

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



March 7, 2015- April 16, 2015

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- Tallahassee Democrat 4-6,
10, 12, 14, 16-18, 20-23, 28-29, 32-34, 37-40
- Urban Pulse Tallahassee 7
- WCTV 8, 14
- The Huffington Post 9
- WTXL 11, 17
- U.S. News and World Report. 13
- Saint Leo University Adult Learners Blog . . 15
- Havana Herald 19, 25-26, 31, 36
- Gadsden County Times 19, 24
- Wakulla News 27, 30
- AZCentral.com 35
- Leon/Lincoln/Chiles High Newsletters . . . 41

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Electronic Media

- March 7 - WCTV - Formerly homeless youth attending TCC through Youth Services
- March 12 - WTXL - Eddie Barnes selected to FCSAA Hall of Fame
- March 17 - WCTV - Foster Youth Collegiate Experience visits TCC campus
- March 18 - WTXL - TCC named in the Top Ten Community Colleges nationwide
- March 18 - WUFT - TCC hosts annual "King of the Hill" state representatives' softball game
- March 24 - WCTV - Former TCC student moves forward with plan to sue the College
- March 25 - WCTV - TCC celebrates Women's History Month
- March 26 - WCTV - FPSI hosting ninth annual Women's History Breakfast
- March 30 - WTXL - TCC alum, Saint Leo student's service dog needs funds for surgery
- March 30 - WTXL - TCC hoping to bring 1,000 manufacturing jobs to students by 4/1/16
- April 5 - WFOX - TCC student killed in auto accident following Easter Break in Jacksonville
- April 13 - WTXL - Part-time job fair to be held at TCC April 15

Heather Mitchell helps nonprofits flourish

MARINA BROWN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Proving that you don't have to "go away" to achieve success, Heather Mitchell's dynamic career has, for the most part, kept her in the very heart of Tallahassee since her graduation from Florida State University with areas of interest in political science, history, and governmental affairs.

Mitchell began her career in nonprofits with a nearly 10 year stint with the state-wide Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, first as membership and Events Coordinator, and later as its Executive Director.

When Mitchell's husband's work took the family to Vero Beach for several years, she immediately found a fit as Executive Director of the Education Foundation of Indian County, another nonprofit that discovered that Mitchell's skills were exactly what that smaller locale needed.

When the family returned to the capital, Mitchell's now polished organizational and fundraising abilities were joined with a hallmark of Tallahassee, the now venerable Tallahassee Ballet. Serving as their Executive Director, Mitchell oversaw changes and growth and the financial continuation of an artistic tradition.

Others noticed her exceptional and dynamic skill set as well. Mitchell was hired by the United Way of the Big Bend as Vice President of Resource Development and later advanced to the first woman and youngest Executive Director and CEO of the organization. During her tenure there, Mitchell oversaw a \$3 million grant to fund quality after-school programs at Title I schools and advanced programs to aid the homeless in the community, "completely shifting the focus to address root-cause issues of education, income, health and basic needs."

Today, Heather Mitchell has decided to shift again. Last month she became the President of Tallahassee Community College Foundation, where her job will be to garner support and funding for a variety of scholarship and expansion plans for the College.

Mitchell, who has been married for 20 years, with an 11-year-old and 16-year-old still at home says, "I love where I live and all of the opportunities I've been given here." Would she ever consider politics or elected office given her educational background? "That was the initial plan," she laughs. "But as a citizen, I think I'm really in the best place now to help."

Kimberly Dixon mixes art and business

MARINA BROWN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

It may seem that Kimberly Dixon, currently Vice President for AMB Investment Advisors, was always at the right place at the right time in both career and private life. Her belief that for opportunity to strike you have to “be prepared” is what she credits for her successes. Most astonishing is the way in which Dixon has managed to combine two disparate passions — business and art.

Following middle and high school in Tallahassee, Dixon set off for Mercer College, a liberal arts school, where an art history course captured her imagination. An even greater awakening came when she accompanied her parents, both with IBM, to their post in Vietnam. She fell in love with the country and its art. But she notes that she is also an analytical thinker, and business too was fascinating.

With Dixon’s canny blend of timing and preparation, she began her formal career with the United States Foreign Commercial Service as Director of Trade Promotion in Hanoi, Vietnam where she stayed for the next three years. During that time she studied Vietnamese art and ultimately opened a gallery there. But when her next posting was to have been Warsaw, Dixon decided to return to the states and expand her opportunities into the private sector. She was hired by the international firm of Loral Space and Communications as Manager of Global Marketing and Business Development of Loral Skynet. Again she said she was excited to learn new skills and have the opportunity to travel across the globe.

Yet, a few years later, based in New York City, Dixon was present for the life changing atmosphere following 9/11. “I think I simply needed a reset,” she says. She ultimately quit a job that others would have sinned for, and returned to her first love — art. Dixon decided to pursue graduate studies at Georgia State. And again, her timing was right. She met her future husband, a banker, there.

Now, mother of two young children, Dixon is firmly settled in Tallahassee and continues her love of adding new skills to a whirl-wind life. She is a General Securities Representative and Investment Advisor, and on her way to her CFP. Dixon holds insurance licenses for annuities, disability and long-term care. **She is the immediate Past Chair of the Economic Club of Florida, the Past President of the Tallahassee Regional Estate Planning Council, on the Board of the Tallahassee Community College Foundation and The Tallahassee Symphony.** Dixon continues her love of Vietnamese art, and is a noted authority on the valuation of contemporary Asian pieces.

TCC celebrates Women's History Month

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College will recognize 10 women from the community, and five of the College's outstanding students during its Women's History Month celebration on March 25.

The event will begin at noon in room 105 of TCC's Workforce Development building.

Leon County Commissioner Kristin Dozier will be the guest speaker for the event, which is free and open to the public. This year's National Women's History Month theme is "Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives."

TCC's 2015 Women's History Month community honorees are: Terrie Ard, Meg Baldwin, Yolanda K.H. Bogan, Melba Jacobs, Patricia Plummer, Pamela Ridley, Lesley Sacher, Sara Saxner, Sarah Sturges and Rhonda Work.

TCC students being honored during Women's History Month are: Tamara Jeffers, Carina Krehl, Sonya Livingston Smith, Jasmine Minor and LaTonya Spencer.

For information, contact Jarrett Phipps at phippsj@tcc.fl.edu or Melissa Scalzi at scalzim@tcc.fl.edu.

Navy vet credits service dog with saving his life, now needs help saving hers

URBAN PULSE TALLAHASSEE

Post-traumatic stress disorder is on the rise for thousands of our military veterans. Hospitals, colleges and other organizations do their best to help these men and women, but about one in three sufferers of PTSD will continue to have some symptoms throughout their lives. However, there is one breed of caregivers who provide companionship and support for those afflicted with this life-changing illness. Meet TCC honors alum and Navy veteran Bryan Wimberly and his service dog, Bella.

Wimberly served in the military for more than 20 years. After returning from Iraq in 2007, he was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and dissociative fugue with amnesia.

"Combat is hell," said Wimberly. "When you're living in an environment where you're constantly, every second of your day, knowing that it could be your last, it really puts a lot of stress on your mind."

For Wimberly, the stress began to manifest into anger, confusion and memory loss. He once woke up in his car in Georgia and had no recollection of ever driving there.

"It's scary," he said. "Sometimes my mind just shuts off and I have no control."

The stress continued to affect Wimberly's personal and academic life as a student at Tallahassee Community College. Through the assistance of a TCC adviser, he sought help for his PTSD. This led him to a young golden retriever named Bella. She was donated in 2012 with the sole purpose of becoming a service dog for a veteran in need. Instantly, Bryan knew Bella was special in many ways.

"Most service animals serve one person and they're trained for a number of tasks. They're not trained to be affiliative or empathetic," said Stephanie Perkins, Tallahassee Memorial Hospital Animal Therapy Program Manager. "Bella is special in that she has those traits too; she helps Bryan reach out to other people so that he can get outside of himself and create friendships and companionship with other people."

"I could be in the classroom," Wimberly said, "and just the fact of her laying there in the classroom with us here on school campus for a test, people were at ease."

In addition to her work in TMH's Animal Therapy Program, Bella also spends time in TCC's Disability Support Services and has worked with Big Bend Homeless Coalition. "Not only has she touched me, she's touched hundreds of people's lives," said Wimberly.

Wimberly credits many people, including his advisers and professors at TCC, for providing the environment in which he was able to graduate with honors from the College. But he credits Bella for getting him through each day, matching him step for step.

Now Wimberly is working on his psychology degree at St. Leo University on TCC's campus. He plans to get his master's degree and become a licensed case worker for homeless veterans. While his future is looking bright, he currently faces a large obstacle on his journey. Bella has torn both ACL's in her rear legs and will require major surgery.

"Bella has pulled me from the darkest, darkest corners of PTSD," said Wimberly. "I've got to help Bella get that surgery so she can feel better. I owe that to her."

(Note: A later version of this story also appeared in the Tallahassee Democrat on March 23, 2015.)

TCC's Eddie Barnes joins the FCSAA Men's Basketball Hall of Fame

WCTV

Tallahassee Community College's Eddie Barnes is the newest member of the Florida College System Activities Association's (FCSAA) Men's Basketball Hall of Fame.

Barnes, along with current Broward College head coach Bob Starkman, comprised the Hall of Fame's Class of 2015. Both gentlemen were inducted into the Hall of Fame on Friday evening as part of the FCSAA Men's Basketball Tournament in Ocala, Fla.

Barnes recently wrapped up his 14th and final season as the head men's basketball coach of the Tallahassee Eagles and 24th overall as an NJCAA head coach – he coached at Wallace Community College-Dothan (Ala.) from 1991-2001.

At Tallahassee, Barnes put together a 274-144 record, which includes a trip to the NJCAA Championship Game in 2006.

Under the direction of Barnes, the Eagles were Panhandle Conference Champions in 2006 and advanced to the postseason five times. His teams won NJCAA Region 8/FCSAA State Championships in 2006 and again in 2011.

He posted a 12-6 postseason record throughout his career with the Eagles.

For Barnes, it is not only his success on the court but his student-athletes' accomplishments off it that he feels is what made him a successful coach.

"You have got to have good players; good players make you a better coach and hopefully you can make those players a little bit better", Barnes says, "and they can become a better person and be self-sufficient in life and be successful. Because of that, you put yourself in positions where you have opportunities such as this."

For his success, Barnes won Coach of the Year for NJCAA Region 8/FCSAA in each of the Eagles' state championship seasons (2006, 2011).

The success of the 2005-06 season also earned Barnes national honors by being named the National Association of Basketball Coaches Junior College Coach of the Year.

However, of all the achievements Barnes has enjoyed over his career, the Hall of Fame nod ranks near the top.

Barnes says, "I'm humbled by it and I certainly worked really hard to make everybody feel comfortable around me and worked hard at being successful on and off the court. I am very honored that my peers elected me into the Hall of Fame."

Throughout his career, Barnes has felt fortunate to have had an opportunity to coach players who have gone on to continue their careers past TCC and, at the same time, made him a better coach.

"I think it's the byproduct of what we do, and I certainly have been very fortunate to have coached a lot of really good young men, student-athletes who have turned into really good players," says Barnes.

Among those players are six All-FCSAA honorees – Marcus Johnson ('02), Steve Cherry ('04), Abdullahi Kuso ('06), Dustin Scott ('07), Bernard James ('10), and Marvell Waithe ('10). James is currently in his third NBA season as a member of the Dallas Mavericks.

Barnes is Tallahassee Community College's fourth member of the FCSAA Men's Basketball Hall of Fame, joining former head coach Mike Gillespie and former players Jason Cipolla and Kerry Thompson.

The top 10 community colleges in America

HUFFINGTON POST

A college education is increasingly important in order to get and keep a job in the current information-oriented world. However, even as it becomes more and more of a necessity, college costs are rising, making it luxury-priced. Many people turn to community college in their local areas in order to get a higher education at a much more affordable price, either going into a career that requires a two-year associate's degree or transferring to a four-year institution to further their aims. SmartAsset has looked at close to seven hundred public community colleges across the country in order to find the best of the best.

To determine the best we wanted to figure out which colleges offered a low cost education, good return on investment and high success rate. To measure the cost of education we looked at in state tuition for one academic year. To measure return on investment we looked at the ratio of starting salary for graduates to the cost of the education. To measure success rate we looked at the percentage of students who enroll at the community college, graduate and then go on to transfer to a four-year institution. Using these three factors, we ranked the community colleges by how many standard deviations they outperformed the mean in each category. It gave us a list of the top ten community colleges in the country.

Coastline Community College, Fountain Valley, California

Coastline Community College has twenty-one academic departments largely in educational and medical support fields. Coastline graduates make one and three-quarters times their total education costs their first year working after graduating, and in-state students pay \$2,200 less a year than the national average to go to school, making it both the least-expensive school for local students and the top-performing community college on our list.

Northern Oklahoma College, Tonkawa, Oklahoma

Northern Oklahoma graduates have an even better rate of starting earnings to college costs than Coastline graduates do, at 187 percent. This school, which is between Wichita and Oklahoma City, also has about a ten percent greater graduation and transfer rate than the national average.

Cochise College, Douglas, Arizona

In-state students at Cochise College pay only \$1,680 per academic year, and once graduated, they make 63.5 percent more than their college costs in a year's salary.

Moorpark College, Moorpark, California

Moorpark is one of the less expensive schools for in-state students, at \$1,338 a year, and graduates make 41.3 percent more than their college costs on average in their first year on the job.

Rendlake College, Ina, Illinois

The southern Illinois community college of Rendlake has a 66.8 percent graduation and transfer rate, nearly twice the national average. Graduates also make 33.4 percent higher than their college costs as an average starting salary.

North Central Missouri College, Trenton, Missouri

North Central Missouri College charges about \$700 less per year than the national average for a local student with a tuition of \$2,712. Graduates make up their college costs plus 45 percent in their first year out of school.

Meridian Community College, Meridian, Mississippi

Not only does Meridian have a 61.7 percent graduation and transfer rate, it also costs more than \$1,000 less a year than average for in-state students.

Tallahassee Community College, Tallahassee, Florida

Students at this community college in Florida's capital make 22.8 percent more than their overall college costs their first year out of school. Plus, 54 percent of them (about 16 percent greater than the national average) graduate and transfer to a 4-year school.

Fort Scott Community College, Fort Scott, Kansas

Fort Scott Community College has a greater than 60 percent graduation and transfer rate, as well as in-state tuition that's about \$900 less than the national year average.

Pratt Community College, Pratt, Kansas

Rounding out the list is Pratt Community College, whose graduates make 22.8 percent more than their college expenses as a starting salary, and which has a 54 percent graduation and transfer rate.

Dr. Anika Fields connects with young people

MARINA BROWN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Accomplished women are also multifaceted women. Here are a few facts about Dr. Anika Fields, who currently is the Coordinator of Mental Health Services at Tallahassee Community College.

She is the former Director of the University Counseling Center at Florida State University. She is the Coordinator of Mental Health Services at TCC. She holds a Diplomat status from the American Academy of Pain Management. She is the President of the Association of Black Psychologists in North Florida; the Vice Chair of the International Association of Counseling Services; and the accreditation site visitor for the IACS and the American Psychological Association. Fields also is a much-in-demand public speaker on issues of mental health.

But she also is an avid gardener. She runs and lifts weights. And Fields admits with a laugh that she loves to read romance novels. "I'm not ashamed — it's good for de-stressing!"

Anika Fields has worked in the field of psychology for the last 30 years, much of it spent teaching graduate students in psychology and providing clinical counseling to students. "I love young people and students. I understand the pressures during that period of their lives."

Yet an area that touches her in a special way, she says, is her work with the Special Olympics. "As an undergraduate, I worked at a residential facility for children with intellectual disabilities. I loved it, taking a Greyhound bus at dawn, and one after dark just to work there. While there, I became a special mentor to an 8 year-old girl ... who made an impact on me that continues to this day."

For the last 25 years she has been involved with the Special Olympics and is Athlete Leadership Programs Coordinator for the Tallahassee area, as well as a coach for flag football, power-lifting, and track and field.

Still, Fields finds time for additional service to the community: The Board of the Tallahassee Urban League; her church's media ministry; and the Community Investment Committee of the United Way of the Big Bend.

Anika Fields' service hasn't gone unrecognized in Tallahassee. She is the recipient of the Community Service Award from FSU; the Servant Heart Award from Florida A&M University; the Inspirational Coach Gold Medal; the Bill Crutchfield Award and the Terry Massa Volunteer of the year Award from the Special Olympics Florida.

And when she can, Fields will sit down with a good romance...before tackling her next volunteer project.

Tallahassee Community College instructor at the center of lawsuit

PAULO SALAZAR

WTXL

A Tallahassee Community College's oyster aquaculture instructor is at the center of a lawsuit filed last month.

Steve Cushman and his wife, Lesley Cushman, are being sued by former business partners over a buyout of a corporation set up to do business with TCC's beleaguered Wakulla Environmental Institute oyster aquaculture program.

According to Aletheia and Andre Lange, who filed suit in Leon County Circuit Court on Feb. 26, the Cushmans failed to pay a \$15,000 promissory note due on Dec. 31, 2014, for their interest in North Florida Marine Holdings LLC, a holding company for funding oyster-growing subsidiaries and distributing profits from oyster sales.

"We're filing this suit because the Cushmans bought out the company and never paid us according to the contract or made any attempt to arrange for delayed payment," said Aletheia Lange, former Chief Financial Officer of the five companies.

In a statement released from TCC Communications, "The college's attorney has reviewed the complaint and is responding to the allegations. They believe this lawsuit has no merit."

Laurye Messer balances teaching, service

MARINA BROWN

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Laurye Messer is among many of the 25 Women You Need to Know who seems to have found the resiliency to glide from one career into another with enthusiasm and grace.

Working her way through college as a bank teller, Messer graduated from Florida State University with a bachelor's degree in finance. She followed her husband to Germany during his Army stint and continued in banking while abroad. Finance continued to interest her when the family returned, and she expanded her career at Capital City Bank.

A happy interim as a full-time mother to her three children was one of Messer's most rewarding jobs, she says. But when her youngest child entered high school, Messer decided that she too would become a student.

"I was always fascinated by history," said Messer. "My grandparents experienced the Great Depression and I loved to sit beside them while they talked about things I had only read about in school." That fascination led Messer to enroll as a master's in education student with an emphasis on history.

Now a graduate, Messer says her appointment as adjunct professor of American History at Tallahassee Community College is a dream come true. "I try to make the historical movements and periods I teach exciting and real," she says. "The 20s are the most important decade in a person's life, I think. They set the tone for the rest of one's life. That's why I love teaching at this college level."

Still, there are other priorities, among them are service to her community. Messer has served as education chair for the Red Hills Horse Trials; president of the Cotillion Club; and been involved with Boys Town of North Florida; St. John's Church Outreach and Fundraising committees; TMH's Cancer Center's Healing Garden Fundraiser; on the Board of the American Cancer Society and its Relay for Life event.

Perhaps Messer's most visible community gift has been assisting in the establishment of the "A Full Summer" program. The project gathers volunteers to donate and assemble over 50,000 meals for young people in the Leon County School system who, during the summer months, might go without. "In the South, food is the way we show love, said Messer. "I believe we can do good and have fun too."

5 questions to ask about online community college courses

IAN QUILLEN

U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT

Students heading to community college to pursue an associate degree, professional certification or transfer to a four-year school, will probably find they can do a significant portion of their course work online. The vast majority of two-year schools offer at least some online learning options. And as far back as 2008, a third or more of community college students in states like Virginia and Washington took at least one online course during their studies, according to the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College.

But online learning at public two-year schools presents some unique challenges students may not expect. So before students choose a partial or fully online route for their community college experience, they might want to answer the following five questions about any potential program.

1. How often will online courses have me coming to campus? While this might seem counterintuitive, experts say what community colleges often advertise as online courses often still require semiregular trips to campus.

Some classes merely require face-to-face exams, which can sometimes be administered by test proctors closer to home. Others may use a hybrid model that blends elements of online learning with periodic face-to-face instruction or lab sessions. And even if all instruction is received online, academic support may not be.

"Not all community colleges have all support services available online for a learner," says Tom Erney, the dean of distance education at Columbus State Community College. "So the student wants to make sure that they fully understand what are those things that are available to them, or if are there times that they're going to have to come to campus."

2. How comfortable am I with the subject material? Research from the Community College Research Center has shown that, in general, online community college students may feel disconnected from their professor, and that academic performance averages lower online than in face-to-face community college classes.

That doesn't mean all professors struggle to support students in the online format. But students might want

to consider whether they have enough foundational knowledge of the subject to survive a course largely as a self-learner.

"It's worth it to sort of think through," says Shanna Smith Jaggars, assistant director at the research center, who especially warns against taking a more challenging class online because the face-to-face section is not offered until a later academic term.

3. Is there a well-run online learning center? Experts say most community colleges with robust online learning programs will have an office devoted solely to supporting online instruction.

The existence of this office suggests students will have access to online advising. And it also usually means faculty -- who are very often adjuncts with other jobs -- have qualified support staff helping to design engaging courses.

But not all online learning centers may be of comparable quality, says Marilyn Dickey, the director of the center for distance learning at Tallahassee Community College.

"I think we all realize how important it is, it's just that some schools are further ahead than others," she says

4. Are competency-based courses offered? Because community colleges are generally open enrollment institutions, academic abilities of students within a class can vary widely.

5. What is the typical class size? Since the majority of online community college courses are not competency-based, that leaves instructors with a classes of students whose instructional needs vary widely.

(Note: This article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

TCC named Top 10 community college in Huffington Post blog

ABBEY MAURER
WTXL

The Huffington Post has recognized Tallahassee Community College (TCC) for being ranked 8th in the country among community colleges by SmartAsset.com.

The investment website looked at the combined factors of cost of education, return on investment and student success rate.

According to the article, TCC had the fourth lowest in-state tuition cost and the fifth highest graduation and transfer rate among the top 10 schools.

The article discussing the website's analysis was featured in the Huffington Post's College blog on March 13th.

INIE selects Lowe-Minor as new director

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (BUSINESS BRIEFS)

The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence will welcome a new director next month.

Jessica Lowe-Minor, a 10-year veteran of the nonprofit sector, will lead the Tallahassee Community College-backed Institute beginning April 1.

"The Institute is tremendously excited to bring Jessica on board," said Kimberly Moore, TCC vice president for workforce development and INIE board member. "We are confident that the Institute will move to even greater heights under her stewardship."

Lowe-Minor also chairs the Tallahassee/Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls and has served on several other local boards and committees. She previously worked as Faith in Florida's Live Free campaign director, as well as the executive director of the League of Women Voters of Florida.

(Note: A later version of this story appeared in the Gadsden County Times on March 26, 2015.)

Tallahassee student veteran aided by faithful service dog

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY ADULT LEARNERS BLOG

Twenty-one year U.S. Navy veteran and Saint Leo University Tallahassee Education Center student Bryan Wimberly recently was featured in a story and video produced by Tallahassee Community College. Wimberly, a TCC alumni, is pursuing a psychology degree at Saint Leo, and plans to work with veterans with a specialty in veteran homelessness.

With a 4.0 GPA, Wimberly was selected as the student speaker for Saint Leo's Tallahassee commencement ceremony that will take place 7 p.m., Friday, May 22, in the Turner Auditorium, in TCC's Fine & Performing Arts Center.

Wimberly, is "an exceptional individual," said Saint Leo University Tallahassee Education Center Director Matthew Hollern. "He would do anything for anyone. He's tutored folks here, and his life story has motivated many students. I've seen him up, and I've seen him down. When faced with an obstacle or a setback, he always bounces back. Wimberly is someone who sets a positive pace in life as well as in the classroom. It is Wimberly's nature to pick himself up and others with him, Hollern said of Wimberly's dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), dissociative fugue with amnesia, and agoraphobia.

Hollern said, "We're going to hear great things about him" about Wimberly's bright future. He chose Saint Leo University's Tallahassee center because of the convenience, the smaller class sizes, and the great reputation for higher learning. He is in a VA Work Study program and works at Saint Leo, aiding veterans.

Here is his story along with that of Bella:

Post-traumatic stress disorder is on the rise for thousands of our military veterans. Hospitals, colleges, and other organizations do their best to help these men and women, but about 1 in 3 PTSD sufferers will continue to have some symptoms throughout their lives. However, there is one breed of caregivers who provide companionship and support for those afflicted with this life-changing illness. Meet Tallahassee Community College honors alumni and Navy veteran Bryan Wimberly and his service dog, Bella.

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For Wimberly, the stress began to manifest as dissociation, confusion, and memory loss. He once woke up in his car in Georgia and had no recollection of driving there.

"It's scary," he said. "Sometimes my mind just shuts off, and I have no control."

The stress continued to affect Wimberly's personal and academic life as a TCC student. Through the assistance of a TCC advisor, he sought help for his PTSD. This led him to a young golden retriever named Bella. She was donated in 2012 with the sole purpose of becoming a service dog for a veteran in need. Instantly, Wimberly knew Bella was special in many ways.

"Most service animals serve one person, and they're trained for a number of tasks. They're not trained to be affiliative or empathetic," said Stephanie Perkins, Tallahassee Memorial Hospital Animal Therapy Program manager. "Bella is special in that she has those traits too; she helps Bryan reach out to other people so that he can get outside of himself and create friendships and companionship with other people."

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"Bella has pulled me from the darkest, darkest corners of PTSD," Wimberly said. "I've got to help Bella get that surgery so she can feel better. I owe that to her."

TCC earns top rank, puts its students first

TAMARYN WATERS

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee Community College's ranking as a top school is likely the result of a 2012 strategic plan that put student needs first.

The community school was ranked eighth in a top 10 list of U.S. community colleges by SmartAsset.com, an investment website. The list was featured in a March 13 college blog in the Huffington Post. TCC was touted for having the fourth-lowest in-state tuition cost and the fifth-highest graduation and transfer rate among featured community colleges.

The strategic plan called for more attention keeping fees low and promoting student success. Officials said the plan has been a road map for improving the school's offerings and creating an opportunity to obtain an affordable education.

"Our strategic priorities focus on making a high-quality college education affordable and giving students the support they need to succeed," said TCC Provost Barbara Sloan. "This ranking confirms that we are on the right track."

According to TCC, SmartAsset.com used data from CollegeMeasures.com and CampusExplorer.com in their calculations. The website is well-regarded by the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and other news organizations.

Others on the list include Coastline Community College in Fountain Valley, California, Cochise College in Douglas, Arizona, and Meridian Community College in Meridian, Mississippi.

Al Moran, TCC's vice president of communications and marketing, said the school's plan supports a federal initiative to create more workforce resources and make education affordable.

"That's what we do and that's what community colleges are all about," said Moran. TCC plans to use the ranking as an instrument to draw support from alumni for a long-term initiative. "We open doors that are otherwise locked for people."

TCC students selected to 2015 All-Florida Academic Team

PAULO SALAZAR
WTXL

Two Tallahassee Community College students are selected to the 2015 All-Florida Academic Team.

Angela Cole, a strategic communications major from Tallahassee, and Sarah Allen, a nursing major also from Tallahassee, received the honors. Both students are members of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges.

The award is given for outstanding academic achievement and recognizes the students efforts in the classroom.

Each year two nominees are selected and their information is then sent to the Phi Theta Kappa national board for consideration.

TCC student Candace Tibbetts received the award last year.

Employers invited to TCC job fair

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College invites employers to participate in its Spring Part-Time Job Fair on Wednesday, April 15, from 9 a.m. to noon. The fair will be held on TCC's main campus in the Student Union Ballroom. More than 450 people attended the Part-Time Job Fair last spring.

Employers looking to fill part-time positions or internships should attend. Details and registration are available online at www.tccfuturelink.com/events or by calling 201-6172. Space is limited.

Syn-Tech Systems has global reach

TAMARYN WATERS
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Companies and government agencies interested in saving money on fuel know all about Syn-Tech Systems.

Yet most residents may be unaware that the engineering and manufacturing company formed in 1970 is an industry leader in fuel management and a defense engineering design and manufacturing firm.

Syn-Tech Systems is the second featured company in the new monthly "Made in Tally" campaign — created by the Economic Development Council of Tallahassee/Leon County and designed to highlight local companies selling products globally. Last month MCCL, the country's largest supplier of digital document management, was featured.

"These are companies that carry the Tallahassee brand around the globe," said EDC Chairman Jim Murdaugh, who is also president of Tallahassee Community College. "It's an exciting effort that the EDC is undergoing."

Leon County Commissioner Bill Proctor said, with the company located in southern Leon County off Adams Street, residents should be proud to know that "the tentacles of what we're doing here is reaching around the world."

Syn-Tech Systems produces the "Fuel Master" and has more than 5,000 clients across the nation and globe, ranging from private-sector companies like Kansas City Power and Light and Boeing and government clients such as the city of Tallahassee, Leon County and Leon County Sheriff's Office.

It also builds another product that interacts with a car's computer system in order to track everything from how fast a car drives, a braking event, remaining oil levels, mileage and miles per gallon.

Syn-Tech Systems CEO Doug Dunlap said the "Made in Tally" campaign highlights his family business, which has 181 employees, in a positive way by focusing on local businesses.

"We can help facilitate helping businesses grow and helping them become good employers and tax payers and that helps the tax base," Dunlap said. "I think that is an important function."

Dunlap, a Florida State University graduate, said he's also committed to maintaining and attracting talent to Tallahassee. He added the company's average salary, \$67,000 per year, is more than twice the average salary in Leon County.

TCC great bang for the buck, national paper says

KENDRICK BROWN
GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

Tallahassee Community College was recently ranked the eighth-best community college in the country by an investment website, earning its position for a combination of reasons that include cost of education, return on investment and student success rate.

The data says TCC graduates on average earn wages that surpass their school fees by 22.8 percent in their first year out of school, and that 54 percent of them eventually transfer to four-year colleges.

TCC currently operates an outlet in Quincy and plans to build a satellite facility in the city where Gadsden County residents can study trade skills such as HVAC. That facility was initially supposed to be built by October, but that timeline will not be met according to Roger Milton, manager of the TCC Quincy House. He said there have been construction delays.

TCC named a Top 10 Community College by Huffington Post

HAVANA HERALD (SCHOOL NEWS)

Tallahassee Community College received accolades in the Huffington Post for excellence among community colleges.

SmartAsset.com, an investment website, ranked TCC No. 8 in the country for the combined factors of cost of education, return on investment and student success rate. The article discussing the website's analysis was featured in the Huffington Post's College blog March 13, 2015.

"It is a great honor for TCC to be recognized among the top echelon of community colleges in the country," said TCC President Jim Murdaugh.

Among the top 10 schools, TCC had the fourth-lowest in-state tuition cost and the fifth-highest graduation and transfer rate.

"[TCC students] make 22.8 percent more than their overall college costs their first year out of school," the Huffington Post blog entry noted. "Plus, 54 percent of them (about 16 percent greater than the national average) graduate and transfer to a 4-year school."

SmartAsset.com used data from CollegeMeasures.com and CampusExplorer.com in their calculations. The website is well-regarded by the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and other respected news organizations.

"Catch Me If You Can" worth catching

NEIL COKER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A preview of TheatreTCC's musical "Catch Me If You Can" on Wednesday recalled fond memories of the 2002 film and the true story from which both originated.

The cat-and-mouse crime drama is a sympathetic glimpse into the chameleon-like con-man Frank Abignale, Jr., who at 16 found himself alone after leaving a broken home in the 1960s. He would go on to cash millions in self-made checks while outrageously impersonating a teacher, pilot, doctor and lawyer.

He would have gotten away with it all were it not for FBI agent Carl Hanratty, whose tenacious pursuit helped lead to his capture. At the time of his arrest, Abignale had become one of the most prolific check frauds of all time — and he wasn't yet 21.

Here Abignale is played by second-year student Malcolm Flavell. As his voice can be likened to Aaron Tveit, who played the part on Broadway, it's easy to see how he got the role. His middle range impressed me more than his higher registers, but that's not to say he doesn't belt out some great high notes, most remarkably in "Goodbye" and "Seven Wonders." And he can scat sing.

Chase Cashion's Carl Hanratty is what happens when hard-boiled cop meets forensic detective. Tireless in his push to find Abignale and put him behind bars, you'd think he was going after a mob boss rather than a serial check forger. In his own words, when the spotlight is his, the songs become something of a "film-noir thing." His bellowing yet melodic tone seeps into the murky jazz number "The Man Inside the Clues."

Spotty diction during the first half of the night's dress run was forgiven after I was gleefully distracted by "Jet Set," the first song to really testify to both the talents and beauty of the mostly female ensemble. They give it everything they've got, with so much character behind each solo, and this spirit is sustained for the whole show.

The musical actually saves three of its most talented members for Act II, when we're introduced to the Strong family. Aptly named, as they were played by some of the company's strongest performers. Erin Lustria and Evan Ross liven things up as the conservative Southern parents to Halie Boling's Brenda in ways that they never did in the film. As for Boling, her rendition of the woeful ballad "Fly, Fly Away" choked me up just a little bit.

With the band onstage, a swinging score by Marc Shaiman ("Hairspray") blends big-band music, blues, jazz and variety show chorus anthems. This is the lifeblood of the piece, and does an excellent job teleporting the audience to the heyday of mini skirts and pop art, as does costumer Crystal Nelson's flawless wardrobe selection.

There's never a dull moment in "Catch Me If You Can." Directed by Krystof Kage, it does justice to a popular life story that has stayed refreshing in every format in which it's been told.

Tallahassee businesses are critical to meeting children's needs

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The message emerging from the Mayor's Summit on Children was pretty simple: investing in improving the lives of Tallahassee's children — and parents — now, will pay big benefits later.

And at the end of the four-hour session at Florida State University's Turnbull Center on Friday, many among the more than 100 business representatives in attendance had agreed to serve on task forces focusing on four key areas:

- Improved Quality and Affordable Child Care for All:** This group will help define quality child care and how that should be measured in Tallahassee. Mayor Andrew Gillum has discussed creating a star-rating system for centers that exceed standards set by the community. This ranges from staff training to facilities to parental involvement.

- Family Friendly Workplaces & Culture:** Based on the philosophy that employees are more productive and focused if they are working in a family friendly environment, this group will examine best practices based on what's offered in the public, nonprofit and private workplaces.

- Greater Community Investments in Children and Families:** This critical area will explore what can emerge from community input and possible financial investment in improving the process for parents exploring child-care option. Another element is getting community support of children's issues.

- Resources and Training for Parents and Families:** Where do people planning to have children learn about parenting, pre-and-post-natal care, resources and why birth to 5 are the critical years? What should they look for in choosing child care? How do they determine if a center costing \$1,000 a month is better than charging \$650 a month?

Gillum's office, with assistance from Whole Child Leon, will place names with committees, designate a chairman and expect them to come back with suggestions in the next six to seven months.

"This is a meeting about people wanting to do something about making Tallahassee a great place to live," said presenter Craig Ramey, distinguished research scholar

of human development at Virginia Tech University and professor of pediatrics. "You have bright committed people here. Tallahassee can be a great human development incubator to show other cities how to do it right."

Ramey's presentation focused on his years of research and studies in child development and how children from a more structured and caring environment succeed far better than those who don't receive early nurturing. The first five years of a child's life are essential, he said.

"Some kids come to kindergarten knowing 20,000 words, others fewer than 500," he said. "Language allows access to other information to serve in this complex world."

"This is where it's important to focus on early childhood education," Ramey continued. "We're all going to benefit together or we're going to lose together."

Rob Grunewald, an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, honed in on the importance of the business community's involvement in early learning. Investing now in early education pays off in the long run in how well students perform in school, how prepared they become for careers and how productive they will be as adults.

"Businesses looking to move to an area are asking about the quality of child care," Grunewald said. He noted that in Florida, more than 65 percent of children have both parents in the workplace.

His research has helped influence Minnesota's achievements in being a leader in early childhood development to the extent that its Legislature has directed millions toward "early learning scholarships," where parents without the means can enroll their children in programs deemed to be outstanding.

Quotes from the conference:

"It matters now. We need to look at our future workforce." Kimberly Moore, vice president, workforce development, Tallahassee Community College.

(NOTE: This article truncated for relevance to TCC.)

Veteran's service dog has first, successful surgery

CARMY GREENWOOD
SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

Many community members pitched in to help when they heard about Navy veteran Bryan Wimberly and his service dog Bella, who needs surgery to repair torn ACLs in both her rear legs.

Since a story about Bella appeared in the Democrat last week, Bryan has received more than \$8,000 in donations through GoFundMe. That made it possible for Bella to have her first surgery on March 26 at Capital Veterinary Specialists.

Bella did fine and is expected to have a three-month recovery period before it's time for her second surgery.

"I'd like to let everybody know that we are blessed for their support," said Wimberly.

It's not too late to help with Bella's second surgery. The fundraising page is still active at www.gofundme.com/bryanandbella, and Dave's Pizza Garage will host a Shake a Hero's Hand/Paw fundraiser on April 4 from noon to 4 p.m. Seminole Aquarium is also planning an event, and students at TCC's Florida Public Safety Institute have selected Bryan and Bella as their class service project.

To see photos of Bella before and after her surgery, visit facebook.com/bryanandbella.

Business lecture planned at TCC

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College's Eagle Business Society will present a lecture by Cindy Sullivan, vice president for learning, development and sales for McGraw Hill, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on April 9 in the TCC Student Union ballroom.

Sullivan's presentation will focus on the business world and how to succeed in the job market.

This event, which is part of the Eagle Business Society's Distinguished Lecture Series, is open to all members of the community. Registration is not required, there is no cost to attend, and parking is also free.

TCC's Coach Barnes earns top honor

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Eddie Barnes, who recently retired as the men's basketball coach at Tallahassee Community College, was inducted into the Florida College System Activities Association Men's Basketball Hall of Fame.

Coach Barnes led the Eagles for 14 years and compiled a 274-144 record during that time.

TCC students earn recognition

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

TCC students Angela Cole and Sarah Allen were named to the 2015 All-Florida Academic Team.

Both are members of Phi Beta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges. Cole and Allen were among only 124 students from the 28 institutions in the Florida College System to be selected.

Herstory lesson

KENDRICK BROWN
GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

Three women were honored March 26 during the Florida Public Safety Institute's ninth annual Women in History Celebration for their career achievements in law enforcement.

The event is one of many annual breakfasts FPSI holds to commemorate difference history months. In February, they held a black history month breakfast where three black men were honored for their achievements in law enforcement.

At the women's history program, Executive Producer Shonda Knight of WCTV acted as the mistress of ceremonies, East Gadsden High School's JROTC honor guard displayed the state and national flags, while Christina Daly of the Department of Juvenile Justice delivered the program's keynote speech.

When it came time to recognize the three honorees, each honoree was surprised with two selfie-style, cell-phone video recordings where people who were their friends, family or co-workers spoke of how the honoree's achievements have inspired them. The videos left one honoree, Retired Lieutenant Iris Carter of the Tallahassee Fire Department, in tears after hearing messages recorded by her daughter and son. "If you're a crier, you bring your tissue with you," Carter said while holding up a piece of folded tissue. "I saw the first two and I knew I'd have to bring my equipment."

In addition, the breakfast featured multiple singers and a violin player.

“Drive to 1000” to place students in manufacturing jobs

HAVANA HERALD (SCHOOL NEWS)

The Florida TRADE Consortium, a coalition of 13 state and community colleges across Florida including Tallahassee Community College, will launch a statewide campaign to place 1,000 Florida TRADE students into advanced manufacturing jobs by April 1, 2016.

The Drive to 1,000 campaign will be highlighted by job fairs, campus events, manufacturing days and forums, and other activities over the next 12 months.

“Florida TRADE’s mission is to develop and deliver accelerated technical training programs that allow students to earn industry certifications and to acquire technical skills that lead to jobs in advanced manufacturing,” said Dr. Gary Graham, director of the Consortium. “We are committed to placing our students into good manufacturing jobs across the state.”

The CareerSource Florida Network, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and the Manufacturers Association of Florida Center for Advanced Manufacturing Excellence have joined Florida TRADE in the campaign, along with Regional CareerSource boards and regional manufacturing associations.

“Manufacturers in Florida are growing and hiring,” said Nancy Stephens, Manufacturers Association of Florida executive director. “They want employees looking for meaningful careers. Today’s manufacturing is high-skill and high-wage.”

“Advanced Manufacturing is an important industry targeted for future growth in Florida,” said Chris Hart IV, CareerSource Florida president and CEO. “CareerSource Florida is a proud partner in this collaborative effort to help Florida’s manufacturers expand and compete, and Floridians secure rewarding, well-paying careers.”

As a part of the Drive to 1,000, the group will conduct a statewide Florida Manufacturing Career Fair on April 22. TCC is one of multiple venues set to host the event.

“The Florida TRADE program is a critical program at TCC and provides quality training to local residents to prepare them for a variety of manufacturing jobs in the region,” said Kim Moore, TCC vice president for workforce development.

For information about the Florida TRADE program at TCC, contact the Advanced Manufacturing Training Center (AMTC) at (850) 201-9720 or amtc@tcc.fl.edu.

Women's History Month celebrated at safety institute

SANDI BEARE
HAVANA HERALD

With the title of "Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives," the Florida Public Safety Institute (FPSI) brought a Women's History Month event to life last Thursday morning. FPSI's Kim Allen and Gigi Hawthorne introduced the many challenges women face on the job and every day. They said their stories helped prepare them to help other women, as well as the male mentors who have helped mentor them along the way.

Emcee of the event was Shonda Knight, news anchor at WCTV, who is passionate about helping young women, said Hawthorne. "Law enforcement officers truly are our heroes," said Knight. "I have an admiration of women in public safety. It is sweet to honor them," she said.

Secretary of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Christina Daly served as keynote speaker at the event: Since she joined DJJ 17 years ago, working hard to improve lives of at-risk children, delinquency is at the lowest levels in 30 years.

"This is a dream job," said the woman who has been entrusted with \$540 million to turn the lives of children around. Daly said that was an incredible improvement from the time when U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was coming out of law school and 40 law firms refused to hire her because she was a woman.

"I knew at a very young age that I wanted to work with kids. (To do so) you have to have a consistency in principles and the ability to work with people of different backgrounds and views," said Secretary Daly, one of a few women at the department-head level in a male-dominated field.

"I care deeply for the live of the youth in the state," she said as she introduced women and girls of the PACE Center for Girls. "PACE is important to DJJ. They are weaving a path and creating footsteps to follow," said Daly.

Jennifer Cook Pritt, Assistant Commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement also addressed the large audience, as did many other law enforcement leaders.

Time to re-tire from TCC Wakulla

BONNIE HOLUB
WAKULLA NEWS

I am retired, although I see it differently.

I even spell the word differently, re-tired, with a hyphen.

I think of retirement as putting on a new set of life's tires and traveling down a new path; a new set of mental wheels moving toward new adventures. Re-tire is an active verb, not a noun.

Since moving to Ochlockonee Bay from Tampa in 1979, my work has been in the fields of education, communication and the environment. I initially worked at the Wakulla County School Board where I coordinated several district-wide programs including the development of the first environmental education curriculum for Wakulla High School.

I left WCSB to work at Wilderness Graphics, an environmental communications and exhibit design company in Tallahassee. From there my career path took her to the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve where I developed the initial public information and environmental education program for the Reserve.

In 1989, I launched Bonnie Holub & Associates, an environmental communications consulting business. BH&A gave me the opportunity to travel throughout the United States and abroad working on environmental projects.

During the BH&A years, I served as Director of the Wakulla County Tourist Development Council.

Five years ago, about the time I was first thinking of re-tirement, the opportunity was presented to her to serve as the Director of Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Center in Crawfordville.

Working for TCC was an exciting offer. Participating in the building of a TCC presence in Wakulla County was too good to pass up, and exactly fit with my skill sets and community interest.

I am also a writer. My columns about Wakulla County have appeared in the Tallahassee Democrat, and my magazine articles in Tallahassee Magazine and Unconquered (the FSU Athletic Boosters magazine), among others.

I loved being a part of TCC and the newly created Wakulla

Environmental Institute, and it's hard to leave.

However, there are other adventures I now want the opportunity to love too.

I know Colleen Dwyer, the new Associate Director of WEI, will be an outstanding addition to TCC and the Wakulla Environmental Institute, and I feel good passing the baton to her.

Re-tirement means spending more time on writing and launching a life coaching practice.

I am a trained life coach and one of the strategies coaches use to help people create the life they want is to have them envision a "wildly improbable goal," or WIG, and then help them start taking steps to make it happen.

My personal current WIG is to combine writing, a life coaching practice, golf and travel.

I will be actively pursuing these passions in my re-tirement.

Word of South will spread literature, music in Cascades

Inaugural festival will highlight arts with mostly free concerts, activities

GERALD ENSLEY

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

You could call it Tallapalooza I. Except it's already got a neat name: Word of South.

But with more than 50 acts on five stages over three days in Cascades Park, the inaugural Word of South festival debuts this weekend as the most ambitious festival in Tallahassee history.

It's taken more than two years to plan, a small army of volunteers to stage and a budget pushing seven figures. But its founder, former Tallahassee City Commissioner Mark Mustian is excited about the possibilities.

"I think it's going to be fun. I think people will come out and really enjoy themselves," Mustian said. "My hope is 10 years from now this is like Winter Festival and Springtime Tallahassee, and draws people here who wouldn't have come to Tallahassee."

Word of South is a combination literary and music festival — featuring a pile of big names. Academy Award winner J.K. Simmons and Emmy winner Tony Hale will appear. Authors include such notables as Ann Patchett, Jeff VanderMeer, Robert Olen Butler — and legendary Florida State University football coach Bobby Bowden.

The slate of musicians starts with the Avett Brothers, who are playing a pre-festival concert on Friday night. The musical acts include such other nationally known performers as Sublime With Rome, Sweet Honey in the Rock and Tallahassee's own jazz great Marcus Roberts. They include cult favorites such as LuLuc, Dog House Band, Jim White and Seryn, plus local musicians such as Velma Frye and the Rickards High Marching Band. The musical acts climax with the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra on Sunday afternoon.

Several sessions will team authors and musicians, who have worked out performances that complement each other's work. One session will feature a panel discussion with seven authors; another will have a discussion with a pair of renowned literary critics.

Saturday features a host of children-oriented acts, most notably Story Pirates and the band Lunch Money. Sunday morning opens with Southern Fried Brunch, featuring dishes prepared from recipes provided by one of the performers, magazine editor Julia Reed.

There will be food trucks and beer vendors (with beer allowed anywhere in the park) throughout the weekend.

It's all free, with the exception of the three ticketed concerts in the Cascades Park Amphitheater (Avett Brothers, Sublime With Rome and Tallahassee Symphony). And it goes on rain or shine.

"A lot of music festivals you pay one price and go all weekend, and eventually that may be our model," Mustian said. "But I like that a big bunch of ours is free. With the public dollars we received, that's the way it should be."

The festival is the brainchild of Mustian, a city commissioner for nine years (2003-2012), and author of two novels: "The Return" (2000) and "The Gendarme" (2010). After his second novel received acclaim, he began being invited to literary festivals. He found them entertaining, and started wondering, "Why can't we do one in Tallahassee?"

As he explored the possibility, he also decided Tallahassee's event needed something to set it apart — such as adding music performances to book and poetry readings and literary discussions.

"Music seemed right. If you Google music and literary festivals, not much comes up," Mustian said. "We've had a good response from musicians and authors. I think it's a cool idea if we can keep it going."

In winter 2013, Mustian assembled a steering committee of 12 people. One of the first tasks was to come up with a name. Out of numerous suggestions, one proffered by Tricia Collins was voted the winner: Word of South. The name plays on the phrase "word of mouth," and eliminates "the," to make it "a little edgy and contemporary," Collins said.

"It had to be a little abstract but also locate the (event). And it needed to be about words," said Collins, a curator and art critic. "I had another, 'Chapter and Verse,' which was a little corny but more illustrative of the (literature and music) concept."

The festival soon blossomed into a massive undertaking, with Mustian persuading Mandy Stringer, executive director of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, to

Word of South will spread literature, music in Cascades....

continued

moonlight as the festival's executive director. It took two years to raise the money, book the acts and coordinate the schedule in Cascades Park, where five performing sites have been established to create continuous entertainment all day Saturday and Sunday.

The Avett Brothers concert Friday night will mark the first sell-out for the Cascades Park Amphitheater: 3,000 spectators. But organizers hope to attract a continuous crowd of 5,000 to 10,000 people on Saturday and Sunday.

"It's designed to be like the New Orleans Jazz Festival; if something is too crowded at one stage, you can go to another," Mustian said.

The festival is a public-private collaboration. The festival budget was originally pegged at \$300,000, though Stringer said, "With in-kind contributions, it's triple that." Though several local authors and musicians donated their time, most of the authors and musical groups are receiving appearance fees and travel expenses.

"We've been lucky to make our money go a long way," Stringer said. "We have Guggenheim Fellows reading poetry for a song."

Tallahassee Community College signed on as the presenting sponsor, providing a financial contribution — and students. The cadre of volunteers include dozens of TCC students, and a writing contest among TCC students has produced works that will be read at the festival.

The festival also received financial contributions from the Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency, the Leon County Tourist Development agency, the Knight Foundation, the state Cultural Arts Council and numerous private businesses and residents.

And Mustian. The former commissioner gave \$100,000 he received from the city commissioners' controversial "deferred compensation" program. The now-defunct program placed money from city revenue in each commissioner's retirement account, drawing howls from critics who said it was an illegal raise.

Mustian, an attorney, cast the lone vote against deferred compensation in 2005. But by the time he left the commission, his account had accrued \$135,000. Mustian

refused to keep the money. He gave \$35,000 to WFSU public TV and radio, and the remaining \$100,000 to Word of South.

"The fact Mark was willing to put his own money in there was a real message to the community that this was not just a small group of people who wanted to do something but rather a serious (effort)," said Tallahassee attorney Berneice Cox, a steering committee member who helped raise money for the festival. "The amount of time Mark has put into this has been phenomenal. He is a real class act for our community."

Barring rain — the forecast is promising, despite a 50 percent chance of afternoon thundershowers on Saturday — the festival may prove a class addition to Tallahassee.

"So many writers live here and love it; this is a natural for Tallahassee," Collins said. "I think it's going to be more entertaining than people expect and 'Word of South' will lead to word-of-mouth (popularity)."

WEI welcomes Colleen Dwyer as associate director

WAKULLA NEWS

Colleen Dwyer does not take the trailblazing nature of her new job for granted.

Dwyer is settling into her role as associate director of Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute.

Former Associate Director Bonnie Holub retired last month. Dwyer reports to WEI Executive Director Bob Ballard.

"It is most definitely not your sit-behind-a-computer-all-day type of job, which is just fine by me," Dwyer said. "The sky is the limit around here. Big ideas are encouraged and put into action on a daily basis. It is very exciting to be working on the ground level of something that will be a great asset to Wakulla."

Dwyer acknowledged that Holub paved the way for her success in the position.

"I am also privileged to have had a dynamic predecessor, Bonnie Holub, who really blazed a trail for me both literally and figuratively, which I am very thankful for."

The skills Dwyer gained in her past positions touch on each facet of this job. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in Recreation and Leisure Administration from FSU. She has experience working with community partners to reopen community centers for the City of Jacksonville Parks, Recreation and Community Services. Currently, Dwyer works as an adjunct professor at FSU, and most recently ran the Visitor Information Center at Visit Tallahassee.

"Everything I have done up to this point in my career will help me in this new role," she said.

Going forward, Dwyer said she is excited about being a part of something that is revolutionary through WEI.

"The people who are involved with this program are not only wonderful, but are pioneers," she said. "Collectively, we are making a difference which will hopefully outlast us all."

Dwyer is a fourth-generation Floridian, raised in West Palm Beach.

"While I am not from Wakulla, my family has roots in the area," she said. "My mom was raised in Tallahassee, my grandmother in Perry and my great-grandfather in Carrabelle. I've been proud to call North Florida home for the past eight years."

TCC Preview offers student info Thursday, April 16

HAVANA HERALD

Prospective students interested in Tallahassee Community College are encouraged to attend the spring edition of TCC Preview on Thursday, April 16, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in TCC's Student Union Ballroom.

The evening will provide opportunities to learn about admission, orientation and financial aid, as well as programs of study, student services and campus life. TCC's Golden Guarantee Programs, which provide guaranteed admission to Florida State University, Florida A&M University or the University of West Florida when students stay on track with Associate of Arts requirements and university prerequisites, will also be highlighted.

While TCC Preview attracts a large number of high school students, the evening is also beneficial for nontraditional students—adults who are attending college for the first time, returning to school or exploring a career change. In addition, current TCC students are encouraged to attend to find out more about TCC programs and resources.

Additionally, TCC Preview attendees may enter a drawing for a \$500 TCC scholarship. Attendees must be present to win.

Reservations are not required for TCC Preview. For information, contact the Enrollment Services office at (850) 201-8555 or admissions@tcc.fl.edu.

For information on how to become a student at TCC, visit www.GoToTCC.com.

Sandi Beare receives recognition at WHM celebration

HAVANA HERALD

Herald correspondent Sandi Beare was given a special recognition on Thursday, March 26th at the Florida Public Safety Institute's (FPSI) Women's History Month celebration. FPSI Director E.E. Eunice along with Gigi Hawthorne gave Beare a trophy that states, "In appreciation for all your support! Sandi Beare, 9th Annual Women's History Program," March 26, 2015."

In an email about the event, FPSI Conference Center's Hayley Hebrock said, "We appreciate all the hard work you do covering our events. As a part of the program we would like to honor you for everything you do!"

Speakers for the event, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary Christina Daly, WCTV's Shonda Knight, and Jennifer Cook Pruitt, Assistant Commissioner of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, were also given special recognitions as were several musical performers at the women's history month celebration.

TCC continues hoops interviews

JORDAN CULVER
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

The search for the next head basketball coach at Tallahassee Community College is winding down, and athletic director Rob Chaney said Thursday the school's search committee is in the process of interviewing the top 10 candidates.

The committee of five interviewed two candidates Thursday afternoon, and Chaney said four more will be interviewed Friday and the final candidates will be interviewed Monday. Chaney said the committee will submit its recommendation to human resources at TCC by Tuesday morning.

"There will be a few HR-level steps that will need to be run through and completed before any official announcement can be made," Chaney said. "Our job is to take a name to HR and that's what I intend to do Tuesday morning."

Chaney said 351 people applied for the job by the time the position closed on March 23.

"We all know this is a crucial time from a recruiting standpoint and I'm anxious to get it wrapped up on Tuesday," Chaney said.

TCC's new head coach will replace Eddie Barnes, who was with the school for 14 years. Barnes compiled a 274-144 record with the Eagles. He also led TCC to the NJCAA championship game in 2006. He won two FCSAA state championships, one in 2006 and another in 2011.

Chaney said he's spoken to Barnes -- who was inducted into the FCSAA Hall of Fame -- frequently while narrowing down the search.

"Both (Barnes) and I started receiving inquiries once word got out he was retiring," he said. "I'd be crazy not to be in his ear from time to time. This is his world. When it comes to names, things are going to connect with him a little quicker. I got feedback from him throughout the process."

TCC hosts job fair part-time jobs, internships

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (BIG BEND NEWS BRIEFS)

Tallahassee Community College will host its Spring Part-Time Job Fair from 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday in the TCC Student Union Ballroom. The job fair will connect individuals searching for part-time jobs and internships with area companies looking to fill open positions.

This event is not limited to TCC students. FSU and FAMU students and all members of the community are invited to attend. Jobseekers do not have to pre-register for this event. Business casual dress is required, and attendees should bring copies of their resume.

For information and a list of employers, visit www.tccfuturelink.com/events or call (850) 201-9970.

TCC magazine will be unveiled today

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

TCC will release the 34th edition of its art and literature magazine, the "Eyrie," at an unveiling party at 7 p.m. today in the Turner Auditorium lobby.

The event will feature the new edition of the "Eyrie" as well as entertainment, food and speeches by adviser Nicolette Costantino, the magazine staff, and the winner of each of five genre categories: nonfiction, fiction, photography, poetry and art. Faculty judges decide on the winners of each category.

Attendees will receive a free copy of the magazine.

The "Eyrie" magazine is unique among College publications in that it is offered as a credit course (JOU2440L) each Spring semester. Every year a new staff meets for the first time and within 12 weeks produces the magazine.

"Through trials, missteps and triumphs, the student staff learns exactly what goes into making a magazine and carries along with them for the rest of their lives memories, experience and a physical work that can be taken to any future job as evidence of achievement," said Costantino.

TCC hosts series

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College's Global Learning program will host several free events. All students and community members are invited, and parking is free.

Today at 10 a.m., Nina Sichel will speak on "Growing Up Global: Children Adjusting to Living between Two Cultures." TCC library.

Wednesday at 6 p.m. The movie "Invictus" is the story of how Nelson Mandela and South Africa's rugby team joined together to help unite their nation post-apartheid. A reception will precede the show at 5 p.m. TCC Fine and Performing Arts Center.

TCC Preview offers a scholarship

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Prospective students are encouraged to attend TCC Preview on Thursday from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in TCC's Student Union Ballroom.

Attendees will learn about admission, orientation, financial aid, programs of study, student services and campus life. TCC's Golden Guarantee Programs, which can provide a guaranteed path to admission at Florida State University, Florida A&M University or the University of West Florida, will also be highlighted.

There also will be a drawing for a \$500 TCC scholarship. Attendees must be present to win.

Reservations are not needed. For information, call 201-8555 or email admissions@tcc.fl.edu.

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Tallahassee Community College is live with transcript ordering and fulfillment services from Credentials eScrip-Safe. The TranscriptsPlus® ordering platform is available to students and alumni 24/7 and combines Tallahassee Community College's service options, pricing, school colors and logo into a secure, compliant and easy-to-use solution. The system collects all fees in a PCI-DSS compliant environment. TranscriptsPlus works in concert with RoboRegistrar®, which automates back-of-the-house processing and facilitates paper and electronic fulfillment. Credentials supports all services with a dedicated Client Relationship Manager for the institution's needs and Customer Service Representatives to answer student and alumni inquiries on behalf of the school.

Students and alumni can send their PDF transcripts electronically for fast delivery. Tallahassee Community College has also implemented print and mail service eRoboMail®, which fully automates the school's paper transcript fulfillment. This service increases document security and integrity by integrating security paper, tamper-proof envelopes, and copy and thermal protections, all while being handled at one of Credentials' facilities. The entire process is more efficient and virtually error free, decreasing the number of resends and reducing the amount of phone and email inquiries. eRoboMail even accommodates attachments.

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Gadsden Re-Entry Center inmates benefit from TCC job training

HAVANA HERALD

Inmates come to the Gadsden Re-Entry Center near the ends of their sentences to prepare for the transition back to their home communities. They may participate in a wide variety of programs the facility offers to meet their needs, such as basic literacy education, GED preparation, addiction education, parenting training and personal finance education.

Inmates who already hold a high school diploma or who earn their GED diploma at the facility may also choose one of four workforce training programs designed to help them land a job after they regain their freedom. Programs are offered in carpentry, culinary arts, masonry apprenticeship and industrial machine repair.

The Florida Department of Corrections, Unlimited Path, Inc., and Tallahassee Community College collaborate to provide workforce training at the 432-bed facility, which is located at TCC's Florida Public Safety Institute and is the nation's only correctional facility built on a college campus.

"This has been an effective partnership, with all of us working together to achieve the common goal of better equipping inmates to be successful upon release," said Walt Summers, the facility's warden.

The partners are currently celebrating the success of the industrial machine repair program, which allows students to learn in-demand job skills and earn several valuable industry certifications, including the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council's Certified Production Technician credential. The Gadsden Re-Entry Center is the only State of Florida prison that provides an industrial machine repair program that includes the MSSC-CPT.

"MSSC is pleased to be part of the industrial machine repair program at the Gadsden Re-Entry Center. The partners' success can serve as a model for others in the state of Florida and across the country," said Neil Reddy, MSSC executive director. "Industrial certifications like ours can help our returning citizens find employment when they are released."

Many manufacturers give preferential consideration to applicants who hold the nationally recognized MSSC-CPT credential. To earn it, trainees must pass four

modules: Safety, Quality Practices and Measurement, Manufacturing Production and Processes, and Maintenance Awareness.

The Gadsden Re-Entry Center's pass rate on the series of four CPT exams is a robust 75 percent, according to TCC's Marc Dick, who teaches the program. Dick believes the program offers inmates an opportunity to get a new start or turn their lives around.

"Some of these men have never lifted a hammer or screwdriver in their life, but now they have core knowledge. They also will have a couple of certifications that could make them attractive job applicants," said Dick.

Jeff Teer earned his CPT credential and OSHA 10-hour safety card at the Gadsden Re-Entry Center and now works at Energy Absorption Systems in Pell City, Alabama. He had previously worked as a commercial fisherman, but the training he received at the Re-Entry Center made him an attractive candidate to the company, which makes highway crash impact barriers.

"It helped out a whole lot," said Teer. "I showed them the CPT certificate and my resume, and the OSHA card, and they pretty much hired me on the spot."

Former inmates will also have the option of enrolling in a two-year Associate in Science degree program in engineering technology at one of Florida's state colleges, where they will be awarded 15 college credits in recognition of their CPT credential. Five state colleges in the Panhandle offer such programs, including TCC. The credits will save the student a full semester plus 25 percent of the cost of the A.S. degree. Further, students who earn the A.S. can move to Daytona State College's Bachelor of Science program in engineering technology.

For information, contact McKinley Lewis at (850) 488-0420 or lewis.mckinley@mail.dc.state.fl.us.



TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
RANKED **#8** IN THE NATION

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"Good return on investment..."

"Low cost..."



54% of TCC students transfer to a four-year school (16% greater than the national average).



TCC students make 23% more than their overall college costs in just their first year out of school.



TCC's tuition is among the lowest in Florida, and about half the cost of a public university.

*TCC is ranked #8 nationally among community colleges reviewed by SmartAsset.
Data compiled by College Measures and Campus Explorer.*



FREE TICKETS to those who *RSVP* to alumni@tcc.fl.edu and attend the reception.



ALUMNI
and Friends

**JOIN US FOR TCC ALUMNI & FRIENDS
PRE SHOW RECEPTION**
APRIL 3 | 7 - 8 P.M.
Hinson Administration Building
TCC campus | 444 Appleyard Drive

Meet fellow alumni and others interested in the newly launched TCC Alumni & Friends Association. Theatre TCC! show begins at 8 p.m.

Catch Me If You Can is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019. P: 212-541-4684 F: 212-397-4684. www.MTIShows.com

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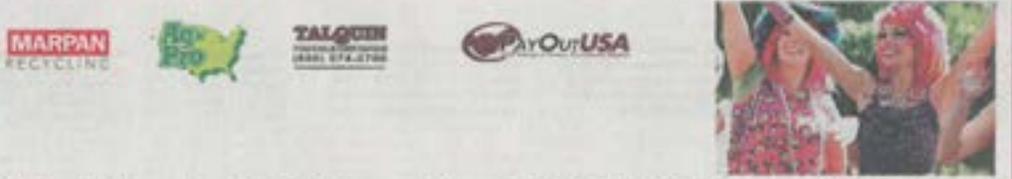
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