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AND *Shakers*



**3** Three members of the first Panther baseball team launch the 2020 season.



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## Gloria and Joe Davis Jr. See Value in Giving to South Florida State College

### DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Recently, South Florida State College talked with Joe and Gloria Davis about their legacy of support for our mission through the SFSC Foundation.

**SFSC: Did either of you attend South Florida State College?**

**Joe:** We did not. Interestingly, our children didn't. One of our children went to Duke University, one went to Vanderbilt University, and one went to the College of Charleston. But we have many family and friends who attended SFSC. Many of our daughter's friends went to SFSC. Back then, it was a two-year college. So a lot of their friends came to the College because it was close and they could live at home. They got a great start. Almost all of them finished college and have done very well.

**SFSC: Tell me about your family business.**

**Joe:** My dad was a successful small businessperson from Wauchula. But I was born in Avon Park because he had a restaurant here. He was in the restaurant business, he sold cars, and he sold insurance. He did many things. He was a manager for the old F.W. Woolworth Company, but he ended up starting a real estate brokerage business in Wauchula that specialized in agricultural real estate, and he was successful in that. Then he invested in citrus groves as an offshoot of the success in the agricultural real estate business.

I'm an only child. When I graduated



‘THE COLLEGE HAS BECOME A GREAT RESOURCE AND A TREASURE FOR THE REGION.’  
— JOE DAVIS JR.

from the University of Florida College of Law, rather than practicing law, I came back and went into business with my dad. By that time, he had accumulated several hundred acres of citrus. So we were in both businesses, and we ran both businesses out of the same office at that time. We later separated the businesses. Then we had an agricultural business that was in citrus, and the real estate brokerage was separate.

**SFSC: Gloria, I understand that you were a teacher.**

**Gloria:** I was a fourth grade teacher at Wauchula Elementary School and taught in Chiefland when Joe was in law school. I taught until I had children and wanted to stay home with them. I was born in Wauchula and grew up there. Joe

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# Partner with Us for the Common Goal of Higher Education

TRUST THAT WHERE YOU ARE TODAY MATTERS FOR WHO YOU WILL BE TOMORROW.

Spring is the season that blooms with the endless possibilities that we anticipated in the New Year.

New beginnings are around every corner with opportunities waiting to be discovered.

It is a thrill knowing that a new chapter is just about to begin and realizing that there is endless potential for achievement.

Our students are experiencing that. With Commencement right around the corner, SFSC students are looking forward to that moment when they walk across the stage to receive what they have worked so hard to accomplish. Some may forge ahead with fiery steps while others may proceed with assurance and stability.

Whatever direction they choose, just knowing where they came from is priceless. At the alumni office, we are able to stay connected with our graduates as they move on. We see their accomplishments and congratulate them on the growth they've experienced in their careers. To know that their success is due in part to the education they received here at SFSC should make you stand proud in knowing that you are supporting an organization that is truly making a difference in the lives of so many.



The impact SFSC has on our students and in our community can only be achieved when we partner together for a common goal—and that

goal is higher education.

Imagine where your life would be if you did not have a teacher who helped you when you were in school, if your hairdresser could not give you the cut or style that had you beaming with confidence and pride ... What would you do if we did not have competent electrical lineworkers who could turn our power on after a storm, or that skilled, compassionate nurse who cared for you when you were sick?

Higher Ed isn't just a degree. It is a way of life. Your life. My life. It influences us every day without even realizing it. Will you make the decision today to support SFSC? You can change the lives of so many and support our community at the same time. Throughout this edition, you will see numerous ways you can give back. Take a moment to review which is best for you and then take that step to ensure our students achieve the success they've worked so hard for.

**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.

# First *Panthers* Team Players Throw Out First Pitch

THE ORIGINAL PANTHERS REMINISCED ABOUT TRAVELING TO GAMES IN AN OLD CHEVY, ATTENDING CLASSES IN AVON PARK'S BRICKELL BUILDING, AND LEARNING LIFE LESSONS FROM COACH DUNNING TERRELL.

During the Panther baseball game against Pasco-Hernando State College on Friday, Feb. 21, three players from the first Panther team (1966-67) came to SFSC for a mini-reunion of sorts and to each throw out the first pitch of the game. They were Fred McCall #2, who was a pitcher and lives in Arcadia; Ronnie Jackson #7, who was a pitcher and lives in Avon Park, and Hoppy Rewis #8, who was a pitcher, and lives in Avon Park.

"I, mainly, played pitcher," said Ronnie Jackson. "But you played whatever position you could play that day if that's where Coach Dunning Terrell put you. We only had 10 players on the team at that time."



Fred McCall as he appeared in SFSC's 1968 Reflections yearbook.

He indicated that because the team was so small, the players were close and had lot of great times together in spite of having a less than stellar record on the field—something like 1-40. "But we had a great time," Jackson said. "We used to travel in an old Chevrolet station wagon and a four-door International truck."

His memories of Coach Terrell are vivid. "He was one of the nicest, greatest human beings I've ever met in my life. We didn't learn a lot of baseball from him, but we learned a lot about life—how to be a better person. Just being around him made you a better person. You learned a lot about character."

When Jackson was asked how the College has changed since he was a student, he recalled classes in downtown Avon Park. "They were upstairs in the Brickell Building, and the library and the administration offices were down where the auto parts store is now. We used to hold some classes in the old theater on Main Street, and teachers' offices were across the street in the old Touchton Drug Store."

Jackson, Rewis, and McCall all went on to complete their bachelor's degrees at Florida universities. Jackson and Rewis both returned to Avon Park to become high school coaches and both were inducted into the Florida Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame. "So we both had some good years," Jackson said. "Hoppy won some state championships in football, and I won some in baseball. And it was good working



During the 1966-67 season, Ronnie Jackson (left), Fred McCall, and Hoppy Rewis were members of the first Panther baseball team, formed under Coach Dunning Terrell. They inaugurated the Panthers' 2020 season by throwing out the first pitch of the game on Feb. 21.

with your friends."

Although McCall is a man of few words, he commended SFSC's first president, Dr. William Stallard. "Dr. Stallard started the College. He was a fine man. He wrote me a recommendation to attend the University of the Florida, and the dean at UF called me in and said, 'We've never had a recommendation from a college president before. So, we wanted to see who you are.' Dr. Stallard was a super guy."

McCall graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in Physical Education to become a coach. "But I didn't want to be a coach, so I went home," he said. "Vietnam wanted everybody then, so I joined the National Guard and worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 34 years."

Jackson said that he learned some life lessons while at SFSC and playing baseball at the College. "When I was in high school, I never lost a baseball game. When we played out here, we failed a lot. When I went into high school coaching, I became a Hall of Fame coach. That just tells me that, along the way, there are going to be failures. You just have to overcome that failure and you have to believe in yourself. If you work hard enough, good things will happen."



## 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](http://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](mailto: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.

## FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CHAIR

# Watch for the Alumni Survey



Looks like an early summer once again for Floridians. That's okay because the evening ball games will be more tolerable—we won't have to

bundle up or bring heaters!

Since coming on board in November, Anastasia Saunders, coordinator of institutional development and alumni development, has been pitching some terrific ideas on how to keep our alumni connected and

engaged with the College, such as doing quarterly rather than monthly activities. Results from the alumni survey will help in deciding what these activities should be. We want to hear from you, and we ask that you respond to our alumni survey.

In the next six months, we will see the College produce more alums who, in turn, can help promote what the College does to create its alumni base, in a wonderful never-ending cycle. Go Panthers!

**Lena D. Phelps**

Chair, SFSC Alumni Association  
Class of 1984

## NEWS & NOTES



### New Board Member

In October, the SFSC Foundation welcomed Cheryl Brown to its Board of Directors.

### Domino's Delivers for Highlands County Teachers

The SFSC Alumni Association thanks Domino's Pizza of Avon Park for partnering with us to honor



Highlands County teachers through our new School Lunch Bunch initiative. It is great to have a community partner that gives back to our teachers and those in education who are investing in our local youth.

### Jerry Miller Remembered

South Florida State College (SFSC) and the SFSC Foundation recently lost a dear friend, Jerry Miller of Duke Energy. Miller made a career of working in utilities and energy conservation. As an advocate for SFSC, he helped to seek funding for the Hardee Campus's electrical lineworker program through Duke Energy and was a member of the Leadership Council for Take Stock in Children. His generosity and his reputation for leading by example demonstrated what it means to be a corporate citizen and community supporter.

"We have lost a community friend and partner, but more importantly, a true friend to SFSC, and we will miss him greatly," said Jamie Bateman, SFSC's executive director of institutional advancement.

The SFSC family send our thoughts and prayers to Jerry's family, along with our gratitude for his invaluable support of our mission.

# SFSC is Designated as a Military Friendly School

South Florida State College (SFSC) has been designated as a Military Friendly® School by VIQTORY, a service-disabled, veteran-owned business that issues the longest-running, most comprehensive review of college and university services provided to military and veteran students.



Each year, VIQTORY establishes the list of Military Friendly® Schools from the results of public research and a data-driven survey that is submitted by each institution. This year, 1,693 schools filled

out the survey and each school was ranked according to the data that was collected.

"SFSC takes a serious commitment to providing top quality services to our active duty military students as well as our veterans," said Dr. Timothy Wise, SFSC's dean of student services. "We are proud to once again be recognized for our commitment to them."

SFSC provide veterans with academic advising and counseling for all programs and degrees. Veterans can sign up for courses the first day of registration regardless of how many hours they have earned. Veterans and/or their dependents utilizing VA benefits to pay their tuition can receive a 60-day deferment from the day classes begin.

"Being prior military myself and knowing that our institution is Military Friendly®, it really makes me proud," said Robert Hampton, SFSC student services advisor and veteran school certifying official.

As part of the College's outreach to veterans, SFSC accepts a variety of educational benefits provided by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. Those benefits range from the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which provides financial support for education to individuals who have at least 90 days of aggregate service after Sept. 10, 2001, to Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program Chapter 31 for veterans who suffered a service-connected disability that limits their ability to work or prevents them from working.

As veterans complete their education, they can access interactive tools that assist them with career planning, counseling, and job placement through the SFSC Career Development Center. The SFSC Testing Center is recognized as an "open" military friendly testing center by the U.S. Department of Defense which regulates most military educational assistance programs.

For more information about SFSC's veteran services, contact Hampton at 863-784-7128 or email [robert.hampton@southflorida.edu](mailto:robert.hampton@southflorida.edu).



Ken Lambert (left) attended a recent Commencement with fellow members of SFSC's District Board of Trustees.

## SFSC Remembers Kenneth Lambert

South Florida State College (SFSC) is taking steps to remember Kenneth A. Lambert, a member of its District Board of Trustees (DBOT) who passed away March 15, 2020.

Lambert joined the board in November 2011, representing Hardee County. He served as board chair throughout the 2013-14 academic year.

"Mr. Lambert's great love has always been at the forefront of his position as a trustee at South Florida State College," said Tami Cullens, chair of the DBOT. "Our College benefitted under his leadership and drive by making a difference for each person that sets foot on our campuses. The board has been honored to serve with a man as phenomenal as Mr. Lambert."

"Since joining the Board, Mr. Lambert has been an influential force and a strong advocate for supporting the academic mission of the College," said Dr. Leitzel. "His love for SFSC was exceptional."

In 2019, SFSC paid tribute to Lambert's service by installing an honorary

bench adjacent to Building F on the Highlands Campus. The message inscribed on a stone next to the bench reads: "Dedicated to honor SFSC Trustee Kenneth A. Lambert and all others who embark on a journey to achieve lofty dreams."

On March 11, the DBOT unanimously designated Lambert as a Trustee Emeritus, so he will always be recognized as a trustee for SFSC. In addition, the Kenneth A. Lambert Memorial Endowment was established with the goal of building a \$100,000 endowment that will fund special needs and projects not met by the College's general operating budget.

Lambert graduated from SFSC in 1980 with an Associate in Arts and earned a Bachelor of Applied Science in Public Relations/Image Management from the University of Florida in 1983.

Lambert was a managing member at Summit 105 Group, LLC, a former commissioner and mayor of the City of Wauchula, and an active member of the First Baptist Church of Wauchula.

# Take Stock in Children Celebrates Mentors



Asena Mott and Avi



DeSoto mentors orientation



Pauline Auyang and Janelle



Janet Lynch Doorlag



Latasia Polk and mentees



Magdalisse and Celine



Joe Sinness and Brandon Ganaban



Susie Johnson (right) and her mentee



Sebring High School



**JOE AND GLORIA DAVIS**, *continued from page 1*

and I graduated from the same class at Hardee High School and went on to the University of Florida.

**SFSC: Your parents made donations to SFSC. In the early 2000s, they donated property near Highlands Hammock State Park and also property in Hardee County.**

**Joe:** There were two or three different transactions. My father and mother established the Joe L. and Patricia Davis Scholarship Fund with the SFSC Foundation in either the '70s or '80s.

My father thought the College was a great resource for our region, so he started donating money or property in the '70s or '80s. And it wasn't just one transaction. He did more over time in multiple gifts. He also served continuously on the Foundation Board for 25 years, I believe.

**SFSC: He had been on the Foundation Board beginning in 1988 and was a past president of the Foundation. How did his involvement influence you?**

**Joe:** I knew my dad was astute in the charitable organizations that he supported. The two organizations that my parents supported the most were the SFSC Foundation and the Florida Hospital Foundation. My mother was also a big supporter of the American Cancer Society because she had lost three sisters to cancer.

So, my father influenced me in support of the SFSC Foundation. As Gloria and I came back to Wauchula in 1976, by then, the College was established in the region, helping young people with their education. By 1976, the College had become a great resource and treasure for the region.

**SFSC: Why do you think education is so important, particularly, for our communities—Hardee, DeSoto, and Highlands counties?**

**Gloria:** Because we're relatively isolated here, and kids can learn

that there's a big world out there. It encourages them to try new things and offers different paths they can take.

**Joe:** Education is the gateway to economic progress and a better understanding of the world. I see how the College helps people and the opportunities it creates for young people.

**SFSC: Gloria, you're a Take Stock in Children mentor. What influenced you to do this?**

**Gloria:** A friend of ours in Wauchula, Marsha Timmerman, started a mentoring program when she was working at the junior high school. She pulled together people to talk to kids who were having trouble either at home or academically or just needed someone to talk to. So I started mentoring kids. Then Take Stock in Children came along and took over. I kept at it because I enjoyed it. It made me happy to see the kids do well.

**SFSC: How do you think Take Stock helps children at risk?**

**Gloria:** It gives them somebody who will be there with them regularly. I meet with my current Take Stock scholar weekly.

I had a Take Stock scholar who graduated from Florida State University and is now working at Pioneer Medical Center in Wauchula. She wanted to become a physician's assistant, but with the baby, it's hard. She had an unplanned pregnancy while in school.

When she went to sign up for high school classes, she would ask me to come with her. She would say, "I'm not taking algebra." I would say, "Yes, you're taking algebra." She would say, "I'm not taking chemistry, either." I think that she wanted someone to make her do it. I had to make a few trips to talk to her high school teachers because she was lax. But overall, she made great grades.

**SFSC: Gloria, what do you get from being a mentor?**

**Gloria:** Being with the kids makes me feel younger. Some of them don't have the guidance they need because their parents never went to college themselves. My Take Stock scholar's

parents wanted her to go to college, but they didn't know how to encourage her. She had been working 4-5 hours a day at Winn Dixie, so she was helping to support the family.

The students may want to go to college badly, but they don't know how to prepare for it or that you need to take certain classes or apply early. They're not persistent with the applications and following deadlines. They don't know how to navigate the application and registration process. As a mentor, if I don't know what to do, I can at least ask.

**SFSC: How have you donated to the SFSC Foundation?**

**Joe:** We donated to Take Stock in Children, mainly through Gloria's continued service. But we have the Take Stock in Children Davis Scholarship that's specific to assisting on the operational side or scholarship side. And we made a donation to the Foundation's Partnership Project. Dr. Leitzel [SFSC president] felt that a contribution to the project was important to the future of the College for the long term, and that was good enough for us.

**SFSC: How would you encourage someone who wants to support education in our community and specifically the College?**

**Joe:** If their main interest is in helping young people with their education, what better way to donate that time than becoming a mentor with Take Stock in Children?

If you want to help young people from the whole region, why not establish a scholarship or fund or support someone else's program through the SFSC Foundation?

**Take Stock in Children provides unique opportunities for at-risk students to escape the cycle of poverty through education. For information about mentoring local students or supporting its mission financially, call 863-784-7343 or email [tsic@southflorida.edu](mailto:tsic@southflorida.edu).**

**To support the work of South Florida State College through the SFSC Foundation, call 863-453-3133 or email [foundation@southflorida.edu](mailto:foundation@southflorida.edu).**

South Florida State College  
600 West College Drive  
Avon Park, FL 33825

## On the Calendar

### Foundation Events .....

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2020: **CANCELED**

#### **Midnight at the Masquerade Mystery Dinner**

5:30 p.m., The Hotel Jacaranda  
(RSVP required)

SATURDAY, OCT. 24, 2020

#### **SFSC Foundation Legacy Showcase and Fundraiser Featuring Dueling Pianos**

5:30 p.m. Social | 7 p.m. Performance  
SFSC University Center, Highlands Campus  
(Tickets required)

MONDAY, NOV. 30, 2020

#### **The Jacaranda Jubilee**

6:30 p.m., The Hotel Jacaranda  
(RSVP required)

TUESDAY, DEC. 1, 2020

#### **#Giving Tuesday**

All day

THURSDAY, DEC. 10, 2020

#### **Christmas Luncheon**

11:30 a.m., The Hotel Jacaranda  
(RSVP required)

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, JAN. 14-17, 2021

#### **4th Annual Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout**

Sun 'N Lake Golf Club  
(No reservations. No tee times required.)

### Board Meetings .....

MAY 12, 2020

#### **Board Meeting**

6 p.m., The Hotel Jacaranda

APRIL 14, 2020

#### **Executive Committee Meeting**

Noon, The Hotel Jacaranda

### SFSC Events .....

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

#### **Spring Commencement**

Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts  
SFSC Highlands Campus

Annual and event sponsorships are available. Please contact the Foundation for more information.