

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



May 19 - June 15, 2018

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In the News



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TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



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Gary Droze inducted into FHSAA Hall of Fame

DAVID YON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

There is a very special place, even by Tallahassee standards, where rivers, marshes (salt and freshwater), a bay and a gulf create great beauty, and a place for cross country and track and field coaching to develop.

It is easy to lose one's self there. Not lost in the sense of being unable to find one's way out, but lost in the sense of being unconnected to the problems and concerns of everyday life.

A unique dike system and as many as seven rivers find their way into the Apalachee Bay before meeting the Gulf of Mexico's flow. Of course, if you recall the alligator that turned the powerful and frantic turtle into its dinner, you know it is not always idyllic.

For most, fishing in the St. Marks Wildlife Refuge means either casting from a safe bank or getting out into the flats with a boat. For Gary Droze, it means putting a canoe on your back and hiking and paddling your way over the dikes, through fresh and salt water marshes and across longleaf Pine forest and savannahs.

"The ebb and flow of the tides in Apalachee Bay's salt marsh creeks feel nearly as much a part of me as my own circulatory system," Droze wrote.

Paradise is, of course not, without its perils. The fishing line was stuck hanging straight down from the tree limb jutting out over the water. Droze scampered out on the limb confident the line could be freed if he pulled from directly above the spot where it disappeared. Seconds later he slipped and splashed into the water.

Now understand, if it were not for this amazing place, Droze well might have left us long ago. However, as he plunged into the water, it appeared his coaching career was coming to an end.

On the other end of his fishing line was a large, very unhappy alligator. But Droze has a few skills that the poor turtle did not. He rose straight up out of that water and started walking, no running on top of it, just like he was ... well, you know Droze would never claim such holiness.

There are only 193 individuals enshrined in the Florida High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. It is a very exclusive club. Inductees include "coaches,

administrators, contest officials and other contributors ... who have raised the level of awareness of high school athletics through their dedication, efforts and achievements."

The FHSAA web page also says "Longevity, without meaningful statewide impact, does not constitute appropriate credentials for Hall of Fame consideration."

Numbers do matter. FHSAA reports that Droze's teams, have won 20 cross country and track & field team state championships and been runner-up 16 times. Unbelievably, he has guided runners to a whopping 57 individual and relay state championships, 52 regional team titles and 79 district team titles.

For 22-consecutive years Droze has qualified the Maclay Boy's and Girl's cross-country squads for the Florida High School Cross Country State Championships.

"The stats are mind numbing, but they are the less important part of what really makes Droze a Hall of Fame coach. Just talk to a few parents. I reached out to three.

Jane Johnson wrote: "The influence he has had on our entire family transcends running and competition. In his humble but powerful way, Gary Droze taught us all how to push ourselves to be better people." She also said: "He was an exceptional coach to both of our daughters and showed them how to find speed, endurance and discipline within themselves they could not have found on their own."

Vicki Emo watched their daughter grow under Droze's direction.

"Gary Droze was such an important part of Jennifer's middle and high school years. He encouraged Jennifer. He developed her talent as a runner, and he made her feel like she was important and special. He provided for Jennifer, as well as countless other young people, a positive activity and atmosphere where the students felt respected, safe, and encouraged. I also remember Gary asked his wife Vicky to marry him by having his runners hold up signs during a track meet."

Gary Droze inducted into FHSAA Hall of Fame....

continued

Craig Willis also watched his kids grow under Gary's guidance. "As a parent of not just one daughter, but two who ran for Gary, I can say without equivocation that this is a well-deserved honor. He brought out not just the best runner in each of them, but more importantly the best as well-rounded young adults. He placed Caroline in leadership roles with younger runners before she knew how to be a leader, and by doing so taught her life skills that will benefit her for the rest of her life."

I could find hundreds more, but these three make the point. Teachers and coaches matter. Ten more people died last week in another school shooting. A 17-year-old apparently totally lost. Of course, no coach or teacher can do it all, but I know many like Gary Droze make a huge difference. I feel confident the more we support coaches like Gary Droze, the fewer times we will have to shake our fist at the sky.

Hall of Fame induction is only one small way to say thanks.

(NOTE: Gary Droze serves as the coach of Tallahassee Community College's cross country program.)

Starbucks open again on Kleman Plaza

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Customers seeking their mid-Monday morning caffeine boost trickled in to the Starbucks on Kleman Plaza, as the café reopened for business.

The Starbucks, operated and managed by Tallahassee Community College since January 2017, closed May 7, as a new manager and staff underwent training.

The reopening was welcomed news for Mark Cason, who strolled by the business with others.

"I'm glad it's open," said Cason, who works downtown. "I don't like the coffee at my office. I'm happy to be able to get my caffeine fix again."

The store is located at TCC's Center for Innovation.

It closed following the previous manager's sudden resignation at the beginning of the month.

"We are excited with the relaunch of the store and look forward to serving our many loyal customers," said TCC's Vice President for Workforce Development Kimberly Moore. "The pause in service afforded us an opportunity to onboard a solid management team with prior Starbucks experience and a commitment to customer service."

The quick turnaround, Moore said, "serves as a testimony to our commitment to succeeding and ensuring just like other small businesses we don't stay down, we get back up."

The operation has six employees. It is open 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Moore said it will open on the weekend to accommodate events that may be taking place downtown.

Never too late

Life-changing mission leads 53-year-old grandfather to college degree

ST. CLAIR MURRAINE
CAPITAL OUTLOOK

About five years ago, Tyrese Williams began to repeatedly hear the voices of his co-worker in his head.

"I listen to those guys talking about going 40 years and have to go back to work again," Williams said. "They didn't plan properly. I didn't want to be one of those guys."

So Williams, who dropped out of Rickards High School as a sophomore during the 1970s and eventually had run-ins with the law, decided to fix his situation. Never mind that he was doing well as a construction worker at FSU.

At age 53, Williams graduated this past weekend from Tallahassee Community College with an AA degree. He plans to spend the next two years completing studies for a degree in social work, beginning this fall at FSU.

Williams was 49 years old when he set out to put his plans in motion, earning a GED certificate. All the time, he held down a part time job as head coach of the Lincoln Neighborhood Center's boxing team.

Gwen Lucas, executive director of the Lincoln Center Foundation, said what Williams is accomplishing makes him the perfect example for participants in the program. Most come from single-parent households and face circumstances similar to Williams' early life.

"I'm very proud of Tyrese," she said. "When I first talked to him to be the coach, there were some people who had reservations. But I knew because of his history he could identify with a lot of the kids."

Obviously feeling a sense of vindication for her decision to hire Williams, Lucas said she saw potential in him that naysayers didn't.

"Tyrese is a no-nonsense kind of person," she said. "I saw him trying to be better than he used to be. Who better than him?"

For many of the young men on the team, Williams has become a father figure. Now he not only tells them about persistence, but he's become an example.

Williams' decision to continue his college education is yet another example, Lucas said.

"Going farther, he is telling them 'you keep trying to attain something better,'" Lucas said.

Williams was more than 40 years removed from a classroom when he decided to get a GED. Before that, he tried having a family but his marriage, from which he has one child, lasted 10 years.

He also proudly speaks of his eight other children and six grandchildren.

In part, Williams said, his decision to attend college comes from having big dreams about his future.

"I don't want to settle for decent," he said. "I want what's rightfully mine. Then, I'll be happy. I want to be able to work for myself."

With all that he has going on with his fulltime job and coaching, Williams finds time to practice his faith in a higher power. He has become a licensed minister who helps to pastor at New St. John AME Church during the past four year.

He had to make changes in his life when he heard the calling, Williams said.

"I didn't know which way God was trying to take me and I was seeking more and more," he said. "I'm not where I used to be and I'm not where I need to be but I'm pushing to get where I need to be."

SECOND CUP: Working Class Wednesday

WTLX

One networking event is bridging the gap between young professionals in our area.

Terrance Barber and Remy Sawyer stopped by WTLX's Second Cup to discuss Working Class Wednesday.

They say the networking experience for young professionals offers the opportunity for growth and exposure to local business owners, community leaders, political candidates and the general community.

Their Working Class Wednesday event will be Wednesday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the TCC Center For Innovation, 300 West Pensacola Street (the Old Brogan Museum) Downtown Klean Plaza.

The event is free, and more information can be obtained at their site: www.workingclasswednesday.com.

TCC president earns high ratings from trustees

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee Community College's District Board of Trustees couldn't be more impressed with President Jim Murdaugh.

In fact, Murdaugh's annual evaluation barely drew any comment as the item — which was absent from the agenda — was approved by consent during Monday's monthly meeting.

Six of the seven board members gave Murdaugh the highest rating of 5 in every category on his annual review.

Eric Grant, appointed to the board in February, didn't participate.

The only 4 rating — in one category — came from board chairman Jonathan Kilpatrick.

That came under the "collaboration" category of: "Creates a work atmosphere that encourages high morale and maximizes individual performance."

But even then, Kilpatrick wrote in the comment section, "The challenge of disparate priorities on campus has required difficult decisions. Jim has done a great job of navigating these priorities and creating an environment of success."

Murdaugh, who begins his eighth year as president in October, took the glowing review in stride.

"It was a great evaluation and I appreciate the continued support of all of the trustees," he said after the meeting. "My high marks are a reflection of the great work of the men and women of this college."

This year's grades mirror evaluations Murdaugh has received in previous years from his bosses. Since there are no raises budgeted for this year, his base salary of \$286,409 will remain unchanged.

The evaluation committee of Kilpatrick, board vice chair Karen Moore, board attorney Craig Knox, Nyla Davis, human resources director and Lenda Kling, executive coordinator, met with the president an hour before Monday's meeting.

"I think he's done a fantastic job," Kilpatrick said.

He noted Murdaugh's focus on student success, moving the college forward under tighter state financial constraints and offering training and education to match the top 10 job markets in the region.

"Jim has been a driving force in making certain TCC is positioned for student success," Kilpatrick said.

When asked about his expectations for Murdaugh this year, Kilpatrick said, "Keep it up; prepare students and make sure they are successful in college and after college."

Strong trustee support has been evident this year as TCC's faculty is now represented in collective bargaining by United Faculty of Florida's TCC's chapter.

Some say privately Murdaugh views unionization as a personal affront to his leadership style.

"It has a tendency to fracture relationships," Murdaugh said of unionization. "We've seen it play out. There are varying views of my leadership."

But, he added, "leadership is not a popularity contest. It's about doing the right thing at the right time."

Fishers, oyster farmers vow to work together

JOHN TAYLOR
WAKULLA NEWS

Wakulla County commercial fishermen and oyster farmers reached an agreement Tuesday to work together in citing oyster-farm locations that would not interfere with traditional fishing areas in Wakulla waters.

"We're going to work together, in fact, we're meeting again on May 29 to identify coordinates of good places for oyster farms in Oyster Bay," said John Taylor, president of the Wakulla Commercial Fishermen's Association (WCFA). "If that meeting is good, the next step will be to get in the boat and survey the locations together."

The WCFA meeting followed an announcement Tuesday morning from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Division of Aquaculture that its controversial proposal to locate 72 oyster farms on 130 acres of submerged land in the mouth of Ochlockonee Bay had been withdrawn.

Competing interests, such as crabbing, kayaking, boating and fishing, led to the decision to terminate the Ochlockonee Bay proposal, said Kal Knickerbocker, the FDACS Division of Aquaculture director.

Knickerbocker and Portia Sapp, deputy director, attended the WCFA meeting and answered a lengthy list of questions about the process for assigning leases.

One of the problems worrying oyster farmers attending the meeting is the lack of available submerged-land leases that would allow them to move their growing oysters from leases held by Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute. WEI has a management contract with the state that allows its five-acre lease to be used for education, research and training, and prohibits its use for commercial gain.

Oyster farmers complained at the meeting that they were promised 1.5-acre leases by WEI when they joined Class 4 of the WEI oyster program. Knickerbocker responded to the complaint saying there is a "problem with WEI making promises."

Sapp offered some encouragement to oyster farmers by explaining that farms not being used for two consecutive years are receiving notices requiring proof of cultivation. After 30 days, a process can begin to remove the leaseholder, Sapp said.

Wakulla County Commissioner Chuck Hess attended the meeting and met with oyster farmers and commercial fishermen after the adjournment.

WCFA isn't really working with aquaculture

JEFF TILLEY
WAKULLA NEWS

There is a lot of information being pumped into the public square in this part of Florida about whether or how shellfish aquaculture and commercial fishing can coexist. Aquaculturists, like the Oyster Boss team, believe it is possible to coexist. However, at this point nearly all the informational public narrative is being generated by the fishermen, and they do not speak for us.

I approached the Wakulla Commercial Fishermen's Association in the Spring 2017 at one of their meetings in Sopchoppy, and offered several ideas. None of those ideas were appealing to them. The first was an invitation for the local crabbers to set traps around AQ leases to rid us of pesky blue crabs. The second was to set up a working committee on both sides to meet to discuss other ways forward. I called both efforts "low hanging fruit." As my eyes watched the eyes of the men to whom I was speaking, I could tell they were uninterested. And, not coincidentally, nothing came of either proposal. Despite the platitudes that were offered at the meeting, no phone calls were returned when the aquaculturists subsequently reached out to set up get togethers for the two working groups.

Now, fast forward to Spring 2018, and there are now almost no oyster farmers who are interested in a similar outreach. The reason is because we do not believe the fishermen's group is interested in doing anything more than grandstanding. So, despite their claims to the contrary, few, if any local shellfish aquaculture farmers are willing to work with the WCFA.

So, with all the aggrandizing in the media over this issue, as the WCFA's leadership is attempting to position themselves in the media as "working with aquaculture," I think it would be appropriate to see a list of names of the aquaculture folks who are actually going lease-hunting for new potential lease areas in Wakulla or Franklin counties. Now that 70-plus leases in the middle of the Ochlockonee Bay have been withdrawn by the state after protests from the fishermen and their friends, I think it reasonable to take a long look at whether the local fishermen are really honest brokers regarding aquaculture.

When you work day and night to deny the activation of over 70 AQ oyster leases, and you simultaneously want to claim the "high ground" of "working with aquaculture" let us see just exactly who it is that you are working with. Is the WCFA working with Bob Ballard's Wakulla Environmental Institute? No. Working with the behemoth Panacea Oyster Co-op? No. Are you working with independent non-affiliated growers like me? No.

Instead, you enlisted Jack Rudloe to tell all of us how the chemicals that would be contained within poles and pilings in AQ leases are detrimental to the ecology of the Ochlockonee Bay. (The leases in Ochlockonee Bay would have been DEEP leases. Deep leases cannot support the wood-pole style of infrastructure design). Rudloe also describes in press releases by the WCFA that AQ leases impede the development of sportfish fry like young tarpon, and other fishes – when, the exact opposite is settled science.

The WCFA also enlisted the powerful CCA to declare that the location of the leases in Ochlockonee Bay would be an obstruction to the entrance to Chaires Creek – but the leases were not near the entrance of the creek. The WCFA made dubious claims that the leases would become boating obstructions and that the area was once productive for crabbing – which was debunked.

Shellfish aquaculture is a legitimate and LEGAL business enterprise. There's no need to get on the AQ train as it leaves the station if you don't want to. But, it will be Florida's only way back to OYSTER GLORY from the flat-lining wild harvest abuse of wild beds that has taken place in the last decade.

Wakulla grads earn full ride to TCC

BETH O'DONNELL
WAKULLA NEWS

Five Wakulla County 2018 graduates earned scholarships to Tallahassee Community College under the "Take Stock in Children" (TSIC) state program in partnership with the Florida Department of Education and the TCC Foundation.

Scholarship recipients are WHS graduates Ebone Davis, Ja'Mecia Rosier, Shawn St. Martin, and Della Rae Watson.

Christian Hamel, who resides in Wakulla County, is a graduating senior from Florida Virtual School.

They received their scholarships at the TCC Senior Awards Ceremony on May 15.

These students will graduate from TCC with an Associate of Arts (AA) degree fully funded.

Davis earned a Certified Nursing Assistant state license through the WHS Medical Academy. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in Nursing at TCC and ultimately go on to become a Registered Nurse.

Rosier is a WHS senior whose passion is art. After TCC, she plans to pursue a degree at the Savannah College of Arts and Design (SCAD). Already, she has participated in a summer program at SCAD.

St. Martin took a class in the WHS Engineering Academy and loved it. He plans to pursue a degree in Engineering with a minor in Business. He already has taken college dual enrollment classes from TCC while at WHS.

Watson has taken advanced and dual enrollment classes through the WHS Medical Academy. She plans to finish her AA degree at TCC and transfer to a four year college to pursue a degree in Psychology.

Hamel is a Florida Virtual School student who lives in Wakulla County. He plans to attend TCC, then transfer to an on-line Christian college to earn a Bachelor of Divinity degree and become a youth pastor.

TSIC is based on the belief that children succeed academically when they are given extensive support combined with motivation and accountability. Students must follow through on meeting criteria throughout their middle and high school years to earn the scholarship.

Recommended middle school students sign a contract agreeing to several requirements. First, they must maintain at least a 2.75 grade point average throughout middle and high school.

They also must attend several Saturday TSIC Academies that deal with topics such as state and federal financial aid tips, character building, applying for college, and managing personal finances.

In addition, they are required to do many hours of community service, plus meet monthly with the mentor assigned to them.

TSIC targets students in middle school who are recommended by their teachers and administrators. Recommendations are based on being the first generation in their families to attend and/or complete college; financial need; and evidence of students' effort to keep up their grades.

Many more students started the TSIC program in middle school, but these five followed it through to be rewarded at the end for their perseverance and hard work.

Wakulla County School District mentors Katherine Spivey and Sue Hutchins help keep students on track to earn the TSIC scholarships.

Superintendent Bobby Pearce says, "These deserving students will have many more career opportunities by earning the TSIC scholarships. They already know what it takes to work hard to achieve a goal."

He adds, "This is one of many great opportunities TCC has for Wakulla County students."

The TSIC program has served students in Wakulla, Gadsden, and Leon counties for 20 years.

To learn more about becoming a mentor for TSIC, contact the Take Stock in Children office at Tallahassee Community College at (850) 201-8314, or send an email to tsic@tcc.fl.edu.

Panacea Waterfronts donates \$10K to TCC

WAKULLA NEWS

Tallahassee Community College received a \$10,000 gift from the Panacea Waterfronts Partnership to support student scholarships. The gift was presented at the April 16 meeting of the TCC District Board of Trustees. Heather Mitchell, executive director of the TCC Foundation, said the organization's gift will be used to create the Panacea Waterfronts Partnership Endowed Scholarship. The purpose of the scholarship is to assist students from Panacea who want to enroll in a degree or certificate program at TCC.

The scholarship fund was the beneficiary of proceeds from the group's popular Rock the Dock Fishing Tournament, an annual event held at Woolley Park in Panacea that attracts anglers from all over North Florida. The 10th annual Rock the Dock tournament will be held on April 28 and 29. The group was represented by Mark Mitchell, chair of the Panacea Waterfronts Partnership, and several other members.

"We see this as an investment in the future of Panacea," said Mitchell.

For information, contact Heather Mitchell at mitchelh@tcc.fl.edu or (850) 201-6067 (Office) and (850) 545-4805 (Cell)

15-year-old graduating from Lincoln High School

LANETRA BENNETT

WCTV

Lincoln High School senior, Cameron Carpenter, has finally made it.

"It feels good. It's been a long four years," he said.

Right beside him growing up over the years, was his younger sister, Devoni'.

Graduation day will be no different.

"She's actually right next to me in the lineup," Cameron said.

However, Devoni' is only 15 years old.

"It was a shock when I found out she was graduating. I knew she had more credits than what her classmates did. But, for her to actually graduate with me, I never pictured that," said Cameron.

Devoni' pictured it even if Cameron didn't.

"That was one of the things that I promised my parents since high school started that I would graduate early with him. I wanted to make sure I didn't fail them," Devoni' said.

Devoni' went to high school during the day, and took courses with Florida Virtual School at night.

She completed her ninth and tenth grade years at Lincoln High and ended with more than the required credits for a senior and decided to go ahead and graduate.

Devoni' and Cameron's parents are beaming with pride.

"It feels good. Very proud, very proud," their dad said.

Devoni has also been writing a book, titled, Inspired.

She said, "I want to inspire other kids that when other people say you can't do something, the motivation says yes you can. I'm a walking example."

Now, she'll be walking across the stage with her brother.

"I'm just happy to know that I'm graduating with him," said Devoni'.

Lincoln's graduation is Saturday at 7 p.m.

Devoni' is enrolled at Tallahassee Community College and will be starting in the fall. She plans to go to a four-year university after receiving her associate's degree in Business.

She has not decided yet which university she's going to.

Her brother, Cameron, is also going to TCC.

TCC students graduate Veterans Leadership Academy

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Four student veterans completed the Tallahassee Community College Moore Veterans Leadership Academy in the Spring 2018 term. All four are Tallahassee natives: Benton Jaco, Ray Ketterman, David Lowery and Austin Nistler.

The academy is a two-semester program that provides outstanding student veterans an opportunity to participate in leadership activities related to different areas of career study. The program allows veterans to participate in community events, attend meetings with community leaders and visit prominent businesses and service providers in the community. The academy is funded by community members Richard W. and Karen B. Moore.

Wakulla associate director resigns

Dwyer quits after filing complaint against boss

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The associate director of Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute resigned this spring weeks after filing a workplace complaint against her boss.

Colleen Dwyer quit shortly after the TCC Human Resources Department responded to her complaint against Executive Director Bob Ballard by recommending she participate in an employment assistance program to address stress management and communication issues by March 9. She was also instructed to attend "Art of De-Escalation" training before March 30.

Dwyer, who was hired in March 2015, filed a complaint with HR against Ballard, following an exchange in which she said he engaged in unprofessional behavior by "raising his voice" at her during an office discussion. Ballard has been director of WEI since 2012.

The February complaint was verified following interviews by HR Director Nyla Davis. But Davis, in her response, told Dwyer, "the investigation also revealed that there appear to be communications issues on both sides that are impacting the workplace."

Three weeks after receiving the HR response, Dwyer submitted her letter of resignation.

"After the finding of the Human Resources investigation I do not feel comfortable returning to the institute, because of this I will be utilizing annual leave for the duration of my tenure," Dwyer wrote March 20, according to a letter obtained by the Democrat through a public records request. Her resignation was effective April 2.

"I have greatly enjoyed working for Tallahassee Community College and I hope to return to the college in another capacity in the future."

Dwyer has since been hired as an adjunct in the Business Industry and Technology division this fall, TCC spokesman Al Moran said.

Albert Wynn, a contract and grants coordinator at TCC, begins June 4 as the new associate director at WEI. He will earn \$61,500. Dwyer was earning \$61,727.

Neither Ballard nor Dwyer could be reached Tuesday for comment.

In her complaint filed in February, Dwyer said Ballard became upset because he didn't understand a budget issue she was explaining. She asked Josephine Jones, an administrative assistant, to join the discussion.

After Jones asked Dwyer to print the budget reports since she didn't have access, Ballard reportedly yelled, "You better get your butts in my office."

Jones joined the meeting, but Dwyer stayed in her office awaiting the printouts.

Dwyer said she was "unnerved and that Mr. Ballard approached her office telling her to get in his office with a raised voice."

Dwyer said as she grabbed her purse and started walking toward the door, Ballard said, "If you leave, you will be suspended or fired."

In her response to Ballard, Davis required him to attend an EAP session on anger management and on communications, as well as an Art of De-Escalation training workshop, or face a five-day suspension.

"This is not the type of behavior expected of our supervisors and cannot be allowed to continue," she wrote.

Davis also reminded Ballard of a civility policy recently approved by TCC's District Board of Trustees, which states everyone can expect professional and courteous treatment.

He has completed the sessions, Moran said.

Q&A: Tallahassee CC's Feleccia Moore-Davis Embraces Data to Help Students

Ten years in, leaders continue to refine early-alert system and increase faculty involvement.

ERIN CUNNINGHAM
EDTECH

Feleccia Moore-Davis joined Tallahassee Community College in Florida three years ago as provost and vice president, following a 20-year career as a professor and administrator in community colleges in North Carolina and Texas.

One of her first initiatives at TCC was to adopt an early-alert system that could identify students who may be at risk academically. The goal, she says, is to use this data-driven system to retain students and support them so they can graduate on time.

Moore-Davis recently spoke with EdTech about the evolution of the system, including efforts by TCC leaders to get faculty on board.

EDTECH: How did TCC's academic alert system evolve?

Moore-Davis: We started our early-alert journey over 10 years ago. We went through several iterations. We started, for example, focusing on developmental education success and the success of first-time college students. In 2013, through another task force, we decided to launch a new tool. However, our goals for that product were not realized. We had made some missteps. We recognized we did not have full buy-in from our faculty. It was a top-down process. Students also weren't aware of why flags were on their records. We had coaches calling them, and they didn't understand why people from the college were calling.

EDTECH: What happened next?

Moore-Davis: We knew we needed to reboot. What we were doing wasn't working, yet we were spending approximately \$85,000 on a software tool. We believed in the premise of early alert, so in 2017 we relaunched. This time we created a student success task force made up of faculty, staff and advisers that researched early-alert systems and what would work for us.

EDTECH: What was the result?

Moore-Davis: We realized we could meet our goals using a system we already had. We re-envisioned it through the ticketing system we use for the call center and IT. It really was an opportunity to maximize the resources and the talent that we have at TCC to create a system that people would buy into but also would work for our students.

EDTECH: How were you able to get that buy-in the second time around?

Moore-Davis: Definitely communication. We do so many things that sometimes we forget the basic thing, which is communication. For the early alert to work, the faculty would need to be the first responders. That was the key for us. They are spending more time with our students than our advisers. They are seeing what is happening to our students in and out of the classroom.

We also looked at why flags were being raised for students. By reviewing the data, the task force came up with categories for student interventions. So, we ended up with four or five categories of interventions, including academic tutoring, financial aid, pathways coaches who assist with life challenges, counseling referrals and academic advising.

EDTECH: Have outcomes for students improved under the relaunched system?

Moore-Davis: In the fall, we resolved about 75 percent of the cases, which had not occurred before. Our institutional effectiveness team is now looking at correlations between those resolutions and our student retention rates, specifically. The early alert is geared toward keeping students in class and progressing forward.

EDTECH: What lessons learned would you share with other colleges?

Moore-Davis: One of the things we learned was to maximize our faculty and institutional talent. Faculty are the heart of our early-alert system. You can't talk about student success without engaging your faculty in some way. We were able to utilize talents of faculty, IT, and academic and student affairs to create a better system. Many of our students were at risk of failure. That was the beauty of what we created, because it was a village that had to come together to help our students progress. I'm hopeful, based on what I've seen so far, that it will work for us.

Pando named next president of Reynolds CC

HENRICO CITIZEN

Paula P. Pando, of Atlantic Heights, N.J., will become the next president of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College.

Glenn DuBois, chancellor of Virginia's Community Colleges, made the announcement last week. Pando's selection concludes a national search that attracted 102 applicants. She was chosen over finalists Genevieve D. LeRosen, the executive vice president at Reynolds, and **Feleccia R. Moore-Davis, the provost of Tallahassee Community College in Florida.**

"Paula Pando's life is a uniquely American success story," said DuBois. "She was very young when her family came to the U.S. from Chile. She had to learn a new language and a new culture, and she has excelled ever since. She has built an impressive career, focused on helping people find and leverage opportunity, and I expect her to be a terrific president for Reynolds Community College."

Pando has worked in higher education for more than 21 years. She began her career in 1994 as the director of campus activities and programs at Saint Peter's University in Jersey City, NJ. Beginning in 2000, Pando worked as a consultant for a New York firm, facilitating sensitivity and diversity training, among other topics.

In 2003, she joined Hudson County Community College, in Jersey City, N.J., as the associate dean for student services. She has since risen through the ranks, holding three different vice presidencies, including her current role as senior vice president for student and educational services.

"I am thrilled and humbled to have the opportunity to lead Reynolds Community College as it approaches its half-century mark of providing the Richmond area outstanding educational opportunities, and to join the forward-thinking community college system that is the VCCS," Pando said.

In 2017, Pando was among 38 leaders from across the country selected for the Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence, a rigorous 10 month applied leadership program. Pando holds a doctorate from Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ; a master's degree from Saint Peter's University in Jersey City, NJ; and bachelor's degree from Stockton University in Pomona, NJ.

"Reynolds was blessed to receive an array of well-qualified candidates interested in serving as the next president of the college. This made our job very difficult. We selected a person who we believe is extremely well-qualified," said Stephen E. Baril, chair of the Reynolds Community College local board. "She received outstanding reviews from faculty, staff, community leaders, and the College Board. We are delighted that Dr. Paula Pando has accepted our offer to be the next president of our college."

Pando will become the college's fourth president, succeeding Gary Rhodes, who will retire on Sept. 1 after serving in that role for 16 years.

Reynolds serves more than 16,000 students annually in its three campuses in Henrico, Goochland and Richmond.

TCC receives support for nursing scholarships

WAKULLA NEWS/TALLAHASSEE REPORTS

Nursing students at Tallahassee Community College will now have access to additional scholarship opportunities, thanks to a gift from Capital Regional Medical Center.

Alan Keese, CRMC's chief executive officer, presented the gift valued at \$82,000 at the May 21 meeting of the TCC District Board of Trustees. The new gift follows on the heels of a \$32,000 gift in February 2017 that originally established the Capital Regional Medical Center Nursing Scholarships, so the total value of the gift is now \$114,000.

The scholarships provide support for students seeking their Associate Degree in Nursing at TCC and engage them to work at CRMC once they graduate and become registered nurses. Five TCC students are already receiving these scholarships. The new gift will support at least 10 additional full-tuition scholarships.

The purpose of the scholarships is to create a pipeline of highly skilled, TCC-trained nurses to staff the Tallahassee hospital and hopefully go on to have long, successful careers there.

"There is a nursing shortage," said Keese. "One of the things we've found is that it helps to hire nurses from the local area—like many of the nurses who graduate from TCC—because they tend to stay longer."

Keese was joined at the presentation by Chris Karpinski, chair of the CRMC Board of Trustees. Brad Coburn, vice president of human resources, Ann Smith, chief nursing officer, and Lori Sumner, associate chief nursing officer, also attended.

For information, contact Heather Mitchell at mitchelh@tcc.fl.edu or (850) 201-6067.

TCC receives additional money for Capital Regional Medical Center scholarship

WTXL

Thanks to Capital Regional Medical Center, nursing students at Tallahassee Community College will now have access to additional scholarship opportunities.

The scholarships provide financial support by paying for lab fees, books and other expenses for students at TCC pursuing nursing degrees.

Students say it is a huge relief and allows them to focus on their studies without worrying about costs.

"I haven't been needing to work. I've been able to focus on my studies and I have the opportunity to work here," said Taylor Codrick, Capital Regional Scholarship Recipient.

"We've done clinicals here. It's been a great experience everybody here is really helpful and ready to teach and help us learn," said Reagan Dunn, Capital Regional Scholarship Recipient.

Capital Regional added 82,000 dollars to its scholarships and can now give out 10 additional scholarships.

"We decided to increase the scholarship this year based on the success of the past recipients and they're desire to say in Tallahassee and the benefit it provided them to continue their education," said Alan Keese, CEO of Capital Regional Medical Center.

Capital Regional Medical Center also offers scholarship recipients chances to work there and become registered nurses.

TCC offers cyber-security program to help keep kids safe

WTXL

A recent study ranks several Florida locations as one of the top risk areas in the country for cyber-security threats.

The study was done by Coronet, a cybersecurity firm.

It ranked Tampa-St. Petersburg as the 10th most vulnerable metro, Orlando-Daytona Beach as the ninth, West Palm Beach-Fort Pierce eighth and Jacksonville seventh.

Tallahassee was not on the list, but Tallahassee Community College is taking action to make sure kids know how to be safe on the internet.

They are currently enrolling students in their cyber-security summer program.

"Everything that we have going on in the world is basically technology based and everything is going over networks and the internet and right now," said Jessica Griffin, who is the TCC program coordinator of workforce development. "When it comes to youth, they're doing everything from social media to emails its very important for our youth to start early to know what their doing can actually impact them."

The program will hold a camp June 25th to the 29th in Leon County, and they are holding another in Wakulla County July 11th through the 16th.

Orthotics fabricator Damon Victor plans to go global with vocational training

ERIN HOOVER

850 BUSINESS MAGAZINE

Damon Victor runs Victor Technologies, a lab in Tallahassee that custom-builds orthotics in collaboration with local practitioners. In March of 2014, he was days away from getting on a plane for Crimea to help an orphanage open a prosthetics laboratory.

Then Russian troops invaded the country, and Victor and the other volunteers working for Med Assist USA Foundation for Children had to pivot to working in a safer area of the world. “(Med Assist) was working in Crimea for over a decade, but the invasion thwarted our chance to make a prosthetic laboratory there,” Victor said.

Months later he traveled to Costa Rica, where, with the help of a Rotary Global Grant, he helped distribute “Matrix system” wheelchairs with custom-molded seats for children.

“The children who (use these) can’t use regular wheelchairs. It’s a life-changer for these families, for their children to have mobility,” Victor said. He has returned to the country on successive trips, sometimes joined by his wife, Rory Krivit.

On a 2015 trip to Ecuador, Victor met a migrant farm worker in the Andes mountains who needed help. “She worked the fields carrying her 16-year-old grandson who had some degree of mental disability and orthotic conditions. Her greatest fear was what would happen to him when she passed away.”

By the time Victor departed, the boy had been fitted with special shoes and orthotics.

As a teenager, Victor was approached by the U.S. Navy to work as an engineer. But at age 18, he met a group of wounded veterans at a party who encouraged him to use his interest in technology to help others.

He learned to fabricate prosthetics and orthotics from a master technician working in Havana. Twelve years ago, he started a shop of his own, Victor Technologies, and has a small, local client list.

“Here in America, for the most part if a child needs a leg brace or a prosthetic, he or she can get it. That’s why I focus my charitable work internationally,” he said.

Over the past five years, Victor has taken five trips abroad to volunteer his expertise in orthotics and prosthetics. Because of Med Assist’s focus, he often works with orphans. “If we can construct a brace that can correct club foot or feet, by the time a child is 5 or 6 years old, he’s running around, and he has a better chance of being adopted.”

“Damon is one of those rare individuals who gets to turn his vocation and his passion into something that makes an impact,” said Alan Hanstein, board member of Challenger Learning Center and of Making Awesome, Tallahassee’s Maker Space. “He has been able to embrace technology — including virtual reality and 3D modeling and printing — to expand that impact to both lower cost and speed delivery to those who need it the most.”

On Victor’s most recent trip, in April 2017, to Lviv Regional Children’s Hospital in Ukraine, he took children’s measurements, designed prostheses upon his return to Tallahassee, and digitally sent the files back to Lviv to be 3D printed by a technician.

Orthotics printed using 3D technology are less durable than traditional devices, but they are also less expensive: a big benefit for a pediatric population that grows out of them quickly.

“The health system (in Ukraine) is trying to catch up to the rest of the world — it’s like how for communications in some countries, they bypassed landlines and set up cell phone networks. (With this technology) it can be easier to make a prosthesis in places where it’s tough to do a traditional fabrication,” Victor said.

For the trip to Ukraine, Victor and three volunteer surgeons traveled with Med Assist and Rotary International. “Damon accompanied us, desiring to make contact with the Rotary Club in Lviv and to share (information about the) manufacture of prosthetics for kids missing limbs,” said Dr. Charles Moore, a retired plastic and reconstructive surgeon. “He was a hit, given his energy and intelligence.”

Orthotics fabricator Damon Victor plans to go global with vocational training...

continued

"Interestingly, the 3D specialist I met was using his printers to make tank parts. After our conversation, he was moved to use his machines in a more humanitarian way," Victor said.

Victor's trip to Ukraine has caused him to shift his focus. "(Helping people) isn't about a room full of machines. It's about the people. At every country I've been to, they're hungry for training.

"I want to use the power of Rotary to apply for grants and vocational training trips to the United States for Ukrainians, Ecuadorians and Costa Ricans. Once they get the proper training, they'll be better equipped to start labs of their own," he said.

In April, Victor began working out of a lab at Tallahassee Community College's Center for Innovation, space that helps him continue his research on 3-D printing, prosthetics and orthotics. He hopes to work with students on these projects and on experimental devices and equipment for people with disabilities.

Joyce Dove, the founder of Med Assist, praised Victor's creativity and work ethic. "We met with someone working on prosthetics in Pensacola who mentioned a helicopter company making parts using 3D technology. Damon was absolutely fine with giving them a call and asking how they do things. He is constantly inquisitive. He gathers information very efficiently and contributes to getting things done at the very best level."

Children worldwide have a capable champion in Damon Victor — and he wants to be able to help more of them.

"Dealing with international bureaucracies and writing grants has taught me a lot about patience," Victor said. "I have been volunteering for five years now. I dreamed about doing stuff like this. I would see pictures in trade magazines and I thought, that's what I want to do with my vocation."

Opa-locka officers pitch in to help homeless family

FRANKLIN WHITE
WSVN

A homeless family of six living out of their car has been given a new chance at life with a temporary home.

The Opa-locka Police Department pitched in along with members of the community to help provide the family with a new home.

"I'm very thankful; I feel very blessed," said Anieshea Dansby.

It all began when two Opa-locka officers spotted the family sleeping in a crammed, messy car.

"Mom sitting in the back on the driver side with an 8-year-old baby on her hand, and the other one right close to her," said Opa-locka Officer Ruber Burero. "I asked her, 'Are you homeless?' and tears started coming out."

The officers sympathized with the family.

"I instantly put myself in their shoes. That could've been me sleeping in the car," said Officer Jamesha McKinney.

The family recently moved to South Florida from Philadelphia and fell on hard times.

The generous surprises did not stop at the new home.

A Chrysler 200 was gifted to the family after concerns about the safety with their old vehicle.

"Our tire was going bad, and our A/C compressor had went out, so I bypassed it and was running straight off the engine block," said the father, Dwayne Eason.

The family can stay rent free at their new home until July 1.

Thanks to the community, over \$14,000 has been raised through a GoFundMe page to help cover their expenses.

(NOTE: McKinney is an alumna of the Florida Public Safety Institute.)

Entrepreneurial bootcamp at Wakulla Center

WAKULLA NEWS

Tallahassee Community College's entrepreneurial initiative, TCC Spark!, will offer a hands-on, day-long Entrepreneurial Boot Camp at the TCC Wakulla Center Tuesday, June 26, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The camp costs \$25 to attend. Participants should bring a brown-bag lunch. Registration is open at <https://wakullaebotcamp.eventbrite.com>.

This will be the first offering of its kind at the Wakulla Center. Interested individuals may contact the center at (850) 558-3525 or WakullaCenter@tcc.fl.edu for further details.

TCC staff receive excellence awards

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Three Tallahassee Community College staff members were honored by the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development with Excellence Awards at its annual conference on May 27 in Austin, Texas. The honorees were Frank Brown, professor of chemistry, Rob Chaney, athletic director, and Andrea Oliver, associate professor of history.

TCC hosts forensics benefit event

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The Tallahassee Community College forensics team will present a performance showcase as a capstone to its highly successful 2017-18 competitive season. The nationally recognized team will present a variety of selections and speeches ranging from informative, persuasive and after-dinner speaking to oral interpretation of poetry, prose and drama.

The showcase is Tuesday, June 19, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Turner Auditorium in TCC's Fine and Performing Arts Center.

Proceeds from the showcase benefit the Shira Brownstein Memorial Scholarship Fund, established in memory of a team member who died in 2011 at the age of 21. Brownstein, who was an alumna of Chiles High School and Leon County Schools Adult and Community Education, was also active in Theatre TCC.

A \$10 donation is suggested and the public are invited to attend.

For information, call (850) 201-8037 or email schultzj@tcc.fl.edu.

TCC proposes changes in student fees

TALLAHASSEE REPORTS

The administration of Tallahassee Community College will propose changes to student fees for the 2018-19 academic year. The changes will be submitted to the TCC District Board of Trustees for a vote on Monday, June 18, at 2:30 p.m. in the Hinson Administration Building on TCC's main campus.

Annually, the College reviews all fees and their impact on students. The College is proposing to adjust the fees to more accurately reflect the current costs, to include fee reductions, limited increases and new fees for the 2018-19 academic year. Such student fees cover specific expenses, such as the cost for laboratory materials, supplies, use of special training equipment, registration for industry certification exams and similar items.

For information, contact Calandra Stringer, associate vice president for academic affairs, at STRINGEC@tcc.fl.edu or (850) 201-6036.

TCC: 49 student-athletes earn spring honors

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

During the recently completed spring semester, 49 of Tallahassee Community College's student-athletes earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Among the 49 student-athletes earning at least a 3.0 GPA, nine posted a 4.0 GPA and were named to the President's List.

Seventeen student-athletes posted a GPA between 3.50 and 3.99, and 14 were named to the Dean's List. Three others earned Merit Recognition for their success in developmental courses.

Women's cross country claimed team-high honors with a 3.15 GPA followed by men's basketball (3.01).

The following student-athletes were named to the President's List (4.0 GPA): Lily Adams, softball; Brandie Callaway, softball; Bamba Jaye, men's basketball; Jake Kinney, baseball; Aliyah Lawson, women's basketball; Samantha Malik, softball; Justin Sorokowski, baseball; Hanna Stapleton, softball; Cole Vann, baseball.

The following student-athletes were named to the Dean's List (3.5-3.99 GPA): Kyle Benson, baseball; Rawlins Cleveland, baseball; Louis Cordero, men's cross country; Christian Dearman, baseball; Callen Delucas, softball; Corey Douglas, men's basketball; Dorcas Jepleting, half marathon; Savana Osterbye, women's cross country; Callie Paine, softball; Trey Polewski, baseball; Ismay Poot, softball; Tucker Rayburn, baseball; Brandon Reitz, baseball; Javien Williams, men's basketball.

The following student-athletes were named to the Honor's List (3.0-3.49 GPA): Chris Agbo, men's basketball; Luke Ard, baseball; Collier Baggett, baseball; Nakiah Black, women's basketball; Lynnsey Cranmer, women's basketball; Onyx Freeman-Henderson, women's basketball; Tyler Lehrmann, baseball; Keith Lyle, baseball; Sidney Mathis, softball; Jamyra McChristine, women's basketball; Mason Miller, baseball; Alex Mills, baseball; Gatlin Nennstiel, men's cross country; Travis Parks, men's cross country; Juliunn Redmond, women's basketball; Billy Schopp, baseball; Alex Stobert, baseball; Chris Swiney, men's basketball; Jaycee Thomas, softball; Rachel Williams, women's cross country; Jacob Winston, men's basketball.

The following student-athletes received Merit Recognition (students who are fulfilling developmental course requirements and complete a minimum of six hours with a 3.0-3.99 GPA): Mari Hill, women's basketball; Taylor Lomack, baseball; Monica Marquez, softball; Benly Olizia, men's basketball.



You may be eligible for a \$1,000 Gadsden Learn Scholarship at Tallahassee Community College

The Gadsden Learn Scholarship is awarded exclusively to Gadsden residents who are current high school seniors graduating from a Gadsden County public or private high school or who are home schooled. The scholarship is a one-time award for tuition assistance for up to \$1,000 per student provided by the TCC Foundation.

Apply for the Gadsden Learn Scholarship today at www.tcc.fl.edu/scholarships



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