

# 'A very good friend' to a lot of people'

Bateman is all about helping those in need

By **BILL ROGERS**  
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — People whose job it is to ask others for money know that friend-raising is crucial to fundraising.

Jamie Bateman, who raises money for the South Florida State College Foundation, is exceptional at making friends according to people who know her.

Melissa Kuehnle, director for institutional communications at the college, said Bateman "knows everybody" and knows them well.

"She is a very good friend to a lot of people," Kuehnle said. "She makes a lot of connections."

"Jamie is great at building lasting relationships in our community," Christen Johnson, executive director of AdventHealth Foundation, Volunteer Services, Child Learning Center, wrote in an email. "Her ability to communicate effectively with others and to nurture those lasting and meaningful relationships is a commendable quality."

The foundation boosts community awareness of the college, solicits and accepts gifts, receives bequests, manages and helps to appreciate cash gifts or non-cash gifts that are donated to it. Money it receives is distributed to things that benefit the college and subsidize its students, staff and programs.

Deborah Bell Latter, coordinator for institutional communications, said at SFSC 61% of the students rely on financial aid to attend college. Much of Bateman's job is to encourage people and organizations to donate funds to the foundation toward student scholarships.



COURTESY PHOTO

**Jamie Bateman is executive director for institutional advancement for South Florida State College.**

likes raising money"

Those who know Bateman mention other qualities about her.



"To perform her job requires someone dedicated to education and the benefits it reaps for our community," Latter wrote in an email. "The fact that she is a kind, approachable, gracious and caring person only makes her more effective in communicating the need to support education."

After Hurricane Irma struck Florida in fall 2017, the chancellor of the Florida College System made food donations to each of the 28 colleges within the FCS. SFSC had already planned a food and clothing pantry for its students.

Latter said Bateman was on the "front line" in establishing a drive to collect and distribute the food and clothing to students in need.

"It's simply one example of her caring and kind nature," Latter said.

Dr. Thomas Leitzel, college president, said Bateman is "extremely kind and caring."

"She loves students and she enjoys working with people," Leitzel wrote in an email, adding that she "truly likes raising money" and helping others who need financial assistance.

Those who know Bateman mention other qualities about her.





COURTESY PHOTO

**Jamie Bateman, left, is shown with former Financial Aid Director Jerry Donna awarding a first generation in college scholarship to South Florida State College student Veronica Molina.**

## BATEMAN

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"She is always smiling," Kuehnle said.

"Jamie has an engaging personality,"

Leitzel wrote. "She is outgoing and always happy."

Leitzel added that Bateman likes to have fun and does not take herself too seriously.

Kuehnle said Bateman is "very thoughtful" and is good at remembering details.

On a personal level, Johnson said that Bateman has been a mentor to her for many years.

"She helped me strengthen my relationship with Christ and I'm forever thankful for her and her love she continues to show for my immediate and my extended family," Johnson wrote in the email. "I still know to this day I can call her and she will be at my doorstep in no time to be a friend, crying shoulder, give me a good laugh, anything at all. She's my forever family."

There are those that might not know that Bateman apparently enjoys Christmas a lot.

Leitzel noted that every time her mobile

phone rings, it plays Christmas tunes.

Johnson said it's not unusual to walk into Bateman's office in July and hear Christmas music playing.

"Her joyous spirit shines all year long," Johnson wrote. "I've never met someone who puts up a Christmas tree in every single room in their house. This just shows of her constant cheerful spirit."

Bateman previously was the executive director for the Florida Hospital Heartland Medical Center Foundation.

A press release stated that while in that position, she assisted in raising more than \$4 million in donations for the foundation. She helped secure the largest donation and naming opportunity in what was then Florida Hospital Heartland's history — for the Jarrett Family Blessed Beginnings Birthing Center. She led a \$500,000 capital campaign from which the hospital's Sebring campus obtained equipment to grow its Cardiac Catheterization Lab.

A native of Sebring, Bateman is a graduate of Webber International University with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. She earned her Master of Business Administration degree from Webster University.





MARC VALERO/STAFF

**South Florida State College supports the new funding model being touted by State Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran.**

# SFSC supports new college system funding model

By **MARC VALERO**  
STAFF WRITER

AVON PARK — Less than a year on the job, Commissioner Richard Corcoran has convinced the State Board of Education to sign off on a new funding formula for the 28-college system, which, with more than 320,000 students, is widely viewed as one of the finest in the nation.

Corcoran, whose post-secondary education got off to a rocky start, attended two of what were known at the time as “community colleges” before graduating from Saint Leo University in 1989 and receiving a law degree in 1996 from Regent University.

Corcoran credits the state college system — which includes only two schools that still use the “community” college moniker — for his educational turnaround.

The new funding model would create “bands” to group colleges by size and, in part, would base funding on growth. The model also would address increases in the “cost of doing business,” according to the Department of Education’s legislative budget requested approved by the state Board of Education on Aug. 21.

Colleges with growing enrollment would get a funding boost. And the model also would create a process to support workforce programs that are more expensive.

The budget proposal, for the fiscal year that will begin July 1, seeks a \$24 million increase in state funds in addition to the roughly \$1.2 billion the colleges received for the current year.

South Florida State College Vice President for Administrative Services Glenn Little said, “While the new Tier-Based Funding Allocation Model remains a work in

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## COLLEGE

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progress, SFSC supports the Commissioner’s efforts to provide funding to our colleges through tiers/bands (based on the size of each college) and with a focus on enrollment growth, high-cost programs, and inflation of basic operational costs totaling \$24 million for our Florida College System.

“Additionally, we support the additional funding requested in this year’s Legislative Budget Request to cover the costs associated with expanded dual enrollment offerings, the Last Mile College Completion Program, and performance incentive funding for dual enrollment and workforce development programs for a total system request of approximately \$50 million.”

The restoration of PECO [Public Education Capital Outlay] building maintenance funding for the Florida College System (\$38 million) will provide critical funding needed for roof replacements and equipment repairs, he said.

“We support the LBR [Legislative Budget Request] and look forward to providing additional support for our students and community partners with the additional funding,” Little said.

*The News Service of Florida contributed to this*





COURTESY PHOTO

South Florida State College's LPN program was ranked 5th in the state by PracticalNursing.org.

# SFSC nursing program ranked 5th in Florida

By **MARC VALERO**  
STAFF WRITER

| September 10, 2019

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Practical Nursing program was ranked in the top five in the state in 2019 by PracticalNursing.org in its sixth year of ranking nursing programs.

SFSC came in at number five in the 2019 rankings.

The PracticalNursing.org ranking included a listing of the top 30 programs with a short commentary on each program, followed by the programs ranked 31 through 75 and then another 12 programs that were not ranked.

The best LPN programs statement about SFSC, follows: South Florida State College is an open-access higher education institution located in Avon Park, Florida, with additional locations in Arcadia, Bowling Green, and Lake Placid. South Florida State College is dedicated to providing a learning-centered environment with quality programs, including its excellent practical nursing program.

According to SFSC, its Practical Nursing (PN) program is designed to provide students with classroom theory and clinical experience in nursing skills. The program includes the scientific principles of nursing care common to all patients and the development of the beginning skills necessary to implement a nursing care plan.

Students who graduate from SFSC speak very highly of the program, faculty, and support that was provided at every step of their student experience, SFSC notes. The PN program provides a pathway to SFSC's LPN to RN Transition program with the opportunity to then earn SFSC's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree and beyond.

"I couldn't have asked for a better experience in the Practical Nursing Program. I found the instructors to not only be

## NURSE

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professionals in the material they teach but also caring individuals who've guided, motivated, supported and prepared me for the nurse I am today. SFSC's Practical Nursing program offers endless opportunities," said Stephanie DeAnda, a 2018 graduate of the program who is now an LPN at AdventHealth.

Student outcome data is strong with passing rates on licensure exams consistently exceeding the national average. In addition, the percentage of SFSC alumni who obtained a job within nine months of graduation was 94% since 2014 with 100% of graduates receiving employment in 2017.

ParacticalNursing.org notes that The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports favorable employment trends for the field through the year 2026, predicting a 12% increase.



Sunday, September 23, 2019



COURTESY PHOTO

Superintendent Brenda Longshore, left, at the New Teacher Orientation in August. Longshore said the district is providing career pathways in high schools to help local students become educators.

# School district assesses efforts in reaching goals



**SEBRING** — The Highlands School District is making progress on some of its goals, but losing ground in other areas focusing on improving academics.

In April the School Board of Highlands County approved the district's new strategic plan, vision, mission statement and logo.

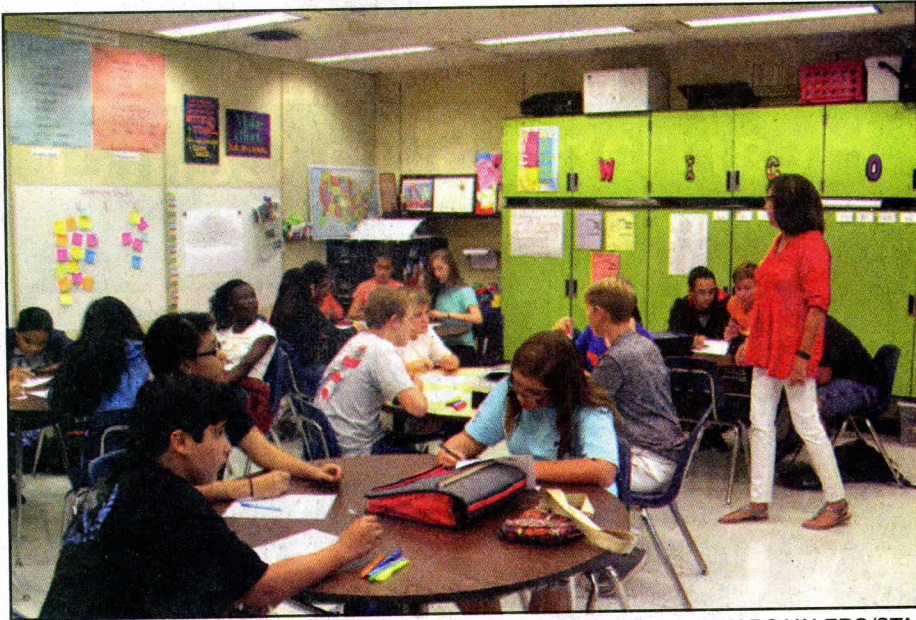
The detailed plan included many goals.

At a recent School Board Workshop, the district administration presented an overview of the progress in meeting those goals.

Some academic goals that were set for 2021-22 have already been met at some schools, such as increasing the percentage of students scoring a Level 3 or above to 68% on the middle school end-of-course civics exam and high school end-of-course U.S. history exam.

For the 2018-19 school year, Hill-Gustat Middle was at 74% and Lake Placid High was at 73% on the percentage of students who scored a Level 3 or above.

One measure of academic progress, at the middle school level, dropped significantly — “increase the middle school acceleration rate” with a 2021-22 goal of 70%. The actual acceleration



MARC VALERO/STAFF

**The School Board of Highlands County set a goal to increase the number of teaching positions that are filled with educators that are in-field and certified.**

rate dropped from 67% in 2017-18 to 54% in 2018-19.

Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Program Iris Borghese explained the middle school acceleration component is based on the percentage of eligible students who passed a high school level EOC (end of course) assessment or industry certification.

“We are working with middle

schools to identify ways to increase the number and success of students that participate in high level algebra 1 and geometry courses,” she said.

Additionally, middle schools are working to add high school level courses that prepare students to take industry certifications, Borghese said.



# DISTRICT

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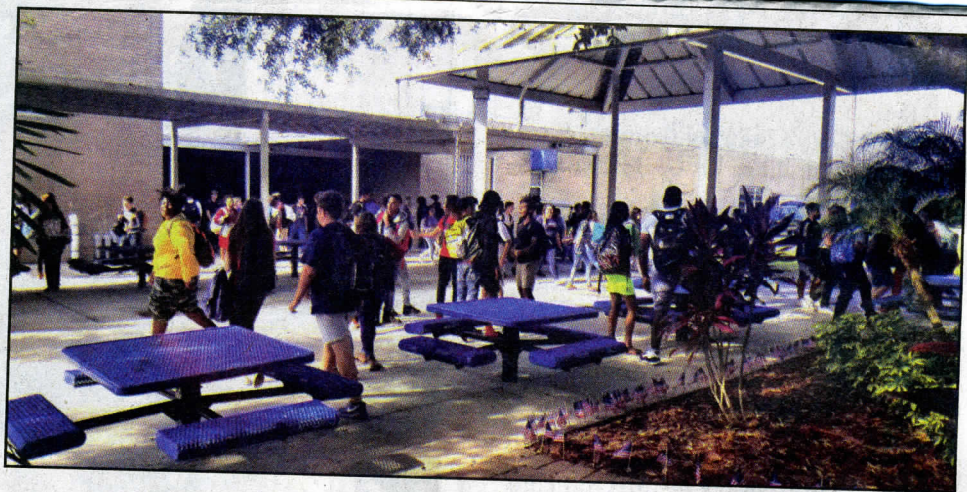
The district's progress on its science goal, for elementary and secondary schools, also regressed though three schools met the 2021-22 goal of 68% of the students scoring in Level 3 or above on an assessment exam — Lake Placid and Sebring high schools and Sun 'n Lake Elementary.

Borghese said the district is implementing the "5E Instructional Model" across all grade levels.

In the 5E Instructional Model, science instruction is primarily student-led and inquiry-based, she said. The model has five stages that allows students to engage, explore, explain, extend and evaluate science concepts.

Also, English Language Arts standards and strategies are embedded into science instruction to support comprehension of complex, rigorous informational text, Borghese added.

Another district goal focuses on the recruiting



MARC VALERO/STAFF

**The School Board of Highlands County recently assessed its progress toward meeting goals that were set in April including student achievement goals.**

and retaining of high quality staff.

On recruiting teachers, the district presentation noted that despite increasing the amount of out-of-state recruiting trips, the results did not improve and while the number of candidates have increased in the teacher program at South Florida State College, the demand is greater than the supply.

Superintendent Brenda Longshore said they will be concentrating on "growing our own" with

education pathways, that include prerequisite courses, in the high schools.

"Our desire is that we can begin sharing those opportunities with our students in our local high schools and providing pathways for them to be able to go right into the college and move forward," she said. "And, giving them opportunities to intern in our schools while they are even in high school."

So the hope is to grow their own educators, Longshore said, "Because

we find that if they have family here and connections here they are more likely to stay here."

The district aims to increase the percentage of positions filled with in-field, certified teachers from 86.5% in 2017-18 to 91% by 2021-22.

It was noted the district is still calculating the current in-field, certified status, but the 2018-19 school year started with 46 long-term substitute teachers and the 2019-20 school year started with 32 long-term subs.





# SPORTS

• LOCAL • STATE • NATIONAL

Friday, September 27, 2019

SECTION B

## South Florida strides into third

### Lady Panthers ease past the competition

By **RUTH ANNE LAWSON**  
STAFF WRITER

The South Florida State College Lady Panthers cross country team recently competed in the Embry Riddle ASICS Classic.

Embry Riddle hosted placed first at the meet while South Florida placed sixth overall and third among the two-year state schools.

The meet consisted of 11 schools adding up to 85 competitors vying for first place.

"This was the Lady Panthers' third meet and they are bringing the times down each week," stated first-year South Florida

Coach Christina Bobo.

South Florida's consistent front runner is Abigail Liddle, who placed 28th overall in the 5K with a time of 22:50. Not far behind was Jenasea Moyle with a time of 23:32.

Closing out the team's scorers were Savannah Oldsfield, Jessica Hayes and Kareli Plata, in that order.

The South Florida State College Lady Panthers will head to Seminole State College in Oviedo to compete today starting at 5:30 p.m. The Lady Panthers will participate in the Disney Cross Country Class on Saturday, Oct. 12.



COURTESY PHOTO

South Florida's Jenasea Moyle (left) and Savannah Oldsfield (right) were neck and neck during the Embry Riddle ASICS Classic.



COURTESY PHOTO

South Florida's Abbi Liddle passes a competitor during the 5K race at Embry Riddle.



# South Carolina Ballet

## holds Cinderella auditions



### SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

The Florida premiere of the ballet Cinderella produced by South Carolina Ballet comes to the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, March 7 for one performance at 7 p.m.

Cindy Garren, SFSC director of cultural programs, will hold auditions for children and youth on Saturday, Sept. 28, beginning at 9 a.m. at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts located on SFSC's Highlands Campus at 600 West College Drive in Avon Park.

South Carolina Ballet produces what critics have described as "some of the highest quality cultural entertainment in the southeast." The Ballet attracts not only audiences from all over the southeast, but also quality dancers from all over the country. Entering its 58th season, South Carolina Ballet travels to 15 cities in three states performing a full ballet

"Many roles are available for both boys and girls," Garren said. "Dragonflies, royal pages, fairies, keepers of time, Cinderella's wedding attendants, and other roles are available."

William Starrett, artistic director of Columbia City Ballet, will conduct local auditions at the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts.

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," Garren said.

Children ages 5-6 who have completed kindergarten audition at 9 a.m. Children ages 7-10 audition at 10 a.m. and youth 11 years and up will audition at noon.

"We especially need dancers with two years pointe experience," Starrett said.

Children should wear a leotard, tights, and

ballet shoes, or shorts and a plain white t-shirt with comfortable shoes. Sandals or flip flops are not permitted. A \$10 audition fee must be paid to South Carolina Ballet at the audition. Credit cards are not accepted.

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 with

Nancy McDuffee as the local dance instructor.

This performance is funded in part by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Florida Department of Cultural Affairs. Sponsors are: AdventHealth, SFSC Foundation, The Sebring Rundown, All Around Septic and Sewer, Dr. Catherine Cornelius, Dr. Andrew and Beth Kulick, Shaila Jensen, Senator Denise Grimsley, Terry and Michele Heston, and Joan Hartt.

For more information or to obtain an audition form, visit [sfscarts.org/cinderella-auditions/](http://sfscarts.org/cinderella-auditions/) or email [culturalperformances@southflorida.edu](mailto:culturalperformances@southflorida.edu).