



# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

APRIL 2019

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## MOMENTUM THROUGH DETERMINATION

**“Every day is a new opportunity. You can build on yesterday’s success or put its failures behind and start over again. That’s the way life is, with a new game every day, and that’s the way baseball is.”**

–Bob Feller

Northwest Florida State College personnel and students are continuing to move this college forward in extraordinary ways. I believe it is determination-an unrelenting pursuit of excellence - that separates the average from the great. The results of bold execution and the movement outside of our comfort zone is where good things are going to happen and where our College will realize significant advancement!

Spring enrollment is up 1 percent as of March 2019 compared to the prior year. Our nursing program has now been recognized as one of the top 10 in Florida among all universities, private colleges, and state colleges. We continue to have success bringing Public Education Capitol Outlay funds to our College to improve our facilities. Our Welding Program is the Nation’s Best and soon we will make major announcements regarding program development in our Career Education and Workforce Development areas.

*(continued on next page)*

## CELEBRATING THE GRAND OPENING OF THE VETERANS SUCCESS CENTER



*(L to R): Bernard Johnson, Gulf Power Central District General Manager; Major General Don Litke, USAF Retired, NWF Board of Trustees Member; Representative Mel Ponder, Florida House; Marlene Santos, Gulf Power President; Dr. Devin Stephenson, NWF President; Major General Thomas “Rudy” Wright, USAF Retired, NWF Board of Trustees Vice-Chairman; Charlotte Flynt, NWF Board of Trustees Member; and Lori Kelley, NWF Board of Trustees Member.*

Northwest Florida State College celebrated the grand opening of the Veterans Success Center with a ribbon cutting event. The Veterans Success Center, located in building 500 at the Niceville campus, provides a one-stop shop to expand educational opportunities, transitional services and career services for veterans and their families. The Veterans Success Center offers a tranquil, professional and respectful location, including state-of-the-art infrastructure and technology, where veterans can study or pursue other scholastic assignments. The Center creates a cooperative community for veterans and provides resources for leadership, support, advisement and campus engagement.

Florida House Representative Mel Ponder said, “Last year, I worked diligently to sponsor the Military Tuition Assistance bill, which waives state fees for active duty service members at Florida Colleges. This year, I’m sponsoring the Veterans Success Center House Bill 2279, which will provide

appropriations to assist in funding this valuable service to the men and women who have served our country.”

Due to legislative changes, the Northwest Florida State College Board of Trustees unanimously approved last year to waive all fees for active duty military using tuition assistance.

“The Veterans Success Center concept could not have taken flight without the support from legislators and generous donors in our community like the Gulf Power Foundation,” said Dr. Devin Stephenson, president. “We were recently named a Military Friendly College, and the Veterans Success Center is our way of making the world a better place for our veterans.”

Gulf Power Foundation recently pledged \$150,000 to assist in the establishment of the Veterans Success Center at Northwest Florida State College.



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

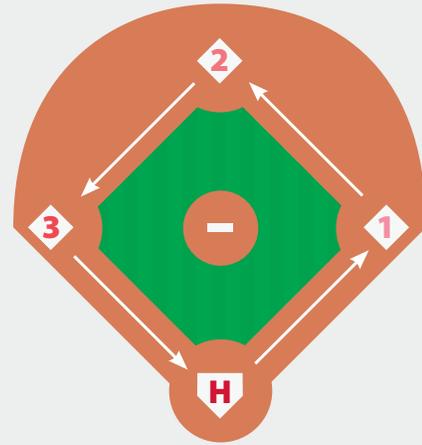
I'm proud to report these accomplishments that are moving us forward:

- 95% of end users rate our Information Technology Department as AWESOME.
- Students rate NWF Student Success Navigators with a 93 Net Promotor Score – among the top 3.5% of the nation.
- Collegiate High School places among the top 5 A+ high schools in the state each year.
- Textbook costs are down 45% from Spring 2016 to Fall 2018.
- The graduation rate increased 41% through the use of technology.

Here's how I know we are moving in the right direction, and with it being baseball season, I thought this reference would be fitting:

Conviction is the key ingredient to change an organization for the better. It doesn't change because you are smart; it doesn't change because you simply express an opinion. Things change because you commit and execute! I'm extremely proud of our team, and their determination to improve lives through higher education.

Dr. Devin Stephenson  
President  
#TheBestisOurStandard



1

You move to first base when you demonstrate skills in planning, organizing and motivating.

2

You move to second base when your well-trained, well-qualified staff is focused on organizational goals and actively engaged in achieving them.

3

You move to third base when communication among the organization is open and transparent, and there is mutual support and trust in the organization.

H

You score at home plate when the team goals are achieved and when team and individual performance is recognized.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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



- **NWF Student Zachary Lambert** was recently selected as a Gold Scholar on Coca-Cola's 2019 Academic Team.

- **Students** brought home 10 accolades, eight of which were in first place, from the SkillsUSA Regional Conference held in Pensacola on February 20, 2019. All of these students will go on to compete at the state competition in Pensacola April 7-10, 2019.

- **Northwest Florida State College** is excited to announce its partnership with the Walton County Board of County Commissioners in support of a Triumph Gulf Coast application for Walton Works. The Walton County Board of County Commissioners committed \$1.5 million to the \$5.25 million Walton Works project, directing staff to research the ability to use funding from the RESTORE Act Pot 1 funds to fund the County's portion of the project, affirming its support of expanding career education within Walton County.

- **Emily Wixtrom**, NWF Student, was recently selected as the only 2019 New Century Workforce Pathway Scholar in Florida.

- **NWF Nursing Program**, ranks in Florida's top 10 among all Florida colleges and universities by RegisteredNursing.org. The nursing associate of science (A.S.) program was ranked 9 according to percentage of pass rates.



Back Row (L to R): Lena Webb, Michelle Long, Amber Mihacsi, Jami Schultz, Rachel Williams, Kalyn Kissam; Front Row (L to R): Ariel Sprague, Candice Jackson-Montague, Suzette "Michelle" Brazill, Jacquelyn Figueroa, Gabriel Jackson, Samuel McLead

## APRIL CALENDAR

### THE MATTIE KELLY ARTS CENTER

This month is packed full of shows, speakers, symphony concerts and more at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center. We hope to see you at the following upcoming events:

#### RACHEL CRUZE

Learn from money expert and Dave Ramsey's daughter, Rachel Cruze, on April 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the Mainstage Theater at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center. This NWF President's Speaker Series event is free and open to the public.

#### MOZART'S REQUIEM & STARS OF TOMORROW

Join the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra on April 13 at 7:30 p.m. for a farewell letter from the greatest composer of all time featuring Northwest Florida Symphony Chorale. This season finale concert spotlights the amazing talents of the Youth Concerto Competition winners of the NFSO Guild-sponsored competition.

#### SEBASTIAN JUNGER

As part of the annual NWF Reads event, New York Times bestselling author and Restrepo director Sebastian Junger will take center stage at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center on April 15 at 7 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

#### MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

On December 4, 1956, four young musicians -Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins -gathered at Sun Records in Memphis for what would be one of the greatest rock 'n' roll jam sessions ever. The Tony® Award-winning smash-hit musical Million Dollar Quartet brings that unbelievable musical moment to life, featuring timeless and enduring hits. Don't miss this show on April 17 at 7:30 p.m.

#### NORTHWEST FEST

Head to Mattie Kelly Arts Center's outdoor amphitheater on April 25 at 6 p.m. for a free concert featuring two locals' favorite bands – Forrest Williams and l'magene.

#### DANCE FACETS

This annual dance performance featuring Northwest Florida State College students showcases many styles of dance including ballet, jazz, contemporary and tap. Performances are on April 26 and 27 at 7:30 p.m.

For more information on each event visit [www.MattieKellyArtsCenter.org](http://www.MattieKellyArtsCenter.org).

STRATEGIC PLAN:  
Goals 2, 4 and 6



# ATHLETICS

## RAIDER BASKETBALL TEAMS EARN ALL-PANHANDLE CONFERENCE HONORS

Men's basketball earned their fifth consecutive Panhandle Conference championship while the women were named Panhandle Conference Co-Champions for the first time since 2013!



### All-Panhandle Conference Honors:

#### Women's Basketball

- First Team: Georgia Gayle, Jaiden McCoy, & Shania Meertens
- Second Team: Leandra Echi & Cece Mayo
- Co-Coach of the Year: Bart Walker

#### Men's Basketball

- First Team: Chris Duarte, Javion Hamlet, & Eric Vila
- Second Team: Trey Diggs, Kayne Henry, Tyrie Jackson & Noah Morgan
- Player of the Year: Chris Duarte
- Newcomer of the Year: Javion Hamlet
- Coach of the Year: Steve DeMeo

STRATEGIC PLAN:  
Goals 2 and 6



NWF STATE COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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| MGen Thomas "Rudy" Wright,<br>USAF Ret., Vice-Chair | Reynolds Henderson              |
| Shane Abbott                                        | Lori Kelley                     |
| Craig Barker                                        | MGen Don Litke, USAF Ret.       |
|                                                     | Dr. Devin Stephenson, President |

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100 College Boulevard, East  
Niceville, FL 32578

## COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP CREATES SAILING TEAM

Students can now learn to sail and compete in regattas. Northwest Florida State College partnered with the Fort Walton Yacht Club and the Emerald Coast Sailing Association to hire full-time Sailing Director Paul Beaudry. Chemistry Professor Dr. Lisa Struck will lead the club for Northwest Florida State College.

"We believe the Sailing Team is an exclusive opportunity for our students," said Dr. Devin Stephenson, NWF State College president. "It gives our students another opportunity to express their talents through recreation they enjoy."

STRATEGIC PLAN:  
Goals 2, 4 and 6



(Front row, L to R) NWF State College President Dr. Devin Stephenson, Fort Walton Beach Yacht Club Commodore Craig Stoldt, Emerald Coast Sailing Association representative Robert Harrison; (second row) NWF State Faculty Advisor Lisa Struck, Fleet Captain John Farris, NWF State Vice President Randy White and Sailing Director Paul Beaudry



## 2019 PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE MEMBERS RECOGNIZED ON CENTER COURT

On February 16, 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.

Members of the President's Circle demonstrate their commitment to making an impact on lives at Northwest Florida State College through their contributions and participation in this program. President's Circle gifts provide the college the flexibility to use the funds where they are needed most - for program enhancement, instructional needs, support to the Foundation,

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and many other crucial expenses that benefit NWF State College students. The President's Circle provided more than \$29,000 in unrestricted gifts this year helping create the NWF Student Success Fund, the Feed-A-Raider Food Pantry and a Student Emergency Fund. The President's Circle is open to any individual or organization contributing an unrestricted, minimum gift of \$500 annually. For more information, please call (850) 729-5357 or visit [www.nwfscfoundation.org](http://www.nwfscfoundation.org).

STRATEGIC PLAN:  
Goal 5

