MICHAEL SITTIG HAS LED FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES FOR 20 YEARS
BY BRENDA S. GRINDSTAFF

As executive director of the Florida League of Cities, Michael Sittig makes an impact not only on Tallahassee, but also on the more than 400 municipalities throughout Florida that his organization represents. He directs the League’s programs, services and legislative affairs from its headquarters in the Citizen Center on Kleman Plaza in downtown Tallahassee. Spearheading the planning and construction of the six-story building, dedicated in 1998, is one of Sittig’s many challenging accomplishments and one that helped shaped Tallahassee’s current cityscape.

Sittig was born in Italy, where his father, Ray, was stationed during the Korean War. The family moved to Jacksonville in 1959. When Ray Sittig, who himself worked at The League for more than 35 years, was tasked with moving the organization to Tallahassee in 1971, the family followed. Fresh out of high school, the younger Sittig became a League employee that year. He has served in nearly every position at the 94-year-old association, from janitor and errand boy, to the top executive post he has held since 1995. While working full-time, he also attended classes at Tallahassee Community College from 1972 to 1976.

“My dad wasn’t going to deprive me of the right of paying for my own education,” said Sittig. “TCC came along at the right time in my life when I wanted to go to school. It was within driving distance, affordable and I could go at night.”

Sittig credits TCC for helping him develop skills that remain critical to his success. Most specifically, he remembers Dr. Judy Jolly, who taught speech and journalism. “She influenced me and taught me the subject matter for my career,” he said.

He covered his first legislative issue at the Capitol as a reporter for the TCC campus newspaper, The Talon. “It was lowering the drinking age to 18 and all of my buddies were interested in it,” he said. It passed.

Sittig continued his education at Florida State University, studying government and business. He has the distinction of being awarded his Associate in Arts from TCC and his Bachelor of Science from FSU on the same day: December 15, 1978. Sittig’s five siblings also received degrees from TCC.

“I’m proud to have gone to a school that has maintained its great reputation all of these years and contributed so much,” said Sittig.