

BSN students apply knowledge to projects

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — Before graduating from South Florida State College's Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN) program, seniors complete capstone projects that demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge they have acquired to real-life situations.

On April 27, 13 BSN candidates presented their capstone projects to other nursing professionals during the Conference on Caring at the SFSC University Center. In each project, students identified a health-related need, explained the actions they took to address it, and documented the results.

Erica Apolinar, a self-professed

animal lover, focused her project on improving patient well-being through pet therapy by observing how 19 elderly patients responded when she brought her Pomeranian, Simba, to Wauchula's Hardee Manor Health Care Center.

Patients who were withdrawn and uncommunicative became more relaxed when they interacted with Simba. "Sometimes, they talked to Simba when they wouldn't talk to me," Apolinar said. Though her project has ended, she and Simba continue to visit with patients.

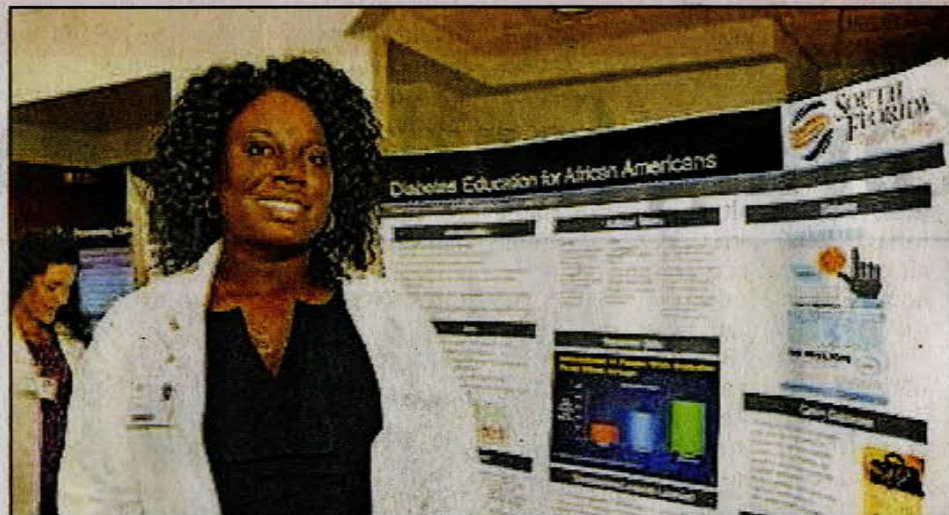
Kosha Nicholson-Kirlew sought avenues for educating blacks about diabetes. Her research found that while 4.9 million blacks have the disease, many in Highlands County were

not being diagnosed until they ended up in emergency rooms.

They were also largely unaware that they could receive education and care through the Highlands County Health Department and other support groups. She advocated for bringing education to this community by forming partnerships with health care professionals and churches.

Other capstone project topics ranged from establishing the value of a 24-hour pharmacy, recognizing the health issues that are caused by poor hydration in older adults, improving health care through local projects and policy initiatives, and educating parents about preventing obesity in their children.

The students outlined



COURTESY PHOTOS

SFSC BSN student Kosha Nicholson-Kirlew explored avenues for educating African-Americans about recognizing the signs of diabetes and the local health care services available to diabetics.

their findings on display boards. Instructors evaluated their oral presentation, creativity, and

academic references.

The BSN Class of 2017 will graduate at spring commencement

Thursday in the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, Highlands Campus.



SFSC BSN student Erica Apolinar explains how Simba the Pomeranian became a pet therapist for residents at the Hardee Manor Health Care Center.

SFSC graduates 10 students from EMT program

SPECIAL TO THE HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — On May 2, South Florida State College graduated 10 emergency medical technicians during an evening ceremony in the SFSC University Center Auditorium on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

Earning EMT certificates were Kylie Casey, Cali Gumpel, Frans Jansen, Paul Kidwell, Kody Littles, Marlen Meza, Leonardo Montano, Arianna Quesada, Joseph Rey and Gerald Watson.

"You have all worked

diligently since starting the program in January and you rightly should be proud of your accomplishments," said Richard Shepard, EMT instructor. "In the lecture, the lab, and in your field practicums, you have all excelled."

Meza received an award for highest grade point average, Jansen earned the top honor for best lab performance, and Watson was tapped for the "Most Heart" award for his passion and determination.

Upon completing the program, graduates are eligible to take the Florida EMT State Board

examination.

Before Steven Ashworth, SFSC's director of Emergency Medical Services and Fire Science Programs, awarded the graduates their certificates of completion, the students heard a send-off message from one of their peers.

"We have acquired the knowledge of what to do in an emergency situation," said Montano, one of the 10 graduates. "To learn those skills, we have sacrificed family and personal time to attend class and study for exams, riding many hours in ambulances,



COURTESY PHOTO

SFSC EMT graduates are, from left, Gerald Watson, Joseph Rey, Arianna Quesada, Leonardo Montano, Marlen Meza, Kody Littles, Paul Kidwell, Frans Jansen, Cali Gumpel, and Kylie Casey.

taking care of patients, and now we're ready to move on to careers as EMTs."

"Now let's congratulate ourselves," Montano

shouted, as he thrust his arms into the air to the applause of his fellow students, their families, and well-wishers on hand for the ceremony.

For more information about SFSC's EMT program and other Emergency Medical Services programs, call 863-784-7272.

SFSC Foundation explores serving alcohol during fundraisers

By MARC VALERO

STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — South Florida State College is once again looking into limited exceptions to the Florida College Board's no-alcohol policy.

It was noted at the college's March Board of Trustees meeting that SFSC attorney Pam Karlson has started research on the limited sale/service of alcohol as a fundraising option.

As noted in the minutes of the meeting, Board member Lana Puckorius stated her suggestion to look into that possibility was for the SFSC Foundation.

The college had previously explored the possibility of serving alcohol at fundraising events about three years ago, but took no action on the issue at that time.

SFSC President Thomas Leitzel said recently that other colleges do allow limited alcohol during fundraising events, but it is subject to policy and each individual college policy would have to be examined,

"It's only exploratory," he stressed. "We do have

a board policy that prohibits alcohol on college property."

What is being considered are special events at the Hotel Jacaranda, which is owned by the SFSC Foundation, Leitzel noted.

Right now, if someone is having a wedding reception at the hotel they cannot serve alcohol because of the board's no-alcohol policies.

School district, SFSC expect funding cuts

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

SEBRING — The School Board of Highlands County will likely see a reduction in state funding after the Florida Legislature approved the budget Monday, according to Highlands County Superintendent Brenda Longshore.

In a message posted Monday morning on the district's Facebook page, Longshore said that Highlands is one of 20 school districts that will get less student funding from the state for the next school year.

The school district is expecting \$27 less for every student compared to this school year, which will result in a loss of \$473,754, she noted.

"As Superintendent of the Highlands County School Board, I am pleading to the public to understand the regrettable situation

facing our school system," Longshore stated. "This proposed budget cut will further impede our ability to provide the services and resources our students need and deserve."

But, the Florida Legislature overwhelmingly approved the budget and ended the annual session Monday, after narrowly avoiding a meltdown over a controversial measure that makes sweeping changes to the state's education system. Gov. Rick Scott hadn't signed the budget as of presstime Tuesday.

South Florida State College expects to see a reduction in state funding, as well.

SFSC Vice President of Administrative Services Glenn Little said there is a reduction of \$30 million for the entire Florida College System.

He believes the reduction will be based on the size of the institution.

"We will definitely be looking at a reduction in funding; we just don't know exactly how much," he said.

Sen. Bill Galvano, R-Bradenton defended the \$30 million cut in remedial education funding, noting the number of remedial students in the 28-school system has declined after a policy change that sought to limit the number of remedial classes in the colleges.

But, the Association of Florida Colleges said the reduction will result in a permanent average cut of \$1.1 million for each school, ranging from over \$4.6 million at the larger colleges to \$190,000 at the smallest schools.

In a news release, Florida Education Association President Joanne McCall called on Gov. Rick Scott to veto the education portion of the state budget as well as HB 7069. She described both

disappointing actions by lawmakers as attacks designed to weaken the state's public schools.

Sen. Denise Grimsley, R-Sebring, voted against CS/HB 7069, an assistant in the senator's Punta Gorda office said Tuesday.

In an email to Highlands News-Sun Grimsley said, "I supported the budget because I believe the product as a whole responsibly meets the needs of our state, from funds for our agriculture industry and environment to state worker raises and some tax relief."

"I was disappointed Highlands County schools received a slight funding reduction of 0.56 percent. I've been working closely with Dr. Longshore and grateful for her leadership."

"We will be back in Tallahassee in the fall," Grimsley said. "I hope we can help Highlands schools get more money

next session which begins in January."

Rep. Cary Pigman, R-Avon Park, voted "yes" to approve CS/HB 7069, according to the tally on www.myflorida.com.

McCall said the massive HB 7069 includes provisions that had not been thoroughly vetted through the legislative process — and some that had even been voted down in committee.

"HB 7069 was cooked up behind closed doors to tie popular changes like more recess and minor relief on testing to reducing local school district authority, yet another sketchy teacher bonus scheme and more financial breaks for charter schools," McCall said.

The News Service of Florida contributed to this report.

SFSC graduates 18 new corrections officers

SPECIAL TO THE
HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — South Florida State College graduated 18 new corrections officers on May 3.

The six men and 12 women from the Basic Corrections Class gathered at the SFSC University Center Auditorium to receive their diplomas and hear from a fellow corrections officer, who is also an alumna of the program.

"It took a lot of hard work for you to get to where you are right now — corrections officers ready for a new career," said Kemoy Newman, a lieutenant at the Florida Civil Commitment Center in Arcadia. "Everyone here can trust me when I say that because I've been through what these graduates have endured for the past 11 weeks."

Newman recounted her own experience at SFSC, recalling her time on the gun range, the day she was doused with pepper spray, the times of doubt when she wondered whether she would pass the course. "That journey was worth the hard work because here I am now a lieutenant only two years after leaving SFSC, and now you are about to embark on your journeys," Newman said.

Newman urged the graduates to adhere to high ethical standards, treat well those whom they watch over while in their custody, and place their trust in their fellow officers.

Michael Austin, coordinator of the Criminal Justice Programs, handed diplomas to Bergeline



COURTESY PHOTO

Graduates from SFSC Basic Corrections Class 17-192 are, from left, Willisia Kendrick, Charles Dowers, Teresa T. Osborne, Remy Rivera, Minerva Ramirez-Smith, Jean L. Daverne, Kshunquecowha Johnson, La'Ciera D. Edwards, Ruekeyta Gaskin, Bergeline Antoine, Akesha Jenkins, Yosvanis Leon, Mahogany B. Lawrence, Kneisha S. Smith, Nakya S. Perkins, Charles G. Duchow, Shelby Hicks, and Dorceau S. Antoine.

Antoine, Dorceau S. Antoine, Jean L. Daverne, Charles Dowers, Charles G. Duchow, La'Ciera D. Edwards, Ruekeyta Gaskin, Shelby Hicks, Akesha Jenkins, Kshunquecowha Johnson, Willisia Kendrick, Mahogany B. Lawrence, Yosvanis Leon, Teresa T. Osborne, Nakya S. Perkins, Minerva Ramirez-Smith, Remy Rivera, and Kneisha S. Smith.

Duchow and Gaskin earned top honors for academic excellence. Perkins scored the firearms award for achieving the highest score on the firing range. Jenkins got the "Honor Award," for her hard work and determination.

Before dismissing the class, Daverne, who had served as class leader, thanked his fellow graduates for their camaraderie.

"Each instructor planted seeds in our lives since we came together in February," Daverne said. "Let's not stop simply being corrections officer but grow to become supervisors, lieutenants, and even wardens."



COURTESY PHOTO

The Florida College System has named four South Florida State College students to the 2017 All-Florida Academic Team. Recognized for their academic achievement, leadership and service to the community at an awards ceremony in Tallahassee in April were Margaret Dunn, Kelsey Pena, Abigail Wiggins and Summer Xiong. They joined 127 of their peers from the 28-member FCS in being named to the academic team. The students attended a luncheon where they were presented with a medallion recognizing their achievements. Dr. Sonji Nicholas, sociology instructor, and Michelle MacBeth, Spanish instructor, accompanied the students to Tallahassee. Shown at the awards are (from left) Nicholas, Xiong, Dunn, Pena and MacBeth.

SFSC volleyball player develops unique friendship with special athlete

By CINDY MARSHALL

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

AVON PARK — What could a 64-year-old lady standing 4'5" and a volleyball player from South Florida State College standing 5'10" have in common? A unique friendship.

As the South Florida State College volleyball team finished up their last practice of the season on Thursday and said goodbye to the graduating sophomores, Mary Beth Boudrias was unaware of the surprise lurking around the corner. Head volleyball coach Kim Crawford called Boudrias into her office to work on some paperwork before she departed to her home in Fort Pierce.

Throughout the past two years, Boudrias developed a close bond with Frances Goff, 64, of Avon Park who is a consumer at Ridge Area Arc and a Special STARS athlete. They met while the volleyball team was providing training to the consumers at the agency last year and continued keeping in touch at various events at the college when the Special STARS athletes would attend.

It would be nothing to see this outside hitter for the SFSC volleyball team sitting next to Goff at an SFSC baseball game or hold her hand during a volleyball practice with the Special STARS. On Good Friday this year, Boudrias was heartbroken when she came to the Arc campus to play volleyball with Goff and her friends but Goff was nowhere to be found. She had gone home with a friend for the Easter weekend.

"Where's Frannie?" Boudrias raced through the Arc work center in a panic searching for her. She could not wait to see her friend again. It was truly heartbreaking to see the tears swell in her eyes after she realized Goff was not

there that day. But, nonetheless, she was reassured she would be at the next volleyball practice on April 21.

That's when the SFSC Lady Panthers pulled a fast one on Boudrias and hid Goff behind them as Boudrias approached the outdoor volleyball court at Arc. As they parted in the middle and unveiled their surprise, Boudrias smiled from ear to ear and screamed "Frannie, you're here." She ran toward her and gave her a big hug. They were inseparable for the entire hour while the players played volleyball with the Arc consumers. It was a hot day, so Boudrias took Goff by the hand and they went inside the work center where they played indoor chair volleyball so they could sit and talk.

Goff continued to honor Boudrias and her volleyball friends on April 21 by presenting each of them a rose to show appreciation for all their time volunteering to play volleyball at Arc. Boudrias and the other sophomores on the team got a chance to say goodbye to all the consumers and share where they were heading next. Boudrias will be playing volleyball and continuing her education at Florida College in Temple Terrace.

"I am sad that Mary is leaving," Goff said after the Arc recognition. "I want to see her again."

The wheels were then put into motion to work with Coach Crawford to make one last memory for the two unique friends. Goff sneaked around the corner of Crawford's office on April 27 to surprise Boudrias one last time. The two hugged one more time and sat and talked about their day. Goff presented Boudrias a picture collage featuring several photos of them together throughout the past two years. It made



COURTESY PHOTOS/CINDY MARSHALL

Mary Beth Boudrias, left, and Frances Goff walk hand-in-hand to the South Florida State College gymnasium.

Boudrias cry.

"Why you crying Mary," Goff asked as Boudrias wiped away her tears.

"You made me really happy Frances. I will always cherish this gift," Boudrias told Goff as she hugged the pictures.

Boudrias and Goff posed for more pictures. She introduced Goff to her boyfriend Evan Shaffner, who plays on the SFSC baseball team. Boudrias and Goff walked hand in hand to the SFSC gym to see the volleyball team one last time. The team stopped practice and came over to say hello to Goff as the gentle giants stood around her in a circle.

"I just love her. She is so special to me," Boudrias said before the two parted.



Mary Beth Boudrias, left, receives a rose from Frances Goff as a token of appreciation during their volleyball training at Ridge Area Arc.

Their friendship will not end because Boudrias informed Goff that her college will be playing SFSC next season and invited Goff to come to the game.

"I'll be there," Goff said.



Frances Goff, second from left, is surrounded by the members of the South Florida State College volleyball team as she says goodbye during their last practice of the season.

SFSC graduates celebrate before facing life's challenges

AVON PARK — “We have been trained and tested. We have proven our abilities to our instructors, to our loved ones, and most importantly to ourselves. We made it! We made it not to the end but to the beginning: the beginning of a new chapter that we must each write in our own lives.”

These parting words from South Florida State College graduate Steven Cullipher reflected the sentiments of more than 400 of his fellow Panthers as they collected diplomas, certificates, and degrees during Thursday's Commencement services at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts.

Cullipher, who accepted his Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Supervision and Management (BAS-SM), was the keynote speaker at a service honoring students who received State of Florida high school diplomas and those who earned certificates, Associate in Science (AS) degrees, Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing (BSN), and BAS-SM degrees through the Division of Applied Sciences and Technologies and the Division of Health Sciences.

Emily Swenson, who earned her Associate in Arts (AA) degree, was

the keynote speaker at a service honoring graduates who received AA degrees and Bachelor of Science degrees in Elementary Education (BSEE) from the Division of Arts and Sciences.

“Any dream is truly attainable with hard work, confidence in your ability, and

COURTESY PHOTOS

The excitement builds for members of SFSC's Class of 2017 as they wait in the Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC).

dedication to what you are trying to achieve,” Swenson said.

Some 466 students

CELEBRATE | 25



Members of SFSC's Class of 2017 head to the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts as Commencement begins.



CELEBRATE

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met the SFSC graduation requirements for the spring Commencement. Of these, 212 received AA degrees, 68 received AS degrees, 132 received occupational or college credit certificates, and 21 received their State of Florida High School diplomas. Fourteen received a BAS-SM degree, 13 earned a BSN degree, and six earned a BSEE degree.



Lady Panthers volleyball captain, SGA president, and candidate for an Associate in Arts (AA) degree Emily Swenson addresses her classmates at a service for graduates of SFSC's Division of Arts and Sciences.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Jordan Kinsey accepts her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (BSEEE) from Derren Bryan, chair, SFSC District Board of Trustees.

SFSC Foundation celebrates support for college with annual Spring Gala

SEBRING — More than 160 supporters and friends of the SFSC Foundation turned out for its annual Spring Gala on April 29, a fundraising dinner and auction doubling as a celebration of the group's support of South Florida State College.

"This was the Foundation's 33rd gala," said Jamie Bateman, SFSC's executive director for Institutional Advancement, who wraps up her second year leading the Foundation. "This is not only an evening to raise money for scholarships and the college's capital campaign, the Partnership Project, but a wonderful opportunity to say thank you to the many residents of Hardee, DeSoto, and Highlands counties who, through their support, make our students' dreams come true."

The Foundation held this year's gala at Sun 'N Lake's Island View Restaurant. In a twist,

the Foundation brought in SFSC's Panther baseball players to add extra charm to the evening. Clad in crisp white shirts and bow ties, the players escorted guests to their tables and lent a hand in serving diners their meals.

Before the guests started their meals, Emily Swenson, president of the SFSC Student Government Association, thanked the Foundation's supporters for their generosity and spoke of how their support touched the everyday lives of SFSC's students.

"In my two years on campus, I've been surrounded constantly by folks at SFSC who want the best for me and my fellow students," she said. "Your support of the Foundation makes much of that possible."

From left, Brandon Rosenbaum, Jamie Bateman, and Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel.

Swenson, who has her sights set on a career in broadcast journalism, delivered the student Commencement address at the second of two SFSC graduation ceremonies on May 4.

The SFSC Foundation serves as an auxiliary support organization for SFSC, managing the college's endowment, awarding scholarships, and encouraging giving. The SFSC Foundation awards nearly \$500,000 in scholarships each year to students attending the college's three campuses.

The college offers bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, college credit certificates, and vocational



GALA

FROM PAGE 6

training programs. SFSC brings cultural enrichment to the community through the Alan Jay

Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts and the SFSC Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC).

The auction, donations, and ticket sales raised \$51,000 — up more than 10 percent

from the previous year — for scholarships and SFSC's Partnership Project, a major capital campaign to bolster the Foundation's endowment.

Before a live auction called by Don Elwell,

Highlands County commissioner, the guests heard from Brandon Rosenbaum, a second-year SFSC student who earned a Foundation-managed

scholarship set up by the Highlands County Bar Association.

"There's something special about studying at SFSC and the people you meet here,"

Rosenbaum said. "I don't think there are many colleges where I would have found the individualized attention and the support from so many caring people."



COURTESY PHOTOS

From left, Ariel Starling, Alex Fells, Andrews Fells, and Tami Cullens at the SFSC Spring Gala.

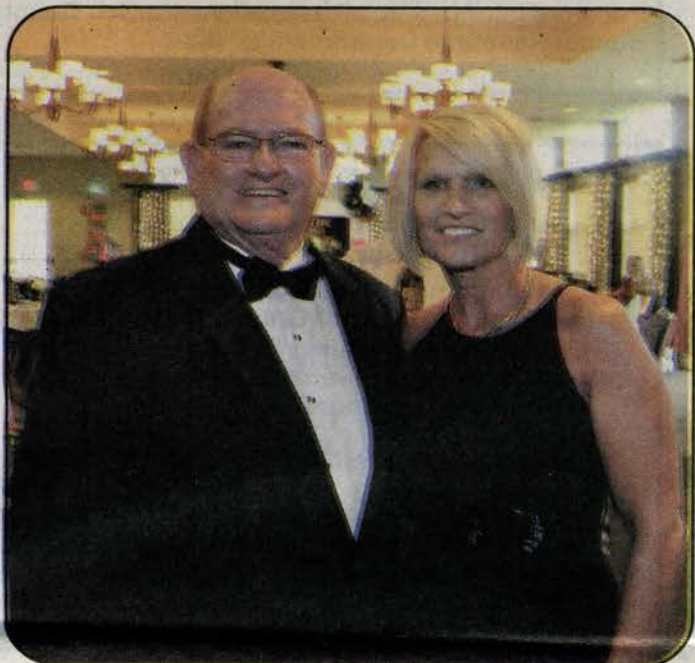


From left, Amanda Hartt, Dr. Catherine P. Cornelius, and Reilly Hartt.



COURTESY PHOTOS

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MOFAC Gives Awards To College Artists

The Museum of Florida Art & Culture honored the winners of its annual juried student art exhibition during a reception on April 20.

The awards ceremony recognized drawings, paintings, sculpture and a range of other artwork students created during their studies in South Florida State College's Art Department.

Ann-Louise Abbott walked away with the Max Gooding Best in Show Purchase Award for her set of ceramic figures titled "Elephant to Heart Series." She received \$400 for the four-piece set depicting the transformation of an elephant to a human heart.

Max Gooding, an alumnus of SFSC's art department, sponsors this top prize and other awards. Gooding, who went on to earn a degree in landscape architecture at the University of Florida, owns a landscape architecture consultancy, the Max Gooding Co., in Naples.

This year, two students, Alex Rodriguez and Meagan Smith, won the Max Gooding Award of Excellence for their artwork. The honor comes with a \$100 check for each student.

Six students received the Best of Media Award, with

each receiving \$75. The winners were Taylor Webb, two-dimensional mixed media; Whitney Williams for three-dimensional media; Alexis Conner, pottery; Ray Espidol, drawing; Abigail Zevallos, painting; and Lindsey Mangrum, photography.

Awards of Merit were presented to Destinee Ellis, Ann-Louise Abbott, Meagan Smith, Lyla Gill, Jasmine Santana, Magdalena Rodriguez, Lizabeth Silva and Kalani Dubberly.

This year's ceremony included the addition of new category, the People's Choice Award. Kelsey Pena's drawing titled "This Took Forever: Morgan Antush" came out on top as the people's choice.

Also new this year was the President's Award. SFSC president Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel selected one piece that garnered a \$100 award. Josie Wilson's photograph titled "The Pale Lady" was the president's choice.

Members of the Tanglewood Art League were on hand to present their sixth annual scholarship award. This year the league tapped two students to share the award. Abigail Zevallos and Kalani Dubberly each took home \$300 for their submissions.

Ten graduate from EMT Program

By **MANUEL CORTAZAL**
SFSC

On May 2, South Florida State College graduated 10 emergency medical technicians during an evening ceremony.

Earning EMT certificates after four months of evening classes were Kylie Casey, Cali Gumpel, Frans Jansen, Paul Kidwell, Kody Littles, Marlen Meza, Leonardo Montano, Arianna Quesada, Joseph Rey, and Gerald Watson.

"You have all worked diligently since starting the program in January and you rightly should be proud of your accomplishments," said Richard Shepard, EMT instructor. "In the lecture, the lab, and in your field practicums, you have all excelled."

Shepard singled out three graduates for their achievements. Meza received an award for highest grade point average, Jansen earned the top honor for best lab performance, and Watson was tapped for the "Most Heart" award for his passion and determination.

Upon completing the program,

graduates are eligible to take the Florida EMT State Board examination.

Before Steven Ashworth, SFSC's director of Emergency Medical Services and Fire Science Programs, awarded the graduates their certificates of completion, the students heard a send-off message from one of their peers.

"We have acquired the knowledge of what to do in an emergency situation," said Montano, one of the 10 graduates. "To learn those skills, we have sacrificed family and personal time to attend class and study for exams, riding many hours in ambulances, taking care of patients, and now we're ready to move on to careers as EMTs."

"Now let's congratulate ourselves," Montano shouted, as he thrust his arms into the air to the applause of his fellow students, their families, and well-wishers on hand for the ceremony.

EMTs function as part of an emergency rescue and transportation team by responding to emergency calls, assessing scenes of accidents, setting priorities for treating patients and providing pre-hospital emergency care.



PHOTO PROVIDED

The following students earned their EMT certificates: Kylie Casey, Cali Gumpel, Frans Jansen, Paul Kidwell, Kody Littles, Marlen Meza, Leonardo Montano, Arianna Quesada, Joseph Rey, and Gerald Watson.

Lake Placid's queen of fitness

There is no slowing down aerobics teacher Kathy Rouse

By **KIM LEATHERMAN**
CORRESPONDENT

LAKE PLACID — In 1979, Kathy Rouse fell in love at the YMCA in Elmira, New York, a love to last a lifetime.

No, it wasn't a man, it was exercise.

Always a size eight, Rouse found herself gaining weight after she was married and had a child. She ran into a friend she hadn't seen for a while who had always been heavy but was sporting a thin and lean look. It seemed the roles had been reversed.

The now-slimmed down friend told her about Jazzercise and sensible eating.

Rouse immediately joined the YMCA and fell head over heels in love with fitness, and has never looked back. The student became the instructor and even opened her own studio in New York called The Sweat Shop, which she ran successfully for eight years. Following a divorce and wanting a fresh start, Rouse move to Lake Placid in 1991.

After attending and teaching many classes, she started teaching aerobics at South Florida State College in 1992. Rouse teaches several classes a week of low-impact aerobics. Rouse's classes are for all ages; she has 40-year old professionals and 87 year-old retirees.

"The ladies love these classes," said Rouse. "I don't have a beginner's class. I teach two different versions of the same exercise so that anyone can keep pace."

That is still not enough for 67-year old Rouse. She faithfully pumps iron at Rezultz Fitness Center three times a week. Rouse could have been the model for the old Olivia Newton John song, "Let's Get Physical."



KIM LEATHERMAN/ CORRESPONDENT

Kathy Rouse's passion is fitness. She teaches over 60 aerobics classes a month at South Florida State College and still pumps iron at the gym three times a week.

Walking into the fitness center at SFSC one can sense the difference between Rouse's gym and others. Walls painted in oranges, greens and purples with fairy lights and disco lights greet the women.

Exercise balls, weighted Hula Hoops, Zumba risers and hand-held weights are just a few of the items Rouse uses inventively in her classes.

Rouse teaches chair aerobics, Zumba and aerobics and is certified in everything that she teaches. Each class has a theme. She has amassed a lot of certificates in the

nearly 40 years of teaching.

Rouse rarely takes time off. In fact, she only took a month off when she was recovering from surgery for breast cancer. She taught a class with modified movements while recovering. Rouse's students have loyally followed her for years. The class is a good place to meet friends as well as get healthy.

"Those girls, when they leave, are clapping," said Rouse. "When I left for surgery and came back these girls kept me going."

FITNESS

FROM PAGE 1

Unbeknownst to Rouse, the treatment for her breast cancer wreaked havoc in her bones.

"The doctors are amazed that I am doing so well," she said. "My bone density scans say that I should be bent over with osteoporosis. He says the muscles I have built up are saving me from the osteoporosis. He attributes my health to my exercising."

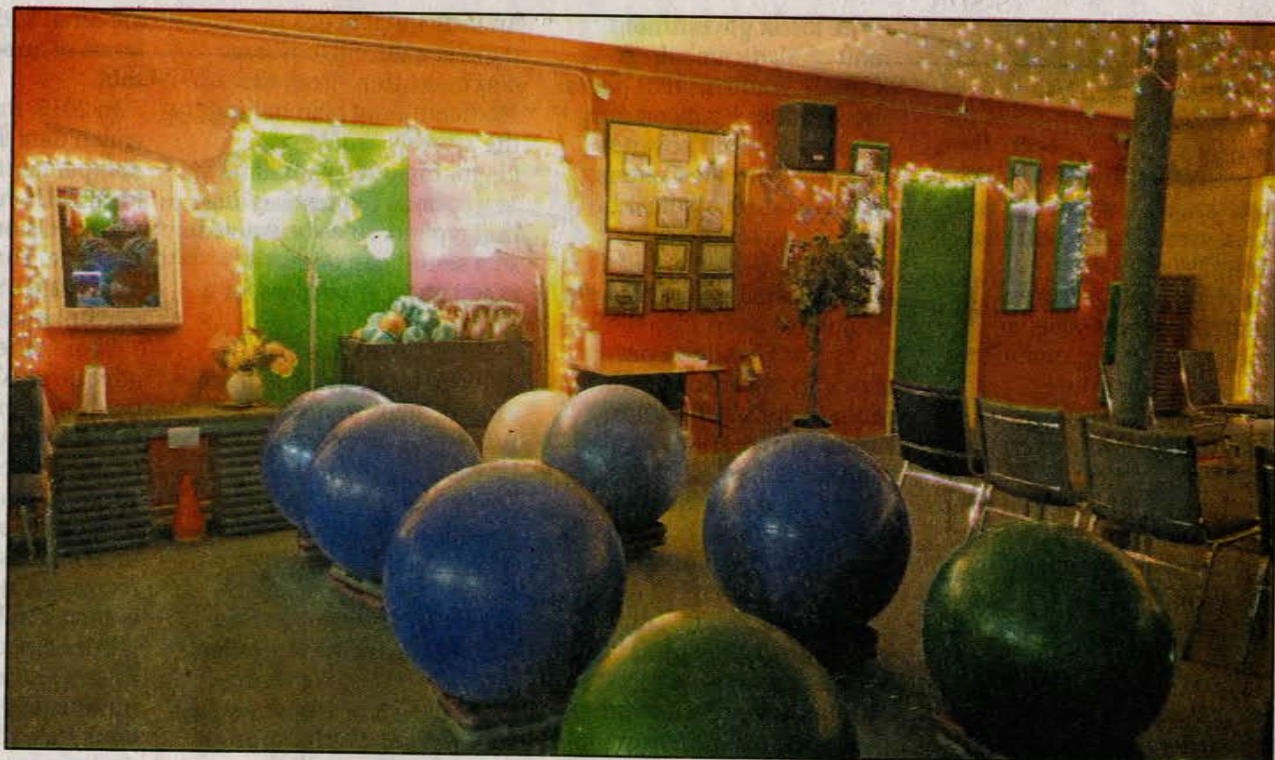
Rouse maintains a healthy lifestyle and admits that being a finicky eater helps maintain her weight. She and her husband eat their main

meal at lunch, which she recommends. Rouse says she eats to live instead of living to eat.

When not building muscles in the gym, Rouse enjoys showing off her muscle car, a 1979 Corvette, at shows. She and her husband of 15 years, Richard, enjoy cruising on their Harley Davidsons as well.

Rouse is also a waitress at the Main Street Diner.

Rouse offers classes at 8 and 9 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays. At 4:30 and 5:30 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays and 9 a.m. on Thursdays is Back in Time Chair Aerobics. The classes are \$35 per month and students can attend as many or as few as they want to. For more information, call SFSC at 863-465-3003.



KIM LEATHERMAN/ CORRESPONDENT

Kathy Rouse has a flair for decorating. The fitness center where she teaches aerobics at South Florida State College is like no gym you have seen before. With whimsy and fairy lights, and creative workouts, boredom is never an option.

Camp Adventure at SFSC campus

New adventures are in store at South Florida State College's annual Camp Adventure with a new lineup of learning activities for children in grades 1-5.

Camp Adventure takes place Monday-Thursday, June 12-July 28, at the SFSC Highlands Campus at Avon Park. Cost is \$157 per week and includes breakfast and lunch Monday-Thursday. Optional field trips and camp programs are available on Friday. Camp is closed the week of July 4.

Camp Adventure begins with mural week in

which kids create murals that will be displayed at SFSC and in area businesses. Week 2 takes kids on a Mission Impossible scavenger hunt for treasures hidden around the Highlands Campus. During week 3, campers produce and star in a production of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts.

After the July 4 break, Camp Adventure explores Highlands County's hometown heroes and learn about good citizenship. During week 5, campers form their own tribes and take on "Survivor"-style mental and physical challenges. The final week of camp celebrates good times

with wacky games, dress-up days and a pizza party.

Camp starts at 8:15 a.m. each day. Parents can drop off children as early as 7:30 a.m. and pick them up by 5:30 p.m.

For more information and a camp registration packet, go to www.southflorida.edu/campadventure, email communityeducation@southflorida.edu, or call 863-784-7388.

State colleges disappointed in funding cut

By **LLOYD DUNKELBERGER**

THE NEWS SERVICE
OF FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE — State colleges were dismayed by a legislative session that resulted in a major funding increase for state universities while colleges had their budgets slashed by \$30 million, a college president told the Florida Board of Education on Tuesday.

"To say that our presidents were disappointed and our boards of trustees were disappointed in a year when there was such an excess of funding toward the universities and not toward the state colleges is an understatement," Ed Meadows, president of Pensacola State College, told the state board, which was meeting in Miami.

Meadows, representing the 28 college presidents, said state colleges receive less than a quarter of the higher-education spending but handle more than 800,000 students, while the universities have

about 350,000 students and receive the bulk of the funding.

"It's also ironic that they're giving universities more money to do better, and they are expecting the Florida college system to do more with less," Meadows said.

The college leaders are most upset by the Legislature's decision to cut \$30 million for remedial, or developmental, education in the new \$82.4 billion budget, which is expected to take effect July 1 after going to Gov. Rick Scott. Lawmakers finalized the budget May 8 as the annual legislative session ended.

Legislative leaders have defended the funding cut, citing a 2013 state policy that curbed the ability of colleges to use remedial courses, which carry no college credits, instead of enrolling students in college-credit classes. But college leaders say it did not change the fact that many students enter the "open access" state

college system lacking some of the skills to handle college-level classes.

"Yes, our developmental courses have decreased, but the students are still there," Meadows said, saying the change has forced the colleges to find "innovative" ways to support remedial students, including using labs and tutors, which add costs to the classroom.

"A \$30 million cut to our system is unacceptable to us in terms of the fairness of how the funds available to higher education should be distributed," Meadows said.

Meadows also warned that the cuts could undermine progress of the college system, which has earned national awards for accessibility and affordability, as well as its ability to successfully move students on to four-year degrees. More than half of the juniors and seniors in the Florida university system come from the state colleges,

which historically were known as community colleges.

"I think time will tell if the Legislature has made a serious blunder in terms of the Florida college system's ability to get students where they need to be to be successful," Meadows said.

Other major changes are looming for the colleges, including the system's relationship with the state Board of Education. A pending law (SB 374) would create a new State Board of Community Colleges to oversee the 28 schools, which are now under the Board of Education.

Board of Education member Rebecca Fishman Lipsey said she was "proud" of the state college system's achievements, including working with the K-12 system to move students into colleges and then onto universities.

"It's not an expense, it's an investment," she said.

Meadows said the colleges have had a good

working relationship with the Board of Education.

"Each institution, whether small or large, we all have particular issues that may differ or be very similar with an open-access institution," Meadows told the board. "I think each one of you understands the challenges that we have as a system."

Meadows said other changes the state colleges will face under the recently passed legislation will be revised performance standards and a 15 percent cap on baccalaureate degree enrollments at each school.

But overall, Meadows said the colleges were upset that the new budget and legislation, touted "as one of the greatest education packages in the recent history of Florida, has failed and has overlooked the fact that we have the best (state college) system in the nation and we're not recognized in the funding process."

SFSC Faculty Recognizes Students On Awards Day

South Florida State College students were honored for academic excellence and community service during the college's annual Awards Day ceremony in the University Center Auditorium on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

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

SFSC student Mayra Hernandez was honored with the Joseph E. Johnston and Bette L. McDearman Student Services Award for exceptional academic achievement and outstanding involvement in professional, social, and cultural activities and programs.

According to Dr. Sidney Valentine, vice president for Academic Affairs & Student Services, the faculty who nominated Hernandez for the award cited her exceptional student engagement, helpfulness to her peers, and dedication to the college.

Students presented 2016-17 Outstanding Instructor Awards to Stacy Sharp, Arts and Sciences, full-time; James Houseknecht, Arts and Sciences, part-time; Susan Taecker, Applied Sciences and Technologies, full-time; Beverly Grinis, Applied Sciences and Technologies, part-time.

Hardee County students



COURTESY PHOTO

Mayra Hernandez receives the Joseph E. Johnston and Bette L. McDearman Student Services Award from Dr. Sidney Valentine, vice president for Academic Affairs & Student Services.

who received special honors for participation in the following academic programs are:

Melissa Barton, Anatomy and Physiology I

Andrea Silva, Anatomy and Physiology II

Priscilla Bowes, Bachelor of Science Elementary Education

Danny Sustaita, General Biology I

Recognized in the Honors Program was:

Summer Xiong, May 2017 Honors Program Graduate

And Hardee Countians recognized by Phi Theta Kappa were:

Summer Xiong, PTK All Florida Academic Team Recognition

Jonathan Mondragon, PTK Enhanced Membership Recognition

Summer Xiong, PTK Enhanced Membership Recognition

SFSC Foundation receives \$40,000 grant

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK —A \$40,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County has been awarded to the SFSC Foundation, Inc., to benefit part-time students who are attending South Florida State College in the 2017 summer and fall terms.

The grant comes from the Edward K. Roberts Community College Fund, which was established by Roberts as a legacy to support Florida's community colleges and other charitable organizations. Managed by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the fund continues Roberts' vision of making higher education a priority, particularly for those

motivated to seek a better life for themselves.

SFSC's grant funds are designated to providing assistance to students who are attending college part-time and may not qualify for other forms of financial aid. The grant covers tuition, housing, books, child care, automobile repairs, and needs that would otherwise prevent students from attending college. Recipients are identified by SFSC's Financial Aid Office.

"The SFSC Foundation has received this grant in the past, and we are grateful that the Community Foundation of Sarasota County is once again making it available to our students," said Jamie Bateman, SFSC's executive director of



COURTESY PHOTO

Jerry Donna, SFSC's director of financial aid, and Jamie Bateman received a check for \$40,000 from the Community Foundation of Sarasota College to benefit SFSC's summer and fall term students.

institutional advancement. "Gifts such as this build a pathway to education so that our students can improve their circumstances and prepare for careers that give their lives meaning."

For more information, contact Bateman at 863-453-3133 or visit southflorida.edu. For information about the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, visit cfsarasota.org.

X State college cuts spur calls for budget veto

THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE — Upset over a \$30 million cut in remedial education funding, state-college advocates are asking Gov. Rick Scott to veto a \$1.2 billion portion of the state budget, forcing lawmakers to revamp the spending plan for the 28 colleges.

The college advocates say the cuts would have “a devastating impact” on the system and that the loss of remedial services, like tutoring, would particularly impact the “most vulnerable students,” including students from low-income families, minority students and military veterans. Advocates are circulating a message highlighting their concerns and trying to build pressure on Scott to take action.

“These are the students

that need additional academic support and help to be successful — the ones that benefit from our open-door access policy and affordable offerings,” the message says. “These cuts threaten our students, programs and support services.”

State college leaders were dismayed that the \$82.4 billion budget (SB 2500) passed May 8 by the Legislature includes a 5.5 percent increase, or \$253 million, for state universities, while the college system would face a 2 percent cut, or \$24.7 million.

The major overall cuts include \$9.4 million for Miami Dade College; \$6.3 million for Florida State College at Jacksonville; \$4.4 million for Broward College; and \$3.88

STATE

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million for Hillsborough Community College, according to an analysis by the state Department of Education.

South Florida State College's operating budget funding from the state is expected to decrease 1.6 percent, or \$270,292, according to a summary of the budget. Adding in Florida Retirement System funding, and pending Performance Funding levels, the actual reduction will be \$216,811.

Board of Trustees Member Louis Kirschner said Wednesday the college could live with the budget. It could have been worse.

Meanwhile, some of the cuts may be offset if the schools qualify for a portion of a \$60 million performance fund, which is a \$30 million increase over the current year.

Two schools would see increases because the budget provided extra operating funds for handful of colleges. The

most dramatic example was Santa Fe College in Gainesville, which received a \$5 million boost, and would have an overall \$1.3 million increase in the new budget.

State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, which received \$1.7 million in added funding, would have an overall \$46,000 increase.

Michael Brawer, executive director of the Association of Florida Colleges, said the college advocates are asking Scott to veto the \$1.2 billion portion of the budget related to funding for the colleges to get lawmakers to reassess the \$30 million cut in remedial, or developmental, education.

"They (lawmakers) would have to do it over and hopefully restore our \$30.2 million cut," Brawer said. "We would be happy if they just brought us back to zero."

Senate leaders, who originally supported a \$55 million cut in remedial funding, said the reduction was based on a 2013 change in state law that deemphasized non-credit remedial courses and a subsequent decline in

remedial students. State enrollment data shows there are about 14,000 remedial students, down from 21,000 in the 2014-15 academic year.

State college advocates say despite the change in policy, many students still need remedial services to be successful in school.

The request for a partial veto involving state college spending gives Scott another option in dealing with the budget, which he has yet to receive from the Legislature. Once he receives the budget, he will have 15 days to act on it.

Scott, who is disappointed in a lack of money for tourism and economic-development programs and a marginal increase in public school spending, has said his options include vetoing all or parts of the budget. Public school advocates have asked Scott to veto K-12 spending in the budget, forcing lawmakers to reconsider that portion.

The new budget must be in place by July 1, when the 2017-18 fiscal year begins.

SFSC recognizes students for academic excellence

AVON PARK — South Florida State College recognizes those students who have pursued and achieved academic excellence during the course of study at the college. Students are named to the President's List for receiving a semester grade point average between 3.8 and 4.0.

Avon Park students named to the spring 2017 President's List were: Ashley Acosta, Marissa D. Alexander, Sarah D. Alfaro, Shaylin T. Alley, Seamus G. Benoit, Lauren C. Benton, Leah L. Blankinship, Brandi A. Bohannon, Jeffery A. Burch, Ashlee B. Carnahan, Genesis C. Castillo, Madeline J. Charles, Mary E. Crosson, Sophia Emile, Allison L. Franza, Jesus Garcia, Gary S. Gergen, Jamisse D. Gordon, Francis R. Hendry, Angela J. Hill, Heather N. Knight, Gabriel A. Lambert, Bryce E. Langston, Lance M. Leonard, George A. Livingston, Lisa J. Lopez, Evelyn R. Marley, Christopher L. Mosely, Jason A. O'Malley, Nancy J. Pena, Andrew S. Protasio, Alysia Ramirez, Tiffany Reyes, Krystal M. Rivera-Ayala, Bryan J. Robbins, Victoria M. Sanchez, Carolyn L. Shooks, Matthew P. Swafford, Jocquas Walker, Rodine V. Walker, Emily L. Whitman, Jacquelyn R. Whitman, Rachel I. Williams, and Stephen D. Wynn.

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

Avon Park students named to the spring 2017 Vice President's List were: Christine M. Bower, Benjamin C. Bustin, Marlene Cruz, Jessie Cuellar, Christopher L. Davies, Lizbeth Delgado Guerrero, Paul M. Devlin, Emily J. Flores, Kimberly B. Goddard, Teresa Gonzalez Duran, Cali Gumpel, Austin J. Harris, Stacy L. Hobby, Estella Islas, Yazmin Jaramillo, Ivan S. Jimenez, Halie M. Johnson, Daniflore C. Julien, Rajad B. Lawrence, Angelia M. Mejia, Luzedy Ocasio, David A. Oldfield, Nicholas V. Ramnarain, Angelo J. Russo, Coren M. Russo, Krystal

Lake Placid students named to the spring 2017 President's List were: Sarah L. Alamia, Ashley L. Amundsen, Zena S. Aviles, Christine Boone, Noah R. Connell, Ashley Diaz, Erica Escamilla, Lauren N. Falls, Maria D. Gonzalez, Shae E. Hatton, Ernesto Jimenez, Justin D. Jones, Marlen Meza, Devany M. Moore, Connor A. Moran, Macey J. Mullins, Sarah M. Murray, Subrina L. Shuler, Megan E. Smith, Hannah M. Thompson, Naudia W. Tucker, Emily Vasquez, Abigail G. Wiggins, Tiffany C. Wiggins, Jose V. Wilson, Jennifer L. Zell, and Abigail Zevallos.

Lorida student Alyssa L. Kunz was named to the spring 2017 President's List.

Sebring students named to the spring 2017 President's List were: Ray N. Aguilar Espidol, Ethan M. Anacay, Morgan B. Andrews, Desiree L. Andujar, Ragan L. Ard, Monica L. Ashley Nguyen, Selena Badillo, Dalton T. Baker, Sharon L. Barabas, Jasmine Barajas, James E. Bible, Andrew M. Bowser, Rachel a. Boyd, Anthony D. Burnett, Elvira Chavez, Michelle L. Colladay,

Grant E. Ritenour, Franklin E. Roberts, Sylvia M. Roberts, Bryan A. Rodriguez, Emelly I Rodriguez, Jonathon J. Rodriguez, Kellymar Rodriguez, Alison E. Romero, Bianca Y. Rosado, Brandon J. Rosenbaum, Gabriella I Rossy, Steven A. Sanchez, Patricia I. Sapp, Jonathan H. Sassatelli, Glenn J. Seeman Jr., Marissa A. Simpson, Eric C. Skinner, Deborah L. Smalley, Aaron D. Smith, Alayna M. Smith, Leah R. Snell, Victoria A. Snelling, Tina A. Stetson, Naseana M. Sullivan, Kailey E. Swaine, Rachel E. Todd, Tiffany A. Tolentino, Benjamin L. Tubbs, Elizabeth J. Varia, Samuel Velez, Kevin C. Webb, Howard L. Williams, Tammy J. Williams, Katherine J. Yeager, and Shea O. Young.

Maya Cullipher, Steven R. Cullipher, Bart D. Culpepper, Closere Damis II, Anatoliy Daynega, Robert J. De Lara, Arianna m. DeArce, Janelle S. Dessources, Haley A. Dixon, Janelle T. Donglasan, Amy N. Dow, Kalani M. Dubberly, Jordan A. Edwards, Alexandra K. Feichtinger, Ana Belle Garcia, Sofia I Garcia-Rossi, Amanda J. Gaskins, Donna L. Goins, Asriel A. Gonzalez, Margo D. Greer-Smith, Jennai E. Hagen, Michael Hameed, Brittney M. Haralson, Harrison P. Havery, ToiaNetsha S. Hicks, Brittany E. Hobart, Jarshuelle M. Holdman, Kylee Huylebroeck, Samantha J. Iglesias, Christine Jerger Foster, Lorna J. Kellar, Dante G. Lepe, Matthew J. Loomis, Lindsey A. Lovett, Thu T. Luong, Keomi O. Marasigan, Yaimée N. Martinez Molina, Jace Augustus L. Masong, Kerry C. McIntyre, Kristina F. McKinney, Samia Mehbub, Cara R. Mingacci, Tammy M. Mortensen, Jessica C. Price, Saun A. Ratliff,

Santos, Emmanuel Satine, Lizbeht Strouse, Emily M. Swenson, Kathleen J. Tirico, Rebecca Torres Cruz, Richenda R. Trenchfield, Luke Trenchfield Jr., Christopher J. Velez, Edna Viljean, and Robert A. Wiggins.

Lake Placid students named to the spring 2017 Vice President's List were: Faleh N. Abuelouf, Sofia V. Aviles Nieves, Jessica E. Brown, Lourdes Calderon, Lydia Daum, Bailey R. Fitch-Roberts, Zachary M. Geitner, Cheryl L. Gonzales, Cynthia N. Granados, Michael J. Grey, Ethan A. Havlock, Jacqueline M. Jennings, Amanda J. Kottkamp, Nicholas J. Kowalski, Alex Media, Gustavo Mejia, Alexis M. Merlo,

Helen R. Moretto, Sarah E. Moretto, Lauren A. Nicolai, Bradley T. Perry, Kayla M. Prescott, Ally E. Priest, Stephanie N. Skipper, Morgan D. Whitbeck, Amanda E. Wood, and Hailey A. Weidner.

Sebring students
named to the spring
2017 Vice President's
List were: Nathaniel
J. Acosta, Danielle N.
Albrecht, Brianna D.
Alexander, Ashley Ann
Alvarez Burgos, Vickash
P. Baichan, Karen L.
Bennett, Matthew
R. Bernard, Joseph
A. Bianco, Sarah M.
Bonenberger, Annamaria
Brubaker, Sabrina
Buckholdt, Ashley N.
Burns, Isaac D. Carlisle,
Esteban Carranza, Erin
K. Coberg, Cheryl L.
Cox, Daynaa B. Cruz,

Erika M. Cruz, Morgan
E. DeVane, Tapasya
A. Desai, Miranda A.
Downing, Jeree Mia
Rubim S. Dumadag,
Margaret Dunn, Laura
E. Eshelman, Elizabeth
M. Etherton, Zachary
T. Gierек, Jamicia S.
Gilmore, Asia G. Gilroy,
Jenny Gonzalez, Melissa
S. Gonzalez, Christina
M. Gourley, Gabriella
M. Grieco, Gianah
M. Gutierrez, Nicholas
W. Haley, Austin B.
Hart, Astrid J. Herrera,
Anthony L. Hicks, Amy
L. Hinote, Lolita S.
Hodges, Eunice Howard,
Logan A. Hull, Nicole
M. Losue, Heidi A.
Jacobs, Sara E. Johnson,
Destiny M. Lewis,
Mark D. McGovern,
Kimberly A. McLeod,
Heather M. Metts,
Alexa D. Mosquera,

Kathleen Narayan,
Joel Pacheco, Mary
E. Patterson, Ashtin
E. Pease, Matthew A.
Portis, Tonya L. Rafferty,
Beatriz L. Ramos,
Freddy Ramos, Andrea
I Randolph, Gabrielle V.
Reyna-Condo, Rochelle
L. Reynolds, Yvonne
J. Rosario, David W.
Sager, Edgardo Sanchez,
Monica M. Sanchez,
Sandra B. Seetaram,
Abhi A. Shah, Aslan J.
Smith, Kaitlyn M. Smith,
Ashley N. Stanton,
Amirah M. Sullivan,
Elizabeth E. Tauchen,
Sophia R. Tauchen,
Jill B. Tiger, Marina A.
Torres, Shelby L. Votaw,
Bradford Walker, Erika
N. Weaver-Coleman,
Sara E. Weeks, Karishia
N. Williams, Kaitlynn N.
Wilson, and Richard F.
Alvarez.

Alexander updates SFSC of Legislative challenges

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — Former state senator J.D. Alexander informed the South Florida State College Board of Trustees of the challenges he faced in the recent legislative session, particularly with Senate President Joe Negron.

The SFSC Foundation is funding Alexander's lobbying efforts for the college.

"For whatever reason, Senator Negron doesn't understand and support the vision of state colleges as we do and believe in," Alexander said.

Alexander said he told Negron he was wrong several times on issues, but couldn't persuade the Senate president to change his position.

There is a lot more

support for the state's college system in the Legislature than was apparent, Alexander noted.

"I had hoped that we would at least hold steady and our plan was to advance your budget," he said. Many are requesting the governor veto the budget, but the college could go from the "frying pan into the fire,"

As leadership changes occur in the Legislature in a year or so he believes the outlook will improve for the college, but in meantime he will be taking a "defensive" stance, Alexander said. "Although my best defense is a strong offense."

Board of Trustees Chairman Derren Bryan noted that Alexander has been forthright with the college about the uphill battle he has been facing.

Speaking about the time before they hired Alexander, Bryan said, "We felt very vulnerable at the time; we didn't have anyone that we felt was fighting for us, specifically for South Florida State College."

Board of Trustees Member Ken Lambert said if the college did not have the support of someone like Alexander it could be in much worse shape.

"I think we have a lot of good news coming if we stay the course," he said. "In the future, knowing how to navigate it is important," Lambert said in thanking Alexander for his efforts in Tallahassee.

In July 2016, the Board of Trustees recommended the SFSC Foundation's \$5,000 per month agreement with Alexander.



PHOTO BY MARC VALERO/STAFF

Former state senator J.D. Alexander provides an update of his lobbying efforts on behalf of South Florida State College on Wednesday at the college's Board of Trustees meeting.

Alexander's firm, Silver Palm Consulting LLC, is located in Lake Wales.

Alexander served in

the Florida House of Representatives from 1998-2002 and then the Florida Senate from

2002-2012, representing District 17, which includes all of Highlands and Hardee counties.