

# A very good year



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Dean of Applied Sciences and Technologies Erik Christensen introduces highlights of the past year at South Florida State College in a video titled "Year in Review 2017."

# SFSC's 'Year in Review' video features highlights of 2017

By **MARC VALERO**  
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — South Florida State College had plenty of high points from 2017 in the form of awards, achievements, recognitions, scholarship, athletics and new programs and initiatives.

To sum up its successful year and the successes of its faculty and students, SFSC presents a

6 1/2 minute video titled "Year in Review 2017" on its Website's homepage.

Speaking from the new Mechatronics lab, Dean of Applied Sciences and Technologies Erik Christensen and Director of HSI STEM Program Tasha Morales serve as the video's hosts with opening and closing statements.

Prior to the slide show of the

2017 highlights, Morales said, "We would like to show you why SFSC has earned a reputation for exceptional quality as a learning institution, a cultural epicenter and a community leader.

The highlights included:

- Florida College System Gold Status Institution based on exceptional performance in retention, completion, job placement/continuing education and entry-level wages.

- SFSC is eligible for the 2019 Aspen Prize for community college excellence for the fifth consecutive time.

- The Spring Term 2017 enrollment increased by 8 percent.

- During 2016-17, overall enrollment grew by 3.5 percent.

- Professor of mathematics J.J. Moye and professor of computer networking technology Brian Bohlman were awarded the National Institute for Staff and Office Development Excellence in Teaching Award.

- SFSC was recognized for the second time as a most promising place to work in Community Colleges Diverse Issues in Higher Education Magazine.

- 97.9 percent of graduates are satisfied they attained their educational goals at SFSC.

- 97.6 percent of regional employers are satisfied with the job performance of SFSC graduates.

In closing, Christensen said, "As we enter 2018, SFSC will continue to serve its students by offering programs that challenges them and prepares them for bright and prosperous futures."

Morales said, "SFSC will continue to support its communities by working hand-in-hand on economic development."



MARC VALERO/STAFF

Director of HSI STEM Program Tasha Morales offers opening and closing comments on South Florida State College's 'Year in Review 2017' video.

# 'Storied Pasts' features etchings, paintings

By MEGAN SMITH

NEWS CLERK

AVON PARK — Art lovers flocked to the South Florida State College Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC) for the Third Thursday Reception and Artist Talk with artist Larry Vienneau.

Vienneau's "Storied Past" series features etchings and paintings of the Raven and the Crow, inspired by countless stories, fables and myths throughout history, and is currently being featured at MOFAC.

Each piece in the series is paired with a story that explains the inspiration and meaning behind it.

Vienneau drew inspiration from tales from around the globe and across time. "There's so many stories about, you know, the Raven and the Crow in mythology and Aesop's fables, that I won't run out," Vienneau said.

He began working on this series when he was living in Alaska and was working as an illustrator.

He lived in Alaska for 12 years and decided to move to Florida to be closer to his family. "When I finally got to Florida, I really didn't know what direction my artwork was going to take, and I just kept coming back to the ravens," Vienneau said.

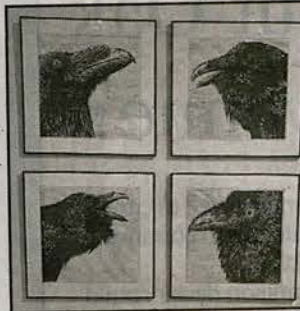
Most of the pieces are prints made by etching a zinc plate with acid and hand engraving it or drawing it on a photo-polymer plate and exposing it to light and water, then hand inking the plates and pressing them on to paper.

The pieces can take anywhere from 15 to 40 minutes to print. "Having to carve into something or engrave into something and then print something and have something be ultimately very unpredictable with prints. You can somewhat control a painting, but a print, you just never know. There's a kind of



MEGAN SMITH/STAFF

Artist Larry Vienneau standing next to his print "Thought and Memory" based on Norse mythology.



"Unkind Conversations" 1-4 prints by Larry Vienneau.

an exciting factor to that, too," MOFAC curator Megan Stepe said about Vienneau's printing process.

"The images are important but the stories go with them," Vienneau said. "One of the reasons I have the stories is that people don't read anymore, you know? They don't take time to let it soak in."

Stepe said: "He uses this sophisticated medium to convey (these stories.) All of these start out as drawings. Larry is a master draftsman, and then he produces all of these prints from them. ...The craftsmanship involved melds well into the richness of the stories



"Inquisition," an acrylic with gold and copper relief by Larry Vienneau.

themselves. There's a nice reciprocity with it."

Storied Pasts will be on display at MOFAC until Thursday, Feb. 8.

Vienneau will also hold a workshop/demo where he will cover making acorn-ink and art-pens from various natural elements from 3:45 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8.

MOFAC is at the South Florida State College Highlands Campus, 600 W. College Drive. For more information, call 863-784-7240, or visit [www.MOFAC.org](http://www.MOFAC.org).

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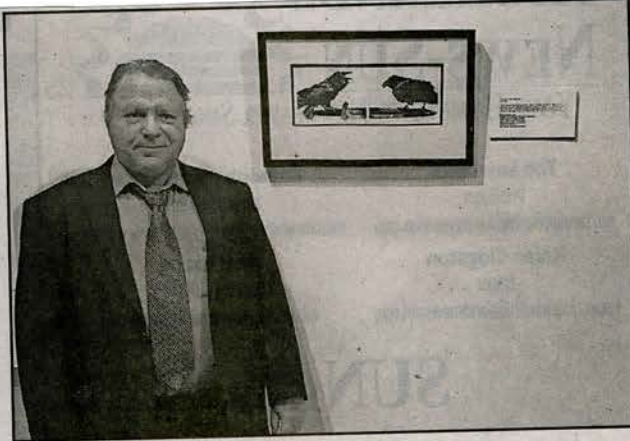
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# SFSC golf event raises big money



COURTESY PHOTO

The 12 finalists for the Million Dollar Shootout at Sun 'N Lake Golf Club.

Million Dollar Shootout raises more than \$10,000 for Panther athletics

**SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN**

Four winners emerged from a pack of 12 qualifiers during South Florida State College (SFSC) Foundation's inaugural Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout on Saturday.

Although no one snagged the \$1 million prize, four top golfers hit

balls closest to the hole. They were Scott Hitt in first place, whose golf ball came within 15-feet, 4.5-inches of the hole; Jose Jimenez in second place, 23-feet, 9-inches; John Vicker Jr. in third place, 27-feet, 6-inches; and Michael Kelly in fourth place, 34-feet, 6.5-inches away.

The three-day golf shootout began on Thursday, Jan. 18 and was held at Sun 'N Lake Golf and Country Club in Sebring. In spite of the frosty weather on Thursday and Friday, more than 70 golfers turned out to vie for \$1 million. Each of the final 12 qualifiers had one

chance to win the \$1 million on Saturday by shooting a hole-in-one at the par 3 18th hole.

The golfers who rounded out the group of 12 qualifiers were: Michael Bloss, Peter Davidson, Jim Doty, Ken Dunbar, John Jarrabeck, Ted McCahill, Jeff Taylor and Richard Sinclair.

"We are pleased with the results of the Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout," said Jamie Bateman, executive director, SFSC Institutional Advancement, who oversees the SFSC Foundation. "With the support of our event sponsor, MidFlorida Credit Union, award

sponsor Heacock Insurance, and many other sponsors and those who braved the cold by participating in the event, we were able to raise more than \$10,000. Plans are in place for next year in hopes that someone will win the \$1 million prize."

Proceeds from the golf shootout will be used to benefit the SFSC Athletic Department. SFSC fields four athletic teams: women's volleyball, women's cross country, men's baseball and women's softball. SFSC's student athletes assisted golfers at the shootout.



COURTESY PHOTO

◆ Scott Hitt, third from left, receives his \$500 gift card for winning the Million Dollar Shootout.

# GOLF

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“What an enjoyable event,” said Rick Hitt, SFSC athletic director. “Our participants were outstanding in posting competitive qualifying scores, and we had a great shootout for our 12 qualifiers. Even though we didn’t have a hole-in-one winner this year, our consolation prizes

were well represented with quality shots into the challenging 18th green on Deer Run at Sun ‘N Lake. Thank you to all of our participants, sponsors, and volunteers, and we look forward to putting on another outstanding event next year.”

The first place winner was awarded a \$500 gift card, second place a \$250 gift card, third place a \$100 gift card, and fourth place a \$50 gift card.



## Golfing for big money

SFSC athletics raise \$10,000 with Million Dollar Shootout

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# SFSC Board extends Leitzel's contract

**By MARC VALERO**  
STAFF WRITER

**AVON PARK** — The South Florida State College Board of Trustees once again gave top marks to President Thomas Leitzel during his annual performance review.

The Board unanimously agreed to extend Leitzel's presidency by one year approving

a three-year contract starting July 1, 2018 and concluding June 30, 2021.

Board of Trustees Vice Chair Tami Cullens said Monday that under the leadership of Leitzel, SFSC continues as a high performing institution.

"He actually exceeds all of our expectations for being the president and it has taken us to the level of being a Gold Level

college for the state," she said. "He has made our performance very high in the state according to the way the Legislature wants it at this point."

"So we are more than happy with having him continue with us."

Board of Trustees member Joe Wright said from the first day at SFSC Leitzel has been as promised.

"He is a dynamic

leader; he is innovative," Wright said. Also, the college achieved the Gold Level recognition from the state in 2017.

"We are one of the smaller state colleges and yet we have superior performance; it's a team approach, but it takes superior leadership and he provides it," Wright said.

Leitzel became the college's president on

July 1, 2013.

Also, at its January meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the 2018-19 Academic Calendar.

The Fall 2018 Term will be Aug. 17 - Dec. 12; the Spring 2019 Term will be Jan. 7 - May 5 and the summer 2019 Term will be May 8 - Aug. 1.

The calendar includes the dates for the three flex sessions in both the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 Terms and the two flex sessions of the Summer 2019 Term.



**Leitzel**

The calendar includes registration dates and other significant academic dates.



# 'Let's do the Twist'

## Chubby Checker, Mary Wilson to play at SFSC

Special to Highlands Sun

Grammy Award winner Chubby Checker and the legendary Mary Wilson of The Supremes will appear at South Florida State College (SFSC) in Avon Park on Thursday, Feb. 1 at 7 p.m. in the 1460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts. The performance is sponsored by William J. Krenlich and funded in part by the state of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. Tickets are \$45-\$65.

Checker, who was born Ernest Evans in 1941 in Spring Gulley, S.C., grew up in Philadelphia. As a young boy, he worked various jobs shining shoes, selling ice and assisting in a butcher's shop. Because of his heavy build, he got his nickname 'Chubby,' while working as a teen in a grocery store. At 11 years old, he formed a street corner harmony group and began performing in churches and on the streets. He soon attracted the attention of music executives in Philadelphia. He signed with Cameo-Parkway Records

in 1959 and recorded his first two singles, "The Class" and "The Dinosaur." In June 1959, he recorded "The Twist" and 14 months later, it was a huge hit.

"The Twist" was not only a No. 1 song, but it introduced the concept of "dancing apart to the beat." Over the next few years, endless songs incorporating "The Twist" into their name sprang up, such as "Peppermint Twist," "Twist and Shout" and "Twistin' the Night Away." The hit was also responsible for getting adults onto the dance floor for teen pop music.

In fall 1961, record industry history was made when Checker's original hit record, "The Twist," re-entered the charts and by January 1962, it was back in the No. 1 position. No other record before or since has accomplished that feat. In 2008, Chubby Checker's "The Twist" was named the biggest chart hit of all-time by Billboard magazine.

Mary Wilson is a founding member of The Supremes who began their singing career in 1959 Detroit as The Primettes, a spin-off group from the male group The Primes. The four original Supremes were Mary Wilson, Florence Ballard, Betty McGlowin and Diana Ross. The



Primettes sang at sock hops, social clubs and talent shows and, eventually, convinced Barry Gordy at Motown to sign them to his record label under one condition, they change their name: Ballard suggested The Supremes. The Supremes recorded

several singles beginning in 1961 and didn't score a hit until 1963 with "When the Lovelight Starts Shining Through his Eyes." Their first No. 1 hit, "Where Did Our Love Go?" was recorded in 1964.

Throughout the years, various members joined and left the group, but Mary Wilson

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COURTESY PHOTO

Chubby Checker will twist his way to South Florida State College on Thursday, Feb. 1.

# SFSC

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COURTESY PHOTO

**Mary Wilson will perform Thursday, Feb. 1, at South Florida State College.**

continued until their last performance in June 1977. Although The Supremes were nominated for Grammy Awards, the group never won.

Three of their songs were added to the Grammy Hall of Fame: "Where Did Our Love Go" and "You Keep Me Hangin' On" (both 1999), and "Stop! In the Name of Love" (2001).

In June 1977, Wilson embarked on her own solo career and toured Europe and Asia while raising three new babies. Wilson has recorded two solo albums, including her self-titled debut in 1979 with the single "Red Hot," and her 1990 release "Walk the Line." She has been honored as a Vocal Group Hall of Famer, Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, and the Pioneer Award from the Rhythm and Blues Foundation.

The SFSC Box Office is located on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park at 600 West College Drive. It is open Monday through Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tickets and videos of upcoming productions are online at [sfscarts.org](http://sfscarts.org). Telephone orders are available at 863-784-7178.

# Black Violin breaking stereotypes

By **JIM ERVIN**  
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — The website, dictionary.cambridge.org defines the word “stereotypes” as “a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong.”

Ladies and gentlemen, meet Black Violin — the “anti-stereotype.” This year BV bring their, “Classical Boom Tour,” to The Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on Feb. 10 at 7 p.m. The audience will be dazzled by outside-the-box hip hop-meets-classical-meets pretty much everything else approach to their music. They will also be inspired to believe in themselves and to embrace life — to defy stereotypes.

Black Violin is Kev Marcus, violin, and Wil B, viola. Two classically trained violinists and amazing Florida talents. The two men began their musical journey very early in life. Wil B started playing at 14, Kev Marcus has been playing since he was 9 years old.

In their music, in their lives and in the message they carry with them everywhere they go, there is one constant. That being the drive to push the envelope, refuse life in a box, and encouraging others to do the same in their own lives. In a nutshell, to defy stereotypes. It should come as no surprise, then, that their most current release, from 2015, is entitled, “Stereotypes.”

“We’re working on a new album. It should come out this year. We’ll probably play a few unreleased songs in Avon Park, so you guys will hear some songs before anyone else,” said Kev Marcus in a phone interview. Also, “there’s a 10 minute part of our show that

changes every single night no matter who we are. It’s always different and it’s inspired by the crowd. It’s completely crowd-driven fresh improv that’s dedicated to giving you something that no one else has.”

The two became friends at Dillard High School of

Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale in orchestra class during Kev’s sophomore year and Wil’s freshman year. After graduating from high school, both Wil and Kev were granted full music scholarships to college, Florida State and Florida International University respectively, according to the Black Violin facebook page.

The band came roaring out of the gate in 2003 right after graduating from college. In 2004 they performed on stage with Alicia Keys. The very next year the group was awarded the coveted title of Apollo Legend by the esteemed Apollo theatre in Harlem, effectively confirming what many were beginning to suspect — Black Violin was on its way to the top.

“Basically in 2003, we both graduated and we were like, ‘okay, now what are we gonna do?’ recalls Kev Marcus. “We decided to try this and see if we could find a way to make it different and make people that normally wouldn’t really vibrate with it, try to bring it into their world a little bit. And that was kind of our entire intention from when we graduated college until now.

“We were lucky because it worked really well pretty much from the beginning. As musicians, it was sorta like, we just graduated college, let’s mess with this violin thing. ‘Oh wow, we’re on television, wow, we’re playing with Alicia Keys,’ and it kind of snowballed.”

Aside from the sheer joy and

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COLIN BRENNAN PHOTO

Wil B, left, and Kev Marcus of Black Violin.



# VIOLIN

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positive message of BV's music, there is a deeper, more poignant side to the group. They have an obvious desire to inspire children and encourage them in positive ways.

On [www.blackviolin.net](http://www.blackviolin.net), they have stated it in this way:

"Through the message of Black Violins music, we've spent the last 10 years working to encourage and empower people of all ages, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds to find what connects us, rather than shine a light on what divides us. This past year alone, we've played for nearly 100,000 students and over 125 public shows across the U.S. and Europe."

They went on to say, "we've taken this opportunity to spread a message that challenges the world's view of what it means to rise above labels, be daring enough to follow their passion and most of all, be true to themselves. As black men living in America, we understand challenges and we also understand the power of 'I can't,' yet we decide to live by and promote the power of 'I can.' We

realize that every opportunity to connect our diverse fans is an opportunity to break down the barriers that separate us, empower individuality and encourage progress."

During their shows for kids, middle-schoolers and/or high school kids, the band will meet them at their school, assembly-style. Other times, students will be bussed to the venue for an early mainée show and interaction with the band. Often times students will actually be brought up on stage during the evenings' show to perform live with BV.

"Our message for kids is a broader message of, 'what can you do that no one else thought was possible?'"

"We feel like if we just show up on stage, and as a fan or audience member your like, 'that was a cool show,' that's fine. But we feel like we've (been given) this platform, so we feel like, almost a bit of responsibility to use it to try to make people see things in a different way. When you come to a Black Violin show, your probably gonna hear something you've never heard before.

"We are definitely here to entertain you, but we wanna educate and inspire all at the same



COLIN BRENNAN PHOTO  
**Black Violin's Wil B. left, and Kev Marcus will be playing at South Florida State College's Alan Jay Wildstein Center for Performing Arts on Feb. 10.**

time. We don't want you to leave with just a CD in your hand, we want you to leave with some inspiration. The true point of this show is to think outside the box and break stereotypes."

"You know," said Wil B. on blackviolin.net, "our show is not necessarily about picking up the violin. It's about forward

thinking, it's about doing something you love. Something that you have a passion for and

doing it differently than anybody's ever done it. That's our music man, we bridge the gap."

For ticket info go to [www.sfsc.org](http://www.sfsc.org) or call the box office at 863-784-7178.

# Panthers split with Eagles

## South Florida comes out swinging against Broward

By Jim TAYLOR  
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK – The South Florida State College Panther softball team handled the brisk wind flowing from right to left field to pound out twelve hits, five of them doubles, to beat the Broward College Seahawks in their first game of the season by an 8-2 score on Saturday.

“We needed that,” said South Florida head softball coach Carlos Falla. “We are a really young team. Our starting pitcher was a freshman as well as second base and short-stop. We have a lot of freshman, but we played well and we battled.”

The Panthers jumped on the Seahawks early scoring two runs on three hits in the bottom of the first.

Raylee Coleman started the inning slapping a single into right field and Shyann Skinrud followed with a bunt single to put runners on first and second with no outs.

April Alvarado moved both into scoring position on a sacrifice bunt down the first-base-line and Dominique Lundy drove Coleman and Skinrud home with on a double into right-center field to put the Panthers up 2-0.

Broward College responded with a run in the top of the second to cut the Panther lead in half, 2-1.

South Florida answered with four runs in the bottom of the second.

Tatiana Escudero and Victoria Eland started the offense with one singles, then a double steal put them on second and third.

With two outs and the

bases loaded, Alvarado battled back from an 0-2 count to launch a shot into deep left-center field that cleared the bases for a double to give the Panthers a 5-1 lead.

Alvarado scored shortly afterward on a single into right-center field by Lundy as the Panthers concluded the second inning with a 6-1 lead.

South Florida added two runs in the bottom of the fourth inning as a one-out double by Alvarado was followed by Lundy reaching on a fielders choice. The Panthers loaded the bases with two outs after Peyton Hill reached base on a walk.

Evelyn Maysonet nearly cleared the bases on a hard hit ball into right-center field that the Seahawk centerfield was unable to catch up to. The ball eventually went under the fence for a ground-rule double and forcing the third run to go back to third.

Two runners, Alvarado and Lundy, did cross the plate to increase the Panther lead to 8-1.

The Seahawks posted another run in the fifth, but were unable to generate any offense against freshman Panther pitcher Shelby Young.

Young tossed a seven-inning complete game, holding Broward to just two runs on four hits while striking out seven in the 8-2 win.

Lundy led the Panther attack with three hits, including two doubles, and she drove in three runs.

Alvarado had a pair of hits, both doubles and also drove in three runs. Coleman and Eland each had two hits and



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

**South Florida State College's Dominique Lundy had three hits and drove in three runs against Broward College in the first game of Saturday's doubleheader at Panther Field.**

Maysonet drove in two runs for the Panthers.

“We pitched well,” said Falla. “We hit the ball well with several extra base

hits because we were hitting line drives in this wind. If you hit them in the air like we were able to get them to do, we

are fast enough in the outfield to get to them.



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

**South Florida State College right fielder Raylee Coleman tracks down a sinking fly ball during Saturday's first game against Broward College.**

## SOFTBALL

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We got on top of the ball and hit line drives and that helped us."

The Panthers ended up splitting the doubleheader as the Eagles captured the second

game in five innings with a 13-5 win.

South Florida returns to action with a road trip to Indian River for a doubleheader on Thursday. The Panthers are home on Saturday with a doubleheader against Santa Fe. First pitch is set for 1 p.m.