

Two SFSC Students Named To 2021 All-Florida Academic Team

By **DEBORAH BELL LATTER**

Special To The Herald-Advocate

The Florida College System (FCS) has named two South Florida State College (SFSC) students to the 2021 All-Florida Academic Team.

Each year, the FCS names a Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) All-Florida Academic Team to honor students enrolled at Florida's public state and community colleges for their academic achievement, leadership, and service to the community.

The SFSC students earning this recognition are Sara Canali and Camila Rimoldi. They join 135 of their peers from the 28-member FCS in being named to the academic team.

Canali and Rimoldi will be recognized, formally, during the 2021 All-Florida Academic Team Awards Ceremony that takes place via a virtual platform using a pre-recorded format. The ceremony airs on Friday, April 23 at 2 p.m. EDT. The video will continue to be available for viewing until the end of April. A link to the pre-recorded ceremony will be posted on the All-Florida Academic Team webpage at floridacollegesystemfoundation.org/phi-theta-kappa. The Chancellor's Student Service Chapter Award winners will also be announced during the ceremony.

"We are so proud of Camilla and Sara for earning their distinguished places on the 2021 All-Florida Academic Team," said Amy Bohan, SFSC Honors Program director and Biology instructor. "Both of these young women are academically strong and have participated in various community efforts. Sara and Camilla are exemplary students and well deserving of

this award.

"Sara is the SFSC Art Club's marketing officer and is involved in the Aktion Club. In addition, she participates at Heartland Horses Equine Activities & Learning (HHEAL), a horseback therapeutic riding program. She is an athlete of Special Stars and recently graduated in Florida Partners in Policymaking, where she won the Alan C. Wesley Award in Policymaking. In pre-COVID times, Sara was involved in Miracle League Baseball, an organization that removes barriers for children with mental and physical disabilities and lets them experience the fun of baseball."

"Camilla has extensively participated in undergraduate research," Bohan said. "She has presented her work on coral gene expression at the Florida Undergraduate Research Conference, Florida Collegiate Honors Council, and Florida Academy of Science. Her abstract has been accepted for the 2021 Experimental Biology Conference, where she will be featured in a press release. In addition to her contribution to the science field, she published a paper based on her research on a 1926 hurricane, including Moore Haven, Fla. victims buried in Sebring. Camilla also holds offices in Phi Theta Kappa and Honors Ambassadors."

Students named to the All-Florida Academic Team were drawn from SFSC's Honors Program and the College's Tau Epsilon chapter of PTK. 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.



Amy Bohan, SFSC Honors Program director, with All-Florida Academic Team honorees Sara Canali and Camila Rimoldi.

COURTESY PHOTO

PTK is an honor society that recognizes the academic achievements of community and state college students and helps them to grow as scholars and leaders. The society is made up of over 3.5 million members in the United States and 10 additional nations. For more on PTK, visit ptk.org.

For information about SFSC's PTK chapter, contact Joan Briand, PTK advisor, at 863-784-7368.

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May 6, 2021

SFSC Welding Program Students Return A 100% Pass Rate On Certification Exam

By DEBORAH BELL LATTER

Special To The Herald-Advocate

Of the 11 students who recently graduated from South Florida State College's (SFSC) Principles and Practices of Welding program, 100 percent of the students passed the American Welding Society (AWS) Basic Welder Certification exam.

SFSC has graduated two classes from the program. This is the second class to score a 100 percent pass rate on its certification exam.

"The high pass rates are a testament to the quality of training our instructor, William Bluhm, provides," said Fred Hayes, Construction Trade Program coordinator.

"The AWS certification is not a requirement to get a job," Hayes added. "However, in the welding industry, it carries a lot of weight. This includes better wages and more opportunities that are afforded to those who hold the credential. This credential is also recognized nationwide."

Welders, as well as all construction trades, are in high demand at this time because the Baby Boomer generation is hitting retirement age at a massive rate. Welders are used in building construction, fabrication of machinery, manufacturing, plumbing, nuclear power plants, the marine industry, and more.

"Passing the AWS certification exam is a big accomplishment for the students," Hayes said. "It demonstrates to the student and the instruc-

tor that the time invested in training and the proficiencies and skills they have attained are worth the effort. It is a major confidence builder and adds to the possibility of gaining better employment."

Many of the graduates from the program have been offered jobs. Some came into the program already holding jobs as welders but wanted the training to acquire the AWS certification and better wages.

SFSC's Principles and Practices of Welding program was established in 2019 and is held at the SFSC DeSoto Campus in Arcadia. It meets on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 5:30-9:30 p.m. and on Saturdays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. The next class runs from Sept. 7, 2021 through May 7, 2022.

For information about the program, see the College's Advanced Manufacturing and Industrial Trades class catalog at southflorida.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2018/09/Industrial-Trade-1.pdf.

To register for the program, call 863-784-7405 before the deadline of Friday, Aug. 6, 2021.

For scholarship opportunities, call 863-201-7195.

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May 6, 2021



As a dually enrolled student, Camila Rimoldi Ibanez graduates from Sebring High School and South Florida State College in May 2021.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Rimoldi Ibanez performing research in the lab

SFSC Student Wins 2021 Skoch Scholarship For Research

By **DEBORAH BELL LATTER**

Special To The Herald-Advocate

South Florida State College (SFSC) student, Camila Rimoldi Ibanez, was awarded the \$1,000 Skoch Scholarship through Florida Sea Grant. Rimoldi Ibanez is a Sebring High School senior dually enrolled at SFSC.

The Skoch Scholarship is awarded to an outstanding high school senior competing in the State Science and Engineering Fair of Florida. The scholarship recognizes promising young researchers in a coastal or marine science-related field.

"We are thrilled to learn of Camila winning the 2021 Skoch Scholarship," said Dr. James Hawker, SFSC dean of arts and sciences. "She won because of the undergraduate coral research project she conducted at SFSC this past year. It is gratifying that talented and deserving students like her have the chance to win scholarships for university transfer, because SFSC promotes expanded learning by students doing research projects with faculty mentors."

Rimoldi Ibanez researched whether a species of coral has genes that are associated with the reception or emission of sound in her award-winning project, "Ultrasonic Planimals! Identifying Genes Associated with Coral Bioacoustics."

According to Rimoldi Ibanez's research abstract: "Because corals make up the 'rainforests of the sea,' this ecosystem is believed to be highly dependent on communication to grow and survive. Many organisms that live in coral

reefs, including coral larvae, perceive and are guided by sound when trying to find their way to coral reefs to develop."

To conduct the study, Rimoldi Ibanez performed genetic analysis on coral DNA, looking for evidence of four genes known to be sound-sensitive. Two of the sound-sensitive genes, called TRPV and FOLH1, displayed "faint bands" in the gene presence analysis, indicating that they may be present in corals and that further research is warranted.

Rimoldi Ibanez graduates from Sebring High School and earns her Associate in Arts degree from SFSC in May. She plans to continue her education at Nova Southeastern University or Florida Atlantic University.

Funding for this scholarship is provided by the Skoch family of Boynton Beach in memory of Charles "Chuck" Skoch, an avid fisherman, boat captain, and Florida resident who prematurely died in an automobile accident at age 51.

Florida Sea Grant is a university-based program that supports research, education, and extension to conserve coastal resources and enhance economic opportunities for residents of Florida. It is partnered with the Florida Board of Education, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Florida's citizens and governments.

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SFSC Foundation receives \$60,000 grant

Special to the Highlands News-Sun

AVON PARK, Fla. — A \$60,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County has been awarded to the South Florida State College (SFSC) Foundation, Inc. to benefit part-time students who are attending SFSC in summer 2021, fall term 2021, and spring term 2022.

The grant comes from the Edward K. Roberts Community College Fund, which was established by Roberts as a legacy to support Florida's community colleges and other charitable organizations. Managed by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the fund continues Roberts' vision of making higher education a priority,

particularly for those motivated to seek a better life for themselves.

SFSC's grant funds are designated to provide assistance to students who are attending college part time and may not qualify for other forms of financial aid. Individual students may receive up to a maximum of \$1,500 during the grant period of June 2021 to March 2022. The grant covers tuition, housing, books, child care, automobile repairs, and needs that would otherwise prevent students from attending college. Recipients are identified by SFSC's Office of Financial Aid.

"Because of grants from organizations such as the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the SFSC Foundation can support the educational

goals of SFSC's students," said Jamie Bateman, SFSC executive director of institutional advancement.

"The funds from this grant allow our students to concentrate on their studies and prepare for personally and financially rewarding careers. This grant also addresses the needs of parents. The Community Foundation of Sarasota County takes a two-generation approach to helping families break the cycle of poverty. With this financial support, students can achieve their higher education goals."

For more information, contact Bateman at 863-453-3133 or visit southflorida.edu. For information about the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, visit cfsarasota.org.



COURTESY PHOTO

Tina Stetson (left), SFSC director of financial aid, and Jamie Bateman, SFSC executive director of institutional advancement



COURTESY PHOTO

Bill Jarrett (left), Lisa Jarrett, and Jamie Bateman, executive director, SFSC Institutional advancement. The Jarretts were recently inducted into the South Florida State College Foundation Legacy Society.

Bill And Lisa Jarrett Inducted Into The SFSC Foundation Legacy Society

By **DEBORAH BELL LATTER**

Special To The Herald-Advocate

During the South Florida State College (SFSC) Foundation Legacy Showcase and Fundraiser on Saturday, May 1, Bill and Lisa Jarrett were inducted into the 2021 Legacy Society for their service to the Foundation and to the College. Jamie Bateman, SFSC executive director of institutional advancement made the presentation.

"It's hard to put into words how appreciative we are of Bill and Lisa for all that they have done and continue to do for our College and our community," Bateman said. "They lead with a servant's heart and don't ask for recognition. They also lead by example. Bill and Lisa are such dear friends whom we cherish and adore. It is a great honor to recognize them for all of their support, dedication, and, most importantly, friendship. Because of their dedication and leadership, our Foundation is as successful as it is today."

This is the third year that such an honor has taken place. Joan Hartt was inducted into The Legacy Society in 2020 and Joe Jr. and Gloria Davis were inducted in 2019.

The Jarretts have served the SFSC Foundation and been friends to the College for several years. Bill Jarrett has been a member of the SFSC Foundation Board of Directors since 1991.

"The Jarrett's record of support to our College and community is remarkable," said Dr. Norman L. Stephens, SFSC president emeritus, in a video presentation. "They supported the restoration of the Hotel Jacaranda, they helped our student athletes through the Athletic Booster Club and in improving athletic facilities, they provided housing scholarships for students in need, they sponsored numerous Artist Series programs, and helped with facilities renovations. Of course, the Bill and Lisa Jarrett Endowed Chair in Business provides a deserving member of the faculty with funds to improve their teaching and learning. Several Foundation endowments benefitted from the Jarretts' generosity, including one in my name. The South Florida State College Foundation is one of the most successful in the state or in the nation because of their many influences."

"Bill and Lisa Jarrett have made a tremen-

dous difference to the profession of dentistry, particularly in our practice," said Dr. David E. Willey, dentist and owner of Lakeside Dental Arts and a member of the SFSC Foundation board of directors. "We were planning our Day of Giving and Bill came to me and said, 'How can we make it bigger and better.' So, Bill and I brainstormed. I provided the dentistry and Bill offered to pay the lab bills on some of the very extensive smile makeovers and rehabilitations for many patients. Bill's theme is always: How Can We Do It Bigger? And it's been a blessing. Bill and Lisa don't ask for recognition, but they always help us to improve the lives of many other individuals in the community, more than anyone would ever know."

"When I think about Bill and Lisa Jarrett, I think about four words: humble, compassionate, kind, and friend," said Denise Grimsley, vice president of administration, AdventHealth Wauchula. "They are not only friends to me, but they're friends to our College, to our Foundation, to our community. I first met Bill and Lisa about 25 years ago. I quickly realized what kind of people that they were and how much they gave back to the community. I met them through an SFSC Foundation meeting when I became a Foundation board member. I've watched them over the years invest in our youth in Hardee, DeSoto, and Highlands counties. I've watched so many young people grow up under the influence of Bill and Lisa. And they continue to give back. I believe that we will continue to see the impact of their investment 20, 30, 40, and even 50 years out at South Florida State College."

Randy Surber, CEO of AdventHealth Heartland, recounted the Jarretts' contributions to the hospital and the community.

"Bill's been a member of our hospital board for over 22 years. In fact, he was recognized throughout AdventHealth last year as the Trustee of the Year for our entire AdventHealth System. And Lisa's been a part of the Hospital Foundation Board for nearly 21 years. What a difference you've made," Surber noted.

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COURTESY PHOTO

Rudram Dance Company to perform Saturday, June 19 at 7 p.m. at SFSC.

NEA awards grant to SFSC

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS SUN

WASHINGTON, D.C. – For its second major grant announcement of fiscal year 2021, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has distributed over \$88 million in recommended grants to organizations in all 50 states and jurisdictions.

Grants to organizations in three funding categories are included in this round: Grants for Arts Projects, Our Town, and State and Regional Partnerships.

“As the country and the arts sector begin to imagine returning to a post-pandemic world, the National Endowment for the Arts is proud to announce funding that will help arts organizations re-engage fully with partners and audiences,” said NEA Acting Chairman Ann Eilers. “While the arts, whether through books, movies, or online performances and programs, have been a sustaining force for many throughout the pandemic, the chance to gather with one another and share arts experiences is its own necessity and pleasure.”

Grants for Arts Projects

Grants for Arts Projects (GAP) is the principal grant category of the National Endowment for the Arts, supporting public engagement with, and access to, various forms of art across the nation, the creation of excellent art, learning in the arts at all stages of life, and the integration of the arts into the fabric of community life.

Matching grants in this category range from \$10,000 to \$100,000, cover 13 artistic disciplines, and are for organizations in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, DC. In July 2020, the agency received 1,924 eligible GAP applications. Approved for funding are 1,172 projects totaling over \$27 million.

Recommended grants this round support a range of activities, including: South Florida State College (\$10,000) to support a series of free, culturally diverse performances for the 2021-2022 season.

“South Florida State College is committed to bringing the performing arts to all members of our community,” said Cindy Garren, director of cultural programs at South Florida State College. “On June 19 at 7 p.m., SFSC will present Rudram Dance Company which is funded by the NEA. We hope to see families attend this entertaining dance performance.” Tickets are available now online at sfscARTS.org.

The next deadline for organizations interested in applying for Grants for Arts Projects is July 8, 2021; visit arts.gov for more information.

State and Regional Partnership Agreements

In partnership with the state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and regional arts organizations (RAOs), the NEA provides federal support for projects that benefit local communities.

The Partnership Agreements for the state arts agencies provide funds to address priorities identified at the state level and help to cultivate a strong statewide arts infrastructure and position the arts in a broad range of areas such as cultural tourism, community revitalization, economic development, education, and health and human services.

The regional arts organizations, each representing a geographic grouping of states, assist the Arts Endowment in distributing funds and programs nationally through touring and other activities that are responsive to the needs of the region.

Each year, 40% of the agency's grantmaking funds are designated for state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, and national service organizations that support the work of the states and regions. A total of \$56.7 million is recommended for these partners in FY 2021, with \$45.7 million of that total designated for the state arts agencies. Each SAA and RAO matches its Arts Endowment funding on at least a 1:1 basis.

SFSC Graduates Celebrate A Milestone in Their Academic Life



SFSC's commencement ceremony on May 11 was a festive affair.



Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel, SFSC president, with a graduate. COURTESY PHOTOS

By DEBORAH BELL LATTER

Special To The Herald-Advocate

For South Florida State College (SFSC) graduates who gathered in the Alan Jay Wildstein Theater for the Performing Arts on Tuesday, May 11, the three 2021 Commencement ceremonies were times to celebrate, while taking precautions during the pandemic.

The number of students participating in these Commencement ceremonies totaled 229. Approximately 429 students met the SFSC requirements for spring 2021 Commencement. Of these, 29 received their Bachelor of Science in Supervision and Management (BAS-SM), four received their Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), eight received their Bachelor

of Science in Elementary Education (BSEE), 179 received their Associate in Arts (A.A.), 63 received their Associate in Science (A.S.), 10 received their State of Florida High School diplomas, and 138 received career certificates and college credit certificates.

Dr. Thomas C. Leitzel, SFSC president, emphasized one particular phrase when addressing the graduates: "You heard me say, 'Keep moving.' That is more than just a processional message during Commencement. I truly mean 'keep moving.' Move on to your next opportunity with confidence. Move toward your next academic credential. Move toward that next promotion at work. Move toward the opportunity to make a difference in the world. Just keep moving. And above all, never give up. Remain strong. We will get through difficult times, and we will do it together."

Early in the program, Joe Wright, chair of the SFSC Board of Trustees, addressed the graduates, expressing his joy that SFSC was able to hold its Commencement ceremonies in person compared to the previous year. "For social distancing, we have three individual ceremonies," he said. "Guest lists are limited. But, and this is the most important thing, we are here to celebrate and honor your graduation. The focus is on you, not on the challenges of the pandemic. Class of 2021, you deserve a hearty congratulations. We celebrate with you."

The mace bearer and chief marshal for this year's ceremony was Elizabeth Andrews. Marshals were Thomas Bohan, Kathleen Cappel, Jennifer Groves, Robert Hampton, Cindy Kinser, Michelle MacBeth, Ricardo Pantoja, Dr. Mintoo Patel, Andrew Polk, Tina Stetson, Joan Davies Briand, and Dr. Christopher van der Kaay.

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A graduate poses with '2-0-2-1' balloons outside the SFSC auditorium.



A SFSC graduate raises her diploma over her head.



SFSC trustees with a graduate.

Graduating nurses receive pins for completing program

By Special to Highlands News-Sun
COURTESY SFSC

AVON PARK — South Florida State College's Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program honored 28 graduates with all receiving Registered Nursing (RN) pins Tuesday, May 18, in a ceremony that marked the end of their studies and celebrated their commitment to pursuing careers in the nursing profession.

The graduates are Yiley Acosta, Emily Aguilera, Joshua Arce, Teresa Baker, Jessica Boatwright, Evelia Cabrera, Kadie Crosson, Lauren Dutcher, Sarai Espinoza Alaniz, Kimberly Frazier, Luis Garduno, Kyle Jahna, Allison Lee, Breanna Lee, Blanca Martinez, Autumn Massey, Erin McGlinchey, Giselle Mendez, Madison Miller, Scott Milliken, Danielle Minnick, Julia Moody, Jessica Morris, Addie Proctor, Gabriella Riboni, Nancy Sanchez, Scott Shievdal Jr. and Stephanie Whitmore.

During the ceremony, graduates accepted their nursing pins from instructors Sharmin Jones and Laurie Simmons.

In her parting remarks to the graduates, Dr. Michele Heston, dean of health sciences, stressed the power of hope. "New beginnings instill in you, our future nurses, hope for the future. Hope is an expression of possibilities. It is energy, not a passive waiting for something to happen, but a realization of the other through your knowledge and caring and therefore an important aspect of courage. Such courage is found in standing by the other in our care. In trying circumstances and in taking risks that go beyond safety and security, contemporary healthcare has never experienced circumstances such as those we have all encountered during the past 14 months. My congratulations come with a charge: to never lose hope and to always stand up for the other, knowing that your care and courage make hope possible."

Jones, the keynote



COURTESY PHOTO

South Florida State College's Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) graduates for Spring 2021.

speaker, praised the graduates for their accomplishments. "It takes a special person to be a nurse. Each and every one of you has proven that you can be that nurse: that nurse who has a sense of humor; that nurse who has professionalism; that nurse who has diligence and compassion; that nurse who has empathy, a sense of deeper understanding of life; that nurse who has hope for what others may seem hopeless; and a sense of pride in saying I am that nurse. We are proud of you and you have a right to be proud of yourselves and your accomplishments."

Each year, ADN graduates present the Golden D.U.C.K. award to someone who they looked up to as a mentor. The D.U.C.K. acronym represents the foundational elements of the mentoring arrangement: Developing, Understanding, Compassion and Knowledge.

During the ceremony, the 2021 Golden D.U.C.K. Award was presented to instructor Mary Ellen Powrie. The evening was especially satisfying for Powrie because, a former patient of hers, Danielle

Minnick, was among the graduates. Years ago, when Powrie was working as a neonatal nurse in Winter Haven, she cared for Minnick after she was born prematurely.

Graduates of the ADN program become registered nurses by passing the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX) exam. SFSC nursing graduates are usually fully employed in nursing within a few months of graduation.

SFSC's ADN program is the only nationally accredited nursing program in its service district of Highlands, Hardee, and DeSoto counties. It is accredited through the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN).

SFSC offers ADN program options for students interested in becoming registered nurses: a two-year Generic-RN program and a one-year Transition-LPN to RN program. The College also offers a one-year practical nursing occupational certificate program. For program entry requirements, consult the SFSC College Catalog at southflorida.edu or call 863-784-7027.



COURTESY PHOTO

Nursing instructor Mary Ellen Powrie, left, receives the Golden D.U.C.K. award from ADN graduate Blanca Martinez for mentoring the student nurses.



COURTESY PHOTO

By reciting the Florence Nightingale pledge, ADN vow to live by good moral standards while they serve humanity through nursing. Nightingale, the author of the pledge, is considered to be the founder of modern nursing.



COURTESY PHOTO

Sharmin Jones, left, affixes a Registered Nursing (RN) pin to the uniform of Autumn Massey, signifying that she has graduated from SFSC's ADN program.



South Florida State College recently held a pinning ceremony for participants in the dental hygiene program. .

COURTESY PHOTOS

Dental Hygiene Graduates Honored With Pinning Ceremony

By **DEBORAH BELL LATTER**

Special To The Herald-Advocate

South Florida State College (SFSC) honored eight graduates of its Dental Hygiene program in a traditional pinning ceremony in the Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park on Thursday, May 6. The graduates had just completed their Associate in Science in Dental Hygiene program.

Receiving their pins were Kaitlin Brianne Alsvig, Tatyana Siara Haro, Jaylin Hope Maynard, Noel Donniece Henry, Sebrina Sue Gillilan, Earlnajah Taiwana Collins, Lyric Elizabeth Antonio, and Chelsey Lynn Stephens.

Stephens and Henry are from Hardee County.

Kaitlin Alsvig, 2021 class president, addressed her fellow graduates and recalled their perseverance when taking classes and exams through a pandemic. "We had some interesting times, but I know that they can be turned into stories that will inspire others to go after their dreams no matter what the challenges are," she said. "My classmates are some of the most incredible people that I know. Without them, I would not be where I am today."

Graduates were presented their dental hygiene pins by Dr. Deborah Milliken, chair of SFSC's Dental Education program.

"Changes have occurred to you over the past two years. Parts of your bodies have changed," noted Dr. Milliken. "Your hands have learned the skills of controlling and manipulating tiny, sharp blades on soft tissue.

They are stronger and they have learned how to make intentional movements that are effective in the treatment of patients. They have learned to be gentle, but sensitive to touch. Your heads have changed a lot. Your minds are filled with knowledge for a lifetime. Your minds are trained to think sequentially and organize information. But your minds are also able to critically analyze situations and come up with accurate conclusions. Your minds are accustomed to using sound judgment and making decisions about your patients. Above all else, you've been given the opportunity to learn compassion for each individual, wherever they are in life. We leave you with the words of George Washington Carver who said, 'How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the wrong. Because sometime in life, you will have been all of these.'"

Upon completing the Dental Hygiene program, graduates become dental hygienists by passing the National Dental Hygiene Board Examination and the Florida State Clinical Licensure Examination. They can, then, work alongside a dentist as a member of a dental health care team.

For information about SFSC's Associate in Science in Dental Hygiene program, call 863-784-7225 or email healthsciences@southflorida.edu.

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Class president Kaitlin Alsvig spoke during the ceremony.

COURTESY PHOTOS