



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

MARCH 2017

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THANK YOU, COMMUNITY PARTNERS!

The great poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, pinned these words in his poem, The Song of Hiawatha, "All your strength is in your union, All your danger is in discord; Therefore be at peace henceforward, And as brothers live together."

It's been three months since I became President of Northwest Florida State College and one word keeps flooding my thoughts, synergy. Over the past three months, we have made great strides to establish synergy within the communities we serve.

Our primary focus at NWF State College is to improve lives and we are doing just that through the pursuit of partnerships with our regional business/industry leaders, administrators in secondary and post-secondary education, and our state legislative delegation. We are focused on making a direct positive impact on the community; as well as, economic, and workforce development initiatives of this region.

Through the non-partisan work of Senator George Gainer, Senator Doug Broxson, Representative Mel Ponder, Representative Brad Drake, and Representative Jayer Williams; legislation has been introduced that will assist us in touching more lives by expanding our capacity to serve. House Bill 509 focuses on Tuition Assistance for Military Students, House Bill 43.73 for upgrades to the college's utilities infrastructure, and House Bill 3683 for the complete renovation of our Engineering Building on the Niceville Campus. These bills are among the first

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NWF State College Foundation Recognizes PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE MEMBERS



Northwest Florida State College President's Circle members were recognized at center court of the Raider Arena before the start of the last home men's basketball game Wednesday, February 22. This is the largest President's Circle the NWF Foundation has had since the inception of the program.

Members of the NWF President's Circle are individuals committed to the future of higher education in our community. Member gifts provide the college the flexibility to use the funds where they are needed most – for program support, instructional needs, and many other crucial expenses that benefit NWF State College students.

The President's Circle is open to any individual or organization contributing an unrestricted, minimum gift of \$500 annually. For more information, please call the NWF State College Foundation at (850) 729-5357 or visit our website at www.nwfsfoundation.org. ■

Northwest Florida State College Exceeds \$2 Million Energy Savings

By implementing an innovative energy conservation program, Northwest Florida State College has significantly cut energy use — saving \$2,037,621 in only three years.

The focus on conservation reflects NWF State College's partnership with Cenergistic, a national firm that helps clients to plan and implement a comprehensive energy program focusing on the best practices for using energy. These best practices typically result in 20 – 30 percent savings. Savings are

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Thank You Partners (continued from page 1)
to have been introduced on behalf of our college in almost a decade.

I want to take a moment to discuss the Military Assistance bill. NWF State College is proposing a change to Florida Statute 1009.23 that would allow our college to waive mandatory fees for military students. Military Tuition Assistance (TA) is a benefit paid to eligible members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard. In 2014, the Department of Defense made a change to the TA program which excludes the payment of fees, including all expenses not labeled as tuition. This separation of "fees" and "tuition" has greatly reduced our ability to serve our military as state statute ties mandatory fees to tuition. As you can see, this is a challenge to NWF's military-friendly reputation and a barrier that we must overcome. I want to personally thank Representative Ponder for his strong commitment to leading this legislation.

We appreciate the work of all our Northwest Florida state legislators and their staff members to introduce these bills and to shepherd them through the legislative process. Our local legislators realize the partnerships, promise, possibilities, and potential for our college and the communities that we serve; and they are stepping up for us in Tallahassee.

What does this all mean? It means that it doesn't matter who gets the credit for the work or who "seals the deal." What matters is that we forge these crucial partnerships with all members of Northwest Florida in order to reach our goals and a bright future for our college and its students and the region we serve.

The best way to predict our future is to create it. I pledge to you that I will be at the table working with others in creating promise and leading progress in our region. We are listening to the needs of our community and our students, and we are positioning ourselves to be proactive problem-solvers to any challenge.

Together we are excellent. Apart we are mediocre. We are creating community partnerships to increase synergy for progress in Northwest Florida. Will you join us? ■

FIRST GENERATION MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

The First Generation Matching Grant (FGMG) is a need-based program providing financial aid to Florida undergraduate residents who demonstrate financial need and whose parents have not earned a baccalaureate degree. Private support is required to receive the annual state matching allocation, which totaled \$13,450 this year. Thank you to the following donors whose gifts will provide up to \$26,900 in scholarship funds to qualifying First Gen students: ■

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Liz and Mack Gay■ Lois and Mauri Lunderman■ Bob and Venita Morell■ Donnie and Sharon Richardson■ Alonso Smith■ Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority■ Bright Light Land Title Company, LLC | <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Center for Lifelong Learning, Inc.■ ERA American Realty Charitable Foundation, Inc.■ Rotary Club of Crestview■ The Guy and Judy-ann Zoghby Family Fund■ Yolanda D. Thomas Scholarship Endowment, Inc. |
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College Exceeds \$2 Million Energy Savings (continued from page 1)

generated from an array of systems including: heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment; food service equipment; athletic facilities; irrigation; auditoriums; classrooms; offices — wherever energy is consumed.

"This entrepreneurial approach to energy savings comes as the result of effective collaboration, planning, adoption, and follow-through," said Dr. Devin Stephenson, President. "Northwest Florida College has passionately embraced this innovation and even in challenging economic times, we have realized significant savings, allowing us to continue strongly positioning ourselves to fulfill our mission and vision in our region. There is no doubt our partnership with Cenergistic is a best practice model." ■

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

- **Ms. Lois Henry, Professor of Music**, was selected to serve as pianist for one of the Florida All-State Choirs and she performed a full solo piano recital here at the college on February 28 and March 5, 2017.
- **Mr. Dean Allen, Assistant Professor of Humanities** in the Division of Humanities and Fine and Performing Arts, published an article in ChiPPS E-Journal: Children's Project on Palliative/Hospice Services entitled "Reciprocal Relationships: Giving and Receiving Care with Children in Spiritual Pain."
- **Ms. Wanjiku Jackson** received the SkillsUSA Florida Region 1 2017 Advisor of the Year Award on March 1, 2017.
- **Ms. Leigh Peacock Westman, Visual Art Professor**, was a juror for the 2016 ArtsQuest Festival and for the 2016 Okaloosa County K-12 Art Show. Ms. Westman also showed new artwork in the 2016 and 2017 NWF State College Faculty Exhibitions.



30TH ANNUAL MATH BOWL AT NWF

High school teams from all across Northwest Florida competed in the 30th annual Math Bowl at Northwest Florida State College on Friday, March 3. This year's event was made possible through a partnership with the Air Force Research Laboratory of Eglin Air Force Base. Placing first in each of their classes were Chipley from Class X, Gulf Breeze from Class Y and Lawton Chiles from Class Z. ■



Pictured above l to r: Jeffrey Rink, NFSO Conductor, Fred Semasko and Lynne Fehrenbach, NFSO Education and Outreach Director

region, which provides a year-long music curriculum and fun classroom activities that culminate in an interactive concert with the NFSO. ■

SEMASKO DONATES TO NFSO

Fred Semasko of First Command Financial Services in Niceville donated \$5,000 to the NFSO for its fourth year as the presenting sponsor for the *Link Up* with Carnegie Hall program for Okaloosa and Walton Counties fourth grade students. In 2012, the NFSO was the first to bring Carnegie Hall's innovative music program to the

A promotional poster for the NWF READS event. It features the NWF READS logo (R2L) and the date April 17, 2017. Below the date, it says "Q&A Session", "Blackwater Review Reception", and "Reading & Book Signing". A portrait of author Andre Dubus III is shown, along with the text "ANDRE DUBUS III BESTSELLING NOVELIST".

Fiction writer and Memoirist Andre Dubus III will take center stage at the main event for this year's NWF READS, the college's annual literacy celebration on Monday, April 17 at 7 p.m. in the Sprint Theater, part of the Mattie Kelly Arts Center.

Immediately preceding this performance will be the annual Blackwater Review reception in the adjoining McIlroy Gallery from 6 to 6:45 p.m. This event will feature student readings and the unveiling of student art selected for the cover of this year's edition of the college's annual literary and fine arts journal. Both events are free and open to the public. ■

Men's Basketball at NJCAA National Tournament

Following an undefeated conference season for the first time in program history, NWF State College men's basketball team has traveled to Hutchinson, Kansas for the NJCAA National Tournament where they've secured a spot in the Final Four after a 98-82 win over San Jacinto Central. At the time of this publication, NWF has continued on to semifinals where they will compete for a spot in the final game. The NJCAA championship game took place on March 25.

For the third straight year, Steve DeMeo was named Panhandle Conference Coach of the Year. The Raiders' starting five were named to All-Panhandle Conference First Team, with Jeremy Rodriguez named Player of the Year. ■



Visit our website at:

www.NWFRaiders.com

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NWF Students Excel at SkillsUSA Regional Competition

At this year's SkillsUSA regional competition, teams representing NWF State College excelled, bringing home first and second place in Career Pathways: Education and Training Services division and first place in Career Pathways: Health Science division. ■

Symphony of Taste Supports Youth Music Programs

A big thank you to numerous area restaurants and beverage vendors who donated time, talent and tastes for the 26th annual Symphony of Taste Food and Wine Fest sponsored by the NFSO Guild! This event continues to benefit the college's Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra and its youth music education programs. ■

NWF STATE COLLEGE NURSING PROGRAM RANKED IN FLORIDA'S TOP 20

The Northwest Florida State College Nursing Program was recently ranked as one of the top 20 associate of science (A.S.) in nursing programs in Florida by RegisteredNursing.org.

This designation is awarded to programs based on an analysis of past and present pass rates of the NCLEX-RN, a national exam used to assess competency of registered nursing students that is required for licensure.

"One of the most important measures used to evaluate the quality of a nursing program is the first-time pass rates of its graduates on the NCLEX exam," said Dr. Marty Walker, Director of the NWF Nursing program. "Our Nursing department is proud to share that the A.S. program's first-time pass rate reported by the Florida Board of Nursing (FBON) on the NCLEX exam is 94.44 percent for 2016. This number is well above the national pass rate for AS programs of 81.68 percent." The state of Florida has over 130 associate of science in nursing programs of which RegisteredNursing.org ranked the top 50 by percentage of graduates who pass the exam. The nursing program at NWF was ranked 13. ■



GLITTER Grant Received

The Costa Leadership Institute received a \$2,500 grant from the Foundation of the Fabrication and Manufacture Association to support a high school girls manufacturing camp this summer called Girls Learning Industrial Trades To Empower & Redefine (GLITTER). This program is intended to introduce females to these industries. "We look forward to this inaugural summer program and to making it a self-sustaining entity for years to come," said Julie Cotton, Director of Professional and Continuing Education. ■



Volunteer with CBA

From Shelves to Shores is seeking high school students to volunteer and aid in the restoration of Choctawhatchee Bay! This group will meet at the Coastal Branch Library in South Walton on April 10 and May 1 at 4:30 p.m., April 22 at 8:30 a.m. and May 13 at 9:00 a.m. ■