

SUMMER 2014

INSPIRATIONS

A PUBLICATION OF FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE FOUNDATION



FSW Foundation welcomes new Executive Director

Along with a new name, the Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation is pleased to formally welcome Dr. Lou Traina to the team as the newly appointed Foundation Executive Director.

In addition to his current duties at FSW as the Vice President of Institutional Advancement, he will also lead the Foundation team with a focus on major gifts, planned giving, annual giving, direct marketing communications, community relations and major fundraising events.



With previous service in the higher education sector at Hodges University and Ave Maria University, Dr. Traina brings with him an array of talent as an experienced fundraiser, community leader and top administrator. He received his Doctor of Education from Columbia University Teachers College and has served in public and private

higher education holding positions as Advancement Vice President, Foundation Executive Director and Campus Provost.

Throughout his career, Dr. Traina has led several multimillion dollar campaigns and fundraisers with St. Ann School, Ave Maria and those that resulted in the naming of Hodges University, the Kenneth Oscar Johnson School of Business, the Nichols School of Professional Studies, the Fisher School of Technology, the Francis Pew Hayes Center for Lifelong Learning and the Lavern Norris Gaynor President's Chair.

In honor of his years of accomplishments in the Southwest Florida community, he was recognized during the 2012 National Philanthropy Day Celebration and named the Fundraising Executive of the Year.

Dr. Traina leads by example with a strong commitment to the community, both financially and through service. He has served on numerous boards such as the Association of Fundraising Professionals, the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce Leadership Foundation, the Village School of Naples, North Naples United Methodist Church, the Forum Club and was recently appointed to the board of directors for the Healthcare Network of Southwest Florida.

With dedication to service and family, his wife, Meg, along with their two children, are active in mission work serving orphans and at-risk youth locally and in the Bahamas.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Lou Traina to the FSW Foundation! ■

NEW NAME, SAME MISSION

After more than 50 years with Edison in its name, July 1 marked the start of a new era as Edison State College officially became Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW).

"What's important for people to understand is this is a name change, not a mission change," said Dr. Jeff Allbritten, college president. "How we serve our students, our communities, our vision ... all of those fundamentals remain the same."

The reason for the change?

"We wanted a name that would include all five of our counties, and quickly identify where we are geographically," said Dr. Allbritten.

Along with FSW came new college colors. Purple symbolizes many things, including creativity, wisdom, royalty, ceremony, pride, spirituality and enlightenment.

Of equal importance is the color aqua, which is a member of the cyan family of colors. Aqua is a Latin expression for water and is reminiscent of our own beautiful Gulf waters. It is universally known for its soothing effect, and symbolizes youth, health and hope.

Looking ahead, the evolution of Florida SouthWestern State College will continue.

"Florida is one of 21 states that allows colleges to offer bachelor's degrees, and that's more than double the number just a decade ago," Dr. Allbritten said.

"We are going to have announcements to make that involve such things as international studies, additional key partnerships with sister institutions and businesses," he added. "This really is an exciting time not only for all of us (faculty and staff), but for our students and the communities we serve. The unwavering enthusiasm and support of our donors have made all the difference. Our moment is now. Go Bucs!" ■

"Change your opinions, keep to your principles; change your leaves, keep intact your roots."

— Victor Hugo



Visit our website: www.FSW.edu/foundation

Dear Friends:

It is truly a new day at Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW)! I invite you to take a few minutes to peruse the latest edition of the Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation's publication, *Inspirations*. It provides us a medium for communicating some of the highlight activities and accomplishments of the College and the Foundation. In addition to the significant name change that took effect on July 1, many inspirational and exciting things are happening here at FSW.

As you will note, this publication is a celebration of the many people and constituencies whose contributions add to the growing legacy of Florida SouthWestern State College. Donors, students, faculty



and staff, alumni, executive leadership, the College Board of Trustees, our state legislative delegation and the Foundation Board of Directors all play key roles in bringing the mission of the college to life throughout our five-county service area.

As the Chairman of the FSW Foundation, I want to assure you that we take our responsibilities very seriously and are redoubling our commitment to support the College's mission and President Allbritten's vision. I want to sincerely thank all of you who are currently supporting the College. We are significantly impacting the quality of life in our community, and we could not do it without you! As you can see, great things are happening. This is an exciting time to be an FSW supporter. If you aren't already involved, I invite you to join us in supporting this truly inspirational institution.

TAMARA SURRATT
Chairman of the Florida SouthWestern
State College Foundation
Board of Directors

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FSW FOUNDATION, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS
» MEETING DATES FOR 2014-2015

FOUNDATION BOARD MEETINGS 9 a.m.
Lee Campus Bldg. AA-177
November 20, 2014 • March 17, 2015

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS 9 a.m.
Foundation and Alumni Center, 8060 College Parkway Bldg. Z-117
August 12, 2014 • November 13, 2014 • February 19, 2015

**Other meetings called as needed by the Chairmen of the Executive and Finance Committees.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

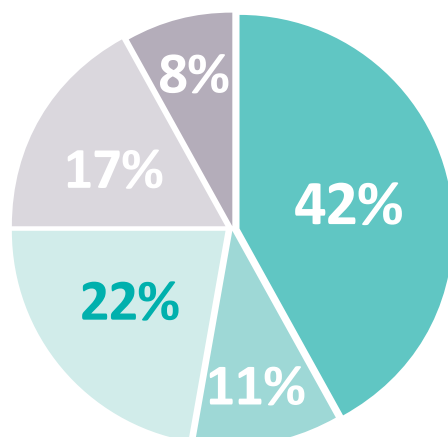
FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC. • YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014

The Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation, Inc. operates on a fiscal year from April 1 to March 31. The annual operating budget is approved by the Foundation's District Board of Directors and the books are audited annually by the independent accounting firm of Tuscan & Company, P.A. The firm SEI Investments is retained by the Foundation as an investment advisor. The Foundation currently manages over \$44 million in invested assets.

Income from the investment portfolio is used to fund scholarships, provide support for instructional services and technology, provide for faculty and staff development, endow academic and instructional chairs and provide support for the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall and the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery.

GIFT AND REVENUE DISBURSEMENT APRIL 1, 2013 - MARCH 31, 2014

42%	Student Services	\$1,476,016
11%	Academic Support	389,347
22%	Foundation Operating Support	750,413
17%	Institutional Support	577,825
8%	Donor Cultivation and Recognition	294,451



ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$72,850
Prepaid expenses	6,435
Unconditional promises to give, net.....	135,990
Investment in marketable securities held at fair value	44,477,448
Investments held in trust	2,905,414
Cash surrender value of life insurance	17,858
Investment - other.....	1,237,291
Total Assets	\$48,953,286

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	\$233,463
Note payable	1,100,000
Unearned revenue	6,250
Investments held in trust	2,905,414
Total Liabilities	\$4,245,127

NET POSITION

Unrestricted-undesignated	\$3,385,570
Temporarily restricted	23,110,223
Permanently restricted	18,212,366
Total Net Position	\$44,708,159

Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation, Inc., in an era of ever increasing scrutiny of nonprofits, earned an unqualified audit without exception. There was not a single unacceptable or questionable issue in the expert opinion of the auditors.

Let's play ball!

LEASE AGREEMENT SECURES
CITY OF PALMS FOR BUCCANEERS

On May 20, leaders from Lee County, the City of Fort Myers and Florida SouthWestern State College gathered at the City of Palms Stadium in downtown Fort Myers to sign a 10-year lease agreement. This stadium is now home for the Buccaneers' baseball and softball teams.

"Not too many college teams have a stadium to play where baseball greats have competed," said Carl McAloose, Director, Intercollegiate Athletics. "It's a terrific facility and a great place for fans and families to spend time watching and cheering on our teams."

Baseball and softball will begin in the fall 2015, followed by their first regular seasons in the spring 2016.

City of Palms Stadium,

originally built by the City of Fort Myers, was the spring training site of the Boston Red Sox from 1993 until 2011, when the team moved for spring training in 2012 to JetBlue Stadium.

Since then, City of Palms has seen continued use for sports, tourism and community events, including 73 days of amateur baseball tournaments annually that generated more than 46,000 hotel room stays and \$22.2 million in direct visitor expenditure. Events included Perfect Game, Roy Hobbs World Series, Minnesota Twins Sun Conference, USA Baseball and AAU Baseball. Community events at City of Palms included Easter sunrise and sunset services, Lee County Human Resources Health Fair, Homeless Coalition wellness event, Florida State Field Umpire Clinic and Team Puerto Rico practice. ■



From left to right: Fort Myers Mayor Randy Henderson, Intercollegiate Athletic Director Carl McAloose, FSW President Dr. Jeff Allbritten and Lee County Commissioner Larry Kiker at the ceremonial signing at City of Palms Park.

SPECIAL THANKS & APPRECIATION...

The Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation engages corporations, community groups, and foundations throughout the five-county region to support students, faculty and staff through scholarships, program donations, endowments and partnerships. Most of these generous supporters have given to the College for many years and have formed long-standing relationships.

Thank you for your support!

AAUW Fort Myers-Lee County, AFCO/Prime Rate, B&I Contractors, Barron Collier, Jr. Foundation, Inc.; BB&T-Oswald Trippe and Company; BSSW Architects; Busey Bank; Collier County Sheriff's Office; Community Foundation of Collier County; Creekmore Livingston, Inc.; Enterprise Holdings Foundation; Estate Planning



From left to right: Dr. Lou Traina, Dorothy Fitzgerald, Dr. Jeff Allbritten, Marie A. Collins, RDH, MS, Ed.D and Elaine Hawkins, SWFL Children's Charities, Inc. check presentation.

Council of Lee County; The Stanton Storer Embrace The Arts Foundation; FineMark National Bank & Trust; Florida Power and Light Company; Follett Higher Education Group; Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce; Women in Business; Halstatt LLC; Harbor Heights Peace River Rotary Club; Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt,

P.A.; Korean War Veterans Association Chapter 155; LCEC; Lee Memorial Health System; Lehigh Community Health Association; Manhattan Construction (Florida); Merrill Lynch; Naples North Rotary Club; Naples United Church Of Christ; NCH Healthcare System, Inc.; North Naples Fire Control and Rescue District;

Owen-Ames-Kimball Company; Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce; Rollgiving; Rotary Club Foundation of Ft. Myers South; Rotary Club of Cape Coral Foundation; Scientists' Society of Southwest Florida; SWFL Children's Charities, Inc./Southwest Florida Wine & Food Fest; Southwest Florida Community Foundation; Staples; Summit Management Group of Florida; the Copham Family Foundation; The Mrs. Bunny Foundation; The Robert J. Gunterberg Charitable Foundation; The Smith Family Foundation; United Way of Lee, Hendry, Glades; Volunteers of Charlotte Regional Medical Center; Wells Fargo Foundation; Women of The Moose, Chapter 1619

(\$1000 and above organizational donors from April 1, 2013 to July 1, 2014. If you do not see your organization's name on this list, please notify the FSW Foundation office).

For more information, please visit www.FSW.edu/foundation

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CONTACT US » To reach a member of the Foundation Staff, please call 239-489-9210

LOCATION » Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation & Alumni Center, 8060 College Parkway, Fort Myers, FL 33919

• For more information, please visit our website: www.FSW.edu/foundation

Florida SouthWestern State College is committed to providing an educational and working environment free from discrimination and harassment. All programs, activities, employment and facilities of Florida SouthWestern State College are available to all on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, sex, age, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information or veteran's status. The College is an equal access/equal opportunity institution. Questions pertaining to educational equity, equal access or equal opportunity should be addressed to Title IX/Equity Officer, Florida SouthWestern State College, 8099 College Parkway, Fort Myers, FL 33919, (239) 489-9305.



IN MEMORIAM »

Barbara B. Mann

A legend in her own time, with her name gracing the tallest building on the college campus, Barbara B. Mann died December 15, 2013.

Most of us know the name well and have attended performances at her hall many times. What might not be so well known is the fact that Barbara herself, at almost 50 years old, became one of the first students when Edison Community College opened, tackling the new math and sciences of today, with a high school preparation from the late 1920s. That in itself is a story, but what is truly impressive about this woman of boundless energy was the fact that she undertook the academic challenge while managing the family's general contracting business office, serving as organist and choir director at First Presbyterian Church of Fort Myers, presiding as president of the 1,800-member Community Concert Association, and just coincidentally being wife to husband George (they were married 59 years when he died), and mother to sons Pat and Franklin, then just nearing adulthood.

College had not been an option for a girl finishing high school in the depth of the Depression, while being raised by a single mother, but it was always important to Barbara, and remained her lifelong dream. Not only did she receive her A.A. from Edison, but also she then enrolled in the distance learning program of Thomas Edison State College of New Jersey, where in time she was, at the age of 71, awarded her bachelor's degree in humanities. She had already proven that she didn't need a college degree to succeed in life, but this goal oriented dynamo did it anyway. How proud we at the Foundation are of this example of excellence and commitment, whose memory will always serve as an inspiration to thousands who will follow in her footsteps to this outstanding institution. ■

Yoko Ono exhibit links local hopes to wishes of the world

NOTES ON TREES AT RAUSCHENBERG GALLERY SHOW DELIVERED TO ICELAND

Wishes close to the hearts of Southwest Floridians have traveled far in the name of art.

Last spring, the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery hosted "Yoko Ono: Imagine Peace." The exhibition included two "Wish Trees," which are critical parts of Ono's exhibitions. Visitors wrote their wishes – personal or global – on shipping tags and attached them to the branches of a tree.

Ono has been collecting these wishes from all over the world and taking them to The Imagine Peace Tower in Iceland. She built a light tower in 2006 on Videy Island as a memorial to John Lennon reflecting their mission to create world peace. The tower is powered geothermally, by naturally occurring hot springs. On it are 15 searchlights with prisms that act as mirrors, reflecting a column of light that soars miles into the sky. The base of the tower is a 30-foot-wide wishing well that contains more than a million wishes – now including hopes from Florida SouthWestern State College.

Jade Dellinger, Gallery Director at Bob Rauschenberg Gallery and Dr. Edith Pendleton, former Dean of Division of Libraries, thought it would be exciting and educational if FSW students actually delivered the wishes to Iceland when the exhibit closed.

Once they pursued the idea, everything fell into place. Iceland's Fulbright Commission extended an invitation and the college paid the travel costs.

To read the full story, click here.



Studio visit with Icelandic Artist Sossa Bjornsdottir and artist from Faroe Islands, Birgit Kirke

"As a child in Japan, I used to go to a temple and write out a wish on a piece of thin paper and tie it around the branch of a tree. Trees in temple courtyards were always filled with people's wish knots, which looked like white flowers blossoming from afar." — Yoko Ono

Arts @ FSW

In 2014, Arts@FSW makes its debut as the comprehensive source of arts at Florida SouthWestern State College. For over 52 years, this institution has provided students with outstanding instruction in the areas of performance and visual art. Music, art and theater courses form the framework for public performances and exhibitions at our Thomas Edison (Lee) and Collier campuses.

Student and guest artwork is displayed in the Keystone Gallery at the Charlotte Campus, and throughout the halls and buildings at the Thomas Edison (Lee), Collier and Hendry/Glades campuses. The Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall and

the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery attract thousands of visitors to enjoy art, music, dance and theater.

Arts@FSW is a one-stop website designed to help everyone find ALL of the arts offerings on one master calendar. The master calendar will include dates of all campus offerings, Bob Rauschenberg Gallery events, and Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall events. The listing to the right is a partial calendar of upcoming events featuring student work, special exhibitions, Broadway shows, and world-renowned art. We thank our generous corporate sponsors for their support of the arts. For more information, visit www.FSW.edu for a link to the Arts@FSW and for ticketing and times. ■



Evening of Celebration: Meg Traina, Dr. Lou Traina, Tamara Surratt Marino, Steve Marino, Liz Allbritten, Dr. Jeff Allbritten

SCHOLARSHIP CELEBRATION LUNCHEONS



Collier Campus



Thomas Edison (Lee) Campus



Hendry-Glades Center



Charlotte Campus

A note of thanks »

The staff at the Florida SouthWestern State College Foundation would like to thank our generous special event sponsors for making this a year to remember.



2014-2015 FSW Calendar of Events

August 2014

08/22/14 » Opening Reception, "Moon Museum," Bob Rauschenberg Gallery, Thomas Edison (Lee) Campus

September 2014

09/06/14 » 3 Doors Down, Acoustic Concert, Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall (BB Mann Hall)

October 2014

10/12/14 » Earth, Wind & Fire, BB Mann Hall
10/19/14 » Ringo Starr, BB Mann Hall
10/22/14 » Opening Reception, "Rauschenberg and China," Bob Rauschenberg Gallery, Thomas Edison (Lee) Campus. *Generously sponsored by FineMark Bank*
10/25/14 » Anjelah Nicole Johnson (comic), BB Mann Hall
10/30/14 » Keystone Award Reception, Keystone Gallery,

Charlotte Campus

November 2014

11/17/14 » FSW Symphony Orchestra & FSW Choir, BB Mann Hall, 7:30pm. *Generously sponsored by Follett Education Group*
11/25/14 » FSW Jazz Ensemble, BB Mann Hall, 7:30pm. *Generously sponsored by LCEC*
TBD » Student Theatre Performance, Black Box Theatre, Thomas Edison (Lee) Campus, 8pm (8 day run)

December 2014

12/3/14 » FSW Concert Band, BB Mann Hall, 7:30pm. *Generously sponsored by B&I Contractors*
12/11/14 » Lewis Black (comic), BB Mann Hall, 8pm
12/29/14 » Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker, BB Mann Hall, 8pm

January 2015

01/02/15 » Salute to Vienna, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
01/06-1/11/15 » The Book of Mormon, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
01/24-1/25/15 » Arts@FSW Open House
01/22-1/31/15 » Phantom of the Opera, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
TBD » Opening Reception/New Exhibition, Bob Rauschenberg Gallery

February 2015

02/01/15 » Phantom of the Opera, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
02/05/15 » Alton Brown, Edible Inevitable Tour, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
02/10-2/15/15 » Annie, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
02/24-2/28/15 » Blue Man Group, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
02/25/15 » Fort Myers Film Festival, BB Mann Hall

2/26/15 » Evening of Celebration, BB Mann Hall. *Generously sponsored by BSSW Architects*
02/28/15 » Arts@FSW Open House
TBD » Student Theatre Performance, Black Box Theatre, Thomas Edison (Lee) Campus, 8pm (8 day run)

March 2015

03/01/15 » Arts@FSW Open House
03/01/15 » Blue Man Group, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
03/26/15 » Donor Appreciation Luncheon, Thomas Edison (Lee) Campus
03/27/15 » Donor Appreciation Luncheon, Hendry-Glades Center. *Generously sponsored by FPL*

April 2015

4/7-4/12/15 » Camelot, BB Mann Hall, 8pm
4/9/15 » Donor Appreciation

Luncheon, Collier Campus
4/10/15 » Donor Appreciation Luncheon, Charlotte Campus
4/16/15 » FSW Concert Band, BB Mann Hall, 7:30pm
4/20/15 » FSW Orchestra & FSW Choir, BB Mann Hall, 7:30pm
4/27/15 » FSW Jazz Ensemble, BB Mann Hall, 7:30pm

Please visit www.FSW.edu/foundation for full calendar listing. Dates and times are subject to change. ■

Great things are happening at FSW »

The Alumni Association hosted the 3rd annual BBQ & Baseball Bash at JetBlue Park on Sunday, March 23, 2014. The game featured the Boston Red Sox against the Tampa Bay Rays. The event was sponsored by BSSW Architects.

For a small fee, FSW alumni were invited to the event, which included access to the Red Sox batting practice, great food and tickets to the game. One of the event highlights was the introduction of new Intercollegiate Athletic Director Carl McAloose. He greeted the group and shared plans to bring sports activities back to FSW.



Until 1996, sports played an active role in the College landscape. Now, not only is it bringing back baseball and softball, the College is also exploring opportunities to raise funds to build a 3,500 seat arena. This student center will house several of the sports teams, as well as serve host to

concerts, graduations and a variety of tournaments.

The decision to offer quality athletics at FSW will expand efforts to recruit students from across the country, as well as the globe. With the opening of the dorms last year and the growth of the local economy, athletics provide an opportunity to promote the College and build the brand throughout Southwest Florida.

David Conde, FSW Alumnus and event attendee, shared his enthusiasm for the direction that the College is taking. "I am honored to be an alumnus because not only do I get to watch first hand this plan unfold, we all get to watch the expansion of a program that will thrive and bring great attention to our school. I graduated in 2010 with my associate's and then began pursuing my bachelor's, which I will complete in the fall of 2014. Great things are happening at FSW. It all starts with the people in charge, as they are doing a tremendous job of not only getting FSW out into the community but also continuing to create ways of marketing the school to draw students to our Southwest Florida campuses. I believe in the school and what it stands for." ■

FSW alumnus named Marco Island Firefighter of the Year »

This past March, Florida SouthWestern State College alumnus Dan Stoller was awarded the Marco Island 2013 Firefighter of the Year award. Stoller, a driver engineer paramedic with the City of Marco Island Fire Rescue Department, was honored after he saved a friend's 3-year-old daughter from choking while he was off-duty at a family gathering.

"I was shocked and thrilled to have been recognized," Stoller said. "I didn't expect it. Every one of us has days where we have to go above and beyond our normal duties to help someone. It can't be easy for the department to choose one person to receive the award each year, so I was extremely honored."

Stoller received both his EMT and paramedic certificates from FSW. He recommends FSW's programs to anyone who is looking for EMT and paramedic training.

"I always recommend FSW because the programs are accredited," Stoller said. "It is also convenient to those who work full time. The ride times are done locally and many of the instructors themselves also work for local agencies, so they are knowledgeable of how the system works in our area."

Stoller hopes to continue his education and attend more classes at FSW in the future. ■

Meanwhile back at the ranch ...

CPA BY DAY, FSW GRADUATE ALSO TENDS TO A HERD OF ALPACAS

When he's not auditing his clients' financials, Jeff M. Tuscan is accounting for a herd of inquisitive alpacas.

These may seem disparate pursuits, but Tuscan, 57, is a successful entrepreneur as well as a certified public accountant. He is owner of Tuscan & Company, PA, in Fort Myers, and partner of STARanch in Alva.

In the community he's called home since 1968, Tuscan juggles a full schedule, just as he did during his collegiate years at Florida SouthWestern State College, then Edison. The 1979 alumnus held down a fulltime job to pay tuition toward his associate of arts degree. He transferred to the University of Florida to earn a bachelor's in business before launching into a career with the national Coopers & Lybrand, which merged with Price Waterhouse in 1998. Tuscan's brothers are FSW alumni, too: Chris ('83) is a commercial artist in Chicago and Mark ('84) also is a CPA in Fort Myers.



Jeff Tuscan has a moment with STARanch residents.

[To read the full story, click here.](#)

Code Blue revived a hospital career

When Diane Spears decided to earn a nursing degree in the 1970s at what was then Edison Community College, she was far from being a typical student. In fact, the young wife and mother of three was a high school dropout.

She had applied for a house-keeping or food services job at Lee Memorial Hospital and was thrilled when she was offered a better-sounding position: patient care technician (nurse's aide). It set her on the course of a robust medical career; today she is director of Lee Memorial's Medical Infectious Disease Unit and Vascular Access Nursing Department.

What inspired Spears to earn her

GED and enroll at Edison? A code blue emergency. She distinctly recalls making patient rounds early one afternoon and encountering a male patient who suddenly became unresponsive. "As soon as I walked into his room, he slumped over," she said. "I ran and called for help. I remember standing there, fascinated, as the team worked to revive him." The patient lived, and the event left Spears with an unwavering desire: "All I could do was watch people do their jobs. I was limited in what I could do. I decided that if I was going to get everything out of the healthcare field that it has to offer, I was going to school."



Dean, FSW School of Health Professions Marie A. Collins, RDH, MS, Ed.D and Diane Spears, RN, MS

[To read the full story, click here.](#)

"Don't limit yourself to the environment you're in. There's more out there for you." — DIANE SPEARS

An Herban lifestyle for a new generation

FSW JUNIOR BEGAN
CULTIVATING A CAREER AT 12

Whitney Tucker, 21, has known Ken Ryan, a microgreens farmer, most of her life. In fact, she stepped onto her North Fort Myers neighbor's five-acre farm when she was 12 years old looking for a part-time job.

At the time she knew nothing about growing the young vegetable leaves that are Ryan's mainstay. But that didn't stop her from having goals. "Teach me everything you know and you can stay inside and I'll run the farm," the pre-teen said. And that's exactly what's about to happen.

Ryan, 68, established Herban Gardens in 1985. His son in Virginia was not interested in farming, and the solution to carrying on the business was obvious. He is turning that farm over to Tucker, the Florida SouthWestern State College student who has been working and learning alongside Ryan for almost a decade. Tucker, a junior business major, will assume ownership of Herban Gardens in 2016.

Tucker will have additional help running the farm. Her best friend, Becky Allen – who graduated with an associate's degree from FSW in May – will work with her. Another friend, Ty Hostettler, will join



them.

Tucker didn't have to think twice when Ryan offered her this unique opportunity.

"I think I wanted to do other things when I grew up," Tucker said. "But I had so many years invested here. I love it. So why not make it a career?"

Ryan and his team cultivate hundreds of varieties of herbs, edible flowers, vegetables and other specialty items. They sell their best produce to more than a dozen of the top chefs and restaurants in Southwest Florida.

Tucker already has taken charge of most of the operations, allowing Ryan more time to spend with his wife, Carol. Tucker touches everything that grows on the farm, including the more exotic herbs like Spicy Bush Basil, Maryland Salad Mint and Chocolate Peppermint. The chives she planted as a child are still thriving.

"I putter," Ryan said. "And she runs the place."

Tucker says that business classes at FSW have boosted her confidence, increased her business savvy and helped prepare her to run the farm.

She always has felt at home on a farm. When other kids were watching cartoons, she spent her free time digging in the dirt, coaxing plants to grow and learning about microgreens.

"I was the only kid in middle school who had a job," she said. She worked at Herban Gardens, just a few houses down the street from her own, on the weekends.

[To read the full story, click here.](#)

MODEL UNITED
NATIONS TEAM »

Model UN students think locally, act globally

When she launched the Model United Nations program two years ago, Dr. Laura Weir

knew instinctively that it would boost participants' skills in critical thinking, parliamentary procedure, research and rhetoric.

It stands to reason that debating diplomatic issues at Harvard University with 3,000-plus students from 35 countries can do even more: "We're getting students to think not just about the wider world, but the universe inside of themselves," Weir said.

Of the six students who traveled in February 2013 to Boston for the conference coordinated by Harvard, the majority had never been on an airplane or traveled outside of Florida. "It was a transformative experience. They came away with the idea that they could compete on an international level," said Weir, who is Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs and a Political Science professor. "That's what FSW is all about. That's what we want our students to experience: opening the world inside of them."

Enrollment in the Model UN means making a challenging commitment to understanding another country from the inside out — its domestic politics, geopolitical standing, history, major religions and ethnic composition, economy, human rights policies and ruling parties. In its first year, FSW's Model UN was a voluntary club, and the fledgling group competed against a serious contingency of 140 students from The Netherlands and a 200 strong delegation from the University of Chicago. "It was a little intimidating. On the first night, our students looked at me like, 'What did you get me into?' but they realized they were just as prepared," Weir recalled, noting that students handled the competition with aplomb. "They learned to be the mouse that roared."

[To read the full story, click here.](#)

Students wade into 'The Living Ocean'

MARINE SCIENCE CLASS IS AN ADVENTURE

With their bright smiles beaming below polarized sunglasses, this collegiate group seems to be beaching it off the clock. Who really has that much fun in an academic science course?

Students enrolled in a semester of marine science professor Dr. Rozalind Jester's "The Living Ocean" discover that wide smile — and a whole lot more. They may sign up with the goal of fulfilling a prerequisite, but they depart with a clearer understanding of Southwest Florida's complex marine ecosystem and gain hands-on experience with professional researchers in the field and in a working laboratory.

Jester realizes "very few have the intention of being marine scientists or scientists at all." That doesn't thwart her enthusiasm for teaching the class, though. In fact, it seems to motivate

her. "This is potentially the last science class these students may take. Once they fulfill requirements, they're done. So for most of the kids I come in contact with, this is the last chance to change their perspective of science and becoming science literate."

It's a major tour on their educational journey. For some, it's their first knee-deep foray into the Gulf of Mexico. Along the way, they all get to know their professor as Dr. Roz.

"So many haven't been on a boat, to a beach or to Sanibel. Some know the area super-well. I get the whole spectrum of students," says Jester. "Even when they think they know it really well, they're often surprised at what's hidden beneath the surface of the water. For others, it may be about overcoming their fear of the water."

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