

13 East Main Street  
Avon Park, FL 33825  
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AND

*Shakers*

...inside  
**DONORS**  
AND *Shakers*



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## College is Awarded **\$2.3 Million** Job Growth Grant for Three New Initiatives

SFSC WILL CREATE A CONSTRUCTION INSTITUTE, ENHANCE ITS ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CURRICULUM, AND LAUNCH AN ELECTRONIC WARFARE PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AVON PARK AIR FORCE RANGE.

In January, South Florida State College received an executed contract from the Department of Economic Opportunity signaling the official sanction of a \$2.3 million award by the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund under former Gov. Rick Scott to promote economic opportunity by improving public infrastructure and enhancing workforce training.

"We are enormously grateful to Governor Scott for supporting Florida's Heartland Region with this grant award," said Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel, president of SFSC. "The Job Growth Grant Fund award to South Florida State College will make a meaningful impact by supporting educational programs designed to put

people to work in infrastructure support jobs that will contribute to positive economic growth and development."

In the College's tri-county service district of DeSoto, Hardee and Highlands counties, there is a demonstrated need for affordable housing and an educated workforce in order to encourage advanced manufacturing companies to set up locations and employees to relocate to homes in the region, both boosting the economy of the area.

With this grant, SFSC plans to create a construction institute to provide skills-based training that will meet and exceed the industry's standard. Graduates of the

**JOB GROWTH GRANT** continues on page 7

# Graduates Are Ready to Begin Next Leg of Life's Journey

Spring is a great reminder of all things new and a chance for a fresh start on the next leg of this journey through life. With graduation just around the corner for some of our SFSC students, I think about the journey of life and the unlimited amount of possibilities that awaits them.

I had the privilege of sitting in a dinner recognizing some of our outstanding students and listening to them explain where they plan to go to pursue their next degree and what career they're choosing to embark upon. Their goals are impressive. As a supporter of SFSC, you can take pride in knowing that your contributions are being invested in the future of greatness.

Our students are great!

I heard a presenter once say that if you're going to be great, you have to be better than the person next to you. I believe our students are doing just that. They are striving to be successful people who can do what people who aren't successful don't want to do. They are choosing to make a difference.

They have an unyielding, uncompromising desire to win at this game of life. That desire is what is driving them to the next level. That level that will help our communities grow and contribute to positive economic growth for our local economy. They are the next medical professionals, business leaders, professors, and who knows, maybe the next President of the United States!

I can't predict what their outcome will be, but if they are willing to do the things that some don't want to do, they'll have an exceptional journey through life. Knowing that they got their start at SFSC makes me proud.



**“You have brains in your head, you have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own, and you know what you know. And YOU are the one who will decide where you go.”**

**FROM "OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!" BY DR. SEUSS**

Join me as we celebrate their accomplishments. When you choose to support SFSC, you are helping our students on this journey. You are making a difference in the lives of future generations. You are the example of giving and teaching our youth the importance of giving back.

Thank you!

**Jamie Bateman**  
Executive Director,  
Institutional Advancement

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is produced semiannually by the South Florida State College Foundation, Inc., to inspire charitable contributions in support of South Florida State College. The SFSC Foundation raises awareness of the value of an SFSC education and promotes student success through scholarships, facilities development, and program support. By supporting SFSC, the SFSC Foundation endeavors to enhance the opportunity for students in our district to obtain a college education.

# Amy Albandoz is Recipient of **\$40,000** Scholarship

## TAKE STOCK IN CHILDREN SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT

While participating in her English honors class at Sebring High School on Jan. 9, Amy Albandoz was met with an unexpected surprise. Entering her classroom were her mother, Maria Jimenez; Take Stock in Children (TSIC) staff; her TSIC mentor, Nancy McDuffee; Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brenda Longshore; South Florida State College President Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel; Sebring High School Principal Kimberly Ervin; and SFSC Executive Director of Institutional Advancement Jamie Bateman.

They broke the news that Albandoz earned a TSIC \$40,000 Leaders 4 Life Scholarship from the Asofsky Family Foundation. She was one of six students statewide who received the scholarship, an award that covers non-tuition expenses such as housing, books, and transportation. Her tuition will be covered by a TSIC scholarship.

The Leaders 4 Life Scholarship is an initiative of the Asofsky Family Foundation, which supports programs aimed at helping the state's youth. The foundation awards the scholarship in partnership with TSIC. The South Florida State College Foundation is the lead agency for TSIC within the College's service district of DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties.

Albandoz was eligible for the scholarship because of her participation in the local TSIC program. The program matches students at-risk of not completing high school with mentors who guide them toward earning their high school diplomas and onto college with scholarships in hand.

"We are happy for Amy for being selected as one of six winners of the Leaders 4 Life Scholarship," said Irene Castanon, student service coordinator for the local TSIC program. "Her outstanding academics speak for themselves, and she has been an



Leaders 4 Life scholarship recipient Amy Albandoz (center) is congratulated by Irene Castanon (left), Linda Roman, Danielle Ochoa and Jamie Bateman.

exceptional leader in her school and community. More importantly, she is humble and genuine. With this scholarship, Amy is now able to fulfill her dreams at the University of Florida without stress and financial burden."

"Basically, this scholarship means that I can go forward with my life," Albandoz said tearfully. "This is something that I was worried about because I don't really come from a background that's very wealthy. But getting this money means that I can actually do some good in the world."

Albandoz graduates from Sebring High School in May 2019, has earned a 4.57 GPA, and is placed in the top 5 percent of her graduating class. She plans to attend the University of Florida to major in sustainable architecture. "I want to make buildings more efficient," she said. "I think about the planet and how humanity has to advance. We don't want the planet to deteriorate and not have any way for people to live."

Nancy McDuffee has served as Albandoz's TSIC mentor since she entered seventh grade. "All throughout school, Amy told me, 'I'm going to get straight A's.' I thought that was a bit too lofty an expectation and, as a parent, I didn't want her to have that

kind of pressure on her, but she did it. I also told her when she was a freshman in high school that she was going to win the Leaders 4 Life Scholarship, and she did it."

McDuffee considers herself a support system and a cheerleader for Amy. "But motivation has never been a problem for her," McDuffee said. "She is a self-starter and a hard worker. She gets involved in so many things." In fact, Albandoz was a drum major for the Spirit of Sebring Marching Band and a member of the National Honor Society. As a member of the National Art Honor Society, she participated in the service project "Soup Up the Arts," in which proceeds went to a local family who lost their home and to another member of the community who is fighting cancer. She was also involved in "80 Ways to Sweeten Up Parkland," a service event that was dedicated to raising funds for the victims of the Parkland shooting.

Albandoz attributes much of her academic and personal success to the TSIC program. "Every member of the TSIC staff and my mentor have been supporting me since day one and helped me keep my grades up and stay optimistic," she said. "They've done so much for me."

# Dental Programs Are Reaccredited

ACCREDITATION CONFIRMS AN SFSC EDUCATION  
IN DENTAL HYGIENE AND DENTAL ASSISTING  
MEETS HIGH STANDARDS

SFSC's Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting programs were recently reaccredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) through 2025.

Both programs quickly earned accreditation after they were launched more than a decade ago. The Dental Hygiene program opened in 2002 and was accredited in January 2005. The Dental Assisting Program began in 2003 and was accredited in July 2004. Graduates earn an Associate in Science (A.S.) degree from the Dental Hygiene program and an occupational certificate from the Dental Assisting program.

The continuing accreditation was recommended by four CODA evaluators who reviewed the programs last June during a three-day visit to the Highlands Campus. Afterward, Michelle Smith, manager of allied dental education at CODA, informed College President Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel in a letter that the programs had met or surpassed the minimum standards for reaccreditation and that the evaluators had no recommendations for improvement.

"They praised the program chair, the faculty, and the College's support of the program, citing it was an 'excellent program with stellar facilities.'" said Dr. Michele Heston, dean of Health Sciences at SFSC.

"CODA accreditation means that SFSC's graduates are among an elite group of dental professionals in the country and that this program trains the students to that level and expertise," said Dr. Deborah Milliken, chair, Dental Education. "Only graduates of CODA-accredited programs are eligible for licensure. This means our dental hygiene



Dental hygiene instructor Carole Pierre (left) closely observes one of her students as she works in the Dental Clinic.

students are eligible to take the licensure examination in Florida and in all states for that matter. Otherwise, they would have to wait two years, and practice, before they are eligible."

CODA is nationally recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the sole agency to accredit dental education programs at the postsecondary level. It considers 12 standards and over 600 criteria for both dental programs. It assesses administration of the programs, financial support, curriculum, credentials of the faculty and their course loads, computer access, classroom setups for lectures, library resources, lab and clinic facilities, equipment, and entry-level competencies that students must pass.

"We are proud of Dr. Milliken and her team," Dr. Heston said. "The collaborative spirit of SFSC is illuminated during such visits. Everyone played an important role in the success of our Health Science programs and students."

## SUPPORTERS THANKED

South Florida State College presented William J. McMenemy with a personalized jersey that he accepted on behalf of the Carney Foundation for its continued support of Panther Athletics.



# Golf Shootout Raises Over \$10,000

PROCEEDS FROM THE ANNUAL FUNDRAISER SUPPORT SFSC'S BASEBALL, SOFTBALL, CROSS COUNTRY, AND VOLLEYBALL TEAMS.

More than 100 golfers participated in the second annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout and helped the SFSC Foundation raise over \$10,000 for South Florida State College's athletic programs.

Qualifying for the shootout began Thursday, Jan. 17 and ran through Saturday, Jan. 19 at Sun 'N Lake Golf & Country Club in Sebring. On Sunday, Jan. 20, the 12 finalists got one shot at winning the \$1 million prize by making a hole-in-one at the par-3 18th hole.

Although no one walked away with a million dollars, first-place finalist Mark Ward won \$500 for landing his ball 56'10" from the hole. Scott Hitt claimed \$250 for second-place when his ball fell 58'6" from the hole.

The remaining finalists were Rick Strong, Mike Bloss, Charlie Fuhr, Jeff Burnett, Jim Kelleher, Matt Moyer, Martin Knapp, Kutter Crawford, Rick Garrett, and Thomas Kestler.

"This year, we were happy to see a significantly higher number of golfers participating in the event," said Jamie Bateman, executive director of Institutional Advancement at SFSC, who oversees the SFSC Foundation.



Jamie Bateman presents a \$500 first-place prize to Mark Ward (left) for landing a shot 56'10" from the par-3 18th hole on the Sun 'N Lake golf course and a \$250 second-place prize to Scott Hitt (right) for his shot that fell 58'6" from the hole.

"We are thankful to our sponsors whose support was integral to the event, especially Ronnie Carter of Century 21 Advanced Realty who was our event sponsor and Bowen & Son Roofing, Inc. who was our award sponsor. We were able to raise over \$10,000 for Panther athletics. We are all set for next year and that \$1 million prize is ready to go home with someone."

Proceeds from the golf shootout benefit SFSC Panther athletic teams in women's volleyball, women's cross country, men's baseball, and women's softball. SFSC's student athletes assisted with preparation and organization at the Shootout.

"The Second Annual Million

Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout was again a great success," said Rick Hitt, athletic director at SFSC. "With the support of many volunteers, our outstanding sponsors, and of course the many competitors that took a shot at an opportunity to win \$1 million, the SFSC Shootout continues to grow and continues to be an outstanding fundraising opportunity in support of South Florida State College athletics. Thank you to Sun 'N Lake Golf and Country Club, the SFSC Foundation, and our title sponsor, Ronnie Carter of Century 21 Advanced Realty in Sebring. We are looking forward to next year's event with great anticipation."

## Date Set for 2020 Shootout

Golfers will have another chance to take home a \$1 million prize when the third annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout returns to the Sun 'N Lake Golf Course in 2020. Qualifying days will be Thursday, Jan. 16 through Saturday, Jan. 18, and the final shootout will be Sunday, Jan. 19. For more information about the event, contact the SFSC Foundation at 863-453-3313.





Retirees from the College are enjoying meeting once a month for lunch and a program at the Hotel Jacaranda. A large group (left) attended the first meeting in September. Another group posed for a photo in January at the first meeting of 2019.

## College Retirees Reconnect at **Lunch & Learn** Programs

The SFSC Foundation welcomes College retirees to Lunch & Learn programs that meet at the Hotel Jacaranda at 11:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month from September through May.

Each luncheon has a guest speaker from the College who shares updates on projects, programs, and activities for specific areas. Guests are welcome to purchase lunch from the Hotel Jacaranda's restaurant. The lunch series is a great networking opportunity for our retirees to reconnect with each other and learn how they can support the College.

The next Lunch & Learn program will be Thursday, April 4. Dr. Michele Heston, dean of Health Sciences, will give an update about the College's health care programs.

On Thursday, May 2, Cindy Garren, director of Cultural Programs, will reveal the lineup of live performances for the 2019-20 season.

To learn more about SFSC's Retiree Lunch & Learn programs and receive the 2019-20 meeting schedule, call the Foundation at 863-453-3133 or visit the College website at [southflorida.edu](http://southflorida.edu).

## Alums Enjoy Lunch Bunch Meetings

### FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHAIR

Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow on Feb. 2 so that means an early spring for everyone except Florida; we're seeing an early summer! This hasn't kept alums from joining us at our monthly Lunch Bunch gatherings in Arcadia, Wauchula, Avon Park, Lake Placid, and Sebring. These lunches are popular enough and are so conveniently located that even some retirees attend.



spring break and midterms while April brings final exams! The most rewarding time is commencement in May. Before the 2018 fall commencement, I was always a platform marshal who saw that the graduates were presentable and ready to walk across the stage. In December, I changed roles, addressed them as the Alumni Association chair, and shook hands with every one of them. This May, I will have the honor to address them and shake their hands once again. I remember many of the students from their time in the library, at a ball game, or from seeing them around campus. Summer classes start the day after graduation, and new and returning students are back on campus and in the library. It is a wonderful never-ending cycle.

**Lena D. Phelps**

March brings a much appreciated

### Upcoming Lunch Bunch Meetings

Join the SFSC Alumni Association and your fellow alumni at the next SFSC Alumni Lunch Bunch near you! The meeting locations change from month to month and are posted on the SFSC Alumni Association Facebook page.

**DeSoto County:** First Friday of each month

**Hardee County:** Third Friday of each month

**Highlands County:** Last Friday of each month

Network with fellow SFSC alums during your lunch break, Dutch treat. It's a great time to catch up with friends and learn how you can be a part of SFSC Alumni Association activities.



# 5 Ways You Can Give to the SFSC Foundation

**Amazon Smile.** Your shopping through Amazon will benefit the SFSC Foundation if you add us as your favorite charitable organization. To learn more, use this link: <http://amzn.to/2g9Ku0P>, then go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) when you make future purchases.

**Recurring Donation.** Become a Friend of SFSC by setting up an online recurring donation of \$25 or more per month: <http://bit.ly/2Fi3fx2>.

**Sponsor an SFSC Fundraising Event.** We are seeking sponsors for events that are planned throughout 2019. These include the annual Spring Gala and Auction in April, the Jacaranda Jubilee in November, and the

Christmas luncheon in December.

**Give Stock or Securities.** We have an account set up to allow gifts of securities to the SFSC Foundation. If interested, please contact our office at 863-453-3133 or email [foundation@southflorida.edu](mailto:foundation@southflorida.edu).

**Join Our SFSC Heritage Society.** You can do this by including the SFSC Foundation in your will or trust, or name us as a percentage or contingent beneficiary of a life insurance policy, which will benefit the college. The Heritage Society recognizes those individuals who plan to leave an indelible mark on SFSC through a planned gift.

*Thank You*

TO OUR  
SFSC FOUNDATION  
ANNUAL SPONSORS

GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



## JOB GROWTH GRANT

Continued from Page 1

institute can find work with construction firms to sustain and expand the housing industry within the region.

The second phase of funding will expand and enhance the advanced manufacturing curriculum at SFSC. Students who progress through these courses and graduate will be able to gain employment as a machinist or

an industrial maintenance technician, both valuable to the manufacturing industry which the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says is on an upswing for hiring with the creation of 288,000 new jobs over the past year.

The third and final phase introduces another option for students who progressed through the advanced manufacturing curriculum and also those who have a military background. SFSC will create an electronic warfare program through a partnership with

Florida Institute of Technology and the United States Air Force. The electronic warfare program labs will be housed partially at the Avon Park Air Force Range. This program will be the first in the nation.

SFSC identified economic demands in the region and with the Florida Job Growth Grant, the College is able to address those needs head-on.

For information about the variety of programs at SFSC, call 863-453-6661 or email [recruiter@southflorida.edu](mailto:recruiter@southflorida.edu).



13 East Main Street  
Avon Park, FL 33825

## On the Calendar

### Foundation Events.....●

#### 1920s Mystery Dinner Show Fundraiser

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2019  
6 P.M. SILENT AUCTION | 7 P.M. DINNER  
The Hotel Jacaranda (RSVP required)

#### Jacaranda Jubilee

MONDAY, DEC. 2, 2019 | 6:30 P.M.  
The Hotel Jacaranda

#### Christmas Luncheon

THURSDAY, DEC. 5, 2019 | 11:30 A.M.  
The Hotel Jacaranda

#### 3rd Annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, JAN. 16-19, 2020  
Sun 'N Lake Golf Course, Sebring

If you would like to be invited to Foundation events, please call 863-453-3133 or email [foundation@southflorida.edu](mailto:foundation@southflorida.edu).

### College Events .....●

#### Spring Commencement

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019  
Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts  
Highlands Campus

#### Board of Directors Meeting.....●

TUESDAY, MAY 14 | 6 p.m.  
Hotel Jacaranda

#### Executive Board Meeting.....●

TUESDAY, APRIL 16 | Noon  
Hotel Jacaranda