

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



February 14, 2015- March 13, 2015

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TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



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Eagles rally for win in Barnes' home finale

WCTV

The Tallahassee Community College Eagles sent retiring head coach Eddie Barnes out with a thrilling 74-70 victory over Gulf Coast State College on Saturday night in the veteran coach's final home game.

The Eagles improved to 18-10 on the season and 4-7 in Panhandle Conference. Gulf Coast State dropped to 5-5 in league play but didn't lose any ground on second-place Pensacola State College, who fell at Northwest Florida State College.

With Saturday's victory Barnes earned his 274th win at Tallahassee. He'll have an opportunity to hit 275 in Tuesday's regular season finale at Chipola College.

Saturday's game served as a bookend of sorts for Barnes, who was victorious in the first game he ever coached inside the Bill Hebrock Eagledome, though he did it as the visiting coach. On November 22, 1991, Barnes' Wallace Community College-Dothan (Ala.) squad defeated Tallahassee, 80-79, in the Eagles' first-ever home game as a member of the NJCAA.

In that game, more than 23 1/2 years ago, his team needed a buzzer-beater to get the win over the Eagles. On Saturday, the victory was equally dramatic as Tallahassee rallied from a 17-point, first-half deficit and outscored the Commodores by 19 (46-27) in the second half.

Gulf Coast State shot lights out in the first half while the Eagles struggled from the floor. The result was a 43-28 lead at the half for the visitors.

The second half was a different story. Tallahassee came out and played some of its most inspired ball of the season. A 21-6 run led to a 49-49 tie with 12:10 left in the game.

The Commodores had one answer after another, eventually gaining a four-point lead but Tallahassee roared back one last time and eventually took the lead with 6:58 remaining on a pair of free throws by Norbertas Giga.

Tallahassee never looked back and led by as many as six points inside the final minute. Gulf Coast State's Jon Wade provided one last bit of drama, hitting a three-pointer

with 22 seconds remaining to cut the Eagles' lead in half, 73-70.

But Jahvaughn Powell hit one of two from the free throw line to make it a two-possession game and the Commodores' final shot attempt was off the mark at the buzzer.

Dirk Williams had a team-high 25 points and also added seven rebounds for Tallahassee.

There other players also scored in double figures – Cameron Smith, 14 points with nine rebounds; Powell had 13 points, three rebounds, and three assists; and Giga recorded 12 points and seven assists.

Tuesday's game will tip at 8:30 p.m. eastern.

TCC's Eddie Barnes wins final home game of coaching career

JORDAN CULVER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The first time Eddie Barnes visited Tallahassee Community College's Bill Hebrock Eagledome, he was actually the head coach of Wallace State (Dothan, Ala.) Community College.

On Nov. 22, 1991, Barnes and the Lions walked into the Eagledome for TCC's first-ever home game, and beat the Eagles 80-79 on a buzzer-beater.

Saturday night — almost 24 years later, 14 spent as the head coach at TCC — Barnes coached his final game at the Eagledome, this time as the head coach of the Eagles.

Barnes' team made sure his final game at the Eagledome was just as successful as his first. The Eagles roared back after being down double-digits in the second half and dropped the Gulf Coast State College Commodores in a 74-70 home thriller.

"It was just amazing," Barnes said after the win.

"The kids got down in the first half and things didn't really seem to be going our way. We were kind of on our heels. I just challenged them at halftime and in the second half they responded. This is a team that has been either very good or very bad. This was a tale of two halves. I'm just appreciative of the effort."

Dirk Williams, who led the Eagles with 25 points, said the team wanted to make sure Barnes got one final win in Tallahassee before the end of the season. The Eagles were down 43-28 at halftime.

"It was pretty big," Williams said.

"We just didn't want him to end his last home game with a loss. We talked at halftime and said we needed to pick up it up. This was a big win."

Before the game, Barnes was honored by TCC President Jim Murdaugh, vice president for student affairs Sally Search and the school's athletic director Rob Chaney. Barnes and his wife Judy Barnes received a standing ovation from the crowd after Murdaugh congratulated Barnes on his 200-plus wins with the school.

Barnes now has 274 wins with TCC.

"I'm just trying to make a difference in young peoples' lives," he said.

"We're really just focused on them. We want to win and I feel the by-product of what we do is about winning. It's all about trying to help people find themselves and try and become successful later on in life."

Chaney held back tears while describing what Barnes has meant to Tallahassee Community College. After the game, about 50 fans stayed to shake hands with Barnes, whose daughter and son also attended Saturday's game.

"So many lives have been touched over the course of your career," Chaney said to Barnes before Saturday's game.

"You've been a teacher, coach, mentor and friend to individuals across the country. Your contributions have changed the lives of so many. Congratulations on a memorable 40-year career and thank you for all you've done for Tallahassee Community College Athletics."

Barnes said he's focused on building long-lasting friendships throughout his career. Those friendships were on full display Saturday night as several Dothan community members came to his final home game.

"It's amazing here," he said. "I've got a lot of lifelong friends who came in from Dothan and from Orlando just to be here. One of the things my wife and I talk about is having friends. We've had a small family for most of our lives and we've built a family around our friends. We just appreciate them making the effort to be here tonight."

TCC helps students apply for college financial aid

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College will host FAFSA Day on Feb. 23 and 24 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Student Union Ballroom. The event is open to TCC students and community members who would like help in completing their 2015-16 Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA.

Help with the FAFSA will also be available on College Goal Sunday, which will actually be held on Saturday, Feb. 28, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the lower level of the TCC Capitol Center. Attendees will be entered into a scholarship drawing. Representatives from the United Way will be present to provide free tax preparation assistance.

For information: 201-8399 or finaid@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC forensics captures state title

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

For the ninth consecutive year, Tallahassee Community College's speech and debate team won the Florida College System Activities Association state championship. Team members Gerald Djajaputra, Alex Fabrega, Jessica Tomlinson, Chase Cashion, Misha Smith and Daniel Santillana swept the top six individual awards (Pentathlon).

Tomlinson also captured the Jennifer Pickman Novice Award. Team TCC has won the Pickman Award every year since its inception 16 years ago.

Santillana received the Shira Brownstein Fellowship Award. Courtney Medina, Tiffany Canseco and Adelina Mitchell also brought home awards.

The team will host the Florida Intercollegiate Forensics Association State Tournament Feb. 19-21, where the squad will grapple with the likes of Florida State and the University of Florida.

Event to focus on women in leadership

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The TCC Leadership Institute and TCC Foundation will host the Building Legacies event March 3, 2015, from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Goodwood Museum and Gardens. The program explores the qualities, characteristics and values that support women in their drive to reach their full potential. Speakers include Karen Moore of Moore Communications Group, Michelle Ubben of Sachs Media Group and Kim Dixon of AMB Investment Advisors. Laura Osteen will facilitate.

Registration closes March 1. Tickets are \$35, with discounts available for students. Purchase tickets at www.xorbia.com/e/lc454/BuildingLegacies.

Speaker bios and information are at www.TCCWomeninLeadership.com.

TCC professor Lee Kitchen to be published in China

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

A book by Tallahassee Community College professor Lee Kitchen will be published by Beijing-based China Fortune Press. Kitchen began using "YOU! The Brand, Marketing the Individual" for his Marketing the Individual course in 2003.

The text is based on Kitchen's 35-year career with multinational businesses, as well as his experiences chaperoning TCC study abroad trips to China and teaching Chinese students. Topics include marketing basics, social media, Western business etiquette and communication skills.

The Chinese adaptation of Kitchen's book will serve as a how-to manual for Chinese students and professionals considering a career change.

TCC signs deal with Valdosta State

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

He could have stood up and pumped out his chest, but instead, Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh signed agreement papers with Valdosta State University Monday with little fanfare.

The papers establish an agreement that Valdosta State has been pursuing that would allow TCC graduates to pursue bachelor's degrees at VSU and benefit by paying in-state tuition.

The action during Monday's board of trustees meeting signals yet another partnership that TCC has with four-year Florida State, Florida A&M and the University of West Florida.

That's in addition to partnerships TCC already has on its campus with Barry University, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Flagler College, Saint Leo University and Thomas University from Thomasville, Ga.

Add that to the agreements already established with online universities and TCC students have a plethora of choices upon graduation.

"We appreciate any opportunity to extend options for our students," Murdaugh said. "I think our students are well served knowing we create a wide range of options. We've got an amazing array of choices for their junior and senior years."

Students earning an associate in science degree with a 2.0 or higher would be able to enroll in Valdosta State's bachelor of science in organizational leadership and bachelor of applied science in human capital performance (similar to Human Resources). Students with associate degrees in arts also would be able to enroll with a 2.0 GPA but also must meet academic requirements for certain majors.

About 75 percent of TCC's students continue studies for a four-year-degree. Currently, about 1 percent of its students are from Georgia.

Valdosta State has over 11,000 students enrolled, with more than 40 percent of them from the Atlanta region. It offers in-state to students from Baker, Columbia, Hamilton, Jefferson, Leon, Madison and Nassau counties.

"This kind of partnership is a natural," Valdosta State President William J. McKinney said at the meeting. The agreement makes it "streamless" for TCC students wanting to study at Valdosta. The university offers a vibrant student life, a diverse student population and strong academic and athletic programs. It has a similar agreement with North Florida Community College in Madison.

Its six-year graduation rate is about 50 percent, he said.

"The biggest benefit for VSU is to fulfill part of our mission — producing graduates ready for the workforce."

TCC partners with Valdosta State to bridge education across state lines

VANITY DURAN
WFSU NEWS

Tallahassee Community College (TCC) and Valdosta State University (VSU) are partnering to simplify student transition between the two schools.

The agreements will allow TCC students with an Associate's degree and the required grade point average to gain admission to VSU and pay in-state tuition. VSU's Joe Weaver says the programs are a part of his school's effort to bring non-traditional students into the Georgia university system.

"We do the same agreement with other technical colleges in the state of Georgia. We've already signed ten agreements so far," Weaver says. We also, part of our service area is not only the state of Georgia, but part of our service area is also Northern Florida and we already signed the same agreement with North Florida Community College."

Two years ago, VSU expanded its policy to waive out-of-state tuition for residents of Leon and other border counties. Transfer students are have the option of VSU's 100-plus degrees, certificates, and/or endorsements. The deal was signed Monday during TCC's Board of Trustees meeting.

TCC Eagles rally past FSC

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (SPORTS BRIEFS)

The TCC Eagles baseball team pulled off a late game rally to beat Florida State College at Jacksonville 9-7 on Wednesday evening at Eagle Field.

The Blue Wave scored runs in the first, third and fifth innings to take a 6-0 lead over the Eagles.

The Eagles came roaring back in the bottom of the fifth inning, bringing in seven runs to take a 7-6 lead.

In the inning the Eagles had 13 plate appearances and saw three pitching changes. Kyle Taddeo, Chris Clark, Jeremy Walton, DJ McKnight, Tyler Kinard, Zach Featherstone, and Colby Sweat all scored in the inning.

Featherstone was 1-for-2 on the night and had an RBI. He also reached base three times due to being walked by the pitcher.

Craig Olson entered the game in the top of the fifth inning and earned his second win of the season. Olson struck out two batters while only giving up one hit over two innings.

TCC men's season ends

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (SPORTS BRIEFS)

A furious second half comeback by the Tallahassee Community College Eagles fell just short in a 60-57 loss to Chipola College on Tuesday night in their final game of the 2014-15 season.

The Eagles finished the season 18-11 overall and 4-8 in Panhandle Conference play.

Dirk Williams led the Eagles with 30 points, his second 30-plus point game this season. Stavian Allen led the way for the Eagles on the glass, pulling down a team-high six rebounds.

Tuesday marked the final game of head coach Eddie Barnes' career.

Barnes, the Eagles' head coach since 2001, finished his career at Tallahassee with a record of 274-143, highlighted by NJCAA Region 8/FCSAA State Championships in 2006 and 2011. Combined with his ten-year stint (1991-2001) at Wallace Community College-Dothan (Ala.), his NJCAA coaching ledger stands at 469-254.

He also coached 13 seasons in the Alabama High School Athletic Association, accumulating a record of 247-121.

Altogether, Barnes' 37-year coaching career concludes at 716-375.

Tallahassee also bid farewell to four departing players from this year's squad - Elmo Stephen, Dirk Williams, Eric Nottage, and Cameron Smith.

In the women's game, TCC suffered a 77-42 loss at Chipola College. The Eagles fell to 20-10 for the season and 5-7 in Panhandle Conference play.

TCC debate team captures ninth straight state title

JOHN SCHULTZ

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

For the ninth consecutive year, Tallahassee Community College's speech and debate team won the Florida College System Activities Association State Championship. In addition to the state title, nine team members brought home awards in 37 of their 41 events, winning six of the 11 individual events along the way. The team also swept the top six individual speaker awards (Pentathlon) at the tournament held in early February at Florida State College at Jacksonville.

Co-captain Gerald Djajaputra placed first in Pentathlon and brought home state titles in communication analysis and informative speaking.

"It was great to retain the state championship," said Djajaputra. "I could not be more proud of the work ethic and dedication of this team."

Alex Fabrega placed second in Pentathlon and won the state title in both impromptu speaking and dramatic interpretation. First-year competitor Jessica Tomlinson placed third in Pentathlon and won the state title in prose interpretation. Tomlinson also captured the Jennifer Pickman Novice Award for the state's best novice competitor. Team TCC has won the Pickman Award every year since its inception 16 years ago.

"Competing with this exceptionally talented team was a phenomenal experience. I can't wait to be a part our continued success," said Tomlinson.

Chase Cashion placed fourth in Pentathlon, taking home a state title in duo interpretation, while Misha Smith placed fifth overall.

Co-captain Daniel Santillana finished Team TCC's Pentathlon sweep by placing sixth. Santillana was also selected by his fellow competitors to receive the Shira Brownstein Fellowship Award. The award is dedicated to the memory of Shira Brownstein, who competed on TCC's speech and debate team from 2007–2010. Brownstein was a noted team leader through her talent, work ethic and selflessness. The Brownstein family has established a perpetual scholarship with the TCC Foundation to honor Shira.

Courtney Medina, Tiffany Canseco and Adelina Mitchell also collected multiple awards.

For information contact John Schultz at (850) 201-8037 or schultzj@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC to host financial aid events

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

Students planning to apply for financial aid for college will have several opportunities to get help from financial aid experts later this month.

Tallahassee Community College will host FAFSA Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, February 23, and Tuesday, February 24 in the Student Union Ballroom. This event is open to TCC students and all members of the community to assist them with their 2015-16 Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA.

Staff from the Financial Aid office will be on hand to assist students. Computer access will also be available.

For information, contact the TCC Financial Aid office at (850) 201-8399 or finaid@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC earns accolades for TCC2FSU advertising campaign

AMERICANTOWNS.COM

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (February 20, 2015) – Tallahassee Community College's communications and marketing team recently won two advertising awards for the TCC2FSU marketing campaign at the 2015 Council for Advancement and Support of Education District III Conference. The campaign also secured a silver ADDY award at the American Advertising Awards Tallahassee Gala earlier this month.

The CASE District III Awards recognize best practices throughout the university and college advancement profession. The district represents more than 500 schools in nine states. TCC won an award of excellence in the total advertising campaign category for the TCC2FSU campaign and a special merit award for the TCC2FSU commercial, produced by TREW Media.

The ADDY Awards honor the best in advertising in the Tallahassee area. The team brought home a silver ADDY in the integrated campaigns category.

The campaign, which promotes the guaranteed transfer option to Florida State University, competed against entries submitted by top advertising agencies in Tallahassee and large educational institutions in the southeast.

"I'm incredibly proud of our team," said Alice Maxwell, director of communications and marketing at TCC. "We're honored to be recognized among such a talented group of entrants including full-service marketing firms and four-year universities."

This past November, the TCC2FSU campaign earned four awards at the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations southeastern district conference. The team took the gold award for successful recruitment marketing program and video advertisement and the silver award for the TCC2FSU postcard and social media campaign.

Lincoln grads reunite on TCC's softball team

JORDAN CULVER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Plenty of coaches recruit from the same school over multiple years, but Tallahassee Community College's softball coach Patti Townsend ended up with three players from the same school entirely by coincidence.

Townsend said she knew she wanted to secure Mariah Rivera, a standout pitcher from Lincoln, but her other two Lincoln players — outfielder Brenna Courtemanche and catcher Dani Ekberg — just wound up on the team under entirely different circumstances.

Ekberg, who has been catching for Rivera since the pair were about 6 years old, said she originally went Wallace State Community College in Hanceville, Ala., and it wasn't a good fit. Courtemanche was a walk-on who wanted to play for a team after dealing with multiple knee injuries.

"It definitely helps they all know each other," Townsend said. "Dani can get on Mariah if she feels like she's having an off-day and Mariah can do the same with Dani. They definitely understand each other. It helps with bringing the local kids in and bringing in some families and fans."

Rivera — the Panhandle Conference's Pitcher of the Year and an All-American — said she knew she wanted to stay in Tallahassee to play collegiate softball. Ekberg and Courtemanche were unsure of whether or not they wanted to stay in the city they grew up in, but eventually decided they wanted to stay in Florida's capital.

The trio were all friends in high school, however Rivera and Ekberg actually played against Courtemanche in middle school when all three played on travel teams. Courtemanche attended Raa Middle while Rivera and Ekberg went to Swift Creek. All three said having the same home crowd cheer them on throughout their careers has been a major plus.

"It's an amazing feeling," Courtemanche said. "I tell the other girls, 'You can come to my parents' house for dinner.' They don't have their families where. Having my family here — I'm just so grateful that I could stay in Tallahassee and have that support and have that love here all the time. I always welcome my teammates to come over and have that, too."

Competitively, Rivera and Ekberg agree their long-standing relationship gives them a slight edge over

opponents. Townsend said sometimes the two have good-natured arguments — both on and off the field.

"We're more like sisters than teammates," Rivera said.

She added, smiling, "But that can also be a downfall sometimes. I love her to death but we can be a pain in each other's rear-ends sometimes. Somebody is always right all the time, but it's cool. We know how to handle each other. I'm glad my catcher isn't some random person I don't really know."

Something about the chemistry on the team is working. Right now the Eagles are 11-2 and ranked No. 9 in the nation. Rivera has three wins in four appearances this year, including three complete games.

"It's three best friends from high school making it to college," Ekberg said. "There's a connection between me and the pitcher and then me and the outfielder and trusting the outfielder to have my pitcher's back. I like it."

Ekberg said even though she grew up in Tallahassee, she's still discovering new things about the city with her teammates.

"I love the area," she said. "Growing up, you think there's not a whole lot to do but over time you see there are things to do here and things to do there. I love knowing the town and I love seeing my friends from high school and I love seeing the other adults I already know."

Rivera said she'd definitely recommend local students give Tallahassee Community College a shot, for both academics and softball.

"I really can't see myself anywhere else but here," she said. "This was the plan the whole time."

Of course, the "Lincoln connection" isn't lost on other members of TCC's team, Courtemanche said.

"We always pick on each other as friends and we have inside jokes from back in sixth grade," she said. "We had a rivalry in middle school and then we just jumped to high school, connected and became the Three Musketeers."

TCC named military friendly school once again

JADE BULECZA
WTXL

Tallahassee Community College is named a top military friendly school in an annual guide that lists schools that go above and beyond to give back to service men and women.

TCC says it's increased the scope and quality of its services for military veterans by opening its Veterans Success Center. The university has also teamed up with the Department of Veterans Affairs to bring a VA counselor on board.

The full guide top military-friendly schools is available online at www.mae-kmi.com.

You can contact the TCC Veterans Affairs office at (850) 201-8406 or fiaivet@tcc.fl.edu for more information.

TCC launching online GED prep course program

ELIZABETH WHITE
WTXL

Tallahassee Community College is launching a new online adult basic education and GED preparation course in March.

In addition to the new online courses, the college will also provide an adult education computer lab, where students taking the online classes can receive one-on-one instruction.

Coursework will cover all areas of the GED exam, including reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science and social studies.

There are up to 40 spaces available in the course and each will cost \$30 per term.

Upon enrollment, students must take a one-time placement test, which costs \$25.

Black History Month celebration continues

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The Gospel Extravaganza and Soul Food Fest, the final event in Tallahassee Community College's Black History Month celebration, will be held Thursday, February 26, from 6 to 9 p.m. in the TCC Student Union Ballroom. The event is free and open to the public.

For information, call (850) 245-0835 or email to dilbertl@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC repeats as top military-friendly college

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

For the second straight year, Tallahassee Community College is listed as a Top Military-Friendly College in Military Advanced Education's Guide to Military-Friendly Colleges and Universities.

Since opening the Veterans Success Center and partnering with the Department of Veterans Affairs to bring a VetSuccess on-campus VA counselor on board, TCC has continued to increase the scope and quality of its services for military veterans.

For information, contact the TCC Veterans Affairs office at (850) 201-8406 or faivet@tcc.fl.edu.

Students shine at UN conference

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

On Feb. 13, hundreds of middle and high school students came to Tallahassee Community College to debate international politics at the Tallahassee Southern Model United Nations conference.

They researched global issues, wrote position papers, gave speeches and voted on resolutions.

Both Wakulla High School and Leon High School won Outstanding Delegation.

Senior Foreign Service Officer Michael E. Thurston, U.S. Diplomat in Residence for the Southeast Region, was the guest speaker.

Peanav Bokey from Rickards High School and Maya King from Maclay High School received scholarships to attend the International MUN conference in Washington, D.C. Outstanding delegates Marissa Rossetti from Wakulla High School and Sydney Selman from SAIL High School were awarded scholarships to TCC.

Oyster-farming student sues TCC

JENNIFER PORTMAN
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A former student in Tallahassee Community College's fledgling aquaculture program has followed through on his promise to sue the school.

Lawyers for John Taylor, one of 10 students in the inaugural oyster-farming class offered through TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute, filed the lawsuit in Leon County court last week.

Taylor, a commercial fisherman from Sopchoppy, issued a notice of intent to sue in October. He is claiming breach of contract, negligence and fraud. He is represented by Linville Atkins and Theresa Flury of the Tallahassee law firm Flury & Atkins.

The aquaculture course, operating as a certificate program, was launched in January 2014 with the promise of harvesting the first oysters by summer. But TCC encountered permitting issues, along with delays assembling the necessary baskets for harvesting the oysters, and the students have yet to haul in any of the coveted bivalves.

"Mr. Taylor wants only what was repeatedly promised to him by TCC: knowledge of oyster aquaculture so that he could have his own oyster business. This was the promise TCC made to him and the other students, the Governor's Cabinet, the Florida Legislature, and the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners," Atkins said. "TCC continues to tout the program as a success even though months after it was to conclude, absolutely none of TCC's promises have materialized for any of the participants."

The 10 students, chosen by the college, were given \$7,500 loans to start their initial oyster harvest. They were also told that they could expect to realize more than \$150,000 in revenue from their first harvest. Taylor said TCC officials told him in March he would have to repay \$18,000 for materials.

Taylor contends he was dismissed from the program after he questioned how materials were being ordered and how money was being spent. Program officials said he was expelled for missing two classes and not turning in a business plan. Taylor said he in fact did turn in the plan and contracts with TCC said students could not be expelled from the program until they had missed three classes. His two absences were excused, Taylor said.

Taylor said he was solicited to join the program by WEI director Bob Ballard, but neither he, nor the man he hired to be instructor had the necessary expertise to teach the class. The instructor, Steve Cushman, misrepresented his credentials, the lawsuit said.

Taylor is seeking damages and attorneys fees in excess of \$15,000. TCC President Jim Murdaugh has said he is not sure what damages Taylor would be entitled to, since students did not pay any tuition or fees.

TCC knocked out of postseason by Gulf Coast

BRAD DALTON
WTXL

Tallahassee Community College's women's basketball team had its season come to an end on Tuesday evening, dropping a 73-67 decision to Gulf Coast State College in a Panhandle Conference playoff game, hosted by Chipola College.

The Eagles finish the 2014-15 season at 20-11, 5-8 in Panhandle Conference play. Gulf Coast State improved to 6-7 in league play and advances to the NJCAA Region 8/FCSAA State Tournament as the PC's No. 3 seed.

Playing without four injured starters, the Eagles played inspired ball and trailed by only a point, 16-15, at the 9:59 mark of the first half. But the lack of depth showed over the next ten minutes as the Commodores closed on a 22-6 run and took a 38-21 lead to the locker room.

Out of the intermission, Tallahassee mounted a charge, outscoring Gulf Coast State 27-12 to pull within two points, 50-48, heading into the final ten minutes. That, however, was as close as the Eagles got.

Eboni Watts led four Eagles in double-figures with 18 points. Marija Pacar added 17 and Jeremica Edwards and Parish Johnson Jones scored 10 points each.

Benedicta Makakala dished out 12 assists for the Eagles.

Students meet with financial aid experts at FAFSA Day

JADE BULECZA
WTXL

Students get the opportunity to meet with financial aid experts at Tallahassee community college in a convenient way.

Over the past couple of days, Tallahassee Community College has hosted an event called FAFSA Day.

Students got some help with their 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid form.

If you missed out, don't worry you can attend College Goal Sunday. It's taking place this Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the lower level of the TCC Capitol Center.

Representatives from the United Way will also be there to provide free tax preparation assistance.

TCC trustees participate in national summit

BYRON SPIRES
HAVANA HERALD

Tallahassee Community College trustees and president Jim Murdaugh traveled to Washington to participate in the National Legislative Summit hosted by the Association of Community College Trustees.

While in Washington, the group also met with Florida Congressional members to advocate on behalf of the college.

The trustees and president met with Congresswoman Gwen Graham, Senator Bill Nelson and staff in Senator Marco Rubio's office.

They had the opportunity to visit with Congressmen John Mica and Joaquin Castro and Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

At the National Legislative Summit, the group heard from the following presenters:

Clarence Anthony, Executive Director, National League of Cities; James Kvaal, Deputy Director, White House Domestic Policy Council; Ted Mitchell, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education; Dr. Jill Biden, Second Lady of the United States; Congressman Joaquin Castro; Senator Dick Durbin; Congressman Bill Flores; Congresswoman Gwen Moore and Congressman Mark Takan.

Living black history

Quincy museum founder, social activist is guest speaker at TCC Black History Month event

KENDRICK BROWN

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

Tallahassee Community College's black history month program provided a stage for the founder of Quincy's Black Heritage Museum to share the story of her civil rights work Friday morning on the college's campus.

Priscilla Stephens-Kruize shared with the audience the story of her and her sister's protest beginnings, stemming from a time in ninth grade then they and their friends refused to be relegated to ordering from a designated window for "coloreds" at a Dairy Queen restaurant in Bell Glades, Fla.

Kruize said she and her sister became known as freshmen at Florida A&M for bringing an imposter to the campus. The man claimed to be an African prince and presented himself to be highly educated, but was discovered to have only a third-grade education.

In their sophomore year, she said she and her sister, Priscilla, started FAMU's chapter of Congress of Racial Equality. The group initially had 13 members, approximately, and would run experiments to test the extent of racism in Tallahassee.

They'd enter restaurants and stores just to see if they'd be forced to leave. Once they'd figured out which restaurants they "couldn't" eat at, they'd come back to those establishments and intentionally try to get arrested for being there.

Kruize said she and her sister lost their hair while in prison and began to experience health issues such as ulcers and temporary paralysis as a result of the jail's coldness.

At times, Kruize expressed disappointment in what she described as a lack of progress in the fight for equal status in American society.

"I'm sorry I fought for integration, because integration has destroyed the values of black people and all other people. We should have no poverty in America and we should have the smartest people, but this country is really lacking in intelligence because if you're an intelligent country, you would know poverty brings on crime," Kruize said. "If you have people who cannot work because they cannot read or they have a low self-esteem, they're going to do something to cause harm to you."

At the end of the program, Kruize was presented with a plaque for her civil rights service and continued support of black interests through ventures such as the Black History Museum.

Universities lay out legislative priorities

SEAN ROSSMAN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The leaders of Tallahassee's local universities will press the legislature for a nursing program, money for new buildings and incentive programs during the upcoming legislative session.

Florida A&M University president Elmira Mangum, Tallahassee Community College president Jim Murdaugh and David Coburn, chief of staff to Florida State University president John Thrasher, laid out their priorities in a panel discussion hosted by the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce on Thursday morning.

Mangum reiterated her request for \$20 million in recurring money and \$10 million in one-time funds to invest in FAMU faculty at the joint FSU-FAMU College of Engineering. Mangum wants to bring its faculty start-up and salary packages to the level of FSU faculty. Coburn said FSU supports FAMU's funding request.

"We can't do it without additional resources," Mangum said. "That would benefit both schools because it would benefit the college of engineering."

FAMU has requested \$5.5 million for student support services to enhance retention programs in order to improve graduation rates; \$3 million for sustainability and agriculture initiatives and \$4.2 million for online courses, Mangum said.

"Our students, many of them, have to have jobs and work in the summer," Mangum said. "Being able to take a course online allows them to be able to continue to support their families and their income."

FAMU has requested another \$18.1 million in campus-wide infrastructure, remodeling and renovation needs and \$6.1 million for a new student affairs building in order to attract students and faculty.

Mangum boasted the university's reputation as an economic engine for the local and state economies.

"When we talk about attracting people to the state and the state growing," Mangum said. "Florida A&M has a very important role to play in that."

TCC's Murdaugh hopes the business community will advocate on behalf of a baccalaureate nursing program

he sought last year. Murdaugh's push for the curriculum failed when on the last day of the session, legislators passed a bill that placed a 12-month moratorium on new four-year degrees at Florida's 28 state colleges.

Murdaugh restated the need for more nurses in Tallahassee and asked the business community to help relay to the legislature the importance of the program.

"There's such a demand and FSU and FAMU train a lot of nurses," he said. "But there's simply no way that either institution can meet that demand without us helping."

The Tallahassee Chamber passed a resolution supporting the baccalaureate program.

Coburn said FSU supports new dollars for performance funding, which they benefited from last year, and an increase to preeminence funding that allowed them to hire 45 new positions last year.

FSU also seeks more funding for STEM programs and a STEM teaching facility. The school will also ask the legislature for half the cost of a \$95-million Interdisciplinary Research and Commercialization building in Innovation Park and about \$38 million to finish the Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science building on the southwest corner of Woodward Avenue and West Tennessee Street.

TCC basketball players honored

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (SPORTS BRIEFS)

Tallahassee Community College placed eight players, including five first-team selections, on the Coaches' All-Panhandle Conference basketball teams, with four women and four men representing the Eagles.

From the women's basketball team, three of the four players selected - Cat Wells, Jeremica Edwards, and Karley Barnes - were named first-team all-conference. From the men's basketball team, two of the Eagles' four all-conference selections - Elmo Stephen and Dirk Williams - were named to the first-team.

Three other Eagles - Eboni Watts from the women's team, and Cameron Smith and Norbertas Giga from the men's - were named second-team all-conference.

INIE to host workshop on tax-exempt status applications

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence will host an interactive workshop Wednesday, March 11, for those seeking to apply for 501(c)(3) tax status for their nonprofit organizations.

The workshop, "501(c)(3) Designation: Understanding the Application Process from A to Z," is scheduled from 9 to 10:30 a.m. at the Tallahassee Community College Capitol Center. Keith Bowers, regional director of the Small Business Development Center at Florida A&M University, will lead the workshop.

Bowers will walk participants through the steps that should be followed when completing the Internal Revenue Service's 501(c)(3) application for tax-exempt status, including instructions for supporting documentation.

"Securing 501(c)(3) status is integral to creating a solid foundation for a nonprofit organization," said Kimberly Moore, TCC vice president for workforce development and INIE board member. "Tax-exempt status allows for far greater opportunities to increase capacity and carry out the mission of the organization."

Registration is available online at www.theinstitutefornonprofits.org. Tickets cost \$5 for INIE members and \$10 for nonmembers. Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop computer to the workshop.

For information, contact Lisa Powell at (850) 201-9436.

Plan now for upcoming training opportunities

ALYCE LEE STANSBURY & KELLY OTTE

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (NOTES ON NONPROFITS)

We're big believers in investing in education and professional development for staff and volunteers which enables nonprofits of all sizes, missions, and stages of growth to learn, improve, and grow. For years, we've extolled the virtues of capacity building which the Foundation Center describes as "actions that improve nonprofit effectiveness." There's no doubt investing in education strengthens the organization from within. There are several upcoming regional, state and national conferences which we urge board and staff leaders to attend. We also encourage donors to consider funding someone from your favorite nonprofit to take advantage of these opportunities. Although it may not be as immediately rewarding as funding direct services, investing in education is one of the best ways donors can support the long-term success of nonprofits who champion their favorite causes.

Many people who serve on nonprofit boards have a heart for the organization but little or no knowledge of their role and responsibilities as an individual board member or the overall responsibilities of the board. To address this need, Building Better Boards will be held on Tuesday, May 5. Many thanks to the board of Leadership Tallahassee for continuing to offer this important training. Along with the education and information offered, BBB is one of the few opportunities for board members to meet each other, network among themselves, share information, and learn together. As attendees since the mid-'90s, we've seen firsthand the synergy and ah-ha moments that often happen at this event. If you are a new or seasoned Board member, or somewhere in between, we strongly encourage you to attend. BBB Committee member Rob Renzi says, "This year's program is about helping nonprofit Board go to the next level by hearing directly from people who are implementing best practices in the nonprofit sector." Register at www.leadershipallahassee.com/events/building-better-boards.

One more thought about board members attending training. It's been our experience some board members operate with the luxury of obliviousness. More simply stated, they just don't know what they don't know. If you got most of your training around the board table, it's important to read books, seek training, and learn what high functioning boards and board members look like.

Building Better Boards can kick start that conversation. Ah ha moments are really pearls of wisdom that can transform anyone into the best board member ever. If you are a new board member, sign up, and come to Kelly's workshop. If you want to improve your fundraising results, plan to attend Alyce Lee's session.

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, May 6 for the 16th Annual Conference for Excellence in Nonprofit Management and Leadership presented by United Partners for Human Services. This is the only local conference focused on nonprofits and is open to all nonprofit organizations, not just health and human service agencies. Fifteen concurrent sessions will address fiscal management, marketing, fundraising, program management, case management, wellness, and leadership development for middle managers and executive directors. **A huge thank you goes to Jim Murdaugh and Tallahassee Community College for generously hosting the conference again this year.** Early registration begins March 16th online at www.upsfl.org/annual-conference.

Planet Philanthropy, the state's largest and best fundraising conference, will be held June 7-9 and is sponsored by the Florida Caucus of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Along with an opening reception, keynote speakers and a slew of fundraising related exhibitors, educational sessions will address annual giving, major gifts, capital campaigns, stewardship, board development, and much more. This 2 ½ day conference is being held in Jacksonville at the downtown Hyatt Regency so it's a short drive for North Florida organizations. For the past ten years, Planet Philanthropy has offered the best bang-for-the-buck when it comes to high-quality fundraising education. To learn more, visit www.planetphilanthropy.org. Early bird registration is open until April 10th. Alyce Lee hopes to see you there!

(NOTE: Article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

TCC to offer GED prep courses online

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College's Division of Workforce Development will launch new online adult basic education and General Education Development preparation courses in March.

The online delivery method for the courses will provide greater flexibility for students to progress at their own pace as they prepare for the GED test.

Workforce Development will provide an adult education computer lab where students taking the online classes can receive one-on-one instruction.

Coursework will cover all areas of the GED exam, including reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science and social studies.

Up to 40 spaces are available in the courses. Each course costs \$30 per term. Upon enrollment, students must take a one-time placement test, which costs \$25.

For information, contact Karen Hill at (850) 201-6104 or hillka@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC2FSU campaign earns accolades

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College's communications and marketing team won two advertising awards for the TCC2FSU marketing campaign at the 2015 Council for Advancement and Support of Education District III Conference.

The district represents more than 500 schools in nine states. TCC won an award of excellence in the total advertising campaign category and a special merit award for the TCC2FSU commercial.

The campaign also won a silver ADDY award at the American Advertising Awards Tallahassee Gala earlier this month.

The TCC2FSU campaign promotes TCC's guaranteed transfer option to Florida State University.

The TCC2FSU program is one of TCC's three "Golden Guarantee" programs. The others are partnerships with Florida A&M University and the University of West Florida.

Former student follows through on suit over TCC aquaculture program

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

Former Wakulla Environmental Institute student John N. Taylor, who participated in the startup oyster aquaculture certification program begun by Tallahassee Community College, is going through with his intent to sue the college and TCC Board of Trustees for negligence, fraud and breach of contract.

The Tallahassee law firm of Flury & Atkins LLC filed the suit on behalf of the Sopchoppy resident. Taylor is seeking damages and attorney's fees upwards of \$15,000.

Alan Moran, vice president of TCC Marketing and Communication, said the college has received information regarding Taylor's lawsuit.

"The college's attorneys are reviewing complaint, and will respond to any allegations," Moran said. "We also believe this lawsuit has no merit."

According to Taylor's complaint, 10 students in the inaugural program were to receive \$7,500 worth of materials from the WEI in order to grow oysters in the Gulf waters at Panacea to boost the suffering oyster industry throughout the county. The contract called for students to repay the cost of materials from its first oyster crop in January 2015.

Some factors have prevented a harvest, including permitting issues. Students were allegedly told to expect \$150,000 in revenue following the first harvest.

Taylor alleges that the students were informed they would have to repay as much as \$18,000 beginning in January, instead of the \$7,500 required in the contract.

The lawsuit alleges that former oyster aquaculture instructor Steve Cushman should not have been an instructor, because had no formal education in aquaculture, and no experience in teaching aquaculture. The lawsuit says Cushman misrepresented his credentials.

The college has said such credentials are not required for instructors leading a certification course.

Taylor also said he was dropped from the program after asking questions about money and materials. But program officials claim Taylor was dropped because he did not turn in a business plan, and missed too many classes. Taylor contends that the absences were excused.

Big Bend Maritime Center still belongs to county for now Board explores option for TCC's Wakulla Environmental Institute to manage property

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

The future of the Big Bend Maritime Center is at an impasse, but Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute could possibly give it new life.

Commissioners voted 4-1 for the county to retain the BBMC Panacea property at the board meeting on Feb. 17, and will pursue options to allow WEI to manage it.

The original purpose of the BBMC was to have a dedicated property to expand public interest, understanding, and appreciation of the Big Bend's maritime heritage, culture, and natural resources. The county became legal custodians of the Panacea property in 2008, made up of five residential parcels – a two-story elevated residential home, two driveways, a dock, and a one-story residential home on pilings. The remaining lots are vacant.

"It's a fish or cut bait moment," said County Administrator David Edwards. "Meaning, we have to make a decisions about what we want to do. If a facility is not being used regularly, it will deteriorate."

It is estimated that upwards of \$300,000 is needed to bring the buildings up to code.

County staff presented three options for the BBMC. 1) Allow the Wakulla-based nonprofit Florida Foresight to bring the BBMC into a state of repair and manage it. They don't have the money to do that, Edwards said, which leads to the next option.

2) Relinquish the property back to the state. "It would be a black mark on the county... the state would overlook us in (property acquisition) endeavors," he said. Option 2 puts the popular boat-building program in a position to be axed.

3) The county can assume full responsibility for the BBMC, and request the Florida Communities Trust allow the county to use the BBMC exclusively as a public-access outdoor recreation park, and other sustainable and affordable activities. "This would allow Roger Pinholster (president of Florida Foresight) to continue his boat building," Edwards said. But, he added, the county cannot afford to maintain the facilities, and those costs need to be lowered, perhaps by demolishing one or both buildings.

Commissioner Howard Kessler said Option 3 allows the county to be "masters of our own destiny. We take control of it. We try to negotiate a position that is meaningful for the county, and something the county can afford."

Commission Chair Ralph Thomas said if all else fails, Option 2 is still on the table.

Pinholster talked about the three components offered by the BBMC – education, recreation and community.

"The people of Panacea want this," Commissioner Jerry Moore said. He admonished the option to tear down the structures, and insisted that TCC-WEI would be the ideal caretaker of the BBMC.

"Problem is," Edwards said. "Nothing is that easy. A transfer from the county to TCC-WEI is not possible. If we are able to change our management plan and include participation with TCC, that's something we can negotiate with the Department of Environmental Protection, but I can't commit to that at this point in time."

He added that reverting the property back to the state, and requesting the state to allow the college to manage it, does not guarantee that will happen, and the boat program could be lost.

"I swear I'll tie myself to the building before you tear it down," Moore said, which drew applause from citizens. "I'll also tie myself to the building before we spend any county money on that."

We can't have both, Edwards said. When it came time to vote on Option 3, Moore voted no.

WEI's Executive Director Bob Ballard asked that TCC-WEI be the recipient of a property transfer to the educational institution. He said WEI receives Public Education Capital Outlay money to maintain the buildings, and grant opportunities to further the vision.

"We love what Roger and his folks are doing to this property with the boat building," Ballard said. "It fits right in with WEI is all about. We would share in trying to support his vision."

Big Bend Maritime Center still belongs to county for now....

continued

Ballard said WEI is especially interested in the dock, which could be not only used for public recreation, but for oyster aquaculture program's cage loading and collection.

parents working together with their hands. Commissioner Richard Harden said he would come out to observe the activities.

The idea will still have to pass through the WEI Board of Trustees, "But I as the executive director am very much in favor of it," Ballard said

Dena Keyserling, a BBMC volunteer, said the boat-building program is a community asset. "No one in the Southeast is building boats of this quality," she said. "Throughout hurricanes, oil spills and the loss of fisheries, this is something they can keep doing, no matter what Mother Nature throws at us. It would be a huge mistake to get rid of it at this point."

BBMC Board Member Julia Knight said there are a lot of children in Panacea with nothing to do. That is why the boat-building program is such a boon locally.

"To take that from the community, and have nothing else to give them in return, you're leaving these kids with nothing," Knight said.

Larry Roberts of Sopchoppy said he has always been against the BBMC, and said the option to give the property back to the state was the way to go, since the structures are basically "a slum."

"Get this property out of the pockets of the taxpayers," he said. "Get rid of it."

Jim Wetheron of the Coastal Optimist Club bragged on the boat-building program, and said WEI's proposal was an excellent one.

"Managed properly, it could equal the economic benefit to the county that Wakulla Springs or (Gulf Specimen Marine Lab) brings in," he said. "It's a phenomenal opportunity."

Wetheron took exception to the "slums" comment.

"They are solidly built buildings, and have every opportunity to be productive community centers and gathering places," he said.

John Meerman invited commissioners to witness the excitement of the boat-building program – kids and



TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Current and former members of the TCC Model United Nations team led the Model United Nations conference that was held recently at TCC in February.

Local students excel at Model United Nations conference

By Richard Murgio
Special to the Chronicle

On Feb. 13, hundreds of area middle and high school students came together at Turner Auditorium on Tallahassee Community College's campus to debate international politics at the Tallahassee Southern Model United Nations 19th annual conference.

The students had researched pressing global issues such as nuclear weapons and sustainable development and written papers from the position of their assigned country to model how members of the United Nations collaborate to find solutions to real-life problems. The

students practiced and sharpened their speaking and debate skills by giving speeches and writing resolutions to be voted on by fellow students. Wakulla High School and Leon High School won Outstanding Delegation recognition for representing the UK and Nigeria, respectively.

Members of TSMUN, who are alumni or current members of TCC's Model United Nations team, served as staff for the conference, organizing sessions and filling leadership positions to support the participation of the young students and ensure that they had a memorable experience.

This year, TSMUN

hosted Senior Foreign Service Officer Michael E. Thurston, U.S. diplomat in residence for the Southeast region. Thurston recently served in Afghanistan as the political adviser and senior civilian representative to the Special Operations Joint Task Force. Thurston discussed the impact he has had on a global platform and inspired students to realize their potential as positive change agents. He also shared his insights into the Foreign Service.

Through a partnership with UNESCO Center for Peace, TSMUN offers two scholarships to the International Model United Nations conference in

Washington, D.C. This year's recipients are Pranav Bokey from Rickards High School and Maya King from Maclay High School. Additionally, TSMUN awards two outstanding delegates with full-tuition scholarships to attend TCC and join the College's award-winning, globe-traveling Model UN team. Marissa Rossetti from Wakulla High School and Sydney Selman from SAIL High School were awarded this prestigious scholarship for Fall 2015.

For information contact Richard Murgio at 201-8145 or murgor@tcc.fl.edu or Tom Waller at 201-8159 or waller@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC STEM Gym open to students in the spring

HAVANA HERALD (SCHOOL NEWS)

Tallahassee Community College invites elementary and middle school students to visit the TCC STEM Gym (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) in Spring 2015 for a spectacular field trip opportunity.

Visitors will work like real scientists to create fun experiments, develop questions and solve problems through hands-on science, math, and engineering activities.

Field trip opportunities are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays and must be booked at least one week in advance. In addition, special groups such as Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops may request visits on Saturdays. All visits are by appointment only.

The entry fee is \$4 per student and free for chaperones. The hours of operation are from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, and from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday. The lab is located in Room 105 of the TCC Science and Mathematics building.

The STEM Gym features educational activities such as:

- Bee Hummer – recreate the sound of a swarm of bees with a homemade toy
- Black Magic – discover the secret colors hidden in a black marker
- Bottle Blast – create a simple rocket and demonstrate how the finished model will fly
- Cuica Laughing Cup – make a “cuica,” a musical instrument from Brazil
- Cup Speaker – make your own speaker to demonstrate electromagnetism and vibration
- Jitterbugs – interact with the jitterbug, a simple motorized toy made of a recycled CD and a DC motor.
- Paper Helicopters – assemble a simple paper toy that functions like a mini-helicopter
- Sound Sandwich – adjust the pitch of the crowd-pleasing noisemaker to play with sounds
- Stripped Down Motor – explore this easy-to-make version of an electric motor
- Water Bottle Membrane – use a water bottle and a paper tube to make an instrument like a saxophone, and gain an understanding of how the wind instrument works
- Whirling Watcher – create your own cartoon with a stroboscope

This is an excellent opportunity for schools and teachers who wish to present science and technology to their students in a fun, engaging way. This hands-on field trip will create a memorable, rewarding experience that could spark a lifelong love or future career plans in the sciences.

To view TCC22's report on the STEM Gym, visit <http://youtu.be/brpJOyGpX4g>.

For information or to schedule a field trip, contact Melissa Spear at (850) 201-6180 or spear@tcc.fl.edu.

Black History celebrated at FPSI

SANDI BEARE
HAVANA HERALD

Tallahassee Community College (TCC) and the Florida Public Safety Institute (FPSI) hosted a celebration last Thursday, February 26th for Black History Month. A packed room of law enforcement officers from agencies throughout Gadsden County and others joined together to hear Judge Angela Cox of Duval County speak about the reasons for the eighth anniversary of the event.

"It's always an honor to represent the judiciary and first responders," said Cox who was appointed to the Florida Circuit Courts of Duval County by Governor Rick Scott.

"African Americans have a rich history, a profound history. Know your past - that will build a firm foundation for young African Americans. This (recognition of African Americans for their history) didn't begin with me. It began long before me. We must possess integrity regardless of race, gender, social status or background," said Cox.

Judge Cox said she understood the mindset of the "thin blue line," representing law enforcement and the "thin red line" of fire responders. "This is service to your community. You put your life on the line. You accomplish a lot with courage, trustworthiness, patience, and you do it every day," she said in honoring first responders.

Judge Cox said members of the judiciary must be above reproach. "The consciousness of judges is relative to their character. Life is constantly changing, always becoming better. You can live the American dream by being a person of character. 'Perfection is the direction, not the goal.' Good character opens doors for you that aren't always clear," she concluded.

FPSI Director E.E. Eunice presented resolutions in recognition of accomplishments of two honorees: Chief Marshal Silvester Dawson of the Florida Supreme Court, and Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) Sgt. Ray Wigfall, who was the first African American pilot in the history of FHP.

Distinguished guest servers offering breakfast at the event were Havana Chief Tracy Smith; Quincy Chief Glenn Sapp; Gadsden Re-Entry Facility Warden Walt Summers; Chief Terrance Calloway, FAMU PD; David Perry, FSU PD; and Leon County Sheriff Mike Wood.



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