

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



January 17, 2015 - February 13, 2015

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



- WTXL 4, 11, 21, 27, 30
- Tallahassee Democrat. . . 5-6, 8-17, 20, 22-23, 28-29, 31-33, 35
- Montgomery Advertiser 7
- Havana Herald 18, 25, 34
- Wakulla News 19, 24
- Foster Folly News. 26

January 17, 2015- February 13, 2015

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



Electronic Media

- January 18 - WTXL - TCC hosts Gym Force Classic gymnastics tournament
- January 18 - WTWC - Mayor Andrew Gillum talks new local job opportunities for TCC grads
- January 20 - WTXL - TCC men's basketball gearing up for tilt with Northwest Florida
- January 23 - WTXL - Girl Scout cookie eating contest to be held at TCC
- January 23 - WTXL - Cherry Alexander African-American History calendar to be unveiled
- January 24 - WCTV - Girl Scouts of the Panhandle celebrate "40 Years of Samoas" at TCC
- January 26 - WCTV - Shonda Knight to emcee African-American History calendar event
- February 3 - WTXL - TCC men's basketball raises money for United Way
- February 3 - WCTV - Parents of TCC student Anthony Branca sue Comcast after his death
- February 6 - WTXL - Opening Day 2015 for TCC baseball, softball
- February 9 - WTXL - Girl Scout "Run for the Cookies" to kick off at TCC
- February 9 - WTXL - TCC professor Frank Leonard discusses officer-involved shootings
- February 9 - WTXL - TCC2FSU Recreation Passes offered for TCC/FSU events
- February 12 - WTXL - TCC men's basketball eliminated from postseason contention

TCC participates in 2015 MLK Day of Service

ABBIE MAURER

WTXL

Tallahassee Community College (TCC) takes part in the second annual MLK Day of Service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Its part of United We Serve, a national call-to-service initiative. It calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems.

Last year's local Day of Service brought in over 120 volunteers who served a combined 488 hours at eight different non-profits around Tallahassee. Those included the Big Bend Homeless Coalition, American Red Cross, Leon County Humane Society, Second Harvest of the Big Bend and the TCC Community Garden.

Ryan Rogers, TCC's Service Learning and Civic Engagement coordinator, tells us they enjoy being a part of the community.

"We definitely want to be in the community, and on many occasions even our presidents says ' We very much love being a community college,'" said Rogers. "So that's really what we're striving for. To really have the community come on to campus and us to go out into the community. So it really effects some change."

Fundraising workshop this Wednesday

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence will offer a special fundraising workshop Wednesday, Jan, 21, at the Tallahassee Community College Capitol Center. The workshop, titled "Removing the Mystique Behind Planned Giving," will take place from 9 to 11 a.m. Charon Bogner, CEO of Planned Giving Network, LLC, will present.

Attendees will identify ways to diversify the funding and support their organizations receive. Participants will also earn two credits toward the Certified Fund Raising Executive credential.

Tickets are \$25 for INIE members and \$45 for nonmembers. Members must log in to their accounts on the INIE website in order to receive the registration discount.

The workshop is recommended for attendees at all levels of experience. For information, contact Lisa Powell at (850) 201-9436 or powell@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC Day of Service set for Monday

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

TCC will participate in its second annual MLK Day of Service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Monday.

The MLK Day of Service is a part of United We Serve, a national call-to-service initiative. It calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems.

Last year's Day of Service drew in over 120 volunteers, who served a combined 488 hours at eight different non-profits around Tallahassee. Volunteers will be split into groups and shuttled to five TCC Community Partner Agencies to complete a variety of service projects.

The Day of Service event is open to the community. For information, contact Ryan Rogers at (850) 201-6146 or rogersr@tcc.fl.edu.

Deadline near for Fall 2015 TCC scholarships

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Students looking for money to help with school costs have just three weeks left to apply for scholarships at TCC.

The scholarship application deadline for the Fall 2015 semester is Monday, February 2.

Scholarships can be a great help in offsetting education costs. During the 2013-14 academic year, TCC's Office of Financial Aid awarded over \$33 million in scholarships and grants.

Students can apply online for a variety of TCC scholarships in a matter of minutes by logging on to www.tcc.fl.edu/scholarships. For information, contact the Office of Financial Aid at (850) 201-8399 or finaid@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC's surgical technology grads fare well

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

All seven members of TCC's inaugural surgical technology class, as well as five of the six members of the second class, have passed their national certification exams and are already employed in the field.

TCC's certification pass rates of 100 percent for the first class and 83.3 percent for the second compare favorably with the national passing average of 69.4 percent.

All 13 students in the first two cohorts completed a surgical technology certificate while at TCC. In addition, 12 of those 13 graduated with an Associate of Science degree.

Students in the surgical technology program also receive opportunities to learn from TCC's clinical affiliates, Capital Regional Medical Center and Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare.

For information, contact Shannon Smith at (850) 558-4573 or smitshan@tcc.fl.edu.

Graham, Gillum: Obama's goals would have 'big impact' in Tallahassee

SEAN ROSSMAN

THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER

U.S. Rep. Gwen Graham and Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum lauded President Obama's calls for expanding high-speed internet access, making community college more affordable and assisting working families following his State of the Union address Tuesday.

Gillum was Graham's guest at her first State of the Union address, where the two witnessed Obama's hour-long speech on climate change, the economy, efforts to combat ISIS and cybersecurity among other issues.

"The president's speech laid the groundwork for a big impact on Tallahassee," Gillum said. "From the free community college to the expanded broadband initiative to strengthening working families, these initiatives hit home."

One of the most important parts of Obama's speech, according to Graham, was his proposal for free community college, a proposal that if it were to become law, would surely impact the 14,000 students at Tallahassee Community College.

"Education is one of the largest economic drivers in North Florida," Graham said. "Community colleges provide a crucial role in training the next generation of workers for small business and new industries."

Obama said "bright, striving Americans" are priced out of their education or graduate strapped with a mountain of debt. He said he wanted to decrease the cost of community college to "zero." Obama's proposal applies to students with a 2.5 GPA and above. It has the federal government paying three-quarters of the cost while states would cover the rest.

"Many Democrats are already supporting the president's community college proposal," Graham said. "Republicans are asking how we're going to pay for it. I think this is an issue we can work together on and find a real solution for."

About 47 percent of people age 25 or older in Tallahassee have a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the U.S. Census, a number Gillum said he hopes would improve if Obama's plan comes to fruition.

"TCC is already a great, affordable institution," Gillum said. "This proposal has the potential to increase its capacity to produce a highly skilled workforce for the new economy of our city."

Gillum most connected with the president's plans to address issues facing working families. Obama highlighted efforts to make mortgages more affordable and plans for paid sick leave and child care.

"It is paramount that we invoke a culture shift that invests heavily in children," Gillum said. "That is something that I am working to address in Tallahassee, to drive bolder efforts that enable children and families to grow strong."

Gillum added he was particularly interested in the president's efforts to increase access to high-speed internet in rural areas.

"Here in Tallahassee, too few people have access to high-speed Internet," he said. "In order to enhance our support of entrepreneurship and innovation, we need to make important investments in the tools and resources needed to build a new economy for our city."

As Obama turns the corner of his second term, he faces a Republican-controlled Congress, which includes fellow Democrat Graham, a self-proclaimed bipartisan. During the speech, she sat with fellow Florida Rep. David Jolly, a Pinellas County Republican.

"I don't agree with all of the president's proposals, like raising taxes while our economy is still recovering," she said. "But the president provided some common sense ideas that Republicans and Democrats can agree on."

She said Obama's speech was about starting a conversation on our nation's most pressing issues with the new Congress.

"The people of North Florida don't expect Democrats and Republicans to agree on everything," she said. "But they do expect us to work together to get things done."

It was not Gillum's first appearance at a presidential State of the Union address, as he has been a guest before with former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

He's also in Washington, D.C., this week for the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Meanwhile, he hopes Tallahassee can build on the president's speech.

"It is our job now to make sure that these initiatives are carried out in a way that benefits our community now and in the future," he said.

William Thomas "Bill" Murdaugh

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (OBITUARIES)

William Thomas "Bill" Murdaugh, age 91, having traveled this world extensively in his career as a rocket scientist, relocated to the heavenly realm on January 16, 2015.

He is no doubt busy looking around for a project and trying to locate anyone who speaks Spanish. To honor his wishes, a private family service was held Tuesday January 20, 2015.

Bill was born the youngest child of James Samuel Murdaugh and Mattie Jennings Murdaugh who predeceased him. He was also predeceased by his sister Louise Murdaugh Brown and his brother Raymond Murdaugh.

Bill enlisted in the Marine Corps in August of 1942. After basic training he returned briefly to Blytheville AK to marry his childhood sweetheart Kattie Mae Bingham before being sent overseas to war. The two of them shared 53 years of love, adventure, and service. Kattie predeceased Bill in 1997.

He was sent to the Admiralty Islands with the 6th US Marine Division where he was part of an 82 man communication platoon attached to an Army unit in the Philippines.

Here he encountered the Spanish language and began a lifelong interest in that language. He seldom spoke of his service in the Pacific theater but his few comments made it clear that it was a brutal time.

At the end of WW II the couple moved to Columbus OH, starting their family as Bill worked construction by day and studied electronics by night.

He remained in the Marine Corps Reserves and was called back to active duty for the Korean Conflict.

At the end of training in Cherry Point NC, Bill's commander recommend Bill for advanced electronic school with the explanation that he was the only man in the unit with a child and theirs was a near certain death mission.

That decision made Bill one of two men in his group to survive Korea and set him firmly on the path of a life spent working with weaponry missiles. He once remarked

that "too many good men died fighting; it made better sense to fire missiles at the enemy than to meet them face to face in hand to hand combat."

He worked for a number of companies in his specialty of missile electronics: designing and re-wiring missiles to hone their accuracy and performance.

When a knotty problem arose, he was known to bring the schematics home, push the furniture against the walls in the living room, and crawl over them all night tracing wiring to locate problems. He took great pride in his small contribution to national security during the Cold War. At launch time, it was always "my missile" and it performed well; he received numerous citations for excellence.

Along the way, Bill continued his studies of Spanish and was an active father teaching his children many life skills and serving as a model for the values he wished them to learn.

He and Kattie made certain their children absorbed the lessons of hard work, absolute belief that all people deserve respect, and the importance of service to an ideal greater than the individual. He was a model for living to the end, even choosing when to pass the reins to his children as he elected to moved to Westminster Oaks and enjoy his last years surrounded by numerous friends.

Bill will be remembered as a modest man whose blue jeans and good ole' boy Southern charm hid a fierce intellect and razor sharp wit. No one can recall him ever raising his voice but his will was that of a Marine at all times; he was seldom challenged and less frequently retreated.

To the end he remained quietly stubborn, interested in politics, current on Florida State football, and fond of the many people with whom he readily connected. He was an easy man to respect, admire, and love. His family will continue to treasure and repeat many of Bill's succinct observations on life and human nature assuring that he lives on in story and legend.

William Thomas "Bill" Murdaugh....

continued

Bill is survived by his daughter Linda L. Ward of Greenville SC and Linda's children: Maj. Jason Ward, USAF, his wife April, and their children Christian Thomas, Brennan Marshal, Ryan Michael, and Isabelle Louise all of Lansing KS, and Jeremy Marshal Ward, his wife Carrie, and their sons Ian Marshal and Thomas Wayne, all of Wake Forest NC.

He is also survived by his son Dr. James Thomas "Jim" Murdaugh, Jim's wife Sara and their son Austin Thomas, all of Tallahassee FL.

A close and longtime family friend, Jan Rampey of Greenville SC also survives him.

The family has been uplifted by the many sincere expressions of support offered by friends and colleagues.

Those wishing to make memorials may wish to consider Westminster Oaks Foundation, 4449 Meandering Way, Tallahassee, FL 32308; Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Center Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32308; or Shriner's Hospital, 950 West Faris Road, Greenville SC, 29605.

Rocky Bevis of Bevis Funeral Home (www.bevisfh.com, 850-385-2193) is assisting the family with their arrangements.

Goals high for 2nd set of conference games

Healthy men's squad seeks strong finish; women in tie for 1st

JORDAN CULVER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Eddie Barnes is pleased with where Tallahassee Community College's men's basketball team is after its first round of conference play, but he's looking for improvement before the end of the season.

The Eagles (16-5, 2-2 Panhandle Conference) have battled through injuries and several bouts of the common cold to remain in second place in a conference with Northwest Florida State College, the No. 2 team in Division I Junior College basketball.

In fact, TCC will have a chance to avenge an 85-78 loss at the hands of the Raiders (20-0, 4-0) Wednesday night in Niceville.

"We've had a few days of practice and we're kind of finding ourselves again," Barnes said. "We can be the warriors I know we are. I think we can finish 3-1 or maybe 4-0 in this second round."

The men are held together by a trio of sophomores. Elmo Stephen, Dirk Williams and Eric Nottage — all second-year players — have not missed a game yet this season, and Barnes said they've kept the team afloat while other contributing players have tried to get healthy.

Williams and Stephen average 17.1 and 16 points per game, respectively, and Nottage leads the team with six assists per game.

"It has been a group effort," Barnes said.

"We've had some of our kids come off the bench and play well. We're going to our sophomores, who've been able to carry the load as far as scoring. With all of that being said, the freshman are understanding they have to contribute on the defensive end and on offense too."

As the Eagles prepare for the second round of the conference play, Barnes said there's still room for improvement with eight games left in the season.

"We're 16-5, 2-2 in the conference," Barnes said.

"We've put ourselves in a very good position conference-wise. We haven't had our starting five together since Christmas. We've dealt with injuries and fighting the cold, people coming down with typical viruses and things. For the first round, people have done a good job surviving."

TCC's women's basketball team shocked the Panhandle Conference by handing Northwest Florida State its only conference loss of the season on Jan. 3, and head coach Franqua Bedell said his group — currently ranked No. 10 in the nation — has its eyes on bigger goals.

"I think we're in a pretty good position as far as the conference," Bedell said. "We've got to keep pushing. We're in a good position. We've got to stay focused and take one game at a time."

TCC (18-4, 3-1) is in a three-way tie for first place in the Panhandle conference with Chipola (19-1, 3-1) and Northwest Florida State (18-1, 3-1) and is ranked No. 2 in the state by the Florida College System Activities Association (FCSAA).

"The one thing you kind of don't expect is the fact the girls are battling to be in that position," Bedell said.

"We talk about it every day and work toward it every day. To be in that position is a good feeling. We've worked hard to be there. We've earned the right to be there, now we need to work to stay there."

Bedell said Sweden native Benedicta Makakala has emerged as a leader on the team.

"We've had a lot of people step up and take on the role when we need it," he said.

"Benedicta, her leadership on the floor, her voice, her defensive prowess night in and night out and her consistency has made a big difference for where we are today."

TCC falls on the road 72-52

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LOCAL BRIEFS)

The Tallahassee Community College women could not overcome an early double-digit deficit in their 72-52 loss to Panhandle Conference foe Northwest Florida State College on Wednesday night.

The Eagles are now 3-2 in conference play.

Jeremica Edwards led the Eagles in scoring with 20 points and seven rebounds. Cat Wells and Karley Barnes also scored in double figures for the Eagles with 11 points. Barnes also led Tallahassee with nine rebounds.

TCC returns home Saturday against Pensacola State College at 5:30 p.m.

TCC men and women in the top 5 of FCSAA poll

BRAD DALTON
WTXL

The FCSAA released its weekly men's and women's basketball coaches' polls on Wednesday and Tallahassee Community College continued to have a presence in the upper half of the rankings.

In the men's poll, Tallahassee moved back up one spot to No. 5, thanks to a 61-58 victory at Chipola College in its most recent game January 13. The Eagles supplanted Gulf Coast State College who dropped to No. 10 after losing a pair of Panhandle Conference games last week.

The top four in the poll remained intact from last week – Northwest Florida State College, Eastern Florida State College, Broward College and St. Petersburg College.

The College of Central Florida leads the second half of the poll and is followed by Palm Beach State College, Daytona State college, Pensacola State College and Gulf Coast State.

In the women's poll, Tallahassee and Northwest Florida State swapped spots, resulting in a No. 3 ranking for the Eagles. Tallahassee dropped a 64-58 game at top-ranked and then-undefeated Chipola on January 13. Northwest Florida State then handed the Indians their first loss of the season on Saturday, helping the Raiders move into the No. 2 spot.

Despite the loss, Chipola continues to lead the poll.

Central Florida is ranked fourth followed by Florida State College at Jacksonville, Gulf Coast State, Eastern Florida State, Daytona State, St. Petersburg and Santa Fe College.

Rudy Ferguson trying to improve Griffin Heights

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

You have to give Pastor Rudy Ferguson credit. He's trying hard to make change in the Griffin Heights neighborhood where he grew up. It's where he pastors a church. And it's where he lives.

Last year, when tensions in the community were running high following a series of police-related shootings, in addition to other crimes involving handguns in the community, Ferguson opened the doors of his church, New Birth Tabernacle of Praise on Harlem Street, for a community meeting. It was packed with elected officials, City Manager Anita Favors Thompson and many of her department heads, and members of the community.

Everyone agreed that better communication was part of the issue between police and this city's residents. But there were other issues, such as adult education, housing, poverty, unemployment and in Griffin Heights, a sense of community pride.

Ferguson held a couple of follow up meetings, with fewer members in attendance. He was not deterred, but it was a realization that getting people who feel lethargic about getting involved in another new initiative to reinvigorate the community was a huge task.

In essence, many of the people who Ferguson is trying to reach and help with the assistance of other pastors, law enforcement and the city of Tallahassee, are too involved in their own day to day struggle to find time to sit at the table where suggestions are being made.

On Friday, Ferguson sat alone in the sanctuary of his church. He had planned on announcing another new initiative, this one targeting an issue that people said they wanted: a chance to earn their GED. To Ferguson, who had gone door to door to try and ramp up support for classes in October, it was a project worth pursuing. The lack of education, especially for too many young adults, was one component holding them back in landing jobs, in improving their status and in making changes in Griffin Heights, which borders Frenchtown in northwest Tallahassee.

"Without education, the guns, drugs and violence would continue," he said, mentioning a shooting last week on Basin Street, a few blocks away from the church.

So, Ferguson and a handful of supporters involved in his separate organization, The Frontline Project, canvassed the neighborhood last October and got responses from about 60 people interested in a GED program. **Ferguson, in turn, approached Tallahassee Community College's Workforce Development program, which oversees adult education. TCC was interested in helping out if Ferguson could get the enrollment of at least 25 people for the off-site program to be held at his church.**

Earlier last week, eight people showed up for an introduction session. The next day, about four more showed up. By Thursday, Ferguson had core group of about eight committed to the program, way short of the goal needed to be reached before TCC could make the commitment.

"We are 100 percent behind him," said Rick Frazier, director of workforce development at Tallahassee Community College. "We appreciate the partnership we are developing with him. That's part of the mission of the college as a whole in the three-county region we serve."

Holding the GED classes had not been in the department's budget, Frazier said, but he was able to find money to add the program if enough people showed interest.

It is because of TCC's interest that Ferguson is not giving up. He's seeking support from the Tallahassee community, and particularly from those involved in improving Frenchtown and Griffin Heights, to get involved by helping him get more committed applicants to sign up. He's also reached out to a group of 35 pastors of other neighborhood-based churches in Tallahassee, to lend their support and financial pledges to his "Do Good for the Hood" campaign as part of The Frontline Project.

"The GED program would be a beacon of hope in this neighborhood," he said. It is one component of his goal to bring change to the community.

On Monday, Ferguson said, he plans to get back out in Griffin Heights and continue the recruiting process, hoping that the eight people who were committed last week will continue to believe in the project.

Rudy Ferguson trying to improve Griffin Heights....

continued

"I'm making a plea," Ferguson said. "We need those in the community to take full advantage of this. If we don't get these numbers, we will have to cancel the program."

And, while establishing a partnership with TCC is a primary goal, Ferguson said he would see what other education classes he could bring at the church.

"I'm really dedicated to this but the people have to want it," Ferguson said. "It comes down to a matter of the people wanting it; accepting it."

As I said, you have to give Ferguson credit for trying to make a difference.

Funding innovations, training and an #Awesome idea

ALYCE LEE STANSBURY
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

It's a thrill for me to interact every week with a wide range of people and organizations involved in the nonprofit sector. Here are some of the issues I've heard being talked about recently, a few upcoming events, and a question I've been asked several times that might be helpful to you and your favorite nonprofit.

The Boston Globe recently published an interesting story about author, philanthropist, and controversial Ted Talk speaker Dan Pallotta. You may recall Tallahassee hosted Mr. Pallotta at a local forum in 2013. Pallotta is a vocal advocate for changing the way we think about nonprofits. In a recent effort, the Charity Defense Council, an organization founded by Pallotta, partnered with local advertisers to donate billboards in the Boston area that read: Don't Ask if a Charity has Low Overhead. Ask if it has Big Impact. I love this idea!

The Globe story points out the overhead issue has become a hot debate between those who believe a charity's administrative costs should be low to ensure the largest amount of proceeds are going to programs and those who believe charities need to take an entrepreneurial approach and spend money on fundraising and infrastructure to raise more money for the mission.

Although there's no legal limit to how much nonprofits can spend on fundraising and overhead, charities are heavily scrutinized by charity watch-dog groups, state regulators, funders and donors who want to be sure dollars are spent wisely. In my experience, watch-dogs and donors alike recognize the basic need for overhead costs like rent, utilities, insurance, and office management but nobody wants to pay for them. As a result, nonprofits have to choose between (A) spending as much as they need and risk sanctions and negative publicity or (B) spending as much as looks acceptable but is often too little to accomplish their mission. I agree with

There are several upcoming trainings and events I hope you will attend and share among your networks.

•First, the Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence (INIE) has a full calendar of great spring courses to help nonprofit board and staff members. Courses will be offered in dealing with difficult

clients, learning no cost ways to increase capacity, starting a nonprofit, and a networking event to connect nonprofits with opportunities to collaborate at FSU. Learn more and register now at www.theinstitutefornonprofits.org.

Please save the date for the second annual Florida Nonprofit Alliance Legislative Symposium to be held March 31 at the TCC Capitol Center. This is FNA's second symposium and will include remarks from Commissioner Putman about recent changes to the Solicitation of Contributions Act. Amy Baker, the legislature's Chief Economist will share economic trends impacting Florida and you'll hear from a panel of funders who believe in funding advocacy. Register soon at www.flnonprofits.org.

Finally, if you haven't already heard about #AwesomeTallahassee, you need to.

This is a national movement with over 1,327 funded projects and \$1.3 million awarded to "forward the interest of awesome in the universe, \$1,000 at a time." **A local chapter has been started by a group of community leaders including Kimberly Moore, Tim Center, Chester Spellman, Adam Corey and others who plan to give away \$1,000 grants to people doing awesome things in the community. That's it. That's the criteria.** It's just starting and their first grant will be awarded in February. I hope this column will spark some awesome ideas to build the capacity of nonprofits. Learn more at www.awesomefoundation.org.

(Note: Article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

Lamb to be honored by alma mater

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Former Gadsden County Commissioner Eugene Lamb will be honored Friday in New Orleans by Dillard University. Lamb and New Orleans banker Charles Teamer will be honored at the 7th Annual Billy Ray Hobley Gala.

Lamb, 67, was a basketball star at Havana High and Dillard University, who spent 15 years coaching high school basketball and 35 years with the Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department. Lamb served on the Midway City Council, the Gadsden County Commission (2004-2012) and is a Tallahassee Community College trustee.

Billy Ray Hobley also was a native of Gadsden County and basketball star at Dillard and played 22 years for the Harlem Globetrotters. The annual gala raises money for Dillard University athletics.

Local leaders meet to discuss upcoming session

JEFF BURLEW

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Local leaders gathered this morning at the Leon County Courthouse to discuss big issues that could impact the community during the upcoming legislative session.

The topics included the state workforce, university funding, school testing, taxes and economic development.

Rep. Alan Williams, D-Tallahassee, said he plans advocate for legislation that would increase the interest rate for state employees participating in the Deferred Retirement Option Program, or DROP. The program allows pension-plan participants to essentially retire but stay on the job for up to five years. While in DROP, their monthly retirement benefits go into an interest-bearing account and can be paid out in a lump sum when employees leave their post.

In 2011, lawmakers reduced DROP's annual interest rate from 6.5 percent to 1.3 percent for members who joined the program on or after July 1 of that year. Williams said he wants to increase the rate so state retirees will have a bigger nest egg.

"It's an economic stimulator for our community," Williams said. "Once they retire, they start going out and remodeling their homes and buying RV campers ... and all that kind of stuff. We benefit from that. So we have to make sure that those folks who put in those good years earn as much as they possibly can."

Williams said he also will be pushing for across-the-board pay raises for state employees and playing defense against any measure that would negatively impact their pay and benefits. State employees got their last across-the-board raise in 2013, which was their first in six years.

Dustin Daniels, chief of staff to Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum, said the city will be seeking changes in state-worker travel restrictions so that more employees can use Tallahassee Regional Airport to fly to conferences and other state events. Workers currently must drive to destinations if they are within a certain proximity to Tallahassee.

Leon County Commissioner Bryan Desloge began hosting the meeting several years ago to help local universities, schools, governments and agencies to present a united lobbying front during the session.

"There are a lot of these issues that have an impact on everybody," Desloge said. "And frankly what's good for one entity in most cases is good for everybody."

Taking part in this morning's meeting were Gillum, newly appointed Leon County Sheriff Mike Wood, Florida State University President John Thrasher, Florida A&M University President Elmira Mangum, Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh and others. It was the first time the presidents for FSU, FAMU and TCC participated in the same legislative-dialogue meeting at the courthouse.

"The three of us are meeting on a regular basis," Thrasher said. "I just want everybody to know that because it's very important that we try to work together as close as we can with the understanding that this is a community and the community is part of the university and the university is part of the community."

Florida College System ensures future of jobs, the state's economy

JIM HENNINGSEN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (MY VIEW)

Florida businesses need an academically and technologically prepared workforce to succeed, which makes the strength of our higher education system a major factor in attracting new business to Florida.

Serving nearly one million students annually, the Florida College System (FCS) is committed to providing access to high-quality, affordable academic and career education programs that maximize student learning and success. Our college system supports the state's economy by providing education and training for Florida's critical workforce needs.

It is true that 98 percent of FCS graduates stay in Florida, contributing their acquired skills and training to the state's economic development. With 28 public colleges throughout the state, the FCS has a \$27 billion economic impact.

It is more important than ever to prioritize the goals of the Florida College System for the upcoming year as the Florida economy continues to expand and the demand for skilled workforce grows.

The system has been highly successful, as evidenced by the many national awards received by our institutions from the American Association of Community Colleges and the Aspen Institute, to name a few. Nevertheless, we know that changing times and demographics demand that we enhance traditional education by focusing on ensuring our students are successful once they achieve their ultimate goal of completion and employment.

Higher education is evolving to have an increased focus on performance funding and the economic landscape in Florida is changing. The FCS has always and will continue to be accountable for student performance. We must:

Expand critical workforce areas: By expanding workforce training programs, the FCS can provide the opportunity for more Floridians to gain skills that are critical to the region in which they live. The college system will work to meet the demand of employers in 2015 by aligning certificate and degree programs with regional workforce needs. These efforts will build a pipeline of talent, helping Floridians gain employment while supporting the state's economy.

Expand academic support: Services offered outside of the classroom are critical components that drive student success. Services such as academic support, learning assistance, advising and mentoring improve a student's ability to ultimately secure upon graduation either job placement or transfer to a college or university. Expanding academic support services plays a crucial role in student success and will be a major focus in 2015.

Maintain affordability: A college's capacity to serve is based on two factors – tuition and state investment. Maintaining affordable tuition is a priority for the colleges, the Legislature and Gov. Scott. Without tuition increases, we must increase our capacity to serve by committing as a state to an investment in our future talent. Florida is recognized nationwide for its overall value in public higher education – affordable tuition being a large component. The FCS wants to ensure the cost of college is not a burden to the student, and therefore needs an appropriate investment from the state.

Following years of dramatic growth during the recession, FCS student enrollment is plateauing at an unprecedented level. An increased investment from the state is essential to help us enable more students to excel in Florida's most in-demand occupations. As one of the most successful college systems in the nation, the FCS, with the vital support of the Legislature and Governor Scott, will continue to concentrate on delivering the talent Florida needs to become the number one job creator in the nation.

Dr. Jim Henningsen is the Chairman of the Florida College System's Council of Presidents and President of the College of Central Florida.

2015 PROGRESS REPORT - PAGE 12

TCC begins construction on new Gadsden campus in Quincy

Groundbreaking for new facility in Quincy highlights TCC's direction.

The year ended on a high note for Tallahassee Community College and Gadsden County as the groundbreaking ceremony for TCC's new home in Quincy was held on Monday, November 17. Education, government and business leaders were joined at the event by community members and local high school students.

TCC plans to build a 4,700-square-foot building on the site off Pat Thomas Parkway, a 1.42-acre parcel of land that was donated by the City of Quincy. The new Gadsden Center will offer the programs and services currently provided at the TCC Quincy House, such as GED preparation and English instruction for speakers of other languages, a computer lab for community members, and

youth programs. However, the new Center will also feature a workforce development lab that will house training programs to prepare students for in-demand jobs. The first programs will focus on HVAC installation and repair.

"It's going to have a significant impact," said Derrick Elias, Quincy's mayor. "We'll get a chance to further the education of our young students as well as our... 'veterans' citizens in this area, so it's going to provide an opportunity for them to hone their skills and just be more marketable for the workplace."

The TCC Gadsden Center will be located next door to the CareerSource office, making it easier for community members to access services that will help them reach their career goals, including job training through TCC and job search and placement assis-

tance through CareerSource.

Construction is anticipated to take about one year and cost approximately \$1.2 million.

Meanwhile, the current TCC Quincy House continues to serve residents of all ages. In 2014, the adult education program at The Quincy House and other locations in Havana, Quincy and Chattahoochee, served approximately 200 students.

For younger residents, The Quincy House provided afterschool tutoring and partnered with Communities in Schools of Gadsden to offer academic and enrichment services during spring and summer breaks.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers are a collaboration among TCC, Gadsden County Schools, Communities in the Schools, the Gadsden Arts Center and

AmeriCorps that provides afterschool, weekend, holiday and summer programs at four area schools.

For teens, The Quincy House hosts a chapter of Students Against Destructive Decisions in cooperation with Gadsden County Schools and also offers the four-hour traffic law and substance abuse course required for teen drivers.

The Quincy House also provided testing center services for more than 100 students of TCC and other area colleges and universities in 2014.

The Florida Public Safety Institute in Midway is a hub of activity for law enforcement and corrections officers from across the Southeast. In addition, Educational Talent Search, which is based at FPSI, provided 476 Gadsden County students in grades six



through 12 with tutoring, college preparation and enrichment activities during the year.

Another way the College serves Gadsden County is by joining with community partners to secure millions of dollars in grants in support of education, economic development, public service and workforce development initiatives.

Tallahassee Community College is proud to partner with the many organizations and individuals in Gadsden County who are building a better quality of life for their neighbors. The College welcomes suggestions for ways to further serve Gadsden County residents. For more information, call (850) 558-3620 or stop by The Quincy House at 216 North Adams Street.

Burn planned at TCC

WAKULLA NEWS

Tallahassee Community College Wakulla Environmental Institute is planning a prescribed burn for its campus property located on Highway 319, south of Crawfordville.

The prescribed burn is scheduled to occur one day within the next two weeks, weather permitting, and could be as early as Friday.

"We want to alert people to the proposed burn, and the possibility of heavy smoke," said WEI Executive Director Bob Ballard. "We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause to those traveling in the area."

Heather Mitchell leaves legacy at United Way

RON SACHS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (MY VIEW)

If you've ever piloted a houseboat, one stark reality is how long it takes to actually move it in the direction you are steering. Similarly, making significant turns in a community – or a real change in direction – often takes longer than those behind the wheel anticipate.

A wonderful exception to directional change taking so long is the leadership path blazed by Heather Mitchell, who completes a stellar three-year run as president of the United Way of the Big Bend today. She is set to become a new vice president at Tallahassee Community College.

Heather has accomplished the near-impossible: creating a bold new vision for how United Way can best serve, and then steering a timely planning and implementation process, generating broad support and turning the wheel of our community to address some key chronic problem areas.

It began with a series of community conversations in which Heather guided the United Way to ask our neighbors where our focus should shift and sharpen – to go beyond a traditional role of just issuing grants that invest in the good works of more than 40 service providers in the region. Heather received the unanimous support of UWBB's board of directors to begin treating our donors with even more respect, by considering them "investors" who deserve and should expect a return on their philanthropic giving.

After a strategic planning process, United Way convened a Community Goal-Setting Summit. From it, she forged consensus on a new course to ensure United Way is in-tune with this eight-county region's most pressing human needs.

Heather led the way for United Way to establish three new hard-working councils, populated by diverse community leaders and volunteers to focus on projects that positively impact income, health and education issues. The early outcomes of this new focus were shared to the community this week in a "Report Card" that is worthy of your review, through this link: uwbb.org/report-card.

During Heather's tenure as president, she confronted one of the most difficult crises the community has faced

in recent years: the breakdown of effective leadership and operation of The Shelter for a chronic homeless population. Forging a necessary but initially awkward alliance among all stakeholders, Heather insisted that no one back away from responsibly making changes in policies and procedures for operation of The Shelter – and it has made a complete turnaround as a result.

Few people could trigger this kind of impact in a decade that Heather has achieved so quickly. She reached out to, and stayed in touch with, people in every corner of the community; involved and inspired a dedicated staff; enlisted and engaged an army of committed volunteers; and pushed our board's leadership to embrace this vision for change.

As she leaves for a challenging new opportunity at TCC, Heather leaves behind a proud legacy of change that matters. We will continue down this bold path of investing the community's generous support into solving problems.

All of this is the result of Heather Mitchell's vision, courage, energy, enthusiasm and relentless passion to inspire change. If you see our friend Heather around town, stop her to say a simple "thank you" for a job well done.

Ron Sachs is founder and CEO of Sachs Media Group, and chairman of the Board of Directors of the United Way of the Big Bend.

TCC Baseball, Softball earn preseason rankings in FCSAA Coaches' Polls

BRAD DALTON
WTXL

The Florida College System Activities Association (FCSAA) released its preseason baseball and softball coaches' polls on Thursday, which is also the eve of the 2015 season.

Tallahassee Community College landed in both polls, highlighted by softball's No. 3 ranking. The Eagle baseball team opens the season ranked ninth.

In the softball poll, Tallahassee garnered eight of the 20 first-place votes, the same number as co-No. 1 College of Central Florida, who shared the top spot with Indian River State College, who received the other four first-place nods. The Eagles' 156 total points was just five points behind the Patriots and Pioneers.

Tallahassee, who finished 41-14 in 2014, is the defending FCSAA State and Panhandle Conference (PC) Champion.

PC rival Chipola College is ranked fourth followed by Miami Dade College, Polk State College, Santa Fe College, Northwest Florida State College, Seminole State College and Daytona State College.

Meanwhile, the Eagles, 40-18 in 2014, were one of 20 schools to receive votes from the state baseball coaches. At No. 9, Tallahassee begins the 2015 season where it ended the 2014 campaign.

The poll is topped by Miami Dade, the defending NJCAA runners-up. Chipola is ranked No. 2 followed by Polk State, State College of Florida, Gulf Coast State College, St. Johns River State College, Palm Beach State College and No. 8 Central Florida.

Northwest Florida State follows Tallahassee at No. 10.

Both teams open the 2015 season on Friday.

Softball is in Clearwater, Fla., for the annual JUCO Kickoff Tournament and Showcase and will play St. Petersburg College at 4:20 p.m. Two more games will follow on Saturday.

Baseball plays a pair of games Friday and Saturday in Panama City, Fla., at the First Pitch Classic hosted by Gulf Coast State College. Friday's games are at 1:30 p.m. vs. Darton (Ga.) State College and 4 p.m. vs. Gordon (Ga.) State College.

International students receive housing scholarships

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The TCC Foundation has received four housing scholarships of approximately \$7,000 each for international students. The scholarships are provided by Greystar Student Living.

Three of the four recipients have been named: Charles Bundala (Tanzania), Noe Perez (Mexico) and Josefa Raveau (Chile). They will be housed at Forum Tallahassee.

The students must volunteer at least 20 hours a week with the TCC International Student Organization, participate in International Services office-sponsored events and maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

For information, contact Betty Jensen at 850-201-8457 or jensenb@tcc.fl.edu.

Meet the honorees in TCC's 2015 African-American History Calendar

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College released the names of the 12 organizations honored Jan.26, when the College unveiled its 15th annual Cherry Alexander African-American History Calendar.

This year, the calendar showcases organizations that have made significant contributions in Leon and surrounding counties. The 2015 calendar theme is "Sustaining the Dream, Inspiring the Future." The 2015 calendar honorees: 2nd Infantry Regiment United States Colored Troops – Living History Association, TCC Black Male Achievers, Elizabeth Popular Spring Primitive Baptist Church, Delta Kappa Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Distinguished Young Gentlemen of America, John G. Riley Center and Museum, Pineview Elementary School, Franklin Academy, Jacob Chapel Baptist Church, MLK Foundation of Florida, Tallahassee Urban League, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives – North Florida Chapter.

The calendar also includes key dates in African-American history. It will be distributed to over 10,000 area youth via schools, churches and other community institutions. For information, contact Louis Dilbert at (850) 201-0835 or dilbertl@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC STEM Scholars attend conference

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Thirteen TCC STEM Scholars attended the 2014 Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students in San Antonio, Texas. Their expenses were paid through the FAMU-TCC Bridges to the Baccalaureate for Biomedical Sciences program funded by the National Institutes of Health.

More than 1,700 students presented their research during oral and poster sessions. TCC's David Perez brought home the gold in the microbiology category.

Speakers included Derrick Pitts, chief astronomer and planetarium director for The Franklin Institute and co-host of the radio program "Skytalk," and television journalist Richard Rodriguez.

The group included students Tonja Bryant, Sharise James, David Perez, Kyra Morgan, Kathleen DeLeon, Nicole Knight, Jerrine Fletcher, Francisco Matallana, Alphonso Robinson, Richard Hudson, Richard Crutcher, Alexis Jamison and Dominique Zimmerman-Taylor.

TCC surgical technology grads impress on exams

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

All seven members of TCC's inaugural surgical technology class, as well as five of the six members of the second class, have passed their national certification exams and are already employed in the field.

TCC's certification pass rates of 100 percent for the first class and 83.3 percent for the second compare favorably with the national passing average of 69.4 percent.

The program is based at TCC's Ghavzini Center for Healthcare Education. Students also have opportunities to learn from TCC's clinical affiliates, Capital Regional Medical Center and Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare.

For information, contact Shannon Smith at (850) 558-4573 or smitshan@tcc.fl.edu.

Chamber networking luncheon held at TCC Wakulla

PETRA SHUFF
WAKULLA NEWS

Our first 2015 monthly networking luncheon got off to a good start with 62 attendees, and Kast Net catering a wonderful buffet of salad, egg rolls, pasta salad, vegetable lo mein, Pasta Alfredo, fresh broccoli, and bourbon chicken. As always, Ms. Thu's cupcakes were heavenly. Kast Net just celebrated their 10th anniversary, and as every year will again be serving Valentine's dinner on Feb. 9, a dinner you won't want to miss. Make your reservations now, 421-1255, before all available seats are booked.

Mary recognized our attending chamber officers and board members before continuing with introductions: Robyn Drummond, our new library director; Genny and Tina with Wakulla Insurance; Chris Curry, new Director of Aviation at Tallahassee Airport – Chris shared that he plans to connect the airport with all chambers they are members of, and the airport's new runway will be inaugurated with a run/walk Feb. 28.

Also with us for the first time was Rodney True with The Garden Center by Gatortrax, who will be hosting an after-hours networking event for their first anniversary in April.

Jo Ann Palmer shared that a new litter ordinance is now in place, and litterbugs will be fined. Upcoming events for Keep Wakulla County Beautiful are the National Forest clean up Feb. 28, and Hazardous Waste Day on April 25 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Jo Ann also invited runners/walkers to sign up for the Rotary Club's Valentine's Cupid 5K.

Bonnie Holub, current director of the TCC Wakulla Center shared that she will be retiring next month, and applications for her replacement are now closed.

Jim Wetherton told us about an exciting endeavor for our youth. The Optimist Club, in conjunction with the Big Bend Maritime Center is building small sailboats sponsored by local businesses and individuals, to teach our young people to sail. Forty youngsters ranging 8-14 years old are signed up for some sailing fun this summer. The boats cost \$1K each; contact the Optimist Club for sponsorships to add to the fleet.

Cynthia Thomas shared the oldest festival in Wakulla, the Wakulla Youth Fair, better known as the Wakulla Swine

Festival, held Feb. 28, is looking for barbecue cooks. Boston butts, ribs or chicken will be furnished to anyone wishing to enter the competition. Just give Cynthia a call 251-0439.

Zoe Mansfield wanted everyone to know about two Spanish ship replicas, the Nina and Pinta, coming to St. Marks from Feb. 13 to 22.

Dee Shriver announced that their office for Shell Point Realty moved to 2473 Crawfordville Hwy.

Mary Jones with Tallahassee Lenders Consortium reminded mortgage lenders and realtors that the organization can help finance for first time or low income home buyers, down payment assistance and more.

Our new members for November and January were announced as Murphy Business Brokers, American Cancer Society, Electronic Health Resources, and New Posh.

The \$62 drawing was won by Sheriff Creel, and our February spotlight will be on Centennial Bank.

Many thanks to Mary Wallace with Cook Insurance and Amy Banning with Olympus Insurance for sponsoring the annual January wine giveaway.

We thank the following for their donation to our raffle: Petra Shuff, Cook Insurance/Olympus Insurance, Red Hills Broadcasting, Ed Gardner O.D., T.E.Lunn PE, Wakulla Insurance, The Garden Center by Gatortrax, The Wakulla News, and Superlube.

Ensuring the future of jobs and economy is priority for the Florida College System in 2015

JIM HENNINGSEN

HAVANA HERALD (OP/ED)

Florida businesses need an academically and technologically prepared workforce to succeed, which makes the strength of our higher education system a major factor in attracting new business to Florida.

Serving nearly one million students annually, the Florida College System (FCS) is committed to providing access to high-quality, affordable academic and career education programs that maximize student learning and success. Our college system supports the state's economy by providing education and training for Florida's critical workforce needs.

It is true that 98 percent of FCS graduates stay in Florida, contributing their acquired skills and training to the state's economic development. With 28 public colleges throughout the state, the FCS has a \$27 billion economic impact.

It is more important than ever to prioritize the goals of the Florida College System for the upcoming year as the Florida economy continues to expand and the demand for skilled workforce grows.

The system has been highly successful, as evidenced by the many national awards received by our institutions from the American Association of Community Colleges and the Aspen Institute, to name a few. Nevertheless, we know that changing times and demographics demand that we enhance traditional education by focusing on ensuring our students are successful once they achieve their ultimate goal of completion and employment.

Higher education is evolving to have an increased focus on performance funding and the economic landscape in Florida is changing. The FCS has always and will continue to be accountable for student performance. We must:

Expand critical workforce areas: By expanding workforce training programs, the FCS can provide the opportunity for more Floridians to gain skills that are critical to the region in which they live. The college system will work to meet the demand of employers in 2015 by aligning certificate and degree programs with regional workforce needs. These efforts will build a pipeline of talent, helping Floridians gain employment while supporting the state's economy.

Expand academic support: Services offered outside of the classroom are critical components that drive student success. Services such as academic support, learning assistance, advising and mentoring improve a student's ability to ultimately secure upon graduation either job placement or transfer to a college or university. Expanding academic support services plays a crucial role in student success and will be a major focus in 2015.

Maintain affordability: A college's capacity to serve is based on two factors – tuition and state investment. Maintaining affordable tuition is a priority for the colleges, the Legislature and Gov. Scott. Without tuition increases, we must increase our capacity to serve by committing as a state to an investment in our future talent. Florida is recognized nationwide for its overall value in public higher education – affordable tuition being a large component. The FCS wants to ensure the cost of college is not a burden to the student, and therefore needs an appropriate investment from the state.

Following years of dramatic growth during the recession, FCS student enrollment is plateauing at an unprecedented level. An increased investment from the state is essential to help us enable more students to excel in Florida's most in-demand occupations. As one of the most successful college systems in the nation, the FCS, with the vital support of the Legislature and Governor Scott, will continue to concentrate on delivering the talent Florida needs to become the number one job creator in the nation.

 Dr. Jim Henningsen is the Chairman of the Florida College System's Council of Presidents and President of the College of Central Florida.

Governor Rick Scott reappoints eighteen to college District Boards of Trustees

KATHY M. FOSTER
FOSTER FOLLY NEWS

Governor Rick Scott has announced eighteen re-appointments to College District Boards of Trustees across the state.

Broward College

John Benz, 64, of Fort Lauderdale, is the senior vice president of Memorial Healthcare System. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Chipola College

John Padgett, 84, of Marianna, is a former Jackson County Commissioner. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Florida Keys Community College

Robert "Bob" Stoky II, 47, of Key Largo, is the president of Señor Frijoles Inc. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Indian River State College

Mark Feurer, 59, of Vero Beach, is the president of Communications International Inc. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Christa Luna, 39, of Okeechobee, is the dealer operator of Gilbert Chevrolet Company. She is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Phoebe Raulerson, 75, of Okeechobee, is the former superintendent of schools for the Okeechobee County School Board. She is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Brantley "Brant" Schirard, 54, of Fort Pierce, is the president of Schirard Citrus Inc. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Seminole State College

Wendy Brandon, 46, of Sanford, is the chief executive officer of Central Florida Regional Hospital. She is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Jeffrey "Jeff" Bauer, 46, of Casselberry, is an insurance agent with Admin Insurance Group and a member of the Seminole County School Board. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

South Florida State College

Tamela "Tami" Cullens, 55, of Sebring, is the human resource manager for Glisson Animal Supply Inc. She is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Kenneth "Ken" Lambert, 54, of Wauchula, is the owner of Summit 105 Group Marketing and Strategic Planning. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Kris Rider, 63, of Lake Placid, is a book keeper for Michael A. Rider PA. She is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota

Dr. Craig Trigueiro, 64, of Lakewood Ranch, is a physician with Manatee County Rural Health Services. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

St. Petersburg College

Deveron Gibbons, 42, of St. Petersburg, is the vice president of public affairs and business development for AMSCOT. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

Tallahassee Community College

Frank Messersmith, 72, of Crawfordville, is a consultant for FSM Associates. He is reappointed for a term beginning February 4, 2015, and ending May 31, 2018.

The appointments are subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

(Note: Article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

Insiders: A look at Tallahassee officer involved shootings and where they are happening most

JADE BULECZA
WTLX

It is one of the most difficult decisions a police officer has to make, when to fire their gun. Tallahassee police officers say it's a very quick and personal decision to protect themselves and the lives of others.

Officer David Northway says that the spike in officer involved shootings was simply based on circumstances. "Our officers only take action in the line of duty to prevent somebody's death other than themselves or for themselves. So if we are having a spike in shooting, or you saw one of the last year, it was simply based on circumstances."

There has been a spike in the number of officer involved shootings in Tallahassee, but why are they on the rise? In 2014 TPD had eight officer involved shootings. (See the map below for dates and locations). In 2013, there was only one officer involved shooting and in 2012 there weren't any.

Criminologist Carter Hay says it takes time to detect and develop any patterns. "For rare events like this, when there is a spike, it is difficult to know what to make of it. There often can be random, chance fluctuations that turn out to be temporary aberrations. Over the next year, we could be back to having 1 or 2 such incidents. The general rule on crime and law enforcement trends is that it takes some time to spot trends," says Hay.

However, on average, officer involved shootings tend to be clustered in areas with elevated crime levels experts say.

"If you look at what's going on in Tallahassee recently most of those shootings are taking place in the core part of the city. They've taken place in areas where there is a large congregation of individuals, transient individuals students or people coming through town--they rarely take place in subdivisions in areas of more established neighborhoods," said Frank Leonard, a criminologist at Tallahassee Community College.

“Made in Tallahassee” tells city’s business story

Economic Development Council rolls out promotion

TAMARYN WATERS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee has a “produced regionally, sold globally” story to tell that isn’t being told.

On Friday, the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee/Leon County debuted its “Made in Tallahassee or #MadeinTLH” branding campaign to 200 influential business professionals at the EDC’s winter forum.

The campaign will focus on manufacturing, specifically research and development, software development and technology industries in the first year. In time, the campaign will add other industries.

Businesses will be highlighted monthly. They must be at least three years old, located, founded or headquartered in Tallahassee or surrounding area and have a proven economic footprint.

“This is something where we’ve acknowledged we’re not telling our story well enough,” said EDC Chairman Jim Murdaugh, who is also president of Tallahassee Community College.

“There are some exciting things happening in this community, and tremendous entrepreneurs who are doing things in this community and selling it around the country and world,” Murdaugh said. “We want to highlight them.”

EDC officials say Tallahassee businesses manufacture high quality and technologically advanced products for national and global markets. That in turn creates a region rich with a network of suppliers and manufacturers. More than 240 startups are in the region, and \$750,000 in grants and investments helped businesses take root in Tallahassee, the EDC reports.

Telling the Tallahassee story could generate interest in other companies, including larger companies, to relocate, expand or do business here. Budding entrepreneurs also may be inspired by existing companies.

Companies in the campaign will range in size, from anywhere between 30 to 150 employees. In addition to recruiting new businesses, the existing business climate holds just as much weight for Tallahassee’s local economy, said Sue Dick, president and CEO of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce.

“Highlighting these local companies creates a general awareness and creates an opportunity for these companies to do business with each other,” said Dick, adding companies can also partner to pursue contracts or products. “It’s really creating an entire support system for economic development.”

The first company in the Made in Tallahassee campaign is MCCI, the country’s largest supplier of digital document management, falling under the campaign’s software manufacturing. It has more than 700 customers across the country.

Several attendees, such as City Commissioner Curtis Richardson, were eager to see how the campaign will boost awareness for MCCI and other local companies and build on the growing trend of incubators for innovative businesses.

“It was impressive for me to hear we have a company right here in Tallahassee that’s one of the largest if not the largest at what they do in the world,” Richardson said. “That’s what we’ve got to sell to the rest of Florida and country.”

MCCI Managing Director Lawton Langford said the company helps its clients go paperless and manage documents. For example, if a client or company has a lawsuit and documents are needed for evidence discovery, MCCI scans those documents and allows the client’s attorney to research them.

“It’s more than just archiving the image of a document,” Langford said. “We convert it to text, which allows full text search ability.... There’s a retrieval component to the archiving. It’s more than eliminating a warehouse and putting the documents on a CD-rom. It becomes more interactive.”

Business professionals working in digital document management consider MCCI a household name, but the campaign will expand the company’s reach.

“It’s a spectacular idea to celebrate existing businesses,” Langford said, who fully embraced the idea. “The chamber and the EDC is really getting it right striking the right balance between the two. We’re really thrilled to be the first company to be recognized.”

Entrepreneurs get a taste of 'Shark Tank' styled encounter

TAMARYN WATERS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Aspiring entrepreneurs like Jason McIntosh and Mitch Nelson convened one night recently at Tallahassee Community College's Advanced Manufacturing Training Center.

In the winter and summer, they come for the Entrepreneurial Excellence Program – a 10-day course covering topics necessary to sustain a business. The course outlines ground work for getting started, legal do's and don'ts, copyrights or patents and team building.

On previous nights, they've heard from former health-care executive Gov. Rick Scott and former Florida Congressman Steve Southerland, a funeral home owner, dispensing insight based on personal experience.

On Tuesday, a dozen entrepreneurs had 12 minutes to pitch business plans or concepts on "Shark Tank" night. McIntosh and Nelson sat in the rear of the small group, a mix of college students, a former IBM employee, a construction worker, a lawyer and others.

Like panelists on the popular television show, Tallahassee's shark, John Thomas "J.T." Burnette, is an aggressive investor who was an owner in Hotel Duval, and he's currently a principal at Hunter+Harp and InkBridge LLC. Burnette dispensed no-frills advice. Each business discussed was different from the next: gourmet pecans, non-lethal weapons and an app that streamlines customer wait times and foot traffic.

"It's hard to start a business without a customer being big enough to start a business," said Burnette, a Monticello native. "When I look at starting something, I always look and say, 'What's the one customer I need to make it worth doing?'"

First up were McIntosh and Nelson who pitched Divvy Up – a company selling trendy socks. For every pair purchased, another pair is donated to a local homeless shelter.

It started as a class project rooted in giving back to the community. McIntosh and Nelson, both studying entrepreneurship at Florida State, took a trip last spring to The Shelter on West Tennessee Street and asked how they could help. The answer? Clean socks.

"We thought the best way to donate socks for the most sustainable basis is to sell the most awesome socks around," McIntosh said.

Create a product that's different, Burnette advised, like adding a red stripe or symbol unique to Divvy Up. The FSU juniors said they would prefer to manufacture instead of buying socks from various websites. Burnette advised outsourcing for mass production. He didn't want to see them setting up sewing machines in their apartment.

"If you buy that, I swear to god I'll slap you," Burnette said in jest. The next day, McIntosh and Nelson returned to campus refocusing their approach but with a sense they were on the right track.

So far entrepreneurs representing more than 100 businesses have graduated from the EEP offered by the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee/ Leon County. That would include about 70 percent of businesses in the DOMI Station on Railroad Avenue – created to be a home for start-up entrepreneurs.

Last year, entrepreneurs representing 28 businesses graduated. The current class was so full that entrepreneurs representing five companies had to be turned away.

"We see it growing, not contracting," said program director Larry Lynch. The program was created with a \$50,000 grant from the Knight Foundation through the Community Foundation of North Florida. "A waiting list is a great problem to have."

Bob Gula, owner of Timberline Garden and Carpentry, has made upscale outdoor furniture by hand for the past four years. In April, it became a full-time job. Talking to Burnette forced Gula to ask himself a lot of questions.

"You come into the class thinking you have a good idea. Then you hear someone's already done what you're trying to do," Gula said. "I have to redirect my thoughts."

(Note: Article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

FSU announces new benefits for TCC2FSU students

ELIZABETH WHITE

WTVL

FSU announced a new benefit for students enrolled in the TCC2FSU Golden Guarantee program.

Current students in the program can now buy special passes to access FSU campus recreation facilities, programs, and services each semester.

The University says they are excited to announce the new opportunities, as they believe it will help with student retention rates.

There are three different options to choose from ranging from \$50 dollars to \$125. What the plans include, is listed below:

TCC2FSU Facilities Pass (\$95) - includes access to the Leach Center, the Fitness and Movement Clinic (FMC), the FSU Reservation and intramural sports outdoor facilities

TCC2FSU IM Sports Pass (\$50) - includes ability to play on intramural sports teams and access to intramural sports outdoor facilities

TCC2FSU Universal Pass (\$125) - includes access to the Leach Center, the Fitness and Movement Clinic (FMC), the FSU Reservation and intramural sports outdoor facilities, as well as the ability to play on intramural sports teams

Mike Wood overcomes decades-old mistake to become sheriff

JENNIFER PORTMAN & JEFF BURLEW

PUBLICATION

Mike Wood had every reason to feel confident.

Bolstered by a distinguished 32-year career with the Leon County Sheriff's Office and the blessing of the late Sheriff Larry Campbell, Wood, a man with deep community roots and broad support inside and outside the agency, was an obvious contender to serve out his mentor's tenure.

But when he submitted his application to Gov. Rick Scott to be appointed sheriff after Campbell's death on Christmas Eve, he felt a familiar quickening dread.

It was the same anxious feeling he swallowed when he sought acceptance to the highly selective FBI National Academy, and before that, when Wood first applied to become a Leon County deputy and came clean to then-Maj. Campbell.

In each case, Wood, 55, steeled himself and disclosed what could have ended his career before it began. For 36 years, it has been an albatross threatening to thwart his advancement.

"I got arrested for possession of marijuana," Wood volunteered in an exclusive interview with the Tallahassee Democrat.

It was a decades-old mistake made when he was 19 years old, one that Scott was willing to overlook when he appointed him Leon County sheriff on Jan. 23. Wood disclosed the arrest when he applied to the Governor's Office.

"I'm just thankful he saw it the way the folks before did," Wood said. "I've never not had success because of it."

He's no longer sure exactly when the arrest happened — he long ago had the records expunged. Tallahassee police found him with more than 20 grams of marijuana, enough for a felony.

His arrest was a double-blow for his hard-working, south-side family as it came not long after the death of his 21-year-old brother Corky in a May 23, 1978, car crash on the way to Wakulla Springs. Wood's eldest brother by 15 years, Ray Wood, was a Leon County deputy at the time.

"It was very devastating to our family — I was an idiot," Wood said. "Let me tell you, if your brother was a deputy

sheriff and your mom was trying to get over a tragedy and you did that, you were not a very popular guy at my house, and deservedly so."

His father, Clarence Wood, a scrap-yard owner with a seventh-grade education, made it clear to his youngest son he had some decisions to make.

"This is your one opportunity for me to stand in the gap for you," Wood recalled his dad telling him, "because I won't do it again."

Wood entered and completed a pretrial diversion program. He said formal charges were never filed.

He voluntarily revealed the decades-old incident to the governor and others because, he said, it was the right thing to do. Plenty of people know about the arrest — he told his two college-aged daughters as a cautionary tale — but he's not proud of it and doesn't recount the tale by way of introduction.

"The bottom line is I did it," said Wood, a graduate of Rickards High School. "I own it. I followed a completely legal path to get past it, and I can tell you for the past 36 years, I've certainly tried to do different and learn a lesson from what occurred."

Work has been the constant in Wood's life, but as kid he never thought that work would include catching crooks, running a jail or leading the Sheriff's Office.

He got his first job, bagging groceries at Willis IGA on Gaines Street, when he was 13 years old. He had his eye on a motorcycle, and his mother, Juanita, who was divorced from his father when Wood was in elementary school, said she'd contribute by helping him get the job.

He went on to other jobs, mowing grass at the city sewage plant, for one, where he made \$2 an hour — a big raise from the IGA. At Rickards, he enrolled in the school's Diversified Cooperative Training program, going to class half the day and working in the afternoon.

The program's coordinator, Sandy Boucher Frazier, said she recognized his leadership abilities then.. He was elected president of the school's cooperative education group, representing Rickards at statewide competitions.

Mike Wood overcomes decades-old mistake to become sheriff...

continued

"Working with his fellow students was never a problem," she said. "He could relate to all of them so he could easily lead them because he obviously respected them, no matter their race or gender."

Frazier, who sent him flowers after his appointment, said she's not surprised her former student was chosen.

"He has always been very effective in knowing the community he serves," she said. "The only element that would surprise me is that a lot of times in this position they are looking for a more of politician than a public servant. He is not a schmoozer."

Wood's mom hoped he would go to college, but he was always more interested in working and earning money. After high school, he went to work at B.F. Shaw, a Tallahassee pipe-fitting and welding fabrication plant, where he worked six days a week. Eventually, his brother Ray suggested he volunteer at the Sheriff's Office, where the elder Wood worked as a patrol sergeant.

Former Sheriff Eddie Boone agreed to take him on.

"I fell in love with this work," Wood said. "I think there has always been some level of destiny."

After Wood joined the reserve unit, the fabrication plant shut down. Instead of becoming a plumber, he sold a boat he had for cash, took three months off and signed up at the Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy, earning his law-enforcement certification.

He became a deputy in March 1983. That same year, he went on his first date with former classmate Brenda Houston to a ZZ Top concert at the Civic Center. Seven years later, they were married and still are.

Wood started as a patrol deputy and marched up the ranks, holding nearly every position in the office.

"I chased bad guys, wrecked a couple of cars and lost a couple of fights," he quipped.

He worked as a school-resource officer, a detective, then a supervisor of detectives. He was promoted to sergeant to lieutenant to captain, serving as commander of the seven-unit Criminal Investigations Bureau.

Wood, hard-wired to excel, joined the SWAT Team — where he worked directly with Campbell — and eventually became commander of the SWAT and Hostage Team. Though he didn't start out an expert marksman, he trained to become a sniper and rose to team leader. **As a 40-something-year-old, Wood went to Tallahassee Community College for his associate's degree.**

"I've always been successful at whatever I choose to do," he said. "So if I was a plumber, I'd be in business for myself right now. If I was a whatever, I'd be the best whatever."

In 2006 he was promoted to major, joining Campbell's command staff, and was responsible for all law-enforcement operations. He was the lead investigator on the gut-wrenching December 2007 killing of Crawfordville nurse Cheryl Dunlap by serial killer Gary Michael Hilton. He counts it as the most stressful investigation of his career.

"It was a horrible, horrible, intense time," he said. "If the Lord blesses me, I'll never see another case like that."

In 2009, he was assigned as director of the Leon County Jail — a job he expected to loathe but came to love during his three-year stint.

"My eyes were so opened," he said. "Once I got over my own stupidity and ego ... I fell in love with the place and the people and the process."

Along the way, he earned the respect of Campbell, himself a hard-nosed cop with a penchant for pranks. Wood and Campbell served together on the SWAT Team starting in 1985.

"We developed an intimate relationship because we were together every Friday as a team, sweating and bleeding and cursing and fighting and shooting and arguing and all of the things that SWAT teams do as a family," Wood said.

One day during SWAT training, Campbell sneaked a firecracker in Wood's gun and set it off.

Mike Wood overcomes decades-old mistake to become sheriff...

continued

"And I said, 'The next firecracker you put in my gun, I'm whooping your ass,'" Wood recalled. "I said, 'I've had all of you I want for one day.' I was mad — and he loved it. And to this day, until he passed, he would tell that story."

Wood said he was never Campbell's favorite major or his closest friend — the two didn't socialize and went fishing together only once. But he said the sheriff appreciated his candor.

"I didn't tell him what he wanted to hear," Wood said. "Sometimes I got chastised for it. And I tell my guys now, if you're not prepared to disagree with me, then you're of no value to me."

Ahead of the 2012 election, Wood and Campbell discussed their political plans. Wood was ready to run in 2012, but Campbell decided to run for one more term.

"As he decided what he was going to do, we communicated because my decision was predicated on his decision," Wood said.

After 31 years at LCSO, Wood stepped down in July for a mandatory six months to take a \$500,000 payout as part of the state's Deferred Retirement Option Program. The plan was for him to rejoin the Sheriff's Office as Campbell's undersheriff on Jan. 1. But two days before his return, Wood stood next to Campbell's casket at St. Peter's Anglican Church as an honorary pallbearer.

Now it's Wood's turn behind the big desk in the corner office on Municipal Way. It's the same desk where Campbell sat, and Boone before him.

Wood considers himself one of the last old-school deputies, "the youngest of the old guys." And while he clearly reveres his long-time boss, Wood is not a Campbell clone.

"He was cantankerous, aggravating, pigheaded, opinionated and one of the best cops I ever laid eyes on," Wood said. "So working for him was a joy sometimes and sometimes it was not a joy ... you didn't have to wonder where he stood, and I respect that. I have a more congenial approach to being the same guy."

The Sheriff's Office prides itself on its homespun, family

feel, but the operation has grown into a sophisticated, \$65-million a year enterprise.

"It's not Mayberry anymore," Wood said.

He intends to carry on the tradition of leadership instilled in him by Campbell, one that he said is focused on responsibility, accountability and being available to the community. But Wood plans to take a more cooperative approach with other law-enforcement agencies.

"I do believe that inter-agency cooperation and communication can only make things better," he said.

The day Wood got the call from Scott, he'd already set up a meeting with Florida Highway Patrol officials to discuss ways to improve communication and enhance partnerships. He has the same goals for relations between LCSO and the Tallahassee Police Department.

"I don't think I have to tell you what Sheriff Campbell's dream was, he wanted to see everyone in green. And that's not a dream we share at the same level," he said of Campbell's long crusade to consolidate city and county law enforcement.

As undersheriff, Wood was already at work on an initiative to better track juvenile offenders so they don't get lost in the system and are able to connect with service providers before minor offenses become life-altering ones.

"If I put a pair of handcuffs on your son or daughter when they are 16 or 17 we are way behind," he said.

And within two days of becoming sheriff, Wood reached out to Refuge House Executive Director Meg Baldwin to affirm LCSO's commitment to a project aimed at reducing domestic violence homicides.

"He has always been an important go-to person for Refuge House," Baldwin said. "I always felt I could call him for any emergency or consult on particular cases and I've appreciated his great relationship with us over the years."

(Note: Article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

TCC celebrates Black History Month

TALLAHASSEE – Tallahassee Community College is proud to celebrate the rich legacy of African-Americans through a series of events during the month of February.

The 15th Annual Cherry Hall Alexander African-American History Calendar unveiling on January 26th served as the kickoff event and was attended by hundreds of community supporters. The remaining events will reflect the diverse aspects of the African-American community in Leon and surrounding counties.

These events include:

Convocation

Speaker: Patricia Stephens Kruize, Civil

Rights Activist, TCC Turner Auditorium, Friday, February 20, 2015, 11 a.m. – noon

Connections Fair

(Health Fair, Author Showcase, and Performing Arts), TCC Student Union, Saturday, February 21, 2015, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Gospel Extravaganza & Soul Food Fest

TCC Student Union Ballroom, Thursday, February 26, 2015, 6 – 9 p.m.

All events are free and open to the public. For information, contact Louis Dilbert at (850) 245-0835 or dilbertl@tcc.fl.edu, or Gloria Mitchell at (850) 558-4502 or mitchelg@tcc.fl.edu.

Move walks for Girl Scout cookies Saturday

GREGG PATTERSON
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Join the Next Move Walk on Saturday, and you will be rewarded with a box of Girl Scout Cookies after your 5K walk.

Here are the details:

What: The 22nd "Run for the Cookies" 5K and One Mile Run/Walk will be held Saturday at Tallahassee Community College. The One Mile Run/Walk begins at 8:30, and the 5K Run/Walk begins at 9:00. The One Mile run is a Gulf Winds Track Club Youth Grand Prix event. We are walking the 5K at 9 a.m.

Cost: This event costs \$15 without a T-shirt; 18 with a T-shirt go to this link to register at Eventbrite.com until Midnight Friday. You can also register on site starting at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday.

Where: Tallahassee Community College, 444 Appleyard Drive, Lifetime Sports Complex, The Lifetime Sports Complex is located a couple of buildings behind the main Administration building or enter from Progress drive (behind TCC) off Pensacola or Tennessee.

Proceeds from the "Run for the Cookies" help to underwrite the Girl Scout Council of the Florida Panhandle's destination travel program. The program assists girls in covering the costs associated with the educational experiences and adventures of Girl Scouting, providing greater opportunities and growth for girls!

Please note, we are keeping Move walks that require payment and registration to a minimum. But we will strive to make these walks memorable and worthwhile. Springtime Tallahassee and the Turkey Trot will probably be our only remaining paid registrations this year.

Come out, walk with us and connect! See you then.