



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

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WORKFORCE EDUCATION: THE TALK OF THE NATION

State and community colleges are being called upon to provide solutions to close a skills gap that leaves more than 7.3 million jobs unfilled in our nation. Faced with an aging workforce and retiring baby boomers, employers are and will continue to be searching for the next generation of educated and well-trained individuals to meet the demands of a rapidly changing, technology-driven, innovation-centric economy.

Career education and workforce solutions are now a top priority nationally.

How does Northwest Florida State College plan to close this skills gap?

During the past three months, Northwest Florida State College's Workforce Innovations team provided leadership training and employment-skills training to a number of entities, including the City of Fort Walton Beach, Walton County, Walton County Sheriff's Office, Okaloosa County, CHELCO and many other small businesses. Additionally, we have been approached by a multi-billion dollar global company to develop and provide high-quality leadership development training for the internal promotion and advancement of new executives. The College has over 200 hours of leadership and hard skills training already contracted for the calendar year, and although this is tremendous progress realized under

(continued on next page)

POLICE DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES DRONE UNIT

Northwest Florida State College's Police Department is proud to announce the launch of a drone unit. We are one of only four colleges in the nation with an active law enforcement drone team per a new study from Bard College's Center, and the drone unit can offer aerial support to other local law enforcement agencies. The drones are all equipped with high-definition cameras, thermal imagers and the ability to attach chemical canisters such as pepper spray to deter suspects.

NWF State College was recently recognized as the safest college campus in Florida, and the addition of drone technology will only help to maintain that safety quality.



STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 5 and 6



BRIAN & KIM PENNINGTON ESTABLISH SCHOLARSHIP



Brian and Kim Pennington understand the financial challenges faced by students seeking a quality, postsecondary education as they have two college-aged students of their own. Mr. Pennington's tenure on the Board of Trustees for Northwest Florida State College, since 2007, also gives the couple insight to the hardships students face when attending college. The Pennington's have pledged \$250,000 to establish the Brian and Kim Pennington scholarship endowment to provide assistance to students with financial need and a priority focus on first time in college students.

The Pennington family has a long history, spanning more than three decades, of providing philanthropic support to NWF students through the TYBRIN Corporation scholarship endowment, established in 1991. The TYBRIN scholarship has provided support to more than \$170,000 in scholarship support to NWF State College students.

STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 4, 5 and 6



(Workforce Education, continued)

the leadership of our workforce training leader, Bill Allison, we have much more work to do to close the skills gap.

Northwest Florida State College recently received \$100,000 from CareerSource as a sub-grant from the Department of Labor to begin a welding apprenticeship program as well as a Computer Numeric Control machining apprenticeship program. The College is in discussions right now with multiple companies to build additional apprenticeship opportunities for our students, and we invite interested companies to reach out to us for more information on how they can benefit from this current grant funding as well as future funding and additional business training opportunities. The College is poised to support the region's unique business training needs with leadership, Microsoft product, drone, and other custom training programs with training funds available in some cases from CareerSource.



What new academic program and training offerings are on the horizon at NWF?

Northwest Florida State College is excited the Triumph Gulf Coast Board unanimously voted to approve the Walton Works Training Center of Excellence project at its meeting on April 29. The Walton Works project includes postsecondary career and education initiatives and expansions to be offered at the College's Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs, Walton County. Our focus is to move people into the workforce quickly through a focused, certificate-based training initiative. Over the next five years, the College projects Northwest Florida residents will earn at least 1,570 industry-recognized certificates. The Triumph Gulf Coast Board committed \$2.7 million to the \$5.7 million project.

The Walton Works project will establish a Higher Education Center of Excellence for 10 new workforce programs, preparing students to earn advanced industry-recognized credentials including state licenses and certifications. The project will expand our post-secondary career education programs in public safety (law enforcement, fire, emergency medical technician (EMT)), cybersecurity, drone technology,



and building trades (plumbing, electrical, welding, millwright and construction). The Walton Works project will provide industrial lab space, an indoor drone facility and a fire tower to meet area training needs.

The College is appreciative, too, for its partnership with the Walton County Board of County Commissioners who committed \$1.5 million to the Walton Works project. In addition, the Walton County Sheriff's Office is providing the College with access to training facilities (firing range and driving range) in DeFuniak Springs for students in the Law Enforcement, Fire and EMT programs to develop skills. CareerSource Okaloosa/Walton will provide placement assistance to employers and job seekers. Our Public Safety Institute was recently ranked #6 in Florida by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and continues to advance in performance under the leadership of Dr. Jeff McGill.

It goes without saying the Walton Works project would not have happened without the partnership between the Walton County Board of Commissions, Walton County Sheriff's Office, CareerSource Okaloosa Walton, the Triumph Gulf Coast Board, and the many leaders who advocated for this initiative. The workforce demands we are experiencing require all hands on deck in training – one entity can't do it all.

We invite you to partner with us to close the skills gap and strengthen workforce education. Together we will build economic prosperity and improve the quality of life in Northwest Florida.

Thank you,

Dr. Devin Stephenson
President
#TheBestisOurStandard

NWF STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN PALEONTOLOGICAL DIG

Northwest Florida State College students enrolled in paleontology got a unique hands-on experience during spring term when they travelled to central Florida to participate in a fossil research excavation sponsored by the Florida Museum of Natural History and the University of Florida.

The trip, led by NWF State College geology professor Dr. Jon Bryan, was supported by the College's Science Development Fund through the NWF State College Foundation.

During the trip, eight students dug for a week at the University of Florida fossil site at Montbrook helping to uncover an ancient mastodon, early alligators, turtles and other fossils. The students also visited the Florida Museum of Natural History, Devil's Den and Rainbow Springs State Park.



NWF State College Paleontology students work to unearth fossils as part of a research excavation with the Florida Museum of Natural History and University of Florida.

STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 2, 3 and 6



FIELD TRIP MONTH FOR THE CBA

In May, the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance brought nearly 2,000 students to the shoreline of the Choctawhatchee Bay. CBA's Grasses in Classes offers a hands-on, environmental education program that gives students a direct role in the restoration of Choctawhatchee Bay. In partnership with AmeriCorps and with partial funding from the USFWS Coastal Program and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, CBA provides teachers in Okaloosa and Walton Counties the equipment and materials required to grow shoreline grasses at their school. This year, students planted grasses at Lincoln Park, Florida Park, Cessna Landing and White Point among others.



CBA's Grasses in Classes inspires the next generation of watershed stewards.

STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 1, 2 and 6



ATHLETICS

STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 4 and 6



RAIDERS EXCEL ATHLETICALLY & ACADEMICALLY

Raider Athletics wrapped up a very successful 2019-2020 season with three of our four teams making it to their respective postseasons. With a combined record of 122-49 (.713 winning percentage) on the year, the Raiders earned three Panhandle Conference championship titles, three appearances at the FCSAA State Tournament, one state title, two state runners-up and two NJCAA National Tournament appearances.

Not only did the Raiders excel in athletic competition, but they also shined in the classroom. Overall, our student-athletes earned a combined 3.22 GPA for the entire year. There were 47 students who were named to the Academic All-Panhandle Conference team (3.0 GPA or higher) and 34 athletes earning FCSAA All-Academic team honors (3.30 GPA or higher). That is nearly 51% of our student-athletes on campus. Finally, we had 19 student-athletes who boasted a 3.60 GPA or above to earn NJCAA Academic All-American honors.

At the end of the summer term, we will have 45 student-athletes who have earned their associate's degrees and will be moving on to continue their education at four-year schools.



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Meet the new members of the Northwest Florida State College Foundation Board of Directors; from right to left:

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STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 1, 5 and 6



MATTIE KELLY ARTS CENTER

NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE
Division of Humanities, Fine & Performing Arts
Proudly Presents...

Footloose the musical

July 10 - 13, 2019 | 7:30 p.m.
July 13, 2019 Matinée | 2:00 p.m.
Mattie Kelly Arts Center Mainstage

Tickets: Adults \$25
Youth (18 & under) just \$10
NWF State College Students
FREE with Student I.D.

Call or Click for Tickets: (850) 729-6000 or www.MattieKellyArtsCenter.org

MATTIE KELLY ARTS CENTER
NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

The Mattie Kelly Arts Center's McIlroy Gallery will be displaying: Contemporary Selections from the Permanent Collections as well as, From the Vault: The Drawings of Emil Holzhauser, through July 13.

STRATEGIC PLAN:
Goals 4 and 6

