

Bill may force SFSC to change its name

Legislation could also hamper efforts to offer four-year degree programs

BY MARC VALERO

Highlands Today

AVON PARK — A bill that aims to avoid “wasteful duplication” of programs offered by state universities and colleges would require a name change for South Florida State College and other colleges.

In a listing of state colleges, under South Florida State College, the word “State” is struck through on page four of Senate Bill 1252.

Sen. Joe Negron, R-Stuart, attached language to the 40-page higher education bill that would hamper state colleges in their efforts to offer four-year degree programs.

Negron’s proposal would require colleges to provide a one-year notice of an expected start date for a new four-year degree. The current law requires a 60-day notice.

Also, a maximum of 5 percent of a college’s enrollment could be comprised of students pursuing four-year degrees.

South Florida State College Board of Trustees member Joe Wright said Negron is out of touch.

“He does not really understand and/or appreciate the role that our state colleges are playing in this state,” he said. “Our students tend to be more local in nature.”

The students, who are earning bachelor’s degrees at state colleges, would probably not otherwise get a four-year degree because of various reasons, such as being older, having family obligations and the cost, Wright said.

Wright noted there are many students who grew up in Florida who are going out of state to

attend public universities, like Auburn University, because there is not enough room for them in a Florida university.

The state colleges are not offering bachelor's degrees in everything, they are trying to meet the needs of their community such as with the elementary education program at South Florida State College, he said.

A recent report in Highlands Today stated that the School Board of Highlands County will be going out of state this month to recruit teachers, Wright noted.

"To me Sen. Negrón is out of touch and he is trying to make a political name for himself," Wright said. "There should be room for excellence in the state in all three parts of education: K-12, the State College System and the University System."

As a businessman,

"To me Sen. Negrón is out of touch and he is trying to make a political name for himself."

Joe Wright

South Florida State College
Board of Trustees member

Wright believes, the state's business people are very supportive of the state college system.

SB 1252 states it seeks to avoid wasteful duplication of programs offered by state universities, Florida Community College institutions and career centers, and charter technical career centers that are operated by district school boards.

If passed, the bill would require, by Dec. 1, a Florida Community College System institution to change its name to "accurately reflect the institution's regional service area

in order to be eligible to receive state funds. The institution may not include the term 'state' in its name or indicate a statewide presence unless expressly authorized by law."

The bill is scheduled to go before the appropriations subcommittee on education on Wednesday.

The Ocala Star Banner opposed the bill in a recent editorial.

"In a display of stunning unawareness and underhandedness, the state Senate is considering reckless legislation that would punish Florida's award-winning state college system for ... doing exactly what the lawmakers beseeched it to do just six years ago," the editorial stated. "Now the Senate, led by its powerful budget chairman Negrón, is looking to not only put the brakes on the four-year programs but also penalize state colleges that continue to offer them."

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Star Parties reveal the mysteries of the universe

AVON PARK — South Florida State College physics and astronomy class will hold two star parties in April. Telescopes will be provided. Deep sky objects, which are stars and galaxies outside of the solar system, will be viewed from 10-11 p.m. Thursday, April 9, and the moon and its craters will be viewed from 10-11 p.m. Thursday, April 23.

Star parties are highly weather dependent and will be cancelled in the event of heavy cloud cover or rainy weather. Check the current status at <http://sfcc-astronomy.wikifoundry.com>. Attendees are welcome to bring blankets and lawn chairs and should dress accordingly.

The star parties meet near Ridge Area Arc, along College Drive, one mile east of SFSC, or just off Memorial Drive. Parking is on Baltimore Street. For more information, contact Erik Christensen at 863-784-7363, or email christee@online.southflorida.edu.

SFSC's Corporate Education offers training in spring

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College offers several corporate training classes this spring.

In Adobe InDesign 6.0, learn how to create and design page layouts, graphic and object integration, formatting and text editing, posters, flyers, brochures, magazines, newspapers, and books.

This workshop is offered as a two-day workshop from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, and Wednesday, April 8. The cost is \$85, and the course number (CRN) is 21357.

In Intermediate Photoshop 6.0, learn about Photoshop tools, composite photos, layers, text/character manipulation, pixel selection, color effects, and advanced photo-editing features.

Create and modify images and business graphics, letterhead, PowerPoint backgrounds. This workshop is offered as a two-day workshop from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 7, and Tuesday, April 14. The cost is \$85, and the course number (CRN) is 21674.

Register in Building B at the Highlands Campus or any SFSC campus or center. For more information contact Corporate Education at 863-784-7033 or by emailing CorporateTraining@southflorida.edu.

Yoga Classes Coming To Local SFSC

South Florida State College's Community Education Department is offering yoga classes beginning next week at the Hardee Campus.

Through yoga, learn how to reduce stress, improve circulation, calm the emotions and stimulate weight loss. Participants will learn the "yoga breath," which quiets the busy mind and awakens awareness and creativity.

The class is being offered Mondays from 5:30 to 7 p.m., running April 13 through May 4. The cost is \$35, and the course number is (CRN) 21685.

Register for classes at the Hardee Campus, 2968 U.S. 27 N., Bowling Green, or any SFSC campus or center.

For more information on this or any other Community Education class, call 863-784-7405 or e-mail communityeducation@southflorida.edu.

Libraries celebrate Poetry Month

For the first time, the South Florida State College library and the public libraries in Avon Park, Lake Placid and Sebring have joined forces to celebrate National Poetry Month in April.

The libraries will feature poetry readings by published poets, two open microphone nights, and a celebration of National Poem in Your Pocket Day.

Each event will be held at a library in Highlands County and is open to the public at no cost, organizers said.

- The series opened Tuesday, April 7 with Dorothy Howe Brooks sharing poems and stories from her 2013 book, "A Fine Dusting of Brightness" at SFSC's library, located in Building Y, Highlands Campus.

- Poets and readers are invited to Open Mic Night on Thursday, April 16 from 5 to 6 p.m. at SFSC's



Library. Participants will have the opportunity to read their own original poems or share a favorite in a celebration of poetry and creativity. Participants are asked to limit their readings to three minutes or less.

- On April 22, Melanie Hubbard will read from her 2012 book "We Have With us Your Sky" that won the 2011 Subito Book Prize in Poetry. Hubbard will be at the Avon Park Library from 3 to 4 p.m., and at SFSC's Library from 5 to 6 p.m.

- Peter Gordon will read from his 2012 book, "Two Car Garage," on Tuesday April 28 from 5 to 6 p.m. at SFSC's Library. Gordon's poems have

appeared in publications including Slipstream, 34th Parallel, Provo Canyon Review, and The Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Journal of Florida Literature.

- The Lake Placid Public Library will host a second Open Mic Night on Thursday, April 16 from 3 to 4 p.m. Participants are encouraged to share an original or favorite poem, or two, that's family friendly.

- Finish celebrating National Poetry Month with Poem in Your Pocket Day on Thursday, April 30 by carrying and sharing a poem with friends, family, neighbors. Pick up and share poems at the SFSC Highlands Library, Avon Park Public Library, Lake Placid Memorial Library, or Sebring Public Library.

For more information about Poetry Month, contact SFSC librarian Claire A. Miller at 863-784-7305 or email millerc@south-florida.edu.



Courtesy photo

Thirty Highlands County middle and high school students received two-year tuition scholarships through Take Stock in Children.

Take Stock in Children celebrates scholarship signings

AVON PARK — The Take Stock In Children program at South Florida State College awarded 30 new scholarships March 31 to middle school and high school students in Highlands County at a contract signing at the Hotel Jacaranda.

Students who received scholarships were Jonathan Duran-Mendoza, Isabel Vargas, Loretta Walker, Prenyonna Sawyer, Javier Gomez-Badillo, Lysmary Silva, Erin Bonini, Elrad Nevers, Deziree Knapp, Lizbeth Capote, Lexie Vaughn, Torrie Allen, Kiersten DeJesus, Destiny Rodriguez, Travis Hill, Lizbeth Martinez-Gonzalez, Sinthia Gomez, Yanelly Mendez, Angel Guevara-Garcia, Roandy Garcia, Gabriela Merlo, Diego Garrido, Dillan

Moon, Vanessa Lopez, Vianey Gonzalez, Jacob O'Neil, Nancy Zuniga, Ciera McCartney, Marilyn Lorino, and Jasmine Barajas.

Take Stock in Children is a statewide program that provides at-risk children with a mentor and a college scholarship. In return, TSIC scholar sign contracts in which they promise to remain drug-free, to avoid behavior that would get them into trouble with law enforcement, to attend school regularly, and to earn satisfactory grades.

The students' parents also sign the contracts and agree to provide home environments conducive to education and to participate in.

"When we awarded these 43 scholarships throughout DeSoto, Hardee, and

Highlands school districts, it was phenomenal," said Irene Castanon, TSIC program coordinator. "There were so many students, who were really nervous and excited at this year's contract signings. More importantly, their hope of going to college has now become a reality."

The SFSC Foundation, Inc. is the lead agency for TSIC within the college's service district of DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties. The program has been in place for 20 years and has awarded scholarships to over 500 local students.

For information about Take Stock in Children, call Irene Castanon, program coordinator, at 863-453-3133 or visit <http://www.southflorida.edu/giving/take-stock-children>.

Courtesy photo

SFSC's Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) business club captured numerous awards at the State Leadership Conference and Competition. Members attending the conference included (left to right) Kerry Mushrush, Martile Blackman, Kylee Martin, Mario Barajas, Deidre Shankle, Michael Nyhan, Teresa McGovern, Shane Meeks, Glenn Powers, Catherine Steiner, and Elizabeth Batts.



SFSC PBL students advance to national business contest

AVON PARK — Eleven students from South Florida State College were among the top winners in events testing their business knowledge and skills during the 65th annual Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) State Leadership Conference and Competition held in Orlando, March 26-29.

After two days of testing and presentations, nine SFSC students placed in the top five in the state in nine different categories including sales presentation, management concepts, hospitality management, project management, entrepreneurship concepts, information management, organizational behavior and leadership, help desk, and human resource management.

SFSC PBL member's placements included one first place, four second place, two third place, one fourth place, and two fifth place finishes.

In addition, five SFSC students qualified to represent Florida at the PBL National Leadership Conference this summer in Chicago, IL. Representing SFSC and Florida at the national competition will be Martile Blackman, Mario Barajas, Michael Nyhan, Catherine Steiner, and Elizabeth Batts.

"SFSC's PBL students spent countless hours preparing, studying, and fundraising in order to

attend the conference," said Adam Martin, PBL advisor and instructor, SFSC Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management Program. "Their performance and awards demonstrate not only their own academic excellence, but also the quality of instruction at SFSC."

The annual state conference and competition attracted over 400 college and university students from around the state that competed in over 60 different business related categories, including subjects ranging from economics and business decision making to public speaking and marketing. SFSC's competition included students from Florida State University, University of Florida, University of Central Florida, University of South Florida, Florida International University, Webber International, Saint Leo University, and many state colleges.

"Over the next three months, these student will study and prepare for the National Leadership Conference where they will compete against other top state winners while continuing to raise funds to help pay for their travel and lodging expenses," Martin said.

PBL is the post-secondary division of the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta

Lambda (FBLA-PBL) organization, which is the largest business career student organization in the world. PBL's National Awards Program recognizes and rewards excellence in a broad range of business and career-related areas.

Conference room named for SFSC professor

AVON PARK — South Florida State College physics and astronomy professor Erik Christensen was honored recently as a “textbook hero” by Rice University’s OpenStax College and was present for the formal dedication of the “Christensen Conference Room.” Rice University is a private research university in Houston, Texas.

For the past month, Christensen has been collaborating in the production of dynamic videos about physics with OpenStax College and a Hollywood-based video production company. The first video, on terminal velocity, was recently completed. “This is our proof-of-concept and, if we can get funding, our goal is

to produce 30 more short videos, each linked to a specific chapter or topic in the OpenStax College physics textbook,” Christensen said.

Christensen was the textbook’s anchor reviewer. During the past three

years, the textbook has gained 20 percent of the national market share of algebra-based physics textbooks.

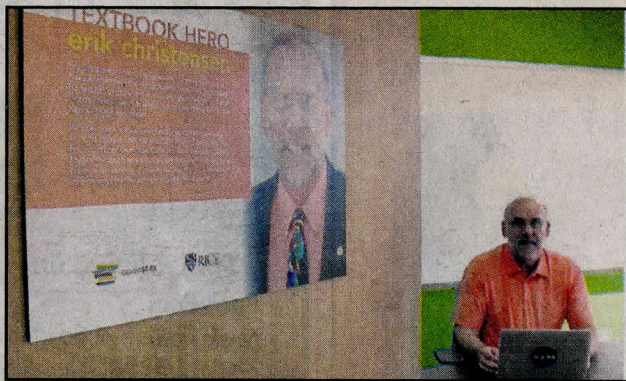
OpenStax College offers free textbooks that are developed and peer-reviewed by

educators.

“Open textbooks increase students’ access to higher education,” said Christensen. “By reducing the cost for a textbook, it reduces the

cost over the course. I have students who have said that they’ve been able to graduate a semester earlier because they could take more courses. So a 4-credit course

that requires a textbook would be approximately \$400 rather than \$650; therefore, students realize an almost 40 percent reduction in the cost of one course.”



Courtesy photo

SFSC physics and astronomy professor Erik Christensen was present for the formal dedication of the “Christensen Conference Room” at Rice University, a private research university in Houston, Texas.

SFSC student's 10-year pursuit

Special to Highlands Today

AVON PARK — When more than 200 graduates from South Florida State College walk down the aisles May 7 in the Theatre for Performing Arts to receive their diplomas, one candidate will celebrate not merely the end of a 10-year pursuit, but the fact that she is walking, period.

Teresa McGovern, 47, was told that she only had an 80 percent chance of ever walking again after suffering a spinal injury in 2011. Her journey to completing her Bachelor of Applied Science in supervision and management degree has been an exceptionally difficult one while overcoming spinal surgeries, uterine cancer, fibromyalgia and several health setbacks. But her stubbornness and determination didn't let them stop her from living her life.

When she graduated from a Fort Myers high school in 1986, she planned to go to college, but her focus changed to children, work, family passing and health issues.

After finding out she could not return to the job she loved due to health concerns, she knew exactly what she wanted to do. As a mother of three and grandmother of five, McGovern set out to be the first in her family to earn a college degree.

"It's a huge deal to me. I'd like it to encourage my family and let them and others know that it's never too late to go back to college or to do whatever you want to do," McGovern said. "It doesn't matter what age you are if you have the desire you can do it. The only person stopping you is yourself. Don't let age or



COURTESY PHOTO

Teresa McGovern, 47, was told that she only had an 80 percent chance of ever walking again after suffering a spinal injury in 2011.

circumstances be an obstacle."

This attitude helped McGovern rise to the top of her class with a 4.0 grade point average; to become a board member of SFSC's Phi Beta Lambda and the African American Association; to serve as a tutor for SFSC's TRiO program; to be selected for the national honor society of two-year colleges, Phi Theta Kappa; and to be inducted into the inaugural class of SFSC's national honor society for bach-

elor's students, the International Society of Baccalaureate Scholars.

She shared that concentrating on a bachelor's degree this late in life wasn't the easiest; however, she received considerable assistance and advice from SFSC faculty and staff.

"Sometimes being able to talk to my instructor whenever I needed to about whatever's affecting me made the biggest difference," McGovern said. "The students are not just a number here. These professors open their hearts to students and make us feel as if we are a part of their family. They don't do this because they have to, but because they want to."

"Teresa is one of the hardest-working students I have known," said Adam Martin, PBL adviser and instructor, SFSC's B.A.S. program. "When she sets a goal for herself, she doesn't let anything get in her way of accomplishing the task. Her achievements in Phi Beta Lambda and relentless fundraising will be missed. I wish her all the best and know she will accomplish anything she puts her mind to."

College has forever changed McGovern's viewpoint on life. She will look at people and circumstances more critically, strategically and comprehensively. She hopes that her journey will inspire and motivate her own family members to pursue a college education so they can go anywhere they want to in life.

After finishing her bachelor's this May, McGovern plans to pursue a master's degree and a doctorate in business. She ultimately hopes to return to Highlands County and come back to teach at SFSC.

Honor Societies induct SFSC students

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

AVON PARK — South Florida State College honored exemplary scholars Friday evening, April 10 by inducting them into honor societies for four-year and two-year students.

The college's new chapter of the International Society of Baccalaureate Scholars inducted its first members, a group of 12 students who are enrolled in one of SFSC's three bachelor's degree programs. The new IBIS members are Junaid Ahmed, Teresa McGovern, Marianne McGuinness-Gargano, Cody Gullatt, Sarah McGann, Danielle Milby, Crystal Mullikin, Priscilla Preece, Mandy Ramos, Catherine Steiner, Robin Stukes, and Kimberley Wasdin.

IBIS was established in 2010 to recognize the achievements of students enrolled in baccalaureate programs at state colleges. Members must have completed at least

72 hours of course work, with 12 being at the junior or senior level, and have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 in their junior or senior course work or rank in the top 15 percent of their class.

Also that evening, 59 students became members of SFSC's Tau Epsilon chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the honor society for students attending two-year community and state colleges. To be eligible for

membership, candidates must be enrolled in an associate degree program and have completed at least 12 hours of course work with a grade point average of 3.5.

Guest speaker Jennifer Blalock, the chief student support officer for the national PTK, encouraged the new inductees to take advantage of the opportunities PTK offers for personal and professional growth, and to get involved in the state,

national, and international levels.

"This network really extends beyond the physical," Blalock said. "You have 3 million new friends."

During the induction ceremony, new PTK members lit candles and received white roses to signify their academic accomplishments and their acceptance into the PTK organization. IBIS members received white roses.



Courtesy photos

Adrian Barragan signs his name in the PTK membership book during the induction ceremony.



Erica Snow Simpson (left) and Tamara Stokes light candles as part of PTK's induction ceremony.



Above: Jennifer Blalock presents a white rose to Crystal Mullikin, who is being inducted into SFSC's new chapter of International Society of Baccalaureate Scholars.



Guest speaker Jennifer Blalock, PTK's chief student support officer, explained benefits of PTK members to SFSC's new inductees.

After 45 years with college, Appelquist is ready to climb other mountains

Foundation leader retires June 30

By **BILL ROGERS**
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — Don Appelquist is probably right when he says that “no one in life starts out wanting to be a fundraiser. Everyone that does it sort of backs into it for one reason or another.”

That’s what Appelquist has been doing for more than 25 years as the first and only executive director of the South Florida State College Foundation.

But SFSC is now searching for Appelquist’s replacement as he has announced his retirement. His last day on the job is June 30.

“It’s time,” said Appelquist, who has worked for the college for 45 years.

Appelquist was working at then-South Florida Junior College as a biology professor. He said he had some experience in writing grant proposals for his own research and that was going to be important for his career.



Bill Rogers/News-Sun

Don Appelquist has been the leader of the South Florida State College Foundation since its inception.

Catherine Cornelius, who was the president at the time, came to him in 1987 and told him the school didn’t have a grant writer. She asked him to write a grant request for a federal program and he agreed to do it.

It was funded and from that point on “I was her grants guy,” Appelquist said.

The Foundation was initially formed in 1984, he said, but it didn’t have a staff and “it was more just an idea than anything.”

In 1987, Cornelius asked him to take on the responsibility of being executive director of the Foundation.

“I said, ‘I can’t ask people for money,’” Appelquist said he told her.

“I said, ‘all right,’” he said. “I had been teaching biology for 17 years at that point. I don’t want to say I was bored, but it was pretty rote....

“I thought I will do something different for a while,” he added. “And I’ve been doing this ever since.”

He said it has been “pretty rewarding” to think about the number of scholarships that have been offered. He noted that more than 5,000 students have benefited as a result of what the Foundation has been able to do.

“I feel that I’ve made a difference over the years,” he said.

Among the many things he plans to do after leaving the college are getting married this summer and doing some traveling, including spending a month in France.

Appelquist also has something else he wants to do lot of — mountain climbing. He said there are 51 mountains in Colorado that are at least 14,000 feet high. He has climbed 12 so far and wants to

No one in life starts out wanting to be a fundraiser!

DON APPELQUIST
SFSC Foundation director

climb the other 39.

“It’s an exhilarating experience,” he said.

Christy Crews, president of the board of directors for the Foundation, is impressed with Appelquist’s dedication.

“He really loves his

job and put his heart into it. There are so many things to like about him” Crews said. “He is down to earth, very friendly and very easy to talk to.”

The job is currently being advertised. Appelquist said the college would like to hire his replacement by June 1.

In addition to having fundraising experience, he said the person should know the area. There is also something else the person needs to have.

“People have to trust you,” Appelquist said.

Thursday, April 23, 2015

Open registration begins for Fall Term classes

AVON PARK — It's not too early to register for fall terms at South Florida State College. Open registration for Fall Term 2015 begins Friday, April 24 for all continuing and new students. Fall classes begin Aug. 21.

Registration for Summer Term 2015 classes continues through May 7. Summer classes begin May 8.

The SFSC Welcome Center on the Highlands Campus at Avon Park, accepts walk-in registrations Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students can also register at the DeSoto Campus in Arcadia,

the Hardee Campus in Bowling Green, and at the Lake Placid Center in Lake Placid.

Continuing students may register and pay fees online by going to the SFSC website at www.southflorida.edu, logging into Panther Central, and going to "Self-Service Banner" under the Student tab.

The SFSC schedules of classes are available at www.southflorida.edu/current-students/class-schedules.

For more information, call 863-453-6661, 863-784-7040, 863-773-3081, or 863-465-3003.

SFSC offers driving classes

AVON PARK — The Community Education Department at South Florida State College has scheduled a trio of driver education classes. One is for drivers with a suspended license or too many points on their license; another is for first-time driver's license applicants; and the third is for drivers who have been ticketed.

Advanced Driver Improvement

The 12-hour Advanced Driver Improvement Course for drivers who have a suspended license or who have too many points on their license will be offered Tuesday, May 19, and Thursday, May 21.

Class time will be from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. both days at the SFSC Highlands Campus, 600 W. College Drive, Avon Park. The cost is \$145.

Alcohol Drug Accident Prevention Training

A series of Alcohol Drug Accident Prevention Training (ADAPT) courses for first-time driver's license applicants will be in Arcadia and in Bowling Green.

The four-hour course will be Saturday, May 9 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the SFSC DeSoto Campus, 2252 N.E. Turner Ave., Arcadia; and Saturday, May 30 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the SFSC Hardee Campus, 2968 U.S. 17 N., Bowling Green. The cost is \$46.

Safe Driving Accident Prevention Program

The Safe Driving Accident Prevention Program (SDAPP) courses for drivers who have received a traffic citation, were court ordered to attend, or were involved in a traffic accident and issued

a ticket is also planned.

The four-hour courses will be held Wednesday, May 13 from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the SFSC Desoto Campus, 2252 N.E. Turner Ave., Arcadia; Saturday, May 16 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the SFSC Highlands Campus, 600 W. College Drive, Avon Park; and Saturday, May 30 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the SFSC Hardee Campus, 2968 U.S. 17 N. Bowling Green. The fee is \$45.

Pre-registration is required for all the classes. Fees may be paid by cash, check, or credit card. Participants may register in Building B on the Highlands Campus or at any SFSC campus or center. For more information, contact the Community Education Department at 863-784-7388 or email CommunityEducation@southflorida.edu.

MOFAC recognizes students for outstanding artwork

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Museum of Florida Art and Culture announced the winners of its Student Art Exhibit during a Thursday, April 16 reception.

The Art Department presented Outstanding Student Achievement Awards to Leighton Skipper, Holly Scherlacher, Missy Simpson, Alina Cancel, Taylor Webb, Toni Crunkelton, and Gabe Clogston.

Awards of Merit were presented to Shelby King, Ashley Kinkade, Allison Smith, Toni Crunkelton, and Sara Canali.

Awards of Excellence were selected by Joey Sacco, artist and SFSC MOFAC Advisory Committee member.

The students received monetary awards which were made possible by exhibit and reception sponsors. Their work will be displayed in SFSC's student art collection. Winning artists were Holly Scherlacher, Taylor Nicole Webb, Shelby King, Toni Crunkelton, and Cheyanne Hazard.

Awards for the Hotel Jacaranda Exhibit were selected by Sacco and Donald Appelquist, executive director of the SFSC Foundation, Inc. Students

received purchase awards for their art, which were made possible by the SFSC Foundation, Inc. Their artwork will be displayed in the Hotel Jacaranda in Avon Park. Winning artists were Missy Simpson, Holly Scherlacher, Gabe Clogston, Mathew Kane, Jenna Blount, and Mason Belcher.

A \$300 Tanglewood Art League Scholarship was presented to Missy Simpson by Norma Evans, President of the Tanglewood Art League, to provide Simpson with the

opportunity to further her education.

The MOFAC Docent Award recognizes artistic excellence in the arts and outstanding service to the college, art department, and museum. This year's \$50 monetary awards went to Gabe Clogston, Holly Scherlacher, and Missy Simpson.

The Max Gooding Award provides \$400 to five students for purchase awards for their art, which was made possible by SFSC Alumni Max Gooding. The award was presented to

Leighton L. Skipper, Gabe Clogston, Katie LaDue, Holly Scherlacher, and Missy Simpson.

SFSC's art students developed the title of the show, promotional graphics, assisted with matting and framing the artwork, and helped install the pieces.

"We are so impressed

with the talent of our students and the quality of the artwork submitted for the juried show this year," said Mollie Doctrow, MOFAC curator.

The 2015 Student Art Exhibit sponsors are Joe and Suzanne Wright, Charles and Anne Reynolds, Bob and Monica

Germaine, and the SFSC Alumni Association.

The exhibit will be on view at SFSC MOFAC through May 1 and is open to the public Wednesday through Friday from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call MOFAC curator Mollie Doctrow at 863-784-7195.



Courtesy photo

Holly Scherlacher shows off her awards for Outstanding Student Achievement, Award of Excellence, The Max Gooding Award and its \$400 scholarship, and a purchase award for a place in the Hotel Jacaranda Exhibit.

Thursday, April 23, 2015

Scenario-based training for concealed weapons holders

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College Criminal Justice Academy (CJA) is offering a Scenario-Based Training for Concealed Weapons Holders course. This course provides training to anyone who already has a valid concealed weapons permit.

Instruction will include live range exercises using various scenario exercises.

Authorized weapons include revolvers or pistol handguns in calibers .22, .25, 32, 380, 9mm, 38, 357, 40, 45, and 44. Handguns chambered in rifle calibers or fully automatic weapons will not be allowed.

The course will be held on Saturday, May 30 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$50 and participants must bring their concealed weapons permit, a handgun with holster and belt, and 50 rounds of factory ammunition. For information contact Richard Morey, coordinator at 863-784-7285. Register at any SFSC campus or center, preregistration is required.

Cosmetology clinic now open on SFSC campus

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College Cosmetology clinic is open for public appointments now at the Highlands Campus. The clinic offers hair design, haircuts, perms, coloring, facials, make-up, eyebrow arching, and manicures performed by SFSC Cosmetology students at low cost.

Clinic hours are by appointment, Tuesday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

To schedule an appointment, call 863-453-4949.

“Clients time and time again say how much they like the

salon environment,” said Timothy Johnson, cosmetology program manager and instructor, “and the fact that the students take their time to complete the services they render and that the instructor is always near if needed.”

The Cosmetology program at SFSC is a 10 ½ -month course that focuses on careers in hair design, nail services, and skin care. For more information on the program, call Johnson at 863-784-7143.

SFSC offers Basic Law Enforcement training course

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College Criminal Justice Academy is accepting applications for its next Basic Law Enforcement course. This is the course required to

become a state of Florida certified law enforcement officer.

Basic Law Enforcement classes will be held Monday through Friday, plus some Saturdays and Sundays, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., beginning Monday, Aug. 17.

By successfully completing 770 contact hours of training, students earn occupational certificates and are eligible to take the state certification examination for correctional officers.

The CJA is located on SFSC's Highlands Campus, Avon Park. For more information, contact program coordinator Richard Morey at 863-784-7285.

Financial aid is available to those who qualify. Applications must be picked up in person by appointment only.

Art meets History

SFSC dedicates Seminole Path

BY MARC VALERO
Highlands Today

AVON PARK — A new path of stepping stones at South Florida State College, created by art students, provides a link to Florida's past while honoring a retiring college administrator.

The college's art department dedicated the "Seminole Path" stepping stones created by a 3-D art class and two concrete benches gifted by the college's Art Club on Wednesday in celebration of Earth Day.

The Seminole Path leads to the chickee hut that was erected about two months ago on the lawn near the art department and the college's Museum of Florida Art and Culture.

The concrete benches are near the Wild Flower

PATH, Page 9



MARC VALERO/STAFF

South Florida State College 3-D art students line up near the stepping stones they made for the Seminole Path that leads to the chickee hut that was built recently near the art department. The path was dedicated Wednesday to Leana Revell, vice president of educational and student services, who will be retiring soon.

Path

From Page 1

Tower obelisk, which was erected in the same area last year.

The path was dedicated to Leana Revell, vice president of educational and student services, who will be retiring soon.

Revell cut the ribbon to officially open and dedicate the path.

Art professor Cathy Futral explained that the chickee hut was part of the Museum of Florida Art and Culture's Seminole Indian exhibition.

Chickee comes from the Seminole word for "house."

Members of the Seminole Tribe, with Norman "Skeeter" Bowers in charge, built the hut about two months ago.

Due to logistical reasons, the college's students were not able to help with the construc-

tion, but they watched it being built, Futral said.

The 3-D design class decided that a path was needed to bring students and those who wanted to look at the chickee hut into that area, she said. The square stepping stones feature diamond shapes and designs created in red, yellow, black and white colored tiles, which are the four colors of the Seminole flag, art student Cheyanne Hazard told the gathering.

Futral explained that the 17 tiles are glass mosaics. Students cut the glass pieces and adhered them to store-bought cement stepping stones. Grout was applied between the tiles and the surface was covered with a sealer.

The Seminole Path was inspired by an earlier path called the "Art Path," which was created in response to a footpath created by students cutting across the grass to Build-

ing B, she said.

Futral explained the connection to Earth Day.

"We celebrate our heritage of the Seminole Indians and their efforts as stewards of the land," she said. "We need to be reminded even as time marches on that we are always responsible for our land."

"We thought that the relationship of Earth Day and the celebration of the Seminole Path with the chickee seemed to match."

SFSC President Thomas Leitzel and former President Catherine Cornelius were present for the dedication.

The college's 3-D design classes have a tradition of creating either permanent or temporary artworks as a feature in the area near the museum and art department, such as "the hand" from 2012 and the obelisk.

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SFSC hosts Awards Day

Special to Highlands Today

AVON PARK — South Florida State College students were honored for academic excellence and community service during the college's annual Awards Day ceremony April 17 in the SFSC University Center.

Each year, faculty members honor students who exhibit talent and exemplary qualities that go beyond academic standards.

"Today, South Florida State College celebrated the outstanding academic achievements of our students," said Dr. Timothy Wise, SFSC dean of student services. "The college is proud of their hard work and dedication to excellence."

Student Katelynn Leman was honored with the Joseph E. Johnston/Bette L. McDearman Student Services Award for exhibiting great ethics and character; exceptional academic achievement; outstanding involvement in professional, social and cultural activities and programs; and her contribution to the campus and community.

Students presented 2014-15 Outstanding Instructor Awards to Dr. Brian Deery, arts and sciences, full time; Felicia Dozer, arts and sciences, adjunct; Adam Martin, applied sciences, full time; Carol Dutton, applied sciences, adjunct; and Dustin Woods, adult education.



COURTESY PHOTO

Katelynn Leman, left, accepts the 2014-15 Joseph E. Johnson/Bette L. McDearman Student Services Award from Dr. Timothy Wise, SFSC dean of student services.

Starting Your Business seminar to be offered

AVON PARK – Ever wanted to start your own business but not sure how to get

started? The Florida Small Business Development Council at University of South Florida, located at South Florida State College, will host a Starting Your Business seminar at the SFSC Corporate and Community Education Room T24, from 2-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 29.

From how to determine feasibility and legal structures to the types of license you'll need, this seminar covers all the essentials that will help you get started.

This seminar is customized for start-ups in Highlands, DeSoto, and Hardee counties, including the cities of Avon Park, Sebring, Lake Placid, Arcadia and Wauchula.

Call 863-784-7405 to reserve a seat. Cost is just \$10 and includes seminar materials.

To find out more about Florida SBDC at USF no-cost business consulting and low-cost seminars, visit online at www.SBDCTampaBay.com.

Registration is open for fall term

AVON PARK — Registration is open for South Florida State College's fall term. Fall classes begin Aug. 21.

Registration for the summer term continues through May 7. Summer classes begin May 8.

The Welcome Center accepts walk-in registrations 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays. Students can also register the Lake Placid Center.

Continuing students may register and pay fees online by going to www.southflorida.edu, logging into Panther Central and going to self-service banner under the Student tab.

The schedule of classes is available at www.southflorida.edu/current-students/class-schedules.

SFSC Briefs **Community summer swim classes offered**

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Community Education Department is offering summer classes open to the public.

Aquabics is a moderately paced aerobic water exercise class for toning, weight loss and building strength. It's easy on the joints but still provides resistance. It is offered 5:30-6:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesdays, May 18 through June 29. Cost is \$63, and the course number is 30066.

Lap Swim is an excellent way to exercise and cross train. This class is scheduled for 4-5 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 19 through July 30. Cost is \$78, and the course number is 30315.

Register for classes in Building B at the Highlands Campus or

any SFSC campus or center. For information, call 784-7388.

Concealed weapons permit course available

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Criminal Justice Academy is offering a concealed weapons permit course 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 27.

This course is required to carry a concealed weapon in Florida. Topics to be covered include Florida Statutes, use of deadly force, carry restrictions and live fire exercises.

Cost is \$55, and the course number is 30729. Pre-registration is required.

For information, equipment list and maps to the range, contact Richard Morey at 784-7285 or visit www.southflorida.edu/publicservice.

Education bill deal will have minor impact on SFSC

BY MARC VALERO
Highlands Today

AVON PARK — Compromise legislation will allow South Florida State College to increase enrollment in its four-year degree programs and also keep its name.

Senate Bill 948, which is sponsored by Sen. Don Gaetz, R-Destin, has been amended to include compromises on some of the provisions in Senate Bill 1252, which is sponsored by Sen. Kelli Satargel R-Lakeland.

State colleges in Florida reacted with concern about four weeks ago when Sen. Joe Negron, R-Stuart, attached language to SB 1252 that would require institutions such as South Florida State

SFSC, Page 6



RYAN PELHAM/STAFF

Gennifer Raulerson holds up a model of the solar system as part of a mock lesson plan she created with her group in a class for the elementary education bachelor's degree program at South Florida State College on Monday. A state Senate bill that would affect the college's baccalaureate programs has been amended.

SFSC

From Page 1

College to drop "state" from its name and up the current 60-day notice, to one year to start a new baccalaureate degree program.

That bill has been postponed for now.

SFSC Vice President of Administrative Services Glenn Little said the compromise will make the application process for four-year degrees a little longer, but not "unreasonable."

When a college wants to add to its baccalaureate program mix, the plan has to be reviewed by the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors, he noted. If SB 948 is approved, there would be some changes in that process, but it would be "minor."

"The biggest issue that we were worried about were Negron's amendments to Senate Bill 1252 ... which included changing the names of our colleges," Little said.

The amended SB 948 does not call for a name change to remove the word "state."

A name change would have cost the college



RYAN PELHAM/STAFF

Above: Kimberley Dos Santos takes notes while a group of her elementary education students present a lesson plan at South Florida State College on Monday afternoon. Right: A state Senate bill that would have required South Florida State College to change its name has been amended. Dropping the "state" from the name would have cost the college \$250,000.



about \$250,000 to modify all the signs, paperwork and branding, he said. Also, the bigger issue would have been for baccalaureate degree holders

to have the degree come from something other than a "community" college, Little said. Employers in other states that may not have baccalau-

reate degrees at the community college level might not embrace a community college degree as much as a degree from a state college.

♦ ♦ ♦

If SB 948 is approved, South Florida State College would be able to add up to 7 percent in additional enrollment in baccalaureate degree programs over the next three years, Little said.

"So, we would be able to add potentially another couple of bachelor degrees, if we chose to, over the next three years," Little said.

The college can have baccalaureate programs comprised of up to 10 percent of the total enrollment, SFSC Board of Trustees member Ken Lambert explained.

The current baccalaureate programs enrollment is 3 percent, so it can increase by 7 percentage points.

The bill would sunset in three years, "so it would all go away unless another bill is filed," Little noted.

The only change that the college views in a "negative light" is that the Florida College System would have to change its name back to its previous

name, the Florida Community College System.

"That is a sticking point that Senator Negron insisted on, which, compared to the rest of it, that is still fairly minor," Little said.

♦ ♦ ♦

Both SFSC Board of Trustee Joe Wright and Lambert said the college can "live with" the compromises in SB 948.

"My preference would still be that they had left it alone, unfortunately, that didn't happen, however we can certainly live with the compromise," Lambert said.

Wright noted the college's bachelor degree programs will be able to grow.

"There is still some room for growth there," he said. "Our primary mission is to meet the needs of our three-county area and that includes the need for baccalaureate degrees."

On Friday, Senate Bill 948 was placed on the calendar, on second reading.

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Thursday, April 30, 2015

Local SFSC Student Earns State Academic Award

A local student is one of five from South Florida State College who recently received special medallions as the 2015 All-Florida Academic First and Second teams at an awards ceremony on April 9 in Tallahassee.

SFSC students Joy Derrick and Katelynne Leman were selected for the All-Florida Academic First Team. Bowling Green resident Ruben De La Cruz, Emma Cardinal and Jessica Saenz were selected for the All-Florida Academic Second Team.

The All-Florida Academic Team recognizes outstanding students for their academic achievement, leadership and service to their communities. Students are nominated by their respective colleges to the All-USA Community College Academic Team competition sponsored by USA Today and the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

"I'm pleased to recognize this group of outstanding scholars for excelling in their studies while providing leadership and service to their schools and communities," said Florida Education Commissioner Pam Stewart.

"Our colleges have done an excellent job preparing these



COURTESY PHOTO

Bowling Green resident Ruben De La Cruz was recognized for his academics and leadership at an awards ceremony in Tallahassee. Congratulating him as he is named to the All-Florida Academic Second Team are Dr. Thomas Leitzel, SFSC's president, and Pam Stewart, Florida's commissioner of education.

students for success now and in the future. I'm confident these are among the next generation of leaders in the Sunshine State," she added.

Gov. Rick Scott proclaimed

April as "Florida College System Month" in honor of the great work being done at the state's 28 colleges to prepare students for both professional and personal success.

SFSC student group to observe Day of Prayer

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Christian Club, a student organization, will host an observance on National Day of Prayer 12:30-12:45 p.m. May 7 at the flagpoles on the circle, entrance 3, SFSC Highlands Campus.

The event is free and open to the public.

Students will read Scripture and take praises and prayer requests.

The Rev. Ben Carter will lead the group in prayer.

For more information, contact Melanie Jackson, Christian Club adviser, at (863) 784-7018 or Melanie.Jackson@southflorida.edu.

Panthers win twice for Jade

By **JAMES TAYLOR**

CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — In the midst of losing eight of its last nine games, the South Florida State College Panther baseball team found inspiration in a 16-year-old girl that walked arm-in-arm with her mother to the pitcher's mound on Panther Field last Saturday afternoon.

What members of the SFSC team saw was a young woman wearing a knitted cap in chillier-than-normal weather and a Panther jersey stand tall on the circular mound of dirt with a glimmer in her eye and a smile on her face as she prepared to throw the first pitch in the Panthers' doubleheader against the University of Tampa.

To understand her story, one only needs to look back two years

NEXT GAME

• **Who:** Hillsborough Community College at South Florida State College

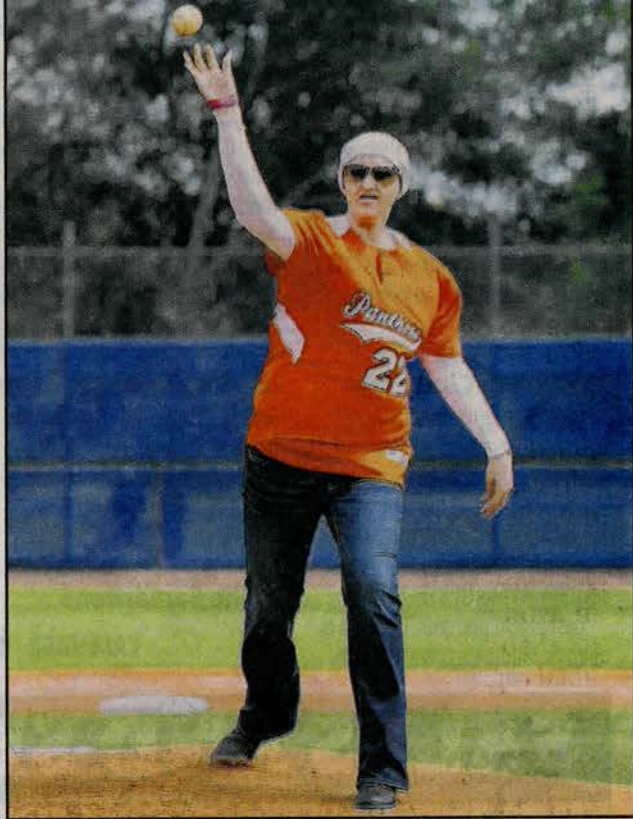
• **When:** 6 p.m., today.

• **Where:** Panther Field, Avon Park.

when in June of 2013 Jade Jackson and her family found out that Jade had brain cancer. After emergency surgery and various treatments, Jade continues to battle the cancer that is attached to her brain stem.

After throwing that first pitch, the Panthers lined up to give her a high-five as she walked off the field. "It was exciting," said Jade after coming off the field. "That was my first time."

Throwing the first pitch in a baseball game was a break from routine for Jade, who



James Taylor/News-Sun

Jade Jackson, who has been battling brain cancer for nearly two years, throws out the first pitch in a South Florida State College baseball doubleheader against the University of Tampa on Saturday. The Panthers won both games.

JADE

FROM PAGE B1

requires a lot of medical attention. "It is a day-by-day thing," said Jade's mother, Jackie Jackson. "She is on a lot of chemo right now and we go back on April 14 for an MRI to see if it is shrinking. That is our goal, to get it to shrink. But she will still need to have brain surgery again."

But not on this day. South Florida State Coach Rick Hitt spoke about why they asked Jade to throw the first pitch. "She is an outstanding young lady and everyone

you talk to," Hitt said. "She is an amazing fighter. She is 16 years old and she does not get up every morning. I explained to our players who wonder if they can hit a curve ball or field a ball in the bottom of the ninth, she is working on beating something that is more devastating than those types of things. You have to have a compassionate feeling for that and you have to be someone who respects that approach to life.

"One of the reasons we had her out here today was because simply in hopes to take her mind off of it for

a few minutes and enjoy herself with her family while being our guest," Hitt said. "We wanted to provide that opportunity. Athletics gives people that platform."

And though Jade was unable to stay for both games, the Panthers battled to a pair of wins over the University of Tampa on the day they honored her.

In the first game, Max Boling scattered seven hits in seven innings and only allowed one run, while striking out seven. Former Avon Park High star Alfred Brown scored both runs for the Panthers in the 2-1 win.



The second game went into the ninth inning (doubleheaders are two seven-inning games), with the score tied 4-4. With two outs, Brown tripled and scored a few seconds later on a base

hit by Harrison McClure to give the Panthers a 5-4 win.

The Panthers will resume Suncoast Conference play tonight and Friday night at home against Hillsborough Community College of Tampa.

James Taylor/
News-Sun

The South Florida State College Panther baseball team lines up to high-five Jade Jackson as she walks off the field after throwing the first pitch on Saturday.

South Florida State College Baseball



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

South Florida's John Tatum takes a throw as Hillsborough's Derek King Jr. begins his slide during Wednesday's game.

Hawks double up Panthers

Hillsborough grabs conference win at South Florida

BY RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Special to Highlands Today

AVON PARK — The Hillsborough Community College Hawks soared to a 10-5 Suncoast Conference victory over the South Florida State College Panthers on Wednesday. The Panthers took the lead in the bottom of the fourth but quickly lost it and weren't able to recover.

"When you grab the momentum in the bottom of the fifth and give it away in the top of the sixth and never get it back that was really the difference in the game as far as I'm concerned," said South Florida coach Rick Hitt. "I didn't anticipate the momentum escaping us in basically three hitters. It happened so fast."

The Hawks took an early lead in the top of the first. Paul Russo hit a pop fly into the right-center field gap for a double and scored on Tino Mention's RBI grounder.

South Florida claimed the lead in the bottom of the third. Alfred Brown hit a line into center field for a single and Isaiah Dean bunted down the third baseline for a single.



Hillsborough's Willie Seay dives back to first as South Florida's Austin Bingham waits for the throw.

Dean raced to second while Brown was still occupying the base, resulting in Brown being stuck in a rundown, but Brown was awarded third base when obstruction was called against the Hawks.

Harrison McClure hammered the ball into the left-center field gap for a double driving home both Brown and Dean for a two-run RBI and claiming a 2-1 lead for the

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Panthers

From Page 1

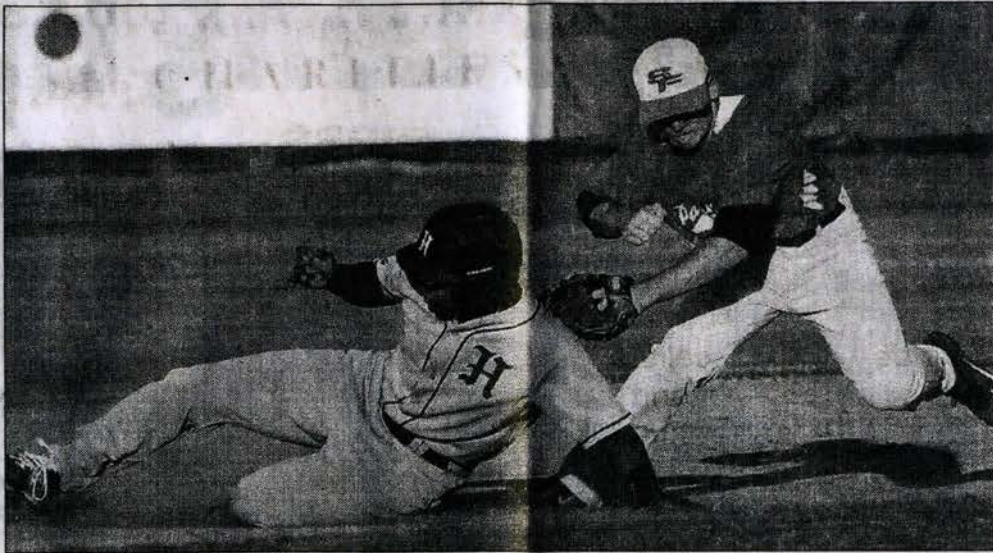
Panthers.

The Hawks tied the game up in the top of the fifth, only to see South Florida bounce back in the bottom of the fifth. Brown drew a walk and Dean bunted to the pitcher, allowing Brown to advance to second.

McClure grounded to third for a single. Flores hit a grounder to second, advancing the runners to second and third. Austin Bingham hit a groundball toward the pitcher that the third baseman picked up and threw to first, but the first baseman missed the ball. Brown scored and McClure went home on the error. The Panthers reclaimed the lead with a score of 4-2.

The Hawks rallied in the top of the sixth scoring five runs. Hillsborough repossessed the lead with a score of 7-4 and tacked on two more runs in the seventh.

"We went to the bullpen



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

South Florida's John Tatum, right, puts the tag on Hillsborough's Derek King Jr. in Wednesday's game.

as often as we could and we just *didn't have answers* for their hitters after that," Hitt said.

Hillsborough added one more to their lead in the top of the eighth, making it a 10-4 game.

The Panthers tried to rally in the bottom of the ninth, as Tobias Culpepper scored

to make it 10-5, but the Panthers couldn't get any closer.

"I thought our guys had a good offensive approach," Hitt said. "That guy, Josh Falk, is really good, one of their top guys. We were really prepared for them. I thought our guys did a good job. We had a couple of opportunities that we didn't cash in run-

wise that we could have."

The loss drops the Panthers' season record to 18-23 and their conference record to 3-10. The Panthers will host Hillsborough in the second game of this three-game series tonight at 6.

"We're still battling along, we still have 15 games to go," Hitt said.

Panthers lose momentum, game

By **JAMES TAYLOR**

CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK —

Momentum can go either way in sports, and Wednesday it got the best of South Florida State College's baseball team.

The Panthers opened the second half of Suncoast Conference play by falling to the Hillsborough Community College Hawks 10-5, blowing a 4-2 fifth-inning lead.

The loss dropped the Panthers to 18-24 on the season, 3-10 in the conference.

"When you grab the momentum in the bottom of the fifth," South Florida coach Rick Hitt said, "and give it away in the top of the sixth and you never get it back, that was the difference in the game."

SFSC endured a see-saw game from the start. The Panthers fell behind early in the first inning,



James Taylor/News-Sun

South Florida State College's Isaiah Dean rounds third base to score in the third inning against Hillsborough Community College on Wednesday. The Panthers lost 10-5.

NEXT GAME

- * **Who:** South Florida State College at Hillsborough Community College
- * **When:** Today, 1 p.m.
- * **Where:** Tampa

1-0, after a leadoff double led to a run.

The Panthers battled back in the bottom of the third as former Avon Park High star Alfred Brown and Isaiah Dean led off with singles. A double

PANTHERS

FROM PAGE 11

steal put both runners in scoring position for Harrison McClure.

McClure then hit a double to drive in Brown and Dean, giving the Panthers their first lead of the game, 2-1.

With the score tied at 2-2 heading into the bottom of the fifth, Brown again was the catalyst for the Panthers as he led off with a walk.

McClure reached on a one-out single and stole second base. With two outs, Austin Bingham came up huge with a single to plate Brown and McClure and give the Panthers a 4-2 lead.

But the momentum changed quickly in the top of the sixth.

"All of a sudden, (Tyler) Knowles could not get anybody out,"

Hitt said. "I am a little surprised by that, to be quite honest with you. I was not anticipating the momentum escaping us in basically three hitters.

"It happened just like that," Hitt said. "After that, we went to the bullpen as often as possible. We just did not have enough answers for the hitters after that."

Knowles breezed through the first five innings, giving up two runs on four hits. After getting the first batter out in the sixth, he began to struggle as three batters singled and a run was in that cut the Panther lead to 4-3.

A walk and another base hit brought in two more runs and the Panthers trailed 5-4 before the first pitching change was made. By the time the Hawks

finished in the sixth, they held a 7-4 lead.

Over the next four innings, Panther bats went silent and the Hawks managed three more runs for the six-run victory.

"I thought we were prepared for them," Hitt said. "Our hitters did a good job. We had a couple of opportunities we did not cash in; especially in the first inning, we left them loaded and grounded into a double play."

SFSC was scheduled to play HCC on Friday night in the second of their three-game series at Panther Field, but results were not available by press time. The teams meet again today at 1 p.m. for the series finale in Tampa.

The Panthers then visit St. Pete College in Clearwater on Monday at 6 p.m.

SFSC splits with St. Pete

By **JAMES TAYLOR**

CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK – It was an up-and-down first part of the week for South Florida State College's baseball team, which split a pair of games against Suncoast Conference foe St. Pete College.

On Monday, SFSC won the first game at the Joe DiMaggio Complex in Clearwater 3-0. Tyler Knowles pitched a complete-game shutout for the Panthers, scattering five hits and striking out six.

Harrison McClure



James Taylor/News-Sun

South Florida State College first baseman Austin Bingham stretches enough to get the out at first base on Wednesday night against St. Pete College. The Panthers lost 11-2.

went 2-for-4 with one RBI and Jorge Flores went 1-for-4 with one RBI for SFSC, which scored runs in the second, sixth and eighth

SFSC

FROM PAGE 11

innings.

"Tyler Knowles pitched outstanding and worked out of a couple of spots at key times," SFSC coach Rick Hitt said. "We got knocks with runners in scoring position a few times to plate enough guys to win as Tyler made it hold up."

SFSC (19-27 overall, 4-13 conference) couldn't maintain its mojo on Wednesday, however, as the Titans prevailed 11-2 at Panther Field.

Panther starting

pitcher Brad Landers never made it out of the first inning. He pitched only two-thirds of an inning while getting tagged for five runs on six hits.

Garrett Albritton came in to curb the hemorrhaging to a slow bleed over the next three innings as the Titans (24-16, 7-10) scored three more runs on six hits to take an 8-0 lead after five.

"We got off to a rough start," Hitt said. "We played really well the other day. Great pitching and defense and timely hitting.

We did not get a lot of guys on base, but when we did, we did a good job against them."

McClure tried to jumpstart the offense in the fourth inning with a towering shot into left field that seemed destined to hit grass on the other side of the fence. But St Pete College left fielder Alex Hanson had other ideas as he climbed and reached over the fence to pull the ball back and keep the Panthers scoreless.

The Panthers' Tobias Culpepper hit a double in the

fifth and a triple in the eighth, but SFSC failed to capitalize with a run on both occasions.

Trailing 11-0 heading to their last at-bat, the Panthers avoided the shutout with two runs in the bottom of the ninth on three hits.

"They have a good club," Hitt said. "We got to bounce back and try to get game three out of this series. Our guys played hard, but this game was never close and they did enough offensively to really take control of this game. They were able

to do that, we were not able to and that was the difference in the game."

Game three against St. Pete College was held last night in Clearwater, but results were not available by press time. SFSC hosts State College of Florida today at 1 p.m. and travels to State College of Florida in Bradenton on Monday at 6 p.m.

Prior to the three-game set against St. Pete College, SFSC was swept by Hillsborough Community College in a three-game series. After losing to HCC

10-5 on April 1, the Panthers lost 3-1 on April 3 and 11-3 on April 4.

SFSC trailed just 4-3 in the eighth inning in the last game before the wheels fell off. "They broke it open against our bullpen," Hitt said. "Max Boling battled, but got the ball up several times and they were ready. We swung the bat pretty well against their top guy; just could not cash in on the guys we had on. Stranded quite a few guys."

— News-Sun Sports Editor Jeff Gardenour contributed to this story.

Panthers to hold summer baseball camp

By **JEFF GARDENOUR**

SPORTS EDITOR

The South Florida State College baseball program is accepting registration for its 2015 Panther Baseball Summer Youth Camps.

Open to youths ages 5 to 14, the camps are scheduled for two sessions: June 8-11 and June 22-25. Both sessions will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Panther Field on the Highlands campus in Avon Park.

Cost is \$150 for two weeks or \$80 per week. Families with more than one

camper registered will be given a \$5 discount per camp. Team discounts also are available.

All camp participants will receive a camp T-shirt.

The camp schedule for both sessions includes registration from 8 to 8:30 a.m., and then camp instruction from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For more information, call South Florida State College head baseball coach Rick Hitt at 863-784-7036 or email him at hittr@southflorida.edu on the Internet.

Panthers stamp out Fire

South Florida knocks off Southeastern University in baseball

BY RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Special to Highlands Today

AVON PARK — After a difficult series against the Polk State College Eagles, the South Florida State College Panthers bounced back with an 8-6 win over Southeastern University on Thursday at Panther Field.

South Florida's Jonathan Struck hurled five solid innings, including five strikeouts to help the Panthers improve to 21-32

for the season.

"This was a good win for our guys," said South Florida coach Rick Hitt. "We had the lead early and gave it up in the sixth, but we came back and took the lead and held it. We have two more games to go. Our league is amazingly tough. You have to play well all the time to have success. Our nonconference record is pretty good but our conference record not so much. Somehow we figured it out on one side but not on the other. The consistency that I talk about all the time we haven't been able to put our thumb on it and stick to it and get on a

run. We're that club that wins five and then loses five or win one and then lose five. We really haven't been able to get on that spurt where we can rattle off six or seven wins and really stay in the hunt in the league. We have had some opportunities to do that but haven't been able to get over the hump."

South Florida got on the scoreboard in the bottom of the second inning as Rodney Forbes singled to left field, Jorge Flores singled to center field, and John Tatum lined a base hit to left field to score Forbes. Max Boling grounded a

PANTHERS, Page 2



South Florida's Tobias Culpepper (9) is out trying to steal third base by Southeastern University's Troy Rivera during Thursday's game.

RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Panthers

From Page 1

single to load the bases, and Chris Kazen lofted a fly ball to center field to plate Flores to give the Panthers a 2-0 lead.

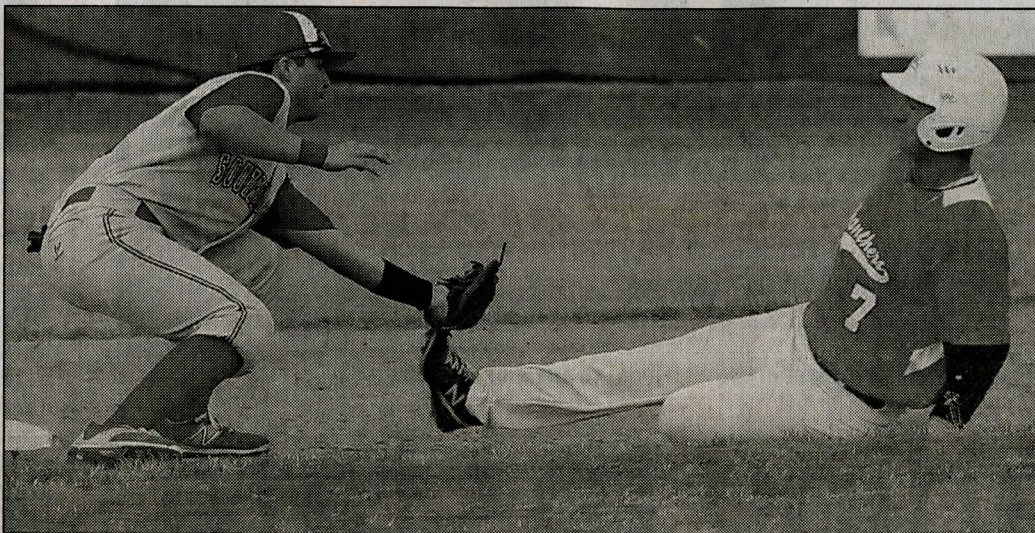
Southeastern was able to touch Struck for a run in the top of the third to trim its deficit to 2-1.

South Florida extended its lead in the bottom of the frame as former Avon Park standout Alfred Brown stroked a single to left field, Harrison McClure smacked a base hit and both runners moved into scoring position with stolen bases.

Jason Plyn ripped a single to center field to score Brown and McClure to put the Panthers up 4-1.

The Fire answered in the top of the fifth inning on a sacrifice fly by Robert Berning, which scored Troy Rivera to make it 4-2.

South Florida tacked on a run in the bottom of the inning, as Forbes roped a single and Flores drilled a double to left-center field to plate Forbes to put the Panthers on



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

South Florida's Chris Kazen (7) is tagged out by Southeastern University second baseman Luis Garcia (17) during Thursday's game.

top by a score of 5-2.

Southeastern rallied in the top of the sixth inning with a four-run outburst to take a 6-5 lead.

South Florida rallied in the bottom of the seventh inning as Brown used his speed to beat out a bunt and McClure hit a ground ball to the Fire shortstop who made a wild throw to second base allowing Brown and McClure to

advance into scoring position.

Forbes grounded a single to left field to score Brown with McClure moving to third base. McClure scored when the catcher made a wild throw on an attempted steal of second base by Forbes.

Flores capped the inning with a ground out to plate Forbes to give the Panthers

an 8-6 lead.

South Florida's pitching staff was able to set down the Fire in the final two innings to seal the victory.

The Panthers invite everyone to come out to their Fan Appreciation Day today. Don Appelquist will throw out the first pitch. Appelquist has worked at the college for more than 40 years.

First pitch is set for 1 p.m.

Panthers rally past Southeastern, snap losing streak

By **JAMES TAYLOR**
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK – The South Florida State College baseball team made Thursday's game a memorable one, snapping a three-game losing streak and a three-game scoreless string with an 8-6 non-conference victory against the Southeastern University Fire of Lakeland.

SFSC coach Rick Hitt

said the game was a microcosm of the season, which has been up and down since the start in January.

"We had a lead early, gave it up, got it back," said Hitt, who added that this time they were able to hold on to that lead once they got it the second time.

"We have competed very well over the years in the league," Hitt said of playing in the Suncoast Conference.

"But we have had

some difficulty with that over the last couple of years. We just got to get back to doing a better job."

Against Southeastern, the Panthers erupted for four hits and two runs in the second inning to break their scoreless drought that dated to April 17 when SFSC fell to rival Polk State 1-0. The Panthers then lost two more to the Eagles, 8-0 and 10-0.

That scoreless

drought ended when SFSC's Rodney Forbes and Jorge Flores led off the inning with singles. A one-out single by John Tatum then drove in Forbes to break the string of zeroes. Max Boling followed with a single to load the bases. The Panthers scored their second run on a sacrifice fly by Chris Kazen for a 2-0 lead.

Southeastern responded with a run in the third to cut the

Panthers' lead to 2-1.

SFSC doubled its run production in the third inning when Alfred Brown and Harrison McClure led off with singles. Both scored on a single by Jason Plyn to increase the Panthers' lead to 4-1.

In the fifth, Flores smashed a double to score Forbes and give SFSC a 5-2 lead.

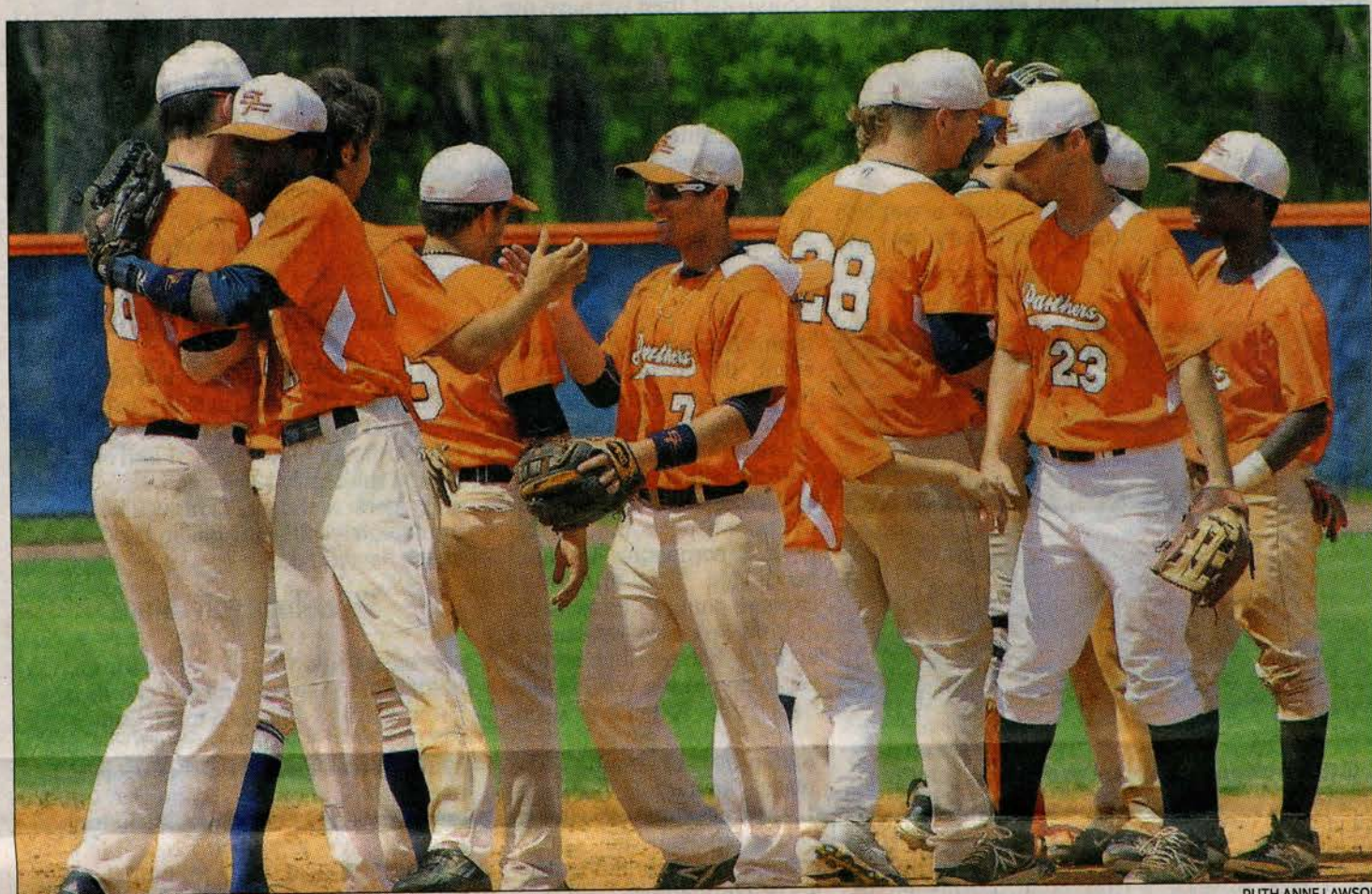
Sebring's Jonathan Struck, who started for the Panthers, then was pulled after five

innings in which he allowed six hits and two runs.

Southeastern rocked Jose Munoz-Rivera for five hits and four runs in a third of an inning to take a 6-5 lead before the Panthers brought in Austin Bingham to stop the damage.

With Bingham holding the Fire scoreless for 2 2/3 innings, the Panthers retook the lead, 8-6, in the bottom of the seventh.

South Florida State College Baseball



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

South Florida State College players meet after defeating Pasco-Hernando State College in their final game of the season Saturday.

Panthers finish season

SFSC ends season on a high note

BY RUTH ANNE LAWSON

Special to Highlands Today

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College Panthers saved one of their best for last, shutting out Pasco-Hernando State College by a score of 5-0 at Panther Field on Saturday.

The Panthers celebrated fan appreciation day, their last game of the season, and said goodbye to the sophomores. Don Appelquist threw out the first pitch. Appelquist will soon retire after working for South Florida for 45 years.

"We've had a pretty good year," said South Florida coach Rick Hitt. "The conference schedule is what we design our program to be good at, and we had a season where we couldn't get on any type of a roll."

Hitt said it was always great for the team to be able to recognize the fans who come out to the games, as well as oth-

ers who have made a positive impact on a number of young adults.

"It was a super day in appreciation for all our fans that came out all year and cheered on our guys," he said. "We really appreciate them."

"Don Appelquist has worked at the college for 45 years, and he threw out our first pitch. Those are things that athletics gives you a platform to recognize. People that dedicate themselves to education for that long, we appreciate him being here today."

South Florida's Tyler Knowles pitched the first six innings and struck out eight batters. Max Boling came in to finish the game for the Panthers and struck out three batters.

It was a fierce pitching battle until the bottom of the sixth when the Panthers came to life and broke the scoreless tie. Isaiah Dean hit a ground ball to first base that bounced off the first baseman's glove for a single.



Panthers

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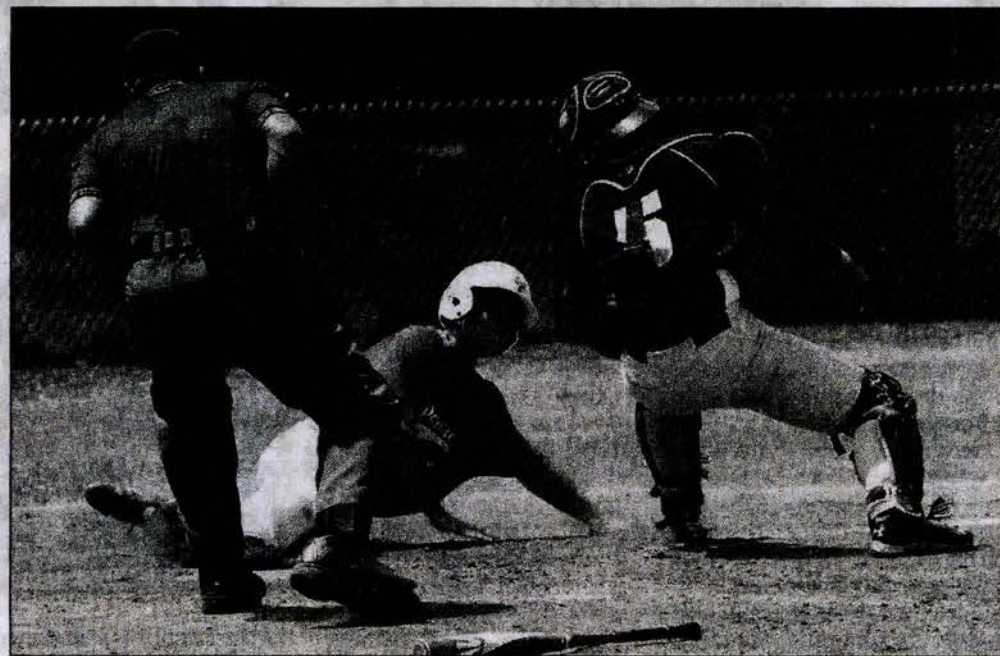
Chris Kazen hit a sacrifice bunt to the pitcher allowing Dean to advance to second. Dean stole third and took home on a passed ball, giving the Panthers a 1-0 lead. Jason Plyn drew a walk and Harrison McClure hammered the ball into the left-center field gap for a double, driving home Plyn.

Rodney Forbes knocked a blooper into center field for a single, bringing home McClure to further the Panthers' lead to 3-0.

South Florida continued to control the game and tacked on a few more runs in the bottom of the seventh. John Tatum drew a walk and stole second when he saw an opportunity.

Kazen followed with an RBI double to left field and Plyn stepped to the plate and sent a rope into the right-center field gap, which brought Kazen home and made it 5-0.

"This was a nice way to send our sophomores off," Hitt said. "We have a great group of young men. Several of them are going on to play. Several of our guys are com-



RUTH ANNE LAWSON

South Florida State College's John Tatum slides safely home as Pasco-Hernando catcher Christian Allcea tries to make the tag.

ing back and a few of our injured will be returning."

Hitt said the team will take a break and gear up for the fall season.

"We'll get right back to it come fall," he said. "Another year in the books, another quality year for the Panthers other than the conference race, which is disappointing.

We are proud of our players. We didn't play good baseball some days, but at the end of the day we are really proud of our guys."

Hitt said there is still a bit of work to do regarding new players joining the program for the 2016 season.

"We have three players returning from injury, we have

players coming up from high school and then we have our returning guys from this season," he said. "We still have a few weeks of recruiting to formulate our roster for fall. We will welcome our new players in with open arms in the fall. We are looking forward to getting them together and starting over again."

Panthers drop two to Polk State

By **JEFF GARDENOUR**

SPORTS EDITOR

With the 2015 season winding down, the South Florida State College Panthers' baseball team is still scratching and clawing for one important thing: consistency.

On the heels of a pair of big wins against the State College of Florida, SFSC dropped a pair of contests to rival Polk State College, 1-0 and 8-0, to drop to 21-31 overall, 6-17 in the Suncoast Conference.

"That consistency we have been working for all year, we have just have not been able to break through with," SFSC coach Rick Hitt said.

"Great example, we win two in a row from State College of Florida, collect 29 hits and score 18 runs, and pitch okay, (and go) to losing two straight to Polk, getting 12 hits, scoring no runs and not pitching very well in Game 2.

"We continue to work

at it," Hitt said. "We have four games to go and are looking forward to seeing a great effort out of our guys down the stretch."

For a while there, it looked as if SFSC would end the season on a roll. The Panthers had clobbered the State College of Florida, 11-6 and 7-3, on April 11 and 13, but then found the going rough against Polk State.

Still, the Panthers had their chances in Game 1 of their season against the Eagles when they fell 1-0.

"(Last) Friday night, it was a great pitchers' game," SFSC coach Rick Hitt said. "Our guy, (Tyler) Knowles, pitched great and their guy, (Jordan) Barrett, pitched great. Both teams had five hits and they scored one more than we did.

"We left four guys at second," Hitt said. "Just could not get a knock when we needed it."

Former Avon Park High standout Alfred

Brown went 2-for-4, and Rodney Forbes went 2-for-3 to lead the Panthers.

A day later, SFSC had no answer for Polk State (32-13, 14-6) in falling 8-0. The Eagles blew open a tight 2-0 game with six runs bunched over the fifth, sixth and seventh innings. Polk State had 11 hits in all against four pitchers. SFS used five pitchers in all, with Brad Landers taking the loss. He allowed four runs, three earned, on six hits in 4 2/3 innings.

The Panthers, meanwhile, were held to six hits by Maikor Mora, who worked seven innings to pick up the win. Jacob Kelley and Jordan Guerrero each pitched an inning of scoreless relief for the Eagles.

John Tatum went 2-for-3 and Brown, 2-for-4, to lead SFSC.

"Saturday, they just outplayed us," Hitt said. "We got in the bullpen early and they went on

to win."

SFSC hosts Southeastern University

on Thursday at 5 p.m. and visits Pasco-Hernando Community

College in New Port Richey on Friday at 2 p.m.

SFSC wins finale

By **JAMES TAYLOR**

CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — In a long, wild up-and-down baseball season, the South Florida State College Panthers finished as a winner.

SFSC ended the 2015 season last weekend on a positive note with a three-game win streak, including the last two over Pasco-Hernando Community College, which had compiled a 29-11 overall record.

The Panthers banged out 16 hits in a 7-6 win over Pasco-Hernando last Friday and finished the year with a 5-0 win at home on Fan Appreciation Day



South Florida State College's Harrison McClure tries to draw the interference call after getting caught in a rundown on Saturday in a game against Pasco-Hernando Community College. The Panthers won 5-0.

on Saturday as Don Appelquist, who spent 45 years with SFSC, threw out the first pitch.

"We had a pretty good year in the non-conference side of things," South Florida State College coach Rick Hitt said. "But the conference schedule is what we design our team to be good at and we just had a spot there in the middle of the season that we could not get on any type of a roll."

The Panthers

finished with an overall record of 24-32, with an 18-14 mark in non-conference games and 6-18 record in the Suncoast Conference.

In the season-finale, the Panthers started Tyler Knowles, who held Pasco-Hernando scoreless for six innings while just giving up three hits and striking out eight. Knowles, however, was hit in the leg in the sixth and did not come back out in the seventh.

Max Boling came in to pitch three innings

of scoreless relief to complete the shutout for SFSC.

With the game scoreless after five innings, the Panthers broke through in the bottom of the sixth with three runs. Isaiah Dean, who reached on an error, would later steal third base and score on a wild pitch to give the Panthers a 1-0 lead.

Harrison McClure, who had four hits and two runs batted in on Friday night, continued being hot with a run-producing double

on Saturday to put the Panthers up 2-0.

Rodney Forbes capped the scoring by driving in McClure with a single to extend the Panthers' lead to 3-0.

South Florida State College added two more runs in the seventh inning on a single by Chris Kazen and a double by Jason Plyn to make the score 5-0.

"At the end of the day, a good win for our guys," Hitt said. "A super day to appreciate

all the fans that come out all year long to cheer for the guys on a daily basis and Don Appelquist, who has spent 45 years at the college and threw out our first pitch.

"Those are some of the things that athletics gives you a platform: to recognize people that have dedicated themselves to education that long, we appreciate that and it is a good way to send our sophomores off," Hitt said.

Hitt also mentioned

that several players will continue playing baseball, as well as several freshman who are expected to come back next year, including some injured players that did not get to play.

"The players represent our institution very well," Hitt said. "They do a good job in the classroom, they have a good relationship with the community and we are proud in a lot of things they do and how they do things."