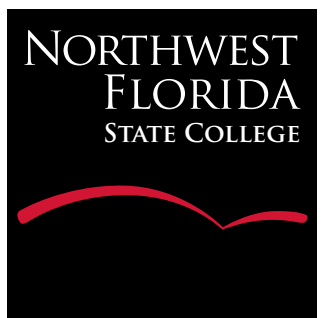


2019 Year in Review





Welcome

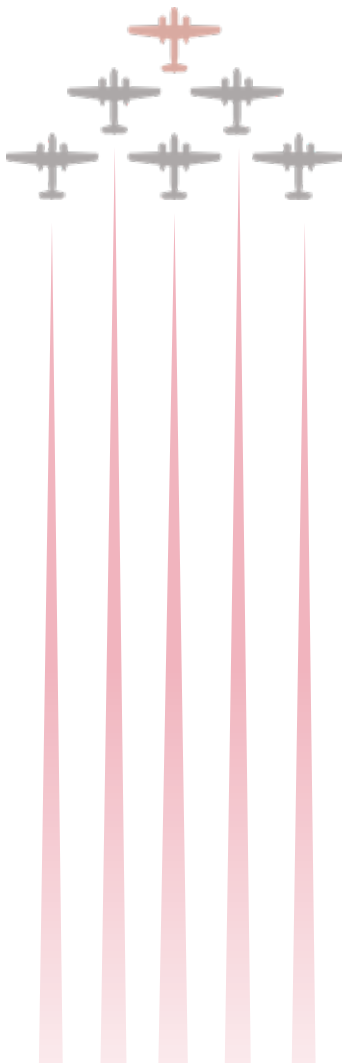
Another year has come and gone here at Northwest Florida State College, and I can say with certainty that 2019 marked tremendous growth for the College. As we look back over the past year's accomplishments, this magazine will emphasize how we excelled in the implementation of our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan.

The following goals were put in place to keep NWFSC focused on our mission to improve the lives of all who live, study and work in Okaloosa and Walton Counties and the surrounding Northwest Florida region:

- **First Choice** – We strive to be the first choice for higher education in our region through accessible, affordable and relevant programs that bolster community, workforce and economic opportunities.
- **Student Focused** – The College promotes a campus culture that supports an environment of student inclusivity and success.
- **Successful Pathways** – NWFSC works to create quality academic and career programs that leave students with lifelong employable skills.
- **Institutional Excellence** – We consistently partner with industry leaders, governmental agencies and peer educational institutions to create innovative opportunities for our student body.
- **Enhancing Resource Development** – The College strengthens its physical, financial and technological advancements through supplementary funding such as fundraising and grants.
- **Encouraging Community Connectivity** – We embed ourselves within the community through the promotion of athletic, cultural and environmental activities that enrich our region's quality of life.

The College's current theme, Take Flight, focuses on launching our students and institution into success. With that in mind, I chose an acronym that defines four key tenets that we at NWFSC embrace—S.O.A.R. We must continuously be Strategic, On-Target, Accountable and Reaching in all that we do.

As we look forward to the coming year, we do so with great anticipation and excitement as the College will be rolling out the next phase of our Strategic Plan for 2020 and beyond. Join us as we celebrate 2019's accomplishments while also building momentum towards even greater achievements for the year to come.



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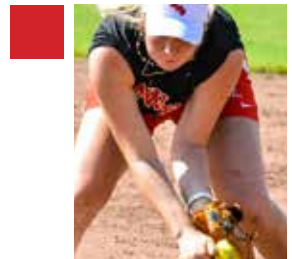
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NWFSC Culinary student, Abigail Morales finds focus in the kitchen.

Tasteful Education

A look at the inaugural year of NWFSC's Culinary Program

Last year when Northwest Florida State College advertised a new culinary program, Abigail Morales saw a glimpse into her future. At the time, her husband was a student at NWFSC, and when he brought home the culinary flyer, it changed everything.

"There was no way that both of us could go to school at the same time," Morales said. "One of us had to work a full-time job when the other one couldn't. While he was finishing up his associate's (degree), I was working a full-time job, and he was working part time."

Now, those roles have been reversed. Morales is now the student—entering her second year in the culinary program—and her husband is working full time.

Although she still works two part-time jobs to help pay for her classes, Morales said her patience and hard work are finally paying off.

"It is completely worth it to be here," she said. "I really liked cooking from a young age, but I never really thought I'd be in a career for it."

Morales said she aspires to own a tasting restaurant someday so she truly values the real-world skills she is learning.

"I did not expect it to be as rigorous as it is," she said. "It's difficult, and I really appreciate that it's so difficult because I want to be able to learn the difficulty here and not while I'm trying to also learn a job."

A typical day in the campus kitchen, Morales said, looks like what she imagines a restaurant kitchen to be - full of competition, creativity and a touch of chaos.

"It's a lot of chaos, but it's a lot of perfection as well," she laughed. "We want to learn perfect technique, that way when we get out in the field, we can learn the menu instead of focusing on technique."

One way our culinary students have gleaned cooking techniques is through the help of guest chefs leading classes, explained Julie Cotton, Director of Hospitality and Tourism Management and Culinary Programs.

"Several area chefs, including a pastry chef and a cake designer, have come and worked with our students, teaching their professional techniques and expertise," Cotton said. "In fact, the most important aspect of the Culinary Program is the hands-on learning environment that we've created."

"It is completely worth it to be here."

This past spring, culinary students took part in the first Baking and Pastry class, which culminated with students serving up 800 pieces of dessert to 200 members of the public in July. For Morales, this event challenged her to think outside the box when it came to her choice dessert: Panna Cotta.

"The best part has been the fact that I can really outdo my creativity here," she said. "I've never been very competitive, but it's just seeing all my peers' creativity pushes me to my limits, and I want to go above and beyond that because of the competition." ■



Let's Do Lunch!

Our culinary program launched a new pop-up restaurant, Seagrass, in September of 2019. The restaurant offers a real-world learning environment for both the Culinary and Hospitality Management students.

The dining experience offers diners a three-course French-inspired menu. All aspects of the meal are prepared in the campus kitchen by culinary students and Chef Instructor Layne Eggers.

Servers at Seagrass include culinary students and other students, and in the spring, will also include members of the hospitality program. During the fall, tables were set with linens, glassware and silverware for a three-course meal, and each table was decorated with live seagrass grown by the environmental group Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance. ■



From fall of 2018 to summer of 2019, the College awarded 1,412 degrees and credentials. Out of the total degrees and credentials that were awarded, there were: 784 Associates in Arts, 186 Associates in Science, 165 bachelor degrees and 277 certificates.

The 54th Annual Commencement ceremonies were held May 4, 2019, and featured keynote speeches from Dr. Joan Davis (morning ceremony) and Dr. joyce gillie gossom (afternoon ceremony). ■

1412 degrees & credentials awarded

May the Fourth *Be with You!*

54th Annual Commencement celebrated with a Star Wars theme



Top: Afternoon Ceremony Keynote Speaker, Dr. joyce gillie gossom
Bottom: Dr. Devin Stephenson, NWFSC President

Click, Click *Hooray!*

NWF Online has launched

Fall 2019, we launched NWF Online, offering distance learning academic programs, advising and tutoring to students with the accessibility and affordability of online learning.

NWF Online offers a \$1 eRate for online courses for out-of-state students, meaning out-of-state online students only pay \$1 more per credit hour than in-state tuition. Online courses are offered year-round in full 16-week terms and 8-week "fast-track" terms.

The College offers three bachelor degrees and 14 associate degrees and certificates fully online. Visit online.nwfsc.edu to find out more about our new and expanding programs! ■



only
\$1 extra

**for out-of-state students
taking online classes**



0 **6** Years with
**Tuition or Fee
Increase**

**Six years with no increase
in tuition or fees**

In June 2019, the Board of Trustees voted to approve the College's budget for the 2019-2020 academic year with no increases to tuition or fees. This marked the sixth consecutive year the Board of Trustees has held tuition flat for NWFSC students. ■



President Dr. Devin Stephenson with the Fall 2019 Phi Theta Kappa inductees.

The Best



Dr. Devin Stephenson awarded Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Paragon Award for New Presidents

College President Dr. Devin Stephenson was selected by the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society to receive the Paragon Award for New Presidents.

These awards are given to new college presidents who have shown strong support of student success by recognizing academic achievement, leadership and service among high-achieving students at their college. Recipients were nominated for the award by the students on their campus. Stephenson received the award as part of PTK Catalyst 2019, the Society's annual convention, in Orlando, Florida April 4-6, 2019.

This year, NWFSC's Sigma Mu Chapter of PTK earned the designation of becoming an official Five-Star Chapter, an honor bestowed on the nation's most elite and high-performing chapters. The Chapter worked diligently to improve their ranking from a One-Star Chapter to a Five-Star Chapter in two years. ■

Mascot Madness



Our new mascot, J.R. (Jimmy Raider), was unveiled on January 12. J.R. replaced Jimmy the Fox as a better representation of General Jimmy Doolittle, who led the squadron of B-25s on a daring raid to Japan as a reply to the attack at Pearl Harbor—a feat for which he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. The significance of the mission, many believe, was a turning point in World War II. Those Raiders had trained at nearby Eglin Air Force Base.

The student body chose the name “Raiders” in 1964, and we are honored to use the name as our mascot. ■



Photos: top left - NWFSC Mascot, J.R. checks out the Raider gear at the bookstore; top right J.R. works in the lab with Dr. Dana Stephens; bottom - J.R. sits in on a very important meeting with the President’s Cabinet

Digging Deeper

Paleontology students participate in dig

Eight paleontology students got a unique hands-on experience during spring term when they traveled 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 Northwest Florida State College geology professor Dr. Jon Bryan, was supported by the College's Science Development Fund through the NWFSC Foundation.

The 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. ■





Photo: (front row, l-r) Gabrielle Jackson, Samuel McClead, Lena Wood and (back row) Rachel Willams

Highly Skilled

NWFSU students excel at SkillsUSA competitions

Our students brought home 10 accolades, eight of which were in first place, from the SkillsUSA Regional Conference held in Pensacola on February 20, 2019. The students then went on to compete at the state competition in Pensacola April 7-10, 2019. At the state competition, the team brought home three first-place and two second-place accolades. Four students advanced to the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference in Louisville, Kentucky on June 26. Gabrielle Jackson participated in the Computer Programming division of the competition. Samuel McClead and Rachel Williams earned bronze in the audio/radio production competition. Lena Webb earned silver in early childhood education competition.

SkillsUSA is an educational partnership that provides students, teachers and other professionals with the tools needed to excel in the workforce. Each year, SkillsUSA puts on several competitions at the local, regional, state and national levels to test the skillset of students who are preparing to begin their careers. ■



Breathe Easy!

All of our campuses and centers became tobacco-free January 1, 2019. The policy was set in place by the Board of Trustees after unanimously approving the proposal in June 2018. This project was three years in the making and was approved following a petition from the NWFSU Tobacco-Free Task Force, a group formed by the Student Government Association in 2015. The goal behind the new policy is to strengthen community awareness with the vision of a safe, healthy campus of tobacco-free adults. ■





NWF 2 UWF

At Northwest Florida State College, 2 + 2 = success

Molly McLain wasn't sure what she wanted to major in when she first began her college career at Northwest Florida State College. But just before obtaining her general Associate in Arts degree, she discovered what she was destined for: a career in physics and mathematics. McLain began searching for the best way to pursue her newfound major, and found out about the College's 2+2 agreement with the University of West Florida, called NWF 2 UWF.

"The whole process was quick and easy..."

"I found out about NWF 2 UWF in the middle of my spring semester at Northwest Florida State College because I was looking for more information about transferring," McLain said. "The whole process was quick and easy, and I was able to transfer to UWF the next fall."

Through NWF 2 UWF, McLain's UWF application fee was waived, and her transcripts were sent to UWF free of charge as well. When asked how her experience at NWFSC prepared her for her next step in her college career, McLain said the classwork matched right up so that she could continue her degree with no delay.

"I was able to get all of the prerequisites for the physics program done at NWFSC, so I was able to go straight into my upper division classes when I got to UWF, which was really nice," she said. "I would recommend that all NWFSC students join a 2 + 2 program; it's free to join and it saves you some time and money." ■

University partnerships expand student possibilities



Photo top: (L-R, seated) Dr. Jack Hawkins, Jr., Troy University Chancellor and Dr. Devin Stephenson, NWFSC President, joined by leadership teams from both Troy University and NWFSC.

Photo right: (L-R, seated) Dr. Devin Stephenson, NWFSC President and Dr. Tony Waldrop, University of South Alabama President, sign partnership agreement.

Northwest Florida State College has nine university partnership agreements with eight institutions including:

- Florida State University-Panama City
- Florida A&M University
- University of South Alabama
- Northcentral University (AZ)
- University of West Florida
- Troy University (AL)
- University of Central Florida
- Western Governors University.



Photo (L-R): NWFSC President Dr. Devin Stephenson, Florida Chancellor for Career and Adult Education Dr. Henry Mack, NWFSC Director of Workforce Development Bill Allison, NWFSC VP of Academic Affairs Dr. Deborah Kish, and friends of NWFSC join to announce apprenticeship program.

Apprenticeship program launched

Northwest Florida State College is proud to announce its approval to join the State of Florida's Apprenticeship System. This approval means that NWFSC will soon launch a new Apprenticeship Program to train skilled carpenters and plumbers, preparing them to join the labor workforce.

Funding for the NWFSC Apprenticeship Program was made possible through a \$1.75 million State of Florida

Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. The College was one of 14 approved sites to receive approval for the Apprenticeship Program and was awarded \$100,000 from the State in partnership with CareerSource Okaloosa/Walton.

Apprentices will work 2,000 hours a year in their field of plumbing or carpentry and receive 144 hours of instruction at NWFSC. As part of the program, apprentices will receive classes in financial literacy, safety training and industry-specific training as dictated by the employer to ensure a smooth transition from training to real-world scenarios.



Making the Grade

NWFSC nursing program excels

Spring 2019 saw the largest graduating cohort ever for our Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) degree, with 56 students graduating. If that wasn't enough good news for the ASN program, every student who attempted the National Counsel Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) this spring (55 of 56), passed the test and obtained their license.

The NCLEX-RN is a nationwide examination for the licensing of nurses and must be passed before being licensed to practice nursing in the United States and Canada. The College's NCLEX-RN passing rate is so high that it ranks in the top percentile for nursing passing rates in the country. Currently, our College's NCLEX-RN passing rate is 98.7%, while the State of Florida's passing rate through September 2019 is 74.7% and nationally the passing rate is 89.1%. ■

Nursing Program is ranked in Florida's top 10 among all Florida colleges and universities according to percentage of pass rates by RegisteredNursing.org.





Sparks *Fly*

Welding earns American Welding Society Accredited Test Facility designation

Our Welding program recently earned the designation of an Accredited Test Facility (ATF) by the American Welding Society (AWS). NWFSC is the only ATF between Tallahassee, Florida and Mobile, Alabama, making it the exclusive welding testing location on Florida's Emerald Coast.

"NWF State College has a very well organized welding training facility that is staffed by extremely well qualified

personnel and management," said Lyndsey Deckard, American Welding Society Auditor & Senior Certified Welding Inspector. "This will be a fine addition to the ATF program and one of which AWS can be exceptionally proud."

AWS evaluated The College's welding program on our facilities, personnel and equipment's abilities to test and qualify welders. Once accredited, ATFs are able to test and qualify welders on behalf of the American Welding Society and their strict standards for quality fabrication.

"We are a leader in welding education and aim to be Florida's best welding training and testing center," said Dr. Devin Stephenson, president. "Scottie Smith and his team have significantly raised the profile of our program and continue to find innovative ways to enhance the workforce and career educational pathways available to our students and the surrounding communities of Northwest Florida."

Our Welding program was also recently honored as the Top Educational Institution by the American Welding Society at the Excellence in Welding Awards in Atlanta, Georgia. ■



Serving those *who served*

A look at the first year of the Veterans Success Center

Vickey Whaley has always put her family first. For 20 years, while she served in the U.S. Air Force, Whaley made sure her children received the best education she could give them –even while putting her own education on hold. But now that she is retired, Whaley said she is making up for lost time.

"The Veterans Success Center has been a lifesaver."

"I have reached a point in my life where my children really no longer need me," she said, noting that one of her



sons is in college and the other in high school. "I am 52 years old, and I am a college sophomore so it's been interesting coming back to school."

Whaley started her college journey this past spring, right when the doors of the new Veterans Success Center at the Niceville campus opened.

"The Veterans Success Center has been a lifesaver," Whaley said. "When I took classes before, I didn't know how

to navigate or where to start. I had no idea whatsoever, but they walked me through every step of the way."



While in the military, Whaley worked in what she calls the military's equivalent to a civil rights office. Now, Whaley hopes to pursue a Bachelor of Applied Science in Management & Supervision with a concentration in Human Resources Management, which she said will be similar to her job while serving in the Air Force. She said with the help of the Navigators at the Veterans Success Center, she was able to complete her entire enrollment session in one visit.

"It is such a pleasure to assist our student veterans and eligible family members in achieving their personal and professional goals," said Dorian Busby, a student success navigator at NWFSC. "We have a diverse student veteran population, but there seems to be a common thread amongst them—the continued desire to serve and support their community by pursuing their education."

For now, Whaley is taking her workload one day at a time. She juggles her school work with her job as a substitute teacher for special-needs classrooms in Okaloosa County, and still maintains an active family life. ■

Military Friendly

11% of the student body receives post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits.



That's **3.6** times greater than the Florida College System average.

We were recently designated as a Military Friendly School by Victory Media in the small public college category for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Military Friendly® Schools are rated to the extent to which each organization exceeds the following benchmark standards:

- Academic Policies and Compliance
- Admissions and Orientation
- Culture and Commitment
- Financial Aid and Assistance
- Graduation and Career
- Military Student Support and Retention

With close proximity to Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field and Duke Field, NWFSC serves a multitude of veterans, active-duty military members and their families. ■



Photo (L - R): At the Grand Opening were Central District General Manager of Gulf Power Bernard Johnson, Major General Don Litke, USAF Retired and NWFSC Board of Trustees member, Florida House Representative Mel Ponder, Gulf Power Company President Marlene Santos, NWFSC President Dr. Devin Stephenson, and NWFSC Board of Trustees members Major General Thomas "Rudy" Wright, USAF Retired, Charlotte Flynt and Lori Kelley.

Assuring Success

Veterans Success Center is open for business

We celebrated the grand opening of the Veterans Success Center with a ribbon-cutting event on February 28, 2019. The Veterans Success Center, located at the Niceville campus, provides a one-stop shop to expand educational opportunities, transitional services and career services for veterans and their families. ■





PartnerUp!

Hsu Educational Foundation & Crestview Technology Air Park partnership

This year, the College entered into a transformational partnership that will serve as a catalyst for workforce training to support the growing aerospace community in our region. On November 6, the College’s Board of Trustees approved a long-term lease with the Crestview Technology Air Park (CTAP) at Bob Sikes Airport and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Hsu Educational Foundation to house its new Airframe and Powerplant Program.

Northwest Florida State College’s collaboration with the Hsu Educational Foundation creates a unique learning environment where students in grades K-12 have the opportunity to utilize the state-of-the-art facilities for STEM education around the College’s A&P programming with the ultimate goal of introducing them to advanced technology in high-growth industry sectors.



Photo: (L-R) Hsu Educational Foundation Founder/ CTAP CEO Dr. Paul Hsu and NWFSC President Dr. Devin Stephenson.

“It is a historic moment for Northwest Florida State College to enter into this agreement, and I am humbled to be surrounded by such great visionaries for our College and this region,” said Dr. Devin Stephenson, President, Northwest Florida State College. “I am sincerely appreciative of the enthusiastic support we received from members of our Board of Trustees to advance our mission of educational opportunity, economic development and improvement of the quality of place for the citizens of Okaloosa and Walton Counties.” ■

Young Minds

Collegiate High School creates an environment of success for the future

The year 2019 has been a very exciting year for Collegiate High School (CHS) at Northwest Florida State College as they began several new community initiatives including: Collegiate Gives Back, Interact Chick-fil-A Leader Academy and The Veterans Heritage Project™ (VHP), a unique civic project that connects students with veterans in their communities.

Once a month throughout the school year, CHS students participated in “Community Service Fridays” to become more invested in the community. Some of those community service projects included bagging oysters with Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, helping with the non-profit therapy horse-riding organization, Grace Rides, and working with Alaqua Animal Refuge to refurbish its dog park.

In addition to these new projects, Collegiate High School has won a slew of academic accolades and awards, taking first place in Math Bowl, Brain Bowl and Robotics team competitions. Collegiate High School at NWFSC has also been named a GreatSchools.org College Success awardee for the second consecutive year, an A+ school for the 18th straight year and a Florida School of Excellence for the third year. ■

Eye in the Sky

The Police Department announced the launch of a drone unit in June 2019. The College is one of only four colleges in the nation with an active law enforcement drone team per a new study from Bard College's Center. The same study found there are only 38 active law enforcement agencies in Florida that utilize drones.

NWFSC currently has four FAA certified pilots and four drones in its resources. The drones, or Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), are all equipped with high-definition cameras, thermal imagers and the ability to attach chemical canisters such as pepper spray to deter suspects. This summer, the College was also recognized as the safest college campus in Florida, and the addition of drone technology will only help to maintain that safety quality. ■



Photo: (L-R) Lee Blakemore, Blackboard Chief Client Officer and President of Global Markets; Dr. Nate Slaton, NWFSC VP of Student Success; Cole Allen, NWFSC Chief Information Officer; Dr. Deidre Price, Dean of Academic Strategies, Innovation and Support and Bill Ballhaus, Blackboard CEO

Optimizing the Student Experience through Technology

The College was named a winner of the Blackboard Catalyst Award for Optimizing the Student Experience. The award honors institutions whose educational and administrative innovations have markedly improved the total learner experience. This includes embracing new challenges and addressing rapidly changing dynamics in fields such as student recruitment, financial aid, enrollment, retention and assessment, graduation and beyond.

Founded in 2005, the annual Catalyst Awards recognize and honor innovation and excellence in the Blackboard global community of practice, where millions of educators and learners work every day to redefine what is possible when leveraging technology. Winners are selected by a cross-functional team of Blackboard experts. ■

In the Works

On April 29, 2019, the Triumph Gulf Coast Board unanimously voted to approve Northwest Florida State College's Walton Works Training Center of Excellence project. The Walton Works project includes career and education initiatives and expansions to be offered at the College's Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs, Walton County. 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 establishes a Center of Excellence for 10 new workforce programs, preparing students to earn industry-recognized credentials including state licenses and certifications. The project will expand 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 and an indoor drone facility at the College's Chautauqua Center, while the fire tower will be constructed at the Walton County Sheriff's Office in DeFuniak Springs.

The College is also appreciative of 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 NWFSC 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.

The Walton Works project is a direct result of the partnership between the Walton County Board of County Commissioners, Walton County Sheriff's Office, CareerSource Okaloosa Walton and the Triumph Gulf Coast Board. This collaborative partnership affirms the commitment of these entities to expand workforce education across Northwest Florida.

"The Walton Works Training Center will greatly improve the quality of life for many citizens of Walton County," said Larry Jones, Walton County Administrator. "It is amazing to see so many organizations come together to make our community a stronger and more vibrant place to live and work." ■



Photo: NWFSC President Dr. Devin Stephenson and Walton County Administrator Larry Jones



Susan Myers

A legacy of learning

Before her passing earlier this year, Mrs. Susan Pryor Sloat Myers decided to link her name with the Northwest Florida State College's Learning Resources Center with a \$1 million dollar bequest. Today, her name is on permanent display on the Susan Myers Learning Resources Center at our Niceville Campus.

In addition to the named building, Myers also bequeathed \$120,000 to establish the Susan Pryor Sloat Myers Scholarship Fund. This fund will provide six named scholarships each year for graduates of Choctawhatchee High School, Fort Walton Beach High School and any other high school that may be constructed in the future to service students in the Fort Walton Beach area. ■



NWFSC
reduced
energy use by

55%

Going Green

Our Cenergistic partnership continues, following the College's renewal of the Energy Conservation Program. Since the program's inception in February 2014, \$4.8 million in expected utility expenses were recaptured and energy consumption reduced by 55%.

Through the partnership with Cenergistic, the College made significant gains in environmental stewardship initiatives. Greenhouse gas emissions were reduced, equivalent to energy used by average vehicles driving 66 million miles. ■



Brian and Kim Pennington donate \$250,000

Brian and Kim Pennington have pledged \$250,000 to establish the Brian and Kim Pennington Scholarship Endowment through the College Foundation. The couple is committed to offering financial support to students that may otherwise struggle to see their educational dreams achieved. The scholarship will provide assistance to students with financial need and a priority focus on first time in college students. ■

Culinary Arts Greenhouse established in honor of Kay Litke

Major General Donald P. Litke and his family have elected to establish the Kay Litke Culinary Arts Greenhouse to honor and memorialize their beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Kay Litke.

The establishment of this facility will help provide students with fundamental farm-to-table techniques, innovative green practices and equip students with marketable sustainability skills. Under the direction of the culinary arts leadership team, the project will also provide opportunities for community engagement. ■



Photo: Sue Farrell (daughter of Kay and Don Litke) and Retired Major General Don Litke

Meet the 2019-2020 Foundation Board of Directors



Photo (L to R, front to back): Alan Wood, CCB Community Bank; Secretary: Cristie Kedroski, Vice President of College Advancement; Melissa Pilcher, Regional Utilities of Walton County; Dale E. Peterson, Dale E. Peterson Realty; Tyler Jarvis, Bald & The Beard Restaurant Group; Ashley Rogers, Dunlap & Shipman, P.A.; Tom Rice, Magnolia Grill; Steve Wolfrom; Middle: Chairman, C. Jeffrey McInnis, Anchors Smith Grimsley, PLC; Wayne Campbell; Bo Arnold; Past Chair: Chad Hamilton, Warren Averett, LLC; Treasurer: Ken Wampler, Newman-Dailey Resort Properties; Vice Chair: JD Peacock, Okaloosa County Clerk of Circuit Courts; Bernard Johnson, Gulf Power; Back: Eric Aden, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office; NWF State College President: Dr. Devin Stephenson; Trustee Liaison: Maj Gen Don Litke USAF Retired; Hu Ross, Polaris Wealth Management LLC; Jonathan Ochs, Trustmark Bank.

Not Pictured: Marek Bakun, The St. Joe Company; Walter Hooks, Regions Bank; Heather Kilbey, Professional Products, Inc. (Ezy Wrap); Gordon King, Okaloosa Gas; Michelle McGee, Fleet & Smith, P.A.; Mitch Mongell, Fort Walton Beach Medical Center; Dennis Peters, Gulf South Research Corporation; Donnie Richardson, Richardson Farms; Fred Thomas, ThomCo Enterprises; Steve Wills, Raytheon; Dewayne Youngblood, Progress Bank.

On the Front Line

Local first responders complete EMT hybrid program

In mid-August, we graduated the inaugural class of active first responders who participated in a hybrid Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program. Eight firefighters and eight deputies from the Walton County Sheriff's Office completed the EMT certification course while simultaneously working their normal shifts.

The EMT course, typically takes four to six months



to complete, but the hybrid version was condensed into a 10-week course that was comprised of online components and a weekly in-person practical unit.

The first responder students were required to complete 88 hours of clinical work in 60 days. These clinical hours were divided into four 12-hour shifts on an ambulance and five eight-hour shifts in an emergency room. ■



30 years of *Fun & Learning*

Kids on Campus set to
celebrate 30th anniversary

Harvey McKay remembers his first classroom experience at college – he was 13 and enrolled in a slime-making class as part of the summer program Kids on Campus at Northwest Florida State College.

“I just remember having fun with other kids and doing the fun classes,” he said. “It was like going to school, except it was nothing but electives so it made it more fun.”

McKay attended Kids on Campus for three consecutive summers from 6th-8th grade and said he enjoyed the atmosphere so much that he returned while in high school as a volunteer.

“I was a volunteer for Taekwondo and basketball, and I also did the extended care program,” he said.

Now, at age 25, McKay is a College employee. He still pitches in with KOC by setting up computer programs for incoming students.

“I remember Harvey as a student in the program, then as a high school volunteer, and now as an adult working for the College,” said Laura Schultze, NWFSC continuing

education coordinator. “It’s so neat to see our students grow into adults through this program.”

Summer 2020 will mark the 30 year anniversary of Kids on Campus, and Schultze said the program has grown exponentially since its inception.

“In 1990, Kids on Campus was only a half-day program, and there were 230 kids total for the first summer. This summer, we had 650 kids, and we offered both half-day and full-day options,” Schultze said.

Instead of just a handful of classes that were offered 30 years ago, Kids on Campus now offers 50 diverse course options ranging from hip-hop dance and martial arts to fun science and math classes.

“The nice thing about the program is that students and their parents can plan their own schedules,” Schultze said.

This coming summer, Schultze said, Kids on Campus plans to expand its program to offer two weeks of camp at the Niceville Campus and one week of camp at the Fort Walton Beach Campus.

“It’s just grown over the years, and now we have the opportunity to expand it,” Schultze said. “Summer is the fun part of my year. At Kids on Campus, it’s crazy, but we have a whole lot of fun.”

Kids on Campus enrollment is open for students entering 3rd-8th grade, and volunteer opportunities are available for high school students entering 10th grade. ■

CBA Dedicates Living Shoreline to Founding Member



Photo: Approximately 50 people attended Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance's ribbon-cutting for the Mike Flynt Living Shoreline in October, including Flynt's wife Charlotte, children Laura Nemes and Mike Flynt Jr., and several other close friends and family members.



CBA founding board member, Michael Flynt

The Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance hosted a ribbon-cutting at Florida Park in Valparaiso on Friday, October 4, to dedicate their newest living shoreline project to the memory of CBA founding board member Michael Flynt.

Michael Flynt was a champion of CBA and of Northwest Florida State College. He served as a member of the College

Foundation Board, the Institute of Senior Professionals, the CBA Board and the College's Board of Trustees.

CBA Director Alison McDowell explained that a living shoreline is a coastal management plan that uses living plants, recycled oyster shells and other natural resources to protect the coastline from erosion. ■

CBA awarded Impact 100 grant

This year Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) was awarded a \$101,600 capacity-building grant from Impact 100 Northwest Florida. CBA will use this gift to purchase much-needed vehicles and equipment that will allow the organization to expand existing programs, as well as start new initiatives to maintain swimmable, fishable waterways.

With the Impact 100 grant, CBA will purchase a heavy-duty truck, a specialized oyster shell recycling trailer, a van to transport the education and restoration teams and aquaculture tanks for growing seagrass. With these new purchases, CBA will transform and expand their oyster shell recycling program and launch a unique seagrass education and restoration initiative. By investing in oyster and seagrass recovery, CBA will rebuild the bay's natural filters and sustain the bay for wildlife and humans alike. ■





Sights, Sounds and Soul

A year of Mattie Kelly Arts Center entertainment

Mattie Kelly Arts Center's 2018-2019 lineup was full of amazing and unique events. This year boasted Broadway shows, Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra concerts, guest artists and speaking engagements as part of the President's Speaker Series. The audience was dazzled by the likes of *The Wizard of Oz*; *Footloose the Musical*; comedian Preacher Lawson; as well as the creator of the *Super Soaker*, Lonnie Johnson; former NASA Astronaut Winston Scott; and the College's very own Dr. Devin Stephenson on the piano during the NFSO Holiday Pops concert.

In September, we hosted our very first sensory friendly event, NFSO's morning rendition of its *Take Flight* concert. Audience members of all ages were able to enjoy a muted version of the orchestra's repertoire, while being treated to fidget toys and custom accommodations for those with light and sound sensitivities. ■



#Sound the Siren

Raider Athletics wrapped up a victorious 2018-2019 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. ■



3.22 average GPA
of Raider athletes
2018-2019

47 named to Academic
All-Panhandle Conference

34 FCSAA All-Academic
team honors

19 NJCAA Academic
All-American honors

Graduation Rate of
NWFC Athletes

100%



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