

## OUR WAY FORWARD

**O**n January 3rd, I will be completing my first year as President of Northwest Florida State College, and Judy and I could not be more proud to be a part of this college and this region. We would also like to extend a thank you to our Raider community, faculty, staff, and students for welcoming us to this great institution!

The month of December is always one of reflection for me, to look on the months passed and look forward to what the next year has in store. When the college's Board of Trustees offered me this position in November 2016, their first request of me was to develop a strategic plan and a way forward for the college. In November, we rolled out this essential plan to our Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students. In December, we were able to share our goals with our Foundation Board of Directors. Everyone has embraced our strategic plan and there is excitement and resolve to achieve the goals that we have in place.

In 2017, our college also received the first legislative appropriation that it has received in a decade! As we look to

*(continued, page 2)*



## NWF RAIDER ATHLETIC PROGRAM ANNOUNCES BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

## INDOOR PRACTICE FACILITY CAMPAIGN

Investment in new training facilities is a necessity for premier athletic programs, not only to keep players in top performance condition but also to attract top recruits. On November 28, 2017, Dr. Devin Stephenson and Head Baseball and Softball Coaches, Doug Martin and Jack Byerley unveiled plans for a 10,000 square foot, state-of-the-art indoor practice facility. The total cost of the project is \$467,571. To date, \$288,250 has been raised in gifts and pledges, with \$179,321 remaining. "I am very excited about the launching of this project and certainly look forward to seeing it through to its completion," said Director of Athletics, Ramsey Ross. "Once completed, this facility will help us to not only build upon the strong record of success that NWF has always enjoyed in its baseball and softball programs, but it will also improve the quality of the experience for NWF student-athletes." The facility will be available to local high schools and the community when not in use by NWF students and coaches. For more information or to donate to the project, please visit <http://www.nwfscfoundation.org/Campaigns/RaiderAthleticCampaign.cfm>

STRATEGIC PLAN: Goals 2, 3, 4 and 6



## 2018 ALUMNI AWARDS: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!

We are now seeking nominations for the 2018 Alumni Awards. The NWF Alumni Awards recognize alumni who demonstrate exceptional achievement in their profession and make a positive impact on their community. Nominations for the following categories will be accepted until February 1, 2018: Distinguished Alumni, Rising Star, Against the Odds, and Hometown Hero. Please visit [www.nwfsc.edu/alumni](http://www.nwfsc.edu/alumni) for a complete description of eligibility requirements and nomination information.



2018

Alumni Awards  
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January 2018 and the next legislative session, we have developed our priority list, and we are working with our lobbyist and our local delegation to push those priorities forward. Our Foundation Board of Directors continues to see the importance of our lobbying efforts and has pledged their support to continue with this financial commitment. Thank you, Foundation Directors!

Also in 2017, we launched our new Hospitality and Tourism Management Program. Since the launch, we have hosted community advisory meetings and received great feedback from our local tourism industry partners. We are looking forward to launching the culinary component of this program in fall 2018.

This past October, our college was again chosen as one of the Top 150 Community Colleges in the nation to compete for the 2019 Aspen Prize. Our team is already working on our preliminary information and data that we need to support our application for this distinguished honor. To be considered

among the top 150 community colleges in the nation is already an honor, but we are determined to be the BEST!

You will read in this month's edition that our women's and men's basketball teams are currently undefeated in their fall season match-ups! We look forward to following our basketball teams as they begin conference play in the most challenging conference and region in the nation! Our baseball and softball teams will also begin their seasons in January and are poised to excel in their divisions as well. In this month's edition, please read more about our new Baseball and Softball Indoor Practice Facility. Our Foundation and Athletic Department kicked off this exciting fundraising campaign on November 28th. Please join us in this new endeavor for our athletes and our community!

Lastly, in November we said goodbye to Major General (Ret.) Robert Chedister and thanked him for his service to our Board of Trustees. I will forever be grateful to General Chedister and his wife, Trecia

for welcoming us to this community. We wish them the best as they take on a new adventure in Colorado.

We are continuing to build a team of passionate educators and entrepreneurial leaders at Northwest Florida State College. We are committed to creating seamless pathways for the citizens of our region to improve their lives and create a prosperous living for their families. We look forward to working with our community partners to achieve our goals!

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of Northwest Florida State College, I thank you for your support in 2017, and we look forward to a prosperous 2018! ■



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

- **Mr. William Looper**, Director of Criminal Justice and Director of the Criminal Justice Training Center, was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Florida Criminal Justice Educators Association at the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission meeting held in Ponte Vedra, Florida.
- **Mattie Kelly Distinguished Chair and NFSO Music Director Jeffrey Rink** appeared in October as guest conductor for a critically-acclaimed production of Donizetti's opera *The Elixir of Love* with the Opera Company of Middlebury in Vermont.
- **Ms. Lois Henry**, Professor of Music, served as pianist for the Southern Invitational Choral Conference at the University of Southern Mississippi on September 25-26 as well as the All-County High School Choir on October 22-23.
- **Dr. Patrice Williams-Shuford**, Director of the Robert L. F. Sikes Education Center, was recognized by the Association of Florida Colleges with the 2017 Exemplary Practice Leadership Award during their 68th Annual Meeting & Conference held on November 1-3 in Palm Harbor, Florida.

Each recipient of this award is recognized for their accomplishments as administrators and leaders at their respective institutions as well as in the Florida College System.

*Pictured are (L-R) Dr. Xiao Wang, Chair of AFC Administration Commission; Jonweau C. "Tray" Shuford, Dr. Williams-Shuford's husband; Dr. Patrice Williams-Shuford; Pam Walters, NWF AFC Chapter President; and April Leake, NWF AFC Chapter Past President.*



## BRINGING BROADWAY TO THE EMERALD COAST

Have you attended a Broadway performance at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center yet this year? The next show, *Dirty Dancing*, is Thursday, January 11, 2018. The production is an unprecedented live experience, exploding with heart-pounding music, passionate romance and sensational dancing. You'll have the time of your life! To buy tickets or to view the full list of upcoming shows, visit [mattiekellyartscenter.org](http://mattiekellyartscenter.org). ■



## NWF STATE SELECTS NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Northwest Florida State College has selected Dr. Scott Behrens as the college's new Vice President for Teaching and Learning.

"Not only is Dr. Behrens'

commitment to academic excellence notable, but his breadth of experience and demonstrated successes in various leadership roles in academic administration make him an authentic fit for NWF State College," said Dr. Devin Stephenson, President. "We look forward to welcoming our new colleague to the NWF State College team and to continuing our quest to be the BEST."

The Vice President for Teaching and Learning serves as the chief academic and articulation officer of the college. ■

STRATEGIC PLAN: Goals 4 and 6



## HOLIDAY POPS

On December 8, Dr. Stephenson performed an original music arrangement and orchestration of "A Tour of Christmas" arranged by Bradley Knight. Dr. Stephenson performed the composition with the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra during their annual Holiday Pops Concert.

*Pictured L to R are Bradley Knight, Arranger; Dr. Stephenson; Marie White, wife of Randy White, NWF Vice President for Administrative Services; and Susan Pryor Sloat Myers who earlier this year pledged a \$1 million bequest to name the College's Learning Resources Center.* ■



STRATEGIC PLAN: Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4



## ATHLETICS Raider Basketball Starts Strong!

Both Raider Basketball teams are headed into the holiday break undefeated! As of mid-December, the #5 women were 12-0 and they were nationally ranked in the top 10 in several categories: Shooting percentage (52.6%), 3 point percentage (42.4%), Free throw percentage (75.3%), Rebounds per game (47.6), Assists per game (21.6), and Steals per game (17.3). They were led in scoring by Trinity Baptiste (14.9), Georgia Gayle (13.5 points/game), and Jade Lewis (12.7). The #1 men were 14-0 on the season so far and they defeated #9 Motlow State (81-64), #16 San Jacinto (95-69), and #21 Spartanburg Methodist (94-60). Five Raiders were averaging scoring in double figures: Andres Feliz (18.7), Tray Boyd (15.7), Chris Duarte (11.7), DJ Funderburk (11.2), and Kelvin Robinson (10.8). Both teams first conference game will be Saturday, January 6th at Pensacola State College. The women will tip-off at 5:30 p.m. and the men will follow at 7:30 p.m. Their first home conference game will be Wednesday, January 10th against Gulf Coast State. We look forward to your support!



Visit our website at: [www.NWFRaiders.com](http://www.NWFRaiders.com)

STRATEGIC PLAN: Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4



# 6 GOALS

Improving Lives

2017-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL 1	First Choice		through accessible, affordable, and relevant higher education that bolsters community, workforce and economic opportunities
GOAL 2	Student Focused		through an engaging campus culture that promotes student success
GOAL 3	Successful Pathways		through academic and career programs and services
GOAL 4	Institutional Excellence		through innovative partnerships
GOAL 5	Enhancing Resource Development		for physical, financial, and technological advancement
GOAL 6	Encouraging Community Connectivity		through the promotion of athletic, cultural, and environmental activities

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## CBA PLANTS 10,000 PLANTS THROUGHOUT OKALOOSA & WALTON COUNTIES

The Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance's Grasses in Classes is a hands-on, environmental education program that gives students a direct role in the restoration of Choctawhatchee Bay. This fall, CBA educators and our AmeriCorps team partners planted 10,000 smooth cordgrass plants at more than 20 schools across Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Throughout the winter and into spring, students will tend to the grass nurseries at their schools while learning about local estuarine topics. In May, all classes will experience restoration first-hand when they plant their grasses into living shorelines across the Choctawhatchee Bay. ■



## NWF FOUNDATION'S ANNUAL SCHOLARS & DONORS LUNCHEON

On Friday, October 27th, 2017, the Northwest Florida State College Foundation held their Annual Scholars and Donors Luncheon. This year, the NWF State College Foundation celebrated scholarship recipients, the donors who made their scholarships possible, and recognized the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Awards winners. Held every fall, the luncheon provides an opportunity for students to meet and thank their donors in person. Donors are seated with their scholars and are able to learn first-hand how their generosity impacts students. ■



*Pictured L to R: NWF scholarship recipient Austin Castelin, Mattie Kelly Arts Center head usher Audrey Bailey, and scholarship recipient Kathryn Middleton.*



STRATEGIC PLAN: Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

## ROBERT CHEDISTER'S RESIGNATION

During the November 28th Board meeting, NWF State College Board of Trustees Chairman Brian Pennington and Dr. Devin Stephenson presented Major General (Ret.) Robert Chedister with a resolution to commemorate his service to the college's Board of Trustees. General Chedister served as a College Trustee from April 15, 2016, to November 28, 2017, and is leaving the Board due to a relocation to Colorado. Thank you, General Chedister for your commitment and service to NWF State College! ■

*Pictured L to R: NWF President Dr. Stephenson, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Chedister, and Trustee Chairman Brian Pennington.*