 and the Florida Institute of CPAs since 1979. From 1985 to 2006, he was a member of the Rotary Club of Port St. Joe where he served as president and director, and he is also a past member of the Association of Florida Colleges. He received an associate degree from Tallahassee Community College and bachelor's degree from the University of West Florida.

Dunn, of Panama City, is the managing partner of Dunn Properties, LLC and several small businesses. She serves on the Board of the Science and Discovery Center and has chaired it twice. She also serves on the Development Board of Florida State University-Panama City Campus and the Florida Medical Association Alliance. As a military spouse and daughter, she was educated in many

states and studied in Thailand, Germany and Switzerland. She obtained her degree in English from the University of Oklahoma and a language certification in German from the Goethe-Institute of Freiburg, Germany.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees serves as the presiding officer and spokesman of the board, representing the Board at College and community functions as well as state and national meetings. The Chair and Vice Chair both reinforce the mission of the College with board members and the community and help the President preserve the local autonomy of the institution. The chair also coordinates the annual evaluation of the President and negotiates contract provisions.

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Information provided by Gulf Coast State College

FAMU, TCC garner \$2.1 million grant

TALLAHASSEE — Florida A&M University (FAMU) and Tallahassee Community College (TCC) have partnered for a \$2,193,365 grant from the National Institutes of Health Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program in Biomedical Sciences.

The goal of the FAMU-TCC Bridges Program is to cultivate a program that increases the numbers of underrepresented minorities — African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans — attending TCC with the knowledge and skills necessary to attain an Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree, with the additional goal of these graduates obtaining an entry-level degree in the biomedical sciences at FAMU.

"I was very excited when I was informed that we earned the grant," said Carl Goodman, FAMU professor of pharmacology and co-principal investigator. "There was a lot of hard work that went into writing the grant. It is going to do wonders in terms of giving more opportunities for the underrepresented population to

garner careers in the biomedical sciences. When you look at the numbers of African Americans entering these fields, it is just low. This program is unique and will give students an opportunity to be exposed to the biomedical field."

FAMU has strategically positioned itself as one of the few Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to not only serve as a traditional feeder program, but has become a relatively newcomer as a leader in graduating underrepresented minorities with baccalaureate degrees in the biomedical sciences (agriculture sciences and viticulture, biology and chemistry, environmental, chemical and biomedical engineering, environmental chemistry and health, and pharmaceutical sciences).

"I salute Dr. Carl Goodman and Dr. Sandra Suther, as well as their outstanding TCC collaborators for generating this highly competitive training grant," said FAMU Vice President for Research K. Ken Redda. "This five-year project will provide Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program in the Biomedical Sci-

ences and will increase the numbers of underrepresented minority students from TCC to obtain baccalaureate degrees at our institution. Dr. Goodman is not only a brilliant scientist and an astute administrator but he also symbolizes excellence with caring. I have no doubt that this is going to be among the shining examples of a successful BRIDGE Program in the nation."

TCC is fast approaching the status as a minority-majority institution of higher learning. It has an enrollment of 13,908 students and is culturally diversified with 47 percent minorities. TCC has the highest percentage of African-American students among the 28 members of the Florida College System. Among two-year schools, TCC is the No. 1 producer of A.A. degrees in the nation. It is also the number one transfer school to FAMU and Florida State University.

TCC's Dean for Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Calandra Stringer will be leading TCC's participation in this new program.

"This is a great

opportunity for TCC to partner with FAMU in order to increase the pipeline of students who transfer to FAMU," said Stringer. "We are extremely excited about the biomedical sciences program and we are looking forward to introducing the scientific experiences to our students."

Some initiatives for the program include:

- Establishing an innovative recruitment strategy to attract 150 science majors at TCC to the various biomedical science disciplines and research experiences at FAMU. Through the proposed program, there will be seminars, workshops and lectures that will take place on TCC's campus throughout the academic year presented by FAMU biomedical science and research faculty;

- Establishing a FAMU-TCC Biomedical Sciences Forum where 40 TCC students from the pool of 150 underrepresented minorities (URM) will be invited for an one-day orientation during the spring semester to tour FAMU and its bio-

See GRANT/Page A17



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Dream Defenders' Continue Sit-in in Florida's Governor's Office

By James Harper

Special to the NNPA from the Florida Courier

American singer, songwriter, actor and social activist Harry Belafonte, Jr., center, reacts as Dream Defenders Executive Director Phillip Agnew, bottom left, leads a chant Friday, July 26, 2013 in the Capitol rotunda in Tallahassee, Fla. Dream Defenders were joined by Belafonte, Jr. as they went into their 11th day of a sit-in of Florida Gov. Rick Scott's office. The sit-in is their response to the 'not guilty' verdict in the trial of George Zimmerman, the Florida neighborhood watch volunteer who fatally shot Trayvon Martin. They are continuing to demand Scott call a special session. (AP Photo/Phil Sears)

The group of college aged-students who have kept Florida Gov. Rick Scott out of his Tallahassee office off and on for more than two weeks call themselves the "Dream Defenders." Their goal is to make sure the dreams of their generation are not "deferred," a reference to Langston Hughes' famous poem titled "Harlem (Dream Deferred)."

"We are here to no longer defer the dream. These issues are real to our generation. This is our movement, though we welcome icons of the past," said Curtis Hierro, the group's field secretary. "We are a movement of a new generation. We can't rely on other people to do it for us. We are an organized youth resistance. The onus is on us to organize and bring people here."

Their movement has brought civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, entertainer Harry Belafonte, and others to Tallahassee to support them.

Hierro is a recent graduate of the University of Central Florida in Orlando. The Dream Defenders first organized themselves in April 2012. Students from Bethune-Cookman University, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee Community College, and other schools set out on a three-day, 41-mile journey from Daytona Beach to Sanford to protest the improper handling of the Trayvon Martin case by Sanford authorities.

About 40 students from Gainesville, Tallahassee, Miami and Daytona Beach kicked off the march, which was organized to pay homage to Dr. Martin Luther King's march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.

The group began the march at a local Daytona Beach

park and rested at churches along their way to Sanford. The march ended three days later at Allen Chapel AME Church in Sanford, which has been ground zero in the city where Martin was killed by George Zimmerman on Feb. 26, 2012.

Active again

The protesters were spurred to action again after Zimmerman was acquitted on July 13 after his jury trial.

On July 16, about 40 students sat in at the governor's office in Tallahassee, waiting for Scott to return from a trip to New York and take up their demand for a special legislative session addressing laws they say unfairly affect non-White youth.

They want Scott to call a special session to create a Trayvon Martin Civil Rights Act and address "Stand Your Ground" vigilantism, racial profiling and a war on youth that paints us as criminals and funnels us out of schools and into jails."

At the time, Scott's office put out a statement suggesting that Scott would not meet their demands.

"As the governor has said, as a father and a grandfather, his heart goes out to Trayvon Martin's family and all those affected by his death," said Communications Director Melissa Sellers in an email. "We are grateful that people across our great nation have the right to assemble and share their views. ..."

"Immediately following Trayvon Martin's death, Gov. Scott called a bipartisan special task force with 19 citizens to review Florida's Stand Your Ground law. This task force listened to Floridians across the state and heard their viewpoints and expert opinions on this law. The task force recommended that the law should not be overturned, and Gov. Scott agrees."

Scott also called for "a day of prayer" throughout Florida.

A meeting

After putting them off for five days, Scott did finally meet with the Dream Defenders, only to tell them that he supported "Stand Your Ground" and had no intention of calling a special session.

Dream Defenders' Continue Sit-in in Florida's Governor's Office....

continued

After the meeting, Scott left town again, but not before sending Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary Wansley Walters to chat with students for several hours on Aug. 22, 2012.

Dream Defenders Political Director Ciara Taylor said of Walters' visit: "While we appreciate Secretary Walters taking the time to meet with us, we believe the time for talk has passed.

"We currently find ourselves in a state of emergency. There is a growing fear among Black and Brown young people in Florida that their lives are of little value to the state, and the governor's unwillingness to do anything about it is disappointing to us all....

"We urge both Governor Scott and Secretary Wansley to take our calls for justice for Florida's youth seriously and to correct the circumstances that led to the killing of Trayvon Martin last year: racial profiling, Stand Your Ground vigilantism, and the school-to-prison pipeline."

The sit-in continued. As of the Florida Courier's press time late Wednesday night, the Dream Defenders were still occupying the governor's office.

Not going anywhere

Hierro said the Dream Defenders are not going anywhere, even if that means maintaining their protests at the governor's office until March 2014 – Florida's next regularly scheduled legislative session.

"Our goal is to put pressure on. We are going to be here until they come to the table with something.

"They keep talking about costs. What's the cost of a human life?" Hierro said, referring to media reports that it is costing the state \$5,000 a day to handle the protests.

"We are not going to sit idly by. We will move across the state and put in work on the ground," Hierro continued.

Movement will grow

He said whenever a legislative session does convene, Dream Defenders hope to have chapters in colleges and universities across the state that will organize and apply pressure to local state representatives and senators to vote to repeal "Stand Your Ground" and address other issues, including a national call to action to stop racial profiling and end the school-to-prison pipeline.

"Within this month, we expect more engagement as students return back to school. In the fall, we expect our base to experience growth," he said.

Hierro said they are organizers first and they are working to bring even more of their supporters to Tallahassee.

"We don't want any more George Zimmermans. (We want to) stop the climate of hate and injustice," he continued.

No leadership

Phillip Agnew, the organization's executive director, says Scott "is not exercising real leadership.

"So we will remain here, not to retry George Zimmerman, but to express our anger and disappointment at our governor for what happened under his watch peacefully, and to provide a constructive way forward," Agnew said.

"You cannot confront the world as it is without presenting a vision of the world as it should and could be," Agnew stated. "We envision a way forward for a new generation of Floridians – and Americans – that acknowledges race and confronts race, but is not shackled by race. We want to provide this generation with the power and the tools to remove the barriers that stand before us."

Melanie Andrade, president of the FAMU chapter of the Dream Defenders, added, "The governor told us when we met with him that we had big goals, big dreams. Our contention is if it isn't big or doesn't seem impossible at first, you can't call it a dream."

- See more at: http://www.lasentinel.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11682:dream-defenders-continue-sit-in-in-florida-s-governor-s-office&catid=81&Itemid=171#sthash.cLrtU83C.dpuf

Heading Capital City Bank names four new officers

By Democrat staff report

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Capital City Bank has announced that Chris Cherry, Pam Gay, Allie VanLandingham and Alison Voorhees have been named officers at the bank.

Cherry has been named vice president. As financial accounting manager, he is charged with overseeing the corporate finance and accounting function. Cherry worked for Publix Supermarkets Inc. prior to joining Capital City Bank in 2003.

Pam Gay, risk manager in the Human Resources Division, has received the title of senior vice president. She has been with Capital City since 1998. Previously, Gay worked for the Florida Bankers Association, where she served as human resources manager.

Client Experience Manager Allie VanLandingham has been named assistant vice president. A Capital City Bank associate since 2005, she is responsible for managing client service and entertainment, as well as planning corporate events. Previously, she was the off-site center manager for the Center for Workforce Development at Tallahassee Community College.

Alison Voorhees, advertising manager, has been named assistant vice president. In the marketing department, Voorhees is responsible for advertising, budgeting, merchandising, product and service launches and social media. Before joining the bank in 2007, she worked for the Orlando Ballet, Ben Nye Co. and Seven Days of Opening Nights at Florida State University.

Chamber meeting: Building a 'cool factor' in Tallahassee

Incoming businesses talk about Tallahassee's economic assets

By Travis Pillow

FLORIDA CAPITAL BUREAU

Its fertile talent pool and low cost of living helped place Tallahassee in the running with three other cities for a back-office operations center run by the law firm Kaye Scholer.

Jeff Hunter, the firm's chief operating officer, said it was looking for a city that would be attractive to New Yorkers. He said he knew what would give Tallahassee the edge with decision-makers at the firm as they decided where to locate about 100 new jobs. Employees' questions about moving to the new location would be answered if he could get them on a plane.

"If I can get them to see Tallahassee, I can get them to move there," he said.

Hunter was among the executives of three companies that recently chose to do business in Tallahassee who said the city's intangible assets — what Alan Hooper, the president of Hooper Construction, the developer behind the new College Town mixed-use project on Madison Street, called the "cool factor" — could help the region compete with large metropolitan areas.

Hunter said law firms are looking to lower the cost of their services, allowing them to compete on price. Kaye Scholer's rent in Tallahassee is about a fifth of what it would expect to pay in midtown Manhattan, and the company will save about a third on employee salaries compared to what it would pay in its New York offices, Hunter said. And the local labor pool is fed by Tallahassee Community College and two state universities.

He said the law firm was also looking at Wichita, Kan., Springfield, Mo., and Asheville, N.C. A package of economic incentives helped put Tallahassee over the top, coupled with the fact that "I couldn't see New Yorkers going to Wichita or Springfield."

Russ Benblatt, the executive marketing coordinator for Whole Foods Market, joined Hooper and Hunter on a three-member panel at the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce's Annual Community Conference in Amelia Island. The grocer is preparing to open a store on Thomasville Road in Midtown.

He said Whole Foods tends to be "selective" about where it opens new stores, and the company decided to add a Tallahassee location after hearing an outpouring of requests from would-be customers in the area and realizing: "This is a community that wants us. This is a community that really gets who we are."

Benblatt said every store the company builds is different from the others, and it was looking to include items like Gulf Coast seafood and North Florida vegetables in its product mix. The chamber of commerce helped the process along by orchestrating a showcase of local vendors who could supply the grocer with goods from locally grown produce to freshly roasted coffee beans, he said. So far, the store has plans to do business with about a dozen local food producers.

"The chamber helped us be ourselves. That was one of the biggest things that kind of made it easy for us," he said.

Hooper, a longtime Florida State University athletics booster whose Fort Lauderdale-based construction firm is developing the College Town entertainment district, agreed on that count. He said the city's permitting staff "treats us like customers."

"I leave there with a smile on my face, and I can't say that about many building departments," he said.

While the other panelists said they were hard-pressed to identify shortcomings for Tallahassee to correct, Hooper found one such area. He said the Midtown and Gaines Street areas were emerging as places that have the cool factor he spoke of, which can attract young people at different hours of the day or night, as well as companies that tend to gravitate to urban areas.

On the other hand, he said to a burst of applause, "Tennessee Street could use some improvement."

If the city could find a way to revamp one of its major east-west thoroughfares, he said, "then you would give that third place where you could up your game."

\$2.2M grant to go to FAMU, TCC

NIH aims to increase representation of minorities in medicine

By Evan Miles
Democrat writer

Florida A&M University is securing its position as the first-choice university for Tallahassee Community College students to continue their education, and possibly as a leader in graduating minorities with biomedical baccalaureate degrees.

The two institutions have received a shared grant of almost \$2.2 million from the National Institutes of Health Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program in Biomedical Sciences. In an effort to increase the number of minorities in the medical field, FAMU will partner with TCC to ensure the readiness of community college students to enter a four-year biomedical sciences program.

Larry Robinson, FAMU's interim president, said the grant puts a spotlight on the growing relationship between FAMU and TCC. FAMU now maintains a recruiting office on TCC's campus.

"It shows you once again the power of collaboration between these two colleges," Robinson said.

Victor Ibeanusi, the new dean of FAMU's School of the Environment, said he envisions a steady stream of minority students graduating from TCC and coming to FAMU to complete four-year STEM degrees.

"This excites me and it is a great opportunity for recruitment," he said. "It's going to help establish a continued pipeline for various transfer students and increase our enrollment numbers."

TCC has the highest percentage of African-American students graduating with associate degrees of the 28 members of the Florida College System. According to the National Science Foundation, FAMU ranked among the top six institutions graduating African-Americans with science and engineering

See FAMU » 2A

FAMU

Continued » 1A

baccalaureate degrees from 2006 to 2010. However, with only 43,428 African-Americans graduating with science and engineering degrees in 2010, compared to 326,643 whites, FAMU hopes the program will stimulate interest in pursuing science degrees.

"Some of the new areas we have in the School of the Environment are not yet known," Ibeanusi said, "so this will introduce programs to interested students. I would love to speak with students about the opportunities of the program. Students may even be able to use our

program to lead them to graduate schools."

The NIH program will allow TCC students to major in pharmaceutical sciences, biology and chemistry, environmental sciences, life sciences or bio-engineering. The program will first focus on recruitment by bringing FAMU representatives to speak to interested TCC students about the benefits of the programs. It also will offer 10-week summer internships, as well as during fall and spring, where students will research and get hands-on experience in FAMU laboratories.

Along with added enrollment and higher minority graduation rates, the NIH program will aid in students declaring a

major early on in their academic careers. Carl Goodman, FAMU professor of pharmacology and co-principal investigator, said that TCC students generally decide what they want to get a degree in at the end of their fourth or fifth semester.

"One of the things you see at some community colleges is that students, when they are applying, are really going just because they graduated from high school and they really don't know what their intended major will be," Goodman said. "By having a program like this, deans from the departments, faculty and students will be attending TCC and giving these students more information about the program. We're

hoping to have more students attending FAMU who have a keen interest or an idea of what they want to major in, hopefully starting their first semester at TCC."

Students at TCC who are interested in the program may have to take new, required courses. TCC Dean for Curriculum and Instruction Calandra Stringer said the administration is going to play a bigger role in advising students.

"We're going to steer them so that they're taking the right math and science courses," Stringer said. "We're going to make sure they are adequately prepared to enter the program at FAMU."

Recruitment will begin this month.

TCC hosts AMTC open house

On Tuesday, TCC's Advanced Manufacturing Training Center is hosting an open house event from 3 to 7 p.m. The event is an opportunity for the local community to tour TCC's state-of-the-art facility, participate in hands-on activities with manufacturing equipment and view interactive demonstrations of robotics, CNC machining and 3D printing technology. The Advanced Manufacturing Training Center is located on the southwest corner of the main TCC campus at 3958 West Pensacola St.

For more information on this event or the AMTC's services, visit www.tcc.fl.edu/AMTC.

Campus notes is a weekly roundup that appears on Monday. To submit information, email senior writer Doug Blackburn at dblackburn@tallahassee.com

Barron sets stage for Community Conference

Eric Barron must have a very active imagination.

These days, the Florida State president is imagining a hotel and retail shops at the Civic Center offering a "Garnet and Gold experience."

Speaking to the first joint meeting of the boards of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Council on Thursday afternoon on Amelia Island, Barron shared his vision for the future.

A piece of that includes a major-name hotel on the Civic Center site, with retail shops and the Dedman School of Hospitality embedded into operations. The school is part of the College of Business, which Barron also would like to see on the Civic Center property.

Locating a hotel at the Civic Center property is not a new idea. It has been talked about for a long time. Bringing in Florida State as part of the attraction is a game changer and shows the kind of public-private future Barron embraces.

"I don't just want (Florida State) to be highly rated," Barron said, "I want my students to get jobs."

I've never really known what people mean by "it" when they say someone "gets it," but clearly Barron does, with "it" in this case meaning the role of the university in a college town.

He gets the positive economic impact FSU has in the community and understands how much greater it could be.

He values the role the greater community can have in positive ways for FSU, as well.

And he values the collective partnership the three major schools — Florida State, Florida A&M University and Tallahassee Community College — are building.

Parson me if I gush.

But with College Town happening on Gaines Street and Barron's vision for the Civic Center area and with FSU growing again — it added 94 faculty last year and plans to add another 50 this year targeted at STEM areas — well, there is good reason for excitement.



Bob Gabordi
Executive
Editor

Barron spoke not only of the role FSU wants to play in growing the community, but also the role all three schools can play. It is something they call "Educate Your Business."

"It is what we can do together" working with the business community, he said. "Tap us on the shoulder," he said, "and we'll make the call" to help bring in new development and provide training and workforce development.

You may recall that three years ago, after hearing the newly minted FSU president explain his vision at the annual Tallahassee Chamber Community Conference, I was less than kind in assessing his speechifying. I was, however, accurate.

This was different. He was different. Looking relaxed and confident, he articulated a clear and reachable future, a vision in which the community is a partner and not simply asked to ride along on FSU's coat-tails.

To use a familiar sports analogy, with the Chamber's annual community conference kicking off Friday, if this was the pre-game show, bring on the main event. It promises to be something to remember.

Just a reminder, use the hashtag #talacc in your tweets about the conference and look for our updates all weekend.

You can send comments by clicking on Bob Gabordi's blogs on Tallahassee.com and MoveTallahassee.com, emailing him at bgabordi@tallahassee.com or sending a private message on Facebook, Tallahassee.com and Twitter @bgabordi. His mailing address is Bob Gabordi, Executive Editor, Tallahassee Democrat, P.O. Box 990, Tallahassee, FL 32302. Call him at 850-595-2177.

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Leaders Can and Should Still Learn

By Brian Rowland
850 MAGAZINE

According to Webster, the word “leader” can take on three distinct meanings: 1. The position of being a leader. 2. The ability and capacity to lead. 3. The act or instance of leading others.

In our world there are people who lead and those who follow. Both groups are valuable and needed to create maximum results. In a well-run business, strong leadership with a strong team of individuals who follow and execute the requests of leadership can result in an accomplished company that enjoys success. A strong leader and a team of managers working in unison is a beautiful thing to watch and to be a part of.

Sure, one can learn the principals of leadership from books and mentoring, but nothing compares to experience, learning by trial and error and listening and learning from others who have amassed major accomplishments.

Tallahassee Community College recently invested in becoming a sponsor site for Chick-fil-A’s annual Leadercast program. This is a one-day event that brings together some of the most successful leaders and brilliant minds on one stage so they can share their thoughts on and experience with leadership.

When I heard about this, I didn’t hesitate to have 850 — the Business Magazine of Northwest Florida become a media sponsor. I purchased two tickets so that I could attend along with McKenzie Burleigh, Rowland Publishing’s manager of sales. We blocked off the day and became note-taking students.

Chick-fil-A filled the Georgia Dome that Friday in May with amazing corporate horsepower. The event was simulcast to 750 sponsored locations around the world (including Tallahassee), reaching more than 120,000 individuals who were seeking the knowledge, inspiration and motivation to become smarter, well-rounded leaders.

I honestly arrived that morning with few expectations other than the knowledge I would be listening to great leaders like Duke Basketball Coach Mike Krzyzewski, corporate icon and author Jack Welch, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and others I didn’t know.

Krzyzewski related how he accomplished the major feat of taking the individual talents and egos of a group of NBA stars and molding them into a gold medal-winning U.S Olympic basketball team. Welch spent 70 percent of his corporate CEO life as a mentor to his management team and spoke of how and why leaders need to constantly prune their corporate rose bush of employees. Rice explained how she personally managed her time and mind doing one of the most difficult and demanding jobs in the world today.

Greeting guests that day were TCC’s President Jim Murdaugh, Robin Johnston, vice president for Institutional Advancement and TCC’s Foundation director, and Kimberly Moore, vice president of Workforce Development — the driving forces behind bringing this day to Tallahassee. They are strong, visionary leaders for Tallahassee Community College and are committed to bringing this type of ongoing learning resource to our area for those seeking to learn about or fine-tune their leadership skill sets.

To have an opportunity to hear any one of these leaders would cost a considerable amount of time and expense. Yet on this day, for around a hundred dollars, one could sit back and listen to eight interviews/presentations from accomplished, high profile leaders.

But it wasn’t all classroom work. The emcee, Tripp Crosby, had a quick and self-deprecating wit and provided several short and light-hearted entertaining breaks in the action. There was also a three-course catered lunch, snacks and gift portfolio.

To top it all off, everyone’s car was meticulously washed while they attended the event. Yes, all this for around a hundred dollars. That was the best hundred dollars I’ve spent in the past year, hands down.

In this letter, it is difficult to express exactly all I learned. I wrote about 10 pages of notes and a week later took an afternoon to condense them into four categories of learning. This summer I plan to share what I learned with my management team and then break the staff into teams so each individual can learn the principles I took away from this event. I want to take these lessons full

Leaders Can and Should Still Learn....

continued

circle to help my most valued asset, my staff.

Sadly, one observation I made that day was that just a relatively small group of Tallahassee senior leadership attended. Were they too busy? Do they feel there is no room for them to learn from people who will likely forget more about leadership than most will ever know?

When a leader feels there is nothing else to learn, or is unwilling to pause to learn more about leadership, you, your staff and your company will suffer.

As Tallahassee embarks on its journey to the next level, through Imagine Tallahassee, I can only urge the community's leadership in the private, public and political sectors to never forget to seek more knowledge. It will bring you, your staff and whatever you lead closer to success.

Count me in for six tickets next year, plus the sponsorship of Tallahassee Magazine and 850. If you are interested in being notified of next year's Chick-fil-A Leadercast date, just send me an email (browland@rowlandpublishing.com), and it will be done.

This will be the best investment you make in yourself and your company in 2014.

Brian Rowland

browland@rowlandpublishing.com

State colleges promote veteran friendly policies on campus

By Jason Schultz
PUBLICATION

The Florida College System's 28 colleges statewide, including Palm Beach State College, have joined the national "Keys to Facilitating Veterans' Success on Campus" initiative which encourages campus policies that help veterans, active-duty service members and their families attending those schools.

More than 250 colleges and universities nationwide are a part of the veteran-friendly program.

The eight initiatives on the college campuses that will be created by the veterans program include:

Creating a culture of trust for veterans across campus.

Ensuring support from campus leadership.

Implementing an early-alert system so veterans receive academic, career and financial advice before being overwhelmed.

Coordinating efforts for all veterans and creating a designated space on campus for those efforts.

Collaborating with local communities and organizations for veterans.

Utilizing data tools to collect and track information on veterans.

Providing professional development for faculty and staff on veterans issues.

Developing systems to ensure effective practices for veterans are sustainable.

The Florida College System had 20,745 veterans enrolled as of April.

blockbuster term in late June, members of Congress and watchdog groups have urged the justices to allow cameras into the courtroom for the first time, broadcast live audio of their proceedings and adopt a binding code of ethics.

Many of the demands come from Democrats and liberal interest groups concerned about the court's conservative tilt.

branches of government," says Doug Kendall, president of the Constitutional Accountability Center.

Same-day audio from court arguments has been released in a few cases, beginning with *Bush v. Gore* in 2000. Same-day written transcripts have been made available to the public since 2006.

Roberts, who became chief

able to watch. Many were lawyers, journalists, guests of the court and those who could afford to pay others to hold their place in line.

For the historic gay marriage cases, the court broke with its normal policy and released audio transcripts later in the day. That was the first time in a year that members of the public didn't have to wait until week's

The high court's approval rating in a recent USA Today poll hit 43 percent, an eight-year low. A coalition of public interest groups called on the justices last month to release their financial disclosure reports online. That was followed this month by a group of Democratic senators and House members urging the justices to adopt a code of conduct.



TCC Growing & Changing

TCC Board of trustees meets to discuss a four year degree and a possible name change.

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BEF Announces 2013 Honorees

CAPITAL OUTLOOK

The Bethel Empowerment Foundation, Inc., has announced the community members to be honored during the annual banquet to take place on Thursday, Aug. 22 at 7 p.m. at Sheraton Four Points Hotel. There are 12 community members to be honored for community leadership are:

- Mr. Steve Beasley, Business Owner;
- Ms. Lanetra Bennett, Reporter, WCTV, Eyewitness News;
- Reverend Brant Copeland, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church;
- Mr. Jordan Culver, Reporter, Tallahassee Democrat;
- Dr. Edward Holifield, Physician;
- Mr. Henry Hunter, Esq., Henry C. Hunter and Associates;
- Honorable Nick Maddox, Chair, Leon County Commission;
- Ms. Heather Mitchell, President, United Way;
- **Dr. Jim Murdaugh, President, Tallahassee Community College;**
- Mr. Sean Pittman, Esq., Pittman Law Firm;
- Honorable Michelle R. Vasilinda, Florida House of Representatives;
- Honorable Alan Williams, Chair, Florida Black Legislative Caucus (Florida House of Representatives).

The families of the year are:

- Mr. and Mrs. Ralph (Pam) Coleman
- Attorney and Mrs. John (Judge Shirley) Hale

The business of the year is:

- Blue Collar Restaurant
- Louis and Yvonne Chambers

The organizations of the year are:

- The Boys & Girls Club – Ms. Theresa Flury, President/CEO
 - Big Bend Hospice – Ms. Cathy Adkison, President/CEO
- And the person of the year is:
- Joe Thomas, (Retired) Director, Walker Ford Center

TCC to explore offering first-ever four-year degree

College considers strong demand for nurses in community

By Doug Blackburn

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT



Tallahassee's two hospitals are facing a nursing shortage that promises to only grow worse. Especially in terms of nurses with baccalaureate degrees.

The CEOs at both hospitals have met with Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh and members of his leadership team to see if TCC is in a position to provide a solution.

There's just one problem.

TCC, throughout its 47-year history, has never offered a four-year degree. Among its peers in the Florida College System, it is decidedly old school. While 23 of the 28 FCS institutions have shed the word "community" in their names, many of them smaller schools than 14,000-student TCC, TCC has remained focused on training individuals for the workforce and graduating students with associate degrees who are ready to matriculate to Florida State, Florida A&M or another four-year school.

But that could change. The TCC Board of Trustees is scheduled to hold what Murdaugh envisions as the first in a series of workshops to explore the possibility of adding a bachelor of applied science in nursing degree during its monthly meeting on Monday.

"We believe it's an important part of us meeting the

needs of the community," Murdaugh told trustees at their May meeting when he introduced the proposal and the idea of using a workshop to investigate what adding the college's first four-year program might entail.

It's a more involved process than it might seem. If the trustees were to agree, it would require developing the curriculum and working with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, its accrediting agency, to make sure the new degree is approved.

It's a process that could easily take two years. It might also involve changing the name of the school — an idea that at least one trustee balked at immediately when it was first discussed in May.

"I think it's an issue we have danced around for a long time. I think it would be an issue," Trustee Frank Messersmith said.

Murdaugh intends to have the president and a trustee from one of TCC's sister colleges on hand Monday to answer questions from trustees and explain what they encountered when their school added four-year degrees — and changed the name of their institution.

Murdaugh has made no secret that he believes adding the nursing bachelor's degree would be in keeping with TCC's mission.

"It's as important as heck in terms of our relationships, it's as important as heck in terms of our branding," Murdaugh said.

Health care is ever evolving. When it comes to the nursing staffs at hospitals — and keep in mind the Department of Veterans Affairs is hoping to build a hospital in Tallahassee in the near future — the 2010 Institute of Medicine recommendations included transforming acute-care hospitals to meet the goal of having 80 percent of their nurses armed with bachelor's degrees by 2020.

At Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, just 56 percent of the nurses have earned a bachelor's degree, said Barbara

TCC to explore offering first-ever four-year degree....

continued

"We're going to an all BAS nursing workforce," she said.

TCC is well-prepared to train nurses and has an active associate degree program housed in its Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education building located behind TMH. But if TMH is hiring only nurses with bachelor's degrees, that would prevent TCC students, at least in the current model, from seeking employment at the growing hospital next door.

FSU and FAMU both have four-year degree nursing programs, but there's a catch. FSU does not accept transfer students with associate degrees into its College of Nursing; it requires its students to go through the entire sequence at FSU.

"One of the things we're finding," Alford said, "is that students who graduate from FSU and FAMU with nursing degrees don't stay in Tallahassee — they go home. One of the things TCC brings to us is that the students who go to TCC are local. This helps us tremendously."

Ann Smith, the chief nursing officer at Capital Regional Medical Center, is also on the board at TCC's nursing school. She is eager to see TCC expand its offerings to include the bachelor's degree in nursing.

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At Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, just 56 percent of the nurses have earned a bachelor's degree, said Barbara Alford, a TMH vice president and chief of nursing. She averages 90 nursing vacancies a year and noted that more than half of her nursing staff is age 40 or older.

"We're going to an all BAS nursing workforce," she said.

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Ann Smith, the chief nursing officer at Capital Regional Medical Center, is also on the board at TCC's nursing school. She is eager to see TCC expand its offerings to include the bachelor's degree in nursing.

"We definitely need more bachelor-prepared nurses in our community. We have a lot of associate-degree nurses in Tallahassee who want to go back and get their bachelor degree, and it's not that easy to do," she said.

A bachelor's degree does more than qualify nurses for a changing hospital environment, Smith noted. It's also a gateway to nurse-practitioner degrees or possible management positions at different health care operations.

"I think it's really good for Tallahassee and our community to have a third bachelor program here," Smith said. "I think everybody feels good about the college moving forward with this."

That remains to be seen.

TCC Trustee Allison DeFoor did not appear enthralled when Murdaugh introduced the subject in May. He voiced concern that adding the four-year degree might cause TCC to lose sight of its historical commitment to students in need of an associate degree.

TCC to explore offering first-ever four-year degree....

continued

"I think the burden falls heavily on those who advocate change. I think we need to be very strategic and not get swept up in the movement," DeFoor said. "When you bend the twig, that's where you're going to end up growing."

Murdaugh cautioned trustees that he remembered when the school was named Tallahassee Junior College. The shift to TCC did not fundamentally change the school or its mission, and another name change wouldn't either, he said.

"I'm very sensitive to the mission of the community college," Murdaugh said. "If we add a bachelor's program with 100 students, that doesn't change the mission."

State colleges offer nearly \$1 million in scholarships

By Scott Travis
SUN SENTINEL

State colleges offer one of the cheapest ways in Florida to get a higher education, but for some students the price tag (about \$315 per class) is still out of reach. That may be especially true for students whose family income is just high enough to disqualify them from the federal Pell Grant.

But help is on the way. The Florida College System Foundation, the fundraising arm of the state system, has announced nearly \$1 million in scholarships to students at state colleges, including Broward College, Palm Beach State College and Miami Dade College.

The foundation's board of directors kicked off a scholarship tour Tuesday at Florida State College at Jacksonville. Over the next several weeks, all 28 colleges will receive checks for a share of the \$905,899 scholarship pot.

More than \$575,000 in scholarships will be allocated to first-generation students. Research shows that students are influenced by whether or not their parents attended college when deciding on attending, state officials say.

"First-generation students face unique challenges, including less academic preparation, limited access to information about the college experience and lack of support," a state release says. "Scholarships can help alleviate financial struggles for many of these students."

Another \$330,000 will be for students in nursing and allied health fields. These programs are among the most expensive degrees for students to pursue because of laboratory courses, books, national board exam fees, uniform fees and equipment.

Students can apply for scholarships through their local college foundation or financial aid office. Each college will set specific criteria for receiving the awards.

For more information, visit the Florida College System Foundation.

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Special session bid fails, but protest heading into its 2nd month

By John Kennedy
POSTONPOLITICS.COM

Democrats have failed in a bid to call a special session of the state Legislature to repeal the controversial "stand your ground law."

Enough Republicans had voted 'no' by late Wednesday to scuttle the push for a session which used a never-before-trying poll of lawmakers. Protesters on Wednesday also marked the 30th day of their sit-in outside Gov. Rick Scott's office demanding the special session, a protest spawned by George Zimmerman's acquittal in the Trayvon Martin shooting.

Although a decision on the session won't become official until midnight Monday, more than 80 of Florida's 119 lawmakers refused to endorse the push for a session. Three-fifths support of the Legislature, or roughly 95 votes in favor, are needed under the state constitution.

All but one of the 'no' votes have come from Republicans, with only Rep. Mike Clelland, D-Lake Mary, breaking ranks with Democratic leadership.

"Not enough votes 4 SYG Special Session," House Speaker Will Weatherford, R-Wesley Chapel, said in a message on Twitter. "FL supports self defense laws. We're spending way too much on protest security."

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement said Wednesday that overtime costs for security at the Capitol has neared \$150,000 since the protest began. So far, legislative leaders, Scott and the state's Department of Management Services have not indicated they would seek to end the protest.

Still, Wednesday evening signs were posted at the Capitol warning that "routinely scheduled" fire alarm safety testing would occur between 8 p.m. and midnight. "This testing will include the constant ringing of a loud, high pitch fire alarm throughout multiple floors of the Florida Capitol Building," the sign warned.

"We're not leaving," said Dwayne Campbell, a student at Tallahassee Community College and a member of the Dream Defenders. "We are only becoming more mobilized."