

# COPLA CONNECTIONS



The magazine of Florida Tech's  
College of Psychology & Liberal Arts

Spring 2022

## **BALANCING ACT**

*Community Psychological Services'  
Scott Gustafson navigates student  
training, therapy services  
through pandemic*

**Free Speech Week**  
focuses on criminal justice

**Panther Battalion cadets**  
tackle unique challenges

**Writers' Den debuts**  
permanent home

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# COPLA Moves Forward

## Fueling student potential to become 21st-century leaders

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts (COPLA) magazine!

In these digital pages, we will strive to chronicle the interesting and exciting things happening in our amazing college. The focus will be on our diverse programs, our extraordinary faculty and what they accomplish inside and out of the classroom. Students, staff and alumni will also share the spotlight, as they are essential to all COPLA does.

On April 5, I took the helm as the permanent dean of COPLA after more than a year of serving as an interim. I first came to Florida Tech as an adjunct history instructor in 1997, almost by accident.

After more than 20 years here—with many classes taught and a few books published during this time—I have seen Florida Tech grow and evolve and witnessed the birth of COPLA itself. After watching and serving under two very effective deans (Mary Beth Kenkel and Lisa Steelman), now it is my turn to lead the college and face the challenges and opportunities that await us in the future. I am humbled by this appointment and very grateful for the faith so many have in me.

New deans are supposed to have a vision of what they want their college to be. In my mind, such a vision does not come from any one person but the entire college faculty. Together, all of us will work to define what COPLA is and what it aspires to be in the years ahead.

An entrepreneurial spirit must be nurtured, with pragmatic nimbleness as our guide. It is not breaking news that higher education in the United States is under siege from factors like the COVID-19 pandemic and declining potential student populations. Simply put, business as usual will not cut it in this challenging new world. However, I have no doubt that COPLA will not only survive these difficult times but prosper despite them.

The most important assignment we have in COPLA is teaching our students and helping them on the road to being good citizens, fueling their potential to become the leaders the 21st century badly needs. In many ways, I envy them for what they will do and



see in the years ahead. This college deals with much of the human experience, good and bad, and our mission is to give students, regardless of who they are and where they come from, the best education possible.

This education is the foundation that opens the door for them to reach out and grasp their dreams.

As I write this, my mind drifts back to all the outstanding COPLA faculty I have known over the years and how much I learned from them. Two, the late Alan Rosiene and Jose Martinez Diaz, set high standards and went that extra mile for their students. Their examples inspire me and all COPLA faculty to maintain our traditions of excellence in the classroom, research and service. The number of university excellence awards held by COPLA eloquently documents our commitment to all these areas.

So, join me in reading about our outstanding college, and let me know what you think of this new format.

Enjoy!

**Robert A. Taylor, Ph.D.**  
Dean, College of Psychology and Liberal Arts

The most important assignment we have in COPLA is teaching our students and helping them on the road to being good citizens...

*Robert A. Taylor*

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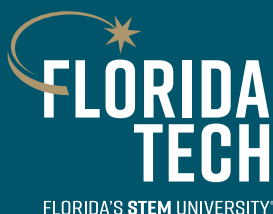
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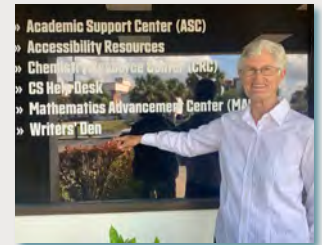
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## PHOTO ESSAYS

# Best of Fall 2022



## Human connections, emotions are focus of photo essay contest winners

A marriage proposal, an emotional awakening and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic were expressed in the winning photo essays presented by students in Y.J. Sohn's COM 2503 digital photography class last fall. Of all the projects submitted, photo essays by Maryam Pishgar, Adrian Haley and Justin Breckenridge were voted as the best.

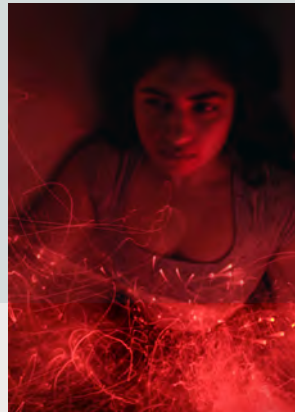
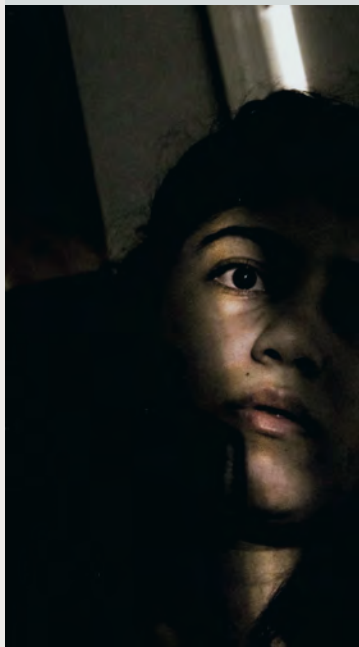
These are some of the photos from the winning essays. Click the link on the class Flickr site to see all of the original photos: [flickr.com/groups/14797201@N21](https://www.flickr.com/groups/14797201@N21)

**Maryam Pishgar: Turmoil of Emotions**  
Maryam wrote, "This series of photos expresses the journey of acknowledging and embracing emotions based off of colors and lighting. To an extent, people tend to bottle up or conceal their feelings, troubles, thoughts and anything deemed as a personal problem. This is something I personally struggle with and hope these pictures portray that. From concealing my emotions to the point where it feels suffocating and nauseating to the point where everything bursts and then reduces to numbness, it is a normal occurrence for myself in how my emotions can be portrayed. Eventually, taking those feelings in, maybe even talking to a close friend and being more vulnerable and open can result in bliss and happiness. It can be a cycle, but there is absolutely nothing wrong with something so human."

**Adrian Haley: A Day to Remember**  
Adrian wrote, "The photo essay was created to recount the most important day of my life."

**Justin Breckenridge: Isolation**  
Justin wrote, "The idea of my photo essay was to convey my personal experience with the pandemic. The essay starts with me finding out about the pandemic, and then transitions into my journey through isolation, and the depression that followed it as the pandemic raged on. I also wanted to convey the connections I made, even from a distance. The end is where we are now, reemerged into the world as we slowly heal from 2020."

### Maryam Pishgar Turmoil of Emotions

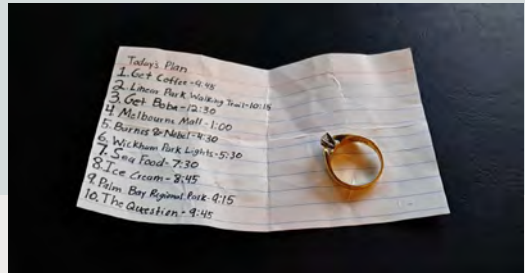
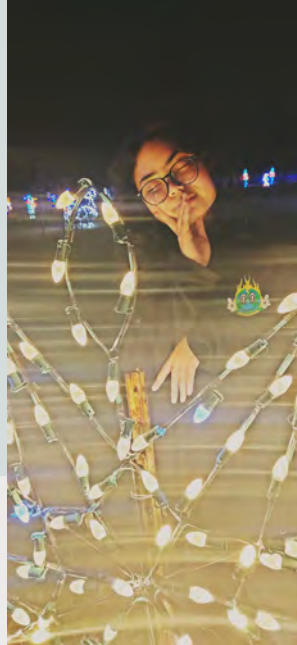




## PHOTO ESSAYS

### Adrian Haley

A Day to Remember



### Justin Breckenridge

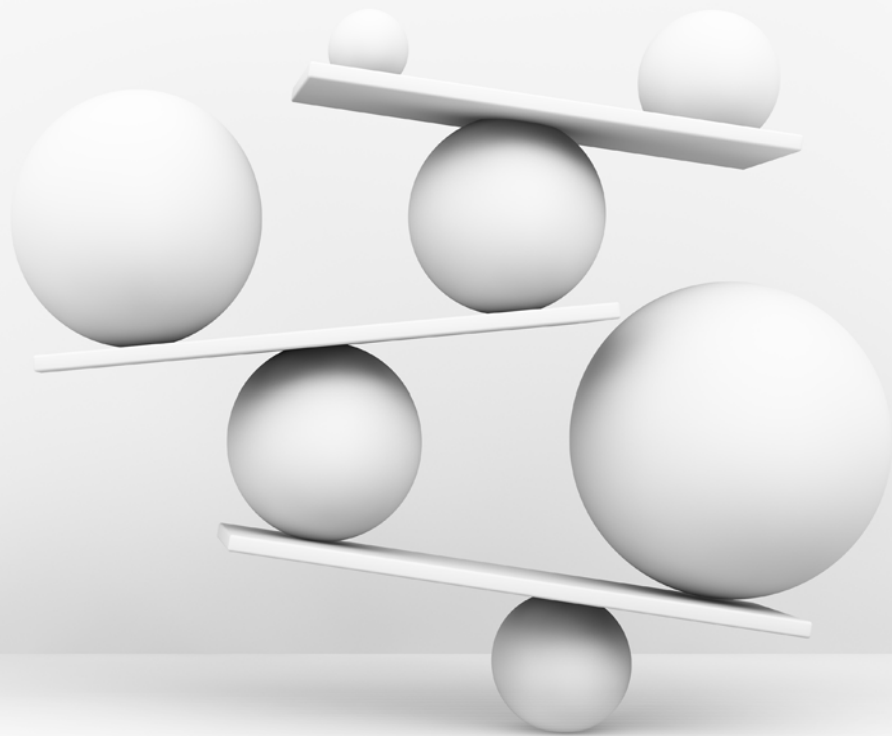
Isolation



## FEATURE

# BALANCING ACT

**Community Psychological Services enters new era of student training and high-quality therapy**



By Rolanda Hatcher-Gallop

Flashback to February 2021, when the world was approaching the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In-person classes had resumed at Florida Tech but with masks, social distancing, Zoom sessions and Panopto recordings now the norm.

In the School of Psychology, graduate students in the clinical psychology “Psy.D.” doctoral program were still adjusting to completing their clinical practicum training through remote telehealth services rather than talking with clients face to face.

And Scott Gustafson had just started his new job.

Gustafson is a psychology professor and director of Community Psychological Services (CPS), a therapy service on campus in The Scott Center for Autism Treatment offering high-quality care at a low cost to students and the greater Central Florida community.

Clinical psychology doctoral students, supervised by licensed clinical psychologists, use evidence-based practices to address a range of concerns for those ages 9 and up, from anxiety and grief to depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Fast-forward to now.

“What a year,” Gustafson says while pondering the weight of changing jobs in the middle of a pandemic and then jumping headlong into his work with CPS.

He came at a time when the therapy service was grappling with a few challenges outside of the pandemic,



*Community Psychological Services administrative assistant Jamie Blaszkowiak, left, stands with CPS director Scott Gustafson on the third floor of The Scott Center for Autism Treatment.*

## FEATURE

including a sort of identity crisis. The service was considered more of an extension of The Scott Center, but it was loosely run by the psychology program.

"When I took over, CPS, in and of itself, didn't actually exist as it does now. Part of my job was, essentially, to build it as its own separate entity; to separate it from The Scott Center and to house it as explicitly a training center for psychology," he explained, adding that the clinic still shares in the center's original mission.

"While CPS serves the university and community, seeing a diverse range of people, we're always mindful of the fact that our mission is to help fulfill the vision of Edward Scott, who was the driving force behind The Scott Center for Autism Treatment," Gustafson adds.

"We offer free services to families and loved ones who are treated through The Scott Center along with providing services to caregivers. Our mission dovetails with The Scott Center to offer support and extensions of their important work, as well as act as a resource for our community."

To do that, he relied on his own 35-plus years of training and experience in the field.

This includes a previous job as professor and assistant director at a clinic at the University of South Dakota as well as being the chief executive officer of a large private practice in New Hampshire.

Before coming to Florida Tech, Gustafson was the training clinic director at the University of Mississippi for 15 years.

"It was a very different environment. Ole Miss and Florida Tech are both highly productive research universities, but Ole Miss was a Ph.D. program and this is a Psy.D. program. The difference there is, as Dr. (Radhika) Krishnamurthy put it, we train primarily practitioners," he explained, adding there is also a big research practice division in psychology as well.

"Most people kind of fall on one side or the other. With a Ph.D. program, it's usually about 60%

research/40% practice, and in a Psy.D. program like ours, it's about 60% practice and 40% research.

"I'm a clinician at heart, so it fits well," he said.

Interestingly, during his first few months on the job, there were times when he was the only person working on the top floor of The Scott Center.

"I would come in and everything was being done through telehealth," he said, adding that coming back to in-person therapy services, which CPS now offers, was "every bit as difficult" as going to remote counseling.

But the work is paying off.

Psychology assistant professor Patrick Aragon, who also is assistant director of clinical training, said Gustafson's impact is already being felt in the year since he became CPS director.

**I'm most proud of our students and how they've dealt with the changes in our format and even our administration over the last year.**

**Scott Gustafson**

"He has done a fantastic job in this role, during a very challenging time for student training and balancing in-person and telehealth services," Aragon stated.

Jamie Blaszkowiak, administrative assistant for CPS, added that the center's visibility and client lists are growing under Gustafson's direction.

"We're working with our social media office at [Florida Tech] and getting our name out there through social media, Google and even *Psychology Today*," she said.

In addition to working with CPS, Gustafson recently was named president of the Association of Psychology Training Clinics, the national organization for directors of psychology training clinics.

The organization provides policy and standards



*Students in Scott Gustafson's advanced graduate consultation seminar talk with clinical research psychologist Solomon Kurz, Ph.D., in early March.*

to doing work in person again. They have an important task in the department called the CPE, clinical proficiency examination. They've seen the creation of a fully functional clinic ... all of this has happened within one year, and they've taken every one of these changes in stride," Gustafson said.

"They've just demonstrated this amazing resiliency, keeping their focus, keeping their motivation and doing what they need to do," Gustafson said.

"Always keeping the focus on improving their skills and serving their clients. I would say that's my biggest takeaway from this last year. If anything, I'm most proud of that, and I had nothing to do with it.

"It was all on them. Just wonderful."

recommendations, training guidelines and continued education for training directors as well as student support, among other areas.

Blaszkowiak added that student support is something Gustafson emphasizes at CPS.

"Scott has an open-door policy, which is great for those students who may have questions to just go up to him and ask them. He is ready and able to guide them," she said.

In fact, Gustafson gives full-credit to the student clinicians working in CPS for the clinic's success.

"I'm most proud of our students and how they've dealt with the changes in our format and even our administration over the last year," he said.

"They started off doing telehealth and then had to adapt

#### Contact CPS:

For more information, log on to [floridatech.edu/cps](https://floridatech.edu/cps) or call Jamie Blaszkowiak at 321-309-3709.



## INSIDE COPLA

## TRANSFORMATION

*Cadets Jonathan Shimer and Chandler Hake go through the ropes course.*



*Eleven cadets placed in the top 10 in the brigade at the Ranger Challenge 2022 competition held in January at Fort Benning, Georgia. The team consisted of Jared Blanco (captain), Nathan Johnson, Tricia Prior, Sam Addington, Jon Shimer, Mason Elizondo, Chandler Hake, Vincent Palermo, Ethan White, Dylan Jessee, and Julia Lonks. MSG Alan Roche was their coach.*



*Cadets Julia Lonks, left, and Chandler Hake endeavor through an obstacle exercise at the Ranger Challenge competition.*

## Panther Battalion Cadets Master Training, Academics to Transform into Army Officers

By Rolanda Hatcher-Gallop

Outside of sports, it can be one of the most physically grueling programs on Florida Tech's Melbourne campus.

Students are up before the break of day, sometimes with boots on to guard against the morning chill.

They line up and mentally prepare for the tasks at hand: road marches, obstacle courses, crawls through the dirt and dust of the woods in Malabar, Florida, and other field training.

On some mornings, they go through the routine with 35-pound packs strapped on their backs, all as part of the university's U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).

"Academics at Florida Tech is very rigorous, and then throw on the additional requirements of ROTC, it becomes a lot," says Lt. Col. James Crook, the professor of military science and cadre head for Florida Tech's Panther Battalion.

But it is a challenge cadets meet head-on.

"There is nothing like it," says Cadet Capt. Chandler Hake, a junior computer science major with a concentration in cyber operations.

He says balancing academics with the physical fitness training, leadership labs and field exercises required of cadets in the program can be tough, but the results eventually become apparent.

"I am currently in the best shape of my life for both my mental and physical health," Hake says.

"Mentally, I have grown to understand and deal with stress as well as enhanced my time management and leadership skills. Physically, I have learned how to push my limits and endure longer physical events, such as rucking 12 miles."

For over 50 years, the Panther Battalion has taken students with talents that lie in everything from engineering to journalism and prepared them to become commissioned officers in the U.S. Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

Steered by faculty and staff in the military science academic department within CoPLA, the Army ROTC program transforms students into highly skilled cadets through a combination of hands-on experiences, leadership training and management theory.



## INSIDE COPLA

That training was put to the test recently during the second half of the 6th Brigade's Army ROTC Ranger Challenge competition held in Fort Benning, Georgia, in January.

Panther Battalion earned a spot in the challenge after placing within the top 10 teams in the first part of the competition.

"The best part of Ranger Challenge was spending time and embracing the 'suck' with the team," Hake says, recalling pressure-cooker relays like the Hand Grenade Challenge and drills like hauling weights through the sand in the Wire Low Crawl obstacle course.

"Our morale was, by far, the best out of all the teams at the competition, and it carried us through the long early and late hours," he says.

"The worst part was during the second phase after the 12-mile ruck, where we had 3- to 4-kilometer movements. This phase was tough because it began to get very cold, and you could really only warm up by moving faster.

"But our team got it done," Hake adds.

Although the team didn't place in the top two spots, they did come back to campus with a host of memories from the competition.

That's the best part for Hake, who initially enrolled in Army ROTC to help pay for his education but eventually saw the program as a gateway to a more interesting career path.

He gets commissioned as an officer when he graduates in fall 2023.

"I now see myself doing active duty for at least four years but may possibly stay for an extended period of time," he says.



*Florida Tech Panther Battalion cadets participate in drills during the 6th Brigade's Army ROTC Ranger Challenge competition in Fort Benning, Georgia, in January.*

Hake is one of 44 cadets currently in the program.

Four of the graduating seniors are scheduled to be appointed the rank of second lieutenant during a commissioning ceremony in May.

Most officers enter the Army at second lieutenant. They then continue their training in their specific branch at Basic Officer Leaders' Course, which can take anywhere from 12 weeks to a year.

Active-duty officers are then assigned a platoon to lead, going to their first duty station for two to three years. While those in the national guard or Army reserves go to whatever unit they have chosen and continue to train part-time as a platoon leader.

The officers can be promoted to first lieutenant within 18 months after commissioning, then to captain within four years.

But it all starts with doing well as an undergraduate student.

Despite the rigors of training, ROTC cadets are told that their main focus must be on completing their academic obligations.

"Academics is our No.1 priority," says Crook. "You cannot be an Army officer without a bachelor's degree."

He says that message is continually stressed to the cadets.

"They have to graduate to become an officer."

Florida Tech's ROTC program is relatively small compared to other universities.

Nationwide, Army ROTC remains the largest branch of the U.S. military officers training program, as compared to numbers in the Navy and Air Force branches.

There are over 20,000 cadets enrolled in ROTC programs at colleges and universities across the U.S.

Any student contemplating whether to enroll in the program should give it a try, says Hake.

"You have nothing to lose and everything to gain," he says.

"If you figure out that it's not for you, that's fine. There are no binding agreements in the program until you decide you absolutely want to contract with the Army," he adds.

"Go for it!"

For more information on Florida Tech's Army ROTC, log on to [floridatech.edu/rotc](http://floridatech.edu/rotc), email [armyrotcrecruiting@fit.edu](mailto:armyrotcrecruiting@fit.edu) or call 321-674-7438.

## ROTC Commissions Eight Cadets in December Ceremony

By Adam Lowenstein

Florida Tech's ROTC program commissioned eight cadets as second lieutenants in the U.S. Army at an outdoor ceremony Dec. 17 on campus. The Honorable Patrick J. Murphy, Bronze Star veteran, former congressman, undersecretary and acting secretary of the Army, served as the guest speaker.

"The fact that you chose to serve during this defining moment in our history is pretty special," Murphy told the cadets.



*The Honorable Patrick J. Murphy, left, and then-president Dwayne McCay, right, congratulate newly commissioned cadets Ballard Barker, Kasey Money, Joseph Paolucci, Jacob Hahn, Pearson Kerchner, Kevin Taylor, Gianna Petrazzulo and Jonathan Bruder.*

## INSIDE COPLA

## Free Speech Week Keynote Speaker Talks Covering America's Criminal Justice System

By Arianna Schuck

Criminal justice reporter Keri Blakinger didn't take the traditional route into journalism.

But her path paved the way for better insight into issues she covers as a reporter with The Marshall Project, a Pulitzer Prize-winning nonprofit news organization covering the U.S. criminal justice system.

Born and raised in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Blakinger grew up in what she describes as a normal upper middle-class family.

"The only sort of thing that stood out about my childhood was that I was a competitive figure skater," she told students and faculty gathered in the Hartley Room on Feb. 23. She was the keynote speaker for the 11th annual Free Speech Week sponsored by The *Florida Tech Crimson* student-run newspaper.

As a child, Blakinger recalled leaving school at 10 a.m. every day to practice at the rink with her partner. They didn't leave the rink until about 6 p.m.

The pair even competed twice in national competitions.

"It was my whole life," Blakinger said.

When she was about age 17, her partner wanted to branch out and find someone else to skate with.

"It seemed like my whole world collapsed," Blakinger said.

She spent the next few months an emotional wreck, so her parents suggested she attend summer school at Harvard University to help her focus on different things in life.

Blakinger got into drugs soon afterwards.

By the end of the year, she was living on the street, shooting heroin and doing sex work.

"I was very intent on self-destruction... I very quickly went from being [a] straight A student and nationally ranked figure skater to being homeless in Boston," Blakinger said.



*Keri Blakinger was keynote speaker of the 11th annual Free Speech Week held in February.*

She continued this behavior for the next nine years, transferring to different schools along the way. Then, a few days before finishing classes to graduate, Blakinger was arrested with six ounces of heroin.

She was convicted and spent nearly two years in prison.

Afterwards, Blakinger was contacted by an old friend who she used to get high with. They put her in contact with an editor who was looking to interview those who had been through the county jail.

At the end of the interview, the editor offered Blakinger a free-lancing job and her journalism career began.

"Coming out of prison, it was the first time that I did something that felt like it had value," Blakinger said.

After a few jobs at different newspapers, she started to work for the *Houston Chronicle*, covering the criminal justice beat.

What started as filling the position for the newly retired death penalty reporter expanded to covering prisons.

"I realized that I could actually tell stories that mattered and had an impact and change people's lives," Blakinger said.

Ted Petersen, Ph.D., associate professor of communication, faculty advisor to *The Crimson* and director of Florida Tech's student media, has coordinated the keynote events and speakers since Free Speech Week first began 12 years ago.

He explained how the event has a tradition of inviting speakers who

I realized that I could actually tell stories that mattered and had an impact and change people's lives.

*Keri Blakinger*

are journalists writing stories that otherwise would not be told.

"They're writing stories about the people whose voices are harder to hear," Petersen said.

Past keynote speakers include a photographer whose captured images conveyed the heartbreak and hardship of people impacted by Hurricane Katrina and a journalist covering botched rape investigations.



*Students write on the Free Speech Wall, a popular activity during the event.*

Blakinger, an investigative journalist whose work focuses on prisons, jails and death row, falls in line with this kind of reporting.

"The whole point is to showcase that if it weren't for these journalists telling these stories, they wouldn't get told," Petersen said. "We wouldn't know about the problems that they help us unearth."

Eli Rines, a senior majoring in clinical psychology, said Blakinger's keynote was one of his favorite campus events.

"She exemplifies exactly why the First Amendment is important, and I know that [it] helped students learn more about what rights are

theirs and what they can do with them," Rines said.

Blakinger commented on a variety of topics during the Q&A session after her keynote address, the most difficult story she's worked on to dealing with hate for covering a controversial issue.

She also touched on how her experiences in prison affect her reporting. Blakinger is the first formerly incarcerated staff writer at The Marshall Project.

"When I'm writing a story about them, it's humanizing these guys on death row," she said.

She further explained that it's not an attempt to minimize the stories or sufferings of the victims, but to show that people on death row should still be treated as people.

"When the truth is just objectively bad, you're not doing anyone a favor by 'both sidesing' it," Blakinger said.

She used the example of how some prisons would blend up food for prisoners who had no teeth instead of giving them proper dental treatment. She went on to explain how after her story came out, some prisons began 3D printing teeth for some of those prisoners.

Free Speech Week is a reminder of a crucial section in the governing document for the Florida Tech Media Board, which states: "Freedom of the press, as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, is not blocked or interfered with by Florida Tech or any of its trustees, administrators, faculty or staff."

In addition to the keynote address, other Free Speech Week activities included the free speech wall and 'Live Free or Eat Free' food truck event.

The latter activity involved students signing away their First Amendment rights in exchange for free food from food trucks funded by the Campus Activities Board.

"It's a very satirical way of promoting free speech in a balanced way, making it still fun for the students," Rines said.



## INSIDE COPLA

## Writers' Den Sharpens Students' Skills in New, Permanent Home

By Ceano Palacio

Have you ever been stumped by a writing assignment or couldn't find the right words while composing content for a report? You are not alone.

"There's so much to learn, so much to remember when you are trying to write well," says freshman Riya Baweja.

That is why she spent most of her Friday afternoons during the spring semester sharpening her writing skills in the Writers' Den.

"I take COM 1101, and these sessions have been very helpful, not just in that class but in my other subjects, too," Baweja says.

What started as a small group of student and faculty volunteers meeting with undergraduates at a table on the third floor of Evans Library has now grown into an essential writing assistance program available to all academic majors.

In January, the Writers' Den found a permanent home in the new Student Success and Support Center located in the Allen S. Henry Building across the street from Panther Dining Hall.

The peer-to-peer tutorial program helps students work on essays, lab reports, research papers, proposals, résumés, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, journal articles, personal career statements, and other academic and professional documents.

The Writers' Den was inspired by longtime educator Joy Patterson, an English instructor in the School of Arts and Communication who recognized the benefits of having a writing tutorial program at Florida Tech. She also served as the program's first coordinator.

"Since a large percentage of Florida Tech students are international students, this was a clear need. Many students who choose STEM majors have not been strong writers, so they also could use help honing their writing skills," Patterson says.

With the help of a few students possessing a strong grasp of writing mechanics, coupled with volunteer faculty members from the SAC and then-Evans Library head librarian, Kathy Turner, the Writers' Den was established in 2015.

Tutors offer assistance by reviewing student writings and papers, providing feedback on format, organization, content, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics. They also check

in-text citations and references, review professor comments, and identify individual error patterns.



Joy Patterson tutors freshman Riya Baweja in the Writers' Den.

The tutor's role is not to rewrite the paper or to "grade it," but rather help the student polish their work and learn how to make effective choices in their writing, says Patterson.

Through practice and guidance, students who attend regular sessions in the Writers' Den develop good writing strategies as they take more time and revise earlier when writing. In turn, students feel more confident in their writing skills and do well in their writing courses and assignments.

The benefits do not stop there.

Students who receive tutoring from the Writers' Den tend to earn higher grades. Strong writing skills can also help students win more scholarships, procure more internships as well as job positions, and perhaps even make more money in life.

"Being able to write is being able to communicate," Patterson says.

Developing those communication skills can now take place in the Den's new home, procured with the help of Robert Taylor, Ph.D., dean of the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts and head of the School of Arts and Communication.

"We now have a real facility to help our students grapple with their writing challenges," Taylor said in a January SAC faculty meeting.

"I'm very excited about it. It's given us a foundation to build on."

Carol Tillema, an adjunct writing instructor in the SAC and a longtime volunteer with the program, serves as the Writers' Den supervisor.

One of the most exciting aspects to the program's new location is the amount of space now available for multiple tutoring sessions to occur at once. There also is room to hold workshops and group meetings for students who want to collaborate with each other on writing projects.

For more information on the Writers' Den, or to make an appointment, go to [floridatech.edu/sssc](http://floridatech.edu/sssc).

## Florida Tech's 63rd Founders Day Featured Virtual Journey on University's Origins

By Rolanda Hatcher-Gallop

Who knew a 45-minute talk could stir up so many memories?

In a virtual presentation last fall, humanities professor Gordon Patterson took 175 Florida Tech alumni on a historical journey recounting the university's origins.

"Today is the 63rd anniversary of our university's first classes," declared Patterson, a faculty member for over 40 years who is widely regarded as the university's resident historian.



"At 7 p.m. on Sept. 22, 1958, about 144 missilemen—and that was both men and women, as some of you know—who worked at the then-called Missile Test Project had arrived at what was then Eau Gallie Junior High School for the commencement of classes," he began.

Patterson went on to walk through images of the early days of the test project and showed an aerial view of what the city of Melbourne, Florida, looked like in 1950. He discussed how its population of 4,000 swelled over the next decade as an influx of 75,000 scientists, engineers and technicians moved to Brevard County at the dawn of the American space program.

"One of the challenges was that there was a problem: there is, in those who study science and technology, an appetite to always study more," Patterson said, adding there were no educational institutions in the area at the time to fill the need.

He then talked of how Jerome P. Keuper saw the opportunity to change that.

A senior engineer with RCA Service Company, which operated the missile

**Founders Day** Continued to page 14

## INSIDE COPLA

## Forensic Psych Professor Pens Book on Law Enforcement Leadership

By Jim Reynolds

Marshall A. Jones, DBA, considers himself an “accidental academic.”

Currently an assistant professor in forensic psychology at Florida Tech, Jones is a retired police officer who earned his undergraduate and most of his graduate education while working full time in law enforcement.

“I remember sitting in classes, especially in I/O psychology, where I would imagine the utility in the field of various concepts and models. I would leverage these light-bulb moments into my applied research and training but hoped to someday have an opportunity to share more,” he recalled.

So, when fellow retired lawman John Blackledge approached him



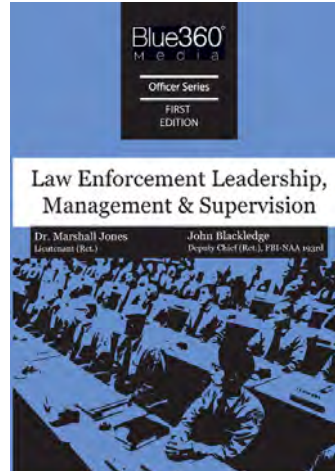
about co-authoring a book on law enforcement leadership, Jones was ready.

“It offered me that exact opportunity to help bridge the gap between academia and the field,” Jones said.

The book, *Law Enforcement Leadership, Management & Supervision, 1st Edition*, was published in late 2021 by Blue 360 Media.

Jones and Blackledge are both retired from the Palm Bay Police Department, with Jones making the transition to academia in 2003.

Their book is aimed at police officers and supervisors interested



in developing their leadership, management and supervision skills, where theories and models are offered as tools in the specific context of policing.

The publication is timely in that now as much as ever law enforcement agencies need leaders proficient in human skills, leadership and professional knowledge to move forward community and information-based policing innovations.

“Today’s environment is increasingly complex, and leaders need tools and models that can help them navigate the complex interactions among people, challenging situations and conflict,” Jones said.

“Our hope is that our book can serve as a resource for developing leaders and managers, and then serve as a field guide that may help when particular situations arise and people need some fodder to help problem solve,” he added.

Jones strives to bridge the gap between theory and practice in his classes, research, consulting and service. He leads the Center for Applied Criminal Case Analysis, a service center that leverages faculty, student and alumni skills to help criminal justice agencies better understand behaviors related to justice issues.

Most recently, Jones and his students conducted an exploratory study of police recruiting, training and retention.

## African American Read-In Highlights Key Figures in Brevard County History

Introduces interactive timeline of local black history

Staff Reports

Local history was the focus of Florida Tech’s 7th Annual African American Read-In, which spotlighted men, women and events that shaped the Space Coast.

“It was a night to not only remember the contributions of those who came before us, but to also memorialize those who set the path for the future,” said Jeff Gallop ’15 M.S., event host.

The event is sponsored by the School of Arts and Communication in partnership with Evans Library.

With the theme, “Giants Among Us: Recognizing Black History Luminaries in Brevard County and Beyond,” the Feb. 25 event mixed poems, readings and songs in with highlights on people like Balaam Allen, Wright Brothers and Peter Wright, three former slaves credited as the founding fathers of Melbourne, Florida.

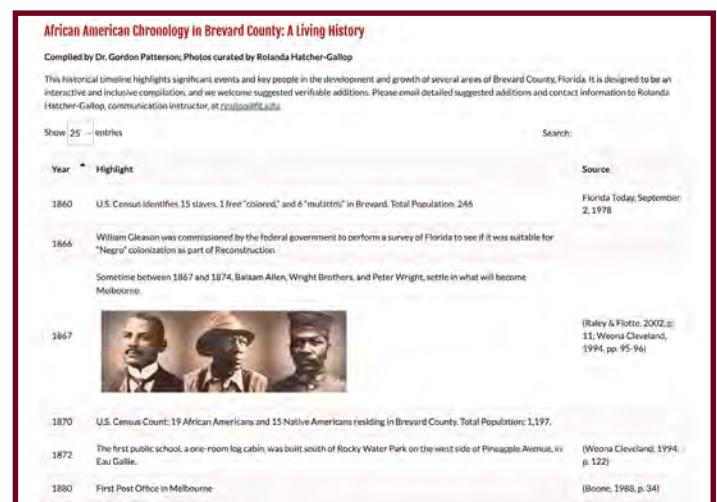
“Brevard County’s Black history—our collective history—is rich and intriguing,” said participant Joseph McNeil, president of the the Concerned Citizens Committee of South Brevard Inc., a nonprofit organization driving an initiative to erect a monument to Melbourne’s three founders.

Sonya Mallard agreed.

“We are standing on the shoulders of giants who paved the way, who cleared the path for us as a people,” she said in her keynote address during the event.

Mallard, coordinator of the Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Cultural Complex in Mims, said the Moores were ordinary people who did extraordinary things during the early days of the modern civil rights movement.

“Most giants, you would imagine, stand at 7 feet or taller. But Harry T. Moore stood about 5 feet, 8 inches, and his wife, Harriette, was 3 inches taller,” Mallard said,



adding that the couple, both educators, worked tirelessly for voter registration and equal rights in the 1930s and ’40s.

“At a time when people were getting lynched for just registering to vote, Harry T. Moore and his friend, Edward Davis, were able

to register over 116,000 Blacks to vote and took many of them to the polls to exercise their rights.

“It changed the political makeup of Florida,” she explained.

### Black history

Continued to page 14



## INSIDE COPLA

### Jason Griggs lauded for 'coolness' during pandemic transitions

By Anushka Boyd

Picture this: You accidentally delete a scheduled Zoom meeting with your class, one that is supposed to start in 10 minutes.

Or you cannot find the quiz you just uploaded to CANVAS.

What do you do? Who do you call?

Cue Jason Griggs, instructional manager in Florida Tech's instructional technology office.

"Jason is even-tempered and has a great sense of humor, essential for stressful times," says Robert Taylor, Ph.D., dean of the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts and head of the School of Arts and Communication.

Times couldn't have been more stressful than at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

The pandemic forced Florida Tech, along with hundreds of colleges and universities across the U.S., to develop a strategic learning model to accommodate varying needs of instruction. Several departments on campus had to collectively unite and implement a unique combination of a more flexible and virtual learning model.

This led to converting face-to-face classes into hybrid models.

This kept the IT department busy as they created and presented workshops, demonstrations and videos for faculty adapting to the new models.

Griggs said the transition made many professors and instructors reexamine the way they teach and learn new techniques.

"From a top level, the university seems to be paying more attention to pedagogy and implementing changes to improve teaching," he adds.

Griggs, specifically, shared how he had to make Canvas, Zoom and Panopto work together and develop workflows that would be easy for instructors to follow. In addition, he was one of the critical team members who helped install web cameras and tripods in the classrooms throughout campus.

"The news reported about toilet paper shortages were fine, but webcam shortages kept me up at night," Grigg jokes.

Although the favorite thing about his job is helping people, when asked how he stays energized and motivated when things get crazy, Griggs says he practices "aggressive self-care."

On weekdays, he wakes up before anyone else in his house (yes, including his dog), to meditate, exercise, read, have breakfast and get ready for the day.

His second home is with the SAC, where he also adjuncts on top of his wizarding duties.

History professor Gordon Patterson, Ph.D., believes that Griggs's experience as a teacher uniquely helps him in this role.

"Jason understands the challenges of organizing and



Jason Griggs, Florida Tech instructional technology manager

conducting a class because he has done it and is doing it," Patterson says.

Ted Petersen, Ph.D., chair of the undergraduate communication program, adds that these traits also were evident as Griggs trained faculty while shifting to remote learning, then the hybrid models and even back to in-person instruction.

"Jason has been an absolute champion for the university as we made these shifts," Petersen says. "He always answered all my questions, even the stupid ones, with kindness and clarity."

He adds that the past two years have certainly presented their fair share of challenges and "shown areas where we can grow."

Griggs, in reflecting on the changes, sums it up with a quote from the late United Kingdom Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who said, "Never let a good crisis go to waste."

### Founders Day

Continued from 12

program, Keuper shared his idea for starting a college with four other missilemen. All joined in planning out the venture.

Within months, Brevard Engineering College took flight with Keuper as its first president.

Patterson touched on the school's move to the land on which the current campus now sits and talked about the first buildings erected. He then highlighted other aspects of its history, including the college being the first in the world to offer a master's degree in space technology, the first honorary degrees given in 1962 (including one to Mercury astronaut Virgil "Gus" Grissom), and the college's name change to Florida Institute of Technology in 1966.

What struck Mike Ussak '72, of Edison, New Jersey, most about the talk was how quickly memories of his time on campus came flooding back, especially walking through the botanical garden in the late 1960s and early '70s and participating in a midnight frog jump down Country Club Road as a freshman.

"They woke us up yelling, 'Fire drill!'," he recalled.

Eric Zillmer '83 M.S., '84 Psy.D., said learning more about Florida Tech's history provides context to the experiences of students and graduates.

"I personally had such a great experience. My teachers were caring and knowledgeable and to this day I model myself after them," he said.

### Black history

Continued from page 13

The Moores are among dozens of Black residents and significant events highlighted in "African American Chronology in Brevard County: A Living History," a new historical timeline unveiled during the read-in.

With 108 entries compiled by history professor Gordon Patterson, Ph.D., and photos curated by

communication instructor Rolanda Hatcher-Gallop '10 M.S., the timeline is designed to be an interactive and inclusive compilation of local Black history.

Patterson said the timeline is "a lens that sharpens our focus on how we came to be what we are and what we might become.

"If the timeline reveals anything, it is that we must know the past to understand the present," he said.

"The value of the timeline is that it suggests that we need to read between the lines."

The timeline can be accessed by logging on to the School of Arts and Communication's stories and events webpage at [floridatech.edu/psychology-and-liberal-arts/schools/arts-and-communication/about-sac/our-stories-and-events](http://floridatech.edu/psychology-and-liberal-arts/schools/arts-and-communication/about-sac/our-stories-and-events).



## MAKING MOVES

### COPLA Professors Garner Faculty Senate Excellence Awards

Two School of Psychology faculty were recognized at the Spring 2022 Honors Convocation for their exceptional work in research and service.



Jessica Wildman, center, receives her award from (left) Tolga Turgut, Ph.D., faculty senate president, and (right) Marco Carvalho, Ph.D., Florida Tech acting president.

Jessica Wildman, Ph.D., an associate professor, received the the Charles E. Helmstetter Award for Excellence in Research, and assistant professor Marshall Jones, Ph.D., took home the Andrew W. Revay Jr. Award for Excellence in Service.



Marshall Jones, center, receives his award from (left) Tolga Turgut, Ph.D., faculty senate president, and (right) Marco Carvalho, Ph.D., Florida Tech acting president.

"This recognition is truly deserved and shows yet again that COPLA is a university leader in so many areas," said Robert Taylor, Ph.D., dean of the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts and professor of history.

### FACULTY NEWS

#### School of Arts and Communication

**Andrew Aberdein** recently published the following articles: "Courageous arguments and deep disagreements," in *Topoi*, 40(5): 1205–12, 2021; "Virtue theory of mathematical practices: An introduction," written with Colin Jakob Rittberg and Fenner Stanley Tanswell, in *Synthese*, 199(3–4): 10167–80, 2021; and "Was Aristotle a virtue argumentation theorist?" in *Essays on Argumentation in Antiquity*, edited by Joseph Bjelde, David Merry and Christopher Roser, Cham: Springer, 215–29, 2021.



He also gave a talk on "Deep Disagreement in Mathematics" during the Disagreements in Mathematics Online Workshop on June 19, 2021; spoke on "Mathematics and Epistemic Trespassing" in the Mathematical Collaboration 4 Online Seminar Series on Oct. 5, 2021; and discussed "Anonymous Arguments" for the Interdisciplinary Online Speaker Series on the Ethics of Argument on Dec. 3, 2021.

Aberdein also wrote the book review on *Truth in Fiction: Rethinking its Logic* by John Woods, (Springer, 2018) for *Philosophia*, 49(2): 873–81, 2021.

**Danita Berg** presented "The Tides of Change: English in STEM and Career Colleges" at the College English Association annual conference in Birmingham, Alabama, in April. She also co-chaired the panel, "Coming of Age in the Age of Covid: A Survival Panel for Students and Professors," with **Melissa Crofton** and **Debbie Lelekis** at the Florida College English Association's annual conference in October. Crofton's paper for the panel was titled "Navigating Freshman Comp with Tolkien's *The Hobbit*."

**Annie Caza's** course, WRI 0100: English Writing Review—Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging, qualified as a class where students can earn credits toward their Cultural Competency Certificate. The course joins the ranks of more than 35 CoPLA classes with the designation, where students receive both academic credit and at least one certificate point.

**Melissa Crofton** presented "Langston Hughes: Gaining Justice by Confronting Slavery" at the College English Association conference in Birmingham, Alabama, on

April 1. She also presented "Reflections on a Virtual Conference: How SAMLA 92 Reinforced the Values of Social-Networking in a Socially Distant World" at the virtual South Atlantic Modern Language Association conference last November.

Panther Battalion **LTC Jimmy Crook** and Regine Diehl, manager of Florida Tech's Military & Veteran Student Services, were quoted in the March 31 article, "Florida Tech earns 'Military Friendly' designation" in *Hometown News*.

**Natalie Dorfeld** published "Safety vs. Security: Returning F2F During a Global Pandemic" in *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry*, Issue 6: 2-10, 2022. She also published "Welcome to the %&\* Show: Teaching Composition During a Global Pandemic" in *St. John's University Humanities Review: Time in the Time of COVID-19: The Relationship Between Time and Distress*, 18(1): 43-50. In addition, Dorfeld participated in the roundtable discussion "Using Our Power: The MLA, Advocacy, and Academic Labor" at the Modern Language Association Conference, Jan. 6–9.

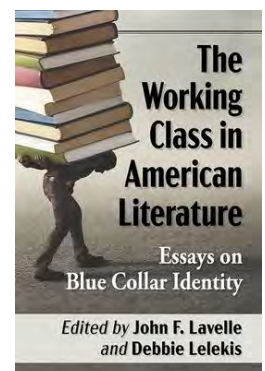
**Eliza Dopira**, chair of the music program, was the guest alto soloist in a performance of "Mozart's Requiem" at Riverside Presbyterian Church in Cocoa Beach on March 13. The event, part of the Dr. Vernon Boushell Concert Series, featured performances by the Riverside Chamber Orchestra and Riverside Community Chorus.

**Rolanda Hatcher-Gallop** recently was elected vice president of the board of directors for Neighbor Up Brevard, a nonprofit organization dedicated to planning, facilitating and implementing revitalization solutions for impoverished communities in Brevard County. She has served on the board since 2017.

**Debbie Lelekis's** new book, *The Working Class in American Literature: Essays on Blue Collar Identity*, published last September.

The book was co-edited with retired associate English professor John F. Lavelle, Ph.D. It is available

on Amazon and the publisher's website: [mcfarlandbooks.com/product/the-working-class-in-american-literature](https://mcfarlandbooks.com/product/the-working-class-in-american-literature).



## MAKING MOVES

Lelekis also presented "Injustice, Vigilantism, and Depictions of Racial Violence in the Works of Paul Dunbar" at the College English Association conference in Birmingham, Alabama, on April 1. While at the conference, Lelekis and **Melissa Crofton** visited the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, as well as the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

**Keturah Mazo** and adjunct instructor **Jacqueline Noto** presented "Community Collaboration in Identifying Factors to Aid the Houseless" on Feb. 24 at the Southern Conference on Teaching and Learning in Savannah, Georgia.

**Moti Mizrahi** published a book "For and Against Scientism: Science, Methodology, and the Future of Philosophy," Rowman & Littlefield, 2022.



**Robert Taylor** was quoted in the *Florida Today* article, "Putin's nuclear threat: 'Nuke-sniffing' plane and Florida Air Force lab monitoring Ukraine" published March 25.



**Wanfa Zhang** presented "How Likely Will China Be a Revisionist Country? Implications of Surveys at 35 Universities in China (2015–2018)" on April 9 as part of the "Public Opinion in China" panel during the 79th Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA). He also chaired the session on "Lightning Talk: Domestic and Foreign Policy of China" at the conference. Zhang also gave the speech, "China's 'One Belt One Road Initiative'—Ambitions, Realities and Implications" at the Johns Island Club's Gold Seminar in Vero Beach, Florida, on Feb. 28.

### School of Behavior Analysis

**Jonathan K. Fernand** presented "The Effects of Behavioral Skills Training on Staff Implementation of Feeding Interventions" on Sept. 30 at the Florida Association for Behavior Analysis in Miami. He also presented "An Introduction to Behavioral Approaches for Pediatric Feeding Problems" at the 4º Encontro Brasil e EUA de Autismo, Brazil on Nov. 14. That was followed by a presentation on "Scope of Practice and Competency in The Assessment and Treatment of Pediatric Feeding Disorders" at the Emirates College for Advanced Education in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates on Dec. 14.

**David Wilder**, along with a Florida Tech graduate students, colleagues and/or alumni, published the following articles: "Procedural Integrity Reporting in the Journal of Organizational Behavior Management (2000–2020)" in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*, last November; "Evaluation of Shoe Inserts to Reduce Toe Walking in Young Children with Autism" in *Behavioral Interventions*, in December; "The use of task clarification and self-monitoring to increase affirmative to constructive feedback ratios in supervisory relationships" in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management*, also in December; and "The Use of Task Clarification and Self-Monitoring to Increase Affirmative to Constructive Feedback Ratios in Supervisory Relationships" in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior Management* in December.

With graduate students, Wilder also published the following in January: "The Performance Diagnostic Checklist—Human Services: An updated user guide" in *Behavior Analysis in Practice* in January; and "A Comparison of Continuous, Dense, and Lean Schedules of Noncontingent Access to Matched Competing Stimuli to Reduce Stereotypy" in *Behavioral Interventions*.

Wilder, along with Florida Tech graduate students, colleagues and/or alumni, also presented the following at the 41st annual meeting of the Florida Association for Behavior Analysis in September: "An Examination of Variables That Predict Turnover, Staff and Caregiver Satisfaction in Behavior-Analytic Organizations"; "Adherence to Medical Routines: Promoting Health And Happiness Without Restraints or Sedation"; "Evaluation of Graduated Exposure To Teach Extended Mask Wearing to Children with Autism"; and "A survey of clinical pediatric feeding practices among practicing behavior analysts."

### School of Psychology

**Rick Addante**, along with four student co-authors, published "Boosting Brain Waves Improves Memory" in *Frontiers in Young Minds*, in November. The article can be accessed



at [kids.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/frym.2021.605677](https://kids.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/frym.2021.605677). Addante, who also received an IDC Research Grant from CoPLA, presented "We Need You: The Essential Role of Psychology in a Mission to Mars and How You Can Contribute to Interplanetary Success" at the annual meeting of the Psychonomic Society in November. Also, he was selected as an associate editor on the editorial board of *Neuropsychology, Frontiers in Psychology* in November and served as the chair of a symposium session on Statistics & Methodology at the 62nd Annual Meeting of the Psychonomics Society that same month.

Additionally, Addante recently received the following awards from the U. S. Air Force Auxiliary as part of the coordinated COVID-19 pandemic response teams: National Commanders Unit Citation Award, the Disaster Relief Ribbon with 'V' device for valor, and the Crisis Service Ribbon. He also presented "From Brainwaves to Mars: What NASA's Mission Exploring Human Isolation for Deep Space Taught Our Crew about Living Together Better on Earth & Off It" to the Lifelong Learners Society of Florida Tech and presented his research on memory enhancement for an invited visit to an NYU podcast, called 'Quantum Photonics'. Addante also presented a talk, "The importance of the humanities to the future of deep space exploration missions," to the COPLA Dean's Advisory Committee in October.

**Demara Bennett** and Morgan Amanda Davies published "Parenting Stress in Non-Offending Caregivers of Sexually Abused Children" in the *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* on Oct. 4. DOI: 10.1080/10538712.2021.1985676. Bennett and Davies also presented "Support for the Inclusion of Non-Offending Caregivers in Child Sexual Abuse Treatment" at the Alberta Health Services Grand Rounds, via Zoom, on Feb. 9.

Bennett, along with **Courtney Kalmanson**, **Patrick Aragon**, **Vida Tyc** and **Heidi Hatfield Edwards**, presented the poster "Adaptability as a Moderator on the Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse and the Development of



## MAKING MOVES

Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms" at the Florida Psychological Association Virtual Convention—Diversity in Practice: Coming Together, via Whova, in September. Bennett also was featured in the *Florida Today* article, "Florida Tech's Family Learning Program marks 30 years of community service," which can be accessed at [floridatoday.com/story/life/wellness/2021/10/05/florida-techs-family-learning-program-has-been-helping-families-30-years/5953405001](https://floridatoday.com/story/life/wellness/2021/10/05/florida-techs-family-learning-program-has-been-helping-families-30-years/5953405001).

*A System of Pleas: Social Science's Contribution to the Real Legal System* edited by **Vanessa Edkins** and Allison Redlich received this year's Lawrence S. Wrightsman Book Award for best book in the field of psychology and law from the American Psychology-Law Society. Formerly the AP-LS Book Award, the honor was renamed for Wrightsman by the American Psychology-Law Society executive committee in August 2019 based on his contribution to the field. The award was presented at the society's annual conference in Denver in March.

### Scott Gustafson

assumed the presidency of the Association of Psychology Training Clinics in March during the national organization's spring conference. He previously served as treasurer of the group for eight years and has been an APTC member for more than 14 years. The APTC is for directors of psychology training clinics. Its members are directors of clinics that are typically associated with pre-doctoral graduate training programs in professional psychology clinical, community, counseling, clinical child, and school psychology at regionally accredited universities.

Gustafson and **Anthony LoGalbo** were quoted in the article, "COVID-19 Strain: Healthcare Workers Increasingly Seek Mental Health Help" in *Healthline* in January.

**Radhika Krishnamurthy**, G. A. Hass, A. P. Natoli, B. L. Smith, P. A. Arbis and E. D. Gottfried published "Professional Practice Guidelines for Personality Assessment" in the *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 104(1), 1-16. Also, with A. J. Wright, L. Chávez, B. A. Edelstein, C. L. Grus, R. Lieb, J. L. Mihura, A. L. Pincus and M. Wilson, Krishnamurthy published "Education and Training Guidelines for Psychological Assessment in Health Service Psychology" in *American Psychologist*, 76(5), 794-801. She also spoke on "Cultural/Diversity Considerations in Assessment" during the Centering



Diversity in Psychological Assessment: Panel and Discussion in January. The online workshop was hosted by the Colorado Assessment Society.

Krishnamurthy also was selected to serve on the American Psychological Association's (APA) Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) to develop Education and Training Guidelines for Psychological Assessment in Health Service Psychology. The guidelines, organized around domains of theory, psychological assessment process, psychometrics, tests and methods, ethics, legal issues, professionalism, diversity, and supervision, were originally released as an independent document with the goal of informing faculty/supervisors, students, and the public of recommended practices associated with quality graduate education and training in psychological assessment. An executive summary of this work was published in the *American Psychologist*, a publication of the APA, in the July/August issue.

Additionally, Krishnamurthy served as lead task force member and first author of the Professional Practice Guidelines for Personality Assessment, commissioned by the Society for Personality Assessment (SPA) board of trustees. SPA is an international organization housed in the U.S. that is dedicated to personality assessment research, applied practice and education/training. The guidelines were developed to aid best practices in personality assessment based on established professional ethics and contemporary research evidence. They were published in SPA's official journal, the *Journal of Personality Assessment*, in January. Krishnamurthy and her team presented an overview of the guidelines during the SPA annual convention in March.

### Anthony LoGalbo

published "The General Ability Measure for Adults Underrepresents True IQ in a High-Functioning Aviation Population" in *Applied Neuropsychology: Adult* in January with graduate student co-authors Andrew DaCosta, Andrew Crane, Analise Roccaforte



and Morgan Davies, as well as Florida Tech alumnus David Prewitt, Ph.D., and professor emeritus Frank Webbe, Ph.D. Additionally, LoGalbo virtually presented "College Athlete Ceiling and Floor Effects on the Immediate Post-Concussion and Cognitive Testing (ImPACT) and Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 5th Edition (SCAT-5)" at the International Neuropsychology Society Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, in February, along with graduate students Andrew DaCosta, Dominique Ghirardi and Kaci Gorres.

LoGalbo also presented "Does Frequency of Baseline Testing Influence Concussion Diagnostic Decision-Making Among College Athletes?" virtually at the International Neuropsychology Society Conference in New Orleans in February, along with graduate students Andrew Crane and Analise Roccaforte.

### Catherine F.

**Talbot** recently was appointed as preprint editor for *Biology Letters*, an online peer-reviewed journal that publishes short articles, reviews and opinion pieces from across the biological sciences. In this new role, Talbot solicits journal submissions from preprint servers.



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## MAKING MOVES



I am an artist and an activist with academic inclinations.

*Donald Harrell*

*Donald Harrell and his wife, Tutu, perform at Orlando Public Library's African American Read-In on Feb. 20.*

## Adjunct Combines Culture and History to Educate Future Professionals

By Ceana Palacio

Donald Harrell is a man whose cultural identity sets the tempo for his life and fuels his passions for advocacy and art.

"I am an artist and an activist with academic inclinations," says Harrell, an adjunct instructor in the School of Arts and Communication. He currently teaches the humanities course, Modern African American Studies, and has taught the class, Evolution of Hip Hop.

Growing up in Virginia in the 1960s and '70s, Harrell said Black history was not celebrated as widely in the U.S. as it is now. During his youth, recognizing the accomplishments of people who looked like him was limited to a week in February, a time mainly highlighting a few important Civil Rights figures like Frederick Douglass and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. rather than providing in-depth information on the societal systems and history that marginalized his community.

As time went on, Harrell developed a great appreciation for his upbringing and culture, a

connection that came through his love of music.

"It was always rhythm that spoke to me," says Harrell, who has been a musician since he was in grade school.

One way he was able to connect to his culture was through drumming. He and his friends would start impromptu performances, something he eventually realized was rooted in his cultural heritage.

"We played the rhythms that we felt; we were just jamming," he recalls, remembering the feeling that washed over him as he delved deeper into the melodic rhythms. "We created our own African sensibility and were able to do it without even thinking about it."

The experiences left him with a desire to learn more about his history and culture. For that, Harrell turned to academia.

He majored in American Studies at Union College in New York with the purpose of understanding the social, political, judicial and racial systems that interplayed daily in the U.S. He then went on to graduate school at UCLA, where he transitioned

to African Studies and focused on ethnomusicology, the music of Africa as it manifested in the Americas.

He also had the opportunity to study at the University of Ghana and worked with other famous African musicians and artists such as Babatunde Olatunji, the father of African drumming in the United States.

Harrell's work after graduation was motivated by his desire to learn more about this culture and to share the knowledge he gathered.

One opportunity to do just that came from a small volunteer opportunity at a local school in Tennessee. Seeing that students at his daughter's school needed a music program, Harrell lent his time teaching students music.

Accompanied by his wife, Tutu, they not only taught music but also struck up students' curiosities about African culture. This led them to begin sharing folklore and stories, eventually establishing their performance company, Orisirisi.

Since its inception, Orisirisi has become known in the U.S. and internationally for its powerful storytelling and music.

Harrell, who recently authored the textbook *Evolution of Hip Hop: A Hip-Hop Nation Story*, has taught at several colleges

and universities over the last two decades, including the University of Central Florida, Valencia College and Ringling College of Art and Design.

He incorporates current events into his courses so students can learn more about themselves, their history and the influence of Black history on American history.

Tying the present to the past is one aspect of Harrell's course that Florida Tech senior Julia Winkler greatly appreciates.

"I had many knowledge gaps when it came to African American history," explains Winkler, a forensic psychology major. "Professor Harrell really helps to fill those gaps through his own experiences growing up during the Civil Rights movement and with other information his class materials provide."

Harrell says the course is designed to do more than teach students about history.

"It's about learning about your life, who you are and what you can contribute to making this world a better place," he says.

Robert Taylor, Ph.D., head of the School of Arts and Communication, agrees.

"Classes like this help students become better citizens and leaders for the 21st century," he says.

## STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

## Forensic Psychology Students Sweep Virtual Poster Contest

By Jim Reynolds

Eighteen Panther forensic psychology undergraduates and one doctoral student entered the 2021 Middle Tennessee State University Criminal Justice Virtual Poster Contest. Three undergrads and the doctoral candidate won top honors, and five undergrads received honorable mention.

Emily Salwak was awarded first place in the Upper Division for her poster, "How Reliable is Criminal Profiling in Investigations?"

Makena Johnson took second place for "Factors Assisting in the Improvement of Eyewitness Testimony," and Kaitlyn Gracey won third place for "Police Retainment: Burnout and Mental Health."

Kate Goodall, a doctoral student in clinical psychology, also won second place in the graduate category for her poster, "Florida Law Enforcement Naloxone Policies and Training." She was a fraction of a point behind the only other graduate level entrant.

The five forensic undergraduates who received honorable mentions for their works all scored just tenths of a point below the three winners. Those students are Sydney Gonzalez, Madeline Bauman, Ethan White, Rosalia Gray and Emily Ward.

The annual contest was started in 2014 by MTSU professor Carter F. Smith, Ph.D. He is also an adjunct professor for Florida Tech's online criminal justice program.

Florida Tech students started competing in the contest in 2019 and have won in top positions every year since.

According to New York University, a poster is a visual compendium of text, graphs, images and other presentation media that summarizes research results. Posters are widely used in academia and are frequently presented at collegiate and professional conferences.

The virtual format allows for an inexpensive and inclusive experience.

Smith started using poster assignments as an alternative to presentation software.

"Creating a poster was a much different challenge than other writing and research assignments," he explained.

"I had started infusing some of my classes with a poster assignment and enjoyed the results. Posters allow the listener or reader to skip ahead to what interests them in case the

presenter hasn't figured out that's what they want," Smith added.

Participating schools last fall were MTSU, Florida Tech and Central Missouri University.

The posters were judged by professors from the participating schools with effort to assign submissions to judges from schools other than the school of origin.

MSTU lecturer Mitzie Forrest, M.S., now a contest organizer, said she entered the competition as an undergraduate and retains enthusiasm for the medium as a learning tool.

"You guys at [Florida Tech] tend to dominate the competition, and I continue to be amazed at your students' efforts. Your students research, format and get a ton of information into a very limited format, which showcases their research capabilities, their analytical thinking skills and their synthesis of the information," she said.

Salwak found the competition exciting.

"I learned a lot about additional productive research methods, how to successfully condense a vast amount of information into



Undergraduate poster winners (from left) Emily Salwak, Makena Johnson and Kaitlyn Gracey.

a poster presentation, (and) much more in-depth knowledge regarding criminal profiling," she said.

Johnson said she thought a poster would be a great medium to explore and present, especially for visual learners like herself.

"I thought it was a much better option than writing a long paper as I could show my somewhat creative side as well as educate others at the same time. I have never entered a competition like this before so I thought it would be fun and there is a first time for everything!"

While Goodall had a different motive in entering.

Noting a general lack of best practices and standards for the use of naloxone, a drug used in the field to counteract opioid overdoses, she said, "The qualitative information I gathered across Florida agencies was an initial effort that I would later use to build on in my doctoral research project entitled Perceptions of Naloxone Training and Administration Among Law Enforcement.



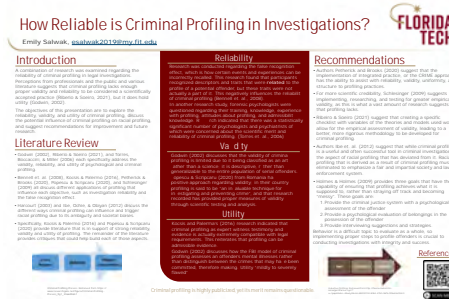
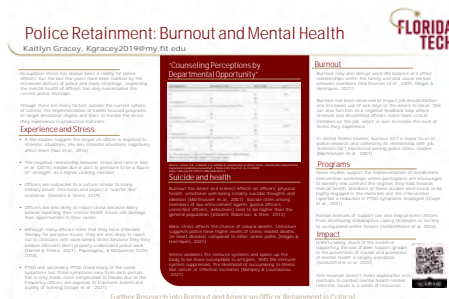
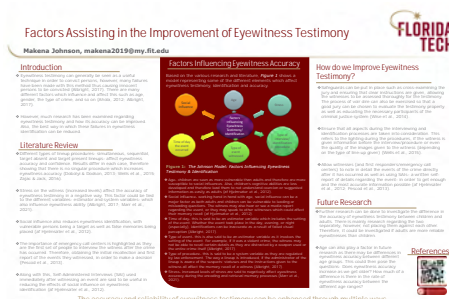
Doctoral student Kate Goodall won second place in the graduate poster category.

"It was a challenge to take the policies and training information from all of the participating agencies and whittle it down to similarities and differences," Goodall added.

All Florida Tech contest participants this year were students of Marshall A. Jones, DBA, an assistant professor in forensic psychology and a retired law enforcement officer.

## Forensic Psychology

Continued to page 21





## STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

*Up Close with...***Paul Cecala, Class of '85****Current City/State of Residence:**

Parsippany, NJ

**Florida Tech degree(s) and graduation**

**year(s):** Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Associate of Science in Aviation Management–Flight Technology, both in 1985

**Current employment and job title:** Chief career navigator/career coach at Cecala Career Consultants

**Why did you choose to attend Florida Tech?**

Back in 1980 and 1981 when I was seeking out colleges, the space shuttle program and International Space Station were big deals. I wanted to be an astronaut flying the shuttle. When I could not get into the military academies, I came to Florida Tech to learn to fly and start on the path to space exploration.

After two years in the aviation management program with flight technology, I received my commercial pilot license and instrument rating, but I procrastinated so long on applying for an aerospace or space sciences major that it became unattainable. So, after utilizing the Student Counseling Center, I switched to psychology.

**How did your experience at Florida Tech prepare you as a professional?**

I fully believe the overall college experience is critical to life preparation. While the academics were absolutely the foundation of my early sales career—understanding how to relate to and communicate with people—really it was the all-around campus life and living away from home that was just as important.

My career started in social services to youth and quickly transitioned to aviation sales and corporate aviation management. In these places, I absolutely utilized all that I learned about business, psychology (human relations) and aviation to quickly rise to a vice president's position. Then, switching to career services and career coaching honed the interpersonal and communications skills I initially learned in college.

**Specifically, were there any courses or faculty that made a significant influence on your education?**

Frank Webbe, Ph.D., (then dean of undergraduate psychology), Robert Shearer, Ph.D., (professor of philosophy) and the chief flight instructor of FIT Aviation at the time of my matriculation all had a direct impact on me.

Dr. Webbe's counsel and easygoing style in the classroom were great, not to mention his calming way of finding solutions to my

Don't just exist at college. Live life to its fullest in the place you are in.

*Paul Cecala*

scheduling needs. Dr. Shearer's way of helping to expand my mind to new and different ways of thinking in History of Philosophy 101 and 102 still help me see problems through new lenses. The insistence on memorizing and using checklists during flight instruction trained me to keep a cool head and to focus on what is important in stressful situations. To this day, I can recite the emergency checklist for loss of communications and a wing stall or unusual attitude in a Piper Cherokee!

But there were others as well: Rick, my boss in the school mailroom who made work fun; Betty, everyone's mom in the Evans Hall cafeteria who always was watching out for us; and Father Doug Bailey, who became one of my closest friends and confidants during those years. I learned more about the world at large and how to live in it from him than anyone else.

**Share your best Florida Tech student memory.**

It was my second Thanksgiving on campus. Many of my friends and I were living in Southgate Apartments. There were about 18 of us from around the world who could not go home that year, so we had our own Thanksgiving. We roasted a 25-pound turkey with eight of us taking turns basting it for six hours. We gathered the dining room furniture of four apartments into one to set a table large enough for us all, and then we feasted for five hours. For that time, they were my family of choice.

**What have been the highlights and milestones of your life and career so far?**

I have had many milestones: My senior project as a relief counselor in a Washington, D.C., youth home in 1985; talking a 16-year-old out of suicide two years after graduating; switching to corporate aviation and its associated adventures, including flights on corporate jets and helicopters, and dining with and meeting some of the rich and famous.

One of the many stories I can tell about them was the time CBS news anchor Dan Rather thanked me on the evening news for helping with his travel during a blizzard.



But by far, the greatest milestones of my life are my marriage to Dan Nazzaro '95 (Psychology) and adopting our teenaged son in 2018.

**What advice do you have for current CoPLA students who want to make the most out of their time at Florida Tech?**

Make Melbourne and Florida Tech your home for the time you are there. This is as much an emotional and intellectual endeavor as a physical one. Try new activities, but find those that you enjoyed in high school and continue them in college. Talk about Melbourne as your home when you return to your family. Don't just exist at college. Live life to its fullest in the place you are in.

**Five Facts about Paul:**

1. Best I can recollect, I was FIT's first "Student Athletic Trainer" before the school hired professionals. I worked with the basketball and soccer teams.
2. To give our son something to do during the COVID winters, we purchased a snowmaking system (like you find on ski slopes) for our back yard. As I write this in mid-March, I am looking out my window at a 20-foot-tall, 40-foot-wide pile of snow that the neighborhood kids are sliding down on boards, skis and sleds.
3. I almost entered the Roman Catholic priesthood as a Franciscan friar during my senior year.
4. Dan and I love visiting our neighbors by paddling our kayaks to their homes on the lake on which we live.
5. I authored the book, *Work Search Buddies: Finding A Job With A Little Help From a Friend*, available on Amazon.com.



## STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

## Science Journalism Students Take Their Opinions on Lagoon Coverage to the Press

Two op-eds written by three students in Heidi Hatfield Edwards, Ph.D., science journalism class during the last fall term are featured in the Feb. 13 issue of *Florida Today*. Edwards said the class was a mix of science and communication students, a community of scholars learning with and from each other.

Originally printed in *Florida Today* on Feb. 13.

## Time to end disconnect between public knowledge, scientific world



**Your Turn**  
Meghan O'Connor and Brianna Forte  
Guest columnists

When we moved from Washington, D.C., and Boston to Florida Tech, we fell in love with our new home and found solace in walking the causeway spanning the Indian River Lagoon. We might not have been able to witness the lagoon in its "glory days," but coming from major cities, it was easy to recognize the beauty of this natural resource.

We came to Melbourne to study biology, and against the backdrop of the lagoon we learned about local ecology, biodiversity, and conservation programs. Meanwhile, climate change has led to the degradation of habitats everywhere, including the lagoon. The changes that our generation is witnessing has led to the development of our voices as environmental activists.

Slowly we assimilated into the culture of academia, where opinions were discouraged and facts were final. In our lab reports we were instructed to eliminate the use of first person, and drilled on the format of introduction, materials/methods, results and discussion.

As scientists, we know nutrient pollution from Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie Basin, fertilizer runoff, and mangrove removal due to coastal development all contribute to the dismal state of the lagoon. However, within our discipline, communication is not the priority. Often there's a disconnect between the knowledge of the public and the scientific world.

The separation of science and politics must be no more. We have reached a critical state, both in our lagoon and globally, where effective communication is necessary to inspire action. Instead of treating science and politics as separate disciplines, we need to combine the two to ensure that the policies being introduced are effective.

In order to create change, you need the support of the public. The only way to obtain this is by making people care. But no one keeps the most recent publication of Science on their coffee table, nor do people have the time to remain up to date. This is where scientific communication comes in. We need people who both understand these complex topics while also having the ability to construct engaging narratives that connect people to these issues.

An example of applying scientific communication to rally public support was when the Brevard Indian River Lagoon Coalition led the half-cent sales tax campaign in 2016 to allocate funding to reduce the impacts of excess nitrogen and phosphorus in the la-



The muck dredging project in the Grand Canal area was funded primarily through revenue from the Save Our Indian River Lagoon sales tax OK'd by Brevard County voters in 2016. PROVIDED BY BREVARD COUNTY

goon. Dolphins were depicted on yard signs, blue shirts emblazoned with "Love our Lagoon" swamped audiences at local hearings, and across Brevard County citizens were being educated by volunteers about why they should care.

The work of the coalition to pass the sales tax has led to a multifaceted approach by the county to preserve the lagoon, including introducing living shorelines, dredging muck, and upgrading septic systems. Just recently, the 50th project funded by the sales tax was completed, and these various projects all contribute to continuing conservation efforts of the lagoon. While there's more work to be done, the coalition has demonstrated the power of precise communication in enacting policies that coincide with science.

Scientists spend hours, years, and lifetimes dedicated to researching their passions. This obvious determination for growth and learning can easily translate into inspiring narratives.

To learn how to channel your voice, we recommend reading the following books: "Houston: We Have a Narrative" and "Escape from the Ivory Tower." Become an active consumer of scientific communication and don't be afraid to create your own content. Take your passion and channel it into action—we need scientific activists like you.

Meghan O'Connor is a master's student studying ecology at Florida Tech.

Brianna Forte is a master's student studying conservation technology and works with the Marine Resources Council.

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## Forensic Psychology

Continued from page 19

"I love finding opportunities to get students more engaged and interested in research and dissemination of information," he said, adding that all the students in his Forensic Behavior and Investigations class complete and submit a poster.

"We usually offer mentoring sessions where students present and peer-critique posters. With feedback from peers, myself and teaching assistants, student submissions are refined and competitive. They receive a poster on their CV, learn a new skill and, perhaps most importantly, engage in disseminating research to a defined target audience."

Jones added that the interest, engagement and enthusiasm of preparing a poster is much greater than doing a traditional paper.

"Students still must identify their literature and complete an annotated bibliography, but rather than simply paraphrase and regurgitate information, they must synthesize information succinctly and creatively get the consumer's attention," he said.

Jones further explained that these type competitions demonstrate to students how their skills align with their peers.

"Students commonly complain about our program's 'hypervigilance' on APA, paraphrasing and academic writing. It is part of our program's culture. But rather than telling them that these are skills that can set you apart in graduate school or professionally, they get to realize the results of their hard work in academic writing and research dissemination skills," he added.

## Viewing environmentalism through a different lens



**Your Turn**  
Justin Breckenridge  
Guest columnist

The world has many reasons to strive for a clean and healthy environment. Among the most important is race and cultural justice.

It's no secret that America has long had a racial justice problem. To this day, we struggle to address issues that have been prevalent since the founding of the country. Similarly, we also fail to sufficiently respond to longstanding environmental issues.

These two failures have overlapping consequences, with those communities who suffer racial injustice also disproportionately suffering environmental issues.

This is no accident, either. It is the direct result of years of racist zoning and practices like redlining, which formed heavily segregated communities. These communities also suffer a disparity in access to both wealth and resources, with Black areas often being much poorer compared to predominantly white areas.

Continuing this disparity, we see a major gap between these areas in how they face environmental challenges.

Overwhelmingly, high-polluting sites such as waste management and water disposal plants are

built within these poorer areas. As a result, air pollution in these areas is much worse compared to other areas, which contributes to health issues. There is also the issue of run-off, which can cause issues with water and food supply.

To use the Indian River Lagoon as a local example, if it collapses, those affected most immediately would be those in low-income areas, as they are in closest proximity to waste management sites.

Since these areas are low-income, it's rarely an option for those living there to simply move away from these conditions. Nor should they be forced to. These communities should be able to thrive without having to relocate because of corporate polluters. Rarely do they have the power to even change these issues as well, because the lack of resources available to them makes creating substantive change difficult. These areas are also notoriously neglected by politicians, who are the ones who have the power to give these areas the resources they need to help their communities.

But even beyond that, taking care of the environment is also an issue of obligation to preserve culture surrounding the environment.

If we are to again use the Indian River Lagoon as an example, Black Seminoles, who were native to the area before colonization, lived off the land with respect to its sanctity. I think it's important that part of doing justice to the oppression these communities have faced is respecting the land that indigenous people once lived on.

**It's no secret that America has long had a racial justice problem. Similarly, we also fail to sufficiently respond to longstanding environmental issues. These two failures have overlapping consequences, with those communities who suffer racial injustice also disproportionately suffering environmental issues.**

Because more than just being an issue of health and inequality, our environment's poor health is also an issue of cultural identity. It's important that communities whose identity is partially tied to the land are protected and have the ability to connect to their culture in a healthy environment.

Solving these issues requires a great deal of resources being allocated to these communities, and giving them a platform where their voices are heard. As we continue to work toward addressing environmental issues, it's essential that we view it through a lens of racial justice.

Justin Breckenridge is a senior in the multiplatform journalism program at Florida Tech.

## STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

*Up Close with...***Jacqueline R. Paniagua, Class of '14****Current city/state of residence:** Ithaca, NY**Florida Tech degree(s) and graduation year(s):**  
Bachelor of Arts in Humanities, 2014**Current employment and job title:** Currently a graduate student at Cornell University seeking a master's degree in public health with a concentration in food systems and health. Also, I am serve as the Tompkins County Department of Health COVID-19 Response Team supervisor.**Why did you choose to attend Florida Tech?**

I chose to attend Florida Tech particularly for the diversity and the flexibility of the humanities. I was able to tailor my degree with my interests and curiosities that would eventually establish a platform for a career in cultural humility and advocacy. I knew that Florida Tech would strengthen my communication skills and develop my professional abilities to propel me into the direction of my career interests revolving around ethics and equity as well as a long-term goal of being an advocate.

**How did your experience at Florida Tech prepare you as a professional?**

I could easily say that Florida Tech helped me improve on my communication and writing skills. However, I would not be stating what was truly meaningful. My experience at Florida Tech gave me the opportunity to foster relationships in a diverse setting. The inclusive environment also allowed me to make mistakes without feeling defeated. It gave me opportunities to learn about myself, others and the role I would like to play in society.

**Specifically, were there any courses or faculty that made a significant influence on your education?**

My experience working with Wanfa Zhang, Ph.D., for my humanities capstone left an influential mark in my career, both academically and personally. I would like to take this

moment to thank Dr. Zhang for encouraging me to trust my process with my work, building my confidence for my career and guiding me in reaching my academic potential.

As a student, we often face the unknown. I feel very fortunate to have a mentor who believed in me, even when I had a difficult time believing in myself.

**Share your best Florida Tech student memory.**

On the days I didn't have class or had a lighter schedule, I would walk around campus and basically allow myself to get "lost" while soaking in the sun. There was always something very calming about those walks.

**What have been the highlights and milestones of your life and career so far?**

My journey in moments of academic successes and challenges with my health reaffirmed my determination to pursue a career that would allow me to bolster a culture of advocacy, empowerment and empathy. My understanding of humility in the previous years were invaluable.

In times of adversity, the guidance of a reliable support system was instrumental to navigating the mentality to persist. My main motivation to be involved comes from the lens that I have personally used in my lifetime. This lens has observed societal inequities and the opportunity to make it dependable, ethical and diverse for others through positive action.

Additionally, my experiences based on my race, gender and health status have influenced my degree of motivation for involvement. Finally, my family roots and peers, who come from many walks of life inspire me to use my voice for my practice, and for that I am forever grateful.

**What advice do you have for current CoPLA students who want to make the most out of their time at Florida Tech?**

Establishing a personal vision for the future of society or one's own community is paramount to a professional's path. I have learned that there may be stumbles along the way, and a change of direction, but it does not mean one should stray from their vision.

My vision is to continue assisting and eliminating disparities in my field that have accumulated throughout history. As you grow and face new experiences, you will develop your own vision. Expose yourself to as many opportunities as possible as they are the opportunities that will allow you to learn and grow.

In being a mentor, I strongly believe that the process is ever evolving as lifestyles and experiences alter perceptions in personal lives. So, allow yourself to continue evolving into the individual that not only you would like to be, but into the individual that society needs you to be.

**Five Facts about Jacqueline:**

1. I love to cook, but I am a terrible baker.
2. As a child, I wanted to be an archaeologist.
3. Photography is one of my favorite hobbies.
4. I received my certification in barre (ballet fitness).
5. During a trip to Ecuador, I went bungee jumping for \$15.

I have learned that there may be stumbles along the way, and a change of direction, but it does not mean one should stray from their vision.

*Jacqueline R. Paniagua*



## STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

## 1980s

**1 ERIC ZILLMER** '83 M.S., '84 Psy.D., is the Carl R. Pacifico Professor of Neuropsychology at Drexel University. Last June, he stepped down as the university's athletics director after 23 years in the position. Zillmer went out on top after both men's and women's basketball programs won their respective conference championships and qualified for March Madness.



## 1990s

**2 PAUL CECALA** '85 and **DAN NAZZARO** '95 toured Florida Tech's campus and the Folliard Alumni Center. Cecala is a past president of the Alumni Association and is a career coach. Nazzaro is a software engineer for UPS.



## 2000s

**3 SHANITA ALLEN** '05, a board-certified behavior analyst, released her new children's book. *What is a Dream?* is the second book in her Let's Go Dreaming series.

**CHRISTINE COOPER** '06 M.S., '08 Psy.D., became a support psychologist with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Cooper states the skills learned across a wide array of clinical settings during her degree have been invaluable in helping to alleviate mental illness, empower individuals and create positive organizational change.

**AGNIESZKA MARSHALL** '04 M.S., '06 Psy.D., was appointed chief clinical officer by Tykes & Teens, a leading provider of evidence-based mental health services and programs for children and adolescents. Marshall is a licensed clinical psychologist and certified addictions professional.

**RANDI C. MCKINTOSH** '08 M.S., '11 Psy.D., was appointed to the Florida Board of Psychology by Gov. Ron DeSantis. Mackintosh is a clinical psychologist who previously worked as a staff psychologist at Florida State University and has served as co-chair for the Florida Psychological Association, Capital Center.



## 2010s

**4 AMANDA DERLETH** '12 moved to LA after receiving her B.S. in communication and serves as director of operations for Fearless TV. She and her husband, Carlos Guzman, welcomed their first-born son Lorenzo David in February 2020.

**BECCA CANDELARIA** '19 is working as a GAP licensing specialist with Brevard Family Partnership. Her work in case management involves child welfare.

**MELISSA CHAPMAN** '15 discovered how much she enjoyed a few introductory law classes as an undergrad psychology and biology student at Florida Tech. She has since parlayed that interest into a law career specializing in intellectual property.

**KATHERINE SCHEA**, Esq., '14 joined the Ward Law Group. She interned at the Florida Partners in Crisis Mental Health Advocacy Group and earned her juris doctorate in 2017.

**5 JULIE FAINBERG** '13, '16 M.S., recently joined ARRAY as a senior business development analyst where she builds and maintains a pipeline of strategic opportunities in the government contracting space with a total value of over \$2 billion. The extensive group project experience garnered during her time as a student is the most translatable to corporate work settings.

**6 DEAN FAITHFULL** '11, who played soccer for four years at Florida Tech, is kicking in his second athletic career as a placekicker at Colorado State University-Pueblo. He is believed to be the oldest college football player in the U.S.

**JEFFERY "J.D." GALLOP** '15 M.S. won first place in the feature writing category in the 2021 Society of Professional Journalists' Green Eyeshade Awards, the nation's oldest regional journalism contest. The recognition was given for his coverage of the 2020 murder of a U.S. soldier by an ex-boyfriend, highlighting domestic violence in the U.S. Armed Forces.



## STUDENT AND ALUMNI NEWS

**KYLE HEBERLE '13** recently returned to his home state of Missouri to take a new role as CEO of TNT Crust.

**7 BRIANNA JONES '18** was promoted to senior talent acquisition recruiter with Ochsner Health.

**JESSICA KEARNEY '17** married Brandon Lloyd on Jan. 16 in Nashville, Tennessee. Both are captains in U.S. Army Aviation. She flies the UH-60 Blackhawk and her husband is an AH-64 Apache pilot.

**MADELEINE KEEVY '17** started a new role as assistant professor of psychology at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada. Kevy earned her M.S. in applied behavior analysis at Florida Tech and completed her doctoral studies at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

**8 ZAMI LAM '16** married his college sweetheart, **SHELBY LANGNER '17**. They met during their first day on campus at the physics and space sciences orientation. Lam recently joined Amazon Web Services as a talent acquisition specialist.

**LEEANNA LAPORTE '15, '18 M.A.**, was promoted to customer operations supervisor at Cardinal Health. She feels her career path has unlimited potential after earning her master's in organizational leadership.

**RACHEL MOORE '16, '18 MBA**, assumed a new role as a program manager at L3Harris. She previously worked at NASA and

served with the United States Marine Corps.

**ASHLEY MOSS '19** recently joined The MENTOR Network as a board-certified behavior analyst.

**JACQUELINE PANIAGUA '14** is pursuing a master's degree in public health, food systems and health at Cornell University in New York.

**BRITTANY SJAASTAD '15** recently joined Rutgers University Behavioral Health Center as a mental health clinician. Her new role involves providing therapy in an outpatient setting, specializing in gender-based violence, trauma, LGBTQA+, depression, anger and anxiety.

**JORDAN SYMONDS '17** began work as head of communication for the car subscription as a service company, imove, in Oslo, Norway.

**9 ALYSSA TOLLY '17** was recently promoted to team supervisor at Behavior Analysis Center for Autism in Fishers, Indiana.

**NICK TOUFEXIS '14** earned his Juris Doctor in 2021 after his retirement from the U.S. Navy and is currently an associate attorney with Saputo PLLC.

## 2020s

**ZACHARY BEHLOK '21**, a senior software technician with Raytheon Technologies, published his first book, *The Requiem of Apathy and Sorrow*.

**KEVIN BOODOOSINGH '20, '21 M.S.**, became a social media

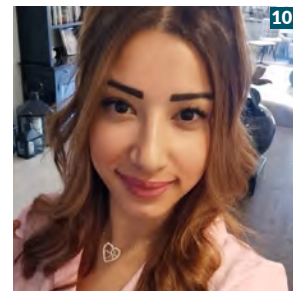
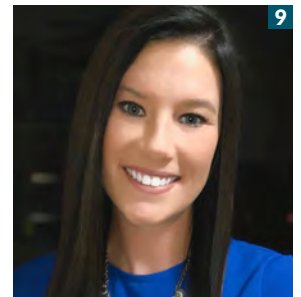
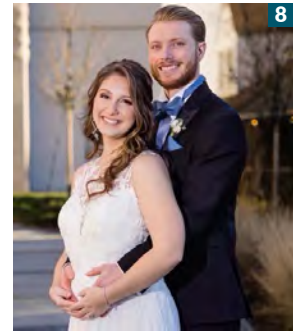
specialist with Florida Tech's University Marketing Office in February.

**10 HIBA GHRAIR '20 M.A.** is the lead therapist with Mohamed bin Rashed Center for Special Education operated by the New England Center for Children in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

**LAURYN HARRIS '21** married Luke Laliberte on Feb. 5 in Charlotte, North Carolina. They are now expecting the arrival of their baby daughter in late May. Harris, a Florida Tech multiplatform journalism graduate, is currently pursuing a master's degree in communications from Queens University of Charlotte.

**SUMMER REBENSKY '15, '17, '20 Ph.D.**, following her postdoctoral fellowship with the Consortium for Research Fellows program with the Air Force Research Laboratory, is now a research scientist with Aptima. Her work focuses on performance assessment technologies.

**KARA WATTS '20** went on to the University of St. Andrews in Scotland after completing her B.S. in animal behavior to study foraging behaviors of grey and harbour seals in the North Sea. Back in the U.S., Watts landed her dream job as an aquatic research associate at Epcot's Seas with Nemo and Friends in Orlando. She credits her amazing experiences from working with cockroaches in Dr. Proctor's lab at Florida Tech to now being able to work with marine mammals at the theme park.



**FLORIDA TECH'S CONCERT CHOIR** took its audience to New York City and beyond during a rousing performance of popular songs from Broadway hit shows and Disney movies. Eliza Dopira, chair of Florida Tech's music program and an instructor in the School of Arts and Communication, directed the choir. The concert, held April 21 in the Gleason Performing Arts Center, was one of several from the music program's Spring 2022 Concert Season. It was streamed live on YouTube at [youtu.be/nl7mBkQkhOk](https://youtu.be/nl7mBkQkhOk).

Additionally, the livestreamed video of the Florida Tech Concert Band's April 11 concert exceeded 3,500 views in less than a week. Directed by Joseph Montelione, DMA, an associate professor in the SAC, the performance featured Grammy Award-winning compositions and music from popular video games like Super Mario Brothers and Final Fantasy. See the concert footage at [youtu.be/WKNFSrKK0oA](https://youtu.be/WKNFSrKK0oA).