

SFSC LPN program ranked No. 4 in state

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — South Florida State College has been recognized by the Annual PracticalNursing.org State LPN Program Rankings as the No. 4 ranked LPN program in Florida.

SFSC scored 97.17 points.

PracticalNursing.org is the leading LPN/LVN advancement and ranking agency, the group said in a news release. They have been publishing the PracticalNursing.org Rankings List for the past four years.

For full, detailed rankings, go to practicalnursing.org/lpn-programs/florida#rankings.

Approved programs in Florida are offered at community colleges, technical centers, and private career schools - 89 schools across the state.

"After careful review of NCLEX-PN exam first-time pass rates over the past several years, PracticalNursing.org has ranked the top 30 programs. For more information on their LPN program rankings, see their Methodology page at practicalnursing.org/lvn-lpn-ranking-methodology," the group added.

TOP 5 RANKED LPN PROGRAMS

1. Withlacoochee Technical, Inverness
Overall score: 100
2. Atlantic Technical College - Broward County
Overall score: 100
3. Cape Coral Technical College, North Cape Coral
Overall Score: 97.99
4. South Florida State College
Overall score: 97.17
5. Marion Technical College, Ocala
Overall score: 96.31

SFSC alumna embraces flexibility in teaching

Special to Highlands News-Sun

LAKE PLACID — Combining her experience as a teacher and her desire to travel, Sheri Stolte, a South Florida State College (SFSC) alumna, would find herself immersed in the cultures of two countries, South Korea and Canada. Through that experience, she learned how invaluable flexibility is in teaching.

Stolte, a native of Lake Placid, graduated from SFSC in 2004 with an Associate in Arts degree. She followed it by earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education, with an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement, from Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers. She spent six years teaching fourth grade at Crestwell School, a private institution in that same city.

Stolte always wanted to travel extensively but wasn't sure how to do that and work at the same time. While looking through Facebook one day, she found a company called Access South Korea (ASK). The company had been established by a group of Canadians and Americans who wanted to teach overseas.

"I researched their business, and they got good reviews," Stolte said. "I didn't see any red flags, so I looked into it further."



COURTESY PHOTO

Sheri Stolte with her students in South Korea.

ASK required that an applicant prove they were a teacher in good standing and provide a criminal background check and letters of recommendation.

Stolte's interest in South Korea was piqued by a friend during her college days. "She was into Asian cultures and introduced me to their cuisines and histories," she said. "One of the things she kept telling me was how nice and welcoming South Koreans are."

Through ASK, she got a job

teaching in South Korea at a Hagwon, a for-profit private language academy. Many students attend English classes at hagwons after their normal school day. "So I taught kindergarten during the day," she said. "In the evenings, I taught grades two to eight."

During her two years in South Korea, Stolte learned to be more flexible in a teaching environment. "The six years at Crestwell School was predictable stability," she said. "There was rarely

a surprise. I could plan classes and events a month ahead. But in Korea, it was different every day. You didn't know if you'd be going on a field trip or if parents were coming in to watch your class that day. We could be told, 'We're going to have a school fair tomorrow, so we have to stay and blow up balloons.' If you can teach in South Korea, you can teach anywhere."

Stolte found that appearance

TEACH

FROM PAGE 1

is important at a school in South Korea. "You must be professional looking at all times," she said. "We had cameras in all the classrooms, so the parents could watch anytime they wanted. But it's a challenge to look professional all the time when you're working with kindergartners."

After a long-distance relationship evolved, Stolte moved to Alberta, Canada during the summer of 2014, to be with her future husband Evan. She now teaches at a school on a First Nations reserve, called Sunchild. First Nations are the predominant indigenous people in Canada who live south of the Arctic. The people of Sunchild reserve are Cree, one of the largest groups of First Nations in Canada.

"I teach grade 3," she said. "I started substitute teaching during the last school year, and I'm in the middle of my first full year as a teacher in Canada."

Stolte explained that learning to be flexible in Korea prepared her for Canada. "Sunchild is a small community, so if the previous chief's wife passed away, we would shut down the school for one day out of respect.

You have to be flexible and change your class lessons."

She has observed the caring nature of the people of Sunchild and has become accepted into the community. "If you show respect to the people of Sunchild, they are welcoming and sharing of themselves," she said.

"The people of Sunchild are concerned about losing their culture and language," Stolte said. "We've had elders of the reserve come to the school so the students can ask them about Cree history and culture. At school, we try to have sweat lodges and pow wows. Instead of taking a Spanish class, the students have Cree class so that they maintain their language. I've worked a comparison of Cree culture and another culture into my social studies curriculum."

One daily practice Stolte has experienced is smudging. "The elder comes in with what looks like a little pot in which they burn sage.

The elder places it on a desk, and the student pulls the smoke over their face or heart as a cleansing or for good luck."

Stolte applauds the school's administrator for his support. "He truly cares about the students. He wants them to

understand that they can do or become anything they choose."

"The only downside to teaching at the reserve are the effects of generational trauma from the 1960s and 1970s—the Big Scoop—when the national government tried to wipe out the native cultures," Stolte said.

The Sixties Scoop was a practice in Canada in the 1960s of taking children of aboriginal people from their families and placing them in foster homes or adoption, primarily, with white families in North America and Europe. An estimated 20,000 aboriginal children were taken.

Intergenerational trauma may be experienced within a family in which the parents or grandparents were traumatized, and each subsequent generation of the family may continue to experience trauma in some form. Self-destructive behaviors, such as depression, family violence, suicidal and homicidal thoughts, and addictions, can manifest from unresolved trauma.

"You do see some of that trauma—addictions, abuse," Stolte said. "I've been privy to circumstances you don't see in other places. So, you create a bubble in your classroom that makes it a safe environment. At my school, there is a freedom to be affectionate

with the kids. The more positive I am with them, the more positive they feel about themselves. I make a point in the morning to know what they need—it may be a high five, a fist bump, anything they need before they go home. You function as half teacher, half mom with them."

But Stolte highly recommends teaching abroad to others. "It gives you a better appreciation for your own culture," she said. "It broadens your horizons. You learn quickly what you're willing to do and not willing to do. It helps you be more aware of your students in the class. You pay more attention, because you're not sure if it's a child issue or a culture issue."

Based on her own experience, Stolte offered words of wisdom to anyone interested in becoming an elementary school teacher. "Remember, it's always about the kids. You will work far more than you ever expected at a job. You're not just a teacher, you're a psychologist, a psychiatrist, and a parent. And you have to love what you do to stay with this job. Also, Pinterest can be your best friend. I get a lot of ideas for the classroom from Pinterest."

"And finally," she said, "You want to be flexible, for sure."

America performing at SFSC

BY JIM ERVIN

CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — “A Horse With No Name,” “Ventura Highway,” “Sister Golden Hair,” and “Daisy Jane,” to name but a few. You know the songs. You know the band. They have been part of the musical landscape since the early 1970s. 2018 marks the 48th Anniversary of perennial classic-rock favorite, America.

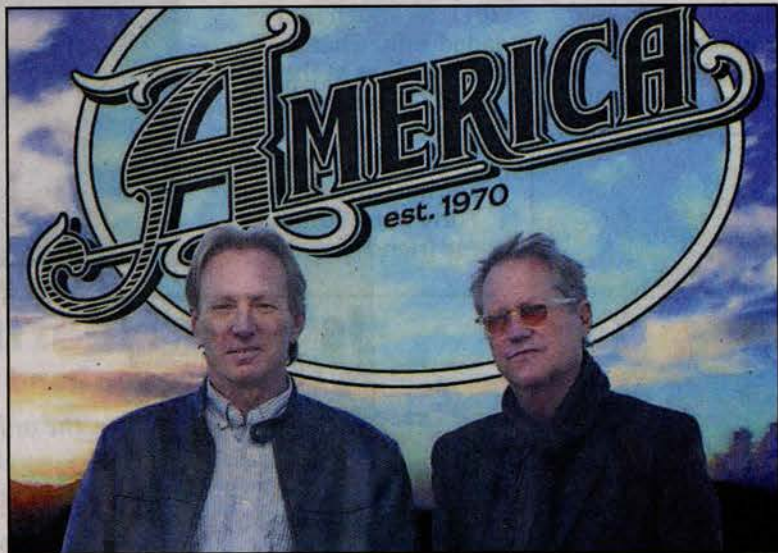
The band will be performing these smash hits and much more, Friday, March 23 at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of South Florida State College. Showtime is 7 p.m.

America originally consisted of Gerry Beckley (guitar, bass,

piano, vocals), Dewey Bunnell (guitar, vocals), and the late Dan Peek (guitar, bass, piano, vocals, 1968-77).

Although all three men are American, they met in England as sons of U.S. Air Force personnel stationed in the London area. Shortly after graduation, the trio formed what would become known as “America.”

In 1971 they recorded their self-titled debut album. The first single from the album, “I Need You” was released to a largely indifferent audience. Sales for the single, as well as the album, were uninspiring. However, all that changed when second single, the million



Gerry Beckley and Dewey Bunnell, two original members of “America” will perform Friday, March 23 at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts.

AMERICA

FROM PAGE 1

selling "A Horse With No Name" was released. The album quickly reached platinum-sales and first single "I Need You" took on a new life, reaching No. 9 on the charts.

Throughout the '70s, America rode the crest of an extremely successful wave of creativity and solid record sales. In 1972 the band's second album,

"Homecoming," sold a million copies. That same year, the band won the Grammy for "Best New Artist."

America's albums — six certified gold and/or platinum, with their first greatest hits collection, "History," hitting four plus million in sales — displayed a fuller range of the trio's talents than did their singles. Their material encompassed an ambitious artistic swath; from effects-laden rockers to oddball

medleys to soul-bearing ballads, America displayed a flawless blend of disparate genres and styles as wide-open as the great American plains, according to www.venturahighway.com.

In May 1977, Peek amicably left the band after becoming a born-again Christian. He died in his sleep on July 24, 2011. Although they faded somewhat from the limelight as the years rolled on, the group has continued to record and tour as a duo, backed by a touring band on stage.

Forty plus years later, these friends are still

making music together, touring the world, and thrilling audiences with their timeless sound.

Sponsorship for this performance is provided by MIDFLORIDA Credit Union. David and Allison Willey, Gayle Obermayr, D.D.S., M.S., Michael G.

Kirsch, D.D.S., M.S. and Steve and Lori Guelff.

For more information or to purchase tickets contact:

Phone: 863-784-7178

E-mail:

culturalperformances@southflorida.edu

Box Office hours:

Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m and one hour before show time at the Wildstein Center and the University Center.

For questions about accessibility, contact Chase Smith at 863-784-7287.



FILE PHOTO

The Florida College System (FCS) has named six South Florida State College (SFSC) students to the 2018 All-Florida Academic Team.

SFSC students named to All-Florida Academic Team

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HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

AVON PARK — The Florida College System (FCS) has named six South Florida State College (SFSC) students to the 2018 All-Florida Academic Team.

Each year, the FCS names an All-Florida Academic Team to honor students enrolled in Florida's public state and community colleges for their academic achievement, leadership, and service to the community.

The six SFSC students will be recognized, formally, at an awards ceremony on Friday, April 6 in Tampa. The SFSC students earning the recognition are Austin Beck of Avon Park, Zachary Geitner of Lake Placid, and Anthony Burnett, Danny Sustaita, Erika Weaver-Coleman, and Kevin Webb, all of Sebring. They join 135 of their peers from the 28-member Florida College System in being named to the academic team.

"We are so pleased with the academic

"We are so pleased with the academic accomplishments of these six scholars from the Tau Epsilon Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa at South Florida State College."

Dr. Sonji Nicholas,

PTK advisor and professor of sociology

accomplishments of these six scholars from the Tau Epsilon Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa at South Florida State College," said Dr. Sonji Nicholas, PTK advisor and professor of sociology.

"Each scholar gives credence to the idea that diligence in academic endeavors has many rewards," Nicholas said. "Being named as All-Florida Academic

Team member is both an honor and a wonderful way to recognize and celebrate the dedication to academic excellence that each awardee has demonstrated while studying at SFSC. We are so proud of them!"

Students named to the All-Florida Academic Team were drawn from SFSC's Honors Program and the college's Tau Epsilon chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), an international academic honor society.

In nominating students for the All-Florida Academic Team, colleges consider participation in academic honors programs, membership in and awards from collegiate societies, and academic enrichment gained from internships and special projects.

For more information about SFSC's PTK chapter, contact Dr. Nicholas at 863-784-7286. For more information about SFSC's Honors Program, contact Dr. Charlotte Pressler, director, SFSC Honors Program, and professor of English and humanities, at 863-784-7247.

Panthers battling for playoff spots

Both SFSC teams in close races for conference playoffs

HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN
SPORTS STAFF

Suncoast Conference
standings.

The Panthers opened the series with a 12-11 victory on Wednesday, scoring twice in the bottom of the ninth to take the win. Pierson Lewis had three hits and knocked in three runs for the Panthers, while Blaise Maris was 4 for 5 with a pair of RBI and Brandyn Ward had two hits and knocked in a pair of runs.

Sebring graduate

Jordan Austin scored three times, while Avon Park grad Luis Martinez and Maris both scored twice. Pedro Castellano hit a solo home run for the Panthers and Kyle Stenger earned the win with a solid relief effort, pitching 3 2/3 innings and allowing just a solo home run and striking out four without a walk.

On Friday the teams moved to Polk State College and SFSC came

away with a 5-3 win, as relievers Edwin Serrano and Riley Degnan combined to hurl eight scorless innings and Serrano earned the win and Degnan got the save.

Brett Norwood, Maris and Avon Park graduate Adarius Council knocked in runs and Norwood paced the attack with three hits. Maris, Lewis, P.J. Cimo and A.J.



HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN FILE PHOTO

South Florida's Franco Camacho is greeted by teammates after hitting a two-run homer earlier this season. SFSC won two out of three games against Polk State College.

PANTHERS

FROM PAGE 8

Drisdorn had two hits each.

On Saturday, the Panthers came up a bit short, scoring three runs in the bottom of the ninth, but fell 7-5, as Norwood had two hits and scored twice, while Franco Camacho had a pair of RBI.

State College of Florida is running away with the conference lead, sporting an 11-1 Suncoast Conference mark, followed by Hillsborough Community College at 9-3. There's a three-way battle for the No. 3 and No. 4 spots, with Florida Southwestern (6-6), SFSC (5-7) and Polk State College (4-8) all battling

for those spots. St. Petersburg College has struggled, going 1-11 in conference play.

The Panthers host St. Petersburg College today at 6 p.m.

SFSC softball

The Panthers softball team has been off since Tuesday and will return to action this Tuesday when they travel to Polk State College for two games. The Panthers may have labored a bit this season with a 10-26 overall record, but are 4-6 in conference play, which has them in the hunt for a playoff spot.

Florida Southwestern is the class of the conference with a 38-3 overall record and 9-1 Suncoast Conference record, with Hillsborough 6-4, State College of Florida 5-5 and the Panthers and St. Petersburg are each 4-6.



MARK PINSON/STAFF

South Florida State College's Leanna Hernandez slides in safely with a triple as Pasco-Hernando's Kaelin Ruiz applies a late tag. The Panthers are 4-6 in Suncoast Conference play.

Polk State College is 2-8, with one of their victories coming against SFSC earlier this season.