



COURTESY PHOTOGRAPH

Desha Galimore, Class Leader (at left), with Mike Austin



COURTESY PHOTOGRAPH

Roger Engle (left) Executive Officer and award for top academics, with Mike Austin (right)



COURTESY PHOTOGRAPH

Russell Rowe (left), award for top firearms score, with Mike Austin (right)

SFSC graduates new corrections officers

SPECIAL TO HIGHLANDS
NEWS-SUN

**Criminal Justice
Academy Graduates New
Corrections Officers**

AVON PARK – South Florida State College (SFSC) graduated 19 new correctional officers from Basic Corrections Class 21-104 on Thursday, May 27, at the Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

Michael Austin, coordinator of SFSC's Criminal Justice Academy, called the cadets to the stage and handed each new corrections officer their Career Certificate.

Graduates who received certificates were

Joseph Benjamin, Daniel C. Cox, Roger D. Engle II, Alexandra M. Figueroa Nater, Leah S. Gaines, Desha Y. Galimore, Kevin C. Harlow Jr., Alvin A. Hinson, Paige E. Jaskolski, Alexander J. Lobo, Yolonda N. Martin, Abdul-Hafiz Muhammad, Khoy D. Rezarie, Gabriel J. Roper, Russell W. Rowe, John L. Schneider III, Orlando S. Smith, Samuel D. Smith Jr., and Antonio Vega-Hernandez.

During the ceremony, special awards were presented to Russell Rowe for Top Firearms scores and Roger Engle for Top Academics. Class 104's

two officers were recognized for their leadership: Desha Galimore as class leader and Roger Engle as executive officer.

Upon successful completion of the SFSC 420 contact-hour Correctional Officer Career Certificate Program, students earn a Career Certificate and are eligible to take the state certification examination to become a certified officer. For more information about this program or any other program offered through the SFSC Criminal Justice Academy, call Austin at 863-784-7282 or email Michael. Austin@southflorida.edu.



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SFSC Corrections Class 104



SPORTS

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Saturday, June 12, 2021

SECTION B

Volleyball camp swings into action



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

Balls every where as the campers work on set drills in the first of many volleyball camps at South Florida State College.

South Florida host first week of camp

By JIM TAYLOR
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK -- The South Florida State College concluded the first of four Volleyball camps being held this summer Thursday with a huge turnout for the week that had nearly 20 kids in the 10-13 age group and over 30 in the 14-18 age group.

Hosted by South Florida State College's Head Coach Kimberly Crawford, who is starting her 19th year with the Panthers and holding camps since her first year and her Assistant Emily Vickers, who has been involved for the past twelve years either as a camper herself, a player with the Panthers and now as a volunteer.

"We changed camps to the evening several years ago" said Crawford "because more kids were able to show up due to parents working during the day."

Crawford also noted that they had a fantastic turnout, "So many kids, we had to dip into the t-shirts for our next

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camp."

South Florida State College has always had multiple camps and if the dates work out right, as projected this year, the college team will be at the last camp of the summer.

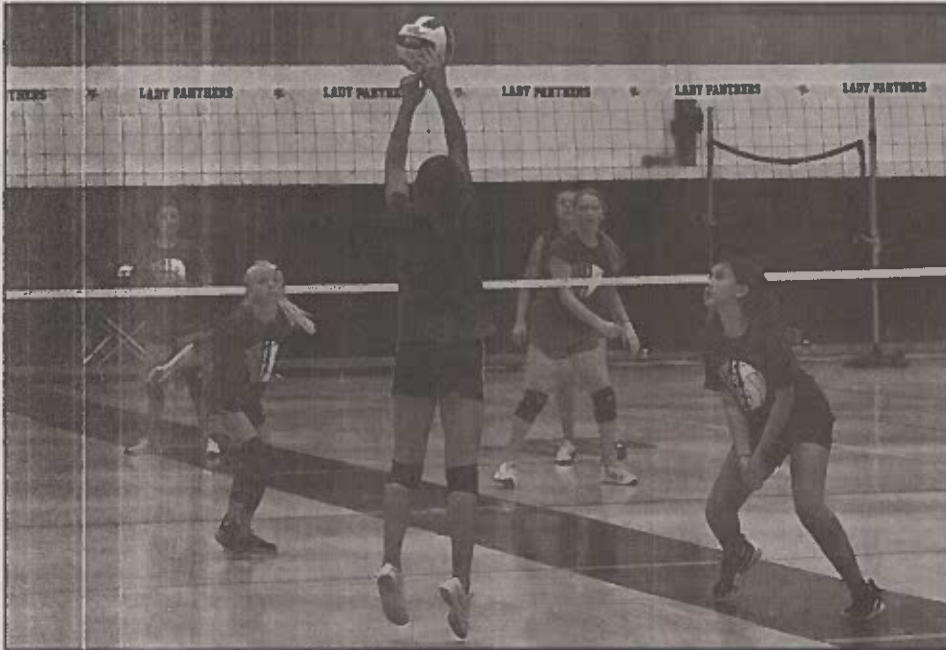
Crawford also mentioned that kids that may be hesitant for any reason, come to the gym.

"These camps are really fun," said Crawford. "Right now I have kids that workout in the morning with their high school coaches or friends and then coming here. They love coming here, the energy makes it a fun camp."

"We also find that kids that show up for one camp will come to multiple camps." As parents that were present were already signing the their kids up for the next camp.

Vickers, who is a veteran of the camps as a camper, player and volunteer agrees wholeheartedly.

"I have been to every camp, between getting



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

The younger campers end the day with a couple of games.

rides from friends, I was here," Added Vickers. "I love being in the gym and the game of volleyball. I am not playing anymore and I still love being here. I get really excited when at the end of the camp, they ask if I am going to be at the next camp, they want to see me and I want to see them."

For the past couple of years, Crawford has been trying to get a boys

camp started as two local colleges, Webber and Warner, both have indoor male volleyball.

"We are trying really hard to get boys involved and trying to get a base of guys involved."

The dates for the next three camps to be held at South Florida State College in the Panther Gym will be Monday through Thursdays; June 21-24, July 12-15 and the

last week of camp will be with the South Florida Panthers' volleyball team during the week of July 26-29.

The camp is open for boys and girls ages 10-18 and will cost \$90 per week or \$25 per daily session. The camp times per age group are ages 10-13 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., ages 14-18 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and boys 14-18 will be from 7:30 p.m. to



JIM TAYLOR/CORRESPONDENT

South Florida State College Coach Kimberly Crawford and assistant Emily Vickers.

9 p.m.
For further information please contact South Florida volleyball coach

Kim Crawford at 863-787037 or by email kimberly.crawford@southflorida.edu

Take Stock In Children Celebrates High School Graduates

By DEBORAH BELL LATTER
Special To The Herald-Advocate

Take Stock in Children student scholars and their mentors celebrated their graduation from the program at a Senior Recognition Breakfast held on Thursday, June 3, at the Hotel Jacaranda in Avon Park.

"You're taking that next step into adulthood," said Danielle Ochoa, coordinator of Take Stock in Children Student Services, to the student scholars. "This school year was non-traditional. But we are so proud of you for making your way through it."

The South Florida State College (SFSC) Foundation serves as the lead agency for Take Stock in its service area of DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties. Take Stock in Children is a statewide program that provides children with a mentor and a two-year state college tuition scholarship. The Take Stock staff also help the student obtain financial assistance for housing, transportation, and other expenses. In return, the student signs a contract to earn at least a grade of C in every class, graduate from high school with good attendance records, maintain good behavior in school, and stay crime and drug free.

Take Stock mentors typically meet with their assigned students each week during the school year, offering encouragement and advice. A Take Stock college success coach provides support and guidance to the mentor and the mentee.

"Through the five years that I have known

Dalila and her family, she has grown to be more special to me than just someone I meet with every couple of weeks to talk about school, career, and grades," said Bettye Hart, teacher at Avon Park Middle School and mentor to Take Stock scholar Dalila Eugenio-Badillo. "I think of her as one of my own grandchildren. As I leave this mentorship with her, I believe that she will accomplish anything she sets her mind to."

Each graduating student was presented with a Take Stock in Children medallion. They were:

—Hardee Senior High School: Brittany Lopez-Perez, who plans to attend SFSC; Esmeralda Morales, who plans to attend SFSC; and Kayla Flash, who plans to attend Georgia Technical College.

—Avon Park High School: Dalila Eugenio-Badillo, who plans to attend SFSC; Adriana Ramirez-Marcelo, who plans to attend SFSC; and Jocelyn Hernandez, who plans to attend the University of Central Florida (UCF).

—DeSoto County High School: Avigail Avila, who plans to attend Florida Gulf Coast University and Yeni Flores-Velazquez, who plans to attend Suncoast Technical College.

—Lake Placid High School: Sole Knorr-Levatte, who plans to attend the University of Florida and Kevin Lopez, who plans to attend SFSC.

—Sebring High School: Anthony Adhin, who plans to attend the University of South Florida Honors College; Aidan Beasley, who

plans to attend the UCF; Genesis Shannon, who plans to attend SFSC; Isaac Simmons, who plans to attend Florida State University; and Colby Whitt, who plans to pursue a certificate in Welding or Law Enforcement.

Linda Roman, Take Stock in Children college success coach, was also recognized with the "Just Hear Me Out" Award for always introducing new ideas into the Take Stock in Children program.

During the Senior Recognition Breakfast, Ochoa mentioned the need for more Take Stock mentors.

"As the pandemic set us back in our recruiting for the end of the 2019-20 school year and the entirety of the 2020-21 school year, the Take Stock in Children program needs nearly 40 volunteer mentors across DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties," she said. "At TSIC, the motto is 'every student deserves a mentor.'"

For every student that Take Stock enrolls, there is a promise of a two-year tuition scholarship, as well as the promise of a volunteer mentor. Become part of a community of caring, compassionate adults who choose to devote their time to students by offering support, guidance, and encouragement. A mentor can change a life in as little as 30 minutes a week in a variety of mentoring opportunities: meeting in person at local high schools or SFSC campuses, texting and/or video through the Take Stock Mentor app, meeting virtually, or any combination of these.

To learn about becoming a mentor, contact Take Stock by calling 863-784-7343 or emailing TSIC@southflorida.edu.

Deborah Bell Latter is the coordinator of internal communications at South Florida State College and can be reached at 863-784-7251 or Deborah.Latter@southflorida.edu.



Take Stock scholar Colby Whitt (left) and mentor Ruby Handley.

COURTESY PHOTOS
Take Stock scholar Avigail Avila, whose mentor is Asena Mott, SFSC DeSoto campus director.



Avigail Avila wins Selby scholarship

By News Service of Florida

AVON PARK — Avigail Avila, a recent graduate of South Florida State College (SFSC), was awarded a scholarship through the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation.

For more than six decades, the Foundation has supported education through grants and scholarship programs to residents of Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties and is awarded to graduating high school seniors and graduating associate degree students from any state college in those four counties. All applicants must be planning to pursue a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university on a full-time basis.

Avila graduated from DeSoto County High School on June 11 and graduated from SFSC with an Associate in Arts on May 11. While in high school, Avila's plate was full. She participated in the dual enrollment program at SFSC, she was a Take Stock in Children scholar, she worked at DeSoto Memorial Hospital screening visitors for COVID-19 and providing directions to various departments, she drove her sister to work in Port Charlotte, and she cared for her baby sister while her mother was at work.

Avila plans to continue her education at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) in Fort Myers to study for a bachelor's degree in nursing.



COURTESY/SFSC

From left: Avigail Avila, recipient of the Selby scholarship, with Asena Mott, SFSC DeSoto Campus director and Avila's Take Stock in Children mentor.

"The Selby Scholarship is going to assist me by providing financial aid that I truly need to cover my FGCU expenses," Avila said. "I do not come from a wealthy family, and anything that I receive will help. Not only will it help me reach my goals, but I will be able to change the world as well as make it a better place for future generations and give back to the community."

Asena Mott, SFSC DeSoto Campus director and Avila's Take Stock in Children mentor, nominated her for the Selby scholarship. "Given her quick thinking and her intelligence, Avigail has the talent to be an incredible nurse, which has been her plan since I've known her for the past few years," Mott said. "I know she could make life-saving decisions in a high-pressure environment, and I know her

compassion for others takes precedence in decisions. She has a natural propensity to lead and to learn."

According to the William G. & Marie Selby Foundation, the Selbys owned an oil company in West Virginia and came to live in Sarasota, Florida in the 1920s. In his oil business, William encountered young people with untapped potential who were handicapped by lack of technical education. Prior to his death in 1956, William set up a charitable trust. The Selbys had no children of their own and wanted to use their money to help the youth of future generations.

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SFSC's McLaughlin to receive lifetime achievement award

Special to Highlands News-Sun

PROVIDED BY SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

AVON PARK — Dr. John E. McLaughlin, South Florida State College (SFSC) director of Criminal Justice Programs, will receive the 2021 National Latino Peace Officers Association (NLPOA) Alan Alvarez Legacy Lifetime Member Award at a banquet in Houston, Texas in September.

"You have 'Bridged the Gap between Latinos and Law Enforcement' and your hard work has not gone unnoticed," said Greg Gonzalez, NLPOA vice president and awards chair, in a letter to Dr. McLaughlin. "You were selected for your leadership and commitment to serve the mission and goals of the National Latino Peace Officers Association for more than 20 years."

McLaughlin has been with SFSC since January 2021. Previously, he



COURTESY/SFSC

Dr. John E. McLaughlin, South Florida State College (SFSC) director of Criminal Justice Programs, will receive the 2021 National Latino Peace Officers Association (NLPOA) Alan Alvarez Legacy Lifetime Member Award.

honorably retired as lieutenant after serving 26 years with the Miami-Dade Police Department and served as chief of police in Rivesville, West Virginia.

McLaughlin first met members of NLPOA while working for the Miami-Dade Police Department. "I worked for five years at

the Miami-Dade Police Academy and did the training/coordination for the specialized classes and educational classes," he said. "NLPOA was having a conference and members of the organization stopped by and indicated that they needed a presentation on racial profiling. So,

I did the presentation. Then, they asked me to join the organization. Ever since, I've attended most of their conferences on a yearly basis."

To receive the Legacy Lifetime Member Award, an individual must have been a member for over 20 years. McLaughlin has been a member of NLPOA for 21 years. He served on the national board of directors as parliamentarian for two years and has been the national editor for the organization's newsletter for the past seven years.

The NLPOA was founded in 1972 to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in the criminal justice system, particularly law enforcement; reduce community juvenile delinquency; and lessen citizen tension in predominantly minority communities. It is the largest Latino law enforcement organization in the United States and has chapters nationwide.