



# NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

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April 23, 2015

Ms. Lynda Earls  
Director, Equity & Civil Rights Compliance  
Division of Florida Colleges  
Florida Department of Education  
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1544  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Dear Ms. Earls:

In over 50 years of service to its communities, NWF State College has impacted the lives of more than 352,000 students in various credit and non-credit programs. Additionally, more than 37,000 individuals have earned degrees or certificates from the college and countless other students have received a great start before they transferred to another college or university to finish their degree. Please find the NWF State College Equity report enclosed in this packet which includes further details of these successes.

This year, NWF State College has impacted **HIGHER EDUCATION** in our communities by:

- The Science Department of NWF State College hosts a monthly **Science Friday Seminar**, bringing in guest speakers to talk on a variety of topics. Our January speaker, is an alumni of both NWF State College and NWF State College's Collegiate High School. He is currently completing his doctoral program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- NWF State College has established a new chapter of the **National Technical Honor Society** to honor achievements of top career and technical education students.
- NWF State College students earned medals in multiple categories in the Florida Region 1 **SkillsUSA competition** held February 24-25 at Pensacola State College. The SkillsUSA Championships showcase the best career and technical students in the nation. The following students won or placed in their respective categories and will advance to the state competition in Lakeland, April 26-30.
  - Computer Programming: 1st - Kameron Legg, 2nd - Jayce Vanderford
  - Dental Assisting: 1st - Caitlin Slater, 2nd - Hanna Gillette, 3rd - Chelsea Holle
  - Early Childhood Education: 1st - Marilyn Mason, 2nd - Mary Helen Swisher
  - Technical Drafting: 1st - Thomas Myers
  - Welding Fabrication: 1st (team) - James Darr, Benjamin Dean, Jack Jensen
- NWF State College was named as one of the **Top 150 community colleges** in the country by the Aspen Institute.
- The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS) has approved materials submitted by Northwest Florida State College seeking SACS approval of the **South Walton Education Center**.
- Three Northwest Florida State College students are among 124 students from throughout the state named to the **2015 All-Florida Academic Team**, which recognizes outstanding students for their academic achievement, leadership and service to their communities. Representing NWF State College on this year's team are Ian Eberle of Crestview, Bethany Fralish of Niceville, and Stephanie Moore of Ponce de Leon.
- NWF State College's Sabine Claybrook, of Crestview, was chosen as one of 54 recipients nationwide of the **Terri Lynne Lokoff/Children's TYLENOL® National Child Care Teacher Award**.

This year, NWF State College has impacted our **MILITARY AND VETERANS** communities by:

- NWF State College received designation as a **Purple Heart College** from The Military Order of the Purple Heart, having the honor of being the **first college in Florida** to receive this designation.
- The Military Order of the Purple Heart and Northwest Florida State College sponsored and welcomed the national tour for the **Spirit of '45 Day Express** to the college's Niceville Campus.

*Continued on page 2.*



**MILITARY AND VETERANS**, continued from page 1

- The local chapter of the **Military Order of the Purple Heart** presented the Northwest Florida State College Nursing Program with a **Prestigious Legion of Excellence Award**, a competitive statewide award whereby each chapter can submit a nomination for an organization or entity it feels is deserving of this recognition. The group also honored nursing professors Dr. Beth Norton and Dr. Teresa Ryan for their leadership and their service to the Veterans community.
- NWF hosted a Grand Opening for our new **VetSuccess Center**, which provides a full-time Veteran's Affairs counselor on-campus to help Veterans, Service members, and their qualified dependents succeed in completing their education and entering the labor market.
- NWF hosted the **Panhandle Warrior Connection**, in partnership with CareerSource Okaloosa-Walton and NWFSC, to present an expo focused on providing employment opportunities and services to veterans, transitioning military members, members of the National Guard and Reserve, and military family members.

This year, NWF State College has impacted **ARTS** in our community by:

- **The Mattie Kelly Arts Center** at NWF State College sponsors at least four school shows per year which are coordinated with all schools within the college's service district- Okaloosa and Walton Counties.
- **The Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra** conducts a 5th grade concert and a 4th grade concert where students are allowed to participate in each performance as guest musicians.
- **Mattie Kelly Arts Center** rents its main stage theatre to local production companies including our local Northwest Florida Ballet which holds performances for school age children- kindergarten through 12th grade.
- **Richard Blanco**, the first Latino immigrant poet chosen to read at a Presidential inauguration and one of the most beloved and influential poets and storytellers writing today, will be the featured Distinguished Author at NWF State College's annual **NWFSC Reads** event in April 2015.

This year, NWF State College has impacted **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** by:

- **NWF State College has joined forces with the Okaloosa County School District** to launch an integrated career and technical education effort to develop programs and curriculum for the future's high-tech, high-skilled workforce. This collaborative effort is driven by local industry partners who will utilize the graduates of the programs being developed. A committee of community and business leaders are serving on the advisory board, and four planning subcommittees have been formed in the areas of manufacturing, tourism, building industry, and health care.
- NWF State College has expanded its Welding and Machining **program offerings**.
- The Allied Welding Technologies program at Northwest Florida State College received accreditation from **The National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)**.

This year, NWF State College has impacted our **COMMUNITY** by:

- NWF Men's Basketball secured the **NJCAA Division 1 National Title** for 2014-2015. This not only brings national recognition to our athletic and academic programs but also to our community.
- NWF is **piloting guaranteed General Education** courses on our DeFuniak and South Walton campuses in Walton County. These courses will allow place-bound students to get all General Education courses without having to travel to another campus.
- The **All Sports Association created an endowment in memory of Coach Patrick Harrington**. Coach Harrington, who served as the Raider Women's Head Basketball Coach for four seasons, passed away in October 2014 after complications due to a car accident.
- New **web-conferencing software** will enable NWF State College to provide a broader range of classes to place-bound students in rural areas of our service district.
- This summer, NWF State College will be piloting a General Education schedule (8 weeks long) that **targets graduating high school seniors**. This program will allow seniors to complete the General Education core protected in transfer.

If you have questions or if I can expand on any of these topics for you, please feel free to contact me.



Ty J. Handy  
President