Together we continue to make a positive IMPACT in Northwest Florida! National Employee Appreciation Day is observed annually on the first Friday in March. I believe it is the “Who” in the organization that makes good things happen, and we have been celebrating many recent successes such as becoming a Five-Star Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Chapter, being named a Military-Friendly school, and opening our new Veterans Success Center. These accomplishments do not happen overnight - nor do they happen without deliberate actionable steps that are foundationally constructed in a highly interactive environment of planning and resolute execution. I want to thank our College personnel and the many community members who work to advance our College on behalf of students and their success.

We recently hosted coaches from Achieving the Dream, a network of the nation’s best colleges, to assist us in building an institutional capacity framework approach to improving the success of our students. Faculty and staff participated in a “Capacity Café,” providing feedback about strengths, challenges and next steps. I was extremely pleased with the reflection, creative ideas, insight and integration that occurred at the meeting. Positive momentum is continuing to build in our organization, making it a very exciting time to be a Raider!

(continued on next page)

STUDENTS SELECTED FOR THE ALL-FLORIDA PHI THETA KAPPA ACADEMIC TEAM

On February 19, 10 NWF and Collegiate High School students were selected for the All-Florida Academic Team by Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society (PTK). This year’s statewide team consists of approximately 150 students. Each year, PTK recognizes outstanding students in the Florida College System based on academic achievement, leadership and service to the community by naming them to the All-Florida Academic Team. Students are nominated by their respective colleges to the All-USA Academic Team competition sponsored by the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and USA Today.

Led by Donna Pierson, Faculty Advisor to the Five-Star Sigma Mu Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, members of the All-Florida Academic Team include Josie Barton, Emily Checchio, Zachary Lambert, Marie Ream, Cathryn Robinson, Donna Scott, Natasha Skrovanek, Aaron Sutherland, Emily Wixtrom and Alana Woods.

NWF STATE COLLEGE FORENSICS TEAM WINS FCSAA STATE TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP

“We are extremely proud of this immensely talented forensics team for bringing a state championship home to NWF State College,” said Dr. Devin Stephenson, President. “Their hard work and dedication, along with guidance from Hall of Fame Coach Cecil Scalf, have made a tremendous impact at the state level.”

Coach Cecil Scalf was also inducted into the FCSAA Hall of Fame, Forensics Division, during the tournament awards ceremony proceeding the competition. Congratulations to all!
Vince Lombardi once said, “Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence!”

Every day we work to create a better experience for our students – one that is focused on raising their expectations and moving them toward becoming their best. That is why we exist, and that is why we serve. There has been a cultural shift toward only accepting the BEST in our operations as we move to making the most significant IMPACT on Northwest Florida.

The support our College personnel receive from the community enables us to keep this momentum going. We must continue to be mindful that our community partners are a vital voice in determining what skills are needed in the workforce. Based on community feedback, we continue to develop programming that will ensure our students are workforce ready.

Certainly, we are focused on my 4L’s of Organizational Success – Look, Listen, Learn and Launch. If we continue to assess and adjust, our organization will remain relevant and transformational. Thank you for your support as our hardworking personnel focus their sites on student success and organizational excellence!

Dr. Devin Stephenson
President
#TheBestisOurStandard

THE MARGARET “PEGGY” KINSELLA SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT SUPPORTS EDUCATION MAJORS

On Friday, February 8, 2019, Denise and Kendall Wagner established a scholarship endowment with a gift of $15,000 to support students majoring in education.

The scholarship was created in memory of Ms. Wagner’s aunt, Margaret “Peggy” Kinsella, who had a passion for teaching and was adored by her many students over her 30 year teaching career. To honor her commitment to education and encourage students to pursue the teaching profession, the Margaret “Peggy” Kinsella Scholarship Endowment was established to provide a bright future to Northwest Florida State College students for years to come.

President Dr. Devin Stephenson will receive the Paragon Award for New Presidents from the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society in April.

The Mattie M. Kelly Environmental Institute at Northwest Florida State College is now accepting submissions for their 12th Annual Amateur Photo Contest. All submitted photos must be taken in the Northwest Florida region within the last two years, and the photo subject must encompass the natural heritage of the Northwest Florida region. The submission deadline for this year’s contest is March 12, 2019 at 5 p.m. Please email mkei@nwfsc.edu for a full list of submission guidelines, contest rules and entry requirements.

Rachel Cruze, Dave Ramsey’s daughter and money expert, will be speaking at the Mattie Kelly Arts Center as part of the NWF President’s Speaker Series event on April 4, 2019.

Strategic Plan: Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
New York Time bestselling author and renowned director, Sebastian Junger, will take center stage at the main event for Northwest Florida State College’s NWF Reads, the College’s annual week-long literacy event, on April 15, 2019, at 7 p.m. in the Mainstage Theater. The event is free and open to the public with a book signing to follow.

Junger is the internationally acclaimed, best-selling author of WAR, The Perfect Storm, A Death in Belmont and Fire. He is also the acclaimed director of the documentary films Restrepo and Korengal. As a contributing editor to Vanity Fair and as a contributor to ABC News, he has covered major international news stories and has been awarded the National Magazine Award and a SAIS Novartis Prize for Journalism.

NWF Softball has also kicked off their season!

The Lady Raiders returned seven players from last year’s team: Summer Frye, Marcie Bewley, Amber Byrd, Maggie Wheless, Venice Sanders, Thalia da Silva, and Emily Sinclair. Conference play begins March 12.
In honor of Michael Flynt, South Walton Utility Co., Inc. donated $7,000 to the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) to improve swimmable, fishable waterways in Okaloosa and Walton Counties.

Flynt, a founding member of CBA, received his Bachelor’s of Science in Zoology from the University of Florida. He furthered his education by earning a Master of Arts in Community Leadership - Urban and Regional Planning from Central Michigan University, as well as a Master’s of Public Administration in Coastal Zone Studies from the University of West Florida. He was a United States Air Force Command Pilot, flying fixed wing aircrafts and helicopters, receiving the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Defense Meritorious Service Medal.

In addition, to working tirelessly to protect and improve our watershed through his work with CBA, Flynt served as Trustee on the Northwest Florida State College Board and President of South Walton Utility Co. CBA has named a living shorelines reef in his honor.