

USEF

UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA
System

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the
USF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
FALL 2018



Preeminence
**The Start of a
NEW ERA**

Young alumni
to watch

Life-saving
malaria research

New VP for
Athletics

A new chapter of
Phi Beta Kappa

Drone PILOTS

A NEW COURSE AT USF IS MOVING STUDENTS out of the classroom and into the pilot's seat, training them to use the latest tools in an ever-changing industry.

Drone photography and videography have quickly become staples for those who work in digital media, marketing, production and a slew of other fields. It was that fast rise into the mainstream that prompted the Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communications faculty to develop a course designed to give students a leg up in this competitive business.

Drone Videography/Aerial Storytelling, offered for the first time in spring semester 2018, teaches students basic safety and legal regulations associated with the use of drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). Students also learn videography techniques and how to utilize aerial footage in digital media storytelling.

Course instructor Ryan Watson, '06, (pictured with the class pg. 3, top, inset photo), says he designed the curriculum to give students a well-rounded understanding of how to responsibly operate drones and learn a skill that could translate into job opportunities.

In the field, students learn basic flying techniques like takeoff, hover and landing. Under Watson's supervision, they also learn more advanced videography techniques that they're able to incorporate into their video projects.

Along with the experience students gain during flight days, time in the classroom is spent learning the technical ins and outs of flying. As part of the course, students prepare for and take the Federal Aviation Administration's Remote Pilot Certification test. This certificate gives videographers the legal authority to use drones for commercial purposes – a required credential for anyone planning to operate a drone professionally.

It's the direct impact on a student's employment prospects that Watson says is so exciting about integrating emerging technologies into coursework.

– AARON HILF | University Communications

First Look



Find out more
Online



Photos: RYAN NOONE | USF Communications

First Look





Millennial MARVELS

DETERMINATION. RESILIENCE. CREATIVITY. That's what it takes to make a big impact when you're barely out of the gate, professionally speaking. So say the seven 2018 USF Outstanding Young Alumni.

Each year, the Alumni Association recognizes a handful of Bulls age 35 and younger whose innovation, creativity and achievements have already made them leaders in their fields. This year's honorees come from diverse backgrounds, including sports, business, law and medicine. But their determination to succeed, desire to make a difference and dedication to USF unite them.

Prioritizing education from an early age is paramount to being successful, they say. "Education was first and foremost in our household ... I really didn't know any different," says former NFL player and business owner Vincent T. Jackson, '16, who finished his degree while playing for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

It's also important to surround yourself with people who are even sharper than you, they agreed.

"The principle I've learned to live by is if you're the smartest person in the room, you're in the wrong room," says Hannibal Baldwin, '11, the co-founder and co-CEO of award-winning tech company SiteZeus.

During a May 18 panel discussion moderated by TV and radio sports personality Ann Liguori, '82, Life Member, USF Distinguished Alumna, the recipients all took questions from the audience. They shared how they overcame obstacles and accomplished their goals. They also gave valuable advice for people looking to achieve their dreams.

Learn more about the 2018 Outstanding Young Alumni on pages 48-51.

— KATIE EBNER, Class of '19 | USFAA



PHOTOS

Top row, from left:

Hannibal L. Baldwin, Finance '11,
USF St. Petersburg

Joel Raney, Civil Engineering '11

R. Grant Baxley, Management
Information Systems '07

Bottom row, from left:

Dr. Venessa Walker, Biomedical
Sciences '04

Maja Lacevic, English and
International Studies '09

Reuben Pressman,
Entrepreneurship '11,
USF St. Petersburg

Vincent Terrell Jackson,
Management '16

Interested in nominating a graduate for the 2019 awards? Find award criteria and more

Online





Photo: ERIC YOUNGHANS | USF Communications

PLATES ON, *Horns Up!*

FOR THE FIRST TIME in 14 years, USF has a new specialty license plate for Bulls fans who never leave home without their pride. The bold design captures the spirit of this exciting new era in the university's young life with striking colors and features that stand out on the road.

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles began issuing the new plates in August. USF receives \$25 for each plate purchased to support scholarships, student programs such as the Alumni Association-sponsored Student Ambassadors and Student Alumni Association, and other alumni engagement activities.

"Adopting a new USF license plate is one more way to showcase our Bull pride, all while providing more resources to benefit students," says USF System President Judy Genshaft.

The cost for the plates, which is in addition to motor vehicle registration fees, varies depending on several factors, including where motorists are in their registration cycle. Find all the details at bullsplate.org or inquire at your local tax collector's office.

"Our alumni are excited about the new plate. Visually, it makes a big statement, whether it's on an individual car or a whole parking lot full of Bulls' vehicles," says Bill McCausland, executive director of the Alumni Association. "The license plate program funds a scholarship endowment that now totals over \$1.3 million and has awarded more than \$400,000 in scholarships to deserving USF students."

Visit bullsplate.org for more information, including how to make the switch

Online



— PENNY CARNATHAN '82, Life Member | USFAA

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Go Bulls!



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USF

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FALL 2018

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through their gifts of time,
talent and treasure.



Photo: ERIC YOUNGHANS | USF Communications



Photos, from left: LAURA KNESKI | Muma College of Business; RYAN NOONE | USF Communications; Courtesy of USFSP



PHOTOS

Top: In August, USF graduated its first class under the Preeminent designation.

Center, from left: The first Bulls to Business students move in; USF Radiology and Busch Gardens staff team up to help an unusual patient; USFSP's Ex Labs Business Boot Camp empowers students.

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From the President

PHOTO: MATT MAY



WELCOME TO AN EXCITING NEW ERA at the University of South Florida.

Over the past several months, USF has reached not one, but two longtime institutional goals. In June, USF was named a Preeminent State Research University by the State University System's Board of Governors, an elite status that puts USF alongside just two other top Florida institutions. Just three months later, USF was also accepted into Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most esteemed liberal arts honor society in the nation. We have been working to join this group for 30 years. Where Preeminence signals to the state of Florida that USF is among our most esteemed institutions, Phi Beta Kappa helps us plant our flag on the national higher education landscape.

Thanks to our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and many friends and supporters, USF is achieving milestones once unheard of for this university. Across every level, excellence has now become the norm, and the world is taking notice.

And this is just the beginning.

As you will read in the following pages, these accomplishments represent the collective drive of USF to reach greater and greater heights. In all areas, and in every measure, we continue to push the limits of our own potential. We continue to look for ways to fuel our

growing research enterprise, to provide the highest-quality education to our students, to strengthen our partnerships, and to make an even bigger difference in our community.

In this issue, you will find many other updates on important work throughout the USF community. One exciting example is our life-saving research on malaria – a disease that threatens nearly half the world's population. USF Health's Center for Global Health and Infectious Disease Research, together with collaborators across USF and internationally, have made significant advances that will help in the development of novel therapies and drugs to fight the disease. You will also be introduced to Michael Kelly, our new Vice President of Athletics, who returns to USF with nearly 25 years of experience in college and professional athletics. And you will meet this year's Outstanding Young Alumni: seven of our brightest Bulls who are making waves in business, industry, philanthropy and their communities.

We are on an incredible trajectory because of the impact we make together. Thanks for all that you do to support USF and our students.

As always, Go Bulls!

JUDY GENSHAFT,
USF SYSTEM PRESIDENT

Stronger together: USF consolidation advances

AS USF MOVES BOLDLY INTO A NEW ERA of Preeminence, the USF System is working together with community leaders to begin the critical planning needed to consolidate its three separately accredited institutions under a single accreditation umbrella.

The higher education bill signed into law by Gov. Rick Scott in March requires USF Tampa, USF St. Petersburg and USF Sarasota-Manatee to consolidate by July 1, 2020. Although the newly designated Preeminent status was granted based on USF Tampa's metrics, once consolidation takes effect, USF will compete for Preeminence bonus funding based on the combined performance of all three campuses.

Rep. Chris Sprowls of Pinellas County, '06, and a driving force behind the consolidation legislation, says that the regional campuses stand to benefit from receiving a portion of the millions of dollars a year in Preeminence funding accrued by a unified USF, as well as sharing in the prestige that comes with the state designation.

"It's an opportunity for St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee to have a Preeminent university in their community," Sprowls told the *Tampa Bay Times*. "I think, naturally, it will have them rising together as opposed to being separate limbs."

By consolidating, students in St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee will experience a range of potential benefits, including a simplified admissions process, access to more degree programs, increased efficiencies that result in graduating faster and with less debt, and expanded opportunities in graduate or doctoral research. Each campus will maintain its unique identity.



USF System President Judy Genshaft emphasizes that no matter where students take their courses – whether in St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee, Tampa or around the world – all students benefit from being part of a united Preeminent State Research University.

"It's our ability to bring together diverse populations, diverse viewpoints, and diverse ideas that makes us stronger – and it will guide us through this consolidation process," Genshaft says. "As has been true throughout our proud history, we will continue to move forward together. We will remain focused on achieving higher levels of student success, conducting high-impact research, and serving the entire Tampa Bay region. We will persevere in making USF the powerhouse it is. United, the future is ours to shape."

With representation from across the USF System, the faculty, staff and students involved in the consolidation process are taking a collaborative, student-focused approach. A task force, with 13 members appointed by state lawmakers and the university, is also holding a number of public meetings on consolidation and will make recommendations to the USF Board of Trustees by Feb. 15, 2019. The trustees are required to submit an implementation plan to the state Board of Governors by March 15, 2019.

"Consolidation will strengthen our stature as a Preeminent university, expand access and opportunities for students, and further solidify our position as a key driver of future growth and economic development in the Tampa Bay region," says USF Board of Trustees Chair Brian Lamb, '98 and MBA '17. "Our board is committed to being transparent and collaborative through this process." – ANNE DELOTTO BAIER '78 | USF

Find more information about the USF System consolidation

Online



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USF UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA SYSTEM

University

ACADEMIC STRENGTH

USF awarded chapter of prestigious Phi Beta Kappa national honor society

JUST WEEKS AFTER being formally designated a “Preeminent State Research University,” USF has again been recognized for its achievements as a nationally competitive institution. On Aug. 3, the university was awarded a chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society (PBK), the oldest and most prestigious national honor organization in America.

PBK, founded in 1776, only awards a small handful of new chapters every three years and 64 percent of its member institutions are private. The three-year application process was a rigorous, multi-step review of the university’s students, faculty, academics, campus life, financial stability, administration, and governance. The average founding date of PBK institutions is 1860, about a century before USF’s 1956 formation. The application effort was led by Honors College Dean Charles Adams, and a USF committee of PBK faculty.

“Being home to a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa validates USF’s growing national reputation. It gives our students and faculty access to a prestigious network of peers across the country, which will serve them now and well into the future,” USF President Judy Genshaft says. PBK members include 17 U.S. Presidents, 40 Supreme Court Justices, and more than 140 Nobel Laureates.

The new chapter at USF, Eta of Florida, will have a formal installation ceremony, with high-achieving students from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of The Arts eligible for induction, this spring.

“The awarding of this chapter is an affirmation of USF’s commitment to the arts and sciences and exemplifies our dedication to academic excellence, advocacy for

freedom of inquiry and expression, and the support for unfettered and civil discourse,” says USF Provost and Executive Vice President Ralph Wilcox. “These are values that reach to the very heart of American higher education, and our democracy.”

The PBK chapter at USF will offer inductees (called key holders) opportunities for merit-based scholarships and access to a network of distinguished professionals. Each year, PBK will send prestigious guest lecturers to campus through its Visiting Scholars Program.

This chapter is also an additional step toward eligibility for the Association of American Universities (AAU).

More about Phi Beta Kappa

According to the Society’s website, the PBK Committee on Qualifications considers how well an applicant institution:

- Recruits and retains good students and prepares some for graduate study.
- Makes appropriate academic demands on those enrolled in its classes, including opportunities for honors studies for those who are especially capable.
- Develops and maintains a faculty whose preparation and scholarly activity give evidence that they are able to establish and assess those demands.
- Maintains sufficient financial resources to support the institution’s academic programs.
- Takes due precautions to prevent issues of governance, athletics, religion or politics from subverting the integrity of the institution’s dedication to liberal education.

— AMY HARROUN '05 | Honors College

Learn more about
Phi Beta Kappa
Online





PHOTO

USF's Poplar Hall welcomed new residents to the new Bulls to Business Program in early July.

NEW BEGINNINGS

Muma College of Business kicks off the Bulls to Business admissions program

DANCING, PARTY TUNES, SNACKS AND BALLOONS. The sounds of squeaky moving cart wheels, dinging elevators and new students timidly introducing themselves one by one echoed in the halls, as proud parents blamed teary goodbyes on sweat in their eyes. After all, they said, they had just carried bulky luggage through the stifling heat of summer.

The 31 new residents of the exclusive Bulls to Business program moved into USF's Poplar Hall in July, getting a jump on the majority of incoming freshmen by starting college four weeks before the fall semester began. USF Housing & Residential Education staff were there to open doors and issue keys, but some also danced along to the early 2000s pop music in the background. Even the most nervous of newcomers had to smile.

"Everyone was so welcoming, the staff downstairs looked like they were having a great time," says Bulls to Business student Andrea Celis, who will join the Zimmerman Advertising Program (ZAP) in the fall. "It wasn't anything stressful, everyone was super helpful. And I love this building, it's just so nice."

Bulls to Business students share a common area on the same floor, along with two specialized courses designed for business students. The interactive professional development course, typically reserved for sophomores, covers everything from business etiquette to interview tactics and résumé writing. Though years away from hunting for jobs, the students acquire the tools they will need to land internships while they study.

Meanwhile, the specialized math course prepares students for a successful start in their business classes.

Completion of the summer course allows them to bypass college algebra and head straight to business calculus in the fall semester.

"I just thought it was a really cool program," says incoming business analytics and information systems major Robert Stanley about why he chose Bulls to Business. "Might as well get a head start on it."

That seemed to be the consensus of the day. Whether it was parents or students being asked, the idea of making early friends and navigating campus before the rush of students in the fall are considered major perks.

Those who complete the summer portion of the program will be automatically enrolled into the Bulls Business Community, which offers business students an opportunity to visit corporate offices and go on company tours to get an in-depth experience of working in a corporate environment, senior director of undergraduate affairs Jackie Nelson says. Such networking opportunities are usually unavailable to most freshmen.

"I'm very excited to start my life here at USF, and all these programs that are available," Celis says. "It's so helpful to people who aren't sure what they want to do or are figuring it out and I'm really thankful that I found Bulls to Business and ZAP. It makes me more excited."

That evening, after parents were gone and boxes were unpacked, the new neighbors went over USF Housing rules with their resident assistant. Then, they all took a marker to the poster paper hanging on the wall. It was a list of community guidelines for their new home, including:

- Motivate each other.
- Make future connections.
- Be awesome.

— LAURA KNESKI '16, MS '18 | Muma College of Business

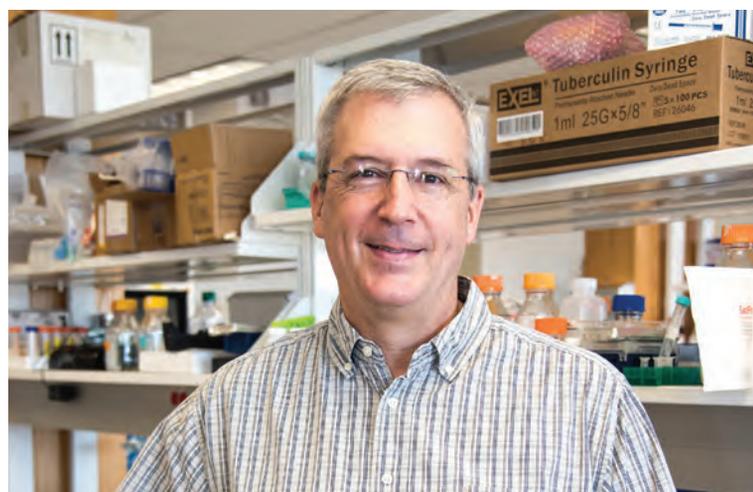
LIFE-SAVING MALARIA RESEARCH

Fighting the world's deadliest parasite

NEARLY HALF OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION is at risk of contracting malaria. In 2016, the World Health Organization estimates 216 million people were infected with the disease, leading to roughly half a million deaths. It's the deadliest parasitic disease on the planet – a fact that researchers at USF Health's College of Public Health are working to change.

Primarily found in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, malaria has been one of the worst global health burdens throughout history and its impact has often shaped civilizations. Humans are infected through contact with parasite-laden mosquitoes. Once bitten, the parasite enters the circulatory system, going directly to the liver before fully developing and causing the clinical illness.

“Malaria is a devastating disease and it's something that has killed as many people around the world as almost anything else,” USF Distinguished University Professor John Adams, PhD, says. “While great successes have been made over the past decade, we've had trouble eliminating the disease. Our hope is that our research can help further these efforts and save lives.”



that while the current treatment is still being used with success, its effectiveness in the long term is at risk – underscoring the need for advances, like those at USF, to be developed.

Unlocking the parasite's genome

Understanding the malaria parasite's genetic make-up is a crucial component to determine the best ways to fight it. For the first time ever, Adams and his team have been able to identify the essential genes of the most lethal malaria parasite species – a breakthrough that will propel drug discovery forward.

“What our team has done is develop a way to analyze every gene in this parasite's genome,” Adams says. “Using our genetic analysis tools, we're able to determine the relative importance of each gene in the genome for parasite survival. This understanding will help guide future drug development efforts targeting those essential genes.”

The genomic discovery, published in *Science*, utilized a USF-developed technique that mutated the majority of the parasite's 6,000 genes. Through computational analyses, scientists identified about 3,300 of those genes to be essential to the parasite's survival. Of those, 1,000 unique parasite genes have functions that remain unknown to researchers.

“This is a huge breakthrough,” says postdoctoral researcher Jenna Oberstaller, PhD, the study's co-author and member of the Adams lab. “This parasite is traditionally very difficult to genetically manipulate in the lab for a number of technical reasons. So, we've effectively gone from knowing only a few handfuls of this parasite's essential genes, to defining essentiality of the entire genome.”

Stopping the disease where it starts

As the place where the malaria infection starts in the human body, liver stage malaria is considered to be one

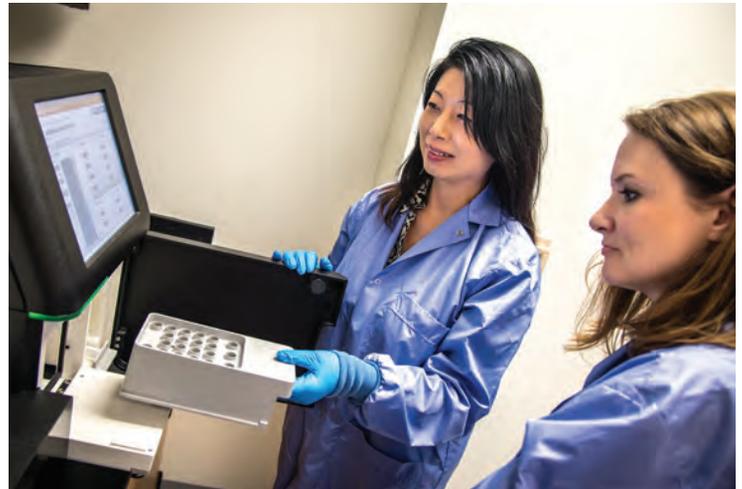
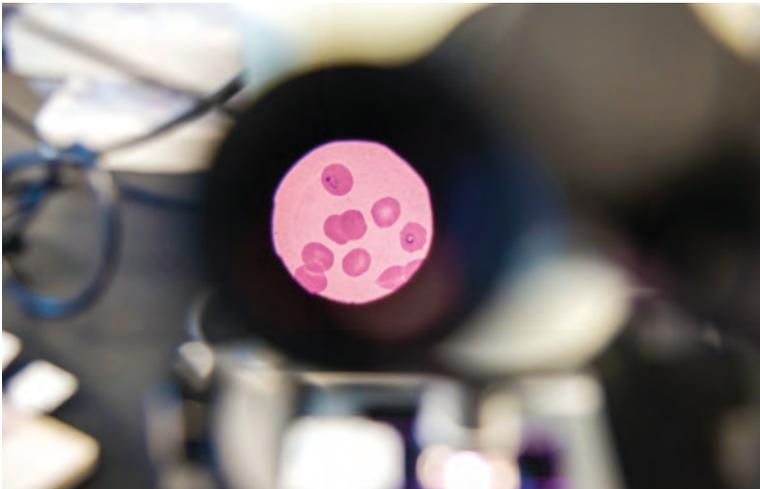
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What our team has done is develop a way to analyze every gene in this parasite's genome. Using our genetic analysis tools, we're able to determine the relative importance of each gene in the genome for parasite survival. This understanding will help guide future drug development efforts targeting those essential genes.”

– John Adams

Adams is the director of USF Health's Center for Global Health and Infectious Diseases Research. He and his team, along with collaborators across USF and internationally, recently published several high-profile articles outlining innovative advances they've made in the fight against malaria.

Their work will aid in the development of novel therapies and drugs as well as provide researchers the chance to study the parasite in ways that were previously impossible. These breakthroughs come as scientists continue to monitor the growing parasite resistance to front-line antimalarial drugs. This spreading drug resistance means



Photos: TORIE DOLL | USF Communications

of the last frontiers of research into the disease. But now, pioneering work from PhD students in Adams' team have developed a new way of studying liver stage malaria outside the human body (in vitro), opening the door to further drug and vaccine development for this crucial stage.

The innovative laboratory technique, published in *Nature Communications*, gives researchers a revolutionary way to culture human liver cells, called hepatocytes, and more efficiently infect them with the malaria parasite.

"Almost all of the current strategies are focused on the blood-stage of malaria – after the person has already become infected. But in order to eradicate this disease, you need to block the cycle of infection before it starts and the most efficient way to do that is by blocking the parasite from coming into the person," Adams says. "This has not been possible previously because the methods of studying the liver stage have just not been there. Our technique makes that work possible."

The current liver stage treatment was developed in the 1950s and is very toxic for some patients, Adams says. Researchers believe this new technique represents a fundamental development in the fight against malaria by allowing new liver stage therapies to be explored.

In fact, USF researchers have already begun using their new method in the lab and with collaborators across the country to evaluate new drugs and validate new vaccines. It's a breakthrough built at USF that will have an impact around the world, and one day, save lives.

— AARON HILF | University Communications

PHOTOS

From left: John Adams, PhD, is the director of USF Health's Center for Global Health and Infectious Disease Research; A microscopic look at *Plasmodium falciparum*. The parasite is the small, dark structure inside the cells; Co-lead author on the groundbreaking publication Min Zhang, PhD, standing at left, and postdoctoral researcher Jenna Oberstaller, PhD, work to identify the essential genes of the malaria parasite; close-up of the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*, a carrier of malaria, encephalitis, dengue and Zika viruses.



Photo: iSTOCK



RADIOLOGY TO THE RESCUE

USF Health and Busch Gardens team up to help unusual patient

USF HEALTH ISN'T USUALLY CALLED UPON to scale the anatomy of a patient from human to animal, but the USF Health Radiology team has that expertise – and was ready when a Busch Gardens veterinarian reached out to schedule a CT scan for a young sloth with dental issues.

“When it comes to the specialty of radiology, Dr. Summer Decker and her team have been unbelievable,” said Dominique Keller, ’94, senior veterinarian at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. In the past, USF Health helped the zoological park’s veterinary team with advanced diagnostic scans of penguins and wallabies, but this would be their first sloth.

Decker, MA ’07, MS ’08, PhD ’10, assistant professor and director of imaging research in the Department of Radiology, holds several patented imaging techniques embracing 3D virtual and 3D printing technologies to visualize anatomy.

“We take pictures in slices and take all of those slices and push them back together to get the exact same patient in 3D,” Decker says. “You can essentially fly through the body.”

Kodiak, a 1-year-old, two-toed sloth, looked as though he was smiling when he arrived at USF in August 2017 for the CT scan. But, in fact, his “smile” was an off-set

jaw, contributing to elongated teeth that prevented his mouth from closing properly and made eating difficult. The CT scan would help determine if Kodiak’s issue was a condition caused by his foot-sucking habit or a jaw deformity.

First the radiation dose and scan protocol was modified to meet modified pediatric guidelines by USF CT technologist Joe Henry, and the images were reviewed by neuroradiologist Ryan Murtagh, MD and MBA ’01, associate professor, Department of Radiology.

“Because of Kodiak’s size, he is basically a little kid, like a baby, and has to be scanned differently than an adult,” Decker says.

The sloth’s unlikely interprofessional health care team included his veterinarian; a dentist, William Geyer DDS; two imaging research scientists; and a radiologist. Before the craniofacial scan, they surrounded Kodiak and worked cautiously, avoiding his razorblade sharp teeth. While the images were generated, the team used normal sloth skulls from Busch Gardens’ skeletal reference collection to compare.

“None of us had ever scanned a sloth before so we were unfamiliar with the anatomy. Using a reference like the normal skull allows us to determine where Kodiak’s differences are,” Decker says.

The 3D modeling analysis was operated by Jonathan Ford, MS ’09, MS ’10, PhD ’13, a biomedical engineer and assistant professor in the Division of Imaging Research at the Department of Radiology. No evidence of a jaw

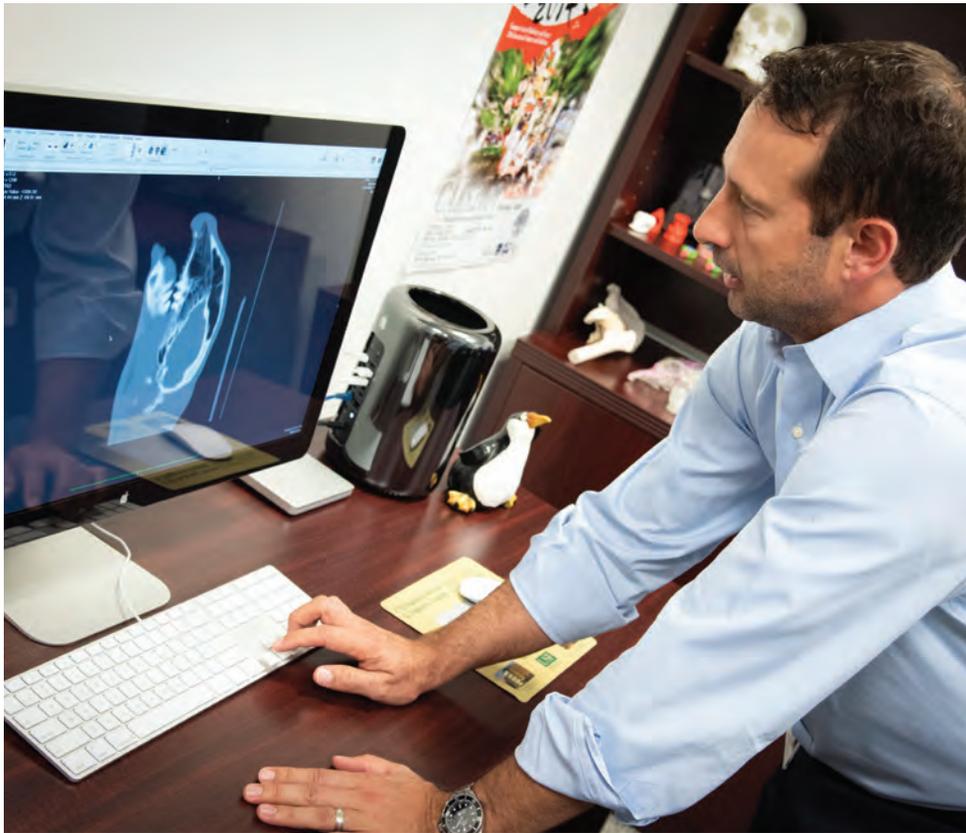
PHOTOS

From left: Kodiak, a 1-year-old, two-toed sloth, was seen by USF’s radiology team for a CT scan.

The USF team worked with a veterinarian and dental consultant from Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

Normal sloth skulls were used for comparison with a 3D print made from Kodiak’s scan.

The CT scan and 3D model were used to develop a dental treatment plan that allows Kodiak’s mouth to fully close.



Photos: RYAN NOONE | USF Communications; pg. 17, bottom right, BUSCH GARDENS

structural deformity was seen. But Ford was able to virtually open and close Kodiak's mouth to help identify the areas of jaw and teeth misalignment that led to Kodiak's bite problem and show the changes that needed to be made to correct the issue.

"That's why the CT is so nice" Dr. Keller says. "You can take an image, rotate it in three dimensions and look exactly at what's happening with him."

In early October, the Busch Gardens team with Dr. Geyer returned to USF for a follow-up. Decker's team helped provide a treatment plan. A 3D print, made from the scan and 3D model, clearly showed where and how individual teeth would need shaving to correct the sloth's bite.

A couple weeks later, Dr. Geyer shaved down Kodiak's teeth at the Busch Gardens Animal Care Center with the whole team looking on. The procedure was simple and also a teaching moment for the small group of children who watched behind a glass wall.

"Will he be OK?" they asked.

Kodiak did well and now eats normally. However, his teeth will continue to grow and he'll need similar dental treatments periodically for the rest of his life.

"This was very different from what we normally do," says Decker, whose 8-year-old-self was fascinated to learn about sloths and jumped at the opportunity to "draw on all the different fields and combine that knowledge to create a solution."

The USF Radiology team thrives in USF Health's

academic clinical environment. Besides being just a call away from Dr. Keller, the clinical researchers have their hands in many other areas, such as neurosurgery, cardiothoracic surgery, plastic surgery, gynecology, pathology and forensics, to name a few. Their expertise is routinely tapped by physicians and surgeons to help create "roadmaps" for treating patients, and they teach medical students and residents innovative, advanced imaging techniques.

"We need that collaboration. To me that's the beauty of working near an academic medical institution, and USF is perfect for us," Dr. Keller says.

A story about how the USF Health radiology doctors worked with the Busch Gardens Tampa Bay veterinary group to find a solution to Kodiak's dental problem aired April 21 on ABC-TV's *The Wildlife Docs*.

— SANDRA C. ROA, and ANNE DELOTTO BAIER '78 | USF Communications



STUDENT SUCCESS

Freshman retention on the rise at USFSP

FRESHMAN RETENTION IS UP 10 percentage points at USF St. Petersburg, from 65.5 to 75.5 percent, thanks to a new strategy that takes an individualized approach to helping freshmen overcome hurdles.

A measure of student success, retention rates refer to the percentage of first-year students who return to the same college as sophomores. At USFSP, retention rates have been slow to rise in recent years.

The new strategy, implemented with the fall 2016 freshman class, included creating an interdisciplinary team of staff from across the university and setting up programs to address common obstacles to retention, such as financial and academic difficulties.

“The intention of our initiatives was to ensure that we as university staff and faculty have an eye on students, share information with one another in a timely way, and provide meaningful and helpful responses to support students,” says Jacob Diaz, dean of students and director of housing and residence life.

Among the initiatives:

- enhancing first-year experiences and mentoring;
- establishing an academic success coordinator to review data weekly and coordinate an information outreach to students;
- using USF’s business process management platform to set up a system that allows faculty to refer students to academic advising when they stop attending classes or start struggling academically;
- increasing programs to enhance connectivity to campus life; and
- initiating faculty-staff excursions to connect students with their interests as they start to explore majors.

Increasing retention garnered more than \$155,000 in tuition revenue, which will be invested in further enhancing campus life.

— MATTHEW CIMITILE | USFSP

Photo: Courtesy of USFSP



PHOTO

USFSP’s Ex Labs Boot Camp provides empowering training. The Ex Labs winning team, from left, Diana Bryson, Sara Rocks, Chris Rotolo, Malachi Greaves, and Jonathan Fanshaw.

TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Business Boot Camp empowers students

AFTER WEEKS OF INTENSE training and countless hours of work, Sara Rocks and her team presented their business plan, Art Assist, to industry leaders, peers, faculty, family and friends.

Rocks, a sophomore psychology and marketing major, and her teammate Christopher Rotolo, a senior accounting major, created the plan as part of Exploratory Labs Boot Camp (Ex Labs), a new class powered by competitive student teams, led by industry professionals, and hosted by USF St. Petersburg.

Founded by executives at Gehant & Associates, LLC, and Tech Data, the class helps students from any major develop real-world business skills, such as business acumen, communication and design thinking. It also exposes them to the newest trends and strategies in the technology industry and helps them discover the range of jobs available in the Tampa Bay area.

“We worked on our own projects in teams and discovered what we are good at individually,” Rocks says. “I had a completely unique experience, different from the generalized education in a classroom setting. It was one of the best decisions I have ever made!”

The 70-hour, 28-session program is

based on a curriculum developed by Tech Data, one of the world’s largest technology distributors. Sessions are led by professionals from Tech Data and area companies, who also share personal career stories.

“We learned what companies are looking for in potential employees,” says Rotolo. “They care more about what you’re willing to learn and less about what you already know.”

Pat Gehant, ’76 and MA ’82, managing partner of Gehant & Associates, LLC, and Angie McCourt, vice president for transformation at Tech Data, are co-founders of the Ex Lab Boot Camp model. In their proposal to USFSP leaders last fall, they noted the class combines educational excellence and industry knowledge with student achievement and job placement.

“Students were asked to rate the overall value of the experience and 60 percent of them said it was life-changing and 40 percent agreed Ex Labs Boot Camp was career-enhancing,” Gehant says. “One hundred percent of the spring 2018 participants reported that the program was extremely valuable.”

Beyond the skills he gained, Rotolo says the class set him up for great internship opportunities, networking events and a chance to shadow professions of interest.

“My resume has increased tremendously,” he says. “I’ve made new friends both professional and personal and have enlarged my network by 400 percent!”

— MATTHEW CIMITILE | USFSP

HIGHER EDUCATION

USFSM debuts accelerated master's in criminology

USF SARASOTA-MANATEE CRIMINOLOGY STUDENTS will soon be able to earn a master's degree with only one additional year of study.

Starting this fall, criminology students will have the option to enroll in the accelerated master's degree program to earn their bachelor's and master's degrees within five years instead of the usual six. The program offers a faster road to an advanced degree and savings on tuition.

"We are pleased to offer this accelerated program to our qualified students who wish to expedite their studies," says Sandra Stone, professor and interim chair of the department of social sciences, which administers USFSM's criminology programs. "This program is an option that will save time and money, both of which are important considerations to many of our students, yet maintain the high quality of their educational experience."

Also known as BA+MA, the program does not replace the campus' existing criminal justice master's degree program. Students who meet the criteria for BA+MA can register in their junior year or at the start of their senior year. Once they graduate, they will have one remaining year of coursework to earn a master's.

As an added convenience, the graduate-level classes will be held online.

"The accelerated master's degree option was created to encourage criminology undergraduate students with top academic records to

remain at USFSM for a master's degree in criminal justice," criminology instructor Murat Haner says.

This is the first BA+MA criminology program within the USF System. It comes as Florida's Board of Governors is calling on colleges and universities to implement more online programming to make higher education more accessible.

"Having a master's degree has become extremely important when it comes to applying for high-paying jobs. Enrolling into our accelerated master's degree program will save criminology students the cost and study time of graduate admissions tests, application fees and extra courses," Haner says. "Students can take courses toward their master's degree in their senior year and get dual course credit toward their undergraduate and master's degrees."

Criminology graduates often work in courthouses and court-mandated treatment programs. Many become police officers, sheriff's deputies, attorneys, social service agents and federal and state investigators. Students who pursue master's degrees typically are seeking job promotions, career changes or greater knowledge of a particular field.

USFSM's BA+MA program will be open to criminology students at any USF System campus and offer the same education as regular, two-year master's programs. The difference is that, during their junior and senior years, students enrolled in BA+MA will substitute graduate-level coursework for their undergraduate elective classes.

Students interested in the program must enroll no later than the start of their senior year. Only those with at least a 3.3 grade-point average overall and a 3.5 GPA in criminology coursework are eligible.

— RICH SHOPES | USFSM

CYBERSECURITY EXPANDS

\$100K grant to fund new cybersecurity programs

USFSM AND FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY (FIU) have been awarded a \$100,000 grant to develop academic programs focused on cybersecurity.

The Florida Center for Cybersecurity, known as FC2, a statewide research facility at USF Tampa, awarded the grant in June so the campuses can jointly develop cybersecurity laboratories and instructional programs.

"Cybersecurity is becoming a specialty by itself," says Ehsan Sheybani, PhD '02, an associate professor of information systems and decision sciences at USFSM's College of Business. "Cyber threats are critical issues these days. I think what we are contributing



will be well received because there's a great demand for programs like this."

Sheybani and Giti Javidi, MS '96 and PhD '05, an assistant professor of information technology, will collaborate with two associates from FIU to carry out plans for the grant. This marks the first time USFSM has received funding in cybersecurity and comes as the College of

Business is preparing a new undergraduate program in cybersecurity and information technology.

USFSM will use the money for software, hardware and student assistants to create an advanced forensic laboratory to support the instructional program. Outside cybersecurity experts and other academicians will be invited to the lab to consult with instructors and students.

"We want to teach students how to detect and prevent cyberattacks to mobile devices, laptops and databases. Sometimes hackers get into your devices and you won't even notice," Sheybani says. "We're trying to teach our students how to detect and prevent these kinds of attacks."

Jobs in cybersecurity are expected to grow nearly 30 percent through 2026 with a median salary of more than \$95,000 for information security analysts, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

— RICH SHOPES | USFSM



Illustration: Courtesy of USF ATHLETICS

ILLUSTRATION

The USF Sun Dome became the Yuengling Center on July 1.

NEW NAME ON CAMPUS

Goodbye Sun Dome; hello Yuengling Center

THE USF SUN DOME now has a new name – one that’s well-known to Tampa Bay area beer drinkers.

Under a 10-year deal announced in June, the home of the USF basketball and volleyball teams – as well as events like concerts and graduation ceremonies for USF and local high schools – became the Yuengling Center on July 1.

D.G. Yuengling and Son is America’s oldest brewery, originating in 1829 in Pennsylvania. The company opened a brewery about a mile away from USF’s Tampa campus in 1999.

Financial terms of the deal weren’t announced. It was negotiated by Tampa Bay Entertainment Properties (TBEP), which has managed the facility since May 2017. That business is operated by Jeff Vinik, who owns the Tampa Bay Lightning hockey team and Amalie Arena.

According to the terms of the 2017 deal, TBEP will receive 35 percent of USF’s annual naming rights net profit.

“Upon assuming management of the Sun Dome and the multimedia rights for USF Athletics we identified the joint priority of selling naming rights to the arena,” says Steve Griggs, chief executive officer for Tampa Bay Sports & Entertainment, parent company of TBEP.

“And we pledged to the university that we would identify a reputable company with solid leadership and a strong local presence, one that USF would be proud to call a sponsor. D.G. Yuengling & Son, Inc., led by the Yuengling family, will prove to be a great partner for the university and its constituents.”

Visitors and students will notice messages about responsible drinking inside the arena and throughout the Tampa campus. There will be designated ride share locations inside the 10,500-seat arena, as well as Yuengling-funded initiatives with the USF student body.

“In Tampa Bay and across the country, the Yuengling family is known for its commitment to the community,” says USF System President Judy Genshaft. “We are grateful to have such a well-known and reputable family associated with USF. We especially appreciate the efforts to promote corporate and social responsibility as part of this new affiliation.”

“Beyond naming rights, we’ll continue to support the greater Tampa community and on the campus of USF with the popular Handshake Internship Program, a scholarship for a veteran to attend USF’s Brewing Arts Program, and upcoming social responsibility initiatives,” adds Jen Yuengling, a sixth generation brewer. “Yuengling Brewery is a family company, first and foremost, and we think this partnership is a great way to help further enhance the local community.”

– MARK SCHREINER | WUSF Public Media

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FACULTY AND STAFF GIVE BACK

The Amazing Race

EACH YEAR, USF SYSTEM FACULTY AND STAFF live the fundraising mission to the fullest in a friendly competition. It's a chance to make a collective impact in a shared passion for USF – and have fun in the process. Welcome to the annual Faculty & Staff Campaign, where colleges and units vie against one another in support of student success, scholarships and programs throughout the USF System.

The Faculty & Staff Campaign is a true testament to the USF faculty and staff's dedication to the USF System and Bulls community. In 2017-2018, the campaign reached unprecedented heights by raising \$7.2 million for the USF System, the largest amount recorded in its 43-year history. Since 2016, faculty and staff giving throughout the USF System has increased from 48 percent to a historic 55 percent, adding close to 550 new donors annually.

The Faculty & Staff Campaign theme changes each year, with the

In 2017-2018, the campaign reached unprecedented heights by raising \$7.2 million for the USF System, the largest amount recorded in its 43-year history.

2017-2018 theme inspired by *The Amazing Race* TV show. Colleges and units worked to win each month's challenge and achieve their goal based on engagement and giving. Area representatives throughout the USF System dedicated 3,000 hours to plan events and raise awareness and dollars. Their efforts supported a variety of funds and programs that benefit students and the USF System community.

Area representatives from USF Business and Finance, Kim Bushe-Whiteman and Elizabeth Jaquez, were inspired by the opportunity to raise awareness of the growing Faculty & Staff Campaign and encourage gifts to help students and co-workers with educational opportunities.

"Our co-workers came together because they believe in what the Faculty & Staff Campaign represents," Kim Bushe-Whiteman says. "They embraced the spirit of giving," Jaquez added.

"I have been the beneficiary of meeting amazing people who make up the fabric of USF," says Dr. Kevin Sneed, senior associate vice president, dean of the College of Pharmacy, and the 2017-18 Faculty & Staff Campaign Chair. "The energy and commitment of our amazing faculty and staff is outstanding, and to witness it first-hand has been truly rewarding."

— KRISTINE HERRINGTON | Annual Giving

FORWARD THINKING

Global patent ranking places USF in top 300 innovative enterprises

FOR THE SIXTH TIME IN EIGHT YEARS, USF is listed as one of the world's leading producers of new U.S. utility patents by the Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO).

In rankings that span the top 300 corporations, universities and government research laboratories, USF stands at #295 on the list with its 116 U.S. patents earned in 2017.

USF first made the global index in 2011 and since then has consistently placed among the world's most inventive universities. In June 2018, the National Academy of Inventors and Intellectual Property Owners Association placed USF as fifth among American public universities and 12th among the world's universities in securing new U.S. utility patents.

"By every measure, USF stands tall as an inventive, innovative and productive university where faculty and students are focused on shaping the future," says Paul R. Sanberg, USF's senior vice president for research, innovation and knowledge enterprise. "Worldwide, not every patent becomes a new product or technology. But each new patent creates a higher bar for innovation and sets the stage for greater discovery and innovation."

Invention and innovation have become hallmarks of USF's rise as a global research university. USF provides inventive students, faculty and staff with a suite of services to help encourage innovation, secure and protect intellectual property, and license their patent for further development or launch a business around it. USF's "culture of innovation" – as the founding home of the National Academy of Inventors and the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame – creates an environment that encourages, supports and rewards inventors.

This year's ranking places USF alongside Amsterdam-based biomedical and energy research company Royal DSM and Japanese auto parts company NGK Spark Plugs Co. Perhaps more telling, though, is that USF trailed just one patent behind American space agency NASA in the ranking.

The IPO's report was compiled from data provided by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Patents reported are utility patents granted during calendar year 2017 that listed the organization or a subsidiary as the owner on the printed patent document. The IPO has published this report annually since 1984 as a service to its members.

— VICKIE CHACHERE | Research and Innovation





Photos: Pgs. 22-23, top: ERIC YOUNGHANS | USF Communications

NEW VP FOR ATHLETICS

New leader moving Bull speed ahead

FITTINGLY, ON THE SAME DAY Judy Genshaft shared her excitement about the Bulls being the state's newest Preeminent State Research University, the USF System president also proudly introduced Michael Kelly as USF's new vice president of athletics.

"I just want to say to the residents of Tampa Bay and Bulls fans everywhere that USF is your college team," Kelly said at the announcement, held June 29 at the



Our youth is an absolute strength."

– Michael Kelly

Yuengling Center. "I don't care where you went, I don't care who you root for on the professional levels. The USF Bulls are your team."

Previously serving as associate athletic director for external affairs at USF from June 2001 to July 2002 under

Lee Roy Selmon, Kelly has continued to make a major national impact on college and pro sports since his first run with the Bulls.

As the COO of the College Football Playoff (CFP) since 2012, Kelly was a key figure in launching the playoff and had a hand in all aspects of the national championship game along with overseeing all day-to-day operations of the CFP and serving as the liaison with ESPN on the New Year's Six bowl games.

Equipped with nearly 25 years of college and pro sports experience, Kelly served as president of Super Bowl host committees in Tampa Bay (Super Bowl XXXV), Jacksonville (Super Bowl XXXIX) and South Florida (Super Bowl XLI). Kelly also was the executive director of the 1999 Men's Basketball Final Four Organizing Committee for the event held at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg.

Prior to his stint at the CFP, Kelly thrived as senior associate commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference for six years, overseeing football, broadcasting and communications. Kelly previously gained valuable experience as director of athletic operations and facilities at Wake Forest University.

In his return to USF, Kelly believes in "building USF Athletics tradition one champion at a time," and



said “our youth is an absolute strength,” when it comes to embracing USF’s athletic department founded in 1965. Kelly’s vision also includes creating an exceptional student-athlete experience, engaging the community and providing Bulls Nation with exemplary customer service to ensure memorable Green and Gold experiences.

“We expect to differentiate our athletic program,” Kelly said. “We expect to be the next preeminent athletic department going forward.”

The buzz around the Bulls has certainly increased since Kelly’s appointment, which has been enthusiastically received locally, regionally and nationally.

“This isn’t a great hire; it is more than that. It is the perfect hire,” says Rob Higgins, executive director of the Tampa Bay Sports Commission.

“USF has hit a home run with the hiring of Michael Kelly,” says John Swofford, commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference.

“In Michael Kelly, USF has found one of the most talented and qualified executives in college athletics,” says Jack Swarbrick, University of Notre Dame vice president, and the James E. Rohr director of athletics.

PHOTOS

Above: President Genshaft introduces Michael Kelly, new vice president of USF Athletics in June.

Opposite page: Michael Kelly and his family, return to USF. From left, daughter Cara, wife Lisa, and daughter Seana.

Right: Women’s Soccer captures its first American Athletic Conference tournament title by defeating rival and host UCF in penalty kicks.

NOTABLE NUMBERS FROM 2017-18

FROM CONTINUED FOOTBALL SUCCESS to capturing conference titles, USF Athletics can proudly look back on a 2017-18 season packed with success in competition, the classroom and the community.

5,313 – Average student attendance number for USF football games, a 21.2 percent increase since 2016.

4,711 – Community service hours logged by USF Athletics as of May 1.

244 – Bulls student-athletes on the USF Athletics Honor Roll this spring.

239 – USF student-athletes named to the USF Athletics Honor Roll in fall 2017.

73 – Student-athlete graduates during the 2017-18 school year.

31 – Bulls named to the all-conference first team.

7 – Consecutive semesters with a departmental GPA above 3.0.

6 – Student-athletes selected in the NFL and MLB Drafts.

6 – USF teams ranked in the top 25.

5 – All-Americans: Maria Jespersen, Kitija Laksa, women’s basketball; Evelyne Viens, women’s soccer; David Villar, baseball; and Claudio Correa, men’s golf.

3.11 – Combined GPA of nearly 450 student-athletes in spring 2018 – a program record.

3 – Regular season Conference championship teams: women’s soccer, men’s golf and softball.



Photo: Courtesy of USF ATHLETICS



PHOTO

Head Football Coach Charlie Strong celebrates with the Bulls at the Birmingham Bowl victory over Texas Tech.

FOOTBALL

Back-to-back bowl wins over Power Five foes set the stage for success in 2018

USF'S HOME OPENER AGAINST ELON on Sept. 1 marked the beginning of the Bulls' second season under head coach Charlie Strong, who guided the program to a 10-2 finish in 2017 and a thrilling Birmingham Bowl victory over Big 12 foe Texas Tech.

"You get a jumpstart for next year," Strong said after the bowl victory. "You get to move forward now and the guys have something to really build on."

In the midst of its 22nd season, USF football already has created lots of program-building momentum, especially in the past two years. USF rolled into 2018 with a 21-4 record since 2016 and was one of only three programs in the nation to have generated 20 or more wins and a pair of bowl victories in the past two seasons.

Sustained success helped the Bulls finish 2017 ranked No. 21 in the final AP and Coaches Polls, which was the second straight year USF wrapped up the season in the top 25. The final 2017 ranking helped USF continue a program-record run of 20 straight weeks appearing in the national top 25.

"We're on an uprise. This has become a great place," says senior offensive tackle Eric Mayes.

Mayes is one of USF's 11 returning starters and 41 lettermen back for the 2018 season that's primed to be packed with more

memorable moments.

After Elon, USF battled AAC opponent Georgia Tech for the first time at Raymond James Stadium on Sept. 8, to be followed by a matchup against Big Ten foe Illinois at Soldier Field in Chicago on Sept. 15. One week later, the Bulls begin conference play against East Carolina back at Raymond James Stadium on Sept. 22.

USF owns the best record of any league team in the past three seasons, going 19-5 in American Athletic Conference (AAC) games during the stretch. Prior to 2018, USF had a 10-2 record in home conference games the past three years and more exciting AAC clashes are in store for fans visiting Ray Jay this year.

Following the Homecoming game against UConn (Oct. 20) and a home test against Tulane (Nov. 3), USF will finish off the regular season with a highly anticipated War on I-4 clash with UCF at Raymond James Stadium on Friday, Nov. 23. USF racked up 653 yards of offense in last season's rivalry game at UCF that was deemed college football's game of the year by numerous national news outlets and drew an average total TV audience of 4.7 million viewers, including more than six million in the final half-hour.

"This year, we'll be out for revenge," junior tight end Mitchell Wilcox says. "Last year was one of the most exciting college football games anyone had ever seen."

Purchase tickets
Online



Reserve your seats for the continued rise of USF football by purchasing tickets at USFBullsTix.com or by calling 1-800-Go-Bulls.

GOLF ALUMNAE

USF women's golf well-represented at the U.S. Senior Women's Open

USF WOMEN'S GOLF WAS well-represented at the inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Open with three former standouts teeing off in July.

Marlene Davis, '88, qualified for the event in June and was joined by former teammates Laurel Kean, '86, and Patricia Ehrhart from USF's mid to late 1980s squads.

"When I saw the list, I was pleasantly surprised. It will be a nice, little reunion for us to get together," said Davis prior to the event. "I haven't seen these girls in a long time. It will be nice to catch up a little with them as well."

Aside from reuniting with her former teammates, Davis gave it her all on the event's par-73 course after qualifying in dramatic fashion. Davis clinched the fourth qualifying position by winning a sudden-death playoff at Scioto Country Club in Columbus, Ohio on June 18.

"Getting into something like this, you really have to have a little luck and a little skill," Davis said. "It's an open event, so anybody gets to try."

Sweet success at qualifying allowed Davis to put another solid achievement into her already impressive golf resume. The Williamsville, N.Y., resident won two Division I tournaments during her USF career (1984-88) before competing in the U.S. Women's Open twice (1988-89) and making an appearance at the LPGA Championship (1988).

An LPGA professional for nearly 30 years, Davis also plans to compete in the Senior LPGA Championship in October, which adds to her super busy schedule that's dedicated to the game. Davis is currently the lead instructor at the Paddock Chevrolet Dome and Brighton Park Driving Range in Tonawanda, N.Y., where she also volunteers to teach junior golfers.

Once Davis got back to New York, she had some special stories to tell her golf pupils



Photos: Courtesy of USF ATHLETICS

about competing in the very first U.S. Senior Women's Open.

"It's just a great opportunity and it's very exciting for me," the 1989 USF graduate says.

Kean and Ehrhart also have plenty to talk about after posting top-25 finishes at the U.S. Senior Women's Open. Kean tied for 19th place while Ehrhart tied for 23rd place at Chicago Golf Club in Wheaton, Ill.

No matter where they finished, USF head coach Erika Brennan says having three Bulls in the U.S. Senior Women's Open was a proud moment for the program.

"What an amazing opportunity for three teammates to reunite and compete for their national championship together. I am elated that Ms. Davis, Ms. Kean and Ms. Ehrhart will represent University of South Florida golf on such a big stage, and I know that they will continue to make us all proud," Brennan says. "I hope that they revel in the moment and magnitude of this opportunity, and we're already excited to connect with them after the event."

Did you know?

- Patricia Ehrhart, who played for USF from 1984-86, is close friends with musician Jimmy Buffett, who served as Ehrhart's caddie during a U.S. Senior Women's Open practice round.

- Laurel Kean is currently a club professional at LaPlaya Beach & Golf Club in Naples, Fla., and won nine titles on the Symetra Tour in



1987. Kean also played on the LPGA Tour after becoming an All-American at USF in 1986.

- Head coach Erika Brennan recently completed her first spring season with USF after two seasons of leading the Southern Mississippi women's golf program. Juniors Natalia Villavicencio and Maria "Nani" Merchan highlighted the 2017-18 season, combining to post four top-10 performances and 11 top-25 finishes, including eight in the spring.

For the latest information on USF women's golf, follow the team on Twitter @USFWGolf and Facebook.

PHOTOS

Above: Marlene Davis

Below: The 1987 USF women's golf team smiles for the camera. The team included Marlene Davis, seated, fourth from left and Patricia Ehrhart, standing, second from right.

—Stories by TOM ZEBOLD | USF Athletics

University // Philanthropy



Photos: FRED COLEMAN | USF Health Communications

Steady, wise and constant

WHEN STEVEN SPECTER, PHD, ARRIVED at USF in 1979, the young assistant professor of medical microbiology and immunology was pleased to continue a family tradition. It was the practice of giving – embodied by his grandfather, a founder of the synagogue the Specter family attended in Philadelphia; his father, a successful dress manufacturer; and his mother, who did volunteer work and ran the household.

The first step was admittedly a modest one, in the form of a small contribution to the Faculty & Staff Campaign after a year on the job. But it would start a legacy of major impact on USF medical students over the decades lasting through his retirement this past May.

“It was a whopping \$10,” Specter says with a warm smile from an office inside the Morsani College of Medicine (MCOM) complex at USF Tampa. “For reasons I can’t explain, I didn’t donate in 1981. But I started again in 1982 and contributed annually to the Faculty & Staff Campaign and other campaigns until I retired.”

Suffice it to say that throughout his pioneering 39-year career, Specter has given far more than that to the USF community, MCOM and its grateful staff and students – highlighted by

an endowed scholarship that now stands at some \$860,000 and growing.

At the core of his efforts lies one constant. “Everything I’ve done is all about the students,” he says. “That is really the most important thing in my career. It’s always been about how to strengthen their experience and allow them to be more successful.”

Specter accomplished that while playing formative roles in multiple areas – pushing for the creation of the college’s Office of Curriculum and Medical Education, which he co-founded and co-directed with one of his former students, Dr. Paul Wallach, MD ’84, later vice dean of the Office of Education Affairs; strengthening the visibility of the humanistic physician as the college’s dean of the Office of Student Affairs; serving as a popular Honors College professor; and even working as a top alumni fundraiser both in Student Affairs and in recent years for USF Health’s Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

Throughout, Specter was known not only for his easy rapport with students, but for the influence he had on their lives as a mentor. “He always puts students first, and I was very fortunate for his guidance,” says Ahmed Mohamed, ’16, who followed Specter’s advice to enroll in the MD/JD dual-degree program between USF and Stetson Law School. “He was always available,

always helpful, and always caring. I know that I am only one of many to say that I am eternally grateful for Dr. Specter.”

Among his many contributions was leading the charge to drive down student debt. Consider that when Specter assumed the reins of the Student Affairs office in 2001, the College of Medicine had no active alumni society and had given out only \$450,000 in scholarships per year. But he and former assistant dean of Student Affairs Carolyn Nicolosi worked hard to revitalize the college’s alumni outreach. And by the time he stepped down as dean in 2014, the amount of scholarships provided to students exceeded \$4.5 million annually.

On a parallel front, only two graduating classes had established scholarship funds when Specter took over at Student Affairs. When he left 13 years later, that number had grown nearly tenfold, and his subsequent efforts in development helped the total more than double to 43 named scholarship funds.

Then there’s one of Specter’s greatest contributions of all: a burgeoning endowed scholarship he established some 10 years ago with wife, Randie. How the scholarship started and grew says a lot about Specter’s dedication to his field – and USF medical students. In 1985, he organized the first Clinical Virology Symposium – with about 140 physicians and scientists from around the world converging on Clearwater Beach. “It was supposed to be a one-time meeting,” he says, “but it was a big success and I decided to hold it again.”

In fact, the “meeting” evolved into a booming annual event of more than 1,100 conference-goers worldwide, generating a healthy amount of income. In Student Affairs, Specter coupled some of that profit with additional funds from the dean of the medical school to support student travel and activities. But in time, the dean established a separate \$50,000 fund for that purpose. That’s when Specter had a thought: “I have all this money growing in this account – what can I do with it that’s meaningful? And that was when I really hit upon the idea of starting the scholarship. We started with an initial donation of \$50,000 that first year, so it was fully endowed from the start, and each year we contribute to it.”

But the best was yet to come. In 2012, the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) approached Specter, who had honed his fundraising ability directing a \$1.3 million fundraising campaign for his synagogue, about taking over the virology symposium.

In 2014, he agreed to transfer it – with one condition: “That they donate 50 percent of the net from the event to the scholarship until they had contributed \$500,000.”

The ASM agreed. And today, the event Specter started recently celebrated its 34th annual gathering and has donated an additional \$260,000 into the fund – enough, Specter estimates, to make it cover a full medical-school tuition scholarship in two years.

Life is good in retirement for the Specters, who share quite a story of their own. They met at the Temple University stop of

“

Everything I’ve done is all about the students. That is really the most important thing in my career. It’s always been about how to strengthen their experience and allow them to be more successful.”

– Steven Specter

the Philadelphia subway as freshmen undergraduates, became engaged as juniors, and married five days after graduating. Randie went on to have a long career as a schoolteacher, and the couple now has ample time to visit their kids and grandkids: son Ross is a physician at James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital and a MCOM faculty member; daughter Rachel is a Hollywood TV writer.

Specter, meanwhile, gladly meets with students who still seek his advice, feeling gratified by their kind words about the difference he made as their advocate. His former co-workers are equally appreciative, such as Dr. Bryan Bognar, MPH ’08, who is MCOM’s vice dean of the Office of Educational Affairs.

“Steve has really been one of the quiet heroes of the college,” he says. “I look at his time as the dean of the Office of Student Affairs, and the hundreds of students he’s advised, and can’t help but appreciate all of the work he did visibly and behind the scenes. Steve has been a steady, wise, and constant presence for the college. He has done some very remarkable things for the college and its students yet never sought the spotlight for what he did. He is truly a champion for student success in the college.”

– DAVE SCHEIBER | University Advancement



PHOTOS, from left: Specter with Michael Kongnuyuy, MD '17, a recipient of the Steven Specter Award for excellence in research;

Specter with staff, faculty and alumni inducted into the Robert A. Good Honor Society;

Specter with graduate student Zhi Ming (Thomas) Zheng, MS'93, PhD '94, and his wife Pei-Jun in 1994. Dr. Zheng is now a senior scientist at the National Institutes of Health.



START *of a* NEW ERA

BY AARON HILF

“What ought to be, can be, with the will to make it so.”

– James Rouse, visionary developer & urban planner

NEARLY 20 YEARS AGO, NEWLY SELECTED USF System President Judy Genshaft spoke those words to a crowd gathered for her inauguration ceremony. The quote was more than just inspirational rhetoric for USF’s sixth leader – it was a call to action that has guided and galvanized the university ever since.

USF, at just 62 years old, is in some ways still in its formative stages as a major research university. But, while it continues to build on its not-so-distant past, it has also been able to look to the future while achieving something that many may not have thought possible.

“Thanks to the unwavering support of our community and the hard work of so many individuals across our campus, USF is now a Preeminent State Research University, standing among the most elite institutions in our state,” Genshaft said in a message to the community announcing the Preeminence achievement in June. “This designation validates our efforts over more than a decade to transform USF into a premiere institution of higher education.”

As Florida’s newest Preeminent University, USF joins the ranks of just two other Florida public institutions with this prestigious designation – both of which were founded more than 100 years before USF. Formally approved by the State University System of Florida Board of Governors, the title is the culmination of years of hard work and focus by the USF community to make the university a national leader in student success, research and community engagement.

The University of South Florida is the state’s newest Preeminent University – a major milestone in a transformative journey that’s just beginning.



Preeminence positions the university to compete for the very best talent nationally and globally.”

– Brian Lamb

The designation also marks a significant milestone for the university that unites faculty, staff, students, alumni, supporters and the entire Tampa Bay region around a common point of pride.

“Achieving Preeminence is a testament to USF’s longstanding commitment to student success, world-class research and faculty excellence,” says Brian Lamb, USF Board of Trustees chair. “Preeminence positions the university to compete for the very best talent nationally and globally, which accelerates the growing reputation of the university and the Tampa Bay community.”

Adopted by the Florida Legislature in 2013, the Preeminent State Research Universities Program rewards high-performing state research institutions based on 12 outcome measures, including graduation rates, student retention rates and research expenditures, among others.

In 2016, USF became Florida’s first Emerging Preeminent State Research University after meeting

nine of the 12 requirements. Since that time, USF has continued to blaze its own path forward, building on its six-year graduation rate and student retention rates to qualify for full Preeminence.

Today, USF meets 11 of the 12 required metrics, the threshold for the designation. The university continues to work to meet the final metric, a \$500 million endowment fund. And with more than \$480 million in its current endowment, USF officials are confident they’ll fulfill all 12 metrics soon.

The amount of funding awarded to Preeminent institutions is determined each year by the state Legislature and governor. The funding is distributed among all Preeminent and Emerging Preeminent institutions, with Emerging Preeminent universities receiving a smaller percentage of the whole. Since 2013, the Legislature has set aside nearly \$152 million in additional funding for Preeminent and Emerging Preeminent institutions. This year, USF received more than \$6.1 million in recurring funds, along with the University of Florida and Florida State University, the two other Preeminent institutions. The University of Central Florida, an Emerging Preeminent institution, received \$1.5 million.

USF’s new dollars will be used to build on existing student success initiatives, attract nationally prominent faculty members and enhance research activities

The journey to Preeminence: transforming a bold vision into a Bullish achievement

2000 - PRESENT

DR. JUDY GENSHAFT BECOMES USF’S SIXTH PRESIDENT

USF’s new president, Dr. Judy Genshaft, shares her vision of USF as a prominent national research university. In her inaugural address, she says: “We dream of being one of the preeminent universities. To get there, it is our responsibility to constantly ask two questions of ourselves. First: In each of our programs, are we setting the national standard for others? Second: If not, what will it take for us to do so?”



2009

STUDENT SUCCESS TASK FORCE FORMED

In November 2009, President Genshaft and provost and executive vice president Ralph Wilcox convene a 100-person Student Success Task Force to build upon and accelerate a campus-wide initiative to maximize student success without compromising USF’s commitment to access and diversity. The Task Force’s report, submitted in April 2010, provided the blueprint for the Student Success movement, which contributed to record gains in student retention and graduation rates.

in strategic areas, such as heart health and medical engineering. Those two fields are critically important as USF moves forward with plans to open the new USF Health Morsani College of Medicine and Heart Institute facility in late 2019 as part of downtown's \$3 billion development project, Water Street Tampa.

Nevertheless, it's not necessarily the financial awards that matter most.

Says Genshaft: "We are excited by the prospect of new resources that we can use to further drive success for our students. But, our real reward is in the spirit of creativity, collaboration and dedication that has resulted from this drive toward Preeminence."

For more than a decade, USF has maintained its vision of transforming into a nationally recognized research institution – capable of changing the world through innovation and the lives of students through education.

In 2009, years before the Preeminence statute was developed, USF launched a Student Success Task Force designed to improve many of the student success metrics lawmakers would later include in the program. At the time, USF's six-year graduation rate was 48 percent. Now, thanks to efforts across campus, including the use of real-time predictive analytics that help track students' academic progress, the rate stands at more than 70 percent. The dramatic improvement came while also eliminating the achievement gap between students

based on race, ethnicity and economic status – an effort recognized by the Washington D.C.-based publication, *Education Dive*, which named USF its 2017 Institution of the Year.

USF's research presence has also surged. In 2000, the university's annual research expenditures were roughly \$100 million. Today, as one of the nation's top 30 public universities for research productivity, USF uses more than \$500 million a year in grant funding to produce better treatments for diseases, craft new technologies and boost the regional economy. In fact, it's estimated that USF's 2017 research funding supported nearly 6,000 jobs and generated over \$1 billion in economic growth across the Tampa Bay region.

While these remarkable transformations, along with many others, have helped position the university to achieve its Preeminent status, university leaders say the designation is simply a side effect of a much greater mission – to turn USF into the best version of itself possible, never settling and always striving for more. It's an effort that shows no signs of slowing down.

"While we celebrate being recognized as Preeminent by our state leaders, this is not the end of our journey. It is a new beginning," Genshaft says. "We will continue our quest to move up in national higher education rankings so that we can attract even more of the best and brightest students and world-class scholars and researchers."

2013

PREEMINENCE SIGNED INTO LAW

On April 22, 2013, a bill to elevate the national stature of Florida's public universities is signed into law by Gov. Rick Scott. The new law confers Preeminent status to a university if it achieves at least 11 of 12 benchmarks, the state's "academic and research excellence standards."



2018

USF REACHES PREEMINENCE

On June 28, 2018, the Board of Governors of the State University System certifies that USF has met the necessary thresholds and the board officially designates USF as the state's third Preeminent State Research University. It is a significant milestone in USF's mission to deliver competitive undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, to generate knowledge, foster intellectual development, and ensure student success in a global environment.

2016

EMERGING PREEMINENT STATUS ACHIEVED

Florida lawmakers amend the law, establishing a new designation of Emerging Preeminent State Research University for universities that meet at least six of the 12 Preeminence benchmarks. USF is designated the state's first Emerging Preeminent university by the Florida Board of Governors in June 2016, having met nine of the 12 Preeminence benchmarks. President Genshaft sets the goal for USF to achieve full Preeminence in just two years, by 2018.

SHATTERING *the* STATUS QUO

USF has successfully reached 11 of 12 benchmarks set by the Florida Board of Governors

71%

Six-year graduation rate

25-point
increase
2000 to
2018

60%

Four-year graduation rate

40-point
increase
2000 to
2018

\$502M

Annual expenditures on research
and development

402%
increase
2000
to
2018

4.1

Average incoming GPA

2.5%
increase
2013-14
vs
2016-17

324 Utility patents awarded | 20% increase from 2011-13 to 2015-17

721 Doctoral degrees awarded annually | 61% increase from 2012-13 to 2016-17

300 Post doctoral appointees | 2.4% increase from fall 2010 to fall 2014

\$442 million endowment | \$78 million increase from 2012-13 to 2016-17

13 faculty members of national academy | 116.6% increase from 2014 to 2018

\$288 million spent on non-medical science and engineering research | \$95 million increase from 2012-13 to 2016-17

7 of 8 broad disciplines ranked in top 100 for research expenditures | 87.5% increase from 2011-12 to 2015-16

4 public university national rankings | 400% increase 2014 to 2018

90% freshman retention rate | 1% increase 2012-13 to 2016-17

1280 average SAT score | 80 pt. increase from 2013 to 2017

Faces of Preeminence

Preeminence is more than just a designation. It's a representation of USF's innovative mindset that shapes the future. These are just a few of the people who make USF Preeminent.



Photo: SANDRA C. ROA | USF Communications

Jackie Reck, PhD Seeing the Progress of Preeminence

FOR JACKIE RECK, PHD, USF'S GROWTH and evolution is an especially personal point of pride. An associate dean in the Muma College of Business, Reck has been a faculty member at USF for more than two decades – a graduate student here even before that. USF has become a part of who she is.

Throughout all those years, at the core of the countless new buildings and flourishing student body, Reck, '88 and MAcc '89, says USF has continued to push forward and evolve, striving to excel to become the very best version of itself.

"It has been amazing to see the growth here," she says. "What I think is really cool about USF is that it moves, it's not static. It's constantly looking to go to the next place. To me, that's what education is all about. And that's really what I think Preeminence is about for us. It's the

acknowledgment that we are movers."

Reck first came to USF in 1986. She was pursuing a master's degree after deciding to make a career change. Upon graduating, she was offered an instructor position and taught accounting courses before leaving to get her PhD from the University of Missouri-Columbia. As soon as she left, she says she knew she wanted to come back.

"The staff, the professors, they all made it feel like a real community here," she says. "We felt like they cared about their students, that they cared about whether we were successful. That was the kind of environment I knew I wanted to work in, which is why I came back to teach here in 1996 and never looked back."

Now in her sixth year as an administrator, Reck continues to teach as well as conduct research. She says she's been truly proud to work at USF and be part of its growth the last 22 years. Being able to look back at the past and celebrate the present makes her eager to see what the future holds. It's a new era – one where every Bull will write a part of the story.

Faces of Preeminence



Dr. Samuel Wickline

Stopping heart attacks through nanotechnology

DR. SAM WICKLINE IS SEARCHING for nano-sized solutions to some of the biggest problems in medicine. As the director of the USF Health Heart Institute, Dr. Wickline and his colleagues are developing precision nanomedicines to fight the world's number one killer, cardiovascular disease.

The focus on heart health is something USF Health has been working toward for years. Through funding from USF's 2016 Emerging Preeminence designation, university officials were able to infuse the program with the resources to get it started. Dr. Wickline says when he heard about the push, he was excited to come back to Tampa Bay and help build the program.

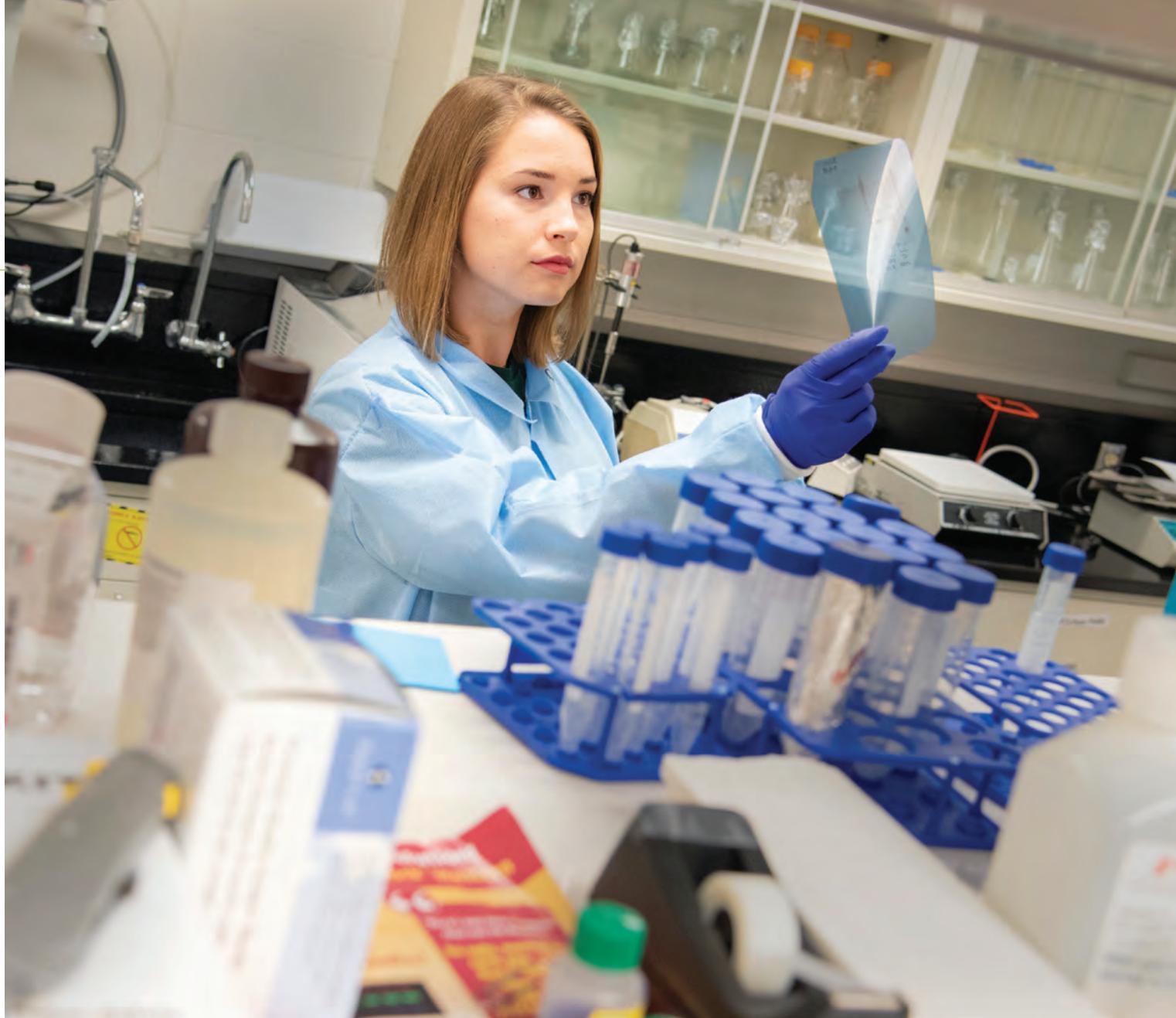
"USF has really put forward a significant investment and has great enthusiasm for pursuing solutions to cardiovascular disease. I came here to be a part of that," Wickline says. "It really is a great place to build this center and do basic research as well as clinical translational research. And, it's gratifying to see how Preeminence is helping to support this effort."

Originally from St. Petersburg, Dr. Wickline returned to the area after a long and successful academic career at Washington University in St. Louis. With his connection to the region, he says he has always kept an eye on USF, watching it transform from a regional university into the premiere research and teaching institution it is today.

At the USF Health Heart Institute, much of Dr. Wickline's work focuses on building nanostructures capable of delivering drugs to very specific areas of the heart and vascular tree. The idea is to precisely target the pathological molecules that contribute to heart attacks and strokes. By identifying and targeting these abnormal molecules selectively, doctors may be able to prevent cardiovascular emergencies before they happen in a safe and personalized approach.

"For us, it's incredibly important to think about the people we're building these therapies for," Wickline says. "It's vital to the public good for universities to undertake applied translational research that achieves useful bench-to-bedside successes."

Dr. Wickline sees Preeminence as just a hint of what's to come for USF. He says the designation, along with USF's new downtown development project that will house both the Heart Institute as well as the Morsani College of Medicine, will help attract even more renowned faculty and talented students to the university.



Rachel Llewellyn

Life-changing opportunities in an unexpected place

RACHEL LLEWELLYN ALWAYS KNEW she wanted to become a doctor. She knew she wanted to work in women's health. And she knew she wasn't interested in going to her local university, USF. Or so she thought.

Llewellyn and her family moved to the Tampa Bay Area when she was in middle school. Her father was an ROTC instructor at USF, and she grew up with a big connection to the university. But it was that same connection, mixed with some teenage angst, she admits, that turned her off to the idea of becoming a Bull. That is, until she came to visit campus.

"When I toured USF my senior year of high school, I immediately knew I was going to come here," Llewellyn says. "I knew that I wouldn't be just a number. I had this overwhelming sense that the faculty and staff were really looking to help me reach my potential. And that's been true since my freshman year."

Now, in her fourth year as an undergraduate student,

Llewellyn says attending USF was one of the best decisions she's ever made. As a biomedical engineering major and Honors College student, she's had the chance to work as a research assistant in the OBGYN laboratory of Dr. Charles Lockwood, senior vice president for USF Health and dean of the Morsani College of Medicine. She says it's been an incredible experience that has strengthened her passion for women's health and sparked a new passion for research.

Llewellyn, who spoke on behalf of USF students at the Board of Governors meeting in June where USF's Preeminence designation was approved, says the last few years have been an exciting time to be at USF. A place she's proud to call home.

"Preeminence is a huge deal. It puts us right up there with the greatest schools in Florida and best schools in the nation," Llewellyn says. "Obviously, the funding is great, but at the end of the day, it's about having the state of Florida and the rest of the country see USF in the light that I know it deserves to be in."



Photo: ERIC YOUNGHANS | USF Communications

Charles Stanish, PhD

Building something new

AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST, Charles Stanish, PhD, is fascinated by how cultures and civilizations evolve. So, when the world-renowned researcher and professor was looking for a new university to call home, it was a feeling of growth and progress he sensed at USF that drew him here.

“I was very much attracted to the spirit of USF,” Stanish says. “In talking with the president, provost, deans and many others, there’s this very optimistic outlook and approach to everything. They really are looking forward and want to bring the highest level of research and teaching to the USF student body.”

A member of the National Academy of Sciences, Stanish joined the USF Department of Anthropology last year after nearly two decades at one of the world’s most prestigious public universities: the University of California, Los Angeles. Stanish was recruited and hired by USF thanks, in part, to state funding provided through USF’s 2016 Emerging Preeminent status.

Stanish’s research focuses on the study of the prehis-

toric cultures of the Andes Mountains. He has worked extensively at archaeological sites in Peru, Bolivia and Chile and has published several books on the evolution of human cooperation and the development of complex societies.

In his role at USF, Stanish is building a new research center that focuses on the historical interaction between humans and the environment during the last 20,000 years. He says the Institute for the Advanced Study of Culture & the Environment is also designed to stimulate interdisciplinary collaboration across campus. He hopes that providing a place for researchers to collaborate will help spur new areas of academic inquiry and give students the chance to think outside their immediate field of study.

“It’s a very exciting time to be a Bull,” Stanish says. “This Preeminence designation validates everything USF has been working toward for years and will not only provide more resources for our students, but gives them the recognition they deserve.”

Faces of Preeminence

Read more comments and learn
more about Preeminence

Online



Keerthana Nimmagadda

From coast to coast

WHEN KEERTHANA NIMMAGADDA FIRST stepped foot on the USF campus, the California high school student had already visited nearly a dozen other universities, including some of the most prestigious schools in the country. But what Nimmagadda found on her tour of USF that day wasn't a university focused on its traditions of the past, like so many others she visited. Rather, she found a place that was charging into the future – a future she wanted to be a part of.

“USF always instilled the idea that I didn't have to follow in the footsteps of students past. Instead, I could make my own path,” she says. “I was really inspired by that.”

Nimmagadda had her pick of just about any school she wanted. As a National Merit Scholar Finalist with a near-perfect score on her SAT, she was accepted into every institution in the University of California System – but still chose to move across the country to become a Bull.

It was USF's seven-year medical program that caught her eye. She has wanted to become a doctor since she was a child and knew an accelerated program would help make that dream come true. But, when she got to campus, Nimmagadda says it was far more than USF's academics that convinced her to attend. She says it was the way students, staff and faculty members talked about the university – excited for what the future holds and what incoming students could achieve. She says she saw opportunities to grow as a person as well as academically and knew USF was the place where she could flourish.

Now, as a sophomore majoring in biomedical sciences, Nimmagadda is volunteering in a research laboratory, gaining invaluable experience as an undergraduate student. She plans to stay at USF for medical school and is working toward becoming a neurologist in the future. It's a dream that's been nurtured and supported since she first stepped foot on campus.

“I know that I made the right choice coming to USF and I'm genuinely honored to be at this Preeminent university,” she says. “I feel like I'm not just going to school here, but like I'm a part of building this university's future. I can't imagine myself anywhere else.” ■



Photo: RYAN NOONE | USF Communications

Faces of Preeminence

Photo: MATT MAY



Generations of

BY JOEY JOHNSTON '81

ALUMNI

*Alumni have contributed directly to the numbers
that define Preeminence.*

THE MANY FACES of Preeminence include generations of alumni. From their gifts of time, talent and treasure to their academic and research successes, alumni contribute directly to the numbers that define Preeminence. Here are just a few of those measures as described in Florida statute 1001.7065, and some of the alumni who've helped USF hit the mark.

(C) A FRESHMAN RETENTION RATE OF 90 PERCENT OR HIGHER ...

(D) ... A SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATE OF 70 PERCENT OR HIGHER BY OCT. 1, 2017...

The number of students who make it to their sophomore year and the number who graduate in four to six years are both measures of student success. At USF, at least some of that success can be traced to transformational gifts from visionary alumni.

In 2016, Jeff Fishman, '92, and his wife, Brandy, '96, Life Members, gave \$1 million to create the Fishman Family Student-Athlete Enrichment Center in the Selmon Athletics Center. It houses nine tutorial rooms, 31 computer stations, and individual and group learning spaces, along with staff dedicated to academic excellence.

The Collier Student Success Center in the Muma College of Business, established in 2015 with a \$10.9 million gift from Barron Collier III, '80, Life Member, and his wife, Dana, offers a range of student support, from scholarships to programs that teach "soft," out-of-classroom skills, such as dining etiquette, networking and negotiating.

"It helped me grow into a confident business



professional," says finance major Maithilee Pagay, '18, of the Collier center. "The advisors provided me with professional guidance on my resumé, sharpened my interview skills and provided excellent tips on networking. As a team, we harnessed my strengths and worked on my weaknesses, which allowed me to confidently apply for internships."

Pagay did land a valuable internship – with Raymond James Financial.

"The end result is a great, well-rounded graduate who can confidently enter today's competitive world," says Collier, a partner in his family's company, which oversees land holdings and businesses in agriculture, minerals and real estate. "This is not only the opportunity for a great education but a shot at getting a job, which is what college is all about, and that's what this program is about."

At USF Athletics, winning means scoring both on and off the field of play. Last spring, 261 USF student-athletes, 62.7 percent, earned a 3.0 or better grade-point average, contributing to a department record term average of 3.11. That set another record – seven consecutive term GPAs over 3.0.

The Fishman center gets a good share of credit.

"It's validation," Fishman says. "It's like 'Field of Dreams' ... you build something and make it conducive for learning, you make it a welcoming space and they will come. It's a thrill for me to walk through the facility and see it fully occupied.

"My parents taught me by example and my father

PHOTOS

Opposite page: From left, Barry and Dana Collier listen with USF System President Judy Genshaft as their gift to the Muma College of Business is announced.

Above: From left, Noah and Abbi Fishman; their mother, Brandy; grandmother Ellie Fishman; and dad, Jeff, visit the Fishman Family Student-Athlete Enrichment Center.

Faces of Preeminence

always believed it was important to give back. With the time constraints put on student-athletes, from schoolwork to their practice schedules to their travel and game schedules, this provides a resource to help.”

Kirby Powers, a high jumper with USF's women's track and field team, says the facility does just that.

“We have new space that is a lot more convenient for studying,” she says. “I think we're in a better position to succeed.”

(I) 100 OR MORE TOTAL PATENTS AWARDED ... FOR THE MOST RECENT THREE-YEAR PERIOD

U.S. PATENT NO. 9,410,212 IS THE Kit for Detecting Salmonella Species by Assaying Outer Membrane Porin F (ompF).

But that description doesn't begin to convey the elation of seeing four years of work culminate in a new tool for quickly identifying tainted food.

“I miss that thrilling moment,” says Aparna Tatavarthy, PhD '05, who now works in food safety for the Food and Drug Administration. “You get excited. You run down the hallway to tell everyone, ‘It worked!’”

Of the 125 patents credited to USF in 2016-17, 64 percent include at least one alumnus inventor. The team addressing Salmonella, a group of bacteria that can cause serious and even lethal food poisoning, also included Loree Heller, PhD '93, and Andy Cannons, former scientific director of the USF Center for Biological Defense.

Their work began during Tatavarthy's graduate studies



at USF, amidst heightened anxiety about food security following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

“My passion for food safety really began at USF,” she says. “We were very passionate about working on different aspects of that in the lab. Getting a patent was not on my mind. I was a grad student trying to figure out the best method to detect Salmonella in foods — rapidly. And rapidly was the key word at that time. We needed urgency.”

Yes, Tatavarthy says, colleagues and friends are usually impressed when they hear a patent bears her name.

“People say, ‘Oh, are you making money from it?’ I haven’t received a single cent. But that is not the point. The rewards are great and they are long lasting. You feel like you have contributed something.

“I think all the work I was able to do at USF has helped me now. It has enhanced the type of research I’m able to do now. The patent is just a definition of all the hard work done by a lot of people at USF. It will always be a fantastic memory.”

(J) 400 OR MORE DOCTORAL DEGREES AWARDED ANNUALLY ...

(K) 200 OR MORE POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTEES ANNUALLY ...

AMAN CHAWLA, PHD '17, ARRIVED AT USF sight unseen and knowing not a single faculty member.

But – “USF had an excellent reputation and it matched my needs,” says the graduate of Cornell University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. “I quickly learned the university has some really great, brilliant people.”

Chawla earned a doctorate in electrical engineering and continued as a postdoctoral appointee conducting research in electrical and chemical engineering. Ultimately, he wants to understand consciousness from a mathematical perspective.

“When I acquired my bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering, I focused on the mathematical aspects, information, communication, signal processing,” he says. “I got practical experience with that during my master’s.

“But with my PhD at USF, I looked at the interface



between electrical engineering and neuroscience. I use my skills to look at problems and interpret them. The brain is a bunch of neurons and cells. These cells communicate and signal to one another and they process data. All of that somehow gives rise to consciousness. ... I believe that consciousness is fundamental to the universe.”

He also likes the thought of contributing to two Preeminence benchmarks along the way.

“Earning a doctorate was a big deal for me,” Chawla says. “Even beyond the doctorate, what I am doing now and what it means for my future, I have had such a great experience.

“At USF, it has been a wonderful mix of knowledge and the personal touch. ... USF will be a pretty big part of my life moving forward.” ■

PHOTOS

Opposite page: Aparna Tatavarthy, pictured, Loree Heller and Andy Cannons spent four years developing a way to quickly identify Salmonella bacteria in foods.

Above: Aman Chawla’s doctorate degree and post-doctorate research contributed to two Preeminence benchmarks.

USF’s New Era Fund



Preeminence isn’t the end of the story. Join in the celebration by making a gift to USF’s New Era Fund by visiting giving.usf.edu/newera. The fund supports faculty recruitment,

student success, scholarships and other critical efforts that impact our students. Every gift makes a difference, no matter the size. Thanks to you, the possibilities are endless.

Support the New Era fund

Online



From your **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**



Happy New Era, fellow Bulls!

I have always believed USF to be among the best academic institutions in the nation. Our great university provides a world-class education built on strong values; it not only welcomes but also embraces diversity of culture and perspective; our faculty and students push the boundaries of tomorrow's possibilities every day with groundbreaking research and innovation.

I am such a through-and-through proud Bull, when I graduated with a bachelor's degree in 2004, I came right back for a master's.

Still, when the state Board of Governors designated USF a Florida Preeminent Research University this summer, I felt a rush of excitement – and tremendous pride for us, USF's 327,000 alumni.

It has been said that great universities are built by great alumni. Take a look at the preeminence benchmarks and you'll see just how true that is. Our support has had a direct impact on USF's remarkable success.

On pages 38-41, you'll read about three alumni (and one committed spouse) whose generous gifts are helping

ensure our students graduate, and do so in a timely fashion. Jeffrey Fishman, '92, and his wife, Brandy Fishman, '96, both Life Members, were the lead donors for the \$750,000 Fishman Family Student-Athlete Enrichment Center, which supports academic success.

Around the corner at the Muma College of Business, the Collier Student Success Center offers an array of services that help students meet their goals both in school and after graduation. Three years ago, a \$10.9 million gift from Barry Collier III, '80, Life Member, and his wife, Dana Collier, enhanced the college's student support programs – everything from scholarships to honing out-of-classroom skills, such as resumé-writing – and increased the number of students served.

You'll also read about Aparna Tatavarthy, PhD '05, one of many alumni who've helped USF achieve benchmark No. 9 – Utility Patents Awarded. A university must have received 100 or more U.S. patents in the most recent three-year period; USF had a whopping 324 thanks, in part, to Aparna and Loree Heller, '93. They were among the scientists who invented the Kit for Detecting Salmonella Species.

Aman Chawla, PhD '17, hit a double-header by earning his doctoral degree and becoming a post-doctoral appointee – two more criteria.

Members of the Alumni Association are also making an impact. Each summer, our alumni chapters and societies host Hometown Round-Ups around the country for incoming freshmen. These party-style gatherings give our newest Bulls a chance to forge bonds with fellow freshmen, current students and alumni, and begin building an on-campus support system even before they arrive. Studies show stressed first-year students are more likely to hang in there if they have social support, so our Round-Ups help boost the freshman retention rate, another benchmark.

Our groups also raise money for scholarships, which allow many students to focus on studies instead of jobs. For some, scholarship dollars spell the difference between staying in school or dropping out due to finances.

I could go on, but you get the point. Committed alumni helped USF achieve Preeminence, which is a simple way of saying our university is preparing students to lead and excel; conducting break-through research; and fueling the economy so that everyone enjoys a better quality of life.

And we're just getting started!

Congratulations, Bulls. I always knew you're the best.

MERRITT MARTIN, '04 AND MPA '06

CHAIR, USF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LIFE MEMBER NO. 2327



Meet your **2018-19** USF Alumni Association Board of Directors

The USF Alumni Association's board of directors includes alumni who've demonstrated a firm commitment to USF's success, are Association Life Members and Circle of Excellence donors. It also includes two students: the student government vice president and the USF Ambassadors president. Non-voting, ex-officio directors are the USF System president; the senior vice president for USF Advancement and the Association executive director.

The board sets policy and guides the direction of the Association as it builds mutually beneficial relationships between USF and its alumni.

Front row, seated from left:
Bill McCausland, MBA '96, Association executive director;
April Monteith, '01 & MBA '03, past chair; **Merritt Martin**, '04 & MPA '06, chair; **Braulio Colon** '03 & MPA '10, chair elect; **Vicki Ahrens**, '73 & MA '75, treasurer

Second row: **Brigid Merenda**, '97; **Maggie Fowler**, '93; **Dr. Chinyere Okpaleke**, '08 & MS '10; **Andrew Ketchel**, '10 & MPA '12; **Sandy Pettit**, '94, MCHE '10 & PhD '14; **Andrew Jones**, '11; **Bruce Van Fleet**, '73; **Gina Rotunno**, Ambassadors president;

Justin Geisler, '04 & MBA '06; **Shaquille Kent**, student government vice president; **Maribel Garrett**, MA '95; **Monique Hayes**, '01, secretary; **Karla Stevenson Mastracchio**, '03

Back row: **Bill Mariotti**, '15; **Jose Valiente** '73; **Dr. Michael Perry**, '81; **Fadwa Hilili**, '13 & MAcc '15; **Arian Marquez**, '01; **Philip Amuso**, '73, MA '75 & PhD '00; **Brian Goff**, '13; **Arthur Bullard Jr.**, '74

Not pictured:
Judy Genshaft, USF System president; **Joel Momberg**, senior vice president for USF Advancement and Alumni Affairs

Counting CROWS

*30 years of study have shown
Kevin McGowan, PhD '87, the
birds' softer side.*

BY KIM FRANKE-FOLSTAD



KEVIN MCGOWAN HAS FRIENDS in high places. Lots of them.

The creator of the popular *All About Birds* website (allaboutbirds.org), has been researching, writing and lecturing about his feathered field of study for more than 30 years.

But he credits a single crow for helping him finish his dissertation back in 1987, when he received his PhD in biology at USF.

McGowan had been studying Florida scrub jays with the late Glen Woolfenden, an esteemed Florida ornithologist and USF professor. He loved the work and those birds, but when it came time to sit down and write about young scrub jays' social development, he struggled. "My interest was in watching birds, not doing statistics," he says. "I needed some green time" outdoors.

One day as he pedaled his bike to school, McGowan spotted a fish crow at the USF entrance and it piqued his curiosity. Was there a crow's nest there? He'd never seen

one. The search was on - the perfect diversion.

He started watching different pairs of the birds and eventually found nests scattered across the Tampa campus. Then he monitored the nests. The fish crows were similar to scrub jays - they were generalists and omnivores - but they were different, too. "I was hooked," McGowan says.

Sated, he finally finished his paper and in 1988 was hired by Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., as a curator/research associate. There he discovered a surprising shortage of information on fish crows or the American crows common in Ithaca and focused his research on the behavioral ecology of both, especially their social behavior.

In 1994, McGowan, who has bachelor's and master's degrees in zoology from The Ohio State University, became principal curator of the bird and mammal collections at Cornell. With that position came access to a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. What would be a worthwhile subject to study? "Crows!" he says.

Most farmers considered his favorite birds a nuisance,

PHOTOS

Kevin McGowan tags a nestling crow in New York. He has tagged and followed hundreds of crows in his years at Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Opposite page: The fish crow, endemic to the Southeast United States, inspired McGowan's interest in the birds when he was a doctoral student at USF.



Photos: KEVIN MCGOWAN



The late Glen Woolfenden was a renowned Florida ornithologist who became a charter USF faculty member in 1960 and retired in 1999. McGowan credits Woolfenden with teaching him the skills that helped him land his job at Cornell in 1988.

but he found they actually had a minimal impact on local agriculture. He's been busting myths about the birds with the bad rap ever since.

For one thing, they may be more like people socially than any primate. You won't find more dedicated parents than crow moms and dads. American crows appear to mate for life, and parents fend for the family year-round, he says. Some offspring stay home for up to five years, and if they leave and return, parents seem to welcome them back.

When there's a threat to the community, McGowan says, crows call in the whole neighborhood to help. They also work together to solve problems, such as chasing away predators, which is why you might spot dozens of crows all checking out a field of grain – or a dumpster – together.

McGowan, 62, and his field assistants have tagged hundreds of birds over the years, and he's climbed up to thousands of nests. He's only been pecked three times. "A hawk or owl will fly right at you – they can dive in and whack you. But people are big, and crows stay away mostly."

He's enjoyed a long-term relationship with some birds, including three he's followed for almost two decades.

While crows are McGowan's specialty, look up just about anything about birds online, and you'll likely find something from *All About Birds*, the website he created. He's written or helped edit several birding guides. And for the past decade, he's been writing online courses for the Cornell Lab Of Ornithology's Bird Academy, which offers free and premium content to anyone interested in "bird-ology" at academy.allaboutbirds.org. His new course, *Think Like a Bird: Understanding Bird Behavior*, helps people get inside the heads of birds.

Birds are great ambassadors, McGowan says. A person's experiences with and knowledge of birds can lead to a greater interest in other species and in science, conservation and ecology.

"It's fun to look at life through a crow's eyes," he says. "It's my lens into the world ... my way to see how the world works."



Crow fun FAQs

From Kevin McGowan's crow faq web page

Do crows collect shiny objects?

No. Wild crows do not like nor collect shiny objects. They do not hide, store or cache anything but food. I believe that all stories of crows and magpies taking shiny objects come from people's experiences with captive, hand-raised young birds. Young corvids are very investigative, and love to handle objects. They like to pick them up, peck at them, and then hide them. In the wild, they play with sticks, stones, acorn caps, and things like that. In captivity, they will do the same thing to just about anything small and portable, and they may be attracted to shiny things, like keys, coins, or the like.

Why do crows hate owls?

Many good reasons, most having to do with decapitated crows.

What is a group of crows called (as in "a gaggle of geese")?

The poetic term for a bunch of crows is a murder. No scientist calls them that, only poets. Scientists would call it a flock.

We've got crows hanging out in our yard. How can we get rid of these pests?

Crows are not evil, and they are not purposely trying to torment you. Try to appreciate the crows for the fascinating creatures they are. If you get over that hurdle, the annoying habits become much less annoying.

Crows do have one endearing characteristic that is apparently not shared by other birds. They will get to know people as individuals. If you toss them peanuts (I recommend unsalted, in the shell) on a regular basis, they will wait and watch for you. Not just any person, but you. If you do this often enough, they will follow you down the street to get more. Some will follow my car down the street, and if I don't notice them, they will dash across the windshield to let me know they are there. Some of these crows recognize me far from their home territories.

So indulge yourself and make some personal friends with the crows. That is the preferred relationship, because they also are happy to turn this talent of recognition to the darker side and treat you as an enemy. (Again, not just all people, but YOU.) ■

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Reuben



Venessa

*USF salutes our
2018 Outstanding
Young Alumni*



Grant



Joel

Dreamers & DOERS

This year's honorees exemplify what it means to be a USF Bull: All aged 35 or younger, they're leaders; they're self-motivated; they strive to excel; they give back. In addition to the many hours they devote to their jobs and families, they serve on volunteer boards and support community charities. Two have created foundations that benefit youth, another created a scholarship fund for immigrant women here at USF, and another devises community-building initiatives.

Meet our seven Outstanding Young Alumni, men and women as passionate about pursuing their dreams as they are dedicated to reaching down and offering a hand up.

Hannibal L. Baldwin

Finance '11, USF St. Petersburg

How he became a successful entrepreneur: "A mindset that has helped is finding and gravitating toward a problem that you can become obsessed about so that you can get so immersed in solving that problem that the stress, the volatility, the chaos that comes along with entrepreneurship subsides and you can look inside the new progress."

Baldwin was just 20 when he and his older brother Keenan owned, operated and expanded Yogurtology, a frozen yogurt franchise that has grown to 13 locations in two states. Next they launched their own private equity and venture capital vehicle, now called B3 Ventures, which invests in promising young startups. In 2014 the

two created SiteZeus, a company built on software they originally developed to identify ideal locations for new Yogurtology shops.

Today, their SiteZeus clients include one of the world's largest franchises, Subway. The company has raised more than \$4 million in investments and won first prize in the 2017 Florida Early Stage Capital Conference. Co-CEO Baldwin's plans for the future include putting SiteZeus' analytics to work in myriad ways, from forecasting the next flu season to predicting and mitigating crime.

He and his wife, Emily, have a son, Maverick.

R. Grant Baxley

Management Information Systems '07, Life Member

What he does to stay ahead of the competition: "I read a lot of technology articles, see what's coming out, try to be on the leading edge of technology. I always try to put myself around other people who know more than me. ... I wouldn't be here today without the team that we've built. I really depend on all my staff."

Baxley launched TeleVoIPs, a business phone service, in 2009 as part of his IT company. In 2014, he sold the IT company to focus on TeleVoIPs, where the daily challenge is to rethink and reinvent communication technology. TeleVoIPs now hosts more than 7,000 phone numbers for businesses nationwide and has offices in Tampa and Jacksonville. The company has ranked in the USF Fast 56 – the 56 fastest-growing Bull-led businesses in the world – three times, reaching the top 10 last year.

Voted Tampa Bay Tech's Emerging Technology Leader of the Year, Baxley continues to give back to USF and the community, sharing his expertise with students and tech startups. His goal is to foster collaboration by connecting the world through reliable communications.

Baxley and his wife, Abby, have two children, Michael and Christopher.

BY PENNY
CARNATHAN, '82,
AND KATIE EBNER,
CLASS OF '19

Vincent Terrell Jackson

Management '16, Life Member

How his upbringing influenced his life: *"It was ingrained in me to give my best at everything I was doing. And there was no going out and playing in the yard or going out and joining a basketball team in summer league unless I took care of grades and other responsibilities."*

Jackson didn't bank on playing for the NFL when he earned a football scholarship to the University of Northern Colorado. But even as he studied business, he broke records for the Bears. He hadn't yet graduated when he was drafted by the San Diego Chargers in 2005. He twice made the Pro Bowl and, in 2012, signed with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, where he made his third Pro Bowl – and finished that degree at USF.

All the while, he looked for investment opportunities that would allow him to hone his entrepreneurial skills. Today, Jackson is the co-owner of numerous successful businesses nationwide, including CTV Capital, a private equity firm, and Cask



Maja

Social Kitchen restaurant. The child of military parents, he's also the founder-president of Jackson in Action 83 Foundation, a charity that helps military parents and kids stay connected.

Jackson and his wife, Lindsey, have three children – Carter, Amaya and Dominick.

Maja Lacevic

English and International Studies '09

On the impact of escaping the Bosnian war with her family as a child: *"When we left Sarajevo, my parents took my sister and me and their diplomas. So I think just in that one act alone, they really signaled to us the importance of education and that that is the one thing that really can't be taken away from you."*

Lacevic arrived in the United States as a Bosnian War refugee and went on to attend USF on merit-based scholarships. An attorney with Trenam Law, her practice focuses on a broad range of health care and business transaction-based services. Her accolades include an AV rating by Martindale-Hubbell; listing in *Florida Trend's* Legal Elite as an Up & Comer; and recognition by *Tampa Bay Business Journal* as an Up & Comer.

Lacevic's dedication to service includes countless volunteer hours with the Hillsborough County Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, where she serves on the board of directors. Maja is also an active member of USF Women in Leadership and Philanthropy (WLP), where she serves as the programs chair. She was involved in creating the USF WLP New American Scholarship for Women of Excellence to help give other immigrant students the opportunities she credits for her own success.

Lacevic is married to attorney Cameron Frye.

Reuben Pressman

Entrepreneurship '11, USF St. Petersburg

His advice for students and young entrepreneurs: *"When you're creating new things, when you're in the front, when you're trying to be innovative, you're trying to solve problems, it typically*



Vincent

means no one's done that thing before. There's no one who knows anything more about it than you. When you realize that, you can keep going and stay positive with it."

Pressman put his enterprising skills to work long before he made history as the first graduate of USFSP's innovative Entrepreneurship Program. While still a student, he created Bulls in the Burg, a program that encourages students' community engagement by offering discounts at businesses throughout the city.

Engagement, technology and community building continue to drive his initiatives, from the nonprofit Swings Tampa Bay, which hung rope swings in unexpected public spaces, to Presence, an education technology platform. Founded in 2014 as Check I'm Here, Presence helps more than 100 higher education institutions use data to increase student engagement, boosting retention and graduation rates. The company has raised \$2.5 million in venture capital since its launch.

Pressman has founded or served on the boards of numerous nonprofits dedicated to civic life, the arts, education, and other interests. He is married to fellow Bull Jami Compton Pressman.

Joel Raney Civil Engineering '11, Life Member

USF's impact on his life: *"In one of my MBA classes, they gave us a book about Southwest Airline's business culture. When I read that book, I realized my passion was more for business than engineering. It really inspired me. ... Also, after that, I only flew Southwest. A year later, I met my wife in the airport flying Southwest."*

Raney started Raney's Inc. in a small house in 2010, converting the kitchen to a warehouse and bedrooms to offices. Since then, the online retailer of custom accessories for heavy-duty trucks has grown from two employees to more than 60 in a 124,000-square-foot former manufacturing plant in Ocala, Fla. The company has twice made the Inc. 5000 and the USF Fast 56, both of which recognize rapidly growing businesses.

Raney also recently launched South Florida Strong, a USF apparel company run by Bulls.

As important to him as his businesses' success are their culture and community involvement. Raney's Inc. hires employees based on eight core values – kindness, dependability, humility, passion, happiness, honesty, open-mindedness and family spirit – and employees regularly volunteer and fundraise for local charities. In 2017, Raney's Inc. was named *Ocala Magazine's* first Business of the Year.

Raney and his wife, Jennifer, have two sons, Carson and Liam.

Dr. Venessa Walker Biomedical Sciences '04, Life Member

How she got started as a chiropractor: "My first year at USF I had a class called the University Experience. One of our homework assignments was to find someone in the field we desired to be

in and interview them. I found a sports physician and during the interview, he told me he was a chiropractor. I thought, 'OK, what is that?' When I sent him a thank you for the interview, he offered me a job. Because of the amazing things that happened in that office, I decided to be a chiropractor."

Dr. Walker combines her medical knowledge, speaking and leadership skills to pursue her mission of wellness for all. After earning her doctorate of chiropractic at age 25, she opened Walker Chiropractic and Wellness Center in her hometown of Miramar, Fla., where she provides a holistic approach to health care with a focus on prevention. She also takes her good health message around the world, earning a reputation as a knowledgeable speaker who educates audiences through her Transform YOUR Life program.

A dedicated community servant, she's involved with a wide range of groups, including The Boys and Girls Clubs, the Fort Lauderdale Chapter of The Links, Inc., and her own Owen Walker Jr. Foundation, Inc., named for her brother who died at 22 of a heart attack. The foundation provides guidance and scholarships to youth and young adults.

Named Florida Chiropractic Association's Emerging Leader of 2014, Dr. Walker is the daughter of Bishop Owen and Vashti Walker. ■

Hannibal



Photos: MATT MAY



Photo: RYAN MOONIE | USF Communications

A Truly Preeminent **HOMECOMING!**

Relive fond memories, revive old friendships and revel in all things USF during Homecoming SuperBull XXII. Alumni, students, faculty, friends and their families celebrate Oct. 14-21 with parties and parades, culminating in the big Homecoming game, USF vs. UConn, on Oct. 21.

Here are just a few of the special events planned; find details and more events at Homecoming.usf.edu. Venues listed here are USF Tampa unless otherwise noted.

Sunday, Oct. 14

Powder Puff Game

8-10 p.m., Rec Field, USFSP; 7v7 women's flag football with music, food and Rocky

Monday, Oct. 15

Carnival Kickoff at USF St. Petersburg

7-9:30 p.m., USFSP Harbor Lawn

SuperBull XXII Homecoming Week Kickoff and Stampede Comedy Show

7 p.m., Yuengling Center

USF Sarasota-Manatee Homecoming Kickoff

Noon; Main Rotunda, USFSM

Wednesday, Oct. 17

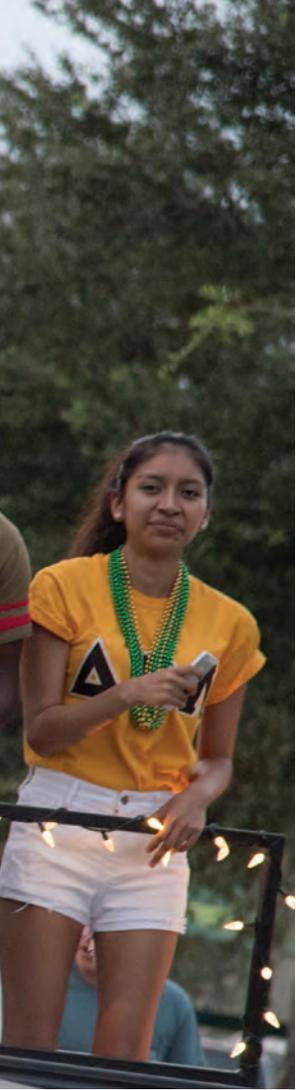
Cardboard Boat Race

3-6 p.m., USFSP Harbor Lawn/waterfront

Thursday, Oct. 18

USF Alumni Awards Dinner and Celebration

6 p.m., reception; 7 p.m. awards presentation, Marshall Student Center Ballroom, www.USFalumni.org/awards



Friday, Oct. 19

Carnival and Student Talent Showcase

Carnival, 3 p.m.-midnight; Showcase, 8:30 p.m., Yuengling Center parking lot

Welcome Home Party

Pre-parade party with live music, games, food concessions and more
5-7 p.m., Gibbons Alumni Center lawn

Poolside Tailgate Party

6-10 p.m., Coquina Pool/Harbor Lawn, USFSP

Running with the Bulls Homecoming Parade

7 p.m., beads, floats, parade watch parties; parade runs east on Holly Drive to Maple Drive, south to Alumni Drive and west to Leroy Collins Boulevard

Saturday, Oct. 20

USF Alumni Association Spirit Tent

Free beads, tattoos, class year stickers and more for alumni; special collector beads for Alumni Association members – bring your membership card or download the Alumni Mobile App at www.USF alumni.org/MobileApp to access your virtual card!

Three hours before kickoff, Bulls Zone, Raymond James Stadium, Tampa

Details at www.USF alumni.org/homecoming

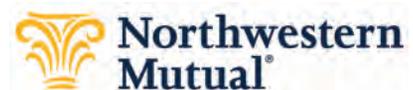
Homecoming Football Game

UConn vs. USF
Visit GoUSFBulls.com for game time and tickets

Our Week

OUR HOMECOMING.

OUR USF.



Official USF Alumni Association Homecoming Sponsor



a

Where's Rocky?

Thanks to his many globe-trotting friends, Rocky goes places no bull has gone before. Catch him sightseeing, showing off his Bull pride, or sampling the local cuisine to help chart his journey through the year.

a Rocky makes a new friend when **Bob Jett** '73 and '79, Life Member, introduces him to residents of Giraffe Manor in Nairobi, Kenya.

b **Andy Cannons**, former scientific director for the USF Center for Biological Defense, left, and **Phil Amuso**, '73, MA '75 & PhD '00, Life Member, USF Alumni Association board member, discover Rocky's second home at Bull's Head Passage in London.

c Rocky encounters some little green friends at the International UFO Museum and Research Center in Roswell, N.M., with **Brenda Lamer**, '87 and '89, **Scott Lamer**, '86, (the photographer) and their dog **Guinness**.

d Lucky for Rocky, **Steven Camp**, '82, Life Member, and **Eileen Rodriguez**, '87 and MBA '02, Life Member, had three tickets to paradise, aka Cancún, Mexico.

e Nothing makes a Bull run faster than caffeine, so Rocky was ecstatic when **ShirleyAnn Shackett**, accounting operations specialist at the USF Federal Credit Union, took him to Bitty & Beau's, a coffee shop run by adults with special needs in Wilmington, N.C.



f Doing his best hood ornament impersonation, Rocky travels in style while exploring Scotland with **Geoffrey Simon**, MBA '90, USF Foundation board member, Life Member, and his wife, **Andrea Simon**, Life Member.

g **Gregg Obariski**, '03, Life Member, and his wife, **Susan Obariski**, '14, Life Member, explore the ruins of Pompeii, Italy, with everyone's favorite travel companion, Rocky.

Email your high-resolution photo (300 ppi) and details to Penny Carnathan at pcarnathan@usf.edu or mail them to her at USF Alumni Association, 4202 E. Fowler Ave. ALC100, Tampa, FL 33620-5455.

Chapters & Societies

Award-winning leadership

The volunteers who lead Alumni Association chapters and societies create meaningful ways for Bulls to make an impact, from raising money for scholarships to pitching in on community service projects.

a Alumni leaders gather in July for the annual **Alumni Academy and Awards Dinner**. Nine groups were honored for excellence in specific areas, and one individual – **Connie Johnson-Gearhart**, '00 and MCE '12, Life Member, front center, was named Volunteer of the Year.

Kicking around

Whether they're on a field of dreams or at a favorite London pub, Bulls the world over enjoy kicking around together. Shared laughs forge friendships that build a powerful network of alumni who support each other and their university.

b **Matt Perry**, '12, prepares to send the ball sailing as part of the Chicago Chapter's first summer kickball league team.

Hilary Graham, '11, gets ready to run on second base and **Marcy Butz**, '13 and MBA '14, awaits her turn.

c The heat was on in England this summer but Bulls know the best watering holes. The new **London Chapter** hosts its first event – lunch at the historic Prospect of Whitby public house.

Rounding up our Bulls-to-be

Alumni groups around the country host Hometown Round-Ups throughout the summer, introducing the Class of 2022 and their parents to each other and all things USF. The events feature food, swag, prizes and lots of hometown love to help our newest Bulls get off to a good start.

d Rocky huddles up with a few of the guests at the Broward County (Fla.) home of longtime hosts **Shawn Cerra**, '93, and **Kerry Cerra**, '94, in Coral Springs.

e Bulls-to-be from the **Jacksonville/St. Augustine, Fla.**, area practice their Horns Up after vying for prizes including a \$100 gift certificate to the USF Bookstore.



Forever Bulls



Chapters and Societies

*No matter where
you live, you'll
always be a Bull!*

The USF Alumni Association has alumni chapters all over the country. We also have college and special-interest societies for like-minded alumni. It's easy to get involved. Just email the contact person of the group you'd like to visit.

INTEREST-BASED GROUPS

Anthropology Alumni

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Architecture Alumni

David Hunter
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Bulls Varsity Club

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Psychology Alumni

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**Without a Heart,
it's just a machine.**

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UNIVERSITY BEAT with Mark Schreiner



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Class Notes

1970s



JAMES HALICZER, English '76 and MA Political Science '78, was appointed co-chair of the trial lawyers section of the Broward County (Fla.) Bar Association by incoming

president Edwina Kessler.

JAMES "JIM" MOSELEY, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences '77, began his pastorate at Campbell Memorial Presbyterian Church in Weems, Va. He previously served as executive presbyter for the New Castle Presbytery in Newark, Del.



THOMAS OLDT, Political Science '72, is first vice president of The Florida Bar Foundation. He is a registered representative and general securities principal, as well as an industry arbitrator for the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.



EDWARD PAGE, Criminology '78, was recertified by The Florida Bar as a criminal law specialist. He was the first lawyer in Tampa to achieve The Florida Bar board certification in 1987. He is a shareholder in the Tampa office of Carlton Fields, P.A.

DENNIS ZANK, Accounting '76, is retiring as COO of Raymond James & Associates after 40 years with the company. He is a 2017 USF Distinguished Alumnus.

1980s

COLLEEN CHAPPELL, Public Relations '88, Life Member, was awarded the Dottie Berger MacKinnon Women of Influence Award by the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. She is the president and CEO of ChappellRoberts, a Tampa advertising agency, and serves on the Feeding Tampa Bay board of directors.

CODY CLARK, MA Guidance and Counselor Education '86 and EdS '96, received the Arts, Culture & Heritage Award at The Gathering of Women, Inc. 2018 Men and Women of Distinction Awards in St. Petersburg. The awards recognize individuals who have given tirelessly to benefit the community. Clark is the guidance counselor for the award-winning Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School, St. Petersburg.

MARLENE DAVIS, Distributive and Marketing Education '88, qualified for the inaugural U.S. Senior Women's Open. Davis, who played golf at USF, qualified for her first U.S. Women's Open in 1988. She's the lead golf instructor at the Paddock Chevrolet Golf Dome in Tonawanda, N.Y.

MARCIA FROST, Management '89, joined Fine Properties in Sarasota as a real estate agent. She was previously an agent with Michael Saunders & Co. in Sarasota.

DEVORA HENDERSON, Management '86, was promoted to vice president, global partners and resellers, at Diebold Nixdorf financial corporation based in Canton, Ohio. She was previously vice president of retail for the Americas region.

KIMBERLY HOPPER, Finance '86, joined IberiaBank as senior vice president, private banking relationship manager, in Sarasota. She was previously senior vice president, Sarasota city president, at Regions Bank.

KURT LONG, MA Mathematics '89, is the founder and CEO of FairWarning, which recently received a \$60 million growth equity investment from Mansail Partners. FairWarning in Clearwater provides cloud-based security for data.

DAVID MEARNS, MS Marine Science '86, USF St. Petersburg, recently had his book *The Shipwreck Hunter* released in the United States. He is a 2011 USF Distinguished Alumnus.



FRANCIS PECK, International Studies '85, serves as a Foreign Service Officer in the U.S. Embassy in Paris. He has had overseas postings in Africa, Europe and South Asia. In 2016, he was inducted into the U.S. Army ROTC Hall of Fame.

LISA RUSSO, MBA '87, has joined the Sarasota Architectural Foundation's board of directors. She is a senior vice president for Baird Private Wealth management in Sarasota.

1990s

ANTHONY ACITELLI, Finance '93, has been named chairman of the board for Remington Outdoor Co., the nation's oldest gunmaker. He is also Remington's CEO.

PABLO ARROYO, MBA '98, joined the Florida Small Business Development Center at USF as a business consultant. He previously worked as a business development specialist for the University of Missouri Small Business & Technology Development Center.



DR. MARY ELLEN BERGH, MD '90, joined Northside Hospital Cardiovascular Care in Atlanta. She previously worked for Gwinnett Cardiology Services in Lawrenceville, Ga.

JEFFREY BROWN, MPA '98, has been named deputy city manager of Haines City, Fla. He was previously city manager of Panama City, Fla.



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BRIAN CAMPBELL, Accounting '93, Life Member, received the Southern Region Chapter President of the Year Award at the 49th annual National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) Convention & Expo in Orlando, Fla. He is president of NABA's Tampa Bay chapter and a founding member of the NABA chapter at USF.



ASHLEY HARDEE, Political Science '92, received the John F. Harkness Jr. Volunteer of the Year award at The Florida Bar's Annual Convention in Orlando, Fla. She is a senior trial court staff attorney in the 18th Judicial Circuit.

SCOTT HIMELHOCH, MBA '95, has been promoted to vice president of land acquisition for the Tampa division of Taylor Morrison homebuilders.

BRETT KEMKER, Speech-Language-Hearing Science '92, is the new regional vice chancellor for academic and student affairs at USF Sarasota-Manatee. He previously worked at the University of New Orleans as the dean of students.

KIP KOELSCH, MLA '95, had his first novel, *Wendall's Lullaby*, selected as a medalist in the suspense/thriller category of the nonprofit Florida Authors & Publishers Association 2018 President's Book Awards.

MICHELLE MITCHELL, General Business Administration '92, is GateHouse Media's new vice president of sales for Florida West. She was previously the Herald-Tribune Media Group's vice president of advertising.

VIJAY NARAYANAN, PhD Computer Science and Engineering '98, was appointed to the A. Robert Noll Chair in Engineering by the Penn State College of Engineering. He is a distinguished professor of computer science and engineering and electrical engineering at Penn State.

ERIC PARTLOW, Psychology '99, has been appointed partner in charge of Adams and Reese's Tampa office. He joined the law firm in 2010 and is a partner in the firm's litigation practice group.

YVONNE WILLIAMS, MA Adult Education '95 and PhD '00, received the Higher Education, Training & Development Award at The Gathering of Women, Inc. 2018 Men and Women of Distinction Awards in St. Petersburg. She is an instructional designer and facilitator in the office of professional development at St. Petersburg College.

MARION YONGUE, Accounting '91, Life Member, was promoted to associate vice president of development at USF. Yongue has worked at USF since 2011 and previously served as assistant vice president of development.

2000s

BRENT AVIS, Mass Communications '09, joined The ProMedia Group as an account manager. The Tampa business designs and installs audio-visual systems.

DR. BRIAN BOONE, MD '09, joined West Virginia University Medicine. He recently completed a surgical oncology fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

KYLE BURKE, History '07 and MA '09, released his book, *Revolutionaries for the Right*. He is an assistant professor of history at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y.

DIANA CLYNES, Mass Communications '03, was elected the American Association of Kidney Patients' executive director by its board. She previously worked in the government and non-profit sectors.

SGT. NICOLE DALEY, Music and Music Education '07, played *Taps* at NASCAR's annual Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord, N.C. She has been a solo bugler in the U.S. Army for seven years.

CHRISTOPHER FILS, Finance '08, joined the Raymond James & Associates Suncoast Complex – the company's Sarasota, Lakewood Ranch and Venice, Fla., branches – as a manager. He previously worked at

Morgan Stanley's San Francisco Bay Area-Los Gatos branch.



PAT FLOYD, Mass Communications '01, joined ChappellRoberts, a Tampa advertising agency, as an art director. He has more than 13 years of advertising experience and has developed award-winning campaigns.



BEAU GRESHAM, Political Science '08, has been accepted into the New York University Stern School of Business MBA program. He was previously a captain in the U.S. Army.

SOPHIA HECTOR, Chemistry '01 and MPH '04, was named to the National Minority Quality Forum's 40 Under 40 Leaders in Minority Health. She is a program manager for the Florida Department of Health-Hillsborough County.

RACHEL JOBS JOHNSON, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences '05, was inducted into St. Michael-Albertville High School's Hall of Fame. Johnson starred in volleyball, basketball and track at the St. Michael, Minn., school before graduating in 2001. She helped lead the basketball and track teams to their first state championships.

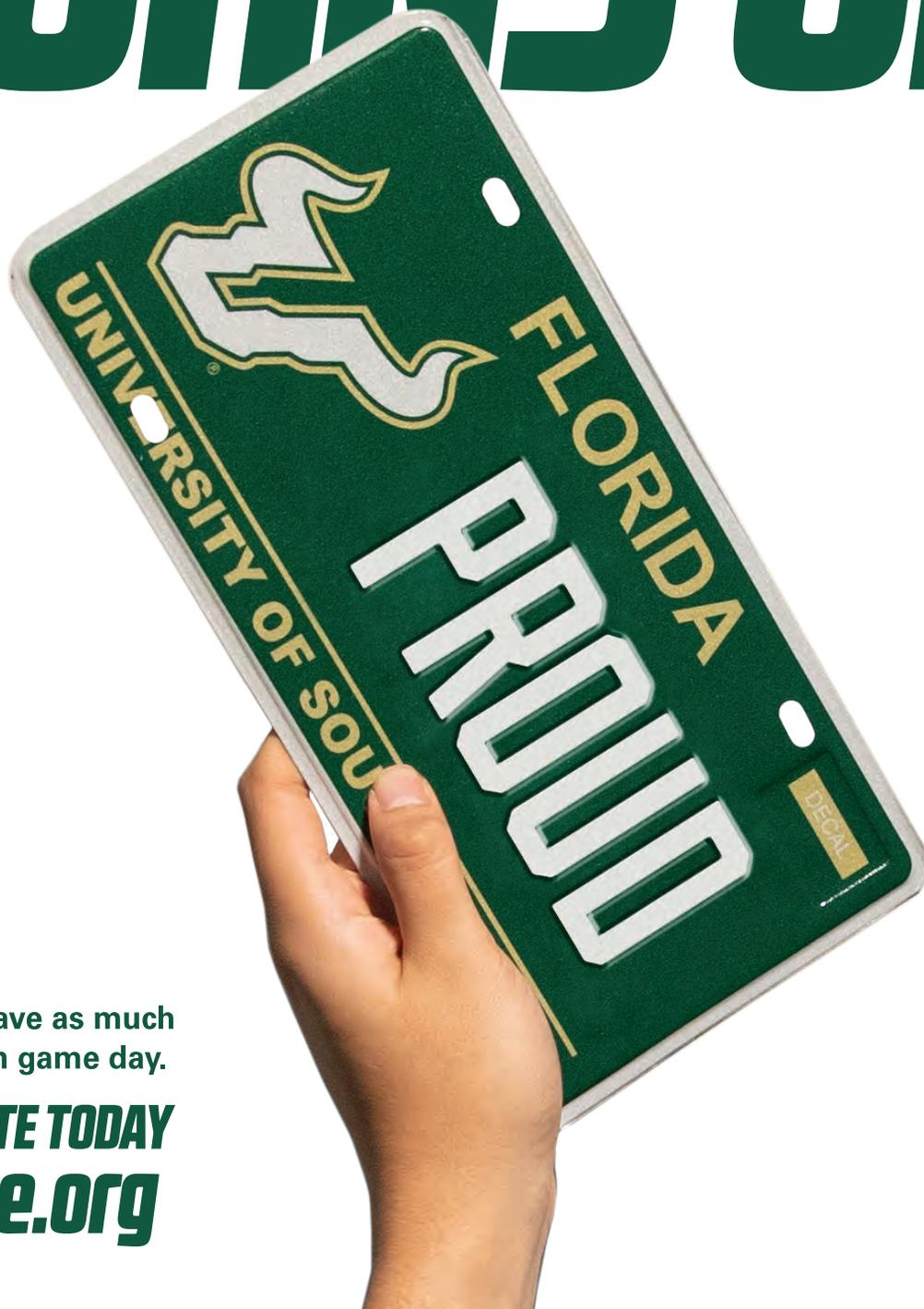
MICHAEL INNOCENTI, Theatre '03, won Outstanding Lead Actor in a Musical at the 34th annual Helen Hayes Awards, which recognizes professional theater excellence in the Washington, D.C. area. He received the award for his performance of Leo Frank in *PARADE* at The Keegan Theatre.

MARYANN KOOPS, Management Information Systems '01, joined Neal Communities homebuilders as an area sales manager for its Lakewood Ranch, Fla., team.

SONYA KRISTIE, Finance '05, has been promoted to vice president and trust officer at Caldwell Trust Co. in southwest Florida. She was previously assistant vice president and trust officer.



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SHAWN MARINELLO, MA Guidance and Counselor Education '04, was named principal of Northeast Elementary School in Stamford, Conn. He was previously assistant principal at Toquam Magnet School in Stamford.

MERRITT MARTIN, Political Science '04 and MPA '06, USF Alumni Association board chair, Life Member, received the 2018 *Tampa Bay Business Journal's* BusinessWoman of the Year award. She is the director of state legislative affairs at H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute.

DR. RODRIGO MARTINEZ, MD '00, joined Seattle-based TransformativeMed, an electronic health records optimization service, as its chief clinical officer. He previously served as senior vice president at Clinovations, LLC, a health IT company.

DR. JEAN G. MATHURIN, French '04, released *7 Checklist Items for Success*, a book about lessons he learned as a Haitian immigrant who became a U.S. Navy medical officer.

GREGORY ROSS-MUNRO, Psychology '03, MBA '07 and MS '08, Life Member, released *Herding Cats and Coders: Software Development for Non-Techies*. He is the founder and CEO of Sourcetoad, a consulting and software development firm based in Tampa.

VANDA DOREEN WAGNER, PhD Nursing Science '07, received the Association for Perioperative Registered Nurse's Excellence in Perioperative Nursing Award. She is a professor at the WellStar School of Nursing at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, Ga.

SERENA YOUNG, Dance '02, is celebrating 20 years of teaching dance at her studio, Serena's Dance Palace, in Brooksville, Fla.

2010s



ALYSSA ACQUAVIVA, Marketing '14, joined the Sarasota law firm Williams Parker Harrison Dietz & Getzen in its trusts and estates department. She previously served as

an intern to Judge Susan Bucklew of the U.S. District Court and Judge Sean Cadigan of the Florida 13th Judicial Circuit Court

ANTHONY ALIBRO, Psychology '17, USF Sarasota-Manatee, was accepted into a post-baccalaureate research program at the National Institutes of Health. He joined the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Md., as an assistant researcher in August.



MORGAN BARUTH, Marketing '14, joined ChappellRoberts, a Tampa advertising agency, as a digital media buyer. She is an active member of Ad 2 Tampa Bay, a nonprofit organization for young ad professionals.

ALANA BRASIER, MURP '11, has joined the Tampa Downtown Partnership as an operations and public space manager. She was the first graduate of USF's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program.

LECIA BROWN, MS Medical Sciences '13 and PhD '17, received the Mentor of the Year Award from the nonprofit Biotechnology Institute in Arlington, Va. She works at GlaxoSmithKline Vaccines as a researcher.



FRANK CABANO JR., Business Economics '12, has graduated with a doctorate in marketing from the University of Kansas and joins the University of Texas at El Paso as an

assistant professor of marketing.

HARMEET "HARRY" SINGH CHAWLA, MS Management Information Systems '17, joined USF Advancement Operations as applications developer. Before moving to the United States, he worked as a senior software developer at Ameriprise Financial in New Delhi.



THOMAS ELIASON, Mass Communications '15, was promoted to junior art director at ChappellRoberts, a Tampa advertising agency. He is also an active member of Ad 2 Tampa

Bay, a nonprofit organization for young ad professionals.



AAREN FIELD, Humanities and Cultural Studies '18, joined ChappellRoberts, a Tampa advertising agency, as an office relations specialist.



DAN HARKINS, Mass Communications '15, wrote *Freeburg*, a political novel set in northern Ohio and Florida. He has previously written for the *St. Petersburg Times* (now *Tampa Bay Times*), *Cleveland Scene* and *Elyria Chronicle-Telegram*.

SARAH HINDS, MPH '15, is the new administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Gulf/Franklin counties. She was previously the deputy administrator.

MARIA JESPERSEN, Civil Engineering '18, signed a contract to compete in the Liga Femenina de Baloncesto, the first tier women's professional basketball league in Spain. She played for the USF women's basketball team for four years.

KATHTHEA JOHNSON, MED '11, USF Sarasota-Manatee, is the new principal at Palm View Elementary School in Palmetto, Fla. She previously served as an assistant principal at Palma Sola Elementary School in Bradenton.

CHRISTOPHER KRENN, Professional and Technical Communication '17, USF Sarasota-Manatee, was named the 20th recipient of the Brian Fishman Internship by USA Hockey. The post is awarded each year to an outstanding college graduate pursuing a career in athletic communications.



DR. SAMUEL LEE, Biomedical Sciences '13, received the American College of Dentists Outstanding Student Leader Award. The national award recognizes the senior dental student

whose academic record most exemplifies a combination of outstanding leadership, scholastic performance, and potential for impact on the dentistry profession. Lee

Class Notes

received his doctor of dental medicine degree from Harvard School of Dental Medicine.

JOHNNY MAIO, Music Studies '17, co-produced a music video for his song *Hometown*, about the city of Tampa. The music video was named Film of the Month for May 2018 at New York's Oasis Short Film Festival.

LAUREN MARTIN, Mass Communications '13 and MA '14, USF St. Petersburg, joined B2 Communications public relations firm in St. Petersburg as an account executive. She previously worked at Feld Entertainment in Palmetto, Fla.

CHRISTINE MCKELVEY, MBA '13, USF Sarasota-Manatee, Life Member, joined Neal Communities of southwest Florida as a marketing manager. She was previously a marketing and art department manager for a signage company.

CARLOS MOREIRA, Finance '17 and Risk Management and Insurance '18, USF Sarasota-Manatee, is the new veteran services administrator at USF Sarasota-Manatee's Military and Veterans Success Center. He served more than 15 years on active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps and three years as a reservist.

MATTHEW MORRISON, Computer Engineering '10, MS '12, and PhD '14, received the National Academic Advising Network's Global Outstanding Advising Award in the Faculty Advising category. He is an assistant professor of electrical engineering at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Miss.



TONY MORRISON, General Business Administration '11, received his second Emmy Award as producer for *Good Morning America*, a national network news show that won Outstanding Morning Program for the second year in a row.

KATE RITZ, Professional and Technical Communication '17, joined Three Six Oh Public Relations as a public relations and social media coordinator. The company is a Sarasota-based public relations agency.

SOLAYMA GONZALEZ SACRE, Accounting and Finance '12, joined the accounting firm Prida, Guida & Perez, P.A. She recently passed all four sections of the certified public accountant exam.

MICHAEL SASSO, MBA '10, is an economy reporter at *Bloomberg News* in Atlanta. He was previously an airlines reporter for *Bloomberg News*.

KRISTIN STEFFEN, MPH '14 and MS Management '17, received the Title IX Outstanding Individual Achievement Award from USF's Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity. She is the deputy Title IX coordinator for USF Health and a Title IX investigator for the USF System. She is also assistant director of student programs and outreach in the Office of Shared Student Services.



ALEXANDRIA WILSON, Political Science '12, received a Fulbright U.S. Student Program award to the Czech Republic. She will conduct research at Masaryk University.

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In Memoriam

Alumni

B. TERRY AIDMAN, Accounting '69, June 20, 2018
 LISA GISELE ALFONSO, Criminology '99, April 26, 2018
 STEVEN F.C. ANDERSON, Accounting and History '85 and MAcc '88, June 25, 2018
 CHRISTOPHER G. BAILEY, Civil Engineering '00, June 1, 2018
 NICHOLA BERRY, MA Library and Information Science '15, April 16, 2018
 TONIA K. BROCKMAN, Psychology '88, June 4, 2018
 EDWARD B. BUCHANAN, Sociology '96, May 10, 2018
 GINA MICHELLE CHIPREAN, Accounting and Management '06, USF St. Petersburg, May 12, 2018
 LAUREL JEAN DAVIS, Political Science '83, May 17, 2018
 GILBERT K. ELLIS, Engineering Technology '91, June 9, 2018
 ELSIE (HAFT) ESTROFF, MA Special Education Gifted '71, April 3, 2018
 JOHN C. FARINA, Geology '70, May 6, 2018
 ROBERT "BOB" L. GILLETTE, MSW '99, July 4, 2018
 JOEL D. GREBIN, Elementary Education '65, May 19, 2018
 JOSEPH "JOE" PINKNEY HAVNER JR., Political Science '74, May 12, 2018
 BRANDI HAWTHORNE, Criminology and English '95, June 8, 2018
 GLORIA HERMS, Physical Education '65, May 16, 2018
 JIMMY ROLAND HICKS JR., Elementary Education '78, May 10, 2018
 MARK C. HOSS, Political Science '78 and MPA '93, April 19, 2018
 CYNTHIA JACOBSON, Early Childhood Education '70, June 8, 2018
 MARY JEFFERY, Early Childhood Education '79 and MA '86, June 15, 2018
 WALTER JENKINS, Elementary Education '75, May 2, 2018
 KENYATTA JONES, Attended 1997-2000, inaugural USF football team member, June 9, 2018
 JACK KEATES, Management '71, May 5, 2018
 PATRICIA A. LONGACRE, Nursing '75 and MS '85, May 27, 2018
 CHRISTOPHER MALLARDI, Marketing '96, May 12, 2018
 PIERRE MATHURIN, General Business Administration '83 and Finance '91, May 31, 2018
 JOSEPH W. MCKENZIE, English '67, July 6, 2018

JAY RICHARD MEISEL, Political Science '80, June 17, 2018
 JON C. MOORE, MBA '08, May 7, 2018
 CAROLYN HARRIS NELSON, MA Guidance and Counselor Education '90, June 19, 2018
 CHARLOTTE B. OVERBEY, English '90, May 28, 2018
 GEORGE FRANK PARKER JR., Accounting '73, Life Member, May 20, 2018
 CHARLES C. PATTON, MEd '85, April 23, 2018
 NAOMI (MARSH) PEARSON, Early Childhood Education '74, May 1, 2018
 SUSAN RYAN, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences '83 and MA '86, June 12, 2018
 JAMES "JIM" SAUNDERS, Management Information Systems '89, USF Sarasota-Manatee, Life Member, June 15, 2018
 JEAN L. SEARS, Criminology '84, May 8, 2018
 DAVID S. SHEPPARD, Biology '93, April 16, 2018
 JOHN R. SKIPPER JR., Special Education '71 and MEd '79, June 23, 2018
 ALLEN ROSS SMITH, Political Science and Psychology '70, April 24, 2018
 JOHN "BARRY" STUFFLET, Psychology '73, May 8, 2018
 MARK CHAPPELL THOMAS, English '74, June 7, 2018
 KENYON TILLOTSON, Psychology '81, MA '84 and PhD '16, June 10, 2018
 NANCY (GWALTNEY) TYLER, MA Elementary Education '66, May 18, 2018
 EDITH "EDE" UPSTILL, Elementary Education '63 and MA '70, June 5, 2018
 WILBUR JOSEPH WELLS, Art Education '68, June 19, 2018
 JOHN S. YEAST, MA Communication '71, June 27, 2018

Faculty and Staff

ROBERT P. CARNAHAN SR., Professor Emeritus, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, June 2, 2018
 CHERIE COLLINS, Adjunct Professor, Kate Tiedemann College of Business, May 3, 2018
 ANN MCDONALD, USF Tampa Office of the Registrar, July 2, 2018
 BARBARA NEVILLE, Program Assistant, College of Marine Science, May 3, 2018
 DR. LEON DENTON PROCKOP, Professor, Morsani College of Medicine; Founding Chair, USF Department of Neurology, June 28, 2018
 DR. MARION BERTON RIDLEY, Professor, Morsani College of Medicine, Department of Otolaryngology, July 1, 2018
 ARMIN WATKINS, Charter Faculty, Professor, School of Music, May 12, 2018

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