

# SFSC graduates 11 law enforcement officers

AVON PARK — South Florida State College graduated 11 law enforcement officers on June 23, handing them their diploma, challenge coins, and plenty of advice for their first assignment.

The class of one woman and 10 men filed into SFSC's University Center auditorium on the Highlands Campus for the ceremony and stood at attention while a color guard presented the Stars and Stripes. The auditorium's seats were filled with family and well-wishers, including Susan Benton, Highlands County's sheriff.

Before picking up their diplomas, the cadets, dressed in brown uniforms, heard a send-off speech from a guest chosen by the graduating class.

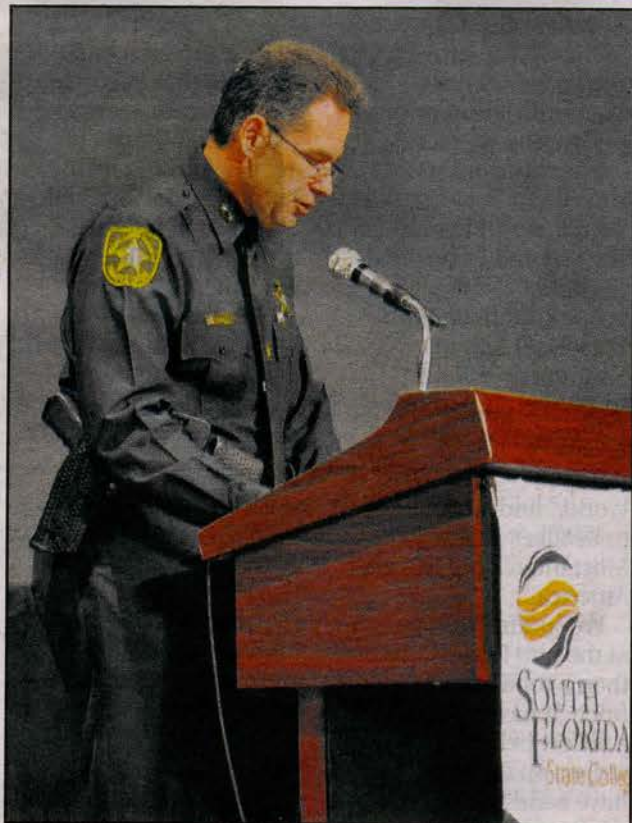
"Why do you want to be cops?" asked Mark Schrader, chief deputy for the Highlands County sheriff's department. "Like most, you'll say you want to help people. That's the best reason to be cop."

He sounded notes of caution throughout his 20-minute speech. He spoke of the physical dangers inherent in police work, the lack of respect cops receive from some quarters, and exposure to the underside of society.

"Cops are the first on the scene when a child has been maimed, when a spouse has been abused, or when an innocent victim has been shot," Schrader said. Out of it all, though, he told graduates, comes a sense of calling that is special to police work.

"You'll have a noble feeling that you've done something to help someone," he said.

Richard Morey, SFSC's



Courtesy photos

**Right: South Florida State College graduate Felix Moros with SFSC Trustees Timothy Backer and Kris Rider.**

**Above: Highlands County Sheriff's Office chief deputy Mark Schrader was the keynote speaker.**

coordinator of criminal justice training, then called up the 11 graduates of the Basic Law Enforcement Program 'class 244' to the stage to hand them challenge coins, specially minted medallions that signify their achievement and bond as future law enforcement officers.

SFSC trustees Kris Rider and Timothy Backer presented the diplomas.

Graduating that night were: Gilbert J. Absolu, Jonathan M. Avery, Jonathan Avalos, Nicole D. Brown, Dustin Gilman, Esaul Hernandez, Frans Jansen, Felix Moros, Markais Neal, Yosmany Pantoja and Emmanuel Vazquez.

Morey singled out Moros and Hernandez for their achievements during the

nearly six-month course. Moros earned top honors for his academic excellence while Hernandez scored the firearms award for his work on the shooting range.

Moros, who was tapped as class captain, took to the lectern to share his parting advice with his classmates. "We used to be mechanics, retail salespersons, and college students," he said. "Tonight we graduate 11 of the newest and finest law enforcement officers in Florida."

Missing kids' birthdays, late night shifts, and the daily hazards of police work await them all, said Moros. "Being in law enforcement, though, is not about us. It's about the community we serve," he said.



Thursday, July 2, 2015

## Register now for SFSC fall term

It's not too early to register for fall term at South Florida State College. Students may register now for Fall Term 2015. Classes begin Aug. 21.

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Continuing students may register and pay fees online by going to the SFSC website at [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu), logging into Panther Central, and

going to "Self-Service Banner" under the Student tab.

The SFSC schedule of classes is available at [www.southflorida.edu/current-students/class-schedules](http://www.southflorida.edu/current-students/class-schedules). For more information, call 863-453-6661, 863-784-7040, 863-773-3081, or 863-465-3003.

# ‘That 60’s Show’ a blast from the past



Sharon Weatherhead/Highlands Sun

The show was full of good vibrations, excellent music and vocals. It also featured cutting edge production, multi-media sound and lights, and made for a most enjoyable experience.

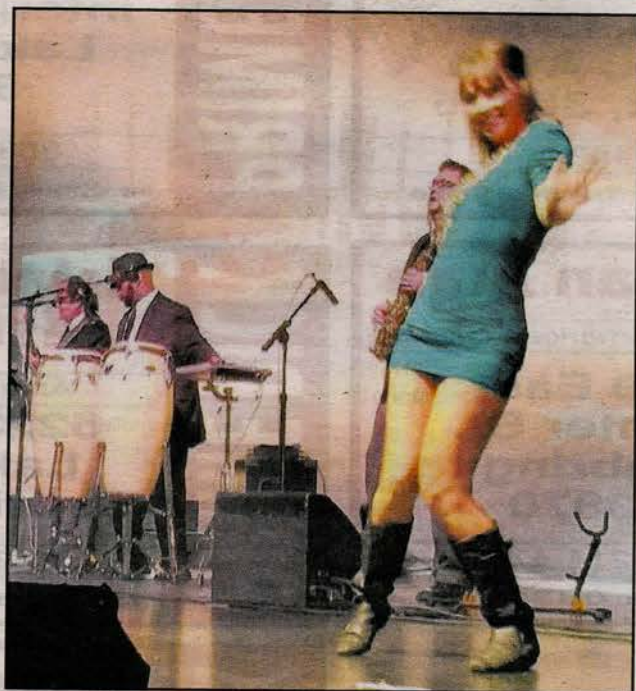
AVON PARK — "That 60's Show" was a blast from the past Friday evening in the Theater for the Performing Arts at South Florida State College.

A packed house was welcomed to the show by SFSC Director of Cultural Affairs Cindy Garron, at first unrecognizable in her '60s gear; long blond hair, bell bottom pants, vest, granny glasses and sporting a peace sign.

Some of the attendees also mirrored Garron's look including flower power outfits, fringed vests and multi-colored beads. People of all ages and generations came to enjoy the show and rocked to the music while reliving those wild days of the past.

The performance featured songs from favorite 1960's artists including Jimi Hendrix, Aretha Franklin, The Beatles, Jefferson Airplane, The Rolling Stones, Janis Joplin, Credence Clearwater Revival, The Doors and so much more. It was like a trip back in time to a simpler era that was also one of the most influential decades in our history.

The show began with songs like "My Girl", "R-e-s-p-e-c-t", "Dock of the Bay", with go-go girls dancing to the music. In addition to three excellent vocalists, there were drums, two guitarists, a rockin' keyboardist, percussionist complete with bongo drums, and a very mellow sax player.



**The show began with songs like "My Girl", "R-e-s-p-e-c-t", "Dock of the Bay", with go-go girls dancing to the music.**

The female vocalist walked across the stage and chose a gentleman to "help" her with a song. "Joe" came on stage and was accessorized with a Sonny Bono-type wig and his signature Fu-Manchu mustache. They sang "I Got You Babe" to the delight of the crowd. "Joe," being a good sport, was given a "That 60's Show" T-shirt for his efforts.

No '60s show would be complete without a wild version of "Proud Mary." The vocalists got the audience involved in singing. And hands were in the air and swaying to the music of crowd favorite "Sweet Caroline."

The evening ended too soon and finished with a tribute to legendary Joe Cocker and his "Getting by With a Little Help from My Friends." The crowd was on its feet and the



**The vocalists got the audience involved in singing. Hands were in the air and swaying to the music of crowd favorite "Sweet Caroline."**

applause lingered for so long, the cast returned for another song.

The show was full of good vibrations, excellent music and vocals. It also featured cutting edge production, multi-media sound and lights and made for a most enjoyable experience. It truly was a feast for the eyes and the ears.

# SFSC Recognizes Students For Academic Excellence

South Florida State College recognizes students who have achieved academic excellence by naming them on the President's List or Vice President's List.

Hardee County students placed on the President's List for receiving a semester grade-point average between 3.8 and 4.0 are as follows:

Bowling Green — Nho H. Cao, Makayla D. Chancey, Ruben G. De La Cruz, Naomi E. Erekson, Cassandra D. Gilman, Sean R. Greenlee, Karlee S. Henderson, A.L. Juarez, Jarrius L. Lindsey, April M. Lazano, Noemi Molina, Emily D. Rhodes, Shaina L. Todd and Erica-Vasquez.

Ona — McKenna N. Hellein, Tami R. Hunt and Celeste Limon.

Wauchula — Juanita Banda, Stephanie M. Belmares, Emily B. Bennett, Kenneth G. Bonds II, Sylvia De La Rosa-Rodriguez, Esmeralda D. De Loera, Byridiana DeSantiago, Jordan N. Evers, Allison C. Farr, Cesar Fimbres, Maribel Garza, Cody W. Gullatt, Crystal L. Hernandez, Melissa Hernandez, Emily J. Hughes, Holly R. Hughes, Cory W. Jones, Milli L. Jones, Maria B. Lopez, Christian Manresa and Kimberly A. McVay.

Also, Dennis Mejia, Danielle R. Milby, Brenda Miramontes, Azucena Miranda, Crystal Morales, Sarah I. Morales, Kayla L. Nichols, Carrie J. Noel, Kaitlin M. Oden, Christian Pena, George Perez Gomez, Shawna R. Pifer, Cheyenne E. Pohl, Kayleen M. Prestridge, Michael J. Ramirez Jr., Courtnee A. Richardson, Kayla M. Rios, Erica D. Roberts, David P. Sams Jr., Deborah L. Singletary, Sarah E. Smehyl, Holly D. Smith, Dana W. Terrell, Joselyn B. Thompson, Roberto Torres, Catherine J. Walker, Luke S. Winter and Daniel W. Witt.

Zolfo Springs — Kayla B. Albritton, Luc S. Alfred, Haley R. Edenfield, Catalina Hernandez, Emily A. Johnson, Claudia G. Klein, Angelica Montanez, Meagan L. Shivers, Allison Smith, Genesis D. Torres, Cynthia Villa and Olga L. Ward.

Students named to the Vice President's List for receiving a grade-point average between 3.5 and 3.79 are:

Bowling Green — Caylah S. Dixon, Stephanie A. Escobedo, Briana M. Esquivel, Ashley M. Greenlee, Tyler R. Helms, Jerrika L. Hendry, Maria V. Hernandez, Jakaysha K. Lindsey, Andrew R. Melendez, Nikki L. Stevens, and Abigail L. Vargas.

Ona — Danielle M. Smith.

Wauchula — Adriana Aguilar, Courtney M. Alexander, Evidiana Arce, Kayla L. Austin, Nicole L. Bernard, Haley N. Britt, Deborah A. Castillo, Mindy S. Castillo, James T. Cloud, Kimberly A. Cummins, Jordan P. Currier, Mariela Delacruz Camarillo, Sarah P. Farr, Elizabeth Gonzalez, Jazmin E. Gonzalez, Tiffanie L. Green, Jesus Hernandez Jr., Chelsey D. Hughes, Sheila M. Jean and Jason R. Johnson.

Also, Brookelyn E. Knight, Pritesh Limbachia, James D. Miller, Savannah L. Miller, Erica L. Molina, Mireya Mondragon, Angelica B. Navarro, Selena M. Olmos, Robert P. Paris Jr., Kirsten A. Ramirez, Rita Rodriguez, Maria G. Ruiz, Olivia Sanchez, Manuel A. Silva, Kaitlyn R. Trew, Alexandria K. Ullrich, Audra Weeks, Danielle N. Weeks and Leah G. Weeks.

Zolfo Springs — Colton D. Albritton, Katherine E. Carter, Garrett J. Edenfield, Sandra Estrada, Priscilla Garacia, Christine E. Gilliard, Amanda H. Graham, Tristen K. Lanier, Cha Lor, Alexi A. Santana and Benjamin T. Tamayo.

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# 'Stained glass' windows brighten New Concepts

In 1970, U.S. troops were on the ground fighting in Vietnam, the Beatles were at the top of the charts with "Let it Be," and the minimum wage was \$1.60 per hour. In August of that year, South Florida State College hired a young graduate student to teach at its newly constructed campus in Avon Park.

Fast-forward 45 years. That rookie instructor, now a dean, is leaving SFSC. Donald L. Appelquist retired Tuesday, June 30, closing a chapter in the college's history and making way for new leadership at its foundation.

"I intended to teach for one year and then return to graduate school to complete my doctorate, but I fell in love with teaching," Appelquist said. "Now, after teaching for 17 years and overseeing the foundation for 28 years, it is time to retire."

Before coming to Avon Park, Appelquist was nearing completion of his doctorate in biology. He decided to take a break and thought a year teaching community college undergraduates the basics of biology would fill the time before returning to his studies.

After his first year, he signed up for another, and he kept signing up. With each successive year, his ardor for teaching pushed the doctorate degree farther down the road. After, nearly two decades of classroom teaching, the doctorate unfinished, he had established himself as one of SFSC's top instructors.

## Biologist to fundraiser

Catherine P. Cornelius, then SFSC's president, stunned Appelquist with a request in 1987. She asked him to step out from behind the lectern and take up the twin posts of executive director at the college's newly formed Foundation and the college's dean of resource development.

Appelquist said he had no experience as a fundraiser, which is mainly what college Foundations do, although he did have experience writing grants connected with his research. Still, he thought it was time for a change, so he accepted the job.

"Don agreed to leave his faculty position to run the new foundation," Cornelius said. "A Foundation that had only \$15,000 in assets then."

For the next 28 years, Appelquist set out to transform the organization into a fully staffed fundraising and grant writing outfit.

"I estimate that we've raised about \$30 million," he said. Much of that money has funded scholarships for students, help build out the campus, and bulked up the endowment, which now tops nearly \$14

million.

Cornelius credits Appelquist with cultivating hundreds of supporters whose giving spurred the college to expand beyond Avon Park. Under his watch, the Foundation acquired two former public schools — the Lake Placid Center in 1989 and the Teacherage, a historical building in Sebring, in 1993 — bringing SFSC classrooms within reach of residents throughout Highlands County.

## More than fundraising

Appelquist's responsibilities extended beyond fundraising. In 1990, the foundation assumed ownership of the Hotel Jacaranda, located in Avon Park's main street historical district. He set about securing historical preservation grants with an eye toward restoring the hotel — which had fallen on hard times — to the grandeur it boasted in the 1920s.

The hotel became the base for the Foundation, housing its offices and serving as symbol of the college's roots in Avon Park. After all, SFSC's very first classes met just across the street when it debuted as a junior college.

For Appelquist himself, the money and the buildings take second billing to one of the Foundation's most successful initiatives — Take Stock in Children. The program, launched in 1997, matches at-risk

high school students with mentors who guide them toward earning their diplomas, with scholarships awaiting those who graduate and enroll in college.

"The sense of amazement and satisfaction I derive from seeing the immediacy of the impact this program has on at-risk kids who finish high school, then move on to college, is without measure," Appelquist said. "And not only them, I can see the affect it also has on the parents and siblings. It's a life-changing experience for everyone."



Donald Appelquist

## Accolades from colleagues

Appelquist has served under each of the four presidents who have headed up the college since its inception. Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel, SFSC's current president, who is poised to begin his third year, lauded the departing dean.

"We are enormously grateful for his dedicated service to SFSC and our community," Dr. Leitzel said. "He leaves us with a solid foundation — yes, an intentional play on words. From his efforts, the college will move forward to embrace and fulfill our vision."

But in his capacity as executive director of the Foundation, Appelquist also answered to a board of directors who oversees its operations. Christy Crews, the foundation's current president, praised Appelquist for his efforts on behalf the students. "Don has devoted his life to SFSC and its students, and untold numbers have benefited from his work," she said. "I wish him the best in retirement."

## Change comes

Appelquist's retirement makes way for his successor, Jamie Bateman,

to assume leadership of the SFSC Foundation. Bateman, who is current executive director for the Florida Hospital Heartland Medical Center Foundation, will take over from Appelquist on Wednesday, bringing 15 years of foundation experience with her.

Retirement has it benefits Appelquist said. In June he will set off for a month in France, including a cruise down the Seine. A

in mountain climbing a marriage, and his face breaks out into a smile.

But before saying goodbye, Appelquist stopped and marvel at SFSC's transformation from junior college with a cluster of buildings to a four-year institution with three campuses and a center.

"Through it all there remains one constant," Appelquist said. "SFSC was and is a great place to spend a career."

# SFSC students win national honors

AVON PARK — After a year of preparation, four South Florida State College business students walked away with top honors at a national conference and competition in Chicago last week.

SFSC students Martile Blackman, Michael Nyhan, Elizabeth Batts, and Catherine Steiner achieved national recognition at the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda National Leadership Conference on June 27.

Blackman placed third in sales presentation and 10th in project management.

The team of Batts and Steiner brought home a ninth place finish in human resource management.

Nyhan competed in entrepreneurship concepts and placed also ninth.

"I could not be more proud of what these students have been able to accomplish," said Adam Martin, business

instructor at SFSC and the college's Phi Beta Lambda adviser. "It is so rewarding for them to have their hard work pay off."

More than 900 business students from across the county and abroad traveled to Chicago to showcase their talents as future business leaders and vie for the opportunity to win more than \$79,000 in cash awards.

Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda is the nation's largest and oldest student business organization. The awards recognize and reward excellence in a broad range of business and career-related areas.

Martin said eight SFSC students traveled to Chicago to take part in the conference. He lauded them not only for scoring in the top 10, but for raising the funds to pay for their trip to the Midwest.

The conference offers business students a



Courtesy photo

**South Florida State College business students (from left) Martile Blackman, Michael Nyhan, Elizabeth Batts, and Catherine Steiner earned top recognition at a national conference and competition in Chicago.**

chance to sharpen their core business skills, expand their networks, and participate in more than 55 business-related competitive events.

The eight students are wrapping up their

studies in SFSC's Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management (BAS-SM) program, which prepares graduates for supervisory and management roles in a variety of

industries. For business students, the competitive events are the capstone activity of their undergraduate academic careers.

In addition to the competitions, students

attended educational workshops, met vendors and prospective employers in the exhibit hall, and attended motivational talks on a broad range of business topics.

# SFSC students shine at leadership conference

More than 900 business students from U.S. and abroad attended

Special to Highlands Today

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COURTESY PHOTO

**SFSC business students, from left, Martile Blackman, Michael Nyhan, Elizabeth Batts and Catherine Steiner competed at the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda National Leadership Conference in Chicago. Each of them placed in the top 10 in multiple categories.**

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## **SFSC offers ADAPT courses**

South Florida State College's Community Education Department is offering a series of Alcohol Drug Accident Prevention Training (ADAPT) courses for first-time driver's license applicants.

The four-hour course will be offered Saturday, July 11, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the SFSC DeSoto Campus, 2252 N.E. Turner Ave., Arcadia; and Saturday, July 25, 8:30

a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the SFSC Hardee Campus, 2968 U.S. 17 N., Bowling Green.

Pre-registration is required. The cost is \$48 and may be paid by cash, check, or credit card. 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](mailto:CommunityEducation@southflorida.edu).

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# Columbia City Ballet to hold 'Nutcracker' auditions

AVON PARK — The sumptuous, holiday classic, "The Nutcracker," returns to South Florida State College's Theatre for the Performing Arts after an eight-year hiatus. Cindy Garren, SFSC director of cultural programs,

has contracted Columbia City Ballet, South Carolina's premiere ballet company, to perform the beloved ballet on Dec. 8, 7 p.m.

William Starrett, artistic director of Columbia City Ballet, will conduct local

auditions on Saturday, Aug. 29, beginning at noon, at the SFSC Theatre for the Performing Arts, Highlands Campus.

"Many roles are available, from mice to soldiers to candy canes and more," Garren said.

Dance and gymnastics experience is not required, although it is preferred, and children must have completed kindergarten.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for local children to perform onstage with a respected, professional company in a beautiful production," Garren said.

Children should wear leotards, tights, and ballet shoes or shorts and a plain white T-shirt with comfortable shoes. Sandals or flip flops are not permitted. No fee is required for auditions, but all children cast in the production must pay a small costume rental fee that covers cleaning and repairs.

Rehearsals will be held on Saturday mornings beginning in November. The final rehearsal schedule will be presented at the auditions. A final dress rehearsal will be held during the day on Tuesday, Dec. 8 and all children are required to attend.

"The Nutcracker" will be performed at 7 p.m.

A parent meeting will be

held at noon prior to the auditions on Aug. 29, in the SFSC Theatre for the Performing Arts. Children without a parent or adult chaperone in attendance will not be permitted to audition.

For information or to get an audition form, go to [sfscarts.org](http://sfscarts.org). If you have any questions, email [culturalperformances@southflorida.edu](mailto:culturalperformances@southflorida.edu). Do not call the SFSC Box Office, which is closed for the summer.

Columbia City Ballet produces what critics have described as "some of the highest quality cultural entertainment in the Southeast." The ballet attracts not only audiences from all over the Southeast, but also quality dancers from all over the country. Entering its 55th

season, Columbia City Ballet travels to 15 cities in

three states performing a full ballet season.



The 'Nutcracker' will be holding open auditions at South Florida State College on Aug. 29.

# Understanding wealth and poverty

By **PHIL ATTINGER**  
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — It's been said that you can take a someone out of the country, but you can't take the country out of that person. The same applies to poverty ... and wealth.

Michele Katz, who presented "Understanding Poverty" to community leaders through a recent seminar at South Florida State College, said understanding how to combat poverty includes understanding how all economic classes interact and view their world.

There are some stereotypical views, but some that aren't as obvious, she said.

First, while the middle class collects things (anything) and the wealthy collect unique objects, the poor collect "people" — relationships.

"With the poor, all you have is people — relationships," Katz said. "People in poverty collect people. Everything they do is based on relationships."

Sometimes that means fighting to get respect, she said, showing people how strong you are.

Language for the poor is casual and for survival, not for middle-class negotiation or wealthy connections. Clothing is individual

## People tend to obey rules for the class in which they were born and raised

style, not based on quality (middle class) or the designer (wealthy). Food isn't judged on presentation (wealthy) or taste (middle class), but by having enough for everybody, Katz said.

Families in poverty tend to be matriarchal (centered around the mother) while middle-class families are patriarchal and wealthy families are ruled by who has/controls the money. The wealthy invest and conserve money and the middle class manages money, but those in poverty spend it. They could win the Florida Lottery, Katz said, and be broke immediately.

People tend to obey rules for the class in which they were born and raised, Katz said, even if the situations change.

One example of a situation change involved a young man who earned a scholarship to play football for Notre Dame.

His local view from poverty would immediately change to the middle-class national view, but he refused to go.

His part-time job took care of his mother and siblings, and college would take him

away from them for four years.

His mother, vehemently opposed to his "leaving the family," finally agreed to let him go as long as he sent half of his paycheck back home to her once he got a job.

For people in poverty to move into the middle class, especially through education, they have to give up relationships for achievement, Katz said.

To succeed in school, they have to learn to use one set of rules at home and another at school.

"A lot of people don't want our class or our rules," Katz said. "Still, everyone wants money. There is no change if (they're) not educated."

People are motivated to leave poverty, she said, if they have a vision or goal to achieve, a special talent or skill they can use, a key relationship that isn't tied to poverty or if it's just too painful to stay.

Education, Katz said, remains one of the biggest ladders out of poverty.

The middle class uses it to make more money and the wealthy use it to maintain traditions and make connections.

To the poor, however, education is an abstract concept, Katz

said. It's about facts, but not reality: Few people get education or can use it for much.

The other step out, she said, is relationships: The connections to teachers and volunteers who can help them develop goals and skills to make that leap.

Her advice to such people is to never give up, no matter how hard it gets.

"You're not going to win the war, or the battle, and may never see the fruits of your labor," Katz said.

"It's still awesome because you're helping people who need your help."

*Phil Attinger may be contacted at 863-385-6155, ext. 541, or [phil.atteringer@newssun.com](mailto:phil.atteringer@newssun.com) and followed on Twitter @PhilAttinger.*

# SFSC Retirees Celebrate College's 50th Anniversary

John Dziewiatkowski, a former South Florida State College employee, drove down from Michigan.

Dr. Elver Hodges, 102 years old and a college founder and trustee, came from Wauchula.

For Jim Brooks, a former trustee, it was a hop from Avon Park.

They joined 75 other college retirees and current and former trustees for a recent luncheon to celebrate SFSC's 50th anniversary. The gathering was one of a series of year-long events to commemorate the college's founding in 1965.

Receptions were held the night before at the Hotel Jacaranda as well as prior to the luncheon at the SFSC Highlands Campus, giving current employees a chance to swap stories and catch up with old friends and colleagues.

The group settled down to lunch provided by the Palms of

Sebring as part of its 55 Acts of Kindness. The retirement community is sponsoring community events throughout the year to showcase its 55th anniversary.

"If it weren't for you, this place wouldn't exist," Catherine Cornelius told those who had gathered in the SFSC University Center for lunch. "You've helped make this fine institution what it is today, which in my mind is the best in the state."

Dr. Cornelius recognized Dr. Hodges, who served on the first board of trustees. SFSC's second president asked him, "How old are you, Dr. Hodges, if I may ask?"

Raising his hand to gesture numbers with his fingers, he said, "0 2."

"That's a hundred and two," said Cornelius to the applause of the other guests.

After lunch, the guests assembled in the SFSC Univer-

sity Center Auditorium to hear a selection of songs from the early 1960s performed by business instructor Adam Martin and retiree David Hale.

SFSC's current president, Thomas C. Leitzel, followed up with a presentation highlighting the accomplishments for 2014 and on his vision for SFSC. He said the college's future lies with precision agriculture, aerospace technologies, bioenergy, and health care.

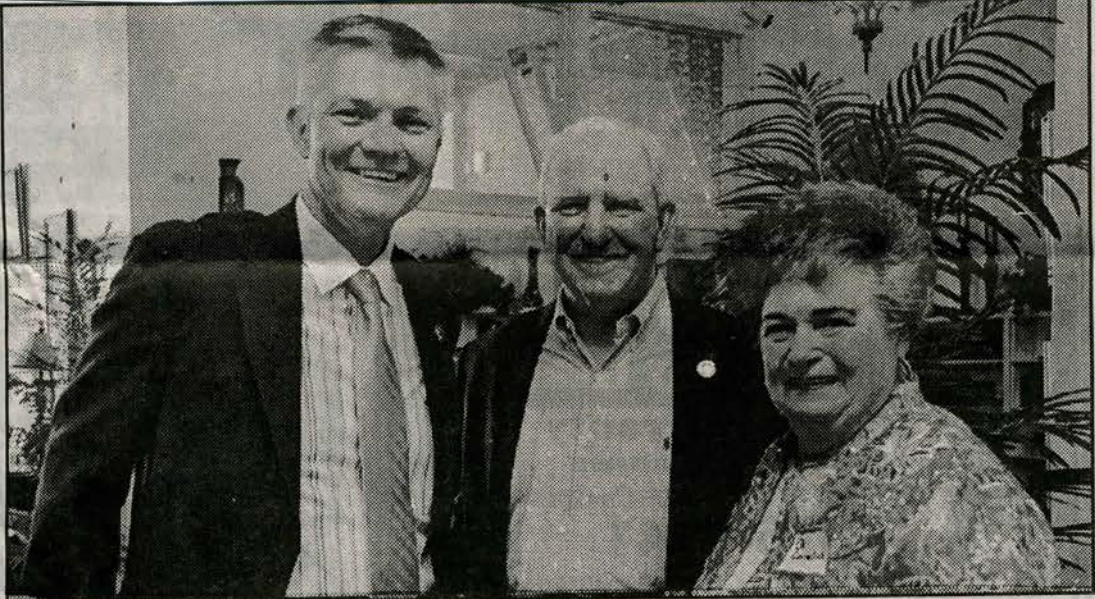
"Change is happening now, and we have to prepare our students for the future," Dr. Leitzel said. He noted that more than a dozen high-demand jobs today did not exist 10 years ago.

He thanked those who had brought the college to where it is today, including SFSC's third president, Dr. Norman L. Stephens Jr., who was listening in the audience. "You've passed the baton on to us, and now we have to run with it."



COURTESY PHOTOS

**Dr. Elver Hodges of Wauchula, now 102 years old, was a college founder and trustee. He received applause and many greetings as retirees gathered once again to reminisce.**



**Ken Lambert, chairman of the South Florida State College Board of Trustees; former trustee Jim Brooks; and president emerita Dr. Catherine P. Cornelius at a reception celebrating the college's 50-year history.**

# SFSC Graduates 33 New Nurses

South Florida State College awarded the Associate's Degree in Nursing to 33 students during a tradition-rich graduation ceremony in June.

Six Hardee Countians were among them, including Hailey Britt, Kimberly Cummins, Sheila Jean, Eric Rodriguez, Ariel Vallejo and Anais Cruz Morrillo.

The students completed the college's two-year registered nurse program and will soon sit for the national board examinations, aiming to start their careers later this summer.

The freshly minted nurses, all clad in white uniforms, sat shoulder to shoulder on the stage of SFSC's Theatre for the Performing Arts, with scores of family, friends and well-wishers

looking on from the audience.

Tonya Chancey, director of nursing at Next<sup>3</sup> Generation Village Advanced Recovery Systems, took to the lectern to address the graduates and share her experience of a life in nursing.

Chancey, a former professor of nursing at SFSC, told the students they were entering a profession where service and dedication were not just bywords but the very essence of their calling.

She recalled the words of famed children's advocate Marian Wright Edelman: "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time."

Alysha Sargent, class presi-

dent, recalled the ups and downs of the students' two-year pursuit of their degree, noting that they all had to sacrifice and lean on loved ones to earn the opportunity to take their seat on the theater's stage that night.

Continuing a custom initiated by Florence Nightingale, recognized as the founder of modern nursing, the graduating students received their nursing pins, as a symbol of their hard work and achievement. In contemporary graduation ceremonies, students accept their nursing pins from a person of their choice, in most cases a relative, who they see as a pillar of support in their lives.

One by one, husbands, mothers, and children mounted the stage, embraced their loved

one, and pinned their new nurse.

The graduates, with the lapels of their uniforms now carrying their pins, then clasped a white lantern, which each graduate lighted in succession. This tradition, a rite of passage also initiated by Nightingale, signifies the courage, compassion and selflessness each new nurse is called to. Dr. Michelle Heston, SFSC's nursing program director, told the assembly.

"These unique values are yours now to pass along to your colleagues, but more important, to your patients," Dr. Heston said.

Then, in unison, the graduates recited the Nightingale pledge, a nurse's commitment of devotion to the welfare of the patient under his or her care.



COURTESY PHOTO

Graduating nurses take part in a tradition-filled commencement ceremony at South Florida State College.

## SFSC enrolling for new CO class

AVON PARK — South Florida State College will enroll a new class of cadets in its correctional officer training program this August. SFSC's Correction

Officer Occupational Certificate (OC) program trains men and women to become correctional officers in Florida.

The 420-hour program prepares cadets to take the state certification examination Florida requires of all new correctional officers. After passing the state test, graduates are eligible for employment in county jails, state prisons, and privately operated correctional facilities.

The class starts Aug. 24. Cadets must attend all training sessions and pass all class exams. Financial aid is available. Classes are held on SFSC's Highlands campus.

There are admission requirements and applicants must first meet with the program coordinator in order to pick up an application packet. Individuals interested in the program should call Michael Michael Austin at 784-7282, or email [publicservice@southflorida.edu](mailto:publicservice@southflorida.edu). Visit [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu) and enter "corrections officer" in the search box.

## SFSC enrolling LEO class

AVON PARK — South Florida State College will enroll a new class of cadets in its police academy this August. SFSC's Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLE) trains men and women to become law enforcement officers in Florida. The 770-hour program prepares cadets to take the state certification examination Florida requires of all new officers. After passing the state test, graduates are eligible for employment as a deputy sheriff, city, or state police officer.

The class starts Aug. 17 and meets during the day, including some weekends.

Cadets must attend all training sessions and attain passing scores on all class examinations. Financial aid is available to those who qualify. Classes are held on SFSC's Highlands Campus.

There are admission requirements and applicants must first meet with the program coordinator to pick up an application packet. Individuals interested in the program should call Richard Morey to schedule a brief meeting at 784-7285, or email [publicservice@southflorida.edu](mailto:publicservice@southflorida.edu). Visit [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu) and enter "law enforcement" in the search box.

## Register now for SFSC fall term

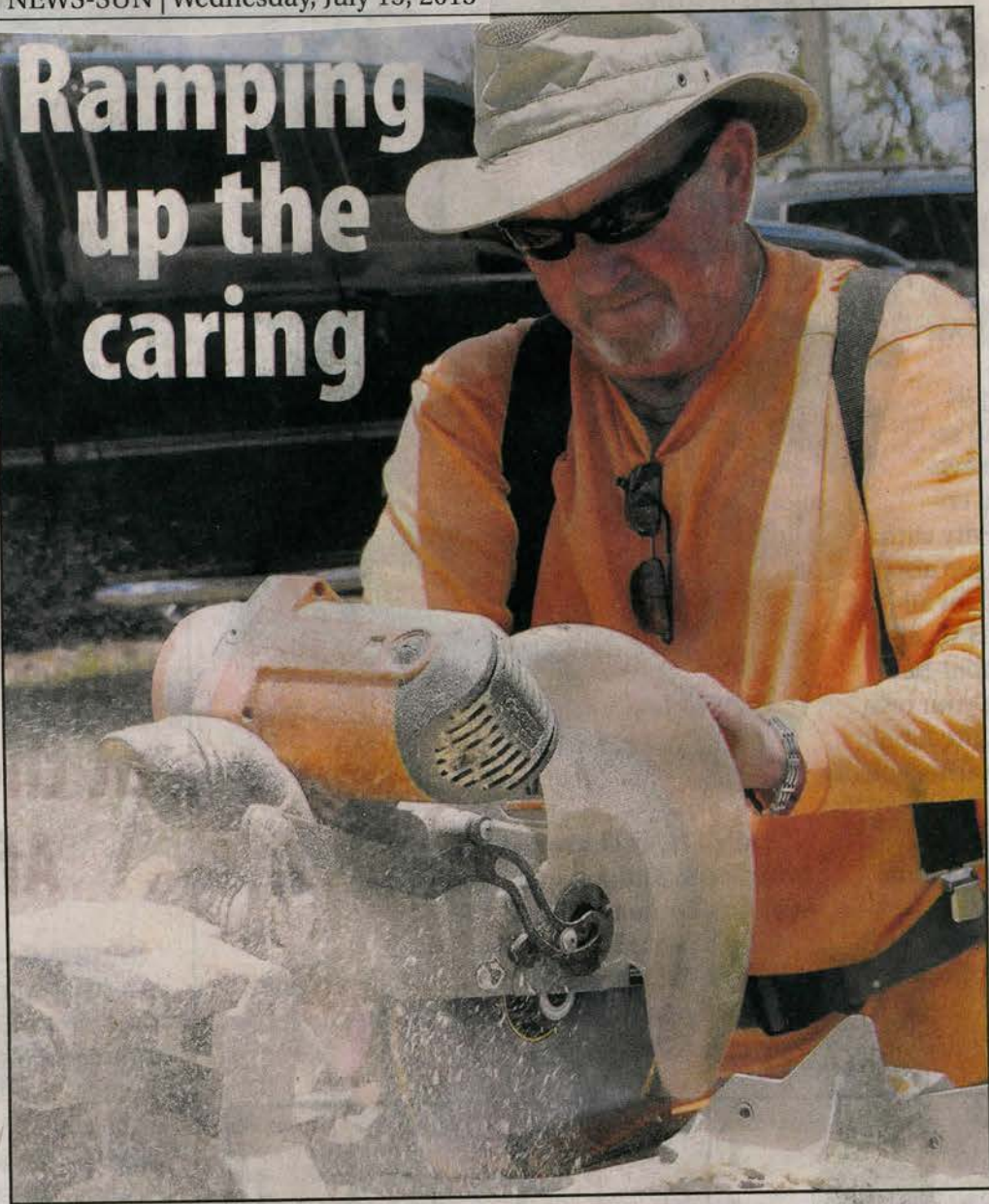
It's not too early to register for fall term at South Florida State College. Students may register now for Fall Term 2015. Classes begin Aug. 21.

The SFSC Welcome Center on the Highlands Campus, Avon Park, accepts walk-in registrations Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., and Fridays, 8 a.m.-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.

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

# Ramping up the caring



Kim Leatherman/News-Journal

**Alan Ball officially retired from Habitat for Humanity but can still be found at many build sites.**

# Leadership Highlands, Habitat for Humanity build wheelchair ramp for veteran

By **KIM LEATHERMAN**  
CORRESPONDENT

DE SOTO CITY — The Leadership Highlands Class of 2015 partnered with Highlands Habitat for Humanity to build a new wheelchair ramp for Diane Raymond last Friday and Saturday.

The new graduates of Leadership Highlands rolled up their sleeves to



Kim Leatherman/News-Journal

**Karen Kensinger (left) and Loretta Jackson are hard at work installing a new wheelchair ramp for a disabled veteran Diane Raymond.**

**RAMP | 8**



Kim Leatherman/News-Journal

**Leadership Highlands Class of 2015 and Habitat for Humanity teamed up for the construction project.**

# RAMP

FROM PAGE 1

help out a veteran in their community. Under the direction of project manager Frank Nelson, the group dug post holes and hammered and drilled its way to the completion of this service project.

"We just graduated," said Sarah Albritton. "Now we are fulfilling our service projects. As a group we decided to do one a month for a year instead of one big project. We have an outline of agencies we might help with but are open to suggestions."

The group would prefer to work with nonprofit agencies. To be considered for a service project email Albritton at [slalbritto@gmail.com](mailto:slalbritto@gmail.com).

"It was great to see the leadership teams put their skills into practice," said Jennifer McGee, volunteer coordinator. "They made Ms. Raymond very happy."

The project was the last in a series of 12 wheelchair ramps built by Habitat for Humanity. Funding for the ramps was made possible by a \$5,000 from the Home Depot Community Action Grant For Veterans.



Kim Leatherman/News-Journal

**Brandon Ball took time out of his campaign for Highlands County Sheriff to help build a wheelchair ramp with Leadership Highlands.**

Leadership Highlands is currently accepting applications for the Class of 2016. For more information and a downloadable application visit [www.southflorida.edu](http://www.southflorida.edu) or call Kris Juve at 863-784-7189.

# Photo contest 'captures' Downtown Sebring

SEBRING — Winners were announced Friday evening in a "Captured: Downtown Sebring" photography competition featuring unique and exciting images that are only found in beautiful Downtown Sebring. A reception at Museum of the Arts (MoTA) at Highlands Art League was the setting for the announcement of entrants and winners.

Those entered in the competition included Matthew Baker of Lorida, Jerry Stout of Hilton Head, S.C., Pam Jessiman of Avon Park, Cynthia Morrison of West Palm Beach, and Elizabeth Engel, Lewis Hall, Cindy Maxon, Caroline Maxcy and Cindy Rose, all of Sebring.

Best in Show honors went to Jessiman for



**Best in Show winner Pam Jessiman of Avon Park with another of her entries, this one featuring the city pier and a classic car.**

"Downtown Park." She won \$250, a booth at the 49th Annual Arts & Crafts Festival in November and will have her winning photo on the cover of

the new CRA Downtown Map.

Three awards for Honorable Mentions were presented, each with a check for \$50 and a ribbon commemorating the accomplishment. The awards went to: Rose for "Zoom," Baker for "Sunset Pier" and to Morrison for "Tuna Sandwiches."

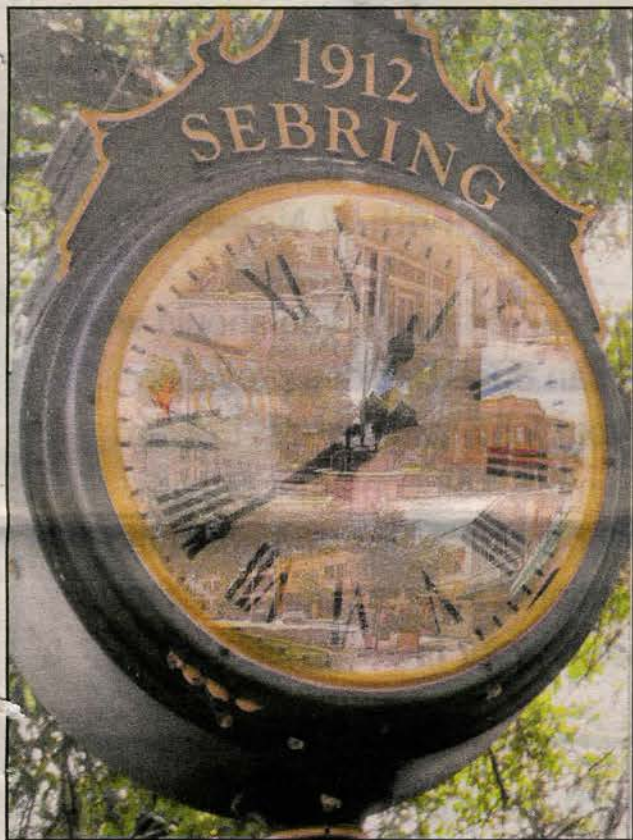
Maxon considers herself an amateur who takes pictures just for fun. "This is only my second time entering a competition," she said. "Sebring is one of the top historical cities and I recently went downtown to take pictures around the Circle area. I enjoy photographing nature and the surroundings."

Her brother, David Repa, was there with her to enjoy the event. "I am very proud of my sister," he said. "She does beautiful work."

Stout, one of the photographers in the competition was viewing photos done by Rose with his wife, Nancy. "She did

a very good job," Jerry Stout said of Rose's work. "Time lapse photography is very difficult to do and do it well. It takes timing and patience." Stout is another photographer in the competition.

Jessiman of Avon Park explained her works on display. "I use Photoshop for some of my works," she said. "I can create a virtual darkroom and use it to make the collages." She pointed to one of her works that had the city pier as the backdrop. "This actually contains five photos: the Rotary stand on the circle, a model-T Ford from a downtown car show, a picture of MoTA, the Buck building and the city pier."



**Contest winner Pam Jessiman's "Downtown Park," which was voted Best in Show.**

# PHOTO

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In another photo, Jessiman used a special technique. "I used what is called poster edge to give it a mural effect and also used multiple pictures," she said.

New HAL operations manager Anastasia Saunders set the stage

for the awards to be presented. "I want to thank Bill Jarrett and the Sebring CRA as well as Susan Milam, Kathryn Obidzinski and Casey Wohl," Saunders said. "Our esteemed judges for this event were Liz Barber and Scott Dressel."

Saunders looked out over the room full of excited people at the exhibit. "This is my first

full show. It's amazing to view this quality of downtown Sebring photography," she said as a smile lit up.

Visitors can view this exhibit of local photography at MoTA until Sept. 10.

For more information, visit [www.highlandsartleague.org](http://www.highlandsartleague.org). MoTA is located at 351 W. Center Ave in Sebring.



Photos by Sharon Weatherhead/Highlands Sun

**From left to right are Cindy Rose of Sebring (Honorable Mention), Pam Jessiman of Avon Park (Best of Show), and Matthew Baker of Lorida (Honorable Mention).**

# STEMQuest program offers robotics, building techniques

AVON PARK — Parents looking for fun and educational summer activities for their kids can enroll them in South Florida State College's StemQuest program.

STEMQuest will host two differeny week-long camps the week of Aug. 3-7 on the SFSC Highlands campus at Avon Park. Both will be centered on using LEGO® sets to teach robotics and master building techniques to kids ages 6 to 13.

Parents can enroll children in Robotics or Master Builder. Both camps start at 9 a.m. and end at 3 p.m., with pickup no later than 3:30 p.m.

## Robotics camp

The robotics camp

teaches the art and science behind being a robotics engineer. The camp starts off teaching the basic robotics engineering skills sets. Next, the camp transitions into the LEGO Mindstorm® NXT Robotics set and then the Mindstorm® EV3 set.

Kids learn to create and command robots.

## LEGO® Master Builders

This camp will teach children the building tips and techniques from LEGO's best designers and builders – the LEGO Master Builders.

Children will learn the secrets behind the

popular builds they've become familiar with. This camp will feature stable building tech-

niques to micro design to wheeled autos.

This camp will feature the LEGO® Master Builder Academy Sets, Series 1-12.

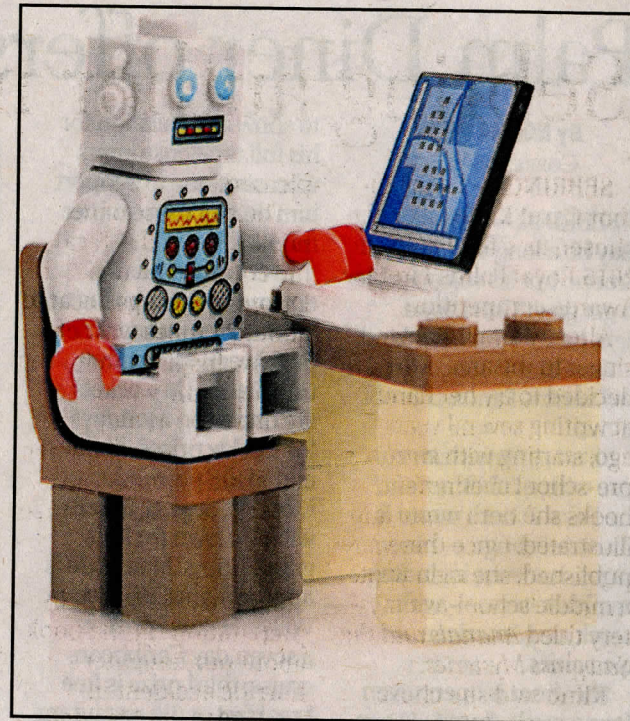
## LEGO® Education

The curriculum used for all camps is based on content from LEGO® Education. Instructors

from iBrick Academy will lead all camp sessions.

STEMQuest is SFSC's summertime program that introduces area schoolchildren to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

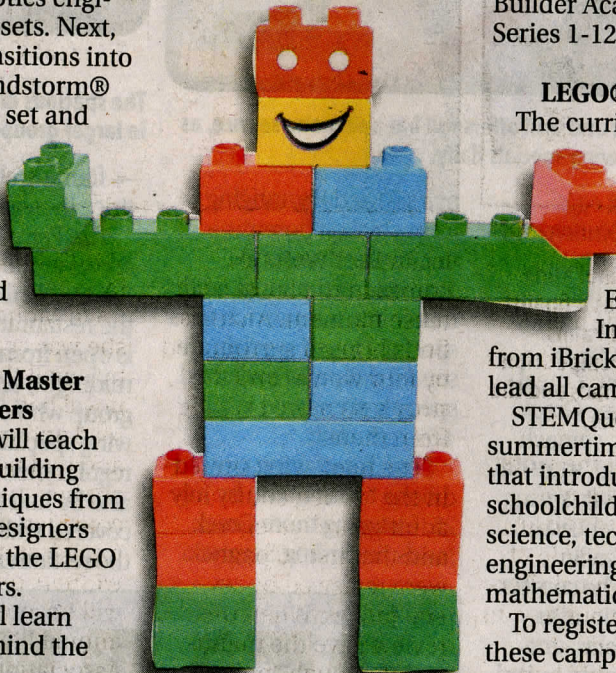
To register for these camps, visit



ibrickacademy.com. The registration fee for the camp is \$219 and includes snacks, tee shirt, and a bag of fun stuff. Children must bring their own lunch. A refrigerator is available to store lunches.

For more information

about the camps' content or registration, contact the iBrick Academy at fun@ibrickacademy.com or call 407-230-6100. Or, contact Dr. Kimberly Batty-Herbert at battyhek@southflorida.edu or 863-784-7329.



## **'Starting a Business' workshop slated**

AVON PARK — Ever wanted to start your own business but not sure how to get started? The Florida Small Business Development Center at University of South Florida, located at South Florida State College, will host a Starting Your Business seminar 2-4:30 p.m. July 29 at South Florida State College, Corporate and Community Education Room T24.

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. It is customized for startups in DeSoto, Hardee and Highlands counties.

To reserve a seat, call 784-7405 and refer to CRN 30830. Cost is \$10, which includes materials.

# SFSC Showcases New IT, Logistics Classes

Heartland residents looking to start a new career are invited to an open house showcasing new information technology and logistics programs at South Florida State College.

The open house will be held today (Thursday) from 4:30 to 7 p.m. on SFSC's Highlands Campus in Avon Park, in Building I, Room 212.

It will introduce prospective students to the college's XCEL-IT programs, which prepare them for high-demand jobs. The programs include:

- Network Systems Technology (Associate in Science Degree)
- Digital Forensics (College Credit Certificate)
- Network Security (College Credit Certificate)
- IT Help Desk (College Credit Certificate)
- Supply Chain Management

(Associate in Science Degree)

- Logistics and Transportation Specialist (College Credit Certificate)

Those attending the open house will have an opportunity to sample the technology and devices used in the training programs. They will also have an opportunity to meet with an advisor to discuss program entry requirements and employment opportunities.

The first course is free.

The U.S. Department of Labor is funding these SFSC programs through a grant, so some students may be eligible for additional benefits.

For more information, call 784-7439 or e-mail [xcel-it@southflorida.edu](mailto:xcel-it@southflorida.edu).

Visit [southflorida.edu](http://southflorida.edu) for more information on the XCEL-IT program and for a campus map and directions.

## **Concealed weapons permit course at SFSC**

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's

Criminal Justice Academy will conduct a concealed weapons permit course Saturday, Aug. 22 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$55 and the course number (CRN) is 11354. Pre-registration is required.

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.

For information, equipment list, and maps to the range, contact coordinator Richard Morey at 863-784-7285 or visit [www.south-florida.edu/publicservice](http://www.south-florida.edu/publicservice).

## **SFSC offers Basic Law Enforcement training course**

AVON PARK — The South Florida State College Criminal Justice Academy

Thursday, July 23, 2015

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.

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Thursday, July 23, 2015

Highlands Sun

•••••  
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SFSC graduates new class of radiologic technicians

Florida State College honored 10 new radiography program graduates in a traditional pinning ceremony in the college's University Center Auditorium last week.

Those honored were:

Brittanie Augustin, Jennifer Cordero, Isauro Figueroa, Jerrika Hendry, James Heston, Tami Hunt, Theresa Miller, Yamil Santiago, Katerina Stoltz, Ohnel Virgile.

In a break with a practice that calls for a faculty member to present the pins, Junior Gray, SFSC's radiography program director, called family members up to the stage to pin their loved ones. Husbands, mothers, and fathers, to the applause of the audience, accompanied the graduates to the stage to affix the pin to their shirts and blouses.

The graduates had completed SFSC's radiography program and will soon sit for the national board examinations, aiming to start their careers later this summer. Radiologic technologists work in hospitals and clinics performing diagnostic imaging examinations, such as x-rays.

James Switzer, a radiologist at Highlands Regional Medical Center, who helped teach clinical skills to the graduates, offered words of advice



**Junior Gray (SFSC Radiography Director) with Yamil Santiago (graduate) receiving his award for clinical excellence.**

as they prepare to launch their careers.

Tami Hunt, the graduating class's president, got the audience chuckling when, in introducing Switzer, she recalled how she kept getting in his way during the first round of clinical instruction.

"Dr. Switzer told me if we're going to dance, then he was going to lead," Hunt said, putting her at ease and dispelling her first day jitters.

Nothing the world is now far more complex than when he started practicing

medicine, Switzer cautioned the graduates to think hard before making decisions that have the potential to change the course of their lives.

"You will all have many decisions to make," Switzer said. "Choose wisely because some mistakes are hard to repair."

Gray presented special awards to Jerrika Hendry for academic excellence and perfect attendance.

Yamil Santiago received an award for clinical excellence.



**SFSC recently graduated 10 new radiology technicians. Graduates are: front row (from left): Brittanie Augustin, Tami Hunt, Theresa Miller, Jerrika Hendry, Jennifer Cordero; and back row (from left): Yamil Santiago, Isauro Figueroa, Katerina Stoltz, James Heston, Ohnel Virgile.**

Upon completing SFSC's two-year radiography program, graduates can work as certified radiologic technologists by passing the American

Registry of Radiologic Technologists national examination.

The five-year first-attempt pass rate among SFSC students for the

national examination is 92 percent, according to Gray. For information, contact Gray at 863-784-7347 or grayj@southflorida.edu.

# SFSC announces fall community classes

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's, Community Education Department is offering a variety of classes for fall.

In Ballroom Dance I, learn the basic steps of the Waltz, Cha-Cha, Foxtrot, and Swing. Beginners will have fun and gain confidence on the dance floor while enjoying all the health benefits ballroom dancing offers. The class is offered Tuesdays, Aug. 11 through Sept. 29, 5:30-6:30 p.m. The cost is \$48, and the course number is (CRN) 10642.

In Ballroom Dance II, this class builds on the foundation of Ballroom Dance I, and introduces other popular rhythm style dances. The class is offered Tuesdays, Aug. 11 through Sept. 29, 6:30-7:30 p.m. The cost is \$48, and the course number is (CRN) 11329.

In Digital Photography

I, learn how set shutter speed and aperture openings, compose photographs, and take picture of people and events. An adjustable camera with the ability to set shutter speed, and lens opening is mandatory. The class is offered Tuesdays, Aug. 18 through Oct. 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The cost is \$71, and the course number is (CRN) 10575.

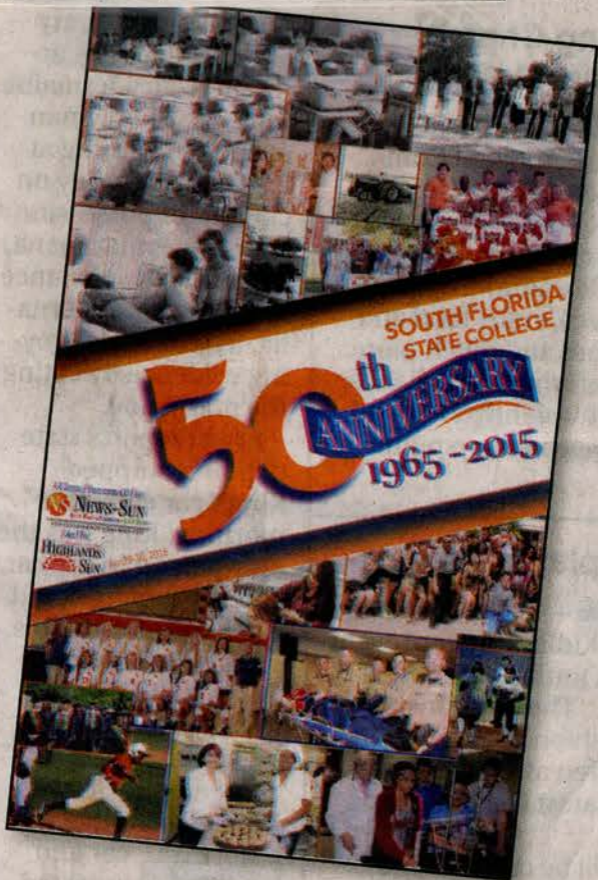
In Conversational Spanish, learn practical conversational Spanish skills that can be applied to real-life situations. Spanish grammar and pronunciation skills are taught in a fun manner. The class is offered Thursdays, Aug. 13 through Oct. 1, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The cost is \$73, and the course number is (CRN) 10937.

In American Sign Language I, learn finger spelling for numbers,

sentence structure, the alphabet, and hand movement commonly used in the English language. This class is offered Mondays, Sept. 14 through Nov. 2. The cost is \$72, and the course number is (CRN) 11363.

In Yoga, learn how to reduce stress, improve circulation, calm the emotions, re-align posture, and stimulate weight loss. The class is offered Thursdays, Sept. 17 through Sept. 17, 5:30-7 p.m. The cost is \$36, and the course number is (CRN) 11364.

Register for classes in Building B, at the Highlands Campus or any SFSC campus or center. For information on this or any other Community Education classes, please call 863-784-7388 or email [CommunityEducation@southflorida.edu](mailto:CommunityEducation@southflorida.edu).



**50 YEARS OF PANTHER PRIDE:** Special section honors South Florida State College' 50th anniversary

In this issue

# SFSC graduates 10 dental assistants

By MANUEL CORTAZAL

SOUTH FLA. STATE COLLEGE

South Florida State College honored 10 graduates of its Dental Assisting program in a traditional pinning ceremony in the SFSC University Center Auditorium on July 22.

Receiving their pins were Miranda Bennett, Jennifer Cochran, Kesso Diallo, Roxanne Gaitan, Amanda Hicks, Stephanie Martinez, Maribel Paz, Diana Retana, Diane Sanchez, and Monica Soria. (Roxanne Gaitan is from DeSoto County.)

The graduates had just completed SFSC's 16-month occupational certificate program in dental assisting. They can now work alongside a dentist as a member of a dental health care team.

Keynote speaker Norine Dowd, a dental hygienist with 27 years of experience and an adjunct instructor at SFSC, congratulated the graduates for their commitment to academic success.

"Each of you has so much potential," Dowd said. "We have never had a more successful class. You are setting class records with your rate of passing the certification examinations."

During the ceremony, graduates accepted their dental assisting pins from Dr. Deborah Milliken, chair of SFSC's

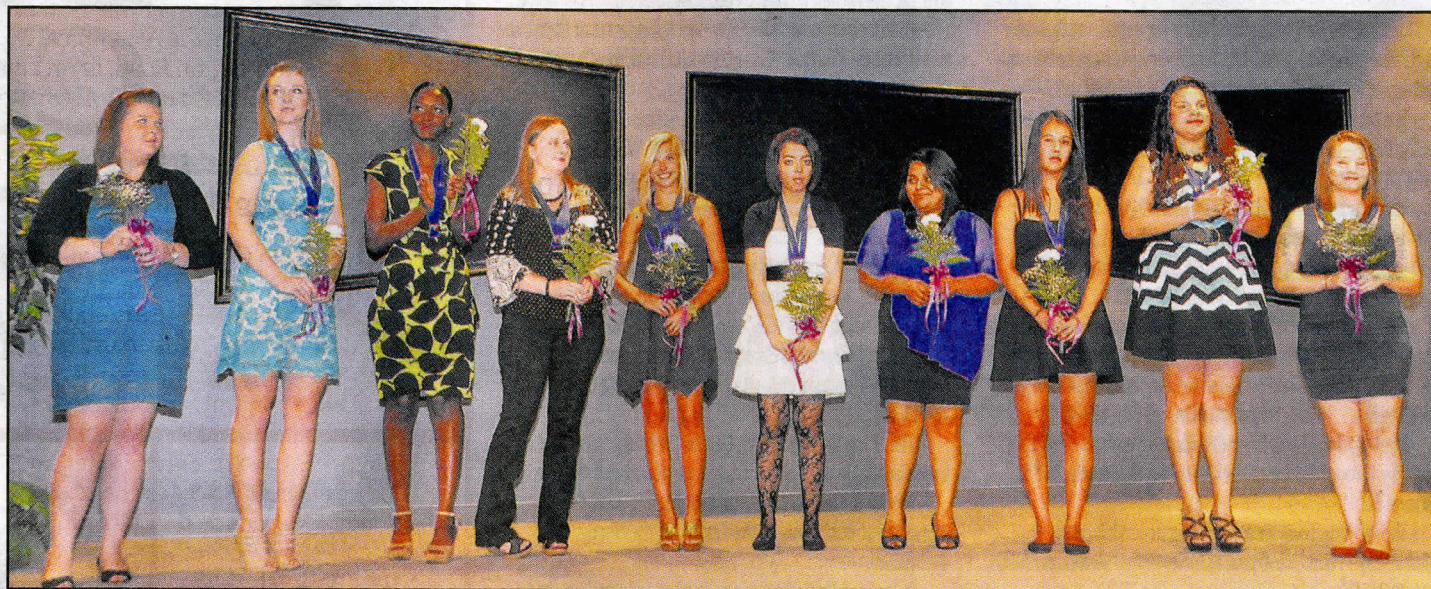


PHOTO PROVIDED

**From left: Miranda Bennett, Jennifer Cochran, Kesso Diallo, Roxanne Gaitan, Amanda Hicks, Stephanie Martinez, Maribel Paz, Diana Retana, Diane Sanchez, and Monica Soria. Roxanne Gaitan is from DeSoto County.**

Dental Education program.

"These graduates were the hardest working class I've had," said Bobby Sconyers, SFSC's professor of dental assisting. "They have accomplished more than any other class."

Upon completing the Dental

Assisting program, graduates can work as Certified Dental Assistants by passing the Dental Assisting National Board examination and qualify for Expanded Functions Dental Assisting Certification as well as Orthodontic Assistant Certification.

SFSC also offers a two-year Associate in Science degree program in dental hygiene. Upon completing this program, graduates become dental hygienists by passing the National Dental Hygiene Board Examination and the Florida State Clinical Licensure Examination.

# Panthers snare Gobourne

## LP grad to play softball

By **JEFF GARDENOUR**

SPORTS EDITOR

When the most familiar college made the only scholarship offer, Lake Placid's Raveen Gobourne had faith it was meant to be.



**GOBOURNE**

Gobourne last Wednesday made it official when she signed a letter-of-intent to play softball for South Florida State College. A three-sport star at Lake Placid High School, she is the latest Highlands

# PANTHERS

## FROM PAGE 1

County athlete to either commit or sign a college scholarship.

Earlier this year, Sebring's Matt Portis signed a baseball scholarship with SFSC.

"I chose SFSC because God opened doors for me to get acquainted with the coaches that saw great potential in me," Gobourne said. "I will be closer to my

family, and it will be less expensive.

"There were other colleges viewing my profile, but SFSC was the only college that I offered any type of scholarship," Gobourne said. "I do think playing for SFSC will be beneficial for me because it will open doors for me in the years to come in a higher division."

A four-year varsity softball player at LPHS, Gobourne played third base in her senior season

and is currently playing the same position for the Owls' 18-and-under travel fast-pitch softball team. But Gobourne has played other positions during her career and is willing to do what it takes.

"The positions that I will work hard to play are third base and outfield," Gobourne said. "It will take a lot of devotion, determination, dedication and hard work and I'm willing to give my all. I thank God

for showing favor."

Gobourne heads to a program that went 11-34 last season and has struggled in recent years. But the LPHS athlete, who also played varsity volleyball for three years and varsity basketball for four years, is content with SFSC molding her into the player that she needs to be.

"I think it is best for me to start at SFSC so I can grow mentally and physically better as a

player so I will be able to advance to a higher division," she said.

A News-Sun All-County First Team selection, she helped LP finish 11-12 and come within one victory of a state playoff berth this season.

"Raveen loves the rocket zone," LP coach Alesia Cheshire said. "She used to be an outfielder before moving on the clay to third base. She can track a ball better than any

player I've ever seen. Her speed is amazing and (she) continued to excel through the years.

"We continued to try and get her to play third base and continued to shy away from it until last year," Cheshire said. "She then realized she had the speed, eye, and glove to handle the position. What a third baseman she has become. I don't think there is anything out there better."