

SFSC graduates 18 fire science students

DEBORAH BELL LATTER

SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

South Florida State College graduated 18 students from its Firefighter Minimum Standards program at an evening ceremony on July 26.

Receiving their certificates were Gary Ball, Jonathan Bash, Jennifer Bidlack, Jarvis Carper, Annemarie Cornine, Antoine Daley, Kelly Gibson, Dillon Hathaway, Antoine Hester, Sean Howard, Wyatt Kofke, Jason LaManna, Justin LaRosa, Brandon Little, Wendy Roberts, Clay Sapp, Clayton Waldron and Katelynne Wigton.

Deputy Chief Michael Linkins of the Polk County Fire Rescue, who has had a 30-year career in firefighting, presented the keynote address. He remarked that he started as a volunteer in August 1985 and was hired by Polk County in 1987.

"Firefighting is the best job in the world," Linkins said, addressing the graduates. "Where else can you roll out of bed, jump in a fire truck, run people off the road, get to their house, kick in their front door, break their windows, put a hole in their roof, spray water everywhere, and as you walk out, they shake your hand and thank you for the job you do?"

"The job itself is that of a public servant," Linkins said in a more serious tone. "The public expects us to be at our best 100 percent of the time. It's tough to do. You may be on your 18th call, and it's hard to get out of bed to deliver that high level of service. But I encourage to do your best. The public has high expectations for firefighters, and public servants in general are held



PHOTO PROVIDED

Front, from left: Chief Elvie "Jeff" Fussell, Justin LaRosa, Clay Sapp, Wyatt Kofke, Clayton Waldron, Katelynne Wigton, Jarvis Carper, Captain Paul Shannon, Lieutenant James Simpson. Back, from left: Jason LaManna, Antoine Hester, Kelly Gibson, Annemarie Cornine, Wendy Roberts, Brandon Little, Antoine Daley, Gary Ball, Jonathan Bash, Dillon Hathaway, Jennifer Bidlack, and Sean Howard.

to a higher standard. We always provide the best service that we can for the public."

Five students were recognized for special achievement. Antoine Hester was acknowledged for Highest GPA, the cadet with the highest grade point average. Justin LaRosa was awarded Highest Score on Final Practical, the highest score on the program's final practical exam. Gary Ball and Wendy Roberts were awarded Company

Leadership, the cadets who showed leadership within the program.

Annemarie Cornine was presented with Most Heart, the cadet who showed the most determination and drive, despite adversity.

The Firefighter Minimum Standards occupational certificate program is for applicants who want to pursue a career in fire service but have limited fire training and experience. A cohort of cadets enroll in the Firefighter I

course, often with the expectation of continuing through to Firefighter II training. Minimum Standards training is required for volunteer firefighters. Firefighter II training is required for those who wish to be employed as professional firefighters in Florida.

For more information about the SFSC Fire Science Program, contact the SFSC Advising and Counseling Center at 863-784-7131, or visit www.south-florida.edu.

7 Locals Graduate Nurses' School

A traditional pinning ceremony highlighted last week's graduation of South Florida State College's newest class of 23 practical nurses.

The commencement was held on Thursday in the Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

Seven Hardee County residents were among the graduates: Clarita Chavez, Rolando Chavez, Rose Eugene, Maria Jaimes, Rebeca Lopez Herrera, Yesenia Lucatero and Aron Ruiz.

The class treasurer, Vanessa

Olivero, introduced guest speaker Barbara Kurtz, who served as an instructor during the early stages of SFSC's Nursing Program in the 1970s and later became its director. Kurtz told of her experiences starting and growing a nursing program at the college.

Adam Rodriguez, class president, said in his farewell address: "I encourage you, my fellow graduates, to continue to fight and be the conquerors that you are, to reach your goals in your careers.

"Be the light of hope in the midst of darkness and despair," he continued. "Stand

up for the weak and defenseless. I am honored and humbled to be counted among you. Let's be the nurses we were called to be!"

During the ceremony, the graduates accepted their nursing pins from spouses, parents and their children as part of the tradition. Mary von Merveldt, director of the SFSC Nursing Education program, introduced each person presenting their loved one with the pin, reading words of thanks written by each graduate.

Another tradition included lighting a candle in their

lamps, symbolic of Florence Nightingale carrying a lantern from patient to patient, providing comfort and light.

In addition to its 11-month Practical Nursing program to become a licensed practical nurse, SFSC offers an Associate Degree in Nursing Degree program for students interested in becoming registered nurses, a one-year Transition-LPN to RN program, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

For more information about these programs, call Sara McGann at (863) 784-7027 or visit southflorida.edu.



COURTESY PHOTO

Students light their nurses' lamps in the traditional candle-lighting ceremony held during graduation services at South Florida State College.

SFSC library celebrates National Coloring Book Day

By **ROBERT MILLER**
NEWS CLERK

AVON PARK — National Coloring Book Day was Wednesday and South Florida State College celebrated in style with its second annual Color-In. A decent crowd joined SFSC Librarian Claire A. Miller in the cold air conditioning at the college's library for coloring and plenty of friendly chatter.

Several people arrived early at 7:30 a.m. while others didn't make it to the event until closer to 10 a.m. By 11 a.m. more than a dozen adults were coloring and having a good time, with a small group of children on the other side of the library.

"There is something calming and fun about coloring," Miller said.



ROBERT MILLER/STAFF

National Coloring Book Day at the SFSC Library.

Miller cited that this event was perfect for the library.

"It encourages creativity and social aspects of

coloring," she said.

Corrine Turner arrived early and enjoyed talking with the other participants. She said she

learned new things about the art of coloring.

"I'm having fun and learning new techniques," Turner said.

SFSC to offer new performing arts Kaleidoscope Series

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — A new Kaleidoscope Series at South Florida State College will offer five free family-friendly and culturally based performances in September in the college's University Center Auditorium.

SFSC Director of Cultural Programs Cindy Garren said the college had a Kaleidoscope Series years ago that started with chamber music and later included bluegrass and

folk artists, but the ticket sales and attendance was low.

The name is being resurrected for a new series of performances.

"We liked the name because a kaleidoscope is like many images and variety, but it is not the same thing," as the previous series, Garren noted.

Highlighting the 2015-16 economic impact of the college's cultural programs, Garren said, 52,000 residents and tourists visited one of the many cultural programs

at the 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts or the 250-seat University Center Auditorium.

"The South Florida State College Performing Arts Program is a strong contributor to the local economy," she said. The total dollars spent by the program and the audience was estimated at \$2.07 million.

Garren noted that the college received its first National Endowment for the Arts Grant for \$10,000 for the Kaleidoscope

Series. "It's a free program; it's for families and it is folkloric," meaning the performances will celebrate cultures and traditions, she said. Each show will have pre-show arts oriented workshops for kids conducted by the artists.

Following is a listing of the performances with a description provided by South Florida State College:

- **Florida Treasures/Fun Family Night** — 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., Sept. 9 — when two tourists discover a treasure chest full of historical artifacts, they are magically transported back in time in a fun-filled journey through Florida's history.

- **Orquesta Caribeno Tropicale/Caribbean & Latin America Heritage** — 7 p.m., Sept. 16 — A Latin heritage band playing the rich sounds of Puerto Rico, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, and Peru.

- **Sitar and Tabla Concert/with Partha Bose and Indranil Mallick** — 7 p.m., Sept. 23 — Shri Partha Bose is a widely recognized sitar player and a highly respected artist in the arena of contemporary Hindustani classical music.

- **Nicole Henry/2013 Soul Train Award for Best Traditional Jazz Performance** — 7 p.m., Sept. 30 — Since her debut in 2004, Henry has established herself as one of the jazz world's most acclaimed vocalists.

LOCAL LOOK by GABE CLOGSTON



X How to get a great job in two years

We all know how hard it is for young people to find a good job. Not nearly as easy as when their parents and grandparents were entering the workforce.

Jobs as a barista or a waiter seems to be the future for today's college graduates. Plus, record-high student debt. What a mess.

What if what everybody knows about how hard it is for young people is wrong. What if there were an easy way, two years after college, to get a job paying \$52,000 and only have \$7,500 in student loans to repay? Might as well believe in Yoda and the Easter Bunny.

As Yoda once said, "Always pass on what you have learned." Here's what I've learned. You can get a great job in Florida, with only two years of college and minimal student debt.

Let's take one of Florida's great, local community colleges as an example. South Florida State College serves places like Highlands and DeSoto as part of their geographic reach. Go to South Florida State College and get two-year associates of science degree. Starting



INK IN MY VEINS

David Dunn-Rankin

pay is \$52,700.

State College of Florida which covers Sarasota and Manatee two-year associate of science graduates earn \$47,200, and Florida Southwestern State College associate of science graduates earn \$46,300. AS degrees include (paramedic, EMT, registered nurse, computer networking, paralegal).

Let's compare the wages of two-year associate of science graduates from our 28 exceptional Florida community colleges to the average four-year university graduate's pay of \$42,000. The two-year associates of science degree holder, on average,

earns \$9,000 more than the average four-year graduate of a Florida university. Higher wages, half the years in college,

Lower wage earners are the four-year university liberal arts graduates from Florida's universities who earn on average \$34,400. If we combine the AA and AS two-year community college graduates, they earn, on average \$34,300. Almost the same as a four-year graduate. Two more years of college and two more years of student debt gets you very little extra in starting salary.

Here's an interesting twist. Our community colleges also have four-year degree programs. The median first-year earnings of a four-year graduate from one of Florida's community colleges was \$41,000 versus just \$34,400 for graduates of Florida's public universities.

Here are some real world examples of starting pay after four years in college. University of Florida, \$34,700; Florida State, \$31,600; University of South Florida \$35,100. Compare that to FSW

\$43,000 and State College \$54,300.

We also often hear from our older readers about how they don't teach "shop class" anymore. Not all kids are cut out for college. True.

In Florida, there is something called district technical centers. There are 48 vocational centers that offer certification in a variety of technical programs. The average graduate from a Florida DTC makes just under \$28,000 a year. Compare that to the median first-year earnings for an English major from one of Florida's 12 large public universities — \$28,800.

As Yoda said, "You must unlearn what you have learned." You can get a great job in just two years of college, with an excellent starting salary and low student debt. It is happening right here in Florida.

Share your thoughts.

David is CEO of the family- and employee-owned Sun Coast Media Group which owns this newspaper. You can contact David at daviddr@sunherald.com



COURTESY PHOTO

South Florida State College graduated 15 paramedics during a ceremony July 31 in the school's University Center Auditorium.

Fifteen students graduate from SFSC's Paramedic Program

SPECIAL TO THE
HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — South Florida State College graduated a class of 15 paramedics during an evening ceremony at the SFSC University Center Auditorium at the Highlands Campus on July 31.

Receiving their paramedic certificates were Brianna Blosser, Dysean Broome, Lawrence Burrell, Myles Cumberland, Bob Daniels, Jason Hutchison, Michael Johnson, Eric Lynn, Amber Noah, Travis O'Bryant, Susan Quinn, Brandy Rudolph, Gordon Sawyer, Daniel Sotolongo, and Kevin Timmer. Cumberland and Quinn are from Highlands County; Blosser is of DeSoto County.

Captain James Towns, who graduated from SFSC's paramedic program in 2009, served as the ceremony's guest speaker. He is a member of the Polk County Fire Rescue and, in 2015, was named Paramedic of the Year.

Towns offered the graduates some practical tips. "When you get into the field, listen to your patients. They can tell you a lot about themselves. Treat every patient with utmost respect. Just because it's your 20th call of the day,



COURTESY PHOTO

Brianna Blosser, of DeSoto County, was presented a plaque for being the first student to complete all public safety programs at South Florida State College.

mostly likely, it's your patient's first emergency. Take the time to make it all about your patients."

He further encouraged them to "never stop learning. Learn from your peers, your patients, keep reaching for higher education. Most importantly, learn from your own mistakes."

Brianna Blosser was presented a plaque for being the first student to complete all of these programs at SFSC: Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, Firefighter Minimum Standards, and Paramedic. Further, she recently graduated with her Associate in Arts degree.

Three students were

recognized for special achievement. Gordon Sawyer was acknowledged for both the Highest GPA Lab and for the Highest GPA Lecture, the student with the highest grade point average. Eric Lynn and Amber Noah, were awarded with Most Heart, the students who showed the most determination and drive.

The graduates had just completed an 11-month college credit certificate course offered by SFSC's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program. Paramedics work as part of an emergency response team called out to traffic accidents, fires, and other life-threatening situations.

SFSC also offers a 300-hour course leading to employment as an emergency medical technician (EMT). EMTs provide entry-level patient care as part of an emergency response team.

SFSC also offers a two-year Associate in Science degree program in Emergency Medical Services, which includes training in both EMT and paramedic programs. Upon completing this program, graduates can work in a supervisory EMS capacity.

For more information, contact Steve Ashworth at 863-784-7272 or ashworths@southflorida.edu.



COURTESY PHOTO

Florida Treasures will be performed at South Florida State College on Saturday, Sept. 9.

SFSC offering free family friendly performances

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

South Florida State College Performing Arts together with the city of Avon Park and Sebring Radio Group will present four Kaleidoscope Series performances in the 250-seat SFSC University Center, Highlands Campus.

"What a wonderful opportunity for parents to bring their children to live, professional entertainment," said Cindy Garren, director, Cultural Programs. "Plus a food truck will be onsite so you can grab dinner before the show."

Free arts workshops for young people will be conducted one hour prior to each performance.

Florida Treasures, an interactive show written and performed by state touring artists, A.C.T. for Youth, is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 9, 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. A.C.T. for Youth is a professional company based in Orlando. Families will laugh and learn about Ponce De Leon, the settlement of Pensacola (Florida's "Almost Oldest" city),

the founding of St. Augustine, and the "original" Pocahontas story. Following the performance, families can attend a Meet and Greet with the performers. Free arts workshops will be conducted for children in the lobby before the show at 3 and 6 p.m.

La Orquesta Caribeño Tropicale performs the heritage rich sounds of the Caribbean and Latin America including Puerto Rico, Cuba, Republica Dominicana, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela and Peru on Saturday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m. Expect an evening of salsa, merengue, bachata, cumbia, bolero and danzon. A free percussion workshop will be offered for children at 6 p.m. in the lobby.

Direct from India, Partha Bose, a widely acknowledged Sitar player and a much respected artist in the arena of contemporary Hindustani Classical Music, will perform Saturday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m. Joined by Samir Chatterjee, one of India's leading tabla players, both musicians are recognized as

A-rated artists by All India Radio. This virtuosic performance is sponsored by the India Fine Arts Series at SFSC established by the Sonni Foundation.

2013 Soul Train Award Winner for Best Jazz Performance, Nicole Henry performs on Saturday, Sept. 30, 7 p.m. Since her debut in 2004, Nicole Henry has established herself as one of the jazz world's most acclaimed vocalists. Henry possesses a potent combination of dynamic vocal abilities, impeccable phrasing, and powerful emotional resonance. Her repertoire includes the American Songbook, classic and contemporary jazz titles, contemporary standards, blues, and originals; while her accompaniment ranges from a simple jazz trio to a full big band.

Nut n Fancy Food Truck will be onsite at all performances at 5 p.m. for dinners and snacks and seating is available in the

SFSC

FROM PAGE 1

lobby. No tickets are required for the performances. All seating is first come, first served. For persons requiring special accommodations, contact the SFSC Box Office at 863-784-7178. More information and videos are posted online

at www.sfscarts.org/kaleidoscope.

The SFSC Kaleidoscope Series is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

SFSC presents over 35 national and internationally touring artists at the 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts and the 250-seat SFSC University Center located on the Highlands Campus at

600 West College Drive in Avon Park. SFSC offers a Matinee Series for adults at leisure, Young People's Theater Series for school performances, Jazz Series, Trending Now Series of contemporary, family shows and the popular Artist Series.

Group rates and subscriptions are available online and at the SFSC Box Office. Upcoming performances

include: The Phantoms... Unmasked on Nov. 30, The Nutcracker on Dec. 5, and Grammy Award winner Petula Clark on Dec. 10.

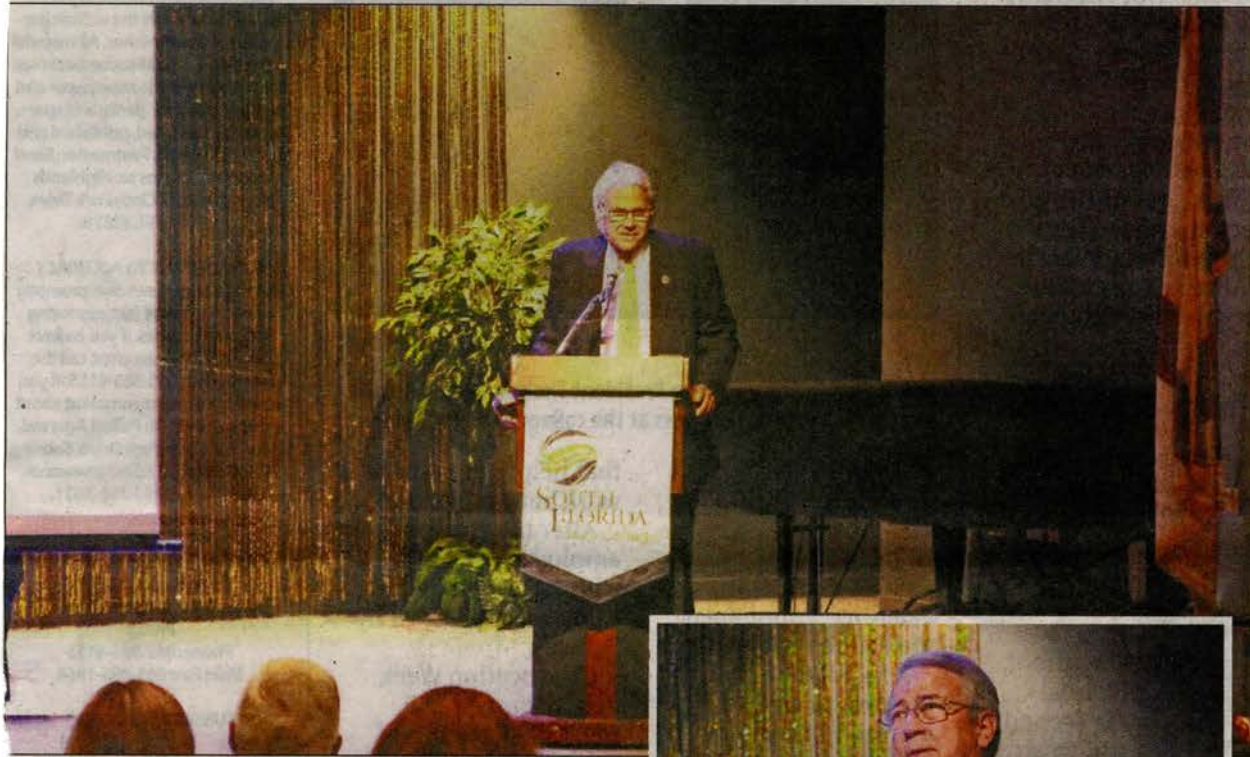
SFSC Performing Arts Box Office is at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts at 600 West College Drive in Avon Park on the

COURTESY PHOTO

Nicole Henry.



Welcome back



MARC VALERO/STAFF

South Florida State College President Thomas Leitzel speaks at the college's convocation at the University Center Monday morning.

SFSC convocation preps employees for fall term

By MARC VALERO
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — South Florida State College kicks off the 2017-18 academic year with its annual Convocation Week, which started Monday morning for faculty and staff in the University Center where college President Thomas Leitzel presented his fifth college update.

The song "Welcome Back" by John Sebastian played on the University Center's public address system to greet the returning faculty and staff who will be preparing for the first day of classes of the fall term, which starts Friday.

"We are going to be very busy, very soon,"

Leitzel said.

In introducing Board of Trustees Chairman Timothy Backer, Leitzel said Backer was the first person to greet him when he arrived for his first day as president of South Florida State College.

Backer welcomed the employees and expressed his appreciation for the jobs they are doing.

With Sound of Heart's "Crazy on You" as in introduction, Leitzel offered a recap on the "crazy" ups and downs for college funding during the 2017 legislative session.

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services Sidney

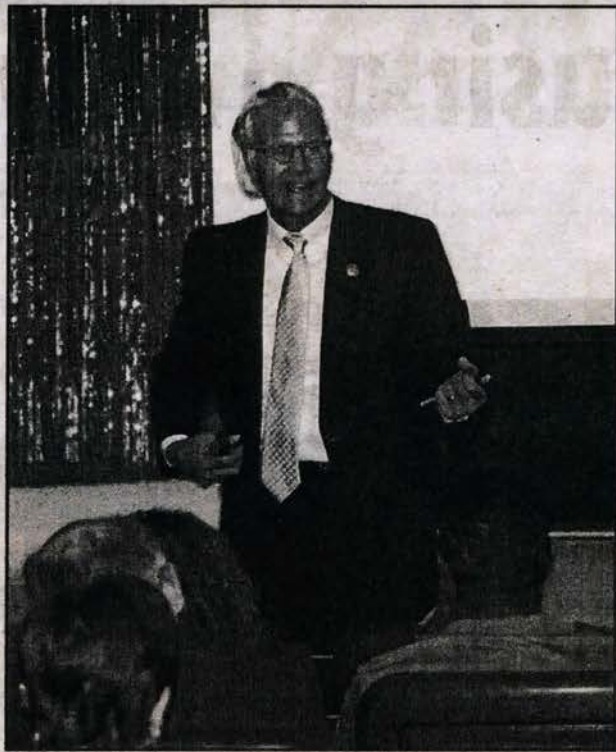


South Florida State College Board of Trustees Chairman Timothy Backer addresses faculty and staff during the college's convocation.

LET ME GO CRAZY ON YOU



South Florida State College President Thomas Leitzel prepares to speak about the ups and downs of the college funding process during the 2017 legislative session.



MARC VALERO/STAFF

South Florida State College President Thomas Leitzel demonstrates his air guitar prowess at the college's convocation.

SFSC

FROM PAGE 1

Valentine announced the academic awards.

A highlight of the program was a presentation by millennial generation expert Gabrielle Bosché.

She spoke of America's future with millennials in charge.

Bosché is the founder and president of The Millennial Solution, an international training and consulting company

that helps generations work better together.

After the convocation, employees enjoyed a luncheon in the cafeteria sponsored by Subway.

Convocation Week organizers have scheduled a series of department meetings, orientations and trainings.

There will be a new employee orientation 8 a.m. - noon today and a new employee luncheon, sponsored by the SFSC Foundation Inc.

Basic corrections graduates honored with ceremony

SPECIAL TO
HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Criminal Justice Academy recently recognized nine Basic Corrections 193 graduates at a ceremony on Aug. 14 at the Highlands campus.

SFSC 2017 basic corrections certificate graduates are Jeffery L. Banks, Sharon K. Brett, Alexandra Brock, Claudel Claude, Ty-Neisha S. Eaddy, Volney Glenn, Craig W. Masters, Brittnei T. McKeithan and Horace O. Nicholson.

Keynote speaker, Lt. H. Steven Levine, Florida Civil Commitment Center, addressed the graduates: "Today, as you graduate, you

should be ready to face all the challenges and the many personalities and attitudes that you will be exposed to in your new career. You're educated, disciplined, and prepared. You have learned and demonstrated teamwork and a solid work ethic. The staff and instructors have prepared you, but the rest is up to you. Your career and what you become are in your hands now."

Levin then turned to family members: "I ask that you be loving and supportive of these fine officers. They will not always show you the emotions they feel, and parts of their lives you may never understand. They will witness things that they may not discuss and encounter hard

times. Make the most of the time you have together, and take the time to educate yourselves about the profession. A number of publications are available that will help you strengthen your relationship and better understand the noble fraternity."

Special awards were presented to Brock for being the "Class Leader," for "top firearms score," and "top academic score." Glenn was recognized for being "class leader."

The SFSC Criminal Justice Academy provides the most current training available in the

areas of corrections, criminal justice, and law enforcement. Through the academy, students can earn their basic occupational certificates, complete recertification training, learn advanced and specialized skills, and earn their associate

degree in criminal justice technology.

For more information about SFSC's Criminal Justice Academy, contact Curtis Ivy, director of the criminal justice program at 863-784-7281 or Curtis.ivy@southflorida.edu.



COURTESY PHOTO

Basic corrections graduates from South Florida State College include, front row from left, Ty-Neisha S. Eaddy, Sharon K. Brett, Volney Glenn; middle row from left, Alexandra Brock, Jeffery L. Banks, Brittnei T. McKeithan; back row from left, Craig W. Masters, Claudel Claude, Horace O. Nicholson.

SFSC seeks grant to research growing olives

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — South Florida State College is seeking a grant to research growing olives commercially as an alternative to citrus.

The Hardee County Economic Development Council wants to assist citrus growers, who, due to citrus greening, are looking to covert to another crop, SFSC President Thomas Leitzel said Thursday.

The Hardee EDC's research showed that olive trees would be a viable option for growers in Florida.

They need money and assistance to do some test plots and help study it, Leitzel said, so Hardee EDC reached out to the college seeking a partnership in the effort.

South Florida State College submitted a proposal to the Florida Department of Agriculture, which was approved by the state

and forwarded to the federal government.

"We don't know the full funding amount yet, but we know we were approved through the Florida Department of Agriculture and hoping now that the U.S. Department of Agriculture funds it," Leitzel said.

A story from the Hardee County EDC — titled "Olives May be the New Oranges In Hardee County" — states olives may be the new big game in town and while this may come as a surprise to some, it makes sense when you consider environmental factors and the overall market for Florida-grown crops.

Olives are different than a lot of crops due to a number of factors and it is this that may make them adept to growing in Florida, the EDC notes. For example, olive trees require less water than other plants, which means that the natural rain we tend to

get during the summer is sufficient.

In Highlands County, after losing crops due to citrus greening, John Paul planted an olive grove in 2012 off Old State Road 8, a mile south of Archbold Biological Station.

Paul said Friday that consistent flooding on the property proved to be a major challenge.

He was not sure if the water problem was due to runoff from the road or a broken artesian well or something else.

"Whenever we were having a drought, our olive grove was being flooded and we could never find a source where the water was coming from, so about 50 percent of it got destroyed," he said.

"We do like olives; we thought it was really good, but we are trying to correct the flooding issue right now.

"We are going to revisit olives soon as more varieties become available for this type of area."

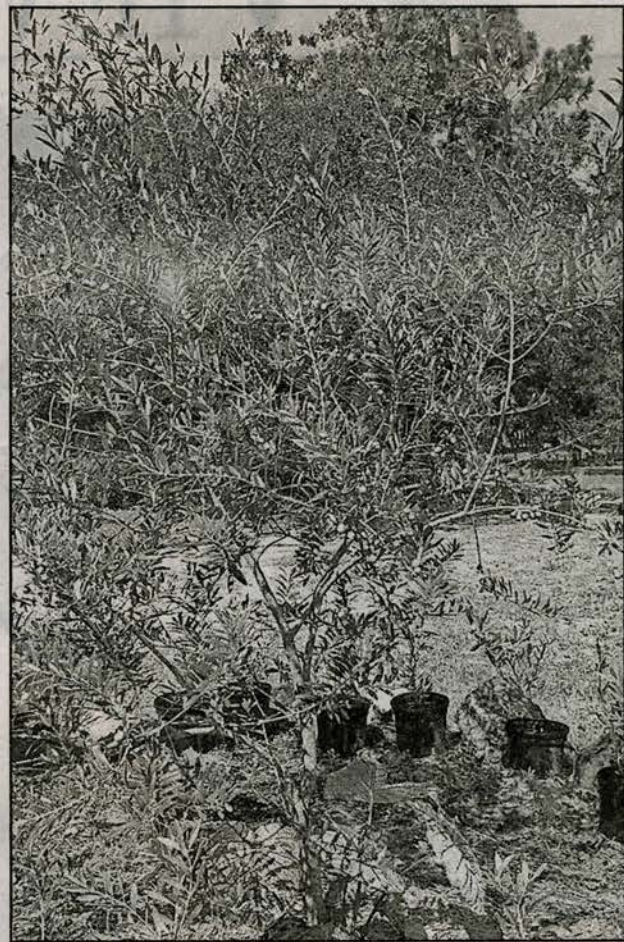


PHOTO PROVIDED BY FLORIDA OLIVE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

To assist the Hardee County Economic Development Council, South Florida State College is seeking a grant to study growing olives in Florida as a commercial crop.

SFSC's 'gold' ranking nets employees a bonus

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's "gold" ranking from the Florida Department of Education will lead to monetary bonus for the college's employees.

Only seven colleges among the 28 in the Florida College System achieved a gold ranking based on certain criteria, such as degrees and certificates awarded, retaining students, job placement and salaries for graduates.

In July, SFSC President Thomas Leitzel informed the college's Board of Trustees that SFSC will

get \$269,000 in non-recurring revenue.

In May the board approved a \$500 one-time salary supplement for all full-time employees.

At the July board meeting, Leitzel recommended an additional one-time salary supplement, which was approved unanimously by the Board of Trustees.

The additional one-time salary supplement will be awarded as follows:

- Full-time faculty - \$500 plus 1 percent of base salary.
- Full-time staff and administration - 1 percent of base salary.
- Part-time employees



FILE PHOTO

South Florida State College's "gold" ranking from the Florida Department of Education will lead to monetary bonus for the college's employees.

in regular established positions - \$400.

The salary supplement will be distributed

in the November payroll of employees who were hired before Feb. 1, 2017.

SFSC adds online program for bachelor's in nursing

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — A new online option of its Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN) program is available at South Florida State College this fall. SFSC introduced its traditional RN to BSN program in 2014.

Michele Heston, dean of Health Sciences at SFSC, said: "This program is designed for the working nurse and provides a

contemporary curriculum that is based on the Quality Caring Model.

The 2010 groundbreaking Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, called for increasing the number and percentage of nurses with bachelor of science in nursing degrees or higher. In response to that call, SFSC is providing greater access for nurses caring for patients and families in our service district and

beyond."

Prospective students may apply to begin the program in the fall or spring. online program allows a student to take classes at her or his own pace, several classes each academic term or, simply, one class.

SFSC's BSN program is a limited-access program. Admission is open only to those who have completed an associate's degree in nursing or its equivalent from a regionally or nationally

accredited institution, have a current unencumbered Florida registered nursing license, obtained a 2 grade point average on a 4 scale, have a minimum grade of C on all common prerequisites, and are certified in Basic Life Support (BLS) for the Healthcare Provider or higher through the American Heart Association.

The program will incorporate prior nursing education and experience with advanced nursing

practice, theory, concepts, and leadership skills. BSN course work will address topics related to leadership and management, informatics, community and public health, nursing theory, and research.

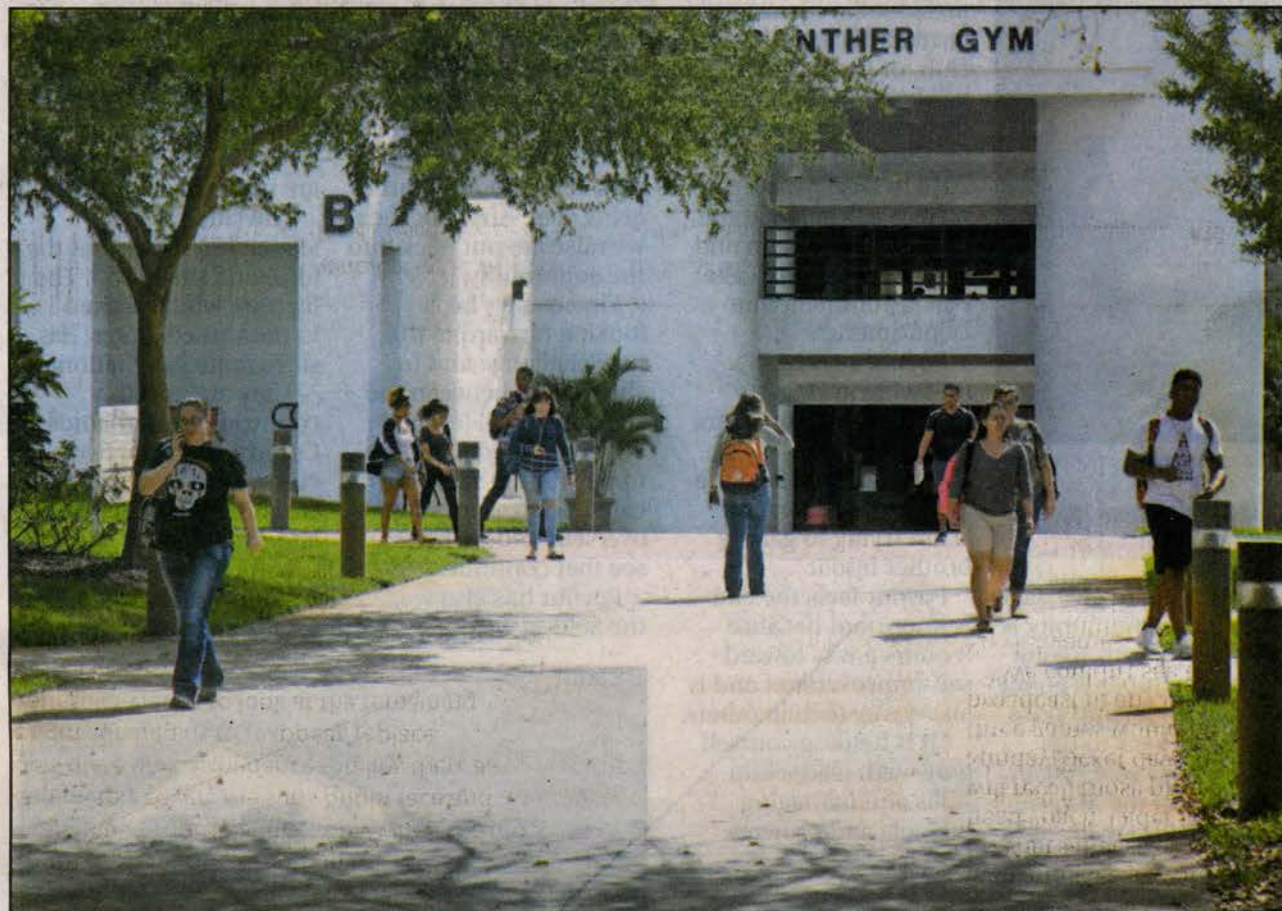
"A bachelor's degree in nursing opens doors to higher paying nursing positions by expanding the types of nursing duties RNs can perform and preparing them for positions in management and health education. Obtaining a bachelor's

degree in nursing can also qualify students for admission to a graduate nursing program," the college said.

SFSC's BSN program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, one of two accrediting bodies for nursing education that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

For more information about th, visit www.southflorida.edu or call 863-784-7027.

Collegiate high school



MARC VALERO/STAFF

The Collegiate High School program at South Florida State College is entering its third year helping students earn college credits while simultaneously completing their high school diploma.

More students are enrolled in the SFSC program

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Collegiate High School program is entering its third year of allowing students to earn college credits while simultaneously completing their high school diploma.

SFSC Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services Sidney Valentine said 23 students were in the program when it started in fall 2015. Enrollment for the fall term, which starts today, is 45, he said.

By enrolling in



**SOUTH
FLORIDA**
State College

Collegiate High School, students may be able to earn an Associate in Arts degree by the time they graduate from high school.

SFSC Collegiate High School students must be high school juniors or seniors and are expected to attend college classes

full-time and complete at least 30 credit hours of college coursework.

Valetine noted that early admission students can take all of their classes on the SFSC campus, while other collegiate high school students can have a blend of courses at the high school and the

college. In the second scenario, both the high schools and the college would receive state funding.

An early admission student is a student who is completing his or her high school diploma, is

COLLEGIATE

FROM PAGE 1

not enrolled as a dual enrollment student, and enters SFSC immediately before earning a high school diploma.

Valentine explained that Collegiate High School is funded through an articulation with each county school board.

School districts pay the standard tuition rate (\$71.98 per credit hour, \$2.33 per contact hour for fall and spring terms) from funds provided in

the Florida Education Finance Program to the institution when the instruction takes place on a college campus.

When dual enrollment is provided on the high school site by post-secondary institution faculty, the school district reimburses the costs associated with the proportion of salary and benefits and other actual costs of the post-secondary institution to provide the instruction.

When dual enrollment is provided on the high school site by school district faculty, the school

district is responsible only for the post-secondary institutions actual cost associated with the program, according to Florida statute.

Students planning to enroll in Collegiate High School should begin preparing in the ninth- and 10th-grade by taking a number of recommended courses, including two years of foreign language classes and completing English, algebra I, geometry and others.

For more details, contact the SFSC Advising and Counseling Center.



FILE PHOTO

In this December 2016 photo, academic advisor Rob Hampton talks to students during College for a Day at South Florida State College. More students are taking advantage of SFSC's Collegiate High School program.

Campus greetings



MARC VALERO/STAFF

South Florida State College staff and administrators welcomed students to the Fall term on Monday. Students lined up to receive a free T-shirt and register to win a television.

SFSC welcomes students to fall term

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER



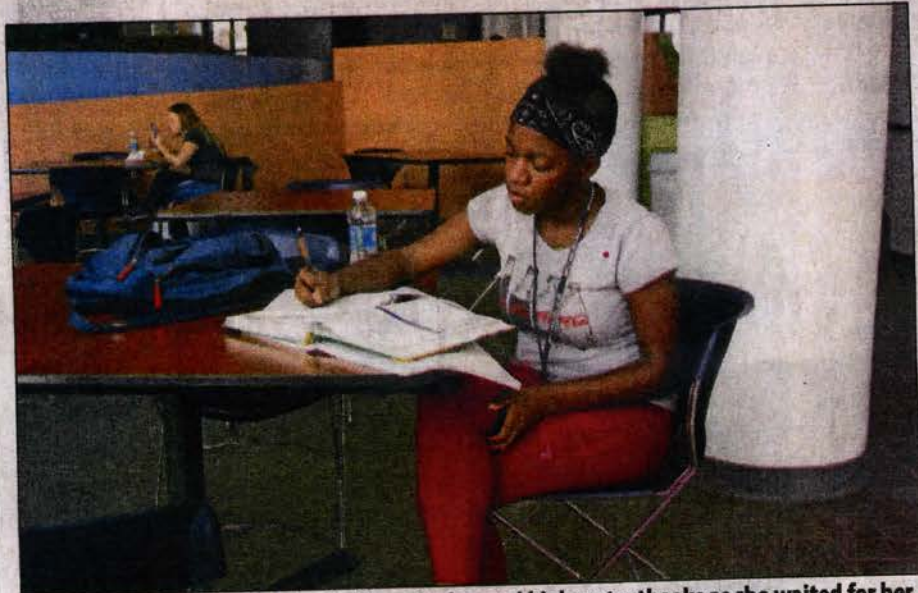
AVON PARK — The fall term at South Florida State College started with students arriving to a big welcome from staff and administrators near Building B and the University Center where students received free T-shirts on their way to their first class at the Highlands campus.

Also, students signed up for a chance to win a free television and staff passed out free popcorn, snow cones and water bottles.

"Enrollment is up and that's a good thing," said SFSC President Thomas Leitzel, who handed out chilled water bottles to the arriving students.

The college's new recruiter, Debra Moyer, had a big smile as she manned the popcorn machine and handed it out in bags.

STUDENTS | 4



Freshman Desha Galimore checked her algebra and biology textbooks as she waited for her first class.

STUDENTS

FROM PAGE 1

She has lived in Highlands County for about 26 years and had been a teacher for 15 years in the county.

Destini Henry checked her schedule on her cellphone to determine her first stop on the campus.

She noted she was in the early admission program

"This is my third year in high school, but I finished all my classes so I am actually early

admitted to the college and taking a full schedule of courses," she said.

A graduate of Sebring High, Henry, is starting her freshman year and will be studying photography and music production.

After completing her associate in arts degree at South Florida State College, she plans to transfer to FAMU (Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Tallahassee).

She prepared in Building B for her first two classes of the day — algebra and biology.

Henry's photography class starts today.

"I like taking pictures so why not use it to my advantage,

right?" she said.

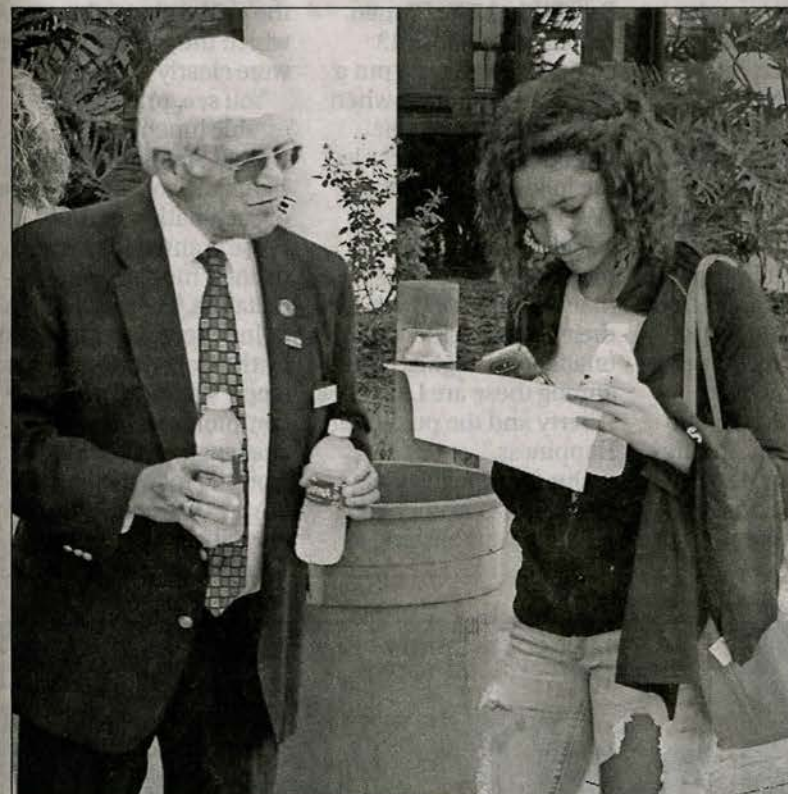
Sebring High graduate Michael Jordan, who is starting his freshman year at South Florida State College, was undecided about his major, but said his possibilities included journalism and digital media.

His first class of the term on Monday was political science.

Welcome stations were also set up inside the Health and Science Education Center and between Buildings I and Y.

Staff and administrators will be welcoming students again today starting at 7:30 a.m.

Registration ends today for the fall term and the first flex session.



South Florida State College Vice President of Administrative Services Glenn Little assists Destini Henry who was checking her schedule to locate her first class of the Fall term.



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Freshman Michael Jordan reviews his algebra textbook.

A view to an eclipse

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — Dozens gathered near Building B at South Florida State College to view Monday afternoon's solar eclipse.

The partly cloudy skies obscured the view at times, but those who ventured out marveled

at the rare celestial spectacle.

"It's really pretty," Madison Todd said.

Jermaine Soudatt said, "pretty cool, pretty cool, pretty cool; first time," he has seen a solar eclipse.

The college had a few pairs of viewing glasses that were passed around to offer a safe chance to

see the eclipse and some staff members had their own glasses.

Also, a couple of students made pinhole viewers.



MARC VALERO/STAFF

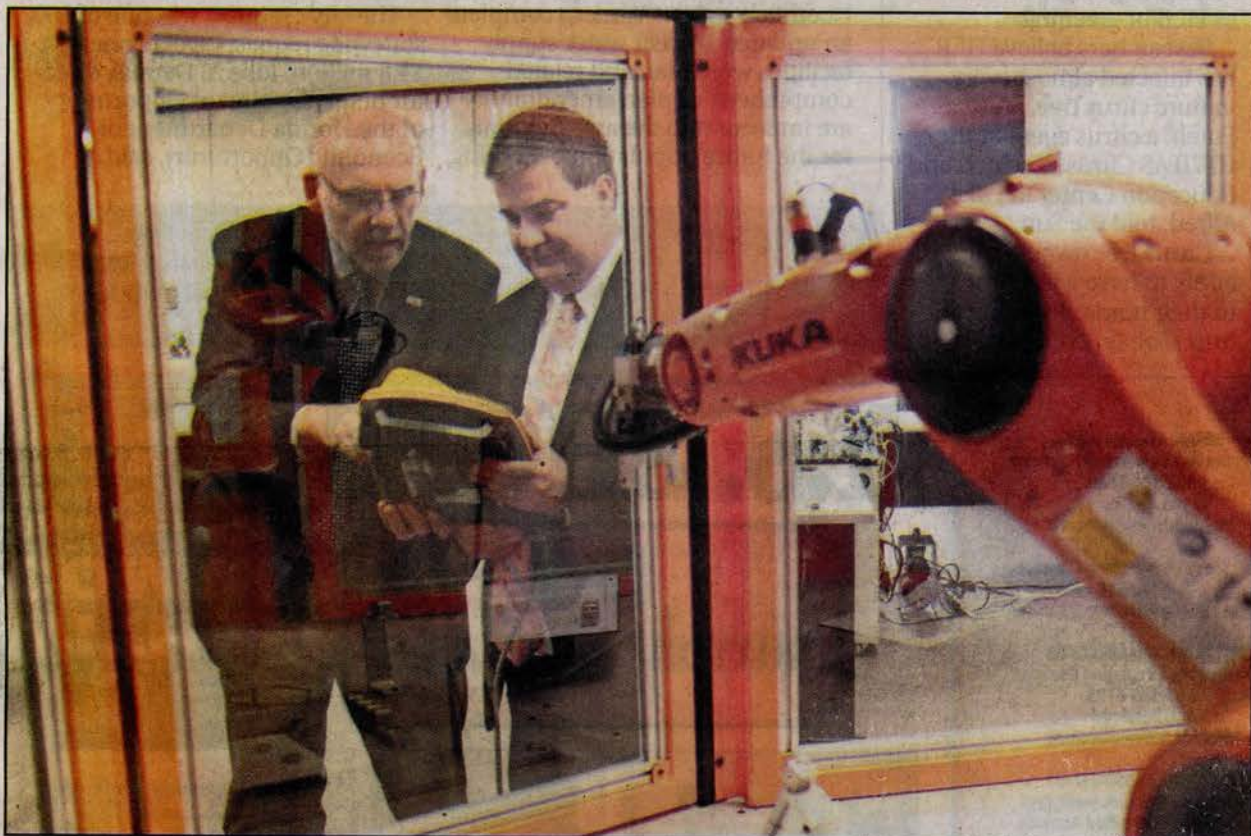
Above: The eclipse watch at South Florida State College.



Above: South Florida State College Director of Cultural Programs Cindy Garren views the eclipse.

Left: Lyndse Tribbitt and Valerie Nieves make pinhole viewers for the eclipse at the viewing locaiton at South Florida State College near Building B.

Mechatronics: Robotics of the next level



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Dean of Applied Sciences and Technologies Erik Christensen, left, shows the features of a control unit in the automation and robotics lab to Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services Sidney Valentine.

New SFSC program will start in January

By **MARC VALERO**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — The “T” in “Building T” at South Florida State College could mean “technology” these days, with laboratories featuring half a million dollars in

the latest in robotics, electronics, hydraulics and pneumatics training equipment.

A new program starting in January will prepare students for careers in the next generation of robotics - mechatronics - which combines numerous technical

disciplines.

The Highlands Campus, in Avon Park, will be the “center of excellence” for the program, by offering a central location for all the equipment and the studies, said Dean of Applied Sciences and Technologies Erik Christensen.

When asked what mechatronics is, Christensen responded, “You think of the title.”

“Mecha” is mechanical and “tronics” stands for electronics, he said. The relatively new field is a combination of multiple disciplines — mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, computer engineering and computer design, he said.

The college describes mechatronics as a multi-disciplinary subfield of engineering that deals with the design and operation of computer-controlled electro-mechanical systems.

Mechatronics engineers develop “new sustainable solutions to industrial issues and innovate machinery for modern use.”

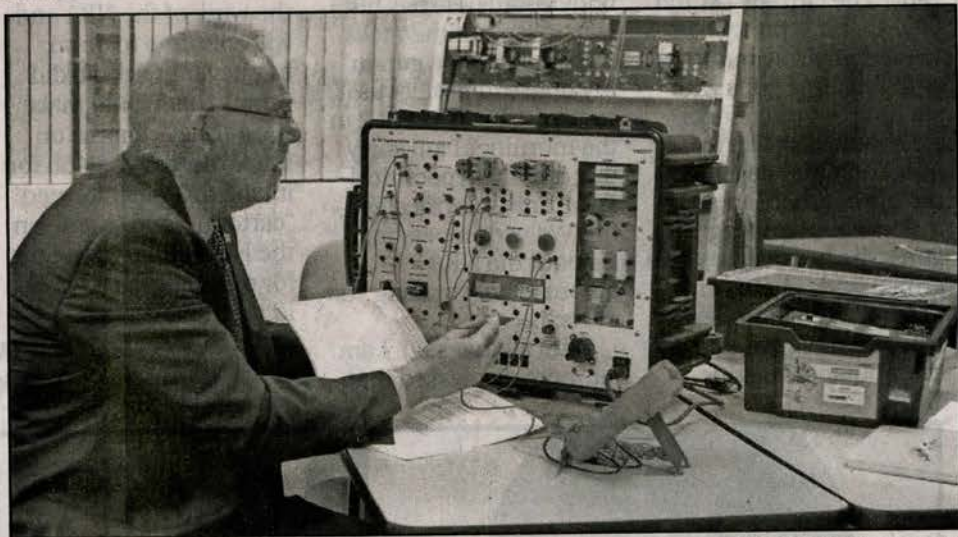
While the program will start in January, students can work on their general education courses



Director of HSI-STEM Project Tasha Morales examines a controller in the automation and robotics lab. South Florida State College received a \$5 million U.S. Department of Education Hispanic Serving Institutions Science, Technology, Engineering, Math grant to improve access to STEM degrees and career fields for students in the Heartland region.

"It's relatively new; it's a combination of multiple disciplines."

— SFSC Dean Erik Christensen



MARC VALERO/STAFF

SFSC Dean of Applied Sciences and Technologies Erik Christensen with a portable electronics training system.

ROBOTICS

FROM PAGE 1

now, said Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services Sidney Valentine.

"With this equipment, there are parts of it that will require different math courses," he said. Higher levels of math will be required for those planning to transfer to engineering programs at other institutions.

The focus of the applied sciences program is to prepare someone with the skills for a job right away, but several universities will accept the credits for students who seek a four-year degree, Christensen noted.

Christensen attended four weeks of mechatronics instructor certification training in July at the Siemens Technik Akademie (STA) in Berlin.

He learned the level I and level II Siemens approach to teaching, which is the "systems" approach focusing on the "why" something is done a particular way before delving into the "what" and the "how."

"Normally when you take a class, you learn all the specifics, and at the very end you have the application and put it all together," Christensen said. "We flip it and we start with the whole

thing and understand what the whole production line does and then go to each component and then each part, such as 'how does this sensor work?'"

Students can earn an Associate in Science (AS) degree in engineering technology, which will fully transfer to Daytona State College's Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology (BSET).

That program prepares graduates for jobs such as systems engineer, process analyst, technical sales engineer, project engineer, and calibration engineer.

Students can also earn college credit certificates in mechatronics, engineering technology support specialist, automation, lean manufacturing pneumatics, hydraulics and motors for manufacturing and CNC (computer numerical control) machinist.

SFSC received a nearly \$5 million, five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which is helping fund the new program and other programs under the theme of "Re-Engineering our Future."

Due to its growing Hispanic student population, SFSC received The Hispanic Serving Institutions (HIS) Science, Technology, engineering, Math (STEM) grant to improve access to STEM degrees and career fields for students in the Heartland region.

SFSC honors basic corrections grads

By **DEBORAH LATTER**

SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

South Florida State College's Criminal Justice Academy recently recognized nine basic corrections graduates at a ceremony on Aug. 14.

SFSC 2017 basic corrections certificate graduates are Jeffery L. Banks, Sharon K. Brett, Alexandra Brock, Claudel Claude, Ty-Neisha S. Eaddy, Volney Glenn, Craig W. Masters, Brittini T. McKeithan, and Horace O. Nicholson.

Keynote speaker Lt. H. Steven Levine, Florida Civil Commitment Center, addressed the graduates. "Today, as you graduate, you should be ready to face all the challenges and the many personalities and attitudes that you will be exposed to in your new career. You're educated, disciplined, and prepared. You have learned and demonstrated teamwork and a solid work ethic. The staff and instructors have prepared you, but the rest is up to you. Your career and what you become are in your hands now."

Levine then turned to family members. "I ask that you be loving and supportive of these fine officers. They will

not always show you the emotions they feel, and parts of their lives you may never understand. They will witness things that they may not discuss and encounter hard times. Make the most of the time you have together, and take the time to educate yourselves about the profession. A number of publications are available that will help you strengthen your relationship and better understand the noble fraternity."

Special awards were presented to Alexandra Brock for being the "class leader," for "top firearms score," and "top academic score." Volney Glenn was also recognized for being "class leader."

The SFSC Criminal Justice Academy provides the most current training available in the areas of corrections, criminal justice and law enforcement. Through the academy, students can earn their basic occupational certificates, complete recertification training, learn advanced and specialized skills, and earn their associate degree in criminal justice technology.

For more information about SFSC's Criminal Justice Academy, call Curtis Ivy at 863-784-7281 or email Curtis.ivy@southflorida.edu.



PHOTO PROVIDED

South Florida State College recently honored its Basic Corrections program grads: Ty-Neisha S. Eaddy, Sharon K. Brett, Volney Glenn; Alexandra Brock, Jeffery L. Banks, Brittini T. McKeithan, Craig W. Masters, Claudel Claude and Horace O. Nicholson.

South Carolina Ballet holding local youth auditions

Company looking for area youngsters to have roles in production

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

The sumptuous, holiday classic, *The Nutcracker*, returns to South Florida State College's Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on Dec. 7, 7 p.m., for one performance. Auditions for children and youth on Saturday, Aug. 26, begin at 9 a.m.

South Carolina Ballet produces what critics have described as "some of the highest quality cultural entertainment in the Southeast." It attracts not only audiences from all over the southeast, but also quality dancers from all over the country. Entering its 57th season, South Carolina Ballet travels to 15 cities in three states performing a full ballet season.

William Starrett, artistic director of Columbia City Ballet, will conduct local auditions at SFSC Panther Gym, Highlands Campus on Saturday, Aug. 26. Many roles are available for both boys and girls, from mice to soldiers to candy canes and more. 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," said Cindy Garren, director, SFSC Cultural Programs.

Children ages 5 and 6 who have completed kindergarten audition at 9 a.m. Children ages 7 to 10 audition at 10 a.m., and youth 11 years and older audition at noon.

Children should wear a leotards, tights, and ballet shoes or shorts and a plain white T-shirt with comfortable shoes. Sandals or flip flops are not permitted. No audition fee is required, but

all children cast in the production are required to pay a small costume rental fee which covers cleaning and repairs.

Rehearsals will be held on Saturday mornings beginning Oct. 21. The final rehearsal schedule will be presented at the auditions. Costume fittings and a dress rehearsal will be held during the day on Tuesday, Dec. 7, and all children are required to attend. The *Nutcracker* will be performed at 7 p.m.

Children under the age of 16 without a parent or adult chaperone in attendance will not be permitted to

audition. Parents are not allowed to attend the audition, and all casting decisions are made by artistic director, William Starrett. Nancy McDuffee is the local dance instructor.

This performance is funded in part by a

BALLET | 7

COURTESY PHOTO

The party scene from "The Nutcracker."



BALLET

FROM PAGE 6

grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Florida Department of Cultural Affairs. Sponsors are Dr. Catherine Cornelius, Joan Hartt, Dr. Andrew and Beth Kulick and Carol Emery.

For more information or to get an audition form, go to sfscarts.org/auditions. If you have any questions, please email culturalperformances@southflorida.edu. Please do not call the SFSC Box Office which is closed until Oct. 23.

COURTESY PHOTO

Right: Clara is surrounded by mice during a scene from "The Nutcracker."



Thursday, August 24, 2017

CPR, basic life support offered

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Corporate Education Department is CPR and basic life support classes.

The CPR training classes with basic life support, through the American Heart Association, is being offered for students who are new or need renewal training on how to perform CPR, as well as other lifesaving skills, in a wide variety of in-hospital and out-of-hospital settings.

Students will participate in simulated clinical scenarios and learning stations, work with an American Heart Association Certified BLS Instructor to complete Basic Life Support skills practice and skills testing, and complete a written exam. Cost is \$55.

First aid training classes provide employee training for designated first responders or

individuals needing credentialed training for job or regulatory requirements. This course covers first aid basics, medical, injury and environmental emergencies, and automated external defibrillator AED use. Students will also complete a written exam. The cost is \$55.

For a detailed class schedule for either session contact CorporateTraining@southflorida.edu or call 863-784-7033.

From aquabics to zumba



KATARA SIMMONS/ CORRESPONDENT

SFSC Purchasing Specialist Pam Vestal, community attendee Melanie Buck, instructor Lauren Redick/SFSC Staff Assistant II and SFSC Administrative Assistant, Arts and Sciences Cathy Lewis take part in aquabics, a water exercise class at SFSC.

SFSC offers many classes for the public

By **CHRISTOPHER TUFFLEY**
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — One of the greatest assets South Florida State College provides Highlands County is its Department of Corporate and Community Education.

The corporate side of the department helps businesses and employers conduct professional training programs for their employees.

The community side provides a wide variety of enrichment programs that vary from a children's camp during the summer to the Life Long Learners program that runs during the season, from January to March.

What most people don't know is that neither side of the department receives any funding from the college, the state or the federal government. It is strictly consumer supported, which is why every class has to have at least five registered members.

Lorrie Key is the director of the department. After 37 years working at the college in a variety of roles, she said, "I absolutely have to say this is my absolute favorite (job). People call asking for a particular course and that's where my work starts." She's the one responsible for gathering students, finding an instructor, and building a syllabus.

There are continuing education classes currently available in art (painting and sculpting), writing, Spanish and aquatic exercise. "We try to accommodate every situation, and keep the costs minimal," she said.

In the past, a course in Italian was offered, as was a class in using smart phones. Both of these could easily be restarted if people showed an interest.

Life Long Learners will be gearing up come January.



KATARA SIMMONS/ CORRESPONDENT

SFSC Purchasing Specialist Pam Vestal spends her lunch break doing an aquabics class at college's pool in Avon Park.



A class enjoys aquabics at the South Florida State College pool recently.

CLASSES

FROM PAGE 1

Members meet from 9 a.m. to noon every Thursday.

There are two speakers

at every session and a field trip once a month. Registration for the entire package is \$99. Individualized selections are available at \$12 a session. For more information contact Key at 784-7033 or at lorrie.

key@southflorida.edu.

Right now in Lake Placid the college offers an exercise class that features zumba, yoga and time in place (exercise in a chair).

In Avon Park, a lunch-hour class in water exercise is ongoing through August. Because it has met the minimum required registered members, individuals are welcome to drop in for \$5 a session. The classes are held from noon to 1 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday.

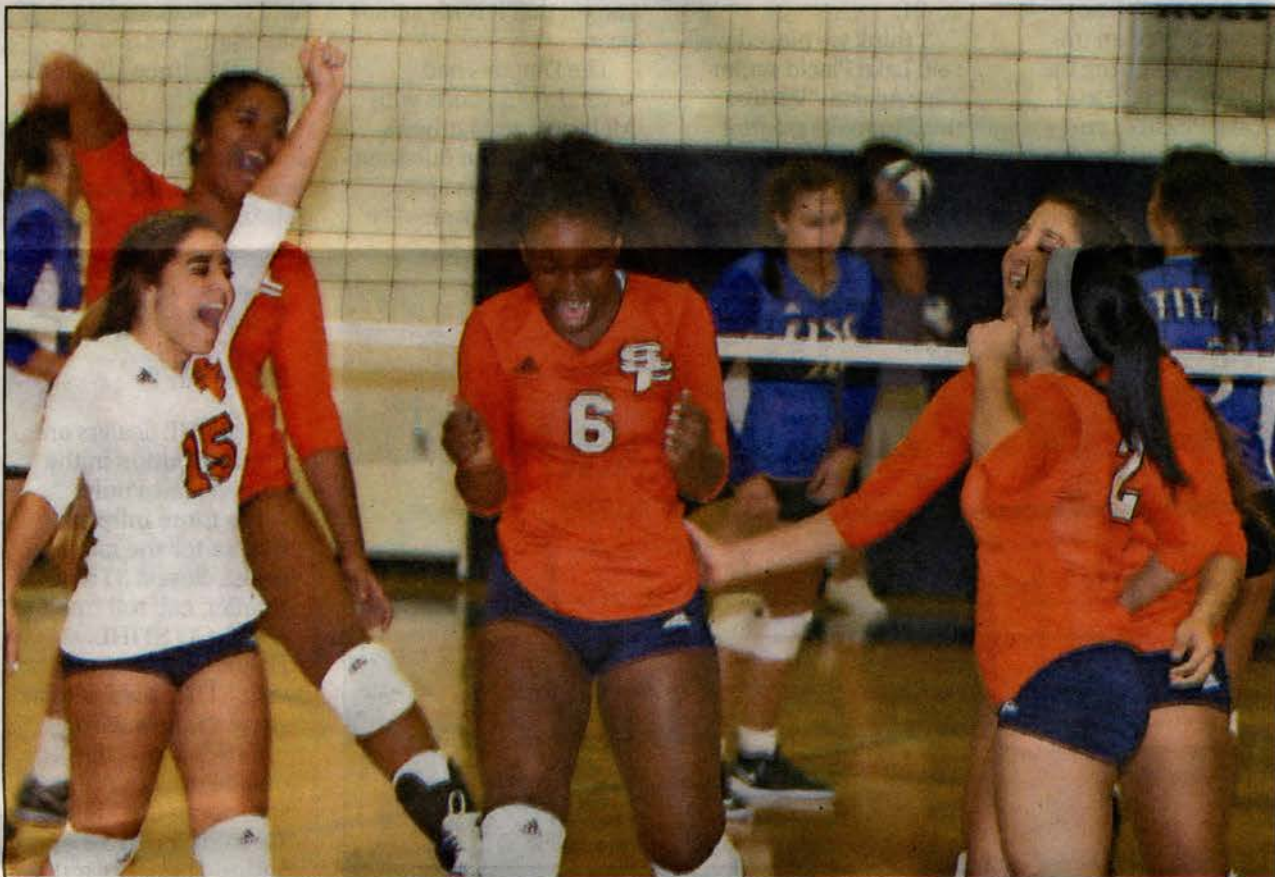
A new session will be offered from Sept. 7 to Sept. 28 on Mondays and Thursdays, also at lunchtime. The registration fee is \$45 for the month. There are no other charges. For more information call Lauren Redick at 784-7405.



KATARA SIMMONS/ CORRESPONDENT

Pam Vestal uses aqua barbells during a water exercise class at SFSC.

Panthers knock off Titans



MARK PINSON/STAFF

South Florida's Jeysamar Velez (15), Monet Butler (6) and Michelle Reyes (2) celebrate after winning the match against Eastern Florida State College on Tuesday night.

South Florida beats Eastern Florida to open season

By **MARK PINSON**
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK - The South Florida State College volleyball team is fairly young, but after beating Eastern Florida State College in its season opener on Tuesday night, expectations are on the rise.

The Panthers, who started five freshmen, won the thrilling five-set match over the Titans by scores of 25-22, 25-20, 14-25, 23-25 and 15-9.

"It was a good way to start the season," said veteran South Florida volleyball coach Kim Crawford. "Our defense and court coverage was amazing. We had five freshmen starting and I didn't know what to expect in our first match of the season, but after watching how we played my expectations are sky high for this team."

The first set was a close affair with South Florida

holding off the Titans for a 25-22 win.

The second set was dominated by the Panthers as hitters Shadaisha Summerall, Nashali Velez, Emma Rustenberghe and Monet Butler took turns blasting kill shots into open spaces in the Eastern Florida defense.

The Panthers used excellent sets by sophomore Sarah Castillo to dominate the play at the net en route to a 21-17 lead.

Eastern Florida used strong serving to claw back within 21-20.

But a bad serve proved costly for the Titans as South Florida ripped off a pair of points on spikes by Butler. Velez then drilled a kill shot down the line to seal the second set victory by a score of 25-20.

Eastern Florida, down by two sets, refused to fold and rallied to win the third set behind strong



South Florida's Nashali Velez spikes the ball during Tuesday night's win over Eastern Florida State College.

net play and numerous kill shots from its talented front line.

The fourth set was tight as the Titans opened up a 19-17 lead.

Eastern Florida led

23-22 before a pair of cross-court spikes sewed up the victory for the Titans.

The win forced a fifth-set

PANTHERS

FROM PAGE 9

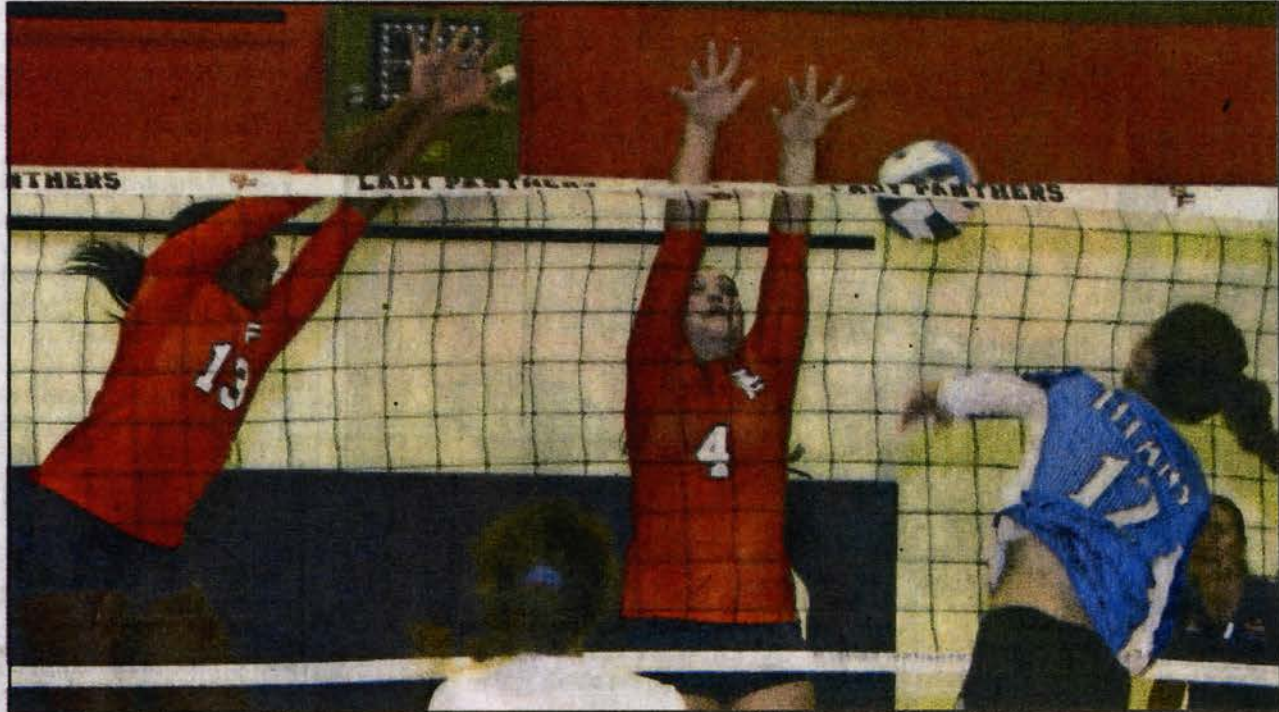
15-point rally to determine the winner.

South Florida wasted no time taking charge as Summerall and Butler got untracked with monster spikes and a pair of blocks to help the Panthers open up a commanding 9-3 lead over the stunned Titans.

A time out by Eastern Florida State College did little to stop the South Florida offense as Velez and Summerall found the range with a pair of spikes.

On match point, Castillo set a beautiful ball for Butler who smashed it down the middle of the court between a pair of Titans to give the Panthers the exciting victory.

"This team is scrappy, likes to fight and never gives up," said Crawford.



MARK PINSON/STAFF

South Florida State College's Shadaisha Summerall (13) and Emma Rustenberghe (4) go for a block during Tuesday night's season-opening volleyball match against Eastern Florida State College. The Panthers beat the Titans in five exciting sets.

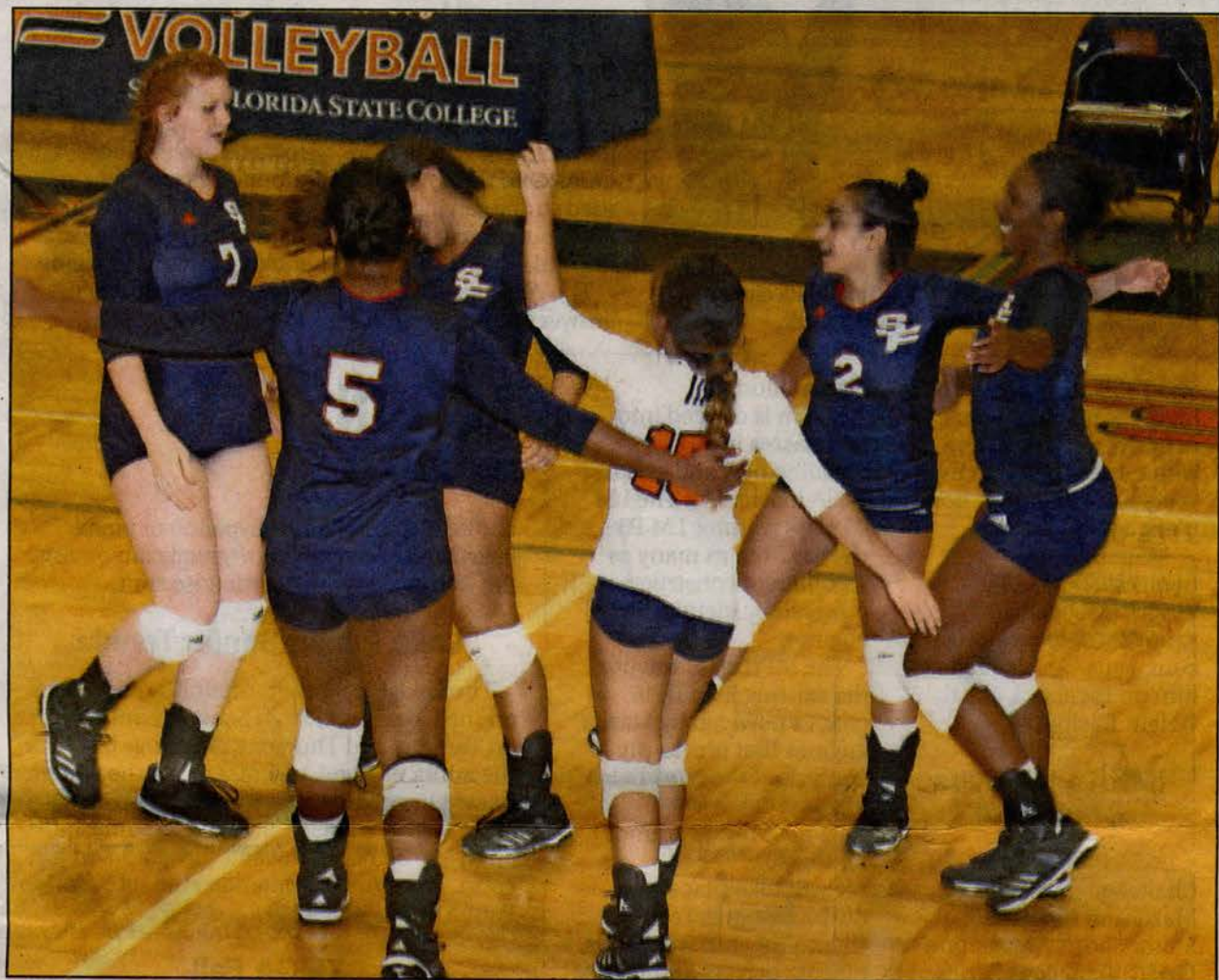
"The two sets we lost were because we struggled with our serve-receive which affected our offense. Our front line did a good job

and Jeysamar Velez was outstanding at libero. I'm really pleased with how we played and I just raised my expectation

bar a bunch. I'm going to have to push the girls a little to get the most out of them because we have a lot of potential."

South Florida is back on the court for a home match tonight against the College of Central Florida. Tip-off is set for 6 p.m.

Panthers whip Warriors



MARK PINSON/STAFF

South Florida State College volleyball players celebrate beating the Webber International University junior varsity on Tuesday night.

South Florida sweeps Webber University JV

By **MARK PINSON**

HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK - The South Florida State College volleyball team bounced back from its first loss of the season with a resounding three-set win over the Webber International University junior varsity squad on Tuesday night.

The Panthers, who rolled to the easy victory by scores of 25-15, 25-15, 25-13, improved to 2-1 on the season.

"It was a team effort and everybody played," said veteran South Florida State College volleyball coach Kim Crawford. "It was a good way to come back after losing to a very talented College of Central Florida squad last week.

We always look forward to playing Webber University because it's a fun match. We came out focused and played hard which is what we want to do in every match. We don't want to play down to the competition, but maintain our level of play no matter who the opponent is."

South Florida came out strong to start the match and jumped to a quick lead behind solid net play from Monet Butler, Leigha Reynolds and Shadaisha Summerall.

The Warriors rallied behind excellent serving and solid defense to close the gap midway through the first set.

South Florida regrouped and stormed back to reel



South Florida's Shadaisha Summerall (13) Leigha Reynolds (3) stop a shot by Webber University's Steshawna Richardson during Tuesday night's match.

PANTHERS

FROM PAGE 9

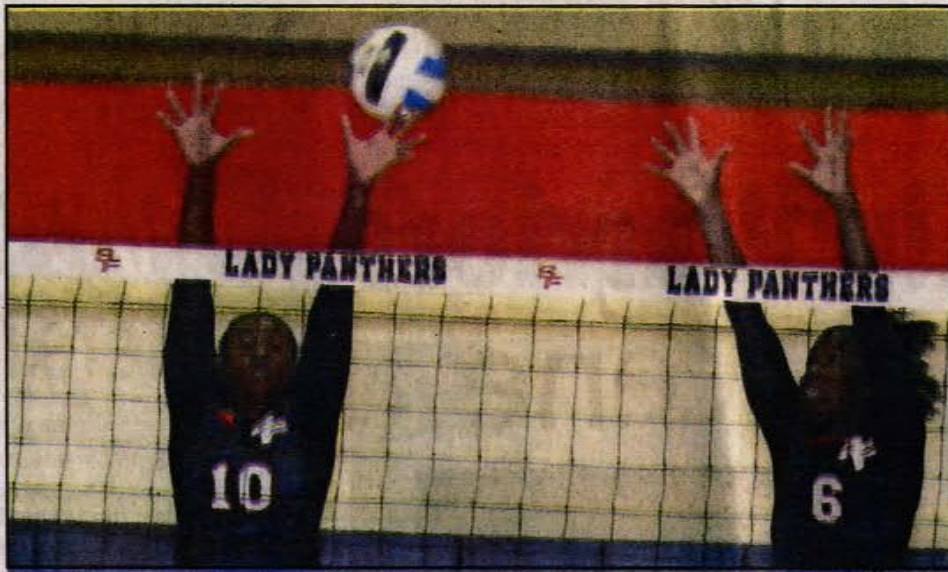
off a string of points en route to the 25-15 win.

"It was a good start and I told the girls what matters is how you play every point," Crawford said.

"We have to stay at a high level all the way through a match if we want to reach our potential this season."

The Panthers and Warriors battled on even terms early in the second set with the score tied at 3.

South Florida's Michelle Reyes, Sarah Castillo and Nashali Velez took over with several spikes



MARK PINSON/STAFF

South Florida State College's Kayla Wood (10) and Monet Butler (6) jump for a block during Tuesday night's win over the Webber International University junior varsity squad.

by each increasing the Panthers lead to 10 points.

The Warriors struggled with numerous unforced errors and South Florida eased to the 25-15 win.

"We were able to get all the girls some valuable floor time," Crawford said. "We tried some different looks and the girls responded well."

South Florida made sure there was no comeback by Webber University in the third set as the more athletic Panthers dominated the net and used strong serving to jump out to a commanding lead.

The Warriors had no answer for the powerful

Panthers offense and offered little resistance as South Florida finished off the 25-13 victory.

South Florida faces a much sterner test in tonight's match against Indian River State College. Tip-off is set for 6 p.m.

"Indian River has a real good team and has had their way with us the last couple of years," Crawford said. "We will have to be ready to play from the opening tip if we want to start turning things around against them. This group of girls works hard, gets along and we're looking forward to seeing how we stack up against Indian River."