



JAKE HITT/CORRESPONDENT

(left to right) Yeishlanie Reyes, Aniyaj Rijos, Angeliz Melendez, Tiara Lindsey, Sydney Shaft and Isabella Hurtado were honored for their contributions to South Florida on Wednesday. Here they are with assistant coach Tammy Needham (far left) and head coach Kim Crawford (far right) holding gift baskets.

# Panthers victorious on Sophomore Night

By JAKE HITT  
CORRESPONDENT

AVON PARK — After qualifying for the FCSAA Division II state tournament on their final road trip, the South Florida State College Panthers made sure to send their departing players out with a great win.

South Florida defeated the Indian River State College Pioneers three sets to one 25-22, 14-25, 25-16, 25-23 in their final home match of the season. It finishes the regular season at 8-11 and 5-8 in conference play in 19 total matches.

"You could tell that they were really battling against each other," Head Coach Kim Crawford said. "Because you could see them make eye contact — Indian River players — making eye contact with us. And it was just really good sportsmanship too with the battling (and) who can hit harder. It

kills — two by Isabella Hurtado and Jayleen Santiago plus singles from Danica Metcalf and Rachel Skyles — for their final six points for the frame.

But the Pioneers came back with a vengeance. Issues in serve receive to start the second set resulted in three straight service aces for Indian River. But two Pioneer errors plus kills from Hurtado and Metcalf brought it to 4-4. After trading two-point stretches, the score remained tied.

A Pioneer kill gave them possession back. Then the service runs started back up. Indian River grabbed an 11-6 lead on a 4-0 run following the kill. A couple traded points later, a 3-0 run made it 16-8. South Florida responded this time with a 4-0 run. An attack error relinquished the ball. The Pioneers then scored their next eight points on a combined three aces and five kills to claim the set.

However, South Florida stole its







JAKE HITT/CORRESPONDENT

Panthers Head Coach Kim Crawford smiles while high fiving her players.

## PANTHERS

FROM PAGE 1B

Shaffer kill and a block from Hurtado gave South Florida a 5-0 lead.

The Pioneers fought back to narrow the deficit to 6-3 but the Panthers kept applying pressure. Three straight kills extended the lead before Indian River got the ball back. Metcalf ended that possession with a kill of her own and another point after that created an 11-4 lead. Eventually the lead swelled to 18-8 that included more offensive contributions from Metcalf and Santiago plus an ace from reigning Division II Defensive Player of the Week Yeishlanie Reyes to get it to 18.

And the offense kept pouring it on while matching Indian River point for point to stall any comeback attempts. Just like in Set 1, the final six points came on kills with Shaffer picking up the final two to clinch Set 3.

Set 4 was a mirror image of the competitiveness seen in Set 1.

The Panthers grabbed a 3-0 lead to start and the Pioneers fought back. Eventually, three straight South Florida errors tied the set and actually gave Indian River its first lead at 7-6. Santiago tied it back with a kill but four straight points made it an 11-7 deficit. But the Panthers kept it within reach.

An attack error then tied the set again, this time at 16-16. Both teams traded points before a Reyes ace and Hurtado kill created a 20-18 margin. But a pair of errors at 21-19 tied the set for a third time. An Indian River kill made it 22-21. Hurtado brought on the fourth tie with a retaliatory kill. A Pioneer attack error and an Añiy Rijos ace got the Panthers within one point.

Santiago couldn't put it away and committed an attack error. It was 24-23. South Florida wouldn't need to do anything themselves though as a service error from Indian River gave the Panthers the set and the match.

Both Crawford and Hurtado expressed happiness with being able to win the final home match of the season. It's even sweeter they'll get to end their season at the state tournament.

"This group of sophomores last year came so close to going to the tournament," Crawford said. "They have overcome obstacles from their last year. And they came in with a different mindset this year that this is the year we're going to do this right and we're going to be better. And they did."

Hurtado – who was named Division II Player of the Week earlier – said as a third-year player it was great to come out with a final win at home. They worked so hard and put in the effort every

day. And the Panthers accomplished their goal of getting to the postseason. Hurtado won a banner before as a freshman, that achievement is what motivated her to get back.

And it's not just the sophomores leading the pack. There's a youth movement at South Florida. Crawford pointed out the Panthers had a court full of freshmen at several instances in the match. In fact, a freshman in Santiago posted 14 kills; just one off the team leader Hurtado for the match.

Assistant coach Tammy Needham said Santiago's really coming on and hitting her stride like the rest of the team. Crawford agreed with that sentiment regarding the team. When the Panthers are on, they're hard to compete with. And it's great seeing more contributions offensively.

Crawford and Needham have been telling their hitters in practice to just trust their swings and not to be scared of making mistakes.

"We want you to hit the spot? Hit that spot," she said. "Hit it as hard as you can, and just trust it. So they're buying into that. If we can just keep peaking and peak at the right spot, we hope to play on Saturday next weekend."

South Florida's next match will come Friday in Palatka against an opponent yet to be announced at press time.



*COURTESY PHOTO*  
Dr. Teresa Crawford and Sheriff Vent Crawford met with AVID students at Hardee Senior High School last week to discuss career options.

## AVID Students Briefed On Career Options

Special To The Herald-Advocate

Dr. Teresa Crawford of South Florida State College and Hardee County Sheriff Vent Crawford visited Hardee Senior High School last week to discuss career options with AVID students.

The students were offered juice and doughnuts sponsored by the Lion's Club of Wauchula. Dr. Crawford discussed the Lion's Club service projects as well as their corresponding service group on campus, the Leo Club, and how to get involved.

Dr. Crawford also spoke about the new programs being offered through SFSC for the spring semester:

**Introduction To Autocad:** This course will use the AutoCAD software to teach how

to make graphic displays, including basic geometric figures, orthographic views of three-dimensional objects, production of mechanical drawings, and pictorial drawings of various three-dimensional applications. The course is suggested for students seeking drafting experience, architectural degrees or construction and construction management programs. It will be offered on Monday and Wednesdays in the spring at the Hardee Campus from 2-3:15 p.m.

**Intro to the Teaching Profession:** This is a survey course including historical, sociological, and philosophical foundations of education, governance and finance of education, educational policies, legal, moral, and ethical

issues and the professionalism of teaching. You are required to complete 15 hours of field based experience with children and youth in schools or similar settings. It is a transfer course required for those majoring in education. It will be offered in the spring of 2023 at the high school.

**911 Telecommunications Program:** The program will be offered at Avon Park's criminal justice center for dual enrollment seniors. It has a limited number of spots. Transportation Monday - Thursday will be provided. At the end of the 132 hour course students can take their certification exam and begin a career in a field that has a nationwide critical shortage.

## EXCAVATING POWER



*COURTESY PHOTO/SFSC*  
South Florida State College (SFSC) recently purchased a mini excavator for its Electrical Lineworker Program at its Hardee Campus in Bowling Green. The purchase came after the College received more than \$82,000 in grant funding from the Duke Energy Foundation to enhance the program. Students in the Electrical Lineworker Program will learn to safely and efficiently use the mini excavator to install and maintain primary and secondary cables for Underground Residential Distribution (URD) systems.



# Business/ Real Estate

Sunday, November 13, 2022

AVON PARK • LAKE PLACID • SEBRING

SECTION D

## SFSC Apprentices receive Certificates of Completion from AdventHealth



COURTESY/SFSC

Deanna Rhyne; Sharmin Jones, SFSC Instructor; and Jeremiah Sawyer.

**Special to Highlands News-Sun**  
PROVIDED BY SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

AVON PARK — South Florida State College (SFSC) and AdventHealth Sebring celebrated four students for completing the Advanced Patient Care Technician (APCT) Apprentice program in a ceremony on Thursday, Oct. 27 in the AdventHealth Sebring Center

for Nursing Excellence on the Highlands Campus at SFSC in Avon Park.

The SFSC students who completed the AdventHealth Sebring APCT Apprentice program are Marnita Johnson, Deanna Rhyne, Jeremiah Sawyer, and Christinna Williams. Rhyne and Sawyer were in attendance to receive their completion certificates from Elsie Graves, vice president and chief nursing officer

for AdventHealth Sebring.

Jason Dunkel, CEO and president for AdventHealth Sebring, gave the keynote address and inspired the students to, "Think about your why. The APCT job description is only 50% of your job. The other 50% is the heart and compassion that you will be bringing to work every single day for every single

SFSC | 7D

[www.highlandsnewsun.com](http://www.highlandsnewsun.com)

November 13, 2022 | HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN | D7



COURTESY/SFSC

From left: Dr. Michele Heston, Deanna Rhyne, and Elsie Graves.



COURTESY/SFSC

Jason Dunkel, President and CEO of AdventHealth.

### SFSC FROM PAGE 1D

patient. You have the competency, but you need the compassion."

SFSC's Dr. Michele Heston, interim vice president for academic affairs and student services, concluded the program by saying, "Don't ever forget the reason you

started this journey. In caring for others, you will receive so much more than you give."

The APCT Apprentice program is 18 months of continuous on-the-job

employment at AdventHealth Sebring with on-site and online instruction from qualified SFSC instructors. Students receive training in nursing, phlebotomy, EKG, and career transitions from SFSC

while working with an experienced health-care professional at AdventHealth Sebring. Upon completion, students are hired as APCTs and can transfer eight credits toward the pursuit of a Nursing

degree. For information about the APCT Apprenticeship program, contact Danielle Ochoa, Health Sciences advisor, at 863-784-7027 or [healthsciences@southflorida.edu](mailto:healthsciences@southflorida.edu).

### BENEFITS FROM PAGE 1D

on future rate hikes.

Last week, the Fed raised its short-term lending rate by another 0.75 percentage points, three times its usual margin, for a fourth time this year. Its key rate now stands in a range of 3.75% to 4%, the highest in 15 years.

Fed officials have admitted that part of their strategy is to loosen up the U.S. job market, which has been adding jobs at a furious pace the past two years after COVID-19 hit the U.S. and wiped out more than 20 million jobs.

The Labor Department reported last week that American employers added a healthy 261,000 jobs in October and that the unemployment rate rose from a five-decade low of 3.5% to 3.7%. Fed officials have signaled that the unemployment rate needs to be at least 4% to slow inflation, a threshold that could be met soon as more and more high-profile companies announce layoffs.

Facebook parent Meta said this week it was laying off 11,000 people, about 13% of its workforce, amid slumping revenue and broader tech industry woes. Twitter laid off about half of its 7,500-person staff after

Elon Musk took over the company last week. The online real estate broker Redfin announced that it was laying off another 862 employees on Wednesday — after slashing 470 jobs in June — with the housing market in an eight-months-long slump. Redfin has shrunk its workforce by more than 25% since April and rival online broker Compass has also laid off hundreds of workers this year.

The Labor Department reported Thursday that total number of Americans collecting unemployment aid rose by 6,000 to 1.49 million for the week ending Oct. 29, a seven-month high, but still not a troubling level.



COURTESY/SFSC

From left: Dr. Michele Heston, Jeremiah Sawyer, and Elsie Graves.



# SFSC receives state funding from DeSantis

November 18, 2022 |



COURTESY/SFSC

Jamie Bateman, vice president for institutional advancement and external relations, and SFSC President Tom Leitzel.

## Special to Highlands News-Sun

PROVIDED BY SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

AVON PARK — Florida Governor Ron DeSantis awarded state funds to South Florida State College (SFSC), Florida SouthWestern State College, and State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota on Wednesday in Matlacha. DeSantis presented SFSC President Tom Leitzel with a check in the amount of \$618,000 for the college's Commercial Vehicle Driver and Welding programs.

"We have to make sure we have people with the right training to be able to fill key positions in our workforce and our economy, in particular, things like skilled labor that are really at a premium," DeSantis said.

SFSC will use these funds to support student scholarships, a full-time instructor position, and a tractor trailer to expand the CDL program. Machines, simulators and positioners will be purchased to train students in the Welding program and allow for daytime instruction. In addition to SFSC, the State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota received \$2.94 million and Florida SouthWestern State College received \$1.98 million.

"Once again our governor came through to support workforce development efforts in the Florida College System," Leitzel said. "The funds

allocated to South Florida State College will immediately assist students seeking career placement in high-paying, high-demand jobs."

Earlier this year, SFSC received funding from DeSantis to purchase truck-driving simulators that students use to begin their training in the CDL program. SFSC's Commercial Vehicle Driver Program is a four-week course that offers in-depth, hands-on truck driving experience and provides connections with future employers. Joe Burke, who was a truck driver for 36 years, is the program's coordinator and instructor. The College accepts approximately 260 students into the program annually.

The Welding program is 25 weeks long and includes an OSHA Safety course and will include a Forklift Safety Training course for spring 2023. Students are trained in a simulated work environment and gain experience in construction, manufacturing, and fabrication. They are introduced to SMAW (stick), inert gas-shielded welding methods (MIG and TIG), air carbon arc gouging, and oxyfuel and plasma arc cutting.

For more information on the CDL and Welding programs at SFSC, visit [southflorida.edu/corporatetraining](http://southflorida.edu/corporatetraining) or email [corporatetraining@southflorida.edu](mailto:corporatetraining@southflorida.edu).



# SFSC graduates new Corrections and Law Enforcement Officers

Special to the Highlands  
News-Sun

PROVIDED BY SFSC

AVON PARK — During a ceremony on Thursday, Nov. 17 in the Alan J. Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on the SFSC Highlands Campus in Avon Park, South Florida State College's (SFSC) Basic Corrections Academy Class 108 graduated 25 cadets,

the Basic Law Enforcement (BLE) Academy Class 269 graduated nine cadets, and the Cross Over to Basic Law Enforcement Class 363 graduated four cadets.

Basic Corrections Academy Class 108 graduates who received Career Certificates were: Ashley Alvarez-Burgos, Quanesha Berry, Dianne Borrero, Jason A. Brown, Nicole Franks Sauvey, Christopher J. Frolich, Michael Gaines, Anthony Garza, Denise Gobourne, Shannon Gould, Daniel Harmon, Shaylynn Hood, Latrent Jones, Katlyn Maharaj, Anthony Mercado, Erick Messer, Raven Pace, Jon-Shea Reed, Angelique Robertson, Gabriel Rosado Negroni, Julio Sanchez Victoria, Caleb H. Smith, Tray'Vis Smith, Keri Taylor Shine (class leader), and Dillon Townsend.

BLE Class 269 graduates who received Career Certificates were: Ryan Barkey (class leader), Garrett Barr, Carlos Castilla, Patricia DeLoera, Donald Fillmore, Jimmy Frazier III, Clarissa Garza, Hannah Gorman, and Gabriela Velasquez.

Crossover Academy Class 363 graduates who received Career Certificates were: Eduardo Lebron Colon, Randall Lowe, James Moore II, and Jose Romero Jr.

During the ceremony,



COURTESY PHOTO/SFSC

**Cross Over to Basic Law Enforcement Class 363: From left: Randall Lowe, Jose Romero Jr, Eduardo Lebron Colon, and James Moore II.**

special awards were presented to several cadets. Of the Basic Corrections Academy Class 108, Keri Taylor Shine was honored as class leader, Ashley Alvarez-Burgos as executive officer, Quanesha Berry for Top Academics, and Michael Gaines for Top Gun. For the Basic Law Enforcement Academy Class 269 and Cross Over to Basic Law Enforcement Class 363, Ryan Barkey was honored as class leader and as Top Gun, Patricia DeLoera for Top Academics, and Jimmy Frazier III for True Grit.

Guest speaker for the graduation was Garrett Roberts, general counsel for the Highlands County Sheriff's Department. Addressing the cadets, he said, "The career you have chosen is a noble one. It is your duty to ensure that it will be respected when you retire just as much as it is today. You will have the incredible opportunity like no other profession to make a true difference and change the lives of the citizens in which you serve. Citizens will call for your help on their worst day. When they think that all hope is lost, it

will be your obligation, your sworn duty, to help that person in need. Children will run up to you and look at you like you're Superman. Act like it. Spend as much time as you can investing in others. But do this while not wanting or expecting anything in return. Think about your legacy. How will you be remembered? Then, act with that end in mind. Be the person who seeks the truth and respects others. Be the person who lives with integrity. Be the person your family would be proud of. Be the protector of those who would be fearful. Be the hero that brings a smile to a child's face. And, ultimately, be the change that you want to see in this world."

Upon successful completion of the SFSC 420 contact-hour Basic Correctional Officer Program, students earn a Career Certificate and are eligible to take the state certification examination to become a certified officer.

SFSC's Basic Law Enforcement Career Certificate program trains students to become law enforcement officers in



COURTESY PHOTO/SFSC

**The Basic Law enforcement Academy Class 269: From left: Donald Fillmore, Jimmy Frazier III, Gabriela Velasquez, Carlos Castilla, Hannah Gorman, Garrett Barr, Patricia DeLoera, Ryan Barkey, and Clarissa Garza.**



COURTESY PHOTO/SFSC

**Basic Corrections Academy Class 108. From left, front: Ashley Alvarez-Burgos, Dianne Borrero, Quanesha Berry, Nicole Franks Sauvey, Raven Pace, Angelique Robertson, Anthony Garza, Keri Taylor Shine, and Julio Sanchez Victoria. From left, back row: Jason A. Brown, Christopher J. Frolich, Michael Gaines, Latrent Jones, Daniel Harmon, Erick Messer, Shannon Gould, Jon-Shea Reed, and Tray'Vis Smith.**

Florida. By successfully completing the program, they are eligible to take the state certification examination to become certified law enforcement officers. The program runs 770 contact hours or approximately five months full-time or approximately 10 months part-time.

The Correction to Law Enforcement (Crossover) Career Certificate program trains currently employed corrections officers to become law enforcement officers in Florida. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are eligible to take the state certification

examination to become certified law enforcement officers. The program runs 515 contact hours or approximately 10 months part time.

For more information about these programs, visit [southflorida.edu](http://southflorida.edu) or call SFSC's Criminal Justice Academy at 863-784-7285.



The best guide to **what's happening** in Highlands County!

Take one - It's free

# HIGHLANDS SUN

Thursday, November 24, 2022

HORSIN' AROUND AT THE SEBRING DERBY



Page 16, 19

A PUBLICATION OF THE HIGHLANDS NEWS-SUN

INSIDE



'Let it Grow!' packs in the people  
Page 8, 14



Leavitt featured HCA artist for December  
Page 9



COURTESY PHOTO

Clara and the Nutcracker.

## Local youth fill stage in 'The Nutcracker'

Special to Highlands Sun

AVON PARK — On Sunday, Dec. 4 at 3 p.m., the Columbia City Ballet returns to South Florida State College (SFSC) with the holiday classic *The Nutcracker*, in the 1,460-seat Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park.

The *Nutcracker* Ballet tells the story of young Clara who receives a magical nutcracker at a Christmas Eve party from her Uncle Drosselmeyer. In a scuffle with her brother, the Nutcracker is broken. Uncle Drosselmeyer repairs the nutcracker, the party guests depart, and Clara sleeps under the Christmas tree to protect her Nutcracker. As she sleeps, mice and their Rat Queen invade the parlor. The Nutcracker magically comes to life and battles the mice. As she is about to be defeated, Clara strikes the Rat Queen with her shoe, saving her Nutcracker, who then becomes a handsome prince. The prince takes Clara on a fantastic journey to the Land of Snow where they meet the Snow Queen. She then travels to the Land of the Sweets where she meets Mother Ginger, Spanish Hot Chocolate, Bon Bons, Candy Cane Twists, and the Sugar Plum Fairy.

"This is a gorgeous production with a magic Christmas tree, toys that come to life, and a joyous woodland snow scene," said Cindy Garren, director of SFSC Cultural Programs.

Columbia City Ballet Executive Director William Starrett auditioned local children in October to perform a variety of roles with the professional company. Nancy McDuffee, a Sebring resident, is the local ballet mistress who has been rehearsing the young dancers since October.

The local cast includes:

**Mice**

Sophia Schlosberg, Ariana Bhandare, Finley Grace Pleger, Addison Philmon, Emmy Bury, Alice Penfield, Gabriella Alvarez, Haygan Hazeltine, Olivia Kelsey, Audrey LeClair, Ariella Arceo, Shelby Seymour, Adeline LeClair and Helena Muhammad

**Cherubs**

Sophia Schlosberg, Ariana Bhandare, Finley Grace Pleger, Addison Philmon, Emmy Bury, Adeline LeClair, Helena Babbitt, Ariella Arceo, Shelby Seymour and Helena Muhammad

**Gingerbread Girls**

Aubrey Dumbleton, Olivia Kelsey, Haygan Hazeltine, Gabriella Alvarez, Alice Penfield, Marleigh Miller, Noelia Barajas and Makenna



COURTESY PHOTO

Columbia City Ballet dancers perform.

**Smith**

**Bon Bons**

Bailey Toney (lead), Mila Meredith, Lincoln O'Donovan, Raelin Corcoran, Tenley Cole, Maci Duncan, Finley Ryan, Charlee Veale, Caroline Gillman, Adelyn Sheffield, Allison Wall, Carlee Shelton and Piper Smith

**Lead Angels**

Taylor Leidel, Paige Jahna, Sofiya Balikowsky and Sophia Shaffer

**Archangels**

Bailey Toney, Shayla Farrow, Camille Schwartz, McKenzie Pletcher, Annandra Ramkissoon, Zoe Pletcher and Isabella Conklin

**Angels**

Goldie Gedeon and Sarah Smith

**Gift Givers**

Goldie Gedeon, Audrey LeClair, Everli Himrod, Cypress Albritton and Savannah Somarriba

**Cinnamon Twists**



New live album from Tom Petty

Page 10-11



Jigsaw puzzles grow in popularity

Page 17, 20



## STAGE FROM PAGE 1E

Bailey Toney, Taylor Leidel, Shayla Farrow, Sofiya Balikowsky, Sophia Shaffer and Paige Jahna

### **Sugar Plum Fairy Attendants**

Charlie Veale, Raelin Corcoran, Allison Wall, Lincoln O'Donovan, Maci Duncan and Tenley Cole

AdventHealth is the title sponsor of The Nutcracker. Series sponsors are Dawn Dell/Paradise Realty, Karlson Law Group, South Florida State College, and Kris and Mike Rider. Performance sponsors are Dr. Catherine P. Cornelius and Friends of June McDuffee.

Tickets can be purchased online at [sfscarts.org](http://sfscarts.org) or by visiting the Wildstein Box Office on

the Highlands Campus of SFSC, at 600 West College Drive in Avon Park. Tickets are \$30, \$35, and \$40, and children and students receive a 50% discount. Groups of 12 or more receive a 20% discount plus one complimentary ticket. The Wildstein Center Box Office is open Monday – Friday, 11:30 a.m. — 2:30 p.m. To contact the Wildstein Center Box Office, call 863-784-7178.

South Florida State College presents over 30 national and internationally touring artists at the

Alan Jay Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts located on the Highlands Campus at 600 West College Drive in Avon Park. Upcoming performances include: "The Queen of Christmas" Darlene Love on Dec. 13; Phil Dirt and The Dozers on Jan. 3; The Manhattan Transfer on Jan. 10; A Salute to Glen Campbell on Jan. 17; and the Lviv National Philharmonic Orchestra of Ukraine on Jan. 19. For a complete schedule or to view performance videos, visit [sfscARTS.org](http://sfscARTS.org).



Go like us on

facebook