

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



June 13, 2015 - August 21, 2015

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



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June 13, 2015 - August 21, 2015

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



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Madison's McKnight chasing pro dream

TCC star drafted by Toronto Blue Jays

JORDAN CULVER

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

D.J. McKnight has been chasing an opportunity to play baseball since high school.

The 2013 Madison County High alum went to Tallahassee Community College to pursue what he called his "first love," despite offers from other schools to play football.

Wednesday, professional organizations called McKnight with a chance for him to keep chasing his dream. The Toronto Blue Jays selected McKnight in the 12th round of the MLB Draft, making him the Eagles' highest draft pick since 2004.

McKnight, who was named first-team All-Panhandle Conference this season, finished his career at TCC with a .344 batting average, six home runs and 69 runs batted in over 97 games. He reports to Dunedin on Saturday.

"It was one of the best feelings of my life," said McKnight, drafted No. 362 overall.

"I'm not nervous at all. I'm excited to report. I'm just ready to go down and compete. I want to show what I really have to offer. I want to let the Blue Jays know they didn't make a mistake in drafting me."

DJ McKnight throws for a first down during Madison

DJ McKnight throws for a first down during Madison County High's FHSAA 3A state title game in 2012. McKnight was just drafted by the Toronto Blue Jays after two years at TCC. (Photo: Glenn Beil)

TCC head coach Mike McLeod said he first noticed McKnight during a summer workout. By then, McKnight had already turned down several offers to play college football.

"This couldn't have happened to a better person who wanted it very desperately," McLeod said.

"He's a great hitter and I'm glad someone other than me saw it. He was a great football player at Madison and a lot of people thought that was the route he'd go. He didn't have people knocking his door down, asking him to play baseball. He stood by it and told all the football recruiters he was going to play baseball.

"He's a great kid, he's got great leadership skills. He draws people to him like a magnet. I'm happy for him and I hope he makes it."

McKnight signed a letter of intent on May 22 to play for Valdosta State, but will pass on that scholarship to play professional baseball.

"TCC has prepared (me) for everything," McKnight said.

"I feel like that was one of the best decisions I made coming out of high school. TCC prepared me and helped me perfect my craft and get me ready for the next level. I'd just like to say thanks for the opportunities and everything they've done to prepare me for this moment."

TCC earns awards, grant

WAKULLA NEWS

Tallahassee Community College was recently honored with two national recognitions for diversity and value, and a \$250,000 grant from the Able Trust.

TCC has been named one of the 2015 Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges by the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) and Diversity: Issues in Higher Education magazine.

This designation recognizes the College for its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Only 16 colleges nationwide received this honor.

"It's a great honor to be recognized by NISOD for our commitment to diversity," said Al Moran, vice president for communications and marketing at TCC. "It's not something that happens overnight. This award results from the College's long-term commitment to diversity in students, faculty and staff. The College is committed to providing a space where all individuals are welcome, respected and valued. It's a very nice award, and it doesn't mean we're done, but we are on the right track. It's nice to get recognition on a national level."

NISOD and Diverse partnered with the Center for Higher Education Enterprise at Ohio State University to implement the study, which focuses on factors such as workplace diversity, equitable staffing practices and supportive work environments.

TCC was recognized at the NISOD conference on May 26.

SmartAsset.com, a highly regarded investment website, ranked TCC at No. 8 in a list of the top ten community colleges in the U.S. SmartAsset has reviewed almost 700 public community colleges around the country to find the best of the best.

To determine the rankings, SmartAsset takes into account which colleges offered a low-cost education, good return on investment and high success rate.

Moran is pleased but not surprised. In 2012, TCC created strategic plan objectives to keep tuition low and target student success.

"That strategic plan is a road map, not just a document," Moran said. "We follow and measure that success."

Moran said TCC is the foremost producer of transfer students to FSU and FAMU. Tuition is \$100 per credit hour, which is the lowest in Florida, Moran said--about half the cost of public university. TCC students 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 four-year school.

Last week, the Able Trust presented TCC with a three-year, \$250,000 grant to help provide educational opportunities for students with disabilities in Leon, Gadsden and Wakulla counties.

The grant award was announced at a press conference Wednesday, June 3 on TCC's campus.

TCC is the only college to receive the grant this year--and one of two organizations in the state--as well as the first group in the North Florida region to receive the award. The College will match the grant with a \$250,000 commitment of its own.

"We are thrilled and honored to accept this award from The Able Trust," said TCC president Jim Murdaugh. "This is a great opportunity for TCC to improve our service to a fantastic group of students."

Jesse Panuccio, executive director of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, added, "Every Floridian who wants a job should be able to get a job, and together The Able Trust, Tallahassee Community College and DEO are helping make that dream a reality."

"The Able Trust is very honored to partner with TCC & DEO on this important program to assist students with disabilities to find their career path and obtain employment that leads to their personal success," said Susanne Homant, president and CEO of The Able Trust.

Research indicates that for every dollar invested in vocational rehabilitation, \$13-26 are infused back into the economy.

(NOTE: Article truncated for brevity.)

Oysters growing

WEI pilot program shows success, overcomes problems in its first year

NICOLE ZEMA
WAKULLA NEWS

While trendy Manhattan foodies squeeze organic lemon and artisan horseradish onto their \$36 Alligator Harbor oysters, Sharon Fitzgerald and Megan Di Pietrantonio will be shoulder-deep in seawater, working hard to keep top chefs supplied with the cornerstone crop.

Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI) has completed the first year of its inaugural Oyster Aquaculture certification program, which was implemented to sustainably grow oysters. Nine students should graduate with a fully operating oyster aquaculture business. This program follows years of crisis in the industry due to watershed issues, the BP oil spill and economic collapse.

WEI Executive Director Bob Ballard said benefiting the economy through an environmentally sustainable agriculture is the mission. While the startup oyster aquaculture program has encountered a few problems, the cages bulging with growing oysters speaks to its success.

On June 4, Ballard pulled on a wetsuit and shuffled into Alligator Harbor in Franklin County with WEI Associate Director Colleen Dwyer. They tried to kick up enough mud to scare the stingrays, as they waded about a quarter mile to a pontoon boat piled high with plastic oyster cages and poles at Sharon Fitzgerald's water column lease.

There were two major tasks at hand on June 4 – many of the cages were getting so full of growing oysters they needed to be culled and separated into fresh cages; and more lines were needed to hang those new cages. Student Megan Di Pietrantonio brought the loaded cages to the boat two-by-two, to divide them into more baskets. Meanwhile, student Sharon Fitzgerald helped Ballard and others to install the poles and hang lines for new cages. Fitzgerald sprayed the tops of the poles with orange caution paint.

The cages are meant to bob with the tide.

"We want movement," Ballard said. "It chips the outside edge of the oyster and makes it more cup shaped, instead of scissor-shaped. We want them to grow deeper instead of longer. We want to have the perfect presentation."

"We just keep on doing that until the oysters are 3 inches long and are ready to sell," Ballard said.

It takes about a year for oysters to grow from 6-millimeter spat to delicious 3-inch bivalves, he said, "Which is the fastest of any place on the planet. We don't know of any other place that can grow them better, tastier or faster than here. Look at how perfect they are. This is what people want – it's an idea as much as a product. It should be a cup shape, and the more they look the same, the more you can get for them. In New York, once they're 3 inches long, could go for \$36 a dozen. It's crazy, but that's what they're going for."

Ballard said students are trained to stagger the harvest, to have oysters every month so there is always an inventory.

"You don't want a chef in New York who can't get his oysters in July because we ran out," Ballard said. "We have to have a supply all the time. If you make a chef mad, they won't come back to you. The more reliable we are, the more we can charge for these oysters."

The program has encountered permitting setbacks at Oyster Bay, but Ballard said those issues will finally be resolved soon, and oyster aquaculture can set up shop permanently in Wakulla County. The lines in Alligator Harbor are just a temporary lease – WEI is renting space from Sharon Fitzgerald (who used to farm clams at that spot) until the permits from Oyster Bay are approved by National Marine Fisheries. Gov. Rock Scott approved the full water column lease in Oyster Bay two years ago.

In March, a former student in the program, John Taylor, filed a lawsuit against TCC's Board of Trustees for negligence, fraud and breach of contract, claiming that a former instructor Steve Cushman had no actual knowledge about aquaculture, and that students had to pay back more than originally invested into them. While TCC could not comment on the case, Ballard said the plaintiff's niece and brother are still in the class, and are having great success.

Others have harshly criticized the pilot program, saying aquaculture "start-ups" often revert to abandoned facilities, financial trickery, and further economic devastation to local communities.

Oysters growing...

continued

There is no buy-in or financial investment expected of students, Dwyer said.

"It's absolutely free," she said. "They literally pay in sweat equity, and oysters. We set them up with leases, equipment and spat. They raise somewhere between one million to a half million oysters. We sell them, and that pays off their loan. After they're paid off, each of them will get their tenth of the equipment, and oysters. You work your butt off, but it's not a bad gig."

Di Pietrantonio said obtaining the permits, navigating the politics, and the amount of paperwork for the new program was a hassle, "But we were persistent. Everything's going to work out."

Oysters are the wedding feast at the marriage of economic opportunity and environmentalism – in line with WEI's mission.

"We need about 40 lines to grow about one million oysters," Ballard said. "Each one of these (oysters) is filtering about 50 gallons of water a day, cleaning the water."

Di Pietrantonio said it is a rewarding feeling to know the system is cleaning the water and creating an estuary for fish.

"When we started a year ago, you couldn't catch anything but catfish out here," Di Pietrantonio said. "And now you can catch redfish, all kinds of fish. There are even pufferfish out here now. It should help with fisheries too, because of all the fishermen who have lost their jobs."

Ballard said a tumbler that separates oysters according to size was purchased from Maryland, but Dwyer is working with War Eagle Welding at Wakulla High School to perhaps build a custom tumbler for WEI to suit their specific needs. This is a cross-benefit for both schools, and the industry.

"We want Wakulla County to benefit from what we do," Ballard said. "I don't want to buy the cages from Australia, and I don't want to buy the tumbler from Maryland. I want to buy it here."

The next class starts around Sept. 1, with 10 new students

coming in needing 10 new leases. Otherwise, potential students are waitlisted until spots are available.

"We'll do this every year," Ballard said. "My goal is to have 500 leases out in Oyster Bay in Wakulla County and the surrounding area. That would be 500 new jobs – and more than that. Sharon has already hired help to keep up with what we're doing. The estimate is – it takes two people to work an acre and a half fulltime. That's why we're here too, to help the economy."

Ballard said the oysters wholesale for 50 cents each, and 900,000 oysters can fit on one lease. If they were all to live, divide that in half, and it equals \$450,000.

"But that's in a perfect world, and we don't live in a perfect world," Ballard said. But still, the profits are projected to be fabulous. "This is not subsistence living. This is – 'in a few years I can afford a summer home' – kind of living. We're excited about that for them."

As Ballard helped to install the new poles, he stepped on a long, sharp tack attached to the sandy bottom, formerly used to tack down clams. Blood dribbled from his foot as he washed the puncture with rubbing alcohol and made plans for a tetanus shot.

Injuries and nature encounters are common in this watery office space. Sharon Fitzpatrick froze as the water became violently disrupted several yards away, and a shiny fin broke the surface. It turned out to be a dolphin chasing a fish, not a shark. The curious shark that visited on June 4 was much smaller.

"It's the best office in the world," Ballard said, who comes out at least once a week. "But when it's cold, you still have to get out here. There's money to be made, it helps the environment, and gets people jobs."

Intern Taylor Brooke was assisting on Alligator Harbor that day. Brooke is majoring in fisheries and aquaculture at Auburn University. "This is what I want to do," he said. "When I graduate, I'm coming back here." In fact, Brooke sees so much potential in the industry that he turned down grad school, and a paying summer job.

Oysters growing...

continued

Di Pietrantonio, 24, said she is already developing a business plan. She will call her oyster aquaculture business "Half-Shell Hotties."

"This has been a really big learning experience," Di Pietrantonio said. "Huge opportunities can unfold from this."

Sharon Fitzgerald disappeared occasionally to pull the old tacks from the seafloor. While oyster aquaculture is hard work, she said, "I'm all in, and I encourage other women to do this. I'd rather work out here than at a desk any day."

Fitzgerald got her feet wet in the aquaculture business, farming clams for years prior. She has already established her business, called Playing Hooky Enterprise.

Ballard said the past year has been a learning process, and the knowledge will compound for future classes.

"We made some mistakes learning, but we've been doing this for a year now," Ballard said. "Vibrio (bacterial infection) could happen, a hurricane five could happen and this is gone. But other than those two things, I think we have a good handle on it."

To get involved, call WEI 922-6290.

TCC announces GED graduation

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

Tallahassee Community College will host TCC's annual General Educational Development graduation ceremony at 6 p.m., Thursday, June 18, in Turner Auditorium on TCC's main campus.

Approximately 25 individuals will receive their GED diploma on Thursday. Students who have completed TCC's English for Speakers of Other Languages program will also be recognized.

The keynote speaker will be Bret Ingerman, TCC's vice president for information technology. The ceremony will also feature remarks from student Guedj Dominique, who came to the U.S. from Haiti at the age of 3, eventually dropped out of high school in Miami, and now, after several attempts, has earned his GED diploma.

In addition, TCC will award the second annual Dream Big Scholarship in partnership with Moore Communications Group.

A video to be played during the ceremony will capture the diverse stories of the program's students.

For information, contact Marilyn Barnes at barnesm@tcc.fl.edu or 850-201-6644.

TCC announces new Director for Academic Enrichment

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College has announced that Richard Murgó will serve as director for academic enrichment during the 2015-16 academic year. Murgó will oversee TCC's Academic Enrichment Initiative, working closely with the Honors Program, Global Gateway Program, and STEM Center. He will also assist with TCC's Distance Learning Board and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Leadership.

Murgó has been with the college since 1994. He is a professor of political science and faculty adviser of TCC's award-winning Model United Nations team.

Murgó succeeds TCC professor John Schultz, director of forensics, in this one-year appointment.

TCC recognizes 35 GED grads

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College hosted its General Educational Development graduation ceremony on June 18, recognizing 35 students who have earned their GED diploma during the 2014-15 academic year. Students who have completed TCC's English for Speakers of Other Languages program were also recognized.

The keynote speaker was Bret Ingerman, TCC's vice president for information technology. The ceremony also featured remarks from student Guedj Dominique. Student Lindsey Spears received the second annual Dream Big Scholarship sponsored by Moore Communications Group.

Tallahassee Fire Academy to graduate nearly 30 recruits

JADE BULECZA

WTLX

Nearly 30 recruits will graduate from the Tallahassee Fire Academy this week.

It's the 17th class to graduate. It's all happening Tuesday at the Florida Public Safety Institute's conference center.

Quincy Fire Chief Scott Haire is the guest speaker.

Individual awards will be presented, including the Executive Director's Award and the Leadership Award. The Isaac Royal Memorial Award will be given in honor of a firefighter who died in 1981 at the age of 26.

"Our approach is built around providing our recruits with the proper foundation and mindset to better serve their future departments and communities," said Melvin Stone, the Tallahassee Fire Academy director.

These graduates are scheduled to take the state examination on July 1.

Applications are being accepted now for Fire Academy Class 019, which begins January 11, 2016.

For information, contact Melvin Stone at (850) 558-4366 or stoneme@tcc.fl.edu.

Local sexual assault report shows progress, further needs

JESSICA LOWE-MINOR

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (MY VIEW)

The statistics are staggering. Nearly one in five American women will be a victim of rape in her lifetime. In the vast majority of assaults, the perpetrator is someone who was known to the victim, and yet only 32 percent of rapes are ever reported to law enforcement and only 2 percent of rapists ever spend a day in jail.

Earlier this week, the Tallahassee/Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (CSWG) released its "Report on Sexual Violence Response in Tallahassee/Leon County." The report represents a 13-month effort to: 1.) learn what local policies, procedures and services were already in place; 2.) determine what are considered national "best practices"; and 3.) develop recommendations to improve response and prevention efforts.

The CSWG consulted with more than 50 stakeholders and community members who helped collect data and verify findings. There have been several institutional advancements in the past year.

•Tallahassee Community College's Police Department entered into a collaborative relationship with Refuge House.

•FSU established its "kNOw More Sexual Violence" campaign.

•FAMU implemented a new sexual misconduct policy.

•The Tallahassee Police Department partnered with End Violence Against Women International to update the department's sexual assault investigation policies as well as train its sworn personnel on best practices.

•The city of Tallahassee, Leon County and TCC all instituted improved personnel policies regarding domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking.

•Tallahassee Memorial Hospital and Refuge House began work on a new, standalone facility for victims of sexual violence.

These advances represent a major step in the right direction. Now we need to continue moving forward by ensuring that our local law enforcement agencies have enough personnel to conduct thorough investigations

and that their staffs are specifically trained to work collaboratively with victims.

Additionally, we must do a better job with data collection. Because institutions maintain their own statistics, the community does not know the number of unique cases that are reported each year. Our community needs a shared data system to track locally occurring incidents of sexual violence.

Finally, we can do more to prevent sexual assaults from occurring in the first place. By implementing a community-wide bystander intervention program, we can address the root causes of sexual assault and empower concerned citizens to make a difference. Such training also focuses on cultural stereotypes about rape and helps foster a better understanding of gender dynamics, sexual violence and consent.

While there have been a number of positive steps taken over the past year, there is still much we can do to improve services to victims, hold perpetrators accountable and create a safer community for all of our residents.

Governor vetoes local projects

Wakulla Environmental, St. Marks Lighthouse on Gov. Scott's veto list

WAKULLA NEWS

Gov. Rick Scott unexpectedly signed the \$78.7 billion state budget on Tuesday morning, but line-item vetoed more than \$461.4 million in spending, including several Wakulla projects.

This is not only a disappointment to communities statewide, but Wakulla Environmental Institute, St. Marks Refuge Association, and the City of St. Marks were let down too.

Gov. Scott told reporters Tuesday that because it is taxpayer money, not government money, he is going to make sure it is spent wisely. Scott vetoed the items following the end of a legislative special session to pass a budget.

A \$1.23 million appropriation to buy more than 150 acres of additional land for Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute was vetoed.

That money also could have been used for the planned seafood incubation center.

Al Moran, vice president of Communications at TCC, said he just heard about the veto on Tuesday afternoon.

"It's rather disappointing that WEI, which has been producing wonderful things for the economy and jobs in Wakulla County, is not receiving the funding it requested."

St. Marks River Boardwalk, with an appropriation of \$200,000, did not make the cut either.

The St. Marks Refuge Association Inc., the Friends group for the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, has received notice that the final state budget included a veto of the \$250,000 appropriation to begin work to repair the historic St. Marks Lighthouse.

"This appropriation would have enabled us to begin the major structural repairs to correct years of neglect and deterioration," said Christopher Weber, Facilities Specialist for the St. Marks NWR which owns the lighthouse.

"We are so grateful to Sen. Bill Montford and Rep. Halsey Beshears for all their hard work on our behalf," said Tom Baird, Chairman of the Association Lighthouse Fund Raising Committee.

The total cost to fully repair the lighthouse is estimated to be \$1.6 million.

The St. Marks Lighthouse is the oldest lighthouse on the Gulf Coast and the second oldest in Florida, and is an iconic symbol of this region. A fully restored lighthouse is expected to be a significant tourist draw. The Refuge Association has also applied for several grants to help fund the major repairs needed, and is seeking corporate support as well.

Scott signed the budget in his office without a public ceremony.

TCC taps Texas administrator as provost

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College has named Feleccia Moore-Davis as its new provost. Moore-Davis comes to TCC from Lone Star College-CyFair in Houston, where she served as vice president for instruction from 2008 to 2014. She previously worked as LSC-CyFair's dean of business, math, communications and computer information technology.

As vice president of instruction, Moore-Davis supervised strategic planning, outcomes assessments and institutional effectiveness measures, leading student success initiatives that transformed the culture of LSC-CyFair. She was the college's chief academic officer and oversaw six instructional divisions.

In addition to her administrative work, Moore-Davis initiated a Diversity and Inclusion Council on LSC-CyFair's campus.

Moore-Davis has lectured at the University of Houston since 2011. She earned her doctorate in organizational leadership from Regent University.

She will begin her tenure before the start of the 2015-2016 academic year.

INIE to commemorate its one-year anniversary

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The Institute for Nonprofit Innovation and Excellence will celebrate its first anniversary with a lunch and learn presentation Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the TCC Capitol Center.

"Insider Update: Summarizing the 2015 Session from a Nonprofit Perspective" will feature Florida Nonprofit Alliance lobbyist Lester Abberger and United Way of Florida president Ted Granger. The panel discussion will address the impacts of the 2015 state congressional session on the nonprofit sphere and discuss the potential implications for organizations' staffs, boards, donors and clients.

The Institute launched on June 24, 2014. In its first year, INIE has attracted over 80 members and conducted more than 40 educational events and workshops geared to increase the Big Bend region's nonprofit capacity.

"INIE has been a great partner, looking for ways to help us be more effective and supporting us as we try to find additional resources," said Jim Croteau, interim CEO of America's Second Harvest of the Big Bend.

Special refreshments will be available to INIE members following the presentation and discussion.

To register for the lunch and learn, visit www.theinstitutefor nonprofits.org. For information, contact Jessica Lowe-Minor at (850) 201-9766 or loweje@tcc.fl.edu.

Sound bytes June/July: Local honors

850 MAGAZINE

SmartAsset.com, an investment website, ranked Tallahassee Community College No. 8 in the country for the combined factors of cost of education, return on investment and student success rate. Among the top 10 schools, TCC had the fourth-lowest in-state tuition cost and the fifth-highest graduation and transfer rate.

Sean Pittman of The Pittman Law Group has been named second vice chair of the Orange Bowl Committee.

John Schrowang, president of the Red Elephant Pizza and Grill, was recently honored with the Governor's Business Ambassador Award, which is given to individuals and business in recognition of their efforts to create jobs and opportunities for Florida families. The Red Elephant began with 60 employees in Tallahassee and today has seven locations in two different states with over 400 employees.

Legal Services of North Florida Inc. awarded the Jack McLean Champion for Legal Services award to Chief Judge Charles A. Francis at its annual Jazz for Justice fundraiser. Francis is chief judge of the 2nd Judicial Circuit consisting of Leon, Gadsden, Wakulla, Franklin, Jefferson and Liberty counties. Local signs and visual graphics provider FASTSIGNS® of Tallahassee, owned by John and Marilyn Buck, received the Pinnacle Club Award as one of the top centers in sales volume out of more than 560 locations worldwide at the 2015 FASTSIGNS International Convention.

Tadlock Roofing has been awarded the service industry's coveted Angie's List Super Service Award, reflecting an exemplary year of service provided to members of the local community and the consumer review site in 2014.

Gigi Rollini, a shareholder and attorney practicing in the Tallahassee firm of Messer Capareello P.A., has been recognized by the Florida Association of Women Lawyers as one of Florida's "Extraordinary Women."

Tallahassee Community College's television station, TCC22, recently took home the gold for the production of "The SKiNNY on Paying for College" at the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations' Paragon Awards.

Tallahassee's Optimal Bagging won as the top technology startup at Jacksonville's One Spark crowdfunding festival, taking home \$15,000.

Hancock Bank recently appointed seven new members to its Tallahassee market advisory board: Chris Dudley, managing partner at Southern Strategy Group; Dr. Marc J. Inglese, a practicing physician and partner at Dermatology Associates of Tallahassee; Dr. Floyd R. Jaggears, managing physician partner and interim chief executive officer of Tallahassee Orthopedic Clinic; Michael Kalifeh, a shareholder at Thomas Howell Ferguson; Felicia Leborgne Nowels, a partner at Akerman LLP; John B. "Jay" Smith II, vice president and owner of Ajax Building Corporation; and Bruce Wiener, a Florida Bar Board of Legal Specialization and Education Certified Real Estate Lawyer at Gardner, Bist, Wiener, Bowden, Bush, Dee, LaVia & Wright P.A.

The Capital Medical Society celebrated Doctors' Day in March by honoring two local doctors for their accomplishments: Dr. Alvie "Al" McCully with the I.B. Harrison M.D. Humanitarian Award and Dr. Armand Cognetta with the Outstanding Physician Award.

Canita Peterson, with Tallahassee-based Thomas Howell Ferguson P.A., has been recognized by the National Academy of Public Accounting Professionals as one of the Top 10 Public Accounting Professionals in Florida for 2014.

Mark E. Holcomb, a partner with Madsen Goldman & Holcomb LLP in Tallahassee, has been named the Gerald T. Hart Outstanding Tax Attorney of the Year for 2014-15 by the Tax Section of The Florida Bar.

Alfreda Blackshear, a pediatrician and owner of Alfreda D. Blackshear Pediatrics, has been elected treasurer of the FAMU Foundation. Randy Guemple, a staff accountant with Carroll & Company CPA since 2004, has been named to the Foundation board.

Valerie Hubbard, director of planning services for the Real Estate Practice Group of Akerman LLP, has started her term as president of the American Planning Association's professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Underwater Wakulla

GREGG STANTON
WAKULLA NEWS

We talk to many people who stop by with someone picking up supplies on their way to the shore. Most are not divers, but clearly interested. They have a wide variety of excuses why they have not yet ventured there: they can't equalize their ears, they can't see very well, claustrophobia, they fear for predicted hearing loss, they easily get cold, they are too young, they are too old, training/equipment is too expensive. All are valid reasons, that limit a person's horizon. Diving underwater is not for everyone!

At 16 years of age, I was told all of these and more reasons for not diving, notwithstanding the "you weren't given gills so stay out of the water". Fortunately, I was a teenager and knew everything. At 15, I had been introduced to a reef in the Bay of Siam, spending 8 hours (and a sun burned back) discovering a new world underwater. My frustration was that I could not breath underwater. What we know as SCUBA was invented a little over a decade before, something I discovered when I moved to Hawaii a year later. With no money but a burning desire to live underwater, I found a way to get training, get my dad to join me (as I was a minor) and soon found myself diving every weekend. By the time I was 18, I was one of the club's instructors! College became possible as a marine biologist! How did this happen?

Hawaii had, and still has dive clubs. I joined one near where I lived. They required a small membership fee but included training and more importantly, they were a social group to mentor young know-it-alls, like myself, keeping me in check. Training took six months at an afternoon a week, when the volunteer instructors were available. When I needed a regulator however, someone had one I could borrow. Another guided me to a junk yard where I could secure a CO2 cylinder, and helped me adapt it to accept a diving regulator. Others would take me diving and be sure I stayed within the dive table limits.

Of course, that was then (mid 1960s), and this is now. Commercial classes at the YMCA back then, were running \$99, including equipment and breathing gas. Today, a similar class will cost 5 times that, 50 years later. The class time requirements for quality education however, have

not changed, around 30 hours plus open water dives. But what is missing is the mentoring that comes with a dive club. **Tallahassee Community College offers a quality 3 credit class called Introduction to Professional Diving, that includes basic certification across 16 weeks. Many past graduates have suggested a dive club would have helped mentor graduates of that program.**

Within the past decade Wakulla County Dive Club worked to open dive sites in the county. At last count they had 16 sites open. More importantly, it provided mentoring and the social support to young and old divers alike. Regrettably, the club collapsed a year ago. Folks have been encouraging our dive center to revive the club idea and participate more directly, perhaps like my old Pearl Divers Club did in Hawaii. The spear fishing tournament we put on earlier this year could be a club function, slow quality training over several months a club function, and monthly social events to invigorate the passion of breathing underwater, a club objective.

Let me know your thoughts as we design a better diving future: greggstanton@wakulladiving.com

Add All-Star to Cain's wonderful success story

JIM HENRY

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Lorenzo Cain played one season 11 years ago for the Tallahassee Baseball Club.

But, as been Cain's modus operandi since he first stepped on the baseball field at Madison County High, the player made a lasting impression on his summer travel team.

"He was just a kid full of life who loved to compete and get after it and play the game of baseball," TBC coach Robbie Zimmerman said Sunday afternoon.

"He wanted to absorb everything. And it was amazing how much he improved from the beginning of the summer to the end of summer. He just blossomed. All the kids rallied around him. He's such a great kid."

That kid, now 29 years old and in his sixth season in the major leagues – and fifth with the Kansas City Royals – is expected to be named Sunday night as a first-time All-Star and starter.

After months of online voting by fans, the starting lineups for the 86th MLB All-Star Game scheduled for Tuesday, July 14 at Cincinnati's Great American Ballpark will be announced on ESPN.

Cain, a center fielder who his batting .309 for the American League Central-leading Royals, led the voting for AL –outfielders when the last balloting update was released Monday.

Jeremy Haynes, Cain's best friend since high school who recently completed his first season as the volunteer assistant coach at Florida State, couldn't be more thrilled – and proud.

"What he's accomplish, I am just so happy for him," said Haynes, who remains in contact with Cain via telephone calls and text messages. (Cain and his wife and young child live in Oklahoma during the offseason).

"To see where he started and where he is now, it's so cool," Haynes continued.

"I am so happy for him. He's going out there every night and enjoying the game of baseball. It's a neat story, and now this is something he can add to."

Cain's story is, well, Hollywood.

When he showed for baseball tryouts at Madison County High as a sophomore, he had never played the game. He didn't have a glove. He didn't know the rules.

Of course, the rest is history.

He continued to work, continued to improve and continued to impress.

Cain eventually started for the Cowboys and was drafted in the 17th round by Milwaukee following his senior season in 2004.

As a draft-and-follow who elected to wait to sign, Cain played that summer for TBC, which is made up of high school-aged players.

He appeared in a team-high 39 games, batted .386 and usually caught a ride to the games with Zimmerman.

"We really spent a lot of time with Lorenzo and my family loved him," Zimmerman.

"He became our team leader, a lead-off hitter who set the table for our offense."

After Cain played one season at Tallahassee Community College, he elected to sign with Milwaukee prior to the 2005 draft.

Known for his athleticism, work ethic and mega-watt smile, Cain has developed into a rising talent, fan favorite and surely a first-time All-Star.

Way to go Lo.

"What he is doing is just tremendous," Haynes said.

"All the work he has put in, it's great to see what he's accomplishing."

TCC Honors

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (LOCAL BRIEFS)

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) announced its 2014-15 Academic Student-Athlete Awards, and Tallahassee Community College picked up seven honors.

Five student-athletes--softball's Danielle Ekberg, Taesha DuBoise and Karley Yeager, and baseball's Cameron Paley and Matt Schaeffer--were recognized as well as the Eagles' softball and baseball teams for their stellar performance in the classroom.

Ekberg, a former standout at Lincoln High School, posted a 4.0 grade point average, thus earning the NJCAA's highest honor, the Pinnacle Award for Academic Excellence.

DuBoise (Stockbridge, Georgia), Yeager (Arden, North Carolina), Paley (Jacksonville) and Schaeffer (Port St. Lucie) all received the NJCAA's Exemplary Academic Achievement Award, presented to student-athletes with a grade point average between 3.60 and 3.79.

TCC's softball and baseball teams received honorable mention recognition as NJCAA Academic Teams of the Year by assembling a minimum 3.0 grade point average.

Tallahassee's softball team had the highest GPA (3.38) among schools from Region 8. Meanwhile, the Eagles' baseball team, with a 3.05 team GPA, was one of five schools from Region 8 to make the academic honor roll.

Wells Fargo donates to Model United Nations

CHRONICLE

Tallahassee Southern Model United Nations (TSMUN), one of Florida's premiere Model United Nations conferences, is the recipient of Wells Fargo's East Tallahassee Branch's charity of choice.

"On behalf of my charity, I'm very thankful for Wells Fargo's generous contribution," said Bugra Demirel, president of TSMUN's Board of Directors. "I would like to congratulate Wendy, Wells Fargo Big Bend District Manager, and her team for putting in great effort to be involved with the community."

One of nine organizations recognized during Wells Fargo's annual Community Connection Breakfast, TSMUN received a \$1,000 donation.

"We will make sure students get the best out of each dollar we received through this grant."

With goals to enhance their annual conference in the coming year, TSMUN plans to use the donation to introduce better guest speakers and expand the training opportunities to students, by supplying more resources and technical support.

In addition to providing more resources, TSMUN will continue to offer their current scholarships to Model UN students. **To encourage students to continue their Model UN experience, TSMUN offers students a full scholarship to pursue their education at Tallahassee Community College (TCC), where TCC has a collegiate level Award Winning Model United Nations team.** Going beyond the local Model UN competition, TSMUN has a scholarship for students actively interested in continuing their Model UN experience with International Model United Nations.

Following their first conference in 1997, TSMUN has strived to further student's international education by providing students with a positive learning environment and an opportunity to grow as individuals and leaders.

"Seeing the support from our community partners and Alumni, we will work even harder to make sure we can change more lives for better."

Former TCC player Lorenzo Cain voted to start in MLB game

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Lorenzo Cain has delivered another historic first for Tallahassee Community College.

On Sunday, Cain, the Kansas City Royals' center-fielder, was announced as one of the American League's starting outfielders in the 2015 Major League Baseball All-Star Game. And when he takes the field next Tuesday at Cincinnati's Great American Ball Park, he will become the first former Eagle to appear in baseball's "Midsummer Classic."

Last fall, Cain garnered Most Valuable Player honors in the American League Championship Series and was Tallahassee Community College's first former player to appear in the World Series.

"It's a tremendous honor for a tremendous individual," said Eagles head coach Mike McLeod. "After the season he had (in 2014) and the postseason success, he's still such a humble guy and you can tell he appreciates where he's come from — I guarantee he's not taking anything for granted.

"I'm very happy for him and proud he's an Eagle."

Cain received more than 12 million votes (12,399,127), the sixth-highest total of any player in this year's fan balloting, and finished second only to Los Angeles Angels centerfielder Mike Trout among American League outfielders. According to reports, Cain is expected to start in right field, a po-



The Royals' Lorenzo Cain played at TCC and Madison County High School.

sition he has played on occasion, including games 3-5 of last year's Fall Classic.

He was one of four Royals voted to start next week's all-star game.

Cain signed with Tallahassee Community College out of nearby Madison County High School in 2004 and played the 2005 campaign under the tutelage of McLeod. After batting .341 with two home runs, 44 RBIs and 19 stolen bases in 53 games as the Eagles' everyday centerfielder — and

earning second-team All-Panhandle Conference honors — Cain turned pro, signing with the Milwaukee Brewers under the now defunct draft-and-follow rule.

His popularity has been on the rise since a breakout season in 2014, which culminated in the World Series appearance, where the Royals fell to the San Francisco Giants in the seventh and deciding game.

The MLB All-Star Game can be seen locally on WTLH Fox 49.

TCC Havana campus locked down during bomb threat

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

The classrooms at Tallahassee Community College's Florida Public Safety Complex was locked down for two hours Thursday after a reported bomb threat. Students found a note taped to the ceiling in one of the classrooms reading "Bomb" and alerted police.

The classroom building was evacuated as the Leon County Sheriff's Office bomb squad conducted a search of the building and gave the all clear around 12:41 p.m. without finding an explosive.

Time to sign up for GED classes at TCC

GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

The fall is a great time to get back to school. Tallahassee Community College is now accepting applications for this fall's GED test preparation classes. Both online and face-to-face classes will be offered.

Fall GED classes run from Aug. 24 to Dec. 10.

Students may choose from face-to-face GED classes offered in the morning or in the evening. Students may take the online classes at any time, and they may work from their own computer or use computers in the TCC Center for Workforce Development's computer lab, which is open Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to noon.

Students who are interested in preparing to earn their GED diploma should apply for admission to TCC online in order to create a TCC Passport account. The application is free.

Students can then go into their online TCC Passport account to register for the Test of Adult Basic Education. Students may also come to the Center for Workforce Development if they would like help in signing up to take the test. The TABE is a placement test that tells students which GED class will meet their needs. There is a fee of \$25 to take the test.

After taking the TABE, students can register for the specific GED class that is right for them. To register for online or face-to-face GED classes, students should come to the TCC Center for Workforce Development on either Aug. 13 or Aug. 20 during one of these times: 9-11 a.m., 1-3 p.m. or 5-6 p.m. Staff will be available to walk students through the course registration process at these events.

Tuition for GED classes is \$30.

For information, call 850-201-8760 or email workforce@tcc.fl.edu.

Stormy weather downs trees

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A sea breeze that moved into Tallahassee early Thursday kicked off a series of showers and thunderstorms, according to the National Weather Service. Wind gusts on the Florida State campus were measured at 41 miles per hour, while wind speeds as high as 44 mph were reported at Tallahassee International Airport. Through 5 p.m., 1.07 inches of rain had been recorded.

A severe weather warning was issued, and several trees were reported as being downed in the Killlearn Acres Subdivision. Once the storms had passed, weather stabilized.

As of 7 p.m., some moderate storms were lingering to the west of Tallahassee, around the Marianna area that could get close to Tallahassee at about 9 p.m.

Tallahassee Community College canceled evening classes on the main campus because of a power outage.

Friday is expected to be a more active day, with rain chances at about 80 percent. With the volume of rain there is potential to see localized flooding, so residents are advised to take precautions.

Crowded county may get a new high school

AMANDA CLAIRE CURCIO
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

For years, classroom portables functioned as Band-Aids to overcrowding problems caused by steady hikes in student enrollment, but approval for a new high school could be just around the corner.

The Department of Education is crunching the district's current and projected student enrollment numbers as well as school capacity figures before giving the go ahead, which should be handed down within the next two months.

Pending further red tape – the School Board must also vote – the high school will be located in southeast Tallahassee, on a portion of land owned by The St. Joe Company, a timber management operation.

"One of my top priorities is to get this new high school started and built," said Superintendent Jackie Pons. "We are constantly growing so it's long overdue."

In addition to the cities of leased portables that can be seen propped up around permanent school buildings, millions of dollars in capital outlay projects tell the same story – LCS is running out of space. In 1999, Chiles High School opened, marking the last time a high school was added to the growing district.

Row after row of approved projects detail expansive new classroom wings that will add eight or more classrooms and labs to elementary and middle schools. In some cases, that may not be enough to get all students out of overflow classrooms.

Talks of building a new school, which could cost nearly \$50 million, have been ongoing since the penny tax was renewed in 2012, said LCS Construction Director Danny Albritton. Revenue from the tax is allowed to be used to pay for a DOE-approved new elementary, middle and high school.

Albritton said officials are ironing out land exchange details – 50 acres of St. Joe Company's land bordering Southwood would be traded for 100 acres near Tram Road.

Rezoning the district is inevitable if a new school were to open, but it is too early to tell how the neighborhoods would be carved, Pons added in a follow-up interview.

Under school choice, students outside the zoned area can opt to go there as well.

Pons hopes that the high school will directly benefit students and the community.

"The school will give us an opportunity to put in newer technology features, develop programs that partner with Tallahassee Community College and provide industry-level certifications that better prepare our students," he said. "Adding this school would also offer economic development for the south side of town."

Losing a fighter in Thomas Jones; sharing sage advice

KELLY OTTE

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Tallahassee's nonprofit sector lost an important member with the passing of Thomas Jones last week. I attended his packed memorial service and now my brain is churning about so many different things. I thought about his 12 years of service to dozens of nonprofits through his work for the City. It made me think how one person can make the world better without being the Grand Marshal of a parade. I met Thomas when he was an MSW intern for the Big Bend Homeless Coalition. The first time I saw him he was surrounded by the computers that were the start of the new Homeless Management Information System. I was impressed with him and we hit it off immediately. I clearly remember thinking that someone needed to snap him up because he was going places.

Thomas worked for years with Pat Holliday and her team as a part of the Community Human Services Partnership (CHSP). When CHSP introduced logic models to the grant process we were required to attend training to learn how to complete them. Thomas was the trainer at the workshops I attended during which an attendee blurted, "This is so stupid." Without missing a beat Thomas said, "I wouldn't describe it that way but stupid or not you need to learn how to do this."

At his memorial service many people spoke about the impact Thomas had on their nonprofit. He spent hours helping people fill out their CHSP applications, helped them solve problems, spoke up at meetings, supported them, and even helped some file their original legal paperwork. He knew that if nonprofits were stronger the people in Tallahassee were served better. Darryl Jones described Thomas as someone not leading the parade or following it, but standing right in the middle and walking with us to do the hard work.

Honoring Thomas made me think about all of the thousands of people that work in the sector but aren't leading the parade. Many could not fill the gym at Lincoln Neighborhood Center for their memorial like Thomas did, but they make our community better. I'm reminded that extraordinary leadership is exhibited by people who volunteer for nonprofits or whose work in government or business is focused on helping the sector thrive. And while the nonprofit sector is our way of improving the quality of life in Tallahassee, our partners in government are working just as hard as we are.

Changing subjects and on a lighter note, I reached out and asked some folks who work or volunteer in nonprofits to share with us a quote that motivates them, sage advice, something funny or just random thoughts they might have. Here they are for your enjoyment.

•"There's no better way to connect with your neighbors and make a difference than to volunteer with one of our many Tallahassee nonprofits. So take a risk, step out there, and reap the rewards of volunteering!" — Mary Coburn, Christmas Connection volunteer & FSU Vice President for Student Affairs.

•"The best advice I received was a professor who told us to spend time learning what we are really good at and what our passion is. He said if we could find a way to combine those two things into a career, we would be most likely to achieve personal and professional success." — Kelly-Ann Fasano, Director of Development at Elder Care Services.

•"I am always inspired by the words of Dr. George Washington Carver, 'Do common things uncommonly well, and you will gain the attention of the world.' This informs my work and service still." — Darryl Jones, ED Bethel Community Development Corporation

•"Always ask for minutes and financials before you say 'Yes' to serving on a Board. READ THEM and understand them. Educated board members become great board members." — Kim Smiley, Market President, Centennial Bank; Leadership Tallahassee Board Chair; Goodwood Museum & Gardens, Board Treasurer.

•"The quality of a community is often measured by the depth and breadth of the people volunteering for causes they believe in." — Bryan Desloge, Leon County Commissioner

•**"It's hard to resist just fixing the problem for someone that needs your help. However, if you take the time to 'teach a man to fish' you've not only changed that person's life but you've also opened up free time to help so many others 'learn how to fish.' In addition, the person you helped to fish is now in a position to teach someone else."** — Kimberly Moore, Vice President, Tallahassee Community College

TCC offers GED prep classes

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College will offer GED test preparation classes that run Aug. 24-Dec. 10.

Face-to-face classes are offered mornings or evenings. Online classes are also available.

Before registering for a GED class, students must enroll in TCC and take a placement test. Students should then come to the TCC Center for Workforce Development on either Aug. 13 or Aug. 20 during one of these times: 9-11 a.m., 1-3 p.m. or 5-6 p.m. to get help with registration.

There is a fee of \$25 to take the placement test, and tuition for the GED class is \$30.

Call (850) 201-8760 or email AE@tcc.fl.edu for information or assistance.

TCC's O'Neil authors book about children and the outdoors

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Maureen O'Neil, associate professor of early childhood education at Tallahassee Community College, has recently had a book published by Kendall Hunt. "The Little Green Guide" includes a children's story and activities that encourage teachers and families to get outside with their preschoolers to explore nature and have fun. The guide includes easy-to-understand lesson plans that can be adapted to any preschool setting.

Family continues legacy of local fallen soldier

AMANDA CLAIRE CURCIO
TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

Army Pfc. Brandon King's plan to graduate college after a tour in Kandahar, Afghanistan, ended when his artillery unit was hit by small arms and sniper fire.

The 23-year-old flew home to Tallahassee in a coffin blanketed by an American flag and escorted by honor guards in crisp uniforms.

Since then — King was killed in action more than five years ago — his mother Freda King and family members keep his memory alive by helping Tallahassee Community College students continue their education.

The Brandon M. King Scholarship has raised more than \$30,000 for TCC students since it was created in 2011.

"My son wanted to come home and go to college, and in this way we are allowing someone else to carry on their own dreams, too," Freda King said.

The fifth annual fundraiser held Saturday evening collected nearly \$6,000, exceeding Freda's goal by \$1,000.

"This fundraiser has generated an awesome response from community," she said. "It's amazing, it's inspiring. We don't want his loss and sacrifice to be forgotten."

The family is still accepting last-minute donations, which can be made online at tcc.fl.edu/foundation or by mailing a check to the TCC Foundation at 444 Appleyard Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32304. Donors need to designate contributions to the Brandon M. King Memorial Scholarship fund.

TCC offering GED prep classes in Quincy

HAVANA HERALD (SCHOOL NEWS)

Tallahassee Community College will offer GED test preparation classes that run August 24-December 10.

Gadsden County residents may take classes at the TCC Quincy House located at 216 North Adams Street in downtown Quincy or at the main campus in Tallahassee.

Face-to-face and online classes are available.

Before registering for a GED class, students must enroll in TCC and take a placement test. There is a fee of \$25 to take the placement test, and tuition for the GED class is \$30.

For information about how to register, call the Quincy House at (850) 558-3620 or the main campus at (850) 201-8760, or email workforce@tcc.fl.edu.

FDLE seeks more crime investigators

JIM TURNER

SARASOTA HERALD-TRIBUNE

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement wants more investigators to handle an increase in shooting incidents involving officers at other police agencies across the state.

The department next week will present Gov. Rick Scott and the Cabinet an outline of its budget proposals, which include requests for a boost in salaries for forensic lab technicians and for additional staff to help investigate officer-involved shootings and use-of-force cases.

"Over the past five years, requests for these investigations have increased over 100 percent," department Legislative Affairs Director Ron Draa told aides for the Cabinet and Scott this week. "Last year alone, we saw a 40 percent increase, which accounts for about 25,000 investigative hours or equates to about 14 (full-time employees)."

The department is often brought in to investigate cases in which local police officers fire their weapons. In the recently completed 2014-2015 budget year, the FDLE opened 63 officer-involved shooting cases at other agencies, up from 48 a year earlier. The department started 29 such investigations in the 2010-2011 budget year, 52 in 2011-2012 and 67 the following year.

Lawmakers this year approved funding for 17 full-time agents to handle use-of-force investigations within the Department of Corrections. However, the Legislature did not back the FDLE's request for \$1.87 million to fill 14 full-time positions to assist in investigations stemming from police being involved in shootings.

The department is still developing its proposals for the 2016 legislative session and has yet to specify overall dollar amounts, Draa said. However, the state law enforcement agency has dollar figures tied to an effort to keep crime-lab analysts from seeking better opportunities.

Draa said the department is proposing a \$10,000 increase to the annual starting pay of crime-lab analysts and a \$12,000 boost to the base pay for senior crime-lab analysts in an effort to make their salaries competitive with counterparts in local agencies and in neighboring states.

"I think our goal is to put them at the average," Draa said. "The challenge with some of the locals is that some of the locals only have two or three analysts and they can pay top dollar. We can't pay our hundreds of analysts top dollar."

Draa said with vacancies among biology technicians around 24 percent, the goal is to "kill the huge influx of people that are leaving."

The department has 193 crime-lab analysts, a position that has a \$40,948 annual starting salary.

The base pay for a senior crime lab analyst is \$43,507. The department has 69 senior analysts.

The issue of pay in the crime lab has been around a while.

Before former FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey was forced from office in December, state Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater expressed concern with the "turnaround" time of investigations going through the FDLE's crime lab and noted that employees in the lab are paid less than their counterparts at other agencies.

Bailey told Scott and the Cabinet on Dec. 9 that the department's lab is seen as a "training ground" and faces "tremendous turnover problems."

Also during a meeting next Wednesday, the Florida Department of Highway and Motor Vehicles will present Scott and the Cabinet with 11 budget requests for the 2016 legislative session worth a combined \$39.8 million.

The proposals include replacing up to 40 vehicles that have been destroyed in crashes and building a new advanced vehicle-driving range for the Florida Highway Patrol academy at the Florida Public Safety Institute.

Susan Carey, chief financial officer for the department, said the driving range is to provide a more "real-life pursuit" experience than the existing range.

"What we've seen is that our current driving facilities at the academy are somewhat antiquated and place some limitations on the types of driving exposure that the academy troops can do," Carey said of the need for the proposed \$2.8 million driving range.

TCC dean to receive honor

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College's Marge Banocy-Payne will be inducted into the Florida College System Activities Association Hall of Fame.

Banocy-Payne, dean of the Division of Communications and Humanities, will receive the honor for her support of the nationally recognized TCC forensics (speech and debate) team. The team recently won its ninth consecutive state championship.

Banocy-Payne will be recognized Friday, Nov. 13, at the Association of Florida Colleges' Annual Meeting and Conference in Orlando.

English for Speakers of Other Languages class begins soon

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College is registering adults for its English for Speakers of Other Languages course that will run Aug. 24 through Dec. 10. The class will meet Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to noon, on TCC's campus.

The ESOL course blends technology with face-to-face lessons on how to read, write, listen to and speak English. Tuition for the ESOL class is \$30.

New students should attend an ESOL registration session on Aug. 17 or Aug. 18 from 9 a.m. to noon at the TCC Center for Workforce Development.

Students will return to TCC on Aug. 19 to take the ESOL placement test. Call 850-201-8760 or write workforce@tcc.fl.edu for information.

TCC Center taking shape in Quincy

KENDRICK BROWN
GADSDEN COUNTY TIMES

Construction of the Tallahassee Community College Gadsden Center has finally begun, and college representatives expect the school to be operational as soon as February 2016.

When a ceremonial groundbreaking for the center was held this past November, officials announced the Center would be operational by this coming October, but Roger Milton of TCC's Quincy House said construction-related issues created delays.

Al Moran, Vice President of Operations and Marketing for TCC, said TCC began its Gadsden County initiatives a little more than 10 years ago when it opened the Quincy House. Their goals for the county were, and still are, to create thriving after-school and summer programs for children, provide workforce programs for youth and adults and contribute to the county's economic development goals. He said the Gadsden Center will help the college more effectively accomplish those goals.

"With this new Gadsden Center, the college will now have a permanent home in Gadsden County, which I think makes clear the college is committed to having a meaningful presence in Gadsden County," Moran said.

The facility will be approximately 4,700 square feet and sit on a 1.42-acre plot donated to the college by the city of Quincy. Courses will include GED preparation classes, youth programs, ESL courses and a workforce development lab.

One of the first programs to be introduced, and the one expected to provide the most high-paying jobs, is the HVAC training program, which includes air conditioning, refrigeration and heating technology. Initially, HVAC courses will only be offered in the evenings and will require five courses for a total of 1,350 hours.

"That's a career that's pretty high in demand, and we think at TCC that the HVAC program will have lots of Gadsden residents entering into high-paying jobs," Moran said. "These are jobs that are pretty hot."

The college will soon advertise start and registration dates for the HVAC program on billboards in Quincy.

Moran said youth and adult education programs will continue to be offered at the Quincy House.

English for Speakers of Other Languages class begins soon at TCC

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College is now registering interested adults for this fall's English for Speakers of Other Languages course.

The course blends technology with face-to-face traditional lessons to teach students how to read, write, listen to and speak English. Students also learn about American culture.

The ESOL class starts on Aug. 24 and ends on Dec. 10. The class will meet Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. - noon, on TCC's main campus in the Center for Workforce Development.

New students should attend an ESOL registration session on either Aug. 17 or Aug. 18 from 9 a.m. to noon at the TCC Center for Workforce Development. Staff will be available at that session to help students enroll in TCC online. The application is free.

The next day, August 19, students will return to TCC to take the ESOL placement test so the staff can enroll them in class. There is no fee for the test.

Tuition for the ESOL class itself is \$30.

Call 850-201-8760 or email to workforce@tcc.fl.edu for information.

TCC focuses on connecting students, community

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

In the spirit of giving back to the community, there are steps one can take to make a difference. For instance, in addressing homelessness, there are opportunities to volunteer by preparing meals.

On the other hand, there's an opportunity to examine what's contributing to homelessness. That could involve bringing together resources and doing the research to determine if policy changes are needed to increasing affordable housing in a community.

Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh, who is a firm believer in the impact the college can have in addressing community issues and needs, wants to see ideas bubble up that are meaningful, yet measurable in getting students to combine what they are learning in the classroom and how they can enhance that through civic engagement.

To that extent, administrative offices at the Appleyard Drive campus were shut down Friday as an estimated 600 TCC faculty and staff met in the gymnasium to participate in the college's Student Success Summit on Campus and Civic Engagement.

The goal was to provide an environment where campus leaders could focus on civic engagement, a key component of TCC's mission and championed by Murdaugh. Murdaugh restructured the Department of Campus Life into the Department of Campus and Civic Engagement which is under the division of Student Affairs to bring greater emphasis to instilling leadership schools and promoting student interest in important community service projects.

The college has been honored by such organizations as Florida Campus Compact for its civic engagement. Murdaugh, who also serves as chairman of the chamber's Economic Development Council, was at the chamber conference in Sandestin, but delivered a message via video to the gathering.

The ultimate goal is to help students become engaged now in social issues such as poverty, access to healthcare or inequalities in learning environments with the idea that they will continue to be solution-oriented as they enter go out into the work world or continue with their education.

"What we do differently is connect (civic engagement) with what goes on in the classroom," said Sally Search, TCC's vice president for student affairs.

For instance, students studying American History collected duffel bags full of toiletries to deliver to local veterans. Students also volunteer to cook at Veteran's Village.

"As they talk about the Vietnam War, that is an opportunity to connect with local veterans," Search said.

Other examples include using the college's community garden to teach others how to grow fresh foods and reduce grocery bills, or coming up with educational activities for students at a local elementary school.

By mid-afternoon, faculty and staff returned from their focus groups and offered suggestions that included: a literacy initiative, enhancing the connection between the campus and veterans and extending the community garden and food pantry initiatives.

"It's not just going out there and volunteering. It's reflecting on the experience and the difference it makes," Search said. "The reason why we believe this promotes student success is it helps them make connection. It helps them see the bigger picture."

Seeing the bigger picture was part of the message delivered by keynote speaker Stephen Black, founder of the Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility at the University of Alabama. He also founded Impact Alabama, now Impact America, which engages college students in civic activities.

The challenges facing this country are immense, he said, citing college graduation rates, limited reading skills, poverty, housing and other issues. These issues first must be addressed through awareness and then moving beyond volunteering. Instead, young people need to address housing policies and code enforcement issues in addition to volunteering on a Habitat for Humanity project.

TCC focuses on connecting students, community....

continued

To get there, people need a better understanding of the needs of others outside of their circle, he said. For instance, America is a country of self-made billionaires and millionaires, but issues like infant mortality, illiteracy and dismal graduating high-school and college graduation rates are clearly evident.

"We need to connect people who are successful with those who are not, said Black, the grandson of late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black.

Mike Coleman, director of campus and civic engagement, said the purpose of the summit and combining the classroom/community partnership is important.

"My vision is to get a more engaged campus in general so their talents are highlighted," he said. Not only are they giving back, but the students themselves are able to obtain real-life skills."

Coleman said the department could spend money for concerts or invest that money in providing students with experiences that will help give them an edge when they are seeking jobs. For instance, students can give back by teaching computer skills to help someone navigate the internet to find jobs or to start their own business; or addressing poverty through what they learn by working in the community garden.

"In the global market you have to be competitive," he said. "Employers are looking at real-world experiences."

Bret Ingerman, TCC's vice president for information technology, was among those in attendance Friday.

"The idea to make it mandatory is to show this is important enough for the entire college to come together to talk about what is important in this community," Ingerman said. "It tells me as a community college, we take our role in this community very seriously."

College Fair returning to TCC's campus

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Leon County Schools will present its annual College Fair on Monday, Aug. 31, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Tallahassee Community College.

Representatives from more than 40 public and private colleges and universities from around the state and nation will be available to speak with prospective students. The fair will be held in the TCC Student Union.

High school and current college students are welcome. Several TCC programs and organizations will offer information as well.

For information, contact Teri Gimbel at collegefair@leonschools.net.

TCC welding program starts Aug. 24

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT (CAMPUS NOTES)

Tallahassee Community College is accepting applications for its welding program for the Fall 2015 semester.

The industry-recognized program offers evening training sessions at TCC's Advanced Manufacturing Training Center. Students who complete the program receive an OSHA safety card and are eligible to sit for American Welding Society exams.

The program begins Monday, Aug. 24. Interested students may register by going to www.tcc.fl.edu/workforce. For information, contact the Advanced Manufacturing Training Center at 201-9716.

Gadsden County commissioners vote against adding billboards to the area

SYMONE DAVIS
WCTV

There are very few billboards on I-10 leading to up to Gadsden County.

Commissioners Tuesday night unanimously voted not to change the county's ordinance, meaning more billboards won't be going up on I-10.

Tallahassee Community College was behind the proposal, and wanted two double-sided commercial billboards to light up the interstate.

TCC Marketing Vice President Al Moran calls it great advertising for the school and county.

"The two poles in the ground were going to give us 300,000 dollars in value that we were going to share with the county and put our own signs up. So there's no money that would be actually spent," said Moran.

Several residents didn't see it that way. Resident Mike Dorian believes more signs would de-value the area, adding local businesses can use the billboards already grandfathered in.

"I want businesses in Gadsden County to be able to advertise their own business, but I don't see any reason for a bunch of billboards to advertise national products and national companies," said Dorian.

Moran said he respects the viewpoints of the board as well as the residents. However, he said he isn't giving up. He plans to work with those who were against the change and find a happy medium that would help promote the community while maintaining the essence of the area.

"The laws just don't allow it, so we'll have to approach it in a different way, talk to some people and see if there's an alternative," said Moran.

"Best and Brightest"

Honors Lounge unveiled at dedication ceremony

BYRON DOBSON

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

A group of about 70 financial supporters of Tallahassee Community College gathered Tuesday for the long-awaited unveiling of the college's Honor Lounge.

The event highlights the college's commitment to addressing the growing caliber of students identified as the "best and brightest" who are choosing TCC to begin their post-high-school studies. It also signals the engagement of members of the President's Circle, a group of donors who make unrestricted financial contributions through the TCC Foundation.

When TCC President Jim Murdaugh introduced the idea of expanding and refurbishing the outmoded lounge earlier this year, long-time supporter Mary Pankowski and her husband, Joe, jumped at the idea to provide the matching money needed to take on the project.

The couple was at the center of attention Tuesday as TCC unveiled the Pankowski Honors Lounge. It is located inside the Fine and Performing Arts Center.

"It is an opportunity to attract and retain high achieving students in an honors program that is second to none in the country and offered at an affordable tuition," Mary Pankowski, a long-time supporter of education in this community.

"We contributed to this effort and we are pleased that it will be a model for what good achieving students can be proud to be a part of," Joe Pankowski.

The Pankowski are well-known in Tallahassee. Joe Pankowski retired in 1997 after a 32-year-career with the state. Mary Pankowski spent 25 years in administrative positions at Florida State University before retiring and accepting a position as a vice president at Florida International University in 1994. She returned to Tallahassee in 1999 and began studies at the FSU College of Law, earning a law degree and then becoming a prosecutor in the State's Attorney's Office on cases involving juveniles. She retired after 13 years and now has a small law practice.

Recognizing the plight of many youngsters whose chances of achieving in life were restricted because of court convictions, she created the New Start Scholarship for Youth at TCC, which is designed to provide assistance to students once in the criminal justice system.

The scholarship now has an endowment of nearly \$250,000. A second fund, the David and Nancy Lawrence "New Start" scholarship, was created by her two of their children, Joe Jr. and Anne Marie, both of whom attended TCC in their early academic careers.

The renovated lounge features a large common area equipped with computers, modern furniture, artwork and other amenities. There's also a large modern classroom area and outside deck.

"Our Honors Program has grown 300 percent in the past two years," Murdaugh said, noting those are students entering with high grade point averages. "(The lounge) allows us to create a margin of excellence. We're making sure our support for the best and brightest is as important as the support we give for those students with greater needs."

Samantha Falstrom, a graduate of North Florida Christian, is entering her second year at TCC. She attended Tuesday's event with Mona Ighania, a Leon High grad who also is entering her second year.

Both women were accepted into the competitive Honors Program of about 200 students and plan to continue their studies at Florida State University.

"The Honors Program has been helpful to me because I am able to have smaller class sizes, and I get first choice in selecting my classes," Falstrom said. "It's been a great challenge, but it helps me think outside the box."



REGISTER NOW

TCC Summer and Fall Classes

June Express starts June 24



www.GoToTCC.com

The banner features a green and white background with a dark grey section on the right. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold and italicized fonts. The logo is circular with a gold border and a blue center containing a stylized 'T' and 'C'.

REGISTER NOW

**TCC Summer and
Fall Classes**

June Express starts June 24



www.GoToTCC.com

The image is a promotional flyer for Tallahassee Community College (TCC). It features a white background with a green border. At the top, a dark teal banner contains the text "REGISTER NOW" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, the text "TCC Summer and Fall Classes" is centered in a bold, black, serif font. Underneath, the text "June Express starts June 24" is centered in a smaller, italicized, black, serif font. In the center of the flyer is the TCC logo, which is a circular seal. The seal has a gold border with the text "TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE" at the top and "Founded 1956" at the bottom. Inside the seal is a stylized blue and gold "T" with a "C" integrated into its center. At the bottom of the flyer, the website address "www.GoToTCC.com" is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

GET AHEAD OF THE JOB APPLICATION COMPETITION

Earn a Certificate in
Office Support at TCC



12 credit hours. Online and in person.
May be eligible for financial aid.

TCC-000000000000



**REGISTER
NOW**

**for TCC Summer
and Fall Classes**

June Express starts June 24



www.GoToTCC.com

The image is a vertical registration poster for Tallahassee Community College. It features a green background with a white central panel. At the top, a dark green banner contains the text 'REGISTER NOW' in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the text 'for TCC Summer and Fall Classes' is written in a black, serif font. Underneath, the phrase 'June Express starts June 24' is written in a smaller, italicized serif font. The Tallahassee Community College logo, a circular seal with a stylized 'T' and 'C' and the text 'Tallahassee Community College' and 'Founded 1966', is centered below the text. At the bottom, the website address 'www.GoToTCC.com' is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

HotOccupationsNow.com

Find the area's most
in-demand careers and
the training you need
to land the job.

The logo for Workforce Development features a large, stylized blue letter 'T' on the left. To its right, the words 'Workforce' and 'Development' are stacked vertically in a blue, sans-serif font. A thin horizontal line is positioned below the word 'Development'.

**Workforce
Development**

IT'S TIME TO PURSUE YOUR DREAMS

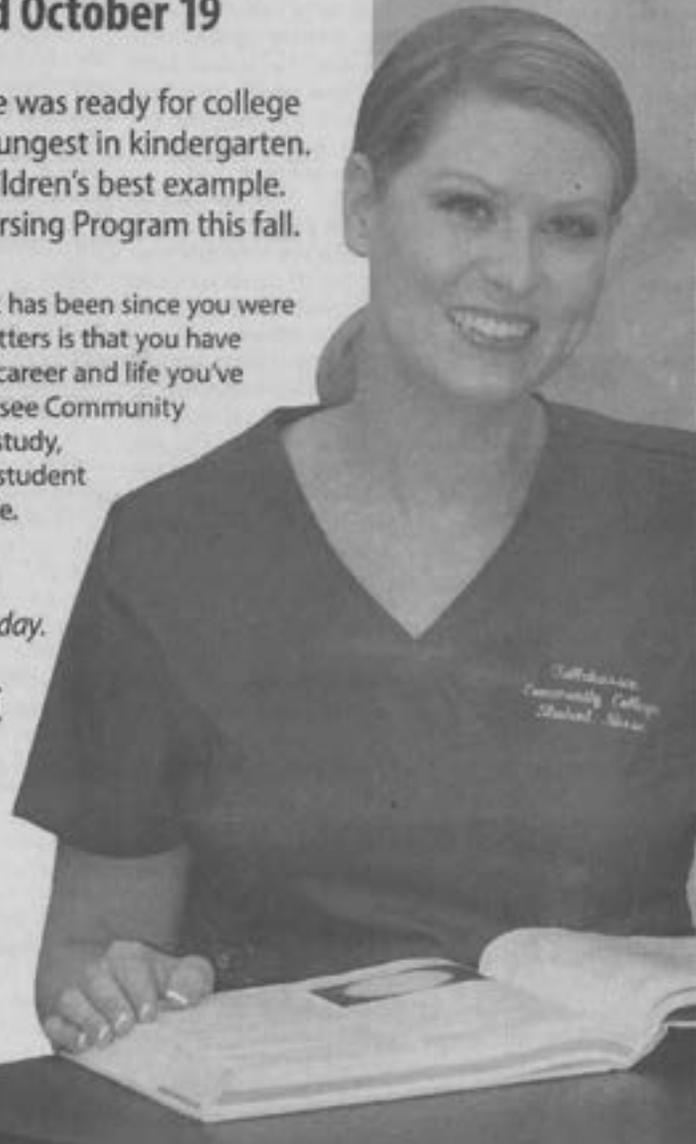
**TCC Fall sessions start August 24,
September 28 and October 19**

Annie Dorough knew she was ready for college after she enrolled her youngest in kindergarten. She wanted to be her children's best example. Annie begins the TCC Nursing Program this fall.

It doesn't matter how long it has been since you were last in a classroom. What matters is that you have determination to go for the career and life you've always wanted. And Tallahassee Community College has the program of study, excellent faculty and caring student services to help get you there.

It's your turn to go back to school. Take the first step today.

GOTOTCC.COM



A Partnership for Progress in Gadsden County

Tallahassee Community College, part of the Gadsden community since 1966, is committed to offering meaningful training that leads to employment and contributes to the county's economic development.

TCC's new Gadsden Center, built on land donated by the City of Quincy, is expected to be completed in early 2016 and will be well-equipped to provide Gadsden residents with workforce programs for in-demand jobs.



GADSDEN COUNTY
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL



CAN YOU TAKE THE HEAT?
TCC Fire Academy.com



WILL YOU ANSWER THE CALL?
TCC Police Academy.com



Register Now for TCC Summer and Fall Classes
June Express starts June 24
www.GoToTCC.com



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Golden Guarantee Program

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