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A New Season

SFSC RETIREES | A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Foundation is Organizing Quarterly Meetings for College's Retirees

South Florida State College is fortunate to have retirees who care deeply about our college and community by giving effortlessly and tirelessly of their time to make a positive impact. We want to capture and channel the enthusiasm and support that our retirees bring to SFSC in the years following their employment by engaging their hearts, hands and minds to benefit future generations of students.

With that idea in mind, the Foundation is establishing a new group to do just that. A New Season is a fun, interactive group of retirees who will gather for a networking lunch on a quarterly basis to keep up with all of the wonderful things taking place at SFSC and interact with old friends. Each will be themed "Guess who is coming to lunch" and will feature a different speaker from the college who will give an update on a specific department, sharing all of the latest information.

Our retirees are proud of their connection to SFSC and contribute greatly

to the success our college has had over the years. Because of their efforts, our college has become what it is today. Leading the field in higher education and graduating top students into jobs that will help grow and develop our local communities and beyond, our retirees and current employees have dedicated many hours into growing our college. Some were educators, others were staff, but together they made a difference and made SFSC great.

A New Season will work to engage and empower our retirees, encouraging them to share with others and work closely with the Foundation in finding new ways to enhance ways of support for future generations. By seeing the successful outcomes, SFSC achieves and shares the same enthusiasm and commitment with others. We are hopeful that together, we can create a bright future.

To get involved in A New Season, call the Foundation at 863-453-3133 or email foundation@southflorida.edu.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

There's So Much Going On at SFSC This Spring

YOUR CONTRIBUTION REALLY DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS AND IN OUR COMMUNITY.

We all know how fortunate we are to live in the Heartland and know how beautiful our community is. At springtime, however, I think Mother Nature likes to show off as Central Florida blooms with vibrant color. All around us, new life is taking shape, trees are filling with bright green leaves, and the sweet scent of orange blossoms gently flows throughout our area.

The spring always offers a fresh, new outlook on many great things to come. The same can be said for South Florida State College. With so much taking place this spring, it's hard to not get excited!

Our baseball and softball games are in full swing. Check out our website for the game schedules. Graduation will soon take place and many of our students hope to line up great jobs after receiving their degrees. Based on current information, SFSC alumni who hold associate in science degrees are earning \$62,284 on average. Our students who earn a bachelor's degree in nursing are earning \$19,000 more a year than the state average. Five students in the B.S. in Elementary Education program will be attending a week-long STEM training at NASA in June, and our dedicated faculty are eagerly anticipating the announcement of our endowed chair recipients in math, dental, Emery math, and Stephens. Our students are excelling in all areas, and we are proud of their accomplishments.

Throughout this edition, you



will read about the success of our inaugural Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout that benefited Panther athletics, our Shopkeepers Reveal at the Hotel Jacaranda, and the amazing accomplishments that are leading the industry in our Take Stock in Children program.

What we accomplish at SFSC could not happen without the sincere support of our local community. With so many ways to give, it is reassuring to know that your contribution really does make a difference in the lives of our students and in our community. I would like to encourage you to look on page 4 and see the variety of ways you can get involved. From donating stock to shopping on Smile.Amazon.com, you can help!

I invite you to contact our Foundation office to learn more about our wonderful college or to schedule a tour. We are proud of SFSC and are eager to show you why we believe we are No. 1!

Go Panthers!

Jamie Bateman
Executive Director,
Institutional Advancement



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DONORS AND Shakers

is produced semiannually by the South Florida State College Foundation, Inc., to inspire charitable contributions in support of South Florida State College. The SFSC Foundation raises awareness of the value of an SFSC education and promotes student success through scholarships, facilities development, and program support. By supporting SFSC, the SFSC Foundation endeavors to enhance the ability of residents in our district to obtain a college education.



From the collection of Anne Reynolds: Sacred Owl, Timucuan War Leader, and Fragment Series.

MOFAC Receives Artwork in Memory of *Anne Reynolds*

REYNOLDS WAS A LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGIST, ARTIST, AUTHOR, AND FORMER MEMBER OF SFSC'S DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES. HER HUSBAND HONORED HER MEMORY BY DONATING PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURES FROM HER COLLECTION TO MOFAC'S HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL SECTION.

The Museum of Florida Art and Culture (MOFAC) has received a gift of artwork from Charles Reynolds in honor of his late wife Anne Reynolds. The donation included three paintings and three sculptures valued at approximately \$9,000.

"Anne Reynolds was a major supporter of archaeological efforts in Highlands County, and she played a significant role in the development of MOFAC," said Megan Stepe, MOFAC curator.

Reynolds was a local archaeologist, author, artist, teacher, and former member of SFSC's District Board of Trustees. Stepe commended her for inspiring MOFAC curators, SFSC students, volunteers, and patrons. A significant portion of MOFAC's archaeological collection came from Reynolds. "Her time, energy, and wisdom helped shape the artistic and archaeological character of the museum. These works are esteemed additions to MOFAC's permanent collection and will be a cherished reminder of her influence."

In the near future, the paintings

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

and sculptures will be on display in the historical/archaeological section of MOFAC. The six pieces that comprise the gift are:

- High Counselor, oil painting, by Theodore Morris
- Sacred Owl, oil painting, by Morris
- Timucuan War Leader, oil painting, by Morris
- The Archer, bronze sculpture, by Bradley Cooley
- Fragment Series, wood sculpture, by Rick Crawford
- 10,000 BC, bronze sculpture, by Bradley Cooley

"Anne's art collection reflected her love of Florida, Florida history, and Florida artists," said Mollie Doctrow, a former MOFAC curator who worked closely with Reynolds over the years. "Anne felt a special connection and affinity for Native Americans and especially Native Americans in Florida. Her collection includes art depicting early Florida by top Florida artists. As

an artist herself, Anne had a discerning eye. She bought beautiful pieces with which she also enjoyed living."

According to Doctrow, Reynolds respected and appreciated artists. "Through her collection, she supported artists and believed in the importance of their contribution to the community," she said. "The recent donations to MOFAC from the Reynolds' art collection add depth to the museum collection in the area of early Florida. The Morris paintings and Cooley sculptures will offer the public a richer interpretation and visual experience of early Florida."

MOFAC is located in the east wing of the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on the SFSC Highlands Campus. The museum is open to the public on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 12:30-4:30 p.m., or by appointment for group tours. Patrons of the Wildstein Center may visit the museum one hour prior to matinee and evening performances. For more information about MOFAC and its programs, contact Stepe at 863-784-7240 or visit mofac.org.



5 Ways You Can Give to the SFSC Foundation

1 Amazon Smile. Your shopping through Amazon will benefit the SFSC Foundation if you add us as your favorite charitable organization. To learn more, use this link: <http://amzn.to/2g9Ku0P>, then go to *smile.amazon.com* when you make future purchases.

2 Recurring Donation. Become a Friend of SFSC by setting up an online recurring donation of \$25 or more per month: <http://bit.ly/2Fi3fx2>.

3 Sponsor an SFSC Fundraising Event. We are seeking sponsors for events that are planned throughout the remainder of 2018. These include the annual Spring Gala and Auction in April, the Jacaranda Jubilee in November, and the Christmas luncheon in December.

4 Give Stock or Securities. We have an account set up to allow gifts of securities to the SFSC Foundation. If interested, please contact our office at 863-453-3133 or email foundation@southflorida.edu.

5 Join Our SFSC Heritage Society. You can do this by including the SFSC Foundation in your will or trust, or name us as a percentage or contingent beneficiary of a life insurance policy, which will benefit the college. The Heritage Society recognizes those individuals who plan to leave an indelible mark on SFSC through a planned gift.

Shauna Norwood Receives Scholarship



The SFSC Foundation delivered a special gift to Take Stock in Children scholar Shauna Norwood at its Christmas luncheon: a \$40,000 Leaders 4 Life scholarship. Norwood is the 11th local Take Stock scholar to be nominated for the scholarship and the sixth to win it. Because the Hardee High School senior attends SFSC through dual enrollment, she will receive her Associate in Arts degree and her high school diploma in May. The scholarship will pay for living accommodations, textbooks, and other needs while she pursues a bachelor's degree in medical technology at the University of South Florida. Pictured along with Norwood are (front row, from left) Danielle Ochoa, Take Stock Student Success Coach, Coordinator Irene Castanon, and College Success Coach Linda Roman; (back row) mother Susan Eells, father Shawn Norwood, Jamie Bateman, and Dr. Thomas Leitzel, SFSC president.

SFSC FOUNDATION

Spring

Gala

DINNER AND AUCTION

Thursday, April 26, 2018

Contact the SFSC Foundation
for sponsorship opportunities and tickets.

Married Business Students Succeed Through Teamwork

COREN AND ANGELO RUSSO
EARN BUSINESS DEGREES
TOGETHER.

The teamwork Angelo and Coren Russo learned to practice over five years of marriage paid off in December. The couple accepted their Bachelor of Applied Science degrees in Supervision and Management (BAS-SM) at fall Commencement.

Coren enrolled in SFSC to better herself, then encouraged her husband to do likewise. In 2014, they completed the first milestone of their educational journey when she earned an Associate in Arts degree and he received an Associate in Science degree in Computer Information Systems.

That's when Coren decided, "Let's keep this going." Together, the Russos entered the BAS-SM program.

The couple took three courses a semester — a full-time load — while also working full-time. It proved to be a balancing act. "We missed out on family and friend get-togethers and some holidays," Angelo said. "It required sacrifice in some areas of our lives, but it was worth it in the long run."

Dr. Tina Adams, the lead instructor for the BAS-SM program, understands the challenges couples like the Russos face, given that she was also once a non-traditional student. "They did an excellent job supporting each other and making sacrifices when necessary to ensure that they successfully finished the program," she said.

When those challenges arose, the teamwork kicked in. "Coren and I would quiz each other on the way to the campus," Angelo said. "We bounced ideas off of each other for some of our class projects."

"We wouldn't let the other one procrastinate," Coren said. "If one of us wanted to watch TV or go out to



dinner, Angelo or I would finish writing our assignment for class first. We held each other accountable."

Although Angelo's final GPA was 3.94 and Coren's was 3.65, they never considered each other academic rivals. "We wanted to show our son, Ronnie, the importance of good grades because he had a problem with grades when he was younger," Coren said. "We wanted him to have something to be proud of, something that he accomplished, with a little nudge from us."

After graduation, Angelo continued working in the Technology Department at the Avon Park Correctional Institution. Coren accepted a position as a project manager with a company in Fort Myers. They are also taking time to enjoy some of the activities they sacrificed in college — reading books of their choice and playing video games.

But Coren takes great pride in her educational accomplishments and believes, "People can take your house, your money, but no one can take your education. It's yours and yours alone."

FROM THE ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION CHAIR



Alums Can Connect at Monthly Lunch Bunch Meetings

A new year is in full swing and so is the SFSC Alumni Association with more exciting events to bring alumni together. In February, we had our first SFSC Alumni Lunch Bunch at Sonny's Barbecue in Sebring. Each month we will invite our alumni to meet at different restaurants around the tri-county area. The Lunch Bunch offers a great opportunity to connect with fellow alumni as well as meet new friends.

One of my favorite upcoming events is Commencement. Celebrating our students' accomplishments and seeing their smiles and hopes for a new future are heartfelt moments I find extremely rewarding. In May, I will have the honor of welcoming new alumni during the ceremony. Afterward, the SFSC Alumni Association provides a photo booth where graduates and their families can have photos taken with Pete the Panther. If you haven't attended one of our commencement ceremonies yet, please join us!

For more information about the Alumni Association and a membership application, go to: southflorida.edu/community/alumni.

Nursing Program Hosts Successful **ACEN** Visit

• ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN
NURSING PROGRAM IS ON PATH
TO RE-ACCREDITATION.

The Associate in Science Degree in Nursing Program at SFSC hosted a successful site visit by three Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) nursing program evaluators, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, serving as the second step of its four-step accreditation process.

ACEN is the leading authority in nursing accreditation, and its goal is to strengthen the quality of nursing education in all types of nursing programs. ACEN accredits certificate-, diploma- or degree-granting programs in secondary, postsecondary and hospital-based organizations.

“Accreditation is a comprehensive process that encompasses every aspect of an educational program,” said Dr. Michele Heston, dean of health sciences at SFSC. “From the curriculum, to program outcomes, to graduate and employer satisfaction, the process engages the entire program, college and community in its review. A debt of gratitude is extended to our students, faculty, SFSC colleagues, community partners, and alumni for their collaborative spirit and unparalleled support. The ACEN program evaluators commented that it was ‘refreshing to know that there are programs like yours out there, that are caring not only for your students but for your entire community.’”

The SFSC program is seeking to continue its accreditation, having earned initial accreditation of the Associate in Science program in 2013. On Feb. 1, the program evaluators’ exit interview with the nursing education department and senior administrative team was positive. The evaluators cited full compliance with all standards and criteria. Several highlights of the exit interview included the following comments by the evaluators:

“Your community values and



SFSC's Associate Degree in Nursing program enables students to become registered nurses. It is successfully on course to retain its accreditation through the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

appreciates the work that you do. It was evident from all the meetings conducted throughout our visit that your caring influence reaches far beyond the classroom and is felt by this college and the community.”

“It is refreshing to know that there is a two-year RN program in this community that is not only doing excellent work, but is doing stellar work.”

“Your graduates articulate The Seven C’s of Caring upon which your curriculum is based. They feel it has allowed them to flourish in caring for the community.”

“Our department has a deep appreciation of the accreditation process and its role in the facilitation of continuous quality improvement,” said Mary VonMerveldt, director of nursing education at SFSC. “We are pleased with the conclusion of a productive ACEN peer evaluator visit and would like to offer our sincerest gratitude to all who assisted in the evaluation process. It is with great pride and humility that we serve as members of

the South Florida State College family and local community.”

An accreditation decision by the Board of Commissioners is expected in July following the June Evaluation Review Committee meeting. For more information about the accreditation process or the nursing programs at SFSC, contact the Nursing Department at 863-784-7118.

About the ACEN

ACEN accreditation is a voluntary, peer-review, self-regulatory process by which non-governmental associations recognize educational institutions or programs that have been found to meet or exceed standards and criteria for educational quality. Accreditation also assists in the further improvement of the institutions or programs as related to resources invested, processes followed, and results achieved. The monitoring of certificate, diploma, and degree offerings is tied closely to state examination and licensing rules and to the oversight of preparation for work in the profession.

'Shopkeepers Reveal' Shows New Additions to Historic Hotel

Merchants and the Hotel Jacaranda showed off their wares when the SFSC Foundation hosted The Jacaranda and Shopkeepers Reveal on Thursday, March 1 at the Hotel Jacaranda. The merchants were Edward Jones Investments, the H. Benitez Studio Boutique, Sherco, Inc. Land Surveying, Take Stock in Children, The Artists' Group, and an as-yet unnamed boutique. Guests at the event had an opportunity to view the hotel's newly remodeled rooms.

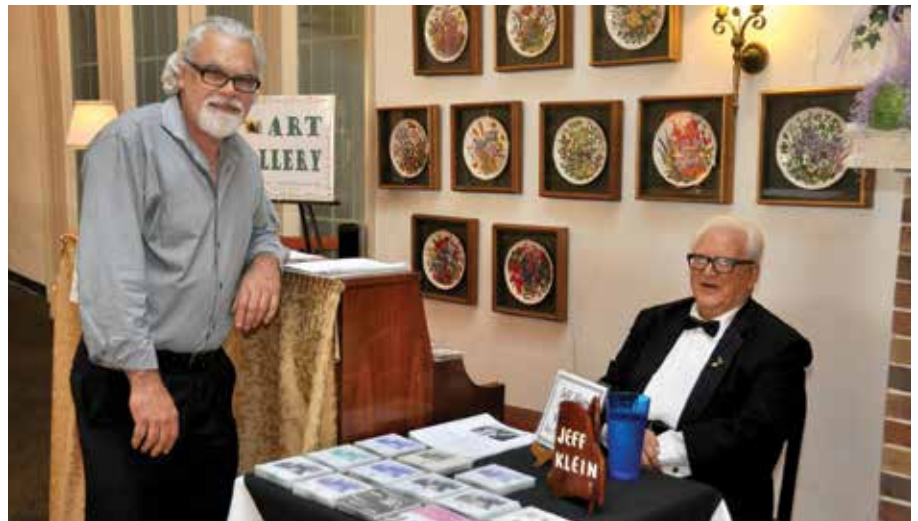
The Hotel Jacaranda has been a fixture on Avon Park's Main Street since it opened in 1926. It is owned by the SFSC Foundation and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Cindy Gross (inset) designed the Hotel Jacaranda's Metcalfe Room.



Local artists show and sell their work in The Artists' Group studio.



Cuban artist Humberto Benitez (left), owner of H. Benitez Studio Boutique, and pianist Jeff Klein.

Million Dollar Golf Shootout Raises **\$10,000** for Athletics

Although no one won the inaugural Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout on Jan. 20, the four golfers who hit closest to the hole were Scott Hitt in first place, who came within 15' 4-1/2"; Jose Jimenez, second, 23' 9"; John Vicker Jr., third, 27' 6"; and Michael Kelly, fourth, 34' 6-1/2".

The three-day golf shootout raised more than \$10,000 for SFSC athletics. It was held at the Sun 'N Lake Golf & Country Club in Sebring.

MidFlorida Credit Union was the event sponsor, and Heacock Insurance was the award sponsor. Many other sponsors, individuals,

and participants made the event a success.

SFSC fields four athletic teams: women's volleyball, women's cross country, men's baseball, and women's softball.

"What an enjoyable event," said Rick Hitt, SFSC athletic director. "Our participants were outstanding in posting competitive qualifying scores. We thank our participants, sponsors, and volunteers, and we look forward to putting on another outstanding event next year."

The second annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout is scheduled for Jan. 17-20, 2019, at Sun 'N Lake.



Scott Hitt (third from left) received a \$500 gift certificate for landing a ball closest to the hole at the Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout. Pictured with him are (from left) Rick Hitt, Dr. Tom Leitzel, and Jamie Bateman.

On the Calendar

Foundation Events

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2018

Spring Gala Dinner and Auction

Silent auction and cocktails: 6 p.m.
Dinner: 7 p.m.
Sun 'N Lake Island View Restaurant

MONDAY, NOV. 25, 2018

Jacaranda Jubilee

Hotel Jacaranda: 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, DEC. 6, 2018

Christmas Luncheon

Social: 11:30 a.m.
Lunch: Noon
Hotel Jacaranda

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, JAN. 17-20, 2019

2nd Annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Shootout

Sun 'N Lake Golf & Country Club

Sponsorships are available for all of our events. Please contact the Foundation for more information.

Board Meetings

TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018

Executive Board Meeting

Noon, Hotel Jacaranda

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018

Board of Directors Meeting

Noon, Hotel Jacaranda

SFSC Events

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018

SFSC Student Art Awards

Awards Ceremony: 5 p.m.
Reception: 5-7 p.m.
Celebrate the achievements of SFSC art students at the annual Art Department/MOFAC Awards Ceremony and Reception.

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2018

Spring Commencement

Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts
SFSC Highlands Campus

OUR SFSC COMMUNITY

The SFSC Foundation has been visiting our friends, including: (1) Laura Wheeler and Tracee Smoak at the Blueberry Patch; (2) Nancy Oxer of Lake Placid Feed and Western Wear; (3) Andrew Fells of Florida Legacy Communities; (4) Dr. James Oxer of Sunshine Dentistry; (5) Jean Fortier of Home & Office Essentials; and (6) Bethel Farms.

