

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



February 18 - March 10, 2017

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



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TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



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- February 20 - WTXL - \$500 TMH Foundation gift, others presented at BoT meeting
- February 23 - WTXL - TCC partners with FSU, FAMU to offer STEAM projects at grade schools
- March 1 - WTXL - Building Legacies series for Women's History Month kicks off at CFI downtown
- March 2 - WCTV - Former Representative Gwen Graham delivers Building Legacies keynote
- March 3 - WTXL - Chef Hugh Acheson headlines TCC Foundation's Cleaver and Cork event
- March 6 - WTXL - Ghazvini Center hosts HCP program showcase for prospective students
- March 8 - WTXL - Rob Chaney named an Under Armour Athletic Director of the Year

Gwen Graham to speak at TCC Women's Leadership Summit on March 1

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Former U.S. Representative Gwen Graham will deliver the keynote address at the first session of the Building Legacies Women's Leadership Summit series launched by Tallahassee Community College. The kickoff session, which coincides with the beginning of Women's History Month, will be on Wednesday, March 1, from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the TCC Center for Innovation.

Panelists include Sally Bradshaw, Midtown Reader; Lila Jaber, Gunster Yoakley & Stewart PA; Alma Littles, Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Board of Directors; and Susan Fiorito, Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship.

Preregistration is required. Tickets are \$30 for the session or \$100 for the entire series and may be purchased at TCCWomenInLeadership.com. Proceeds will go toward funding the Building Legacies Scholarship at TCC.

For information, contact TCC Workforce Development at 201-8760 or workforce@tcc.fl.edu, or contact TCC Communications and Marketing at 201-6049 or communications@tcc.fl.edu.

Gifts to TCC include \$500,000 from TMH Foundation

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The Tallahassee Community College Foundation announced several major gifts, including a gift from the Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Foundation valued at \$500,000.

That gift will support scholarships for students in TCC's healthcare programs, including nursing, radiologic technology, respiratory therapy, surgical technology, emergency medical services and others.

The gift was presented Monday by Mickey Moore, president and chief advancement officer of the TMH Foundation.

Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare is a private, not-for-profit community healthcare system that includes a 772-bed acute care hospital, a psychiatric hospital, multiple specialty care centers, three residency programs, 32 affiliated physician practices, and partnerships with Florida State University College of Medicine, University of Florida Health and other hospitals.

Mark O'Bryant, president and CEO of Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, noted that the TMH staff includes a large number of TCC healthcare alumni.

"We all recognize that the quality of work is defined by the quality of our workforce. This is never more true than at TMH, where we are entrusted with the healthcare of our community," O'Bryant said in a statement Monday. "For this reason, we are deeply grateful for TCC and their focus on helping us train our future nurses, radiologic technologists, respiratory therapists and other crucial allied health specialists. We only have to look at TCC to find world-class healthcare professionals to serve our patients."

Moore, from the TMH Foundation, focused on the importance of community collaborations, especially those centered on education and healthcare.

"This is a way for us to be a good partner in our community and to invest in our future as an organization, because we want highly educated, highly prepared professionals to come to work for us. It just makes sense to invest in education, invest in our community and invest in our shared future," said Moore.

The two organizations have collaborated on many projects over the years, including development of TCC's Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education, which opened in 2011 on land donated by TMH. That donation and the new scholarships in part reflect TCC's role in helping TMH address the shortage of nurses and allied healthcare professionals.

Jim Murdaugh, TCC president, noted that students in TCC's health care programs tend to stay in the local area after graduating, helping to ensure that Big Bend residents continue to have access to high-quality healthcare.

"TCC and TMH are both community institutions, dedicated to serving the people who live here and making this a better place to live," said Murdaugh. "We are truly thankful to have a neighbor and partner like Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, who shares our vision of the future and helps us make it happen."

Also on Monday, Wayne and Betty Edwards presented a donation of \$50,000 to provide tuition assistance for students who have diabetes. Betty Edwards and the couple's oldest son both have type 1 diabetes, and the family is well aware of the challenges that come with that diagnosis.

The gift will be matched by pediatric endocrinologist Larry Deeb and his wife Jo Deeb, bringing the endowment for the Wayne & Betty Edwards Scholarship for Students with Diabetes to \$100,000. Larry Deeb and Wayne Edwards, who is head of financial planning at MMHP Investment Advisors, founded the Rotarian Action Group for Diabetes, which works to increase awareness of diabetes and encourage Rotary Clubs around the world to support projects dealing with diabetes.

The other gifts focused on scholarships for students in TCC's healthcare education programs, including the new Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Rick and Melissa Moore made a gift of \$10,000 to create the first scholarship for TCC's newly accredited Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program.

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continued

Melissa Moore is a registered nurse, and Rick Moore is a principal in Moore Bass Consulting, which provides civil engineering and land use planning services to clients across the Southeast. Rick Moore has served on the boards of directors of both the TCC Foundation and Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare.

Nan and Mark Hillis are also supporting nursing students with a gift of \$10,000 to create the Nan C. Hillis & Mark Hillis Scholarship. According to Mark Hillis, they decided to support TCC because of the many outstanding programs and initiatives taking place at the College.

Nan Hillis is chief strategy officer for Prime Meridian Bank and a member of the board of directors of the FSU Foundation. Mark Hillis, a retired banker, is an FSU trustee. Both are members of the FSU College of Business Hall of Fame.

Scott and Allison Harrell also made a \$10,000 gift to create a scholarship, this one for students in any of TCC's healthcare programs.

Allison Harrell is a certified public accountant with Thomas Howell Ferguson CPAs. Scott Harrell, a TCC alumnus, is the owner of Home Instead Senior Care of Tallahassee. Both have worked with many TCC grads over the years and expect to do so in the future, especially in the healthcare industry.

"TCC has great programs to educate Home Instead's future employees, which is why we decided to fund the scholarship. We believe in TCC's program, and we believe in supporting our community," said Scott Harrell.

Capital Regional Medical Center invested \$32,000 to create scholarships for students seeking an associate degree in nursing at TCC and employment at CRMC after graduation. The gift was presented by CEO Mark Robinson and Brad Coburn, vice president of human resources.

Mr. Lamb goes to Washington



Trustee Lamb met briefly with Congressman John Lewis, D, Georgia District 5, while both were visiting the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington.



Trustee Eugene Lamb is shown with Congressman Al Lawson, D, Florida District 5, (which includes Gadsden County).

The Tallahassee Community College (TCC) trustees attended the National Legislative Summit hosted by the Association of Community College Trustees in Washington, D.C.

While in Washington, the TCC trustees visited with Congressional members to discuss federal issues impacting local colleges and to update them on TCC's programming and to offer support.

TCC garners \$500K gift to fund scholarships

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

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Gwen Graham to speak at women's leadership event

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES/WAKULLA NEWS

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Preregistration is required. Tickets are \$30 for the session or \$100 for the entire series and may be purchased at TCCWomenInLeadership.com. Proceeds will go toward funding the Building Legacies Scholarship at TCC.

The TCC Center for Innovation is located in the former Brogan Museum in downtown Tallahassee at 350 South Duval Street. Check-in begins at 8 a.m., and a continental breakfast will be provided.

The series is sponsored by Club 25, Prime Meridian Bank, the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship, the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship and Thurman Law Firm. The events are hosted by TCC's Workforce Development Division and the TCC Foundation.

For information, contact TCC Workforce Development at (850) 201-8760 or workforce@tcc.fl.edu, or contact TCC Communications and Marketing at (850) 201-6049 or communications@tcc.fl.edu.

Study: Shellfish farming enhances habitat

The 2014 study says aquaculture benefits local economy and commercial fishers, but fishers disagree

E.M. YABOR

WAKULLA NEWS

A scientific assessment determined that oyster aquaculture has a positive environmental and economic impact for commercial fishermen.

The study, released in March 2014, "illustrates the positive external benefits resulting from the habitat provided by Gulf of Mexico off-bottom long line aquaculture parks in terms of enhancements to important commercial and recreational fisheries in the region."

Dr. William Walton of the Auburn University Shellfish Lab and Dr. John Supan of Louisiana State University's Sea Grant College Program oversaw the assessment.

Walton and Supan launched the study in reaction to "regulatory hurdles to the establishment of oyster aquaculture in the Gulf of Mexico region."

The study finds that shellfish farms provide enhanced habitat value for the fish that frequent them.

"The fish that aggregate in aquaculture gear tend to survive better and grow as fast or faster," the study says.

The study focused on commercial and recreational fishing surrounding aquaculture sites in Grand Isle, La. and Porterville Bay, Ala.

The marginal economic value per acre of off-bottom long line aquaculture in terms of both recreational and commercial fisheries enhancements in Alabama and Louisiana were to be \$1,564 and \$2,286, respectively, in addition to the value of the oyster aquaculture itself.

"I absolutely concur," said Bob Ballard, Director of the Wakulla Environmental Institute. "What we're doing is restoring the ecosystem. When we started three years ago it was a desert. Now it's a vibrant place for the fishermen."

That's at odds with what the Wakulla Commercial Fishermen's Association is arguing.

The WCFA has been battling the Department of Agriculture over the placement of oyster leases similar to the ones the study found to be beneficial. The association is concerned about the leases being located in traditional waters that local fishers depend on for their source of income without suitable notice.

"I guarantee you they met with the fishermen before they put any leases in those waters," WCFA President John Taylor said of the study.

That doesn't mean Wakulla can't eventually benefit from oyster farming, though, he said.

"It could apply to us eventually," Taylor said. "My biggest issue is that this program has 63 leases out there right now. The study shows they should make money. Its been three or four years now and they're not making a dime."

Taylor was in the original class of students in the oyster aquaculture program conducted by Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute, but left the class and filed a lawsuit in 2015 for negligence, fraud and breach of contract, contending the class instructor had no experience or certification in aquaculture.

TCC settled the lawsuit in November for \$30,000.

Ballard said oystermen are working making a profit, and noted that so far, those who are part of the oyster co-op, have sold every oyster that's reached maturity.

"If you're a part of the student run co-op they're now just starting to make money," Ballard said. "When we started oysters were sold for 18 cents, now they're 55 cents – that's not bad."

Ballard said the fishermen he's talked to have told him that "the best fishing is around these leases. There are a lot of people out there who have other agendas who don't want any sort of industry in Wakulla, and that's what you're finding here. I think if you dig into it you'll find that it's true that this phenomenon is happening. Anyone who says its not true is out of their mind."

"I haven't made a cent," said Robert Siedler, a local oysterman. "But it's been beneficial to me because of what it brings in terms of knowledge and what it brings in terms of the ecosystem. It's not something that you jump into and in a year you get rich. You watch everything improve, and as it improves, it improves your lifestyle."

Study: Shellfish farming enhances habitat....

continued

Siedler brought the study to the attention of The News.

"I know Bill Walton, so I tracked the study down after reading in the paper about how the oystermen are going to destroy everything," Siedler said. "They're not going to destroy everything. The oystermen are going to restore everything."

Siedler says the study reinforces what he already sees happening around his oyster farm.

"I've watched the ecosystem adapt and adjust to having more food and having more fish," Siedler said. "The Auburn study proves what I've noticed. I have personally witnessed it from being out there."

In time, Siedler says, the oyster leases will prove to be beneficial for the fishermen's association.

"Read the study," Siedler said. "Work with us. Be patient. We all will win. I'm certain because the study really does show that."

The WCFA met with state Agriculture officials Feb. 21 to continue discussions about the oyster leases.

The study's author, Dr. Walton, said, "I think it can work, having visited there. It looks like it can work for growing oysters. I think what we've seen in a number of areas is that you need an area that can environmentally, economically and socially succeed.

"I believe that oyster farming can succeed and be a valuable part of our coastal communities," Walton said.

Scholarships for TCC healthcare students

WAKULLA NEWS

The Tallahassee Community College Foundation announced several major gifts to support scholarships for TCC students. The gifts were presented at a meeting of the TCC District Board of Trustees held at the Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education.

Wayne and Betty Edwards presented a donation of \$50,000 to provide tuition assistance for students who have diabetes. Betty Edwards and the couple's oldest son both have type 1 diabetes, and the family is well aware of the challenges that come with that diagnosis.

The gift will be matched by pediatric endocrinologist Larry Deeb and his wife Jo Deeb, bringing the endowment for the Wayne and Betty Edwards Scholarship for Students with Diabetes to \$100,000.

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Capital Regional Medical Center invested \$32,000 to create scholarships for students seeking an associate degree in nursing at TCC and employment at CRMC after graduation. The gift was presented by CEO Mark Robinson.

Robinson added that CRMC also offers tuition reimbursement for registered nurses who seek a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at TCC.

The Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Foundation also committed to a major gift to support scholarships for students in TCC's healthcare programs.

For information, contact Heather Mitchell at 201-6067 or mitchelh@tcc.fl.edu.

Don't eliminate state programs that work

LYNN SEILER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (MY VIEW)

As the Florida State Legislature begins its discussions on which programs to cut, I would like to tell you about several of the programs that are working as they were intended.

Eighteen months ago, as a 63-year-old woman still trying to catch up after being laid off at the height of the recession, I became involved in Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute's Oyster Aquaculture Class.

Over these 18 months, this innovative program — in partnership with Florida A&M's Small Business Development Center — has provided me with the necessary training, mentorships and confidence to actually start my own business as an oyster grower. From knowing nothing about oyster aquaculture and never having owned my own business, through hard work, great training and mentorships (and running the boat aground several times), I am now harvesting my first crop of delicious premium and highly marketable oysters.

My five-year business plan is to be sending over a million oysters a year to the marketplace, which means I will be hiring employees and buying local supplies and services. Without the training and mentorship of these state sponsored, forward-focused business institutions, I and many other program participants would not be starting our own businesses that truly have the potential to create jobs in a sustainable industry that will transform the local economy and protect and enhance our coastal environment.

As an oyster grower I am also now a volunteer board member of the Panacea Oyster Co-op Corporation, which has recently been developed in partnership with the Florida Institute for the Commercialization of Research. Combining the technical horsepower of these state sponsored business institutions with the vision and hard work of local citizens has produced amazing results in a relatively short period of time.

We are now leading the largest community resurrection project in the history of Wakulla County by fostering dozens of new companies, putting hard working people back to work on the coastal waters they love, converting a waterfront marina, building a wholesale processing plant, and establishing a state-of-the-art hatchery/nursery to ensure the profitable future, of a challenged community, for generations to come!

So legislators, as you continue your discussions on which state sponsored programs to eliminate, please keep in mind this pearl of wisdom: Some of them work – some of them work very well! I and many others now in business are a testament to that.

Florida school's lone cheerleader is second to none

RYAN DAILEY
ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Eighth-grader Tianiya Hall-Scales is committed to being a cheerleader — even when the others on her small squad decided to back out.

She learned hours before showtime that she would be performing alone at a Feb. 9 cheer showcase at Chiles High School, almost 15 miles from home turf at Nims Middle School. But rather than quit along with her teammates, Tianiya got ready to take the stage, alone.

She had a simple reason for remaining as a team of one.

"I had already told people I was cheering," Tianiya said. "I wasn't going to stop because nobody else wanted to show up."

Her school spirit embodies what parents and educators at Nims Middle School want to focus on. Nims is a Title 1 school located within walking distance of the Florida A&M University campus.

That means it receives extra federal financing because a high number of its children come from families that don't make much money. More than 3 of 4 students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

Results in the classroom reflect the struggles that teachers and administrators try to help students overcome daily.

The school has earned a "D" in student performance for the past two school years.

Getting students to participate in extracurricular activities also can be difficult. The school usually has seven to 15 students try out for its cheerleading program each year, Principal Desmond Cole said. This year, it was Hall-Scales and three others.

"We had a couple of drop-offs, and maybe some nervousness," Cole said. "It could be they didn't want to cheer in front of 500 people."

Some of the other schools at the showcase had two dozen or more on their cheer teams. Tianiya had no one with whom to synchronize her movements, so she said she improvised her dance for the crowd.

Tianiya's godmother, a cheer coach at Tallahassee Community College, even came to the school to show her some stunts in preparation, the teen said.

"It kind of came out of the blue, but when I told her I was going to be cheering (at the showcase) she said 'Oh wow,' "Tianiya said of her godmother.

To a mix of Beyoncé songs, Tianiya took complete creative control of her routine. Cole said he offered her words of encouragement — and reminded her she had the option not to perform if she didn't want to.

But backing out was never an option, the teen said.

"She had friends and support out at Chiles, and she was ready. I didn't see the nerves until after the performance when she said, 'Look how my hands are shaking.'" Cole said.

Tianiya did say she felt nervous when the reality set in that she was performing in front of so many people.

"I just looked at the wall, and I was kind of counting down in my head," she said. "And I try to smile the whole time."

Her performance, the bold show of confidence that it was, quickly got the community buzzing. At New Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church, where Tianiya performs with the dance ministry, the pastor lauded her solo effort.

In the days after her performance, Tianiya said even people she didn't know were congratulating her.

"They were like, 'You did a good job. You have so much courage,'" Tianiya said. "One woman said that other kids are wimps and wouldn't do what I just did."

Tianiya was surprised with a gift in the halls at Nims after the showcase — a bottle of perfume.

Nims has two cheerleading coaches, making it a program with twice as many coaches as participants. Vandie Joseph, who is also a science teacher, and Sandra Greer, who teaches language arts, cannot say enough about Tianiya's resolve.

She faithfully cheers at the Nims' Trojans basketball games.

(NOTE: Article truncated for mention of TCC. Article was featured in several Gannett-owned publications.)

Tallahassee Community College teams with Siemens to implement major campus infrastructure improvements

HEALTHCARE FACILITIES TODAY

Siemens has begun addressing significant infrastructure improvement needs at Tallahassee Community College (TCC). Through a performance contract with Siemens, TCC will use new building technologies and make capital improvements that are designed to reduce energy use and operational costs. The total projected savings over the 15-year life of the contract include more than \$8.6 million in energy savings and nearly \$750,000 in operational costs.

"We are excited to make these changes at TCC. Although the College received an allocation from the state to meet some of our deferred maintenance needs, it was not sufficient to address some of our most pressing issues. However, we were able to close the funding gap through our performance contract with Siemens," said Barbara Wills, chief business officer and vice president for administrative services at TCC. "We can now overhaul the heating and cooling systems and the lighting throughout the main campus and our service centers, while laying the groundwork to provide future students with access to hands-on training in the latest in smart building technologies."

With colder weather on the way, replacing the two failed boilers on the TCC main campus with four high-efficiency boilers was the highest priority and was completed in January of 2017. To prepare for the summer months, one new 500-ton chiller and one cooling tower will be installed, and two 750-ton chillers and another cooling tower will be refurbished by spring 2017. Lighting upgrades will also be completed in buildings and parking lots. Siemens will also help improve TCC's energy efficiency and systems monitoring by migrating building controls to Siemens' integrated building management platform, Desigo CC. Work on the project is expected to be completed by January 2018.

In addition to implementing infrastructure improvements, Siemens will assist TCC in designing and equipping a Living Lab, where students in TCC's building technologies programs will be able to train on the new equipment in real-world situations. The concept of the living laboratory was taken into account at every stage of the development of the project, including spacing equipment out and rotating it in order to give students better access and visibility of how the systems operate. The program's unique training approach will help students succeed in the local and regional marketplace.

"Working with Tallahassee Community College is especially rewarding for us. Not only are we able to demonstrate the viability of performance contracting as a means to achieve significant energy savings through infrastructure improvements, but in this case, by working with TCC on its Living Lab, we will help support students who represent the future building automation workforce," said Dave Hopping, president of Siemens' North American-based Building Technologies Division.

Siemens has helped its customers realize more than \$2 billion in energy savings over the past 10 years. The company has implemented more than 1,000 guaranteed performance contract projects for its customers, updating thousands of buildings with the latest energy savings technologies. Its energy services and solutions range from energy savings analysis, to implementation of facility improvement measures, to ongoing monitoring and verification.

TCC to offer corrections/law enforcement exam

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College will soon offer the Criminal Justice Basic Abilities Test on Wednesdays at the TCC Gadsden Center and on Thursdays at the TCC Wakulla Center.

Individuals who wish to apply for the Florida Public Safety Institute's Corrections or Law Enforcement Basic Recruit training program must take the CJBAT as the initial step in the application process. The Florida Public Safety Institute is part of TCC.

Some employers also use the CJBAT as a hiring metric, including the Florida Wildlife Commission, the Florida Department of Corrections and sheriffs' offices.

Beginning on Thursday, individuals may take the CJBAT at the Wakulla Center on Thursdays at 9 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. The Wakulla Center is at 2932 Crawfordville Highway in Crawfordville.

Beginning on March 8, individuals may take the CJBAT at the Gadsden Center on Wednesdays at 9 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. The Gadsden Center is at 223 Pat Thomas Parkway in Quincy.

Registration for the test is \$35, payable on site.

The CJBAT is also administered by appointment on TCC's main campus.

For information, contact the TCC Wakulla Center at (850) 922-6290 or WakullaCenter@tcc.fl.edu, or contact the Gadsden Center at (850) 558-3620 or GadsdenCenter@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC's Wilson earns Player of the Year honors

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT/WCTV

Tallahassee Community College sophomore guard Lawriell Wilson was named Panhandle Conference Women's Basketball Player of the Year on Monday, one of three Eagles to receive individual honors from the league's coaches.

Wilson's teammate Japonica James was tabbed PC Freshman of the Year and men's standout Kiair Crouch was named PC Newcomer of the Year.

In all, Tallahassee had seven players – three women and four men – named to the 2017 Coaches' All-Panhandle Conference teams.

Of the seven selections, five were named First-team All-PC – freshman Jas Hill joined Wilson and James in the women's vote while Crouch was joined by fellow sophomore David Simmons.

Wilson is just the second Tallahassee player to claim the conference's top women's honor, joining Shamar Harris, who accomplished the feat in 2008. The Kenner, La., native is in the midst of a record-setting career for the Eagles while earning first-team all-PC honors for a second straight year.

She leads Region 8 and is the fifth-leading scorer nationally at 21.1 points per game and averaged 23.8 points per game in league play.

Wilson, who has played in all 28 games, also averaged 7.0 rebounds, 5.4 assists and 2.1 steals while shooting 43.3 percent from the floor, 34.7 percent on three-pointers and 82.6 percent from the free throw line.

Wilson, Hill and James formed one of the most formidable trios in the country while leading Tallahassee to a 22-6 record and No. 9 national ranking.

Hill and James, high school teammates at Leflore High School in Mobile, Ala., averaged 19.3 and 17.9 points, respectively, to rank second and fourth, respectively, in the PC.

James was slightly stronger in league play, however, averaging 20.2 points and shooting 57.7 percent from the floor to take top freshman honors. Hill averaged 15.0 points per game in PC games.

Crouch, who hails from Stone Mountain, Ga., transferred to Tallahassee after playing his freshman season at Lander University. He played in 29 games this season and led the Eagles with 15.4 points per game.

Crouch also averaged 3.6 rebounds, 3.3 assists and 1.7 steals and shot 42.4 percent from the floor, 38.9 percent on three-pointers and 70.0 percent from the free throw line.

Simmons, who is from Henderson, Ky., earned a second straight first-team all-PC nod. He has played in 27 games and averaged 13.3 points, 6.1 rebounds and 2.8 assists while shooting 44.8 percent from the floor.

Two other Eagles – men's players Leon Freeman-Daniels and Jacob Winston – were named Second-team All-PC.

Oyster ranching

Resurrecting a dying industry in Wakulla County's waters

LAZARO ALEMAN

As the tide recedes, the cylindrical metal cages become visible, row upon row of them. They comprise a system that altogether takes up 1.5 acres — about the size of a football field — in Oyster Bay near Panacea. Partners Rob Olin and Robert Seidler pull their boat alongside the outer row of upright PVC pipes that mark the system's western boundary and act as posts to support lines where the cages hang. Leaning over the boat's side, Olin lifts two of the cages, revealing their oyster-filled interiors. This particular lease, he says, gesturing toward the 1.5-acre area, contains 250,000 oysters, soon to be a million.

"This is the only lease built out so far, but eventually all 38 will be built out," Olin says, referring to contiguous leases of similar size comprising 56 acres in Oyster Bay.

Periodically at low tides, Olin or his workers will inspect the oysters; clean them and the cages of algae, barnacles and other fouling organisms; sort the oysters into cages according to size; collect the mature ones; and replenish the oysters and cages as necessary.

It's hard work and all part of a budding venture that, when fully realized, the two say will not only resurrect the oyster industry in Wakulla County but also create hundreds of jobs, revitalize the bay, bring back a culture, promote ecotourism and spawn sustainable economic development.

"Ideally, we're shooting for 500 million oysters a year in 10 years," Seidler says. "We don't know how close we'll get, but that's the vision."

"And the best thing about what we're doing is it's repeatable throughout the Gulf," Olin says. "Our state's got more farmable water than any other in the Union. Florida can become the sea basket for the world."

Olin and Seidler are nothing if not enthusiastic about their project, which has been three years in the making and is still developing. Already, the enterprise boasts a marina, which will eventually include an oyster hatchery/nursery; a cooperative that will grow the oysters, along with a branding, marketing and selling component; and wholesale customers that include restaurants Table 23 and the Governor's Club in Tallahassee. **The enterprise also has the blessing of the overseeing state and**

federal agencies and is partnering or planning to partner to one degree or another with various learning institutions, including Tallahassee Community College, Auburn University, Florida A&M University and Florida State University.

The uniqueness of their method, Olin and Seidler say, resides in the floating cages, which the waves and currents rock and low tides expose twice daily.

"These oysters never stop moving," Seidler says. "That's a big difference between wild oysters that settle on the bottom and our tumbling oysters. Because they're rolling in the cages their whole lives, they grow faster, healthier and firmer."

That's because, Seidler explains, floating near the top, the oysters are less susceptible to seafloor predators; the continuous water flow brings them more nutrients; the rocking motion knocks off fouling organisms and chips away at their shells, forcing the oysters to grow round and thick rather than long and thin; and the tidal exposures cause them to contract, creating firmness and texture in the meat.

"This method in the upper water column is relatively new, and completely new to North Florida," Seidler says.

As the two describe the plan, it's both bold and ambitious. Their aim is to produce oysters for national and international distribution, using a pasteurization process that will not only render the oysters bacteria-free but also give them a longer shelf life. They also plan to spawn spats, or oyster larvae, for their own use and for sale.

"It's one of the most important parts," Olin says. "We're going to control our seed. Think if a corn farmer couldn't get corn seed. It would be tough staying a corn farmer. That's been one of our biggest challenges."

Another way to frame it, Seidler says, is that the culture has traditionally harvested but not replenished oysters, which has contributed to their decline. Their model, he says, puts back more oysters than are taken, adding to the wild population.

Oyster ranching....

continued

"Instead of being negative in terms of taking, we're positive in giving back," Seidler says. "It's never been done before."

In a paean to oysters, Olin calls them the original eco-engineers, a keystone species that sets the foundation for other species and acts as a filtering system for estuaries.

"When you wipe out the oysters, you wipe out that structure as well as the ultimate filtering system," Olin says. "They're like the canary in the cave. And we get to help put back that cornerstone block."

"You're witnessing the largest resurrection project in Wakulla County history," Olin continues. "This will help this water come back to support other aquatic species in decline. It will bring back a community that was built on fishing. And it will reinvigorate a culture that's been here for generations, because we're going to generate millions of oysters that will generate hundreds of jobs."

And it's more than doable, Seidler says, citing a community in southern France whose oyster aquaculture dates from the 1860s and that he visited as part of his research.

"They produce three-fourths of what our Gulf produces, but they also have oyster tourism," he says. "And it's the area's single biggest revenue source."

Who's to say Wakulla can't likewise become a destination point? Olin asks.

He cites the several freshwater springs bubbling into Oyster Bay, its pristine water quality, the 1 million acres of natural wildlife refuge surrounding it and the oyster industry that will be.

"It's going to be Florida's grand ecotourism destination location," he says. "Panacea and Spring Creek will start to build up as this wonderful Galapagos."

The two admit their project has a ways to go. They're still learning, experimenting and refining, even as they move forward. When challenges arise, however, they return to their vision.

"We go back to the inspiration that we're part of this resurrection that will be the catalyst for the change that future generations will need," Olin says.

Capitol City women gather for annual "Building Legacies" conference

WTLX

Women in the capital city gathered Wednesday for the annual "Building Legacies" conference hosted by Tallahassee Community College.

Started in 2013, the conference acts as "professional development" for women who want to reach the next level in their personal and professional lives.

The "Building Legacies" conference began as a way for TCC to raise money for a scholarship geared at helping women go back to school.

This year's theme is "Lead, Serve, and Inspire," and it features speakers who have taken bold steps to attain success.

Former Congressional Representative Gwen Graham was today's keynote speaker.

"My message today to the women here, is a wonderful group, was to get out in the community," said Graham. "Serve your community. Run for office. We need more women engaged in every aspect of our society."

There will be three more "Building Legacies" conferences this year, with the proceeds going to TCC's "Building Legacies Scholarship."

Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute

FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM NEWSLETTER (FACILITIES FOCUS)

TCC's prized Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI) opened just last year on 158 acres of bio-diverse land in Wakulla County. In 2012, Governor Rick Scott allocated \$4.5 million dollars for the project in Florida's budget, and a year later, the US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration granted TCC an additional \$1.5 million to contribute to its construction.

The WEI serves to fulfill a three part mission: education, conservation and recreation "in a manner that stimulates economic development in an environmentally responsible way," according to their website.

The first part of the mission, education, is realized through environmentally-focus degrees, certificates and programs for students and community members. These include Environmental Science Technology, Green Guide Environmental Education Program, Oyster Aquaculture Certification, and Unmanned Technology (Drone) Applications.

For their second mission, conservation, WEI boasts a state-of-the-art facility designed with the good of the environment in mind. Along with 10,000 square feet of classrooms, meeting spaces and a wet lab, the Institute features insulated concrete walls, LED light bulbs, a solar-paneled parking lot and rain collection tanks used for cooling the A/C and flushing toilets.

Recreation is their third mission. As WEI continues to grow, they will implement environmentally-themed recreation for both students and the community of Wakulla.

(NOTE: The Florida College System Newsletter is distributed via email to FCS Presidents.)

Fishers ask for moratorium on oyster leases

E.M. YABOR
WAKULLA NEWS

The Wakulla Commercial Fishermen's Association may sit down to negotiate with oyster farmers following a town hall meeting in Sopchoppy Feb. 21.

The meeting was attended by about 50 citizens.

"If you're making all of this money then show it to me," WCFA President John Taylor said to oystermen. "How about putting a little bit back towards my guys? Help them out."

County Commissioner Chuck Hess suggested small-scale negotiations among fishermen and oystermen.

"You can work out a way for this to happen," Hess said. "Get together in small groups so you can negotiate and come to a conclusion as to how we can make this work."

The WCFA is concerned leases being located in waters that local fishers depend on for their source of income will put fishermen out of business.

Kal Knickerbocker, director of the Division of Aquaculture for the state Department of Agriculture, returned to answer questions about pending leases.

"These leases are not a Department of Agriculture initiative," Knickerbocker told the crowd. "These are application requests for individuals who want to start a business here in Wakulla County. My job with the Department of Agriculture is to work those requests through the system so that they work back to the governor and his Cabinet and they'll make the decision on whether they'll issue these or not. This is not like Big Brother bringing this in. These are local people who want to go into business."

"Make something. Then we can address more leases," Taylor said. "I can't put any more (leases) in my county and put one of my fishermen out."

The leases are the latest development in a long series of events that the WCFA argues has made the industry difficult to prosper in.

"Commercial fishermen in Florida are one of the most endangered species in the state," said Jeff Tilly, a citizen who is not in the industry.

"I'm an oysterman now. I chose to be. I heard there's money going to be made in it," said John Porter. "I changed everything from commercial fishing when in 1994 they took my net and I thought I'd do that. You know why? Because if you fish to the letter of the law you can't make a living."

Porter was referring to the so-called net ban – the 1994 constitutional amendment that outlawed gill nets in state waters.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission found that commercial landings of mullet declined by 68 percent since the net ban took effect.

"The aquaculture program was set up back in the mid-90s for one reason," said retired fisherman John Owens. "Not for Tom, Dick, Harry, Joe or Sally. It was for the displaced fishermen because they lost their nets."

"If this program was maintained as it was originally established we wouldn't be sitting here tonight because a lot of these people would have oyster leases," Owens said.

Robin Olin, Chairman and CEO of the Panacea Oyster Co-Op Corporation, says the leases will benefit everyone.

"We've got people planning for the future," Olin said. "This is what farming is about. It's an optimistic approach."

The WCFA says it would be premature to place additional leases when some existing leases are unworked.

"We're sitting here complaining over 13 acres," Taylor said. "There's more than that not getting worked."

"They will be worked," Olin said.

"Put a deadline on that," said Taylor.

Taylor suggested returning unworked leases for use by the fishermen.

"We have (Steve) Cushman's five acres. Why doesn't he give it back?" Taylor asked Knickerbocker. "He hasn't done anything with it in four years."

Knickerbocker said Cushman has held the lease for less than a year.

Fishers ask for moratorium on oyster leases....

continued

Taylor was in the original class of students in the aquaculture program conducted by Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute but left the class and filed a lawsuit in 2015 for negligence, fraud and breach of contract, contending the class instructor, Cushman, had no certifications.

TCC settled the lawsuit in November for \$30,000.

"What we have is an opportunity to lead in Wakulla," Olin said. "We can create more food. We can create more jobs. We're cleaning the water. We have studies that show that aquaculture programs generate for the commercial fishing industry an additional \$1,500 to \$2,500 per acre that's farmed."

Olin was referring to a 2014 scientific study from Auburn that showed oyster aquaculture has a positive economic impact for commercial fishermen.

"They're full of it," Taylor said of the study. "Their science doesn't work."

But the fishermen have little to fear, said Knickerbocker.

"What I hear from the fishermen several times is the concern that this map is going to turn entirely blue," Knickerbocker said, indicating a map with proposed leases in blue. "What you see there is what's suitable."

No date has been set for WCFA's next meeting.

Gifts target scholarships for TCC healthcare students and others

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

The Tallahassee Community College Foundation today announced several major gifts to support scholarships for TCC students. The gifts were presented at a meeting of the TCC District Board of Trustees held at TCC's Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education.

Wayne and Betty Edwards presented a donation of \$50,000 to provide tuition assistance for students who have diabetes. Betty Edwards and the couple's oldest son both have type 1 diabetes, and the family is well aware of the challenges that come with that diagnosis.

"Students with diabetes have expenses other students don't have to deal with," said Wayne Edwards. "The cost of insulin, syringes, meters, test strips, lancets and quarterly visits to endocrinologists can put a huge dent in the budget of a college student. We want to give these students a little extra help to finish their education. Who knows? With the great start TCC gives its students, someone we help could be the person who discovers a cure for diabetes."

The gift will be matched by pediatric endocrinologist Larry Deeb and his wife Jo Deeb, bringing the endowment for the Wayne & Betty Edwards Scholarship for Students with Diabetes to \$100,000. Larry Deeb and Wayne Edwards, who is head of financial planning at MMHP Investment Advisors, founded the Rotarian Action Group for Diabetes, which works to increase awareness of diabetes and encourage Rotary Clubs around the world to support projects dealing with diabetes.

The other gifts focused on scholarships for students in TCC's healthcare education programs, including the new Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Rick and Melissa Moore made a gift of \$10,000 to create the first scholarship for TCC's newly accredited Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program.

Melissa Moore is a registered nurse, and Rick Moore is a principal in Moore Bass Consulting, which provides civil engineering and land use planning services to clients across the Southeast. Rick Moore has served on the boards of directors of both the TCC Foundation and Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare.

"Recognizing the shortage of registered nurses, TCC initiated this new four-year BSN program, and we wanted to support that," said Melissa Moore. "We look forward to the success of scholarship recipients who will call Tallahassee their home for years to come."

Nan and Mark Hillis are also supporting nursing students with a gift of \$10,000 to create the Nan C. Hillis & Mark Hillis Scholarship. According to Mark Hillis, they decided to support TCC because of the many outstanding programs and initiatives taking place at the College.

"We were particularly impressed with how they partnered with Florida State University through the TCC2FSU Golden Guarantee Program, resulting in bachelor's degrees for so many college students," said Mark Hillis.

Nan Hillis is chief strategy officer for Prime Meridian Bank and a member of the board of directors of the FSU Foundation. Mark Hillis, a retired banker, is an FSU trustee. Both are members of the FSU College of Business Hall of Fame.

After a tour of TCC's Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education, the couple decided to target the nursing program because of its high quality and the way it works with local healthcare providers to enhance nursing care in the Tallahassee community.

Scott and Allison Harrell also made a \$10,000 gift to create a scholarship, this one for students in any of TCC's healthcare programs.

Allison Harrell is a certified public accountant with Thomas Howell Ferguson CPAs. Scott Harrell, a TCC alumnus, is the owner of Home Instead Senior Care of Tallahassee. Both have worked with many TCC grads over the years and expect to do so in the future, especially in the healthcare industry.

"TCC has great programs to educate Home Instead's future employees, which is why we decided to fund the scholarship. We believe in TCC's program, and we believe in supporting our community," said Scott Harrell.

Gifts target scholarships for TCC healthcare students and others....

continued

Capital Regional Medical Center invested \$32,000 to create scholarships for students seeking an associate degree in nursing at TCC and employment at CRMC after graduation. The gift was presented by CEO Mark Robinson.

"The Capital Regional Medical Center Nursing Scholarship is a win-win for recipients and our facility because there is a significant need for talented nursing graduates, not just in Tallahassee, but across the nation," said Robinson. "With our scholarship opportunity, individuals obtain their associate degree in nursing and begin their registered nurse career with Capital Regional Medical Center following graduation."

Robinson added that CRMC also offers tuition reimbursement for registered nurses who seek a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at TCC.

"For us, it's all about people and our community. This scholarship provides us with the opportunity to support both."

Scholarships level the playing field for students who seek a college education," said Heather Mitchell, executive director of the TCC Foundation.

"Scholarships attract the best students. They enable those who seriously apply themselves to their studies to remain in school. Scholarships recognize academic achievement. They promote diversity among the student body."

The Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare Foundation also committed to a major gift to support scholarships for students in TCC's healthcare programs. That gift is described in a separate story.

TCC Gadsden Center to offer corrections/law enforcement exam

HAVANA HERALD

Tallahassee Community College will begin offering the Criminal Justice Basic Abilities Test on Wednesdays at the TCC Gadsden Center.

The CJBAT is administered to those who wish to become certified correctional and law enforcement officers in Florida. Employers who use the CJBAT as a hiring metric include the Florida Wildlife Commission, the Florida Department of Corrections and sheriff's offices.

In addition, the CJBAT serves as the initial step in the application process for the Florida Public Safety Institute's Corrections and Law Enforcement Basic Recruit training programs.

Beginning on March 8, individuals may take the CJBAT at the Gadsden Center on Thursdays at 9 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. Registration for the test is \$35, payable on site.

The Gadsden Center is located at 223 Pat Thomas Parkway in Quincy. The CJBAT is also administered by appointment on TCC's main campus and at the TCC Wakulla Center in Crawfordville.

For information, contact the Gadsden Center at (850) 558-3620 or via email at GadsdenCenter@tcc.fl.edu.

Prospective students invited to TCC healthcare program showcase

HAVANA HERALD

Tallahassee Community College's Healthcare Professions Division will host its spring 2017 showcase Monday, March 6, from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education.

Prospective students and the public are invited to tour the Ghazvini Center and learn about the healthcare education programs offered at the site. In addition to the recently accredited Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, TCC offers a two-year nursing degree, along with programs in emergency medial services, radiologic technology, respiratory care, surgical technology, endoscopy technology, pharmacy technology, central sterile processing technology, nurse assisting and more. Students who are interested in TCC's Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting programs, which are offered on the main campus, may also learn about those programs at the March 6 event at the Ghazvini Center.

The Ghazvini Center for Healthcare Education is located at 1528 Surgeons Drive.

For information, contact Stephanie Solomon at (850) 558-4516 or solomons@tcc.fl.edu.

Reinhardt's Popp named Under Armour AD of the Year

VICTORY SPORTS NETWORK

Reinhardt University's director of athletics Bill Popp has been recognized by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) as one of 28 recipients of the Under Armour AD of the Year award. The award recognizes athletic directors across seven divisions of collegiate athletics.

"What an honor to be recognized as Athletic Director of the Year by a great organization like NACDA," said Popp of the recognition. "Though the award has my name on it, the effort and attitude to earn this award belongs to our student-athletes for their hard work on and off the courts and fields, my coaches and trainers for their passion and dedication to making a difference in young people's lives, Jeffrey Pouchier and Kelsey Carl and the rest of our athletic staff for the tireless hours and hard work that they put in, and the university administration, led by President [Dr. Kina] Mallard, and their great support of the mission of the athletic department."

"Once again, we are proud to honor the 28 directors of athletics, from all levels of NACDA's membership, as the Under Armour Athletics Director of the Year Class of 2016-17," said NACDA Executive Director Bob Vecchione. "This award was created by the leadership of NACDA in 1998 to honor those athletics directors who have done an outstanding job in the eyes of their peers. In the 19-year history of the program, we have honored in excess of 425 of the top athletics directors in the industry."

All NACDA-member directors of athletics in the United States, Canada and Mexico who met the criteria were eligible for the award. Among the criteria were service as an AD for a minimum of five academic years; demonstration of commitment to higher education and student-athletes; continuous teamwork, loyalty and excellence; and the ability to inspire individuals or groups to high levels of accomplishments. Additionally, each AD's institution must have passed a compliance check through its appropriate governing body (i.e., NCAA, NAIA, etc.), in which the institution could not have been on probation or cited for a lack of institutional control during the tenure of the current athletics director.

Nominators were NACDA-member directors of athletics, institutional presidents and conference commissioners, as well as other respected intercollegiate athletics

administrators. Special Divisional Selection Committees composed of current and former directors of athletics, current and former commissioners and other key athletics administrators voted on nominees for the award. A complete listing of Selection Committee members can be found on NACDA's Web site at www.nacda.com.

Winners will be recognized during the James J. Corbett Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, June 13 at NACDA's 52nd Annual Convention at the World Center Marriott Resort in Orlando, Florida.

The list of winners and divisions are as follows:

Football Bowl Subdivision: Sandy Barbour, Penn State University; Boo Corrigan, Army West Point; Jay Jacobs, Auburn University; Blake James, University of Miami

Football Championship Subdivision: Jeff Bourne, James Madison University; Brian Faison, University of North Dakota; Lee Reed, Georgetown University; Vaughn Williams, Kennesaw State University

Division I-AAA: Patrick Elliott, Binghamton University; Jeff Konya, Oakland University; Ed McLaughlin, VCU; Patrick Nero, George Washington University

Division II: Earl Edwards, UC San Diego; Ivan Marquez, Concordia College (NY); Pennie Parker, Rollins College; Lisa Sweany, Armstrong State University

Division III: Bridget Belgiovine, Wellesley College; Sue Lauder, Fitchburg State University; John Neese, Hardin-Simmons University; Don Tencher, Rhode Island College

NAIA: Arabie Conner, Ottawa University; Willis Pooler, Lindsey Wilson College; Bill Popp, Reinhardt University; Drew Watson, Southeastern University

Junior/Community College: Dudley "Skip" Bailey, Monroe Community College; **Rob Chaney, Tallahassee Community College**; Albert Gasparian, Golden West College; Troy Tucker, Northampton Community College

(NOTE: Article truncated for mention of TCC.)

TCC Trustee Karen Moore wins volunteer award

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Karen Moore, CEO of Moore Communications Group and a leader in Tallahassee's business community, has won the Bill Franklin Volunteer of the Year Award from District III of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. The award recognizes Moore's efforts on behalf of Tallahassee Community College as a trustee, supporter, fundraiser and advocate.

Moore has been a member of TCC's governing body, the District Board of Trustees, since 2007. Before becoming a trustee, she was a leader of the TCC Foundation's board of directors. The Foundation develops financial and other resources to support the College, and Moore has remained extremely active in that arena, even after taking on her duties as a trustee. She chaired TCC's recent comprehensive campaign, which raised more than \$13 million to support the College's students and the educational programs that serve them.

"Trustee Moore is a steadfast advocate of student success at our college and contributes her time, talent and treasure to help our students succeed," said TCC President Jim Murdaugh.

According to Heather Mitchell, executive director of the TCC Foundation, Moore and her husband Richard were among the first to make a commitment to the "TCC. We Rise." campaign. In February 2016, they made a gift to support the Richard W. and Karen B. Moore Veterans Success Center and the Moore Veterans Leadership Academy, which help veterans succeed in college and in the workforce.

"Karen has leveraged her passion for learning and helping others receive an education on behalf of TCC for almost two decades," said Mitchell. "She is the kind of volunteer every organization dreams about. She gives of herself and she motivates others to follow her passion."

Moore has also endowed a scholarship in memory of her grandmother, Pearl Lamb Batchelor, who had to drop out of high school to work in the tobacco fields to help support her family. Batchelor went back to school at age 72 to earn her GED diploma. Each year, the Dream Big Scholarship goes to a graduate of the GED program who enrolls in a college-credit program at TCC.

"What you have in life is your family and your name and your education," said Moore. "For me to be able — through working with the Foundation and working as a trustee—to focus on student access and student support is very meaningful. It allows people to have that education that creates job opportunities, that creates economic development, that creates the quality of life that we all deserve."

Moore Communications Group has received more than 450 state and national awards and has been named by Inc. Magazine as one of the Fastest Growing Businesses in America and by Florida Trend Magazine for seven straight years as a Top Place to Work in Florida and Top PR Firm to Work for in U.S. by PR Week. Moore is also the author of "Behind the Red Door: Unlock Your Advocacy, Influence and Success," which was published in 2016 by Advantage Media Group.

For all her professional accomplishments, Moore clearly also has a deep personal investment in her volunteer work, especially her work on behalf of TCC students.

"What I really enjoy is when I have the chance to walk around campus and talk to students, or I see them as they cross the stage at graduation. And when I say congratulations, many of them will say, 'I am first person in my family to graduate from college,' and they're beaming with pride. And to know that's possible because of scholarships, because of low tuition, because of the quality of teaching—that's pure joy to me."

TCC's McLeod captures 900th win in midst of rough season

JORDAN CULVER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

After a rough, injury-plagued start of the season, Tallahassee Community College baseball coach Mike McLeod wasn't sure he'd pick up win No. 900 in 2017.

Starters were going down left and right, the team had to endure two losing streaks of at least four games and McLeod had to put together a lineup of freshmen to fill in the gaps.

McLeod, in his 27th year as TCC head coach, got his 900th win – on Feb. 26 against NJCAA No. 6 Chattahoochee Valley – but he's just hoping his team holds together through Panhandle Conference play.

"Our top two catchers got hurt within the first five games of the season, they're out for the year," he said.

"We lost our closer, who in the first five games with 2-0 with two saves. He's finished four the year. We've lost our third baseman and our second baseman. It's been a real patchwork, trying to put the pieces together."

McLeod, already in TCC's Hall of Fame, said he had a plan when the season began, and watching his roster dwindle down to where he only has two extra players to start a game was not part of that plan.

"It's been tough," he said.

"It was just a struggle. You get (900 wins) and you look back at all of the players and coaches – we've had some great people here."

TCC begins its conference schedule with NJCAA Region 8 No. 1 Chipola tonight at Eagle Field.

Three of the Panhandle Conference's five teams are ranked in the Region 8 Coaches' Poll top 10, and Tallahassee is on the outside looking in with a 15-11 overall record.

McLeod, 61, also went into the game that would be his 900th win with a heavy heart. His father, TCC Hall of Fame contributor and concessions guy Les McLeod, died six days before the game against Chattahoochee Valley at the age of 92.

"He will be missed," McLeod said.

"He saw a whole lot of TCC baseball. He missed very few games. He traveled with us a lot of times. If he didn't travel on the bus, he'd follow us in the car. He really loved the players. He was like their grandfather. He knew everything about them, every play they made or didn't make.

"He was a friend to all. But, you know, when you get to 92 and parts start falling apart, he was in a lot of pain. You know he's a great dancer and a great singer. He and his sisters had a little gospel trio and my mother and he were terrific dancers. We figure that's what he's doing now."

McLeod is hoping to close out the season strong. The Eagles have corrected the ship, somewhat. TCC has won eight of its last nine games after losing 10 of 12.

Finishing the season on a positive note won't be easy. There's still plenty for the young Eagles to battle through, but McLeod has 27 years – and 906 wins – of experience under his belt.

"It's not like I just started doing it," McLeod said.

"Hopefully there's some experience coming into play somewhere, but we've got such a tough conference. You hope it holds up. You hope the "Band-Aid effect" holds up. Because you're going to lose. You're going to get beat in this conference. You just hope you can bounce back each day from the losses.

"Nobody feels sorry for you, either. They want to beat your butt every time they come at you."

That experience means he's met some great people along the way.

Martin and FAMU baseball coach Jamey Shouppe are close friends from when McLeod coached at Florida State (1982-90) and served as the program's pitching coach. (McLeod, a Godby High grad, also pitched at FSU).

Matt Heath, head coach of College of Charleston, was McLeod's assistant for two years at TCC.

Former Eagle assistants also include Ryan Robinson, the founder of Next Level Baseball; Bryan Brown, who owns Powermill; former high school coach Greg Jones - the list goes on and on.

TCC's McLeod captures 900th win in midst of rough season....

continued

"It's the coaches in the players," McLeod said.

"All of those guys who have played here, you just think back on them. And then you forget about it and you keep going."

McLeod, who has won four Panhandle Conference titles, said the people surrounding him at TCC – from the athletic director Rob Chaney to the school's basketball coaches – always helped him feel at home.

And TCC will be his home for a bit longer. He'll enter Florida's DROP program in September, stay on with the Eagles likely for five more years, and then probably retire.

"The only pressure I've ever felt is what I've put on myself," he said.

"I like to win. It's no fun when you're not winning. Really, TCC has already had the right perspective on this stuff. It's just a great place to work."

Labor union bill advances

House legislation would cripple public employees unions, opponents say

JAMES CALL

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A bill opponents say will cripple public employees labor unions cleared a House committee Wednesday on a 10-3 vote. Rep. Scott Plakon's HB 11 would almost certainly result in decertification of chapters of groups representing a wide range of workers from university professors to school bus drivers.

Plakon said his bill is simple. Two pages long. And that it is about democracy. If fewer than 50 percent of eligible workers refuse to become dues-paying members then the union can no longer represent the workers in collective bargaining. A United Faculty of Florida chapter sent out an alert stating if the bill becomes law it would put academic freedom at risk and UFF would lose the ability "to ensure equity in terms of course work."

Frank Watson, the Florida Education Association lobbyist, pointed out what he saw as a flaw in Plakon's logic. He noted that in 1980, Ronald Reagan claimed the presidency in a landslide with 60 percent of the vote. That actually translated into only 27 percent of eligible voters, said Watsons, whose union represents public school employees.

Statewide, about 10 percent of state workers belong to an organized labor union. Florida is a Right to Work state, that is employment is not dependent on joining UFF or the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, which claims more than 7,000 dues-paying state employees.

Plakon said he knows of one situation where only 3 percent of the workers belong to the union.

"The question is should these 3 percent with a few leaders represent 100 percent in the bargaining unit," Plakon asked. "The answer is clearly no. The people in that bargaining unit should be empowered on their own to reach out and try to do the best thing for their family."

The Florida Chamber and Americans for Prosperity praised Plakon for bringing the proposal forward. A dozen union representatives and workers lined up to speak against the bill.

"It's really unreasonable. We've even looked at whether it's constitutional," said J.B. Clark of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers said before the hearing began. "It's totally unreasonable."

A group of Florida State University graduate school students explained that Plakon left out an important detail. Many of them would join the union if they could afford the dues. State employees have gone 10 years without a pay raise – losing 20 percent of their salaries to inflation. The grad students explained as teaching assistants and researchers they are paid below the poverty level.

"For workers at the bottom of the pay scale not joining is rarely about democracy. It is far more often about poverty," said Matt Dauphin, an FSU teaching assistant. "They rely on their union to improve their working conditions. This bill will make it virtually impossible for unions to continue functioning."

Federal labor law requires unions to represent all persons in a bargaining unit, regardless of whether they union dues. That provision does not apply to public-sector unions but they accept workers getting a "free ride," representation without paying dues.

In Tallahassee, United Faculty of Florida handles collective bargaining for professors at Florida State and Florida A&M universities. Faculty at Tallahassee Community College last year voted to unionize after tensions arose between staff and administrators over teaching loads and other issues.

While lawmakers debated the proposal, Plakon huddled with committee chair Rep. Neil Combee, R- Polk. Combee then held a brief discussion with Rep. Rick Roth, R-Loxahatchee. When Combee returned to his seat he asked members to pass the measure so that Plakon could continue to work on it.

Roth explained he would rather vote yes in committee and no on the House floor than the other way around.

The 10-3 vote moved the proposal on to the Governmental Accountability Committee but didn't reflect lawmakers' concerns about what Roth called "pitfalls" that need to be amended.

Plakon pledged an opened door policy –willing to meet with anyone if their interest is to "reflect the intention of the bill."

TCC athletic director Rob Chaney receives national honor

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT/WCTV

Rob Chaney, athletic director at Tallahassee Community College, has been chosen as a Junior/Community College Under Armour Athletics Director of the Year by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics.

Chaney, who is in his eighth year as TCC's athletic director, shared the honor with others in the TCC Athletics Department.

"This is more than a recognition for me. It belongs to the coaches and the student-athletes. I have the day-to-day responsibility, but we all work together to serve the students. Anything we accomplish on the field, in the classroom, at the institution, I count those as victories for our department."

Chaney is a member of the College Sports Information Directors of America and the National Alliance of Two Year College Athletic Administrators, where he serves as chair of the Communications Committee. He is also a member of the executive board of the Florida College System Activities Association's Council for Athletic Affairs and chair of the Panhandle Conference.

The NACDA award was created to honor athletics directors who have done an outstanding job in the eyes of their peers. Chaney was nominated by Matthew Ennis, athletic director at State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota.

"Rob's efforts and leadership in the area of sports information have made significant advancements for Region 8," said Ennis, referring to Region 8 of National Junior College Athletic Association. "He has embraced national leadership through the National Alliance of Two Year College Athletic Administrators and at a region level serving as the women's basketball chair for the Florida College System Activities Association. Furthermore, Rob's leadership has been instrumental in the success of TCC's athletic programs and its recent expansion of its sports offerings."

Tallahassee Community College offers five sports: baseball, softball, men's and women's basketball, and women's cross country. The latter began in the fall of 2016 and was the first new program to be added to TCC's line up in more than 20 years. All four of the other sports have thrived under Chaney's leadership and are currently enjoying promising seasons.

"Rob does an outstanding job with the athletics program at Tallahassee Community College," said Stan Wilcox, Florida State University's director of athletics. "He faces some unique challenges in Tallahassee but has managed to turn most of those into opportunities, which has been a key to his success at TCC. He runs his program as well as any I have seen on the community college level."

TCC offering free First Aid/CPR training on March 31

HAVANA HERALD

The Tallahassee Community College Gadsden Center will offer a free First Aid/CPR course targeted to Gadsden County business owners, their employees and community members on Friday, March 31, from 1 to 3 p.m.

The training will be led by staff of Capital Regional Medical Center.

The TCC Gadsden Center is located at 223 Pat Thomas Parkway in Quincy.

Interested individuals may register by contacting the Gadsden Center at (850) 558-3620 or GadsdenCenter@tcc.fl.edu.

This will be the first in a series of safety trainings at the Gadsden Center.

TCC Gadsden Center Safety Series Schedule

Friday, March 31, 2017, 1-3 p.m.: First Aid/CPR Training provided by Capital Regional Medical Center

Friday, April 28, 2017, 1-5 p.m.: Active Bystander Training provided by the Florida Medical Reserve Corps

Friday, May 19, 2017, 1-3 p.m.: Civilian Response to Active Shooter Event Training provided by G.W. Lupton, TCC emergency services coordinator

Friday, June 30, 2017, 1-3 p.m.: Cybersecurity Awareness Training (provider to be announced)

Friday, July 28, 2017, 1-3 p.m.: Developing a Continuity of Operations Plan Training provided by G.W. Lupton

Saturday, August 26, 2017, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.: Community Safety Awareness Day, featuring community partners, parenting classes and other offerings

For information, contact Desiree Gorman at (850) 558-3620 or gormand@tcc.fl.edu.

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