

# USF

UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA  
MAGAZINE

The OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the  
USF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
WINTER 2020

## HEROES AMONG US



The USF community  
responds to COVID-19  
with resilience, creativity  
and compassion

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# USF

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA MAGAZINE

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WINTER 2020

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Illustration: iStock / CLUNDMU

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Photo of Mark Clennon: GARRIN PRYCE

# From the President



President Currall, wife Cheyenne Currall and Rocky on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza at USF's Tampa campus

Photo: SANDRA C. ROA | USF News

## Dear alumni, friends and supporters of USF:

I HOPE YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES ARE WELL.

This has been a year that none of us will soon forget. The prolonged impact of COVID-19 on our university, our communities and our nation has been dramatic and in far too many cases, tragic. Our hearts go out to those who have lost loved ones and friends.

Throughout this ongoing public health crisis, we have invested significant time, energy and resources to offer flexible solutions that allow students to pursue their academic goals without disruption, faculty to teach and continue their critical research, and staff to work in a healthy environment to support our academic mission. We are making evidence-based decisions by regularly monitoring relevant data, such as visits to local emergency rooms for COVID-like illnesses; the number of new COVID-19 cases; test positivity rate; and the impact on hospital capacity.

Our comprehensive response to the pandemic will continue to include environmental testing of high-touch surfaces, enhanced cleaning and robust surveillance strategies, which include a Daily Symptom Check for everyone planning to come to our campuses, and random testing. We are truly fortunate to have world-class experts from USF Health in epidemiology, medicine and public health guiding our efforts. Across our campuses, students, faculty and staff have embraced our shared responsibility to protect the health and safety of all members of the community. Throughout 2020, many individuals have helped all of us navigate these unusual circumstances, and you will meet some of them in the "Heroes Among Us" package that begins on page 26.

I also am extremely grateful to everyone who has contributed to our USF United Support Fund and #BullsUnited in Action initiatives. As the story on page 21 explains, the generosity of so many has supported emergency relief efforts and scholarships for students, important research efforts, and more.

The pandemic has not distracted us from our focus on delivering a world-class education, conducting life-changing research and making

higher education more accessible to all students. Our efforts continue to earn recognition. According to U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges rankings released this fall, USF is again the fastest-rising university in America. Over the past 10 years, USF has risen 78 spots among all universities, from No. 181 to No. 103, and 54 spots among public universities from No. 100 to No. 46, more than any other university in the country. This is the second consecutive year USF is among the top 50 public universities in the nation, according to U.S. News.

It also is important to note that USF ranks No. 12 in the nation among public institutions and No. 1 in Florida on the U.S. News ranking of top "National Universities for Social Mobility." This is calculated based on the number of Pell Grant recipients a university successfully enrolls, retains and graduates. Approximately 40% of USF students are eligible for Pell Grants, the highest amount among Florida's preeminent universities. USF has previously earned national recognition for Pell Grant student success and was recently ranked No. 1 in Florida and No. 6 in the U.S. among public universities on Times Higher Education's list of "Best Universities for Reducing Inequalities."

I encourage you to read the column on the facing page by Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman, who I appointed this summer as senior advisor to the president and provost on diversity and inclusion. She is advising and supporting university leadership in our efforts to foster anti-racism, access, equity, cultural inclusivity and cultural intelligence, and she shares her vision in her column.

While 2020 has been the year of the pandemic, it also has been a year of significant accomplishments by our faculty, staff and students. Thank you for your continued support of the University of South Florida. Cheyenne and I wish you a joyous holiday season and peace and good health in the new year.

**Steven C. Currall**  
President and Professor

# Beyond the metrics

By Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman

THE YEAR 2020 USHERED IN incomparable challenges that have forced us to contend with two global pandemics: COVID-19 and racism. These pandemics revealed to some (and reiterated to many) that systemic racism is a persistent element of all major social institutions. The violent deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery also reveal that systemic racism often reserves its most insidious manifestation when it perpetuates anti-Blackness. In the wake of these and other examples of systemic anti-Black racism, the University of South Florida has been challenged to respond with concrete action rather than rhetoric.

USF has responded by building on the momentum of its significant successes related to diversity and racial equity. For the past 10 years, with efforts led by Paul Dosal, vice president for student success, and Provost Ralph Wilcox, USF has been on a journey toward institutional transformation focused on addressing the racial and social inequities that undermine student success.

Indeed, our attention to addressing inequities helped propel USF toward its unrivaled rise: In 2020, USF was recognized as the fastest-growing university in the United States and ranks among the top 50 public universities, according to U.S. News and World Report. Alongside this, and most relevant to racial equity, the Education Trust recognized USF for eliminating the racial achievement gap in six-year graduation rate that so often negatively affects Black and Hispanic students. Yet, even as we duly celebrate our achievements in student success, an understanding of the pervasiveness of systemic racism offers a sober reminder that these efforts are not nearly enough.

As the senior advisor to the president and provost for diversity and inclusion, my vision is to work closely with administration, deans, chairs, faculty, staff and students to develop strategies and initiatives that extend far beyond student success and that disrupt practices, policies and structures that hinder our collective success. My hope is for USF to meet and then move far beyond traditional performance metrics to establish sustained anti-racist policies that promote belonging



## BUILDING AN EQUITABLE FUTURE

and engagement and create the context for which power and resources can be more equitably distributed. We have already made notable gains toward some of these goals as evidenced by USF's investment of \$500,000 on research on anti-Black racism, the expansion of guaranteed admission programs for undergraduate students, the development of high-profile speakers series on anti-racism, the introduction of anti-racist pedagogical strategies and workshops, proposed curriculum changes to include courses on racism, new efforts to support the success of diverse faculty, and a robust Office of Supplier Diversity.

I welcome working with campus constituents to support more coordinated approaches to institutionalize anti-racism and equity that involve measurable goals and an accountability structure. As observed with our strategic student success initiatives, embracing this moment to institutionalize anti-racism across our campuses is not only the right thing to do, it will ultimately be the best thing to do to elevate the entire USF community.

*(Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman is an associate professor of sociology.)*

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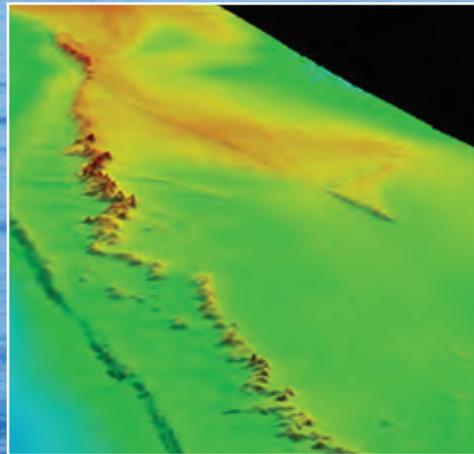
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## Mapping the OCEAN FLOOR

USF'S COLLEGE OF MARINE SCIENCE has been awarded a five-year, \$9 million cooperative agreement by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of Coast Survey to launch the Center for Ocean Mapping and Innovative Technologies. The center, located on the USF St. Petersburg campus, will develop new technologies and approaches to ocean and coastal zone mapping in line with NOAA's commitment to building resilient coastal ecosystems, communities and economies. Ocean maps are traditionally created using sonar equipment and other technologies aboard expensive ships. The work is time-consuming, especially in shallow waters, and requires the ship to cruise over the area of interest in a methodical, "mow the lawn" pattern. The new center will evaluate and demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of innovative technologies including autonomous surface vessels, underwater robots and satellites.



Sonar map of the water depths in the "Elbow" region 70 miles west of St. Petersburg.  
Image Credit: Matthew Hommeyer, Center for Ocean Mapping and Integrative Technologies at the University of South Florida.



Photo: Courtesy of USF College of Marine Science

# ONE 'FAST' Bull

WHAT BEGAN 11 YEARS AGO with two ecologists in a 12-foot by-12-foot office has become a sprawling company with a unique distinction: Flatwoods Consulting Group is the only business that has won a USF Fast 56 award every year since the program's inception.

September marked the eighth consecutive trophy for co-founder Shannon Gonzalez, '98 and MS '04, Life Member (pictured), a leader of one of the world's 56 fastest-growing Bulls-led businesses. (Watch the 2020 USF Fast 56 countdown at <http://bit.ly/2020Fast56>; check out the winners on pages 50-52.)

Gonzalez first entered the competition in 2013.

"I knew we had shown tremendous growth during the inaugural Fast 56 application period and thought recognition from the award could elevate our status in the industry and help us attract talented ecologists," he says.

It's done that and more. The Fast 56 has become a great way to team up with like-minded Bull business leaders.

"Other Fast 56 recipients mesh well with us and that pool of talent is an excellent source for professional relationships," Gonzalez says.

Flatwoods is a Tampa-based consulting firm whose services range from environmental permitting to gopher tortoise relocations and detailed studies of surface water quality. Co-founded by Lee Walton, Flatwoods now employs 33 full-time staffers – affectionately dubbed "Flatwooders" – headquartered in office space that has grown 10 times or more since 2009. That includes two warehouses with swamp buggies, kayaks and other tools for plying Florida's wilderness and waterways.

Gonzalez says he's proud of every Fast 56 trophy – "each one more than the last!"

The USF Fast 56 is sponsored by the USF Alumni Association. The deadline to nominate a business for the 2021 Fast 56 is Jan. 5; visit [usfalumni.org/fast56](http://usfalumni.org/fast56).

– PENNY CARNATHAN, '82, Life Member; USF Alumni Association





Photo: JAY NOLAN

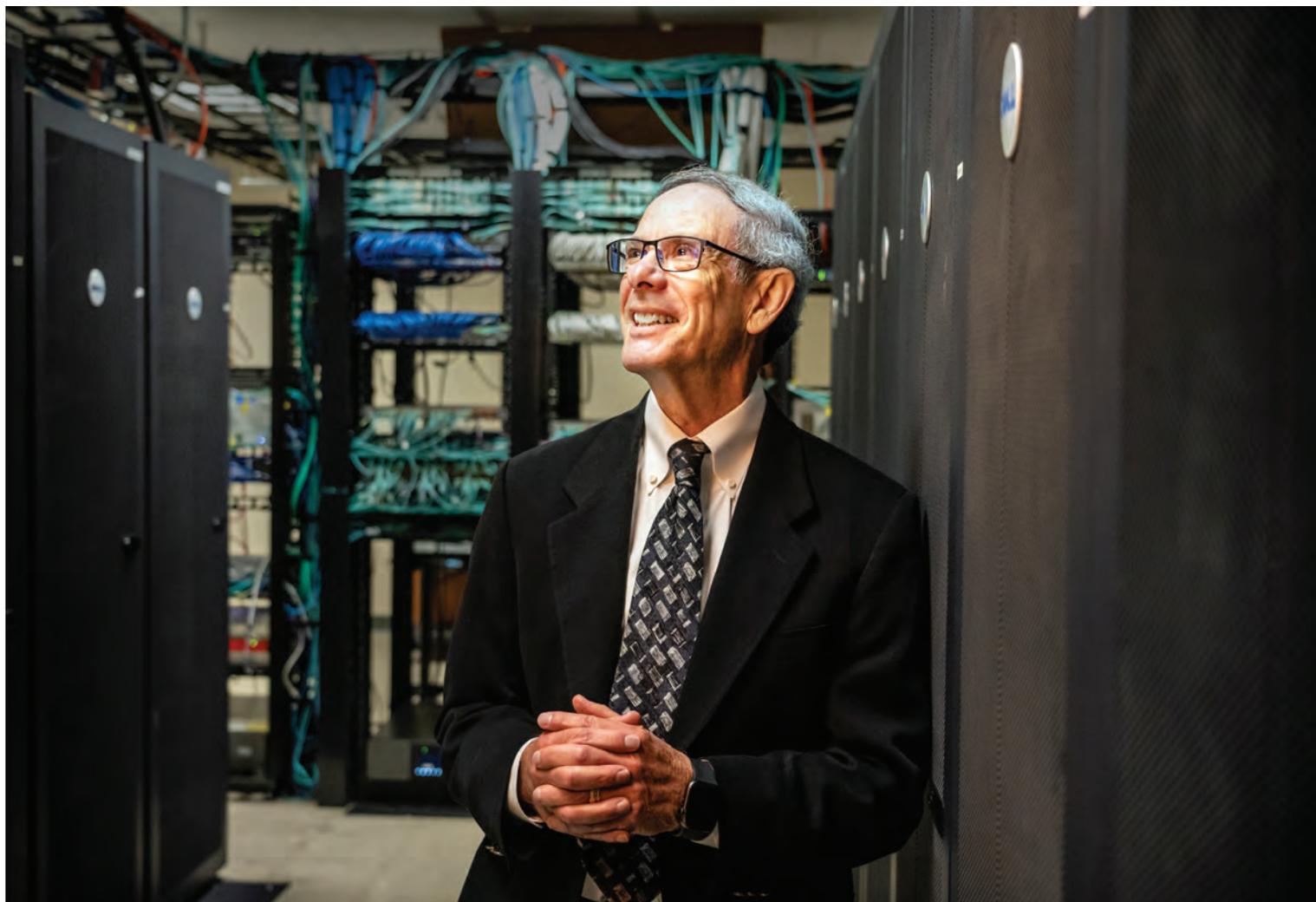


Photo: USF HEALTH

## USF HEALTH

### Researchers aim to discover and demystify rare forms of diabetes

THE USF HEALTH MORSANI COLLEGE of Medicine's Health Informatics Institute is coordinating a nationwide study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that seeks to discover the cause of several unusual forms of diabetes. For years, doctors and researchers have been stymied by cases of diabetes that differ from known types. Through research efforts at USF and 19 other U.S. research institutions, the study aims to discover new forms of diabetes, understand what makes them different, and identify their causes.

The Rare and Atypical Diabetes Network, or RADIANT, plans to screen about 2,000 people with unknown or atypical forms of diabetes that do not fit the common features of type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

A person with atypical diabetes may be diagnosed and treated for type 1 or type 2 diabetes, but not have a history or signs consistent with their diagnosis. For example, they

may be diagnosed and treated for type 2 diabetes but may not have any of the typical risk factors for this diagnosis, such as being overweight, having a family history of diabetes, or being diagnosed as an adult. Alternately, a person with atypical diabetes may respond differently than expected to the standard diabetes treatments.

"With help from participants and their families, we aim to develop a comprehensive description of the genetic and clinical characteristics of these rare forms of diabetes," says RADIANT study chair and coordinating center director Jeffrey Krischer, director of the USF Health Informatics Institute and a professor in the Morsani College of Medicine's Department of Internal Medicine. "This information could help to establish new diagnostic criteria for diabetes, find new markers for screening, or identify drug targets for new therapies that could ultimately bring precision medicine to diabetes."

Above: Jeffrey Krischer stands in the data center housing diabetes patients' records.

RADIANT researchers will build a comprehensive resource of genetic, clinical and descriptive data on previously unidentified forms of diabetes for the scientific and health-care communities.

The study's researchers will collect detailed health information using questionnaires, physical exams, genetic sequencing, blood samples and other tests. People found to have unknown forms of diabetes may receive addition-

**“ This information could help to establish new diagnostic criteria for diabetes, find new markers for screening, or identify drug targets for new therapies ... ”**

– Jeffrey Krischer

al testing. Some participant family members may also be invited to take part in the study.

“It's extremely frustrating for people with atypical diabetes when their diabetes seems so different and difficult to manage,” says the study's project scientist, Dr. Christine Lee of NIH's National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. “Through RADIANT, we want to help patients and the broader health-care community by finding and studying new types of diabetes to shed light on how and why diabetes can vary so greatly.”

USF is the study's coordinating center, and the lead centers include Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and the University of Chicago. The Broad Institute in Cambridge, Mass., and Baylor serve as the genomic sequencing centers for the project. University of Florida, Gainesville, provides the study's laboratory services. Other participating centers are:

- Columbia University, New York City
- Duke University, Durham, N.C.
- Geisinger Health System, Danville, Pa.
- Indiana University, Indianapolis
- Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston
- NorthShore University Health System, Chicago
- Seattle Children's Hospital
- SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, Brooklyn
- University of Colorado, Denver
- University of Maryland, Baltimore
- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- University of Washington, Seattle
- Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.
- Washington University in St. Louis

## OUTREACH

# People with developmental disabilities get support from USF's 'hidden gem'

WHEN PRESIDENT GEORGE H.W. BUSH signed the Americans with Disabilities Act 30 years ago, he said, “Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down.” Since then, much progress has been made to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, health, and all public and private places that are open to the general public.

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (FCIC) within the College of Behavioral & Community Sciences, established in 2005, continues to advocate for, and provide resources to, individuals with disabilities and their families. It is the only center on disabilities at USF.

The center, part of the Department of Child and Family Studies, is led by Co-Directors Lise Fox and Don Kincaid, and Associate Director Elizabeth Perkins.

“I feel like FCIC is a hidden gem – many don't realize the comprehensiveness and depth of our work across multiple areas, such as early childhood, education, behavior, employment and health. We have many high-profile projects in the center,” Perkins says.

During fiscal year 2019, the center distributed information and resources to nearly 400,000 individuals with developmental disabilities, their family members and professionals. Funded by the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, the FCIC received a competitive renewal for another five years in July. The total value of the project across five years is \$2.86 million. This core grant helps to leverage additional grants and contracts, averaging between \$12 million and \$15 million annually.

The center has 23 diverse programs offering a range of supports and services that include: early intervention to promote social emotional learning; educational supports to schools implementing positive behavior support programs; preparing people with developmental disabilities for employment; assisting businesses to support increased hiring of people with disabilities; training future health-care providers about health issues of people with developmental disabilities; and the promotion of inclusion in the community. These programs serve not only the local area, and Florida, but also provide expertise to other states and countries.

Since March, the FCIC programs have provided supports and services using a virtual model in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, FCIC's academic programs include a focus area in the online Master of Science Degree in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health and a developmental graduate certificate in positive behavior support.

People with developmental disabilities often have difficulty accessing appropriate high-quality health care because health-care providers lack training or familiarity with the supports they need. The center is addressing this issue by undertaking activities and developing health resources that educate providers to be sensitive to the unique health needs of people with disabilities, and assist individuals and their caregivers to be proactive about knowing and communicating their own health needs across their lifespan.

– STORIE MILLER | Department of Child and Family Studies

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

### 10 students selected as Millennium Fellows

TEN USF STUDENTS HAVE BEEN selected as 2020 Millennium Fellows. The Fellowship, a collaboration between the United Nations Academic Impact and Millennium Campus Network, is a semester-long leadership development program that convenes, challenges and celebrates bold student leadership to advance the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals both on campus and in communities.

This year, more than 15,000 young leaders applied for the fellowship from 1,458 campuses across 135 nations. Only 80 campuses in 20 nations were selected to host 2020 Millennium Fellows based on the caliber of applicants and cohorts. USF is among only 26 American universities selected to host fellows this year.

The selected students will each work on a project to advance one of the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals. The Millennium Fellows at USF will help support disadvantaged populations, reduce the use of plastic, increase product sustainability, reduce food waste, increase access to mental health services, and document the fight for human rights.

The 10 Millennium Fellows bring the university's total number of national scholarship and fellowship recipients to 103 for the 2019-20 academic year – a USF record. Most of these recipients worked with the university's Office of National Scholarships, whose mission is to advise, support and mentor students throughout the competitive scholarship application process.

#### USF's cohort of 2020 Millennium Fellows includes:

##### Nandini Agarwal

*Project:* "Samagreen"

*Description:* Samagreen aims to revolutionize personal-use medical devices by making them sustainable and more patient-friendly. This project was also selected to be part of the Clinton Global Initiative-University Cohort of 2020, the USF incubator, and the Frank and Ellen Daveler Entrepreneurship Program.

**USF is among only 26 American universities and 80 campuses worldwide to host 2020 Millennium Fellow cohorts.**

##### Claudia Conceicao

*Project:* "A.C.T (Access to Clothes Together)"

*Description:* This project will create an organization to connect families who wish to donate their child's clothes to another child in a low-income family, becoming that child's sponsor. It aims to create a more direct connection between donors and those who receive their donation, creating a deeper sense of unity.

##### Shannon Cousineau

*Project:* Yet to be named

*Description:* The goal of this project is to create a student-led and operated on-campus site for composting to reduce the university's food waste and potentially supply USF's Botanical Gardens with useful compost.

##### Syed Hasan

*Project:* "Utilization of Mental Health Services by College Students"

*Description:* This project will consist of conducting outreach efforts in creative and inclusive ways that raise awareness of and advocate for college students' mental health needs, especially within USF's community. The goal is to empower all students to take the initiative for their mental health without any shame, guilt or fear of stigma.

##### Natalie Krawczyk

*Project:* "Students Vote Change Project"

*Description:* The goals of this project are to inform students about registration and election deadlines, provide information about issues and candidates on the ballot, and engage students as voters and advocates for political and societal issues facing our country today.

##### Brandon Mahoney

*Project:* "Transforming Tampa. Together"

*Description:* This project is a collaborative effort with the City of Tampa to develop or supplement existing programming to teach children social growth and responsibility, provide mentors and promote team-building skills, and act as the beginning of a comprehensive change in after-school programming to make the lives of the next generation better, one step at a time.

##### Danielle Sphikas

*Project:* "Reducing Plastic Use in Retail"

*Description:* This project aims to reduce the amount of plastic use in retail businesses by partnering with both large and small corporations.

##### Anayansi Ugalde

*Project:* "The Rohingya Crisis Documentation Project"

*Description:* The Rohingya are a people who have faced years of violence and persecution at the hand of their government, a government that repeatedly denies and manipulates the truth. This project will document as

much as possible about the experiences of refugees who escaped their country.

**Padma Vasanthakumar and Prakash Vasanthakumar** (co-campus directors for the Millennium Fellowship Class of 2020)  
*Project:* “H-ART-fulness for All”

*Description:* The goal of this project is to promote good mental health during the current time of stress and uncertainty, and will involve creating virtual sessions for all ages that combine the Heartfulness meditation practice and art therapy.

- AMY HARROUN | Judy Genshaft Honors College



Millennium Scholars: L to R, from top left – Nandini Agarwal, Claudia Conceicao, Shannon Cousineau, Syed Hasan, Natalie Krawczyk, Brandon Mahoney, Danielle Sphikas, Anayansi Ugalde, Padma Vasanthakumar, Prakash Vasanthakumar

Photos: Courtesy of USF, Judy Genshaft Honors College

## BUILDING AN EQUITABLE FUTURE

# Supplier diversity, community engagement initiatives win statewide recognition

USF HAS EARNED STATEWIDE RECOGNITION for its supplier diversity and community engagement efforts.

The Miami-based Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council honored USF with its Doing Well While Doing Good Humanitarian Award in the corporation category during this fall’s 45th annual Business Impact Awards event. A Celebration of Excellence in Supplier Diversity was the theme of the virtual event, which recognized the achievements of Florida’s top minority businesses, major corporations and individuals committed to supplier diversity in 14 categories.

The Florida council, founded in 1975, is one of 23 regional councils affiliated with the National Minority Supplier Development Council.

The Doing Well While Doing Good Humanitarian Award, given to a minority-owned business and a large corporation or institution, recognizes civic, philanthropic and volunteer initiatives.

“This recognition and the impact and success that USF is experiencing are due to the efforts of a lot of very hard-working people who are committed to this initiative and we are excited that this hard work is being recognized,” says Terrie Daniel, assistant vice president for supplier diversity at USF.

“I have an excellent team that is very committed to the University of South Florida and to making our supplier diversity program the best in the state and across the country,” she says. “They work extremely hard and this recognition positively shines a light on the efforts they are making every day.”

In materials provided to the Florida State Minority Supplier Development Council, Daniel highlighted several community engagement efforts, including:

- Free consulting services are provided by the Office of Supplier Diversity and the USF Small Business Development Center. In addition, Daniel’s office sponsors a variety of events to promote diverse supplier utilization to the USF buying community.
- USF Health programs, including Tampa Bay Street Medicine, the BRIDGE Clinic, Ybor Youth Clinic and pediatric outreach serve homeless, uninsured and underinsured populations.
- The College of Education offers the Gus A. Stavros Center for Free Enterprise and Economics Education, Tutor-A-Bull and the Mort Teacher Leader Academy, providing resources and training to pre-service and in-service teachers.
- STEM for Scholars and the Oceanography Camp for Girls are annual summer enrichment programs that prepare local youth for academic life and careers in STEM fields.
- The Office of Veteran Success helps student veterans transition to civilian life through mentorship, academic support and employment readiness.

“These programs have been put in place because we want to make a significant impact,” Daniel says. “We are not just an organization that sits in the community. We are an organization that impacts the community in which we sit.”

More information about the Office of Supplier Diversity is available at [www.usf.edu/osd](http://www.usf.edu/osd); via email, [osd@usf.edu](mailto:osd@usf.edu); or by phone, 813-974-5052.

- TOM WOOLF | USF News



Stock photo: Courtesy of USF St. Petersburg campus

## SCHOLARSHIPS

### New scholarship seeks to create greater diversity in brewing industry

D.G. YUENGLING & SON, INC. is sponsoring a \$5,000 diversity in brewing scholarship for a student from a minority group to cover the cost of spring semester tuition to the Brewing Arts program on USF's St. Petersburg campus.

"With the current social and political events around racial justice, Yuengling reached out to us and wanted to do something that addresses these issues and improves diversity in our industry," says Jennifer Sedillo, PhD '14, Life Member, director of the Brewing Arts program.

The deadline to apply is Dec. 31. The spring semester cohort will begin on Feb. 1, 2021.

"As four females in the industry helping to lead America's Oldest Brewery, my sisters and I understand the importance of creating opportunities for every individual who wants to pursue their brewing passion," says Wendy Yuengling, chief administrative officer and sixth generation family member, D.G. Yuengling & Son, Inc. "We're raising our glasses to a more inclusive brewing industry and are proud to help support educating the next generation of diverse brewers."

Craft brewing is one of the fastest growing industries in the United States. According to a study by the Florida Brewers Guild, Florida

could support more than 500 craft breweries, leading to a total economic output of \$2.5 billion and 40,000 jobs.

However, a survey completed by the Brewers Association, which consists of 5,300 U.S. brewery members and 46,000 members of the American Homebrewers Association, showed that brewery employees are disproportionately white relative to both the general U.S. population and where breweries are located. Brewery employees also skew heavily male.

"Diversity has been an ongoing concern of ours for our program and the industry at large," Sedillo says. "We are certainly aware of this issue and have been successful in getting more female students into the program recently and hope to continue progress on this front with more underrepresented groups."

The Brewing Arts program is a collaboration between USF's College of Arts and Sciences and many local and national breweries. Launched in 2015, the online program is designed for a range of participants, from hobbyists to enthusiasts looking to make a career in the industry by working in a brewery or opening a brewery one day.

The online coursework covers the entire process of brewing learning, from the base ingredients to the science and business of craft beer. It is taught by both professionals and academics in the field and followed by a hands-on training experience in a brewery to apply the knowledge learned.

For more information, contact Jennifer Sedillo at [jsedillo@usf.edu](mailto:jsedillo@usf.edu), or visit [stpetersburg.usf.edu/brew](http://stpetersburg.usf.edu/brew).

- MATT CIMITILE | USF St. Petersburg campus

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

# Becoming age-friendly

WHAT MATTERS MOST as we age?

It's a simple question, but one likely to elicit deeply personal and ever-changing responses as we grow older.

For Kathy Black, a professor of aging studies on the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus, this is one of the most important questions a gerontologist can ask because it speaks to well-being, a key factor in healthy living. She began asking it in a meaningful way 10 years ago.

In 2010, Black and fellow gerontologist Debra Dobbs of the USF School of Aging began exploring issues around aging with dignity and independence as part of a study involving more than 500 Sarasota County residents 65 and older.

Their findings were published in the journal *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, "Community-Dwelling Older Adults' Perspective on What Matters Most: Findings from an Exploratory Inquiry." More than a decade ago, participants were asked what really matters as we age. Their replies aggregated around five overarching themes:

- Preserving and promoting health and well-being
- Continuing living arrangements and lifestyle
- Maintaining autonomy and independence
- Engaging in meaningful social opportunities
- Accommodating community assets

Informing the future of her work, Black says the study changed how she viewed aging and impacted her subsequent research. Up to that point, she says, she studied planning in advance for care through the end of life, which represents the nation's prevailing understanding of aging as a period of disease and decline.

Previously trained as a nurse and social worker, Black says she agrees with the importance of planning for future care needs, as most older adults do face multiple chronic conditions with age.

"However, when we conducted our community-based research study, asking what mattered most, we learned firsthand that people weren't worried about care needs," she says. "What mattered to them was staying independent and being able to get around and live their lives. What mattered was living fully, engaging with others and participating in life.

"This study changed me. I now incorporate the voice of older adults into my research to ensure that what is referred to as the 'authentic-lived experience' is included," she says.

Fast forward to the age-friendly community report that Black conducted among nearly 1,200 Sarasota County residents and the resultant action plan that was created in 2017. Overwhelmingly, the community blueprint is based on quality-of-life measures such as the connectedness of community to health through urban planning, housing, transportation and more.

Now a leading scholar and proponent of the global "age-friendly" movement, Black is often called to advise city, county and state officials on methods for helping people live more fully as they age. This can lead to a host of changes, from easy-access doors and buses to age-friendly building codes for "senior housing" and public spaces.

"Becoming age-friendly means recognizing that we change as we grow older and allowing for accommodations during this change," she says. "Not every accommodation needs to be sudden and sweeping. Some can be simple, common-sense things that nevertheless improve people's lives."

Black's work has resulted in invitations to several prominent organizations, including the American Association for Retired People (AARP), where she serves as an Age-Friendly Communities liaison, consulting with communities statewide striving to become age-friendly under the World Health Organization's (WHO) guidelines.

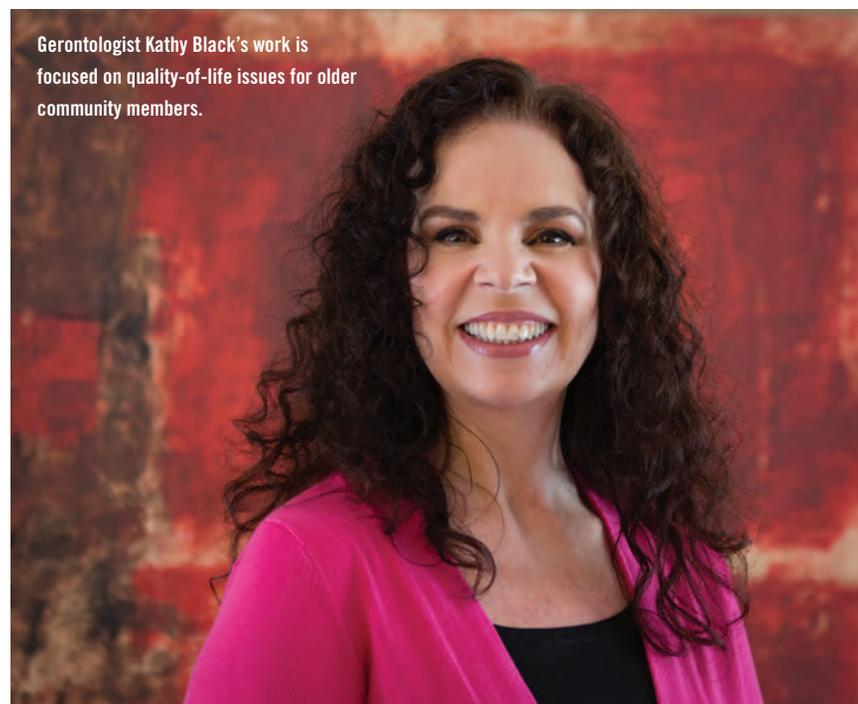
As a researcher who is dedicated to community engagement and outreach, Black has served as an advocate for age-friendly community practices across the state. To date, 36 Florida communities, including Sarasota County, have joined the global Age-Friendly Community network. In April 2019, Gov. Ron DeSantis announced that Florida was designated as the fourth state in the nation to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States.

In addition, Black is one of six people worldwide selected by the WHO to train leaders on creating healthy-aging practices, policies and programs for their host nations.

"This is a growing movement that continues to align traditional players in aging with newer players," Black says. "In 2015, when Sarasota joined, there were 60 age-friendly communities in the U.S. Now, it's nearly 500 and growing."

- RICH SHOPE | USF Sarasota-Manatee campus

*Editor's Note: This story is from the recently released third edition of the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus's research magazine, available at [researchmagazine.sarasota-manatee.usf.edu](http://researchmagazine.sarasota-manatee.usf.edu)*



Gerontologist Kathy Black's work is focused on quality-of-life issues for older community members.

Photo: Courtesy of USF Sarasota-Manatee campus

# Athletics

## STANDOUT ATHLETES

### USF Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2020 features Davis, O'Neal and Williams

THREE STANDOUT STUDENT-ATHLETES have been selected as the Class of 2020 in the USF Athletic Hall of Fame, the seventh to be inducted since the first Hall of Fame class was enshrined in 2009.

The 2020 Hall of Fame class will include Jeff Davis (men's tennis, 1975-79), Matthew O'Neal (men's track and field, 2012-16) and Courtney Williams (women's basketball, 2012-16).

Davis will be the first men's tennis player to be inducted, while O'Neal will be the first men's track and field athlete and Williams will be the fourth women's basketball player – joining Wanda Guyton (Class of 2009), Jessica Dickson, '07, (Class of 2012) and Shantia Grace, '11, (Class of 2019). Both O'Neal and Williams were inducted in their first year of eligibility, four years beyond their last collegiate competition.

"We had so many tremendous candidates for the committee to choose from this year and I am thrilled to welcome this Hall of Fame class that has left an indelible mark on USF Athletics," Vice President of Athletics Michael Kelly said. "This will be the seventh class to be inducted and we look forward to welcoming the inductees back to USF for a great event at some point in the future when it is appropriate for us to do so."

Dates and details for the induction ceremony for the 2020 USF Athletic Hall of Fame class will be announced at a later date.

Davis, '79 and MBA '90, dominated Sun Belt Conference tennis in the late 1970s, winning three conference singles championships, three doubles championships and

helping lead USF to three straight team championships from 1977 to 1979. The three-time all-conference selection was named the Sun Belt Conference MVP in 1979. A three-year team captain, Davis helped propel USF to what became a run of four straight conference crowns and the start of a dominant period that would see the Bulls' men's tennis program post a USF Athletics record-tying 20 conference titles from 1977 to 2019. Davis posted a USF record 174 career collegiate wins – 91 in singles and 83 in doubles – and went undefeated in conference play from 1977 to 1979.

The first six-time All-American in USF Athletics history, O'Neal, '16, also won six conference championships in the triple jump. He claimed both indoor and outdoor titles in the Big East in 2013 and indoor titles in The American in 2015 and 2016 and outdoors in 2014 and 2016. He qualified for the NCAA Championships six times and earned All-America honors outdoors four times from 2013 to 2016 and indoors twice from 2015 to 2016. He placed as high as second indoors (2016) and third outdoors (2016) at the NCAA Championships and was a nine-time all-conference honoree in the triple and long jumps, placing second in the long jump outdoors and third indoors in the years he didn't win the title, and third in the triple jump in the one year he didn't claim the conference crown between 2013 and 2016.

Williams, '16, was a 2016 WBCA First Team All-American and a two-time honorable mention All-American by both the WBCA (2014-15) and Associated Press (2015-16). The talented guard helped lead USF women's basketball to four



Above: Jeff Davis, men's tennis 1975-79

Below: Courtney Williams, women's basketball 2012-16 and Matthew O'Neal, men's track and field 2012-16



Photos: Courtesy of USF Athletics

straight 20-win seasons, four postseason appearances (including three NCAA Tournament second-round appearances and a WNIT semifinal appearance) and a 96-42 record (69.5 winning percentage) during her four-year career.

Williams was named a first team all-conference selection and an all-tournament selection at the American Athletic Conference tournament three times. She also earned first team all-region honors three times and was named the 2016 American Athletic Conference Scholar Athlete of the Year.

The only player in program history to record 2,000 points (2,304), 900 rebounds (931) and 300 assists (318), Williams ranks second on the career scoring chart, third in rebounds, ninth in assists, seventh in blocks (93) and second in career games played (138). Her career scoring average of 16.7 ppg is fourth in program history as she led the Bulls in scoring in three straight seasons, steals twice and assists once. Following her successful run with the Bulls, Williams was selected with the eighth overall pick in the 2016 WNBA Draft by the Phoenix Mercury and has played five seasons in the WNBA.

The USF Athletic Hall of Fame will swell to 28 individuals and one team among its honored members of outstanding contributors to Bulls athletics. The 2020 class will be the second to be inducted to the Hall of Fame since 2013, adding three more honorees to the three selected in 2019 – Shantia Grace (women's basketball), Sara Nevins, '14, (softball) and George Selvie, '09, (football).

## SOCCER SUCCESS

# Epic 2019 season was latest chapter in soccer excellence

MAINTAINING A STRONG STANDARD of excellence certainly has its perks for USF women's soccer.

On a bright morning in October, the Bulls were surprised with a special team meeting at Corbett Stadium, where the program has won nearly 80 percent of its home games the past six seasons.

Instead of talking about the action-packed fall practice ahead, the entire roster got a friendly greeting from Michael Kelly. USF's vice president of athletics congratulated the Bulls once again for an incredible 2019 season that saw the team post a school record 16 wins and reach the Sweet 16 for the first time ever.

The main focus of this impromptu get-together was to celebrate what happened before the historic milestone was reached. Prior to defeating Florida and Washington in the 2019 NCAA tournament, USF won the American Athletic Conference tournament championship for the second time in three seasons.

The prize for the latest AAC feat was a shiny conference championship ring – and a fresh red rose – thoughtfully pre-



Above: Women's soccer 2019 conference title team

sented to each returning player by Iron Bulls supporter Craig Cuffe, '91, along with his fellow Kablelink Communications representative.

"I think it's special, especially during this time with everything going on," senior midfielder Sabrina Wagner said. "To at least get some kind of normalcy and be able to celebrate something was fun."

Wagner, a proud Tampa Bay area native, has built quite the collection of conference rings with a program she grew up watching and admiring long before becoming a Bull. In addition to two AAC tournament championship experiences, Wagner, of New Port Richey, was a part of USF's 2018 team that won the American's regular-season title.

"I think every ring leaves you with a memory, a stamp of your journey and the accomplishment," head coach Denise Schilte-Brown said. "Every journey is special. Every team is special."

SoccerWire.com certainly thinks so about the Bulls' squads since 2015.

The esteemed U.S. soccer news website ranked USF as the 17th best women's college soccer program over the past five years. During that stretch, the Bulls have posted a combined record of 72-21-8 and made four NCAA tournament appearances under the guidance of Schilte-Brown, her associate head coach husband, Chris, and numerous talented assistants over the years.

USF has been represented in the top 25 nationally at some point in each of the past five seasons. The Bulls' 2019 team made school history by finishing the year at No. 16 in the United Soccer Coaches poll.

Many more shining team and individual achievements from the Bulls' past could easily fill a very detailed retrospective penned by Schilte-Brown. Although USF's head coach since 2007 gets a kick out of taking trips down memory lane, she's always keeping her eyes forward at the helm of a hungry program that wants to fulfill the ultimate NCAA dream.

"I'm just blessed with a charmed life, but it feels like a job not finished," said Schilte-Brown, who will enter the upcoming season just six wins away from No. 150 with USF. "I'd like to help this program reach a national championship and see that success. I think we're capable of that here. I'm excited about our future."

- TOM ZEBOLD | USF Athletics

By MELISSA WOLFE, '13, Life Member  
USF Foundation

**B**EFORE CONSOLIDATION APPEARED on the legislative docket, Lynn Pippenger, MBA '88, Life Member, was helping to build a united USF.

“Lynn was one of the architects who set the framework for consolidation,” says Moez Limayem, dean of the Muma College of Business. “She was the first among very few people who invested in a transformational way across the bridge.”

In 2015, the retired Raymond James executive donated \$10 million to name the Lynn Pippenger School of Accountancy on the Tampa campus – establishing the first and only school of accountancy in the world to be named solely for a woman. A year later, she made another \$5 million gift to name Lynn Pippenger Hall on the USF St. Petersburg campus, which houses the Kate Tiedemann School of Business and Finance.

A 2015 USF Distinguished Alumna, Pippenger’s generosity has exceeded \$33 million in gifts to the university with a heavy emphasis on supporting the Muma College of Business and student success.

Now, on the heels of consolidation, Pippenger’s latest gift is poised to impact more than 9,500 business students spanning all three campuses. On July 7, 2020, the USF Foundation announced a \$5 million gift to create an endowed deanship that will support the dean’s strategic direction for the college.

“You cannot believe how honored I am to be the first Lynn Pippenger Dean of the Muma College of Business,” Limayem says. “The immense pride and gratitude I feel every time I think about it is impossible to describe. This is truly the highlight of my career.”

The gift to create the Lynn Pippenger Endowed Deanship not only fortifies the leadership in the college, it provides the resources needed to take academic programs,

across multiple disciplines, to the next level.

The earnings from the endowment will support the academic activities of the college’s dean, including faculty support and salaries, graduate fellowships and assistantships, faculty research awards, professional development support, conferences, publications, visiting lectures, speaker series, and other academic, research and public service programs that promote the core mission of the college.

“Lynn’s longstanding commitment to USF is an inspiration to us all and I look forward to seeing how this will further strengthen the college’s resolve to develop world-class business leaders,” says Les Muma, '66, Life Member, a 2012 USF Distinguished Alumnus. A 2014 gift from him and his wife, Pam, Life Member, named the college.

The endowed deanship represents the next major step on the path to achieving Limayem’s vision of elevating the Muma College of Business to become one of the best colleges of business in the world.

“Dean Limayem has ambitious goals for the future of the Muma College of Business and through the years I have watched as he surpassed each milestone he set,” Pippenger says. “His leadership is a critical part of the college’s path forward and the best investment I can make in its future is to name the deanship and ensure

“ You cannot believe how honored I am to be the first Lynn Pippenger Dean of the Muma College of Business.”

– Moez Limayem



# BRIDGING the



PHOTOS: MATT MAY

we always have an accomplished, forward-thinking and dynamic leader.”

Under Limayem’s leadership, the college has experienced tremendous success. Student retention, progression and graduation rates are soaring to an all-time high. Partnerships with the business community are flourishing. And the college continues its relentless climb to the top in state, national and global rankings.

Currently, the Muma College of Business is ranked the No. 1 college of business in the state for job placement and starting salaries, according to a study completed by the Florida Board of Governors; No. 11 in the nation for its graduate program in entrepreneurship by The Princeton

Review; as well as No. 6 in the world for its Vinik Sport & Entertainment Management Program by SportBusiness International.

“A college does not reach the great strides and progress that we’ve made because of one single person or dean,” Limayem says. “We’ve made it this far because of the incredible work of our world-class faculty and staff, the wonderful caliber of the students we are attracting, and the support of so many dear friends. We simply would not be here or be able to continue this trajectory without the transformational support from great people like Pam and Les Muma, Lynn Pippenger and many others. To them I say, ‘Thank you!’”

**Above: Lynn Pippenger’s generosity to the university has exceeded \$33 million, spanning all three campuses.**

**Opposite page: Muma College of Business Dean Moez Limayem celebrates with Lynn Pippenger.**

## CAMPUSES through philanthropy

# VISION and GENEROSITY

**T**HE LATE CLARA COOPER'S PASSION was teaching the humanities of her native India and introducing students to a country many people in the United States didn't know much about.

"She was a wonderful teacher, and the students just loved her," says Sara Deats, a close friend and fellow USF professor (now retired).

Cooper was born in Secunderabad, India, in 1936. She came to the United States to attend graduate school at Florida State University, earning her doctorate in 1969 before joining the USF faculty. Throughout her life, she remained close to her two sisters, who also immigrated to Florida.

Cooper's scholarship was centered on the humanities of India, and she wrote the definitive study of Hindu mystic Swami Vivekananda.

"She loved writing that book, but mainly she was a teacher," Deats says.

Cooper wore a sari when she taught, often accessorized with beautiful jewelry.

"With that sari and her lovely jewelry, she made the most glamorous impression," says Deats, adding that Cooper spoke "the most beautiful British English" as well as Gujarati and Hindi. "I'm sure the students were quite overwhelmed."

Deats says Cooper had a wonderful sense of humor, and though she was a "lady to her fingertips," she was not at all stuffy.

"She had quite an unladylike laugh," Deats says. "She could really have a guffaw if it was something she found humorous."

Her teaching specialties were Humanities of East and West and Humanities of India. Daniel Rutenberg, another friend and fellow USF faculty member (also now retired), says not only did Cooper have a good knowledge of Hindu philosophy and major Indian writings, but she understood movements, how the music, the visual arts and the philosophy were related to each other.

**“ Her gift is going to continue something that was important to her and is important to us – forever.”** – Liz Kicak

But as diversified and sometimes profound as her intellect was, Cooper was known more for kindness.

"If a student felt a little lost, a little ill at ease, Dr. Cooper was the person to see," Rutenberg says. "There was always a stream of students coming by her office. She was as good in her interpersonal relationships as she was in her classroom."

When planning her estate, Cooper wanted to leave a significant legacy for her students and the university that had given her so much. When she passed away on Jan. 29, 2019, Cooper left the bulk of her estate – nearly \$875,000 – to create the Clara Cooper Endowed Fund for the Humanities Institute at USF.

"It would be hard to overstate the importance of the humanities at this pivotal time in our society, where questions of how we should treat one another are paramount," says Eric Eisenberg, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences where the institute is housed.

The institute was established in 2003 to help promote scholarship and educational engagement across the humanities disciplines. Eisenberg says the institute is the one unit in the university whose sole purpose is to explore questions of meaning and value in society.



Carolina Ledford presents "The Effects of Racial and Ethnic Differences on Foster Care and Adoption Outcomes" (co-authored with Kenneth Garcia, not pictured) at the 2019 Humanities Institute Undergraduate Research Conference at the USF Tampa campus.

"This extraordinary gift from Clara Cooper gives us the freedom and ability to dream bigger about how we might expand all of these critical conversations throughout the Tampa Bay region, and to bring the lessons of literature, poetry, philosophy and the like to inform and inspire as many people as possible," Eisenberg says.

The institute, led by director Liz Kicak, '05 and MFA '10, supports three program areas.

The first is organizing public events that bring outside experts and thought leaders to campus to share their knowledge with the USF and greater Tampa Bay communities.

For the fall semester, the institute hosted a series of virtual events, including a talk by anti-racist educator and political organizer Frank Leon Roberts, a reading by Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Jericho Brown, the annual Humanities & Hops: Home Brew Edition on "Finding your Calling," and two book groups to discuss "Ordinary Girls," by Jaquira Diaz, MFA '12, and Claudia Rankine's "Citizen: An American Lyric."

The institute also promotes faculty scholarship and student research. Each year, it provides summer research grants of up to \$5,000 through the Office of Research to 10 faculty members.

Fittingly, Cooper's endowment will make the biggest impact on the institute's efforts to engage students in research at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Once COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted, the institute will begin funding travel for graduate students who have had original research accepted at national or international conferences.

The endowment will also support an annual undergraduate humanities conference. A pilot event last year attracted 25 students from 12 departments, many of whom went on to apply to the larger undergraduate research symposium at USF or included the experience on their graduate school applications.

This year's virtual event is scheduled for Jan. 28-29, 2021.

Long-term, Kicak says she's most excited about sustaining a relationship with the college's academic units that enhances student success and outcomes.

"If we are able to create a scenario where, because of the institute's support, the academic units recruit a higher tier of graduate students, while at the same time we're coaching undergrads to their next level ... I think that's phenomenal," Kicak says.

Though she never met Cooper, Kicak enjoyed meeting her friends and colleagues at her memorial, where she learned how deeply invested Cooper was in the success of her students.

"Her gift is going to continue something that was important to her and is important to us – forever," Kicak says. "To think that five years from now we will have hundreds of students who will have been touched by her gift is humbling and wonderful and just speaks to such vision and generosity."

# Remaining UNITED

# Philanthropy

**F**ROM MARCH 24 TO JULY 8, 2020, students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends joined together, while apart, to support students and the USF community through the USF United Support Fund and #BullsUnited In Action initiatives.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the USF community adjusted rapidly to remote classes and work. In addition, reduced employment opportunities led to financial and food insecurity for some students.

In response, USF President Steven Currall launched the USF United Support Fund to provide direct philanthropic support for students impacted by the pandemic.

To date, more than \$322,000 has been awarded to hundreds of students, helping them pay for food, rent and other critical needs.

Caroline Keller Vieira says she never knew what it meant to struggle financially until she looked at her bank account and realized if she paid her rent, she wouldn't have enough money for groceries.

Vieira, a sophomore international studies and criminology major, came to USF from Brazil. When COVID-19 caused USF campuses to close, she could no longer work on campus, and was unable to apply to off-campus jobs due to visa restrictions. Her family in Brazil wasn't able to offer much help, as the conversion rate between the Brazilian real and the U.S. dollar had increased. As an international student, Vieira wasn't eligible for CARES Act funding.

Running out of options, Vieira applied for the USF United Support Fund.

"Those moments of desperation vanished once I received the email informing me I had received the funds," she says. The support gave her time to develop a financial plan, which slowly led to stability.

"The crisis isn't over, but knowing USF had my back when I most needed it helped me think straight and trace out what my next steps would be," she says.

In June, the United Support Fund became one of 31 #BullsUnited In Action HerdFunder projects. Organized by the USF Foundation in partnership with units across all three campuses, #BullsUnited in Action included projects supporting emergency relief efforts and scholarships for students, research and more.

A committee of faculty, staff and students had been working for more than a year to open the Support-A-Bull Food Pantry on the Sarasota-Manatee campus. As COVID-19 began to impact the community in March, the committee realized the importance of addressing food insecurity for students who might be affected financially.

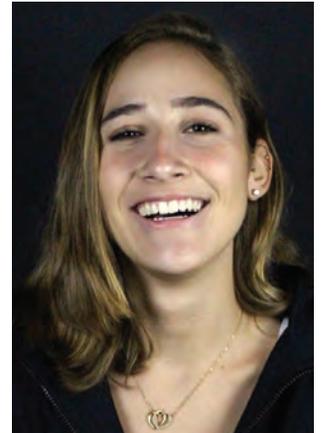
Quickly adapting plans to comply with social distancing guidelines, the pantry began operations on April 1.

"We're very lucky on the Sarasota-Manatee campus to be partnered with All Faiths Food Bank. That partnership along with community donations have allowed us to stock our pantry and serve our students," says Allison Dinsmore, assistant director of student success on the Sarasota-Manatee campus

and member of the Support-A-Bull committee.

Funds raised in the Support-A-Bull HerdFunder during #BullsUnited in Action assisted with final infrastructure needs and will continue to support management of the pantry. The funding also has allowed the committee to organize educational programming in collaboration with other USF campus pantries. Each has hosted a Cooking with Culture event this fall, for instance.

"We hope this resource will continue to assist with offsetting some of the financial difficulties students are experiencing so that they can be more successful academically," Dinsmore says.



**“The crisis isn't over, but knowing that USF had my back when I most needed it helped me think straight and trace out what my next steps would be.”**

— Caroline Keller Vieira

USF Health hosted a HerdFunder to support the Pandemic Research and Response Fund.

Tampa philanthropist and USF alumna Mary T. Pipino made a generous \$25,000 gift to establish the fund in March — and then gave an additional \$25,000 in April. The fund supports the immediate and long-term needs of USF Health to prevent, treat and train for a pandemic response, including the current COVID-19 pandemic, and supports research efforts.

Since it was established, the fund has helped USF Health create more COVID-19 testing kits, and conduct research on alternative treatments and care for patients in the Tampa Bay region.

"It gives us kind of a solid base for being able to do these kinds of unusual research projects," Dr. Charles Lockwood, dean of the USF Morsani College of Medicine, said in a WUSF Public Media interview about the fund. "We wouldn't normally have to create viral collection kits and invent viral collection swabs, but necessity is the mother of invention, and this is a way of helping us fund all that."

These are just three of the 31 projects donors supported during #BullsUnited in Action. Altogether, the USF United Support Fund and #BullsUnited in Action campaigns raised more than \$1.1 million between March 24 and July 8 in support of these efforts.

"It is heartwarming to witness such overwhelming generosity during what has been a difficult time for so many," USF Foundation CEO Jay Stroman says. "We are grateful to each and every person who donated to support the well-being of our students, fund vital research and power innovation that continues to impact our nation."

- Stories by KILEY MALLARD | USF Foundation

# ‘This is what we prepare for in PUBLIC HEALTH’

By TOM WOOLF

**E**XCEPT FOR AN OCCASIONAL BIKE RIDE or kayaking with her husband, Donna Petersen hasn't had much down time over the past 10 months.

“That's OK,” she says. “I'm doing what I need to be doing.”

Petersen, associate vice president of USF Health and dean of the College of Public Health, plays a key role in USF's response to the coronavirus pandemic, chairing the university's 14-member COVID-19 Task Force.

Petersen's perspectives regarding the pandemic are informed by her 30 years in the public health field.

“I have had experience in dealing with large outbreaks in communities,” she says. “I know what happens. It's all hands on deck. Those are intense efforts, but they end. I never anticipated anything like this.”

Many in the public health field have long believed the United States was overdue for a pandemic.

“Every time something like this emerged, SARS, the avian flu – and we were very worried what would happen if that jumped to humans – in each case, they were bad but they didn't turn out to be the pandemic we were long overdue for. This is what we prepare for in public health. We have a decent sense of what needs to happen to control the spread of a virus like this, but that doesn't mean it's easy.”

The overarching challenge, Petersen says, is that there are 50 states and five territories, and under the Constitution, public health is the responsibility of the states.

“Most other countries have something like a ministry of health that manages health for the entire nation,” she says. “We're not organized that way. That always creates challenges when you're trying to manage something across all the states and territories.”

In early spring, the Tampa Bay region was not as severely impacted by COVID-19 as some other areas of the country, perhaps because of the way the population is distributed.





“We don’t have a dense urban core like you see in Manhattan or Los Angeles, we’re very spread out,” she says. “This is when you’re glad you don’t have a public transportation system. We don’t have a lot of the things that create exposures in large urban areas. Plus, it was spring, we were outside more. A lot of factors kept our case numbers low.”

As spring wore on, however, that changed.

“The partial reopening of businesses right around Memorial Day seems to have contributed to the increase in cases that followed, coupled with the fact that as it gets hotter outside, people are more likely to congregate inside,” Petersen says. But this is all speculative as we continue to learn about this virus and how it survives and thrives.”

For public health professionals, the continuing priority has been “trying to get the word out, to communicate, to educate.

“This is where you wish you could do a better job in peace time to prepare people for war,” Petersen says. “But, people don’t want to hear it during peace time. It’s the same as with hurricane preparations.”

Over the course of her public health career, Petersen has observed that “no one understands what public health is or does until something like this happens.

“Then, we get ‘why weren’t you better prepared?’ and the answer is that no one invests in us in peace time,” she says. “Public health budgets have been cut pretty much in every state.”

There were significant investments in public health in the wake of 9/11 and the anthrax scare that followed, allowing Petersen and her colleagues throughout the country to do more in the preparedness space.

“Eventually, that dried up,” she says. “That’s the story of our lives. We can’t be ‘the sky is falling’ all the time. To say that the sky is going to fall someday and that is why you want to keep investing in public health, that’s a hard sell.”

Petersen acknowledges that public health is competing for funds with many other needs, such as K-12 education, Medicaid and prisons.

“The approach seems to be ‘public health, nothing’s going on there, so why invest in it?’ she says. “When something like COVID happens, when you don’t have stockpiles of equipment you need, you can’t ramp up testing and you don’t have the lab capacity you need, it’s because it is hard to make the argument when there is no crisis.

“All of those things were predictable,” Petersen adds. “The investment in public health does not keep up with predictable outcomes.”

Convincing the public to wear face coverings also has been a constant challenge. In the early days of the pandemic, Petersen and some of her colleagues quietly discussed the need for people to take that step.

“But, remember when there was a suggestion that Pepcid AC was a treatment or preventative for COVID-19?” she says. “The shelves were emptied. That’s what people do. We were very concerned that if we said people should wear face masks, people would buy them all up and our health personnel and first responders wouldn’t have them. Until we could build up the supply chain, we were reluctant to say anything publicly.”

Then, when the recommendation changed, “We’re accused of changing our minds, that ‘you don’t know what you’re talking about,’ ” Petersen says.

“We’re constantly learning about this virus and we’ve tried to explain to people that we change our minds because of new knowledge,” she says. “That is an ongoing challenge in public health. Are eggs good for you to eat or not? Is red wine good for you or not? Eat this or eat that? Science is about pursuing truth. Early on we didn’t believe wearing masks was appropriate. Now we know the virus is respiratory in nature and you should wear a mask.

“You also just have that element of society that isn’t going to be told what to do. Sadly, mask-wearing is a very public thing, it’s not like wearing a seat belt in your car. The whole point is we want you to do this in public.”

Even though she knew a mask would help protect herself and others, Petersen recalls feeling awkward about it – and distracted – when she first started wearing one in the spring.



**Science is about pursuing truth. Early on we didn’t believe wearing masks was appropriate. Now we know the virus is respiratory in nature and you should wear a mask.”**

– Donna Petersen

“I would wander around the grocery store for an hour, even though I had a list, trying to remember what I needed,” she says, laughing. “It kind of boggles the mind because it is such a simple thing to do.”

As with masks, there has been significant skepticism about the rapid development of a vaccine.

“There has been an incredible effort on the part of multiple companies around the world to develop a safe and effective vaccine,” Petersen says. “I believe they have been following all of the protocols. I don’t think they’re cutting corners.”

Even when vaccines are widely available, there will be many unanswered questions. Will they help create immunity to the virus? How long will immunity last? Is it like the flu, which requires a new vaccine every year? Will it be one vaccination, or two?

Regardless, Petersen is confident in the safety and efficacy of the vaccines.

“I will get vaccinated,” she says.

Since the pandemic began 10 months ago, Petersen says that effectively communicating the threat the virus poses, and ways the public could respond to it, has been difficult.

“I don’t think we fully appreciated all of the media channels people have access to and what they were reading and sharing,” she says. “We were not expressing well enough what we were learning about this in real-time.”

## BUSINESS RESEARCH

# Business professor studying restaurants' COVID response

RESTAURANTS HAVE TAKEN A HARD HIT throughout the COVID-19 crisis. They shut down months ago, and with no revenue coming in, many were unable to keep staff. Some, however, adapted, switching from sit-down to take-out and altering menus. Most relied on social media to retain relationships with customers. While some will never open again, others will emerge from the pandemic stronger because of their ability to innovate.

Which innovations will disappear when the pandemic subsides and which ones will remain?

USF Muma College of Business Assistant Marketing Professor Mark Bender is leading a research project to get a clearer picture of what the culinary landscape will look like in the wake of COVID-19.

"Restaurants need to embrace practices that allow COVID-conscious consumers to slowly re-acclimate to

that they exist and that their food beats cooking at home may be able to generate more business."

The restaurant research is one of 14 projects awarded seed funding from USF to address medical, technological and societal issues of COVID-19. Since April, USF researchers have embarked on 42 separate COVID-19 projects supported through the university's Rapid Response Research Grant Program.

Bender and his research colleagues aim to evaluate the resiliency of local eateries during the pandemic, using restaurants in the Tampa Bay area as case studies. As the pandemic spread early in the summer, the service industry had to utilize and adopt digital communication and ordering channels to remain in contact with and continue to serve consumers.

At the same time, consumers changed their behavior by spending more time and money online. The researchers hope to identify geographic and restaurant-specific factors that may help restaurants survive the ongoing pandemic.

"So far, the researchers have collected data on about 200 Tampa Bay area restaurants for the project," Bender says. "That number may grow and the researchers may expand the geographical area.

"Some data is easy to collect, as it requires us to send ZIP code and/or address through a software system and the requested information is returned automatically," Bender says. "Other data is going to require that we go through each restaurant's social media profile and capture that restaurant's posting history."

Once the data is compiled, researchers will explore whether the location of the restaurant played a part in its revenue and whether its digital communication strategy helped them survive, or even thrive, since the beginning of the pandemic.

Restaurants slowly opened up in late summer/early fall, with some requirements such as masks for all employees and physical distancing among patrons. Still, customers are tending to stay away, ordering delivery or take-out. That habit may take a while to change.

"It is likely consumer preferences have changed to the point that segments of consumers desire to spend less time dining out at restaurants, even in the absence of any regulations," Bender says. "Certain restaurant categories – or restaurants in specific locations – may be affected more.

"We do want to provide some actionable recommendations by learning more about specific digital strategies that have helped some restaurants survive and thrive through the pandemic and then sharing these digital success factors with other restaurants."

The grant funding the research lasts a year, but due to the timeliness of the research, some findings will be released periodically as they are formulated.

- KEITH MORELLI | Muma College of Business



**We do want to provide some actionable recommendations by learning more about the specific digital strategies that have helped some restaurants survive and thrive through the pandemic ..."**

– Mark Bender

things that were once taken for granted, like the ability to dine out at their favorite restaurant, with a favored server," Bender says. "In doing so, these restaurants may begin to emphasize digital tools that reduce contact between patron and staff. One example might be a QR code on the table that allows consumers to pull up a menu on their phone. This cuts down on one point of contact (the menu).

"Ordering and paying then may take place over the phone even though the consumer is in the restaurant, cutting down on more contact," he adds, "and reducing the amount of time that a server spends at the table."

The factors that go into the consumer decision-making process when choosing a restaurant have likely changed since pre-COVID, says Bender, who is leading the yearlong project along with fellow researchers Ran Tao, assistant professor in the USF School of Geosciences and Kelli Burns, associate professor in the Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communications.

Since the start of the pandemic, consumers have spent more time foraging for food at home and online.

"Thus, they may be more likely to see social media posts by restaurants that they follow," Bender says. "So, restaurants that do a better job of reminding consumers



UNIVERSITY ACTION

## Environmental testing in residence halls helps control spread of virus

EVERY WEEK DURING THE FALL SEMESTER, USF Housing & Residential Education (HRE) staff swabbed hundreds of high-touch areas across the university's housing facilities. The effort has been part of USF's multi-faceted approach to monitoring and mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

With thousands of students living on the Tampa and St. Petersburg campuses, the need to test for the presence of the virus remains a crucial part of the university's strategy and will continue during the spring semester. Along with requirements to complete the COVID-19 Daily Symptom Check and to participate in random COVID-19 testing, residential students will continue to see staff swabbing common areas around their halls.

While COVID-19 can lead to serious health complications and has killed more than 238,000 people in the U.S. at the time of this printing, health experts say most of those infected will experience minor or no symptoms while they are ill. It's these asymptomatic cases that make monitoring the virus particularly challenging and why USF's COVID-19 Task Force decided to utilize environmental testing as a first step in tracking down asymptomatic carriers.

Ana Hernandez, assistant vice president of Housing & Residential Education, says she and her staff take 75-100 samples per week across Tampa's HRE facilities. Each sample typically consists of five to six different high-touch areas, including common-area doorknobs, light switches, elevator buttons and more.

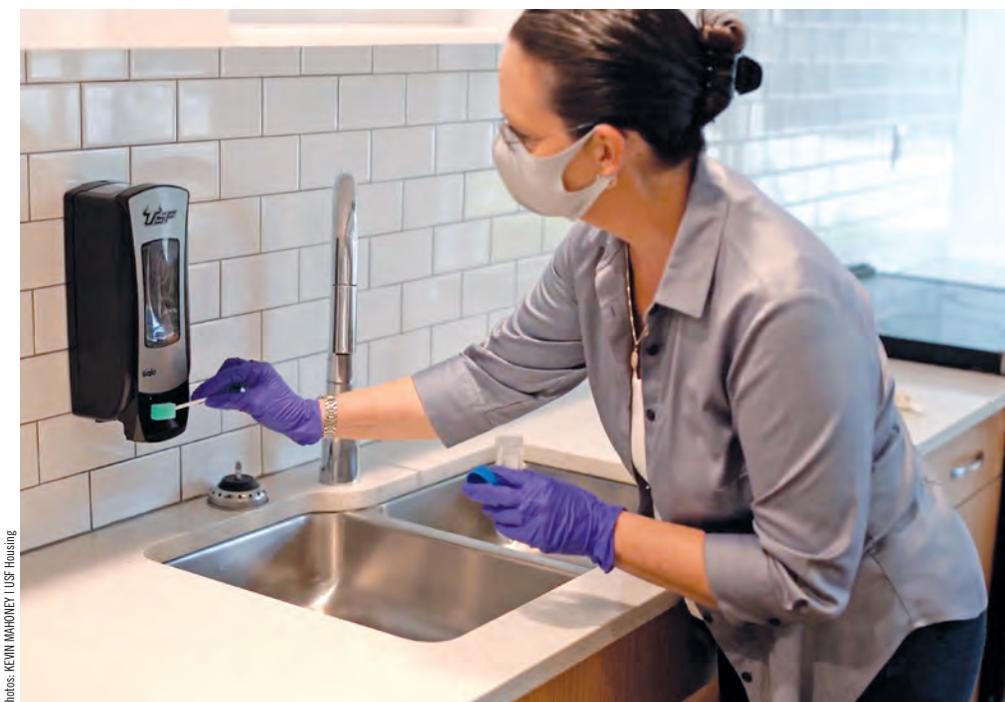
In total, the Tampa campus has processed more than 650 samples just within Housing & Residential Education. Of those tests, so far, they've seen only half a dozen samples containing COVID-19. In those cases, HRE identifies students who may have accessed those areas and refers them for further testing to identify any asymptomatic carriers. In addition to the Tampa campus, environmental testing recently started within Housing & Residential Education facilities on the St. Petersburg campus. It's also being conducted throughout many other heavily trafficked spaces on USF's campuses.

"For us, it's really been about asking the question, 'what else can we do to help promote safety?'," Hernandez says. "Anything we can do that can help identify cases early and help us mitigate the spread of this virus are steps that we want to take. And this environmental testing is part of that."

The testing is done in collaboration with Distinguished USF Health Professor Thomas Unnasch. Unnasch and his research team in the College of Public Health are able to process the environmental tests on campus and provide results and feedback directly to the HRE team.

"Throughout the whole pandemic, it has been incredible to be able to work with the talent here at USF," Hernandez says. "Whether it's our medical staff in Student Health Services or our public health researchers like Dr. Unnasch, we are able to react and respond quickly to support our students and make sure they are in a position to be successful in the classroom."

- AARON HILF | USF News



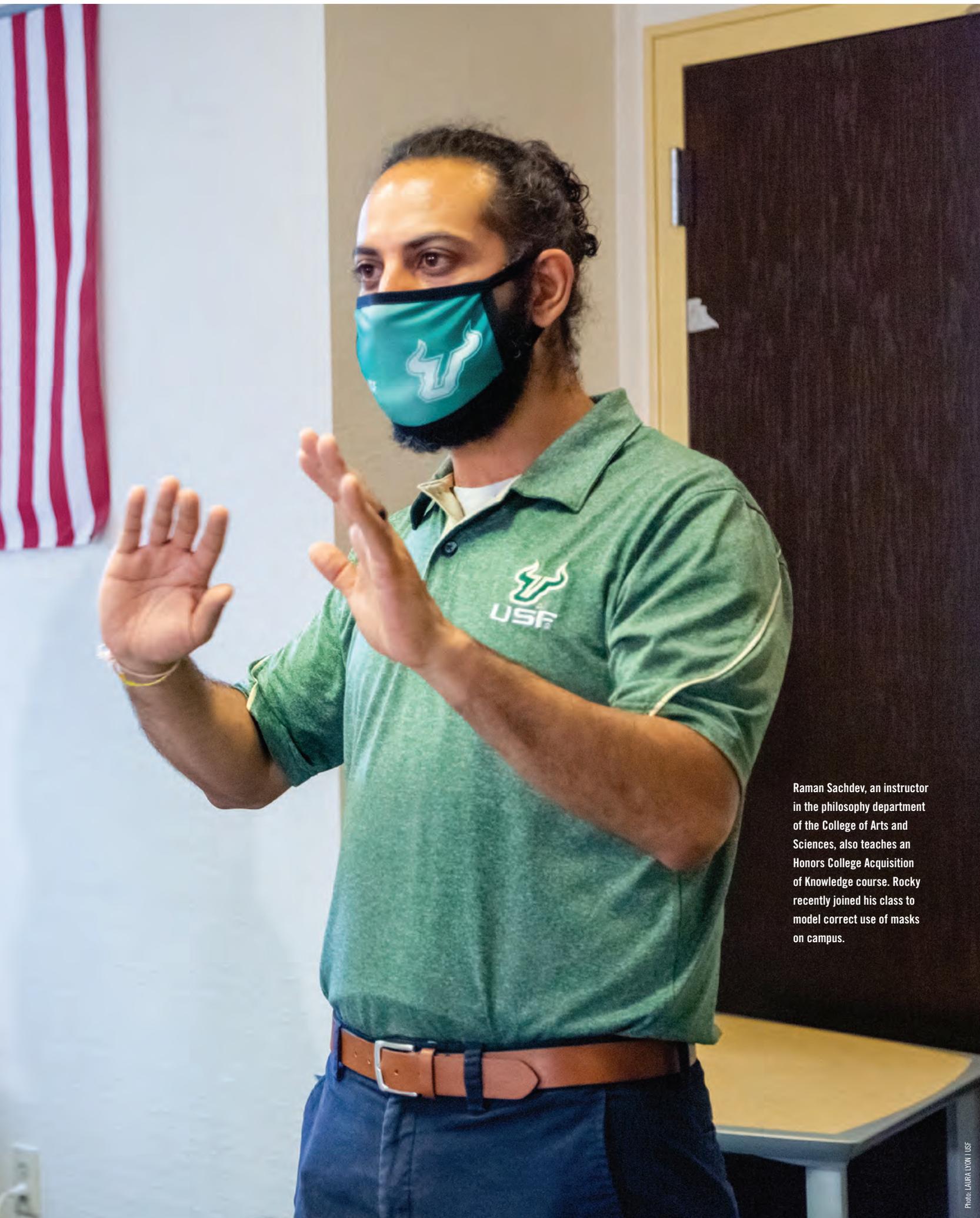
Housing & Residential Education Assistant Vice President Ana Hernandez taking environmental testing samples inside a residence hall common area.

Photos: KEVIN MAHONEY | USF Housing

# HEROES AMONG US

Students, faculty, staff and alumni have had a significant impact across USF's campuses and the Tampa Bay region throughout 2020. Here are short stories about some of the Bulls who have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges by focusing on making a positive difference in the lives of others.





Raman Sachdev, an instructor in the philosophy department of the College of Arts and Sciences, also teaches an Honors College Acquisition of Knowledge course. Rocky recently joined his class to model correct use of masks on campus.

Photo: LAURA LYON | USF



Photo: ALLISON LONG / USF Health

# Office of ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

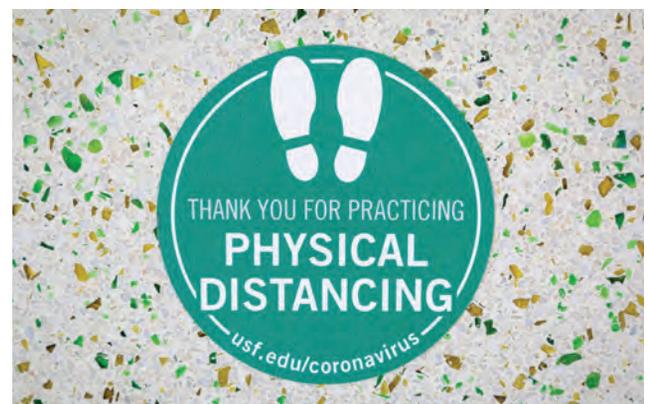
Preparing USF's campuses for the limited return this fall of students, faculty and staff required a herculean effort by the Office of Administrative Services' nearly 450 employees. Some of the numbers help tell their story:

- Signage – decals, table tents and barricade tape – had to be designed and purchased. As just two examples, more than 31,000 decals were installed and 2,000 table tents distributed across the three campuses.
- 29 hand sanitizer vending machines were installed to provide two complimentary 4-ounce bottles of spray hand sanitizer every 30 days to students, faculty and staff.
- 800 SaniKits were assembled and distributed for use in centralized employee areas, such as breakrooms, offices and other employee spaces. The SaniKits include spray bottles of disinfectant, paper towels and gloves.

- More than 75,000 washable, reusable face coverings and nearly 46,000 disposable masks have been distributed to departments and units for use by students, faculty and staff.

- Nearly 700 classrooms, meeting spaces and informal gathering spaces were analyzed and reconfigured for physical distancing. Ninety new outdoor seating areas were created across the campuses.

- 900 plexiglass partitions – a total length of just over half a mile – were installed.





The work did not stop once the fall semester began. For example, hand sanitizer vending machines have to be restocked regularly. And the frequency of enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces – such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks and sinks – has been increased as part of the ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

*Administrative Services consists of Facilities Management, Parking & Transportation Services, the Administrative Services Business Center and the Communications team.*

## College of ARTS & SCIENCES

### **Johnny El-Rady**

*Instructor III*

*Department of Cell Biology, Microbiology and Molecular Biology*

A member of the faculty since 1997, Johnny has truly gone “above and beyond” during this pandemic. In April, he led a USF task force charged with helping move STEM labs online. These labs involve special equipment, materials and hands-on interactions, and so are among the most difficult courses to transition to online learning. The task force successfully scaled media-rich innovative virtual STEM labs and became a go-to-resource for other State University System institutions. Johnny also launched fundraising efforts for his native Lebanon, whose capital city Beirut had experienced the largest non-nuclear explosion in history. In addition, he postponed his professional development leave from fall 2020 to spring 2021 to continue to assist with online instruction. He then postponed that leave to fall 2021, at the request of his department chair, to help teach upper-level courses during the upcoming spring semester.

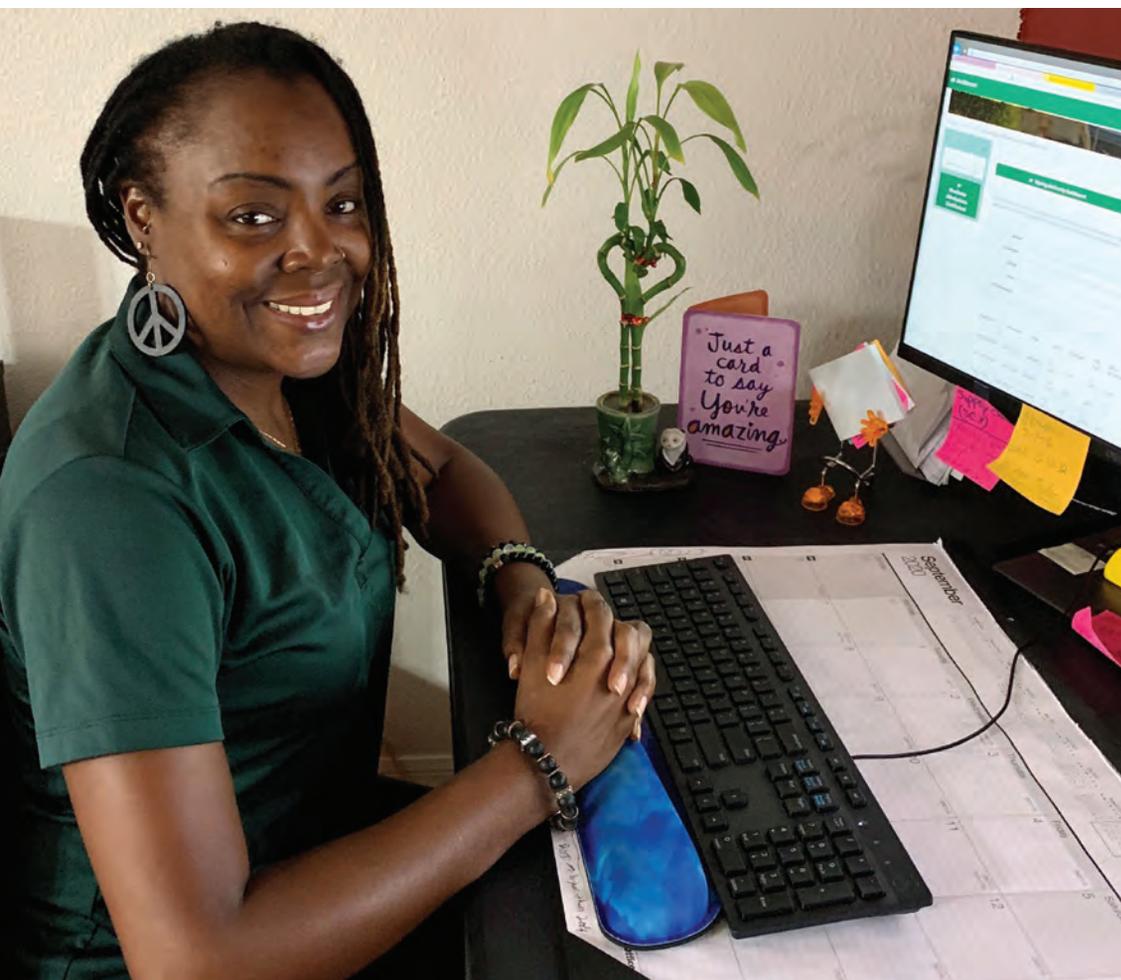


# MUMA College of BUSINESS

## Grandon Gill

*Professor, School of Information Systems and Management  
Founding Director, Doctor of Business Administration program*

At the outset of the COVID-19 crisis, when students and faculty were told to stay away from the campuses and conduct their classes online, Grandon assembled a team of tech-savvy business educators and offered mentoring for the rest of the faculty. His efforts paid off. A lot could have gone wrong during the transition to 100-percent online education, but the business faculty, with the assistance of Grandon and his team, provided a seamless bridge from face-to-face teaching to computer-to-computer education. In recognition of these efforts, Provost Ralph Wilcox named Grandon a Faculty Champion and he will represent the Muma College of Business on the USF Faculty Instruction and Learning Excellence Development Team.



## Le'Shelle Davis

*Application Document Processor,  
Graduate Recruitment  
Graduate Affairs Office*

Le'Shelle has been a true hero for the Graduate Affairs office during the past several months, adapting to a new environment while never missing a beat in her stellar work ethic. She quietly and steadily took on additional programs in her applicant-tracking system, deftly adding them to her growing portfolio. In total, she tracked 1,105 applications for fall 2020 compared to 729 for fall 2019. When USF's St. Petersburg campus admission operations consolidated in the Tampa office, two graduate programs dropped into tracking limbo. Le'Shelle made it her mission to ensure that no applicants fell through the cracks. She served as a sounding board for students who feared this would end their dream of a graduate degree and explained that USF would welcome them in the spring if the fall semester was logistically not an option.



Photo: LAURA LYON IUSF

# JUDY GENSHAFT Honors College

**Raman Sachdev**  
*Instructor*

Raman, MA '15 and PhD '19, is an instructor in the philosophy department who also teaches an Honors Acquisition of Knowledge (AOK) course.

Honors students take AOK during their first semester on campus. In this class they explore the different ways in which knowledge is created and consumed. Raman was not scheduled to teach a summer AOK course, but volunteered to rearrange his schedule and teach one to help the

university determine how to best handle in-person instruction during the pandemic. In his summer “pilot” course, half of his class was in the classroom with him (socially distanced and wearing masks), and half joined synchronously using the Microsoft Teams platform. This was a new way of teaching, and Raman quickly adapted to offer a safe and impactful experience for all of his students. He tested new technology for the university and provided valuable feedback to shape the instruction plan for the fall semester. He also helped train other faculty members to ensure the best possible experience.

In addition to this important work in the pilot course, Raman is now teaching AOK at both the St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee campuses.



Stephanie Jamanca, senior residence life coordinator, is one of the 50+ COVID Care Team volunteers who support residents in isolation on campus.

# USF Tampa campus LIBRARY

## Library Services Desk

They are likely the first people you meet at the Tampa campus library, friendly faces behind the front desk who check out items, answer questions and reveal a service or resource you never knew existed. It's a diverse team, called the Library Services Desk, and they do exactly that, provide a multitude of library services.

Led by **Terry Hutchings**, '16, manager of operations, and managed by **Loryn Ragsdale**, library operations manager, the team puts dynamic practices into place that ensure a safe, healthy environment for the USF community. Their team includes Building & Security Assistants **Patrick Crookston** and **Matt McDonough**, '01, who have been at the building daily since COVID-19 sent most employees and students home in March. Their reliability and attention to detail are never in short supply, whether it's processing and shipping hundreds of laptops to students and books to faculty, or monitoring the building for cleanliness and safety. Library Assistant **Ginny Gates-Fowler**, '06 and MA '08, Life Member, re-launched Uborrow book loaning this fall, and **Tina Pierson**, '18, monitors patron emails and retrieves requested materials for faculty and students. **Scott Hicks**, '95, **Austin Thommas**, '18, **Sarah Grecni** and **Andre Holmes** are library specialists. When not

# HOUSING & Residential Education

## COVID Care Team

USF's impressive efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 have included a quick and efficient isolation process for students who test positive with COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone with the virus.

Students in isolation in the residence halls are assigned a point of contact from the COVID Care Team. This group of more than 50 staff members has volunteered to support residents during their time in isolation. The assigned staff member virtually checks in with the student soon after they arrive in the isolation space and continues to touch base frequently to assess their needs and provide support.

The COVID Care Team members all volunteered their time to support residents in isolation and have been working tirelessly this semester to provide individualized assistance to these students.

## Housing Assignments Team

**David Kloiber, Kim McCabe, Kali Popson, '17, Amy Pounders**

Led by David Kloiber, associate director for operations and outreach, the Assignments Team of USF Housing & Residential Education has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic. Since March, the team has answered thousands of calls and e-mails from residents and families regarding the housing changes implemented in response to COVID-19. From coordinating room changes to implementing grand opening, the team has not taken a break from giving 110 percent to supporting USF residents during this time of uncertainty.



David Kloiber participating in a LIVE Q&A on Facebook



on the desk, Scott extends due dates and assists patrons with account issues. Andre monitors the Laptop Loaner Program, providing laptops to students in need to help them continue their studies remotely. Sarah and Austin work with the Course Reserves and Textbook Affordability Project to ensure students have in-person access to course materials that are affordable, up-to-date and satisfy their academic needs. **Teresa Higdon**, '01 and MA '10, and **Jeff Hadsock**, '13, are library operations supervisors and work closely with staff and students ensuring the front desk runs smoothly and patrons gain access to the materials they need. **Stephanie Mackin**, stacks supervisor, helped create the LibCal Seat Reservation system, which allows students to safely study in the building while following physical distancing standards. Along with her Stacks student employees, **Deandre, Samantha, Ishama, Maleena, Sarah, Jordan** and **Quentin**, she also organized a new system to ensure that books are sanitized and safe for all to browse and handle.

Outside of Stacks, the Services Desk also employs students. **Alex** has been a huge help to the TAP/Course reserve team, stickering and shifting books to make room for the newest editions of

# HEROES AMONG US



Top: Tina Pierson with students at the services desk.

Left: Austin, Terry, Matt, Josh Barreto, Stephanie, Jeff, Sarah, and Loryn (2019 photo)



textbooks. **Sofia, Demara** and **Kaley** have assisted with Uborrow requests and placed QR codes on almost 800 study spaces, allowing students to safely check in and out of their reserved seats. **Cesar** and **Tyler** have tirelessly walked the floors every shift to ensure everyone is wearing masks. And **Jessica, Skyya** and **Daisy** have assisted patrons from the library concierge desk located in the middle of the first-floor lobby, allowing for further safe physical distancing.

**Amanda Boczar**  
*Operations Manager*

**Sydney Jordan, '15**  
*Collections Specialist*

Special Collections is full of wondrous and rare materials including photographs and stories of LGBTQ+ and Civil Rights activism in Tampa Bay, environmental data from Audubon Florida and so much more. Special Collections is a way to look back through history as a means to move forward. Amanda and Sydney bring these unique resources to life.

They have been instrumental in developing virtual resources that enhance access to traditionally print special collections. Their extensive work creating online sites to facilitate research, discovery and classroom instruction during the pandemic has transformed the USF community's interaction and engagement with materials. Using distinctive primary resources to build virtual collection hubs and online learning modules, Amanda and Sydney effectively demonstrate the value of Special Collections in meeting both the immediate and the long-term needs and interests of researchers, educators and students on campus and abroad.

# College of MARINE SCIENCE

gle “Diversi-teas” conversation run as part of the mentoring culture at the college; these address everything from racism to imposter syndrome. Students know he doesn’t have to do that – but showing up matters, especially now.



**Samyntha Francis**  
*Assistant Director of Academic Affairs*

**David Naar**  
*Associate Dean of Academic Affairs*

Samyntha “Sami” Francis and David Naar operate as a kind of Leia and Luke at the College of Marine Science – relentlessly shining their light to improve processes and morale during tough times while fighting off any dark forces of confusion or isolation. Sami doesn’t just do her job, she serves her community. One student struggling with grief this year said Sami called her up every two weeks to check in and provide a “non-judgmental, safe voice of reason” – making all the difference in this student’s ability to succeed. When the pandemic hit, David also stepped up – providing information and support around the clock. When the visa status of international students was uncertain,

he worked tirelessly with USF administration to find a solution while keeping the college community informed every step of the way. He is also known to routinely attend – and really be present for – every sin-



**Gary Mitchum**  
*Associate Dean*

The pandemic took root as the college was hiring a new dean, making life more hectic than usual for Associate Dean (then Interim Dean) Gary Mitchum. Gary’s cool demeanor introduced calm through the frenzy of new information, COVID-19 related protocols and leadership transition. His daily walk-throughs among campus buildings have been a welcome comfort, and his profound commitment to student success is celebrated. When COVID hit, many students felt their research and career paths ground to a halt. Oceanography careers often depend upon spending time at sea but cruises stopped for months, and COVID disrupted the rhythm of lab work. But, said one student, the fact is that progress has NOT stopped thanks to Gary’s fierce, if quiet, work behind the scenes, often late into the night. He’s kept protocols clear and safe. This student was able to safely embark on a critical research cruise in Tampa Bay with Gary’s help, “and you can probably multiply my experience by about 100 over the past six months,” he said. Perhaps fitting for this ocean physicist, while COVID exerted all of its forces of oppression on the typical life of a graduate student, Gary was on the other side of the equation, providing the necessary opposing forces of calm, cool action to ensure momentum in careers and livelihoods.

## USF Health MORSANI College of MEDICINE

**Kami Kim**  
*Professor and Director of Division of Infectious Disease and International Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine*

As the world watched COVID-19 infection rates grow, physicians and researchers scrambled to find effective treatments. Dr. Kami Kim was on the frontline for USF Health and Tampa General Hospital at the start of the pandemic and quickly helped review, evaluate and launch more than 20 clinical trials that tested medications we all hoped would ease the severe and life-threatening reactions patients experience with this virus. In March, she was awarded USF Health/TGH’s very first COVID

trial: an anti-IL6 (anti-inflammatory cytokine) drug, funded by Regeneron. With her breadth of knowledge for infectious diseases as a medical doctor and her accomplished career as a basic science researcher, she continues to help coordinate trials. Her efforts have included trials for Remdesivir, dexamethasone, Regeneron, hydroxychloroquine, among many others – work that is providing much-needed data that will tell the world what works and what is ineffective for fighting this virus. Across the pandemic, she has also organized teams of physicians on using stringent protocols that ensured uniform patient care, continued to mentor junior faculty on how to conduct clinical trials, played a key role in testing the USF-patented 3D-printed nasal swab that helped impact the worldwide swab shortage in COVID-19 testing kits, and initiated a COVID biorepository to study relevant biology, pathogenesis, and serology of COVID-19 on residual blood/serum and nasopharyngeal samples and investigate correlations with patient clinical data.

# USF Health College of NURSING

HEROES  
AMONG US



**Tracey Taylor**  
*Associate Dean of  
Graduate Programs*

Tracey has embodied USF's spirit of resilience and courage during the coronavirus crisis by leading the college's multi-faceted COVID-19 response that has helped local industries, communities, students and faculty.

Tracey developed the college's COVID-19 Standard Operating Protocol, which includes a daily sign-in survey for symptom recognition and contact tracing. This screening survey is required for any person entering a College of Nursing instructional site on any of its campuses or clinical sites and is an additional layer to the USF-wide Campus Pass COVID-19 Daily Symptom Check.

She led the development of COVID-19 and infection control training modules for the Port of Tampa and its neighboring businesses, helping them create a safer environment. She also worked closely with the Hillsborough County Health Department to embed nurse practitioner students into community settings for them to gain valuable pandemic-related response skills.



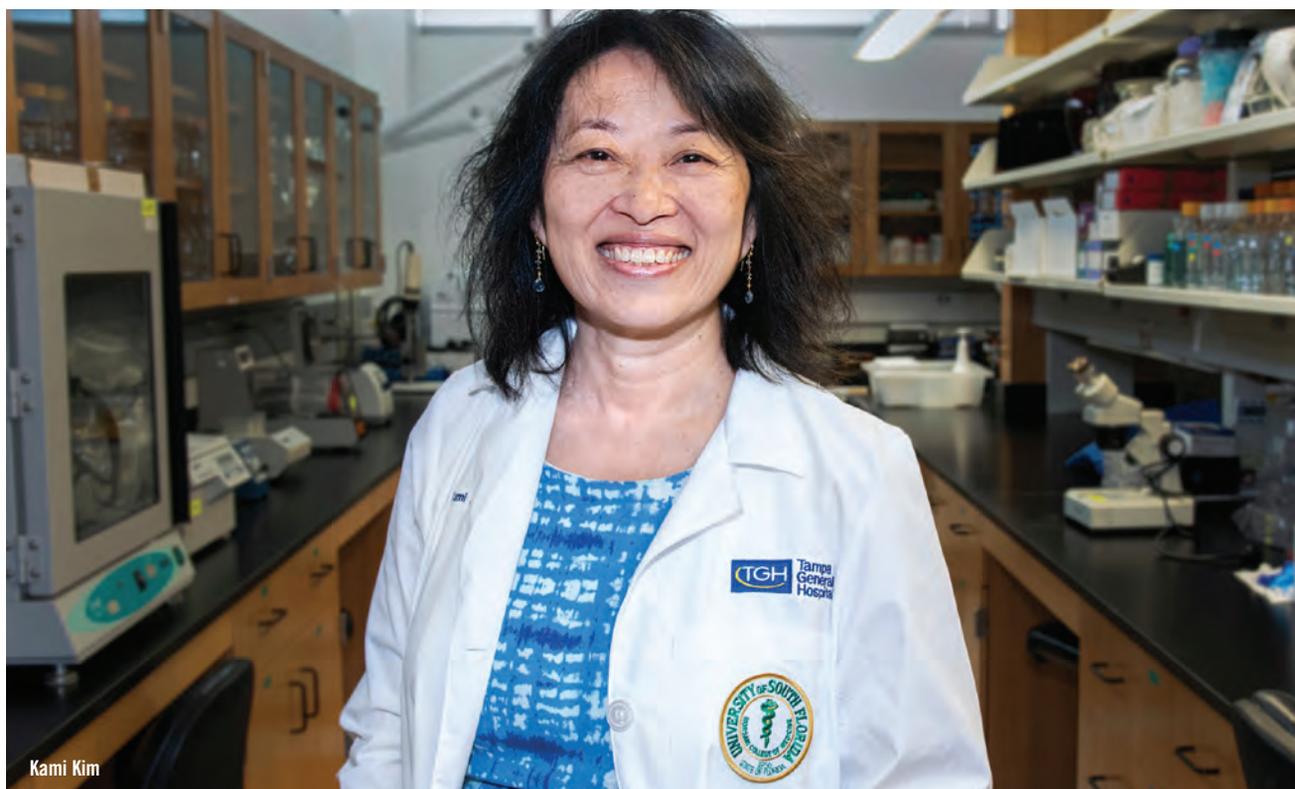
**Ann Joyce, '01 and  
PhD '16**  
*Associate Director of  
Advanced Practice  
Initiatives*

Since March, Ann has been the college's strongest link to numerous community partnerships during the coronavirus pandemic. She has worked tirelessly to ensure that the partnerships

have continued to grow while each partner's pandemic response needs are met.

For example, she helped lead efforts to organize a drive-through donations giveaway in the Sulphur Springs community. The event built on the college's existing partnership with the Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise and benefited families scarce on food and household cleaning supplies.

Ann coordinated with the Hillsborough County School District to help educate 380 nurses as they prepared to return to the schools and worked with the Port of Tampa as they implemented increased safety protocols. With each collaboration, she has kept the college's community connections strong.



Kami Kim

# USF Health TANEJA College of PHARMACY



**Mariam Gendi**  
*Pharmacy Manager of  
USF Health Pharmacy  
Plus*

In the early part of the pandemic, as USF Health quickly transitioned from in-person appointments to telehealth, Mariam took the lead on ensuring USF Health patients continued to receive required

the need was critical to create a process for getting much-needed medications to patients across the Tampa Bay area and beyond. Mariam quickly adjusted Pharmacy Plus schedules and ramped up shipping operations, including innovative cold chain shipping solutions, to ensure continuation in care and therapy for patients, all the while following CDC guidelines for maintaining a safe work area for patients and staff. Mariam was one of many who got out of comfort zones and she worked in the trenches to ensure her patients and providers continued to receive the same standard of care.

prescriptions from Pharmacy Plus, located inside the Morsani Center for Advanced Healthcare. With so few patients being able to pick up their prescriptions on-site,



# USF Health College of PUBLIC HEALTH



**H. Joseph Bohn**  
*Assistant Professor and Director,  
Community Engagement  
Deputy Director, DrPH Program*

COVID-19 has kept us all on our toes, but perhaps no one more so than the College of Public Health's Joe Bohn. Shortly after the pandemic hit, he decided to use his love of dance to build camaraderie and connectedness via near-weekly virtual dance

classes. "A few of my students asked me to do it," says Joe, whose virtual classes have focused on line dancing – Tush Push, Good Times and the Cowboy Cha Cha, among others. "I knew none of these dances before April 2020, but fear of isolation was setting in and an innovative action was needed." He says he averages about eight people (students, faculty and community members) per class. "It takes several hours each week to prepare for the classes, but they help other people," Joe says. "And they also help make me a stronger teacher, on the dance floor and in the classroom."



**Linsey Grove, MPH '13  
and DPH '18**  
*USF Health Sciences Instructor*

As a public health professional and president of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area, Linsey, a College of Public Health alum, knows that civic engagement

can have positive effects on individual and population health.

"The ZIP codes with more cases of COVID-19 house the lowest voter turnout precincts in St. Petersburg," Linsey says. "We know that Black and brown communities suffer from health disparities, making them more vulnerable to COVID-19 morbidity. We wanted to increase civic engagement and keep these communities safe by using mail-in ballots."

Ahead of the November election, Linsey and her colleagues created a social marketing campaign featuring people in the community filling out mail-in ballots on social media, provided kid ballots to families to promote "keeping the voting tradition alive," facilitated a texting campaign with culturally informed messages and commissioned a local Black artist to create a mural with a positive vote-by-mail message.

## HEROES AMONG US

(From left) Timi Hager, Heidi Schroeder, Angelika Fairweather, Sarah Gentry and Donna Lycan

**Timi Hager '05**, Associate Director, Digital Learning Services, and team members **Heidi Schroeder, Sarah Gentry, Angelika Fairweather** and **Donna Lycan**

With COVID-19 upending face-to-face learning, Timi Hager and the Digital Learning Services team shifted into high gear, working weekends and nights over spring break to create 175 online courses and training dozens of professors one-on-one to use the virtual learning technology. That same level of commitment continued during the fall with trainings of new faculty and additional online course creation as the campus embraced the #OneUSF model while continuing to grapple with the pandemic's impact. "I couldn't be more proud of the team," Timi says. "They've come together to meet the course delivery needs of our faculty in a really stressful time."

**Darren Gambrell, '06 and '10**, Life Member, Assistant Director, Student Services, and team members **Tim Thomas, '18, Cristyne Ramirez, '19** and **Christopher "Topher" Mowry, '14**

Darren Gambrell and the Student Services team rose to the occasion this past spring when face-to-face learning transitioned to online classes: calling, texting and e-mailing the campus's 2,100 students to check on their well-being and ensure they were prepared for the changes. Darren's team continued going the extra mile when in-class learning resumed in the fall. Creating a welcoming campus environment while adhering to health and safety protocols, team members greeted each student, provided hand sanitizer and face coverings and even escorted new students to class. "Students are dealing with a lot right now, and we thought it was important to take a personal approach during these stressful times," Darren says.

## USF SARASOTA-MANATEE campus



(From left) Tim Thomas, Christopher "Topher" Mowry, Cristyne Ramirez, Darren Gambrell



New Student Connections  
Peer Advisor Leaders (PALs)  
(Pre-COVID-19 photo)

# Student SUCCESS

## Course Schedule Team

The conversion of a predominantly classroom-based course schedule to one that offered the flexibility of online and hybrid modalities to accommodate the needs of 50,000 students was a momentous task and was adeptly accomplished by USF's Course Schedule Team this past summer in a very short period of time.

By late July, the newly formed team, representing Academic Affairs, Information Technology, Innovative Education and Student Success, coordinated fall course offerings by updating systems to reflect reduced classroom capacities; worked with colleges and faculty members to adjust how, where and when sections were delivered to students; updated registration processes; and communicated with students, faculty and staff.

The team continues to work together, recently delivering the spring schedule and now focusing on summer 2021.



## Financial Aid Team

One of the busiest offices at USF is without a doubt Financial Aid. Student support was typically offered through in-person consultations, phone calls and emails, but when USF went remote last March, the team was challenged without the infrastructure of their physical office.

With the help of IT, they implemented a website chatbot to assist students, adopted the Microsoft Teams platform, and then became the first office (other than the IT Help Desk) to move to the Five9 system to receive and make literally tens of thousands of phone calls.

With special COVID-19 funding sources, the crew also had additional aid to administer and counsel students on. To date, Financial Aid has processed more than 6,600 federal CARES Act applications, distributed 22,213 We Got U-SF Scholarships & Waivers, and distributed USF United Support Funds to another 362 students, totaling more than \$33 million – and all in addition to the financial aid packages typically offered to 75 percent of our student population.

## The Course Schedule Team

Top row: Catherine Mund, Cindy DeLuca, Melissa Irvin, Christine Brown, '02 and MEd '07, Michelle King, '18

Second row: Lisa Landis, '94 and MA '98, Carrie Purool, Erin Sutliff, Tanya Vomacka, '07, Renee Hunt.

# USF St. Petersburg campus

## COMPASS Peer Coaches

The COMPASS Peer Coaches have been assisting first-year, second-year and transfer students through their transition to the USF St. Petersburg campus since early June. At a time when many students are living away from campus and taking classes virtually, the peer coaches' friendly faces and incredible knowledge of USF are invaluable to student success.

The 24 dedicated student coaches take time to have intentional conversations with their peers to create community and foster a sense of pride in being a Bull. Since the summer, the Peer Coaches met with students more than 600 times, focusing their conversations on friendship, academic success and involvement. Additionally, the Peer Coaches are responsible for group engagement through the Network, a variety of interest groups designed to help Bulls find students with similar interests. Thanks to the support of the Peer Coaches, COMPASS has engaged with 62 percent of first-year students on the St. Petersburg campus.

## New Student Connections Peer Advisor Leaders (PALs)

The PALs added "virtual mentor" to their role as the team of 24 student staff provided a proactive, meaningful connection to 9,470 Tampa campus undergraduate students since March 2020. More than 18,345 outreach calls were made to USF first-year, transfer and rising seniors. The PALs answered student questions, referred students to remote learning and support resources, reminded students of their connections with USF, and coached them for continued progress toward a degree.

Their work successfully cultivated community and a sense of belonging.



## Meredith Mechanik

*Student Program Coordinator*

When USF announced it would be transitioning to remote learning for the remainder of the semester, Meredith worried about how students could stay connected. So she turned to a time-honored concept: the pen pal. A student program coordinator at the COMPASS Student Experience program at USF's St. Petersburg campus, Meredith launched the College Pen Pal program on March 17. Less than 48 hours later, more than 700 students from universities across the country had signed up to correspond with a like-minded friend. She and her colleagues have now formed matches among more than 1,600 participants from 100 different universities, including NYU, Yale and the University of Zambia.

"While there is so much uncertainty right now, there has been comfort in knowing that we're all in this together," says Meredith. "Regardless of location, major or university, college students around the world are having the shared experience of social distancing. We are so excited to see what kinds of connections and creative endeavors come out of this project."



## David Brodosi

*Associate Director, Innovative Education*

Online education has always been a top priority on USF's St. Petersburg campus. But with so many classes transitioning to a remote or blended format due to COVID-19, the need for high-quality online learning suddenly became even more acute. That's where David stepped in. A member of the Innovative Education team on the St. Petersburg campus, he spent the summer developing training, creating

templates and preparing classrooms so that faculty could design their own courses and successfully teach both in-person and online audiences. In addition, David served as a resource to faculty, offering guidance on how best to use the new technology and providing direction on adhering to the standards set out by Quality Matters, a program out of the University of Maryland that uses a set of best practices to evaluate the design of online courses and recognizes those courses that meet the highest standards of learning.

**Alexis Naguib** says she lost her best friend when her grandfather died in June of mesothelioma at the age of 76. Today the sophomore at USF's St. Petersburg campus channels her grief into helping senior citizens who may be feeling lonely and isolated as a result of the pandemic. Every week, Alexis calls a woman more than 50 years her senior to chat and listen to stories about the woman's travels as a scuba diving instructor. It's part of a new initiative called St. Pete Friends, which matches USF students with seniors in assisted living facilities at a time when many are craving connections as a result of social distancing restrictions. Alexis says she was a little nervous at first but now considers the woman she calls a close friend. "People of her generation can really give you advice and help you grow as a person," she said.

# Beyond COVID-19

# HOMEFRONT

# HEROES

By Penny Carnathan, '82

## Making college dreams come true



Albert Gibbs II

Hundreds of Black middle and high school boys in Broward County, Fla., have found a friend in **Albert Gibbs II**, '06.

Some had bright futures in the bag and needed only introductions from the well-connected Citrix manager. Others lacked resources – and confidence in their abilities, despite good report cards. One lived in a Home Depot parking lot. They received mentoring and scholarships, school supplies, even transportation to their college campus – whatever they needed to identify and achieve their goals.

“There is so much programming in the Black community for at-risk youth, but very little for young men who are on the right track but need a mentor and resources,” says Albert, a Muma College of Business graduate. “I wanted to bridge that gap.”

What began with personal donations for scholarships at his high school alma mater evolved into the Albert Gibbs Leadership Academy in 2016. The nonprofit raises money and provides opportunities for boys who request them. Albert estimates he and his network, including his USF Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity brothers, have served up to 600 teens.

“Our young people need us,” he says. “They need someone to tell them, ‘You are special and I know you can do amazing things in this world.’ Then hold them to that.”

## From a hero, for heroes

As a member of the Naval ROTC at USF, **Kelly Wise**, '16, had the makings of a strong leader. A top student and battalion commander, she received USF's Capt. Jason Holbrook Memorial Scholarship in 2014.

That enabled her to attend the Naval Leadership Weekend hosted by Notre Dame, where she got powerful lessons in overcoming challenges from top military and civilian leaders. Fellow Bull and ROTC member and future husband Jesus Colon, '14, also received the scholarship.

“Kelly served in the Marines and now plans to pursue a doctorate in clinical psychology to help veterans dealing with post-traumatic stress syndrome,” says John Sarao, director of USF's Joint Military Leadership Center. “Jesus is still in the Marines, was recently promoted to captain, and is an instructor pilot for unmanned aerial systems.”

The couple are foster parents to two boys.

They're among 46 recipients to date of the Holbrook Scholarship, created in memory of U.S. Army Capt. Jason Holbrook, killed in Afghanistan in 2010. His parents-in-law – former Alumni Association executive director and board president John Harper, '76, Life Member, and Cindy Harper, '74 and MEd '79, Life Member – designated the funds to send ROTC students to prestigious leadership conferences, preparation for the weighty responsibilities they'll face as young military officers. Their daughter Heather Holbrook, '03, Life Member, was Jason's wife.

“These conferences give them personal examples of challenges and how these successful leaders got through – their determination and critical decision-making,” Sarao says. “It gives them confidence ... They're a practical application for leadership.”



Jesus and Kelly (Wise) Colon



## Humanitarianism + Scientific Discovery = Impact

Junior Girl Scouts working toward the new STEM Career Exploration badge learn about becoming future neuroscientists from **Joyonna Gamble-George**, MHA '05, a former Girl Scout and now the focus of an official Scout badge activity.

As one of 125 IF/THEN Ambassadors for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Joyonna inspires girls to become the next generation of science pioneers. Through Vanderbilt University, she's also taught hands-on STEM labs to boys and girls in rural schools; volunteered with an aspirational student pen-pal program; and helped establish a biomedical summer workshop for high school students.



"You have to see something to believe it and eventually become it," she says. "My hope is they'll see what I'm doing and say, 'I can do the same,' or – better – 'I can do more.'"

A National Institutes of Health neuroscientist, Joyonna has also teamed with fellow Bull Gloryvee Cordero, '00 and MEEd '05, to found SciX, LLC, a company that aims to prevent health crises such as heart attacks and strokes using wearable health-tracking devices and blockchain technology.

"I grew up on a farm in rural Alabama, where my grandmother always gave back to the community – helping the elderly, the homebound," she says. "Seeing that allowed me to connect humanitarianism to scientific discovery and see the impact, how I could make a difference in society."

**Above: Joyonna Gamble-George**

**Left: The new Junior Girl Scouts STEM Career Exploration badge**

# 5 minutes with BILL



Photo: PENNY CARNATHAN / USFRA

## My fellow Bulls,

WHILE I ALWAYS FIND OUR USF MAGAZINE cover stories timely and topical, the choice for this issue has special meaning for me.

It's easy to look back on 2020 and see only the challenges, but in this issue, we also see the best of ourselves. Bulls are uncommonly courageous, compassionate and creative, whether dealing with the fallout from COVID-19, tackling other societal issues, or supporting our university, its students and one another. I hope the stories of our USF heroes inspire you as much as they have me.

And there are so many more.

You may not think of them as "heroes," but the 21 members of our Homecoming steering committee, which I am honored to chair, faced immense hurdles this year and resolved to overcome every one. They were determined and very innovative.

Even as many universities canceled or postponed their fall Homecoming celebrations, our steering committee charged

ahead. Representing students and alumni, parents and families as well as all three campuses, members navigated pandemic guidelines that sometimes changed on a daily basis. They came up with an action-packed week of events, including online versions of our traditional Homecoming KickOff and Stampede Comedy Show, along with team competitions, special presentations and even a virtual carnival – Carni-Bull.

Their work resulted in an unprecedented Homecoming that drew together thousands of Bulls and friends from all over the world. We had fun, laughs and, most important, a welcome reminder that even while socially distant, we can reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

Innovations like these have emerged as a surprising silver lining during this pandemic. Eliminating the need to travel, or even leave home, opened the door to countless alumni eager to "come home," and your Alumni Association will continue to offer this option even after we're able to resume in-person gatherings. Our Homecoming Trivia Night, for one, has become a popular monthly event – don't miss Holiday Movies Trivia Night on Dec. 15!

This fall also saw another USF tradition gone virtual: recognition of our 2019 USF Outstanding Staff Award recipients. This prestigious honor recognizes employees who go above and beyond in performance excellence and daily commitment to USF, and I'm proud to say they included our own Alumni Association assistant communications director Penny Carnathan, '82, Life Member. She's the co-editor of this great magazine and the person who holds your Alumni Association to Preeminent standards, grammatically speaking, with her red pen and gentle coaching. Congratulations, Penny!

Like you, I'm looking forward to 2021 and a return, fingers crossed, to in-person events. Member Appreciation Baseball, the Green & Gold Gala, the Birdies for Bulls Golf Tournament – these and many more are on the calendar. Rest assured, if we get thrown more curveballs in the coming year, we'll adapt and find new ways to help you connect.

In the meantime, stay safe and thank you for continuing to support your USF Alumni Association. Together, we really do make a difference!

### **Bill McCausland, MBA '96**

*Vice President and Executive Director, USF Alumni Association  
Life Member No. 2331*

# Meet your 2020-21 Student Group Leaders

MEMBERS OF THE USF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION support three organizations that provide special opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, connect with alumni, and build social and professional networks.



**Mary Beth Williams**  
*President*



**Conner Merriman**  
*Vice President*



**Camila Cernawsky Nakandakari**  
*Recruitment relations*



**Trevor Martindale**  
*Alumni relations*



**Mistelle Haughton**  
*Secretary*

**ORDER OF THE GOLDEN BRAHMAN (OGB)** includes top student and alumni leaders who are committed to public service, working together to lead the USF community, and promoting and protecting USF throughout their lives.

**THE AMBASSADORS** host dignitaries and officials throughout the USF System, assist during special events, and otherwise represent the student body. Members exemplify what it means to be a Bull and serve as a bridge between students and alumni.



**Rajay Dockery, President**  
*Tampa campus*



**Livia Rosales, President**  
*St. Petersburg campus*



**Brittany Targaszewski, President**  
*Sarasota-Manatee campus*



**Samuel Steck**  
*President*



**Brooke Shendok**  
*Past President*



**Yovela Debesay**  
*Vice President of membership*



**Savannah Bunch**  
*Vice President of events*



**Rejoy Sabin Thomas**  
*Member at large*

**THE STUDENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (SAA)** is USF's largest student organization with more than 4,000 members. It provides opportunities to interact with peers and alumni, helps individuals grow skills and networks, and helps forge lifelong bonds with USF.

# FOREVER BULLS



Mark Clennon, '10, is remembered by a former USF professor as a man who is always ahead of his time.

Photo: Portrait of Mark Clennon by Rashida Zagon

# A protest, a photo, A LIFE CHANGED

When Black Lives Matters protesters passed his New York City home, Mark Clennon flew outside to follow them and ran headlong into an apparent date with destiny.

By JOEY JOHNSTON, '81

**M**ARK CLENNON MAJORED IN public relations, but has yet to write a press release. He worked for a technology company in Sarasota, then abruptly moved to New York because that sounded interesting. He landed a job in internet advertising and quickly climbed the corporate ladder, only to quit to become a freelance photographer after just two years playing with cameras.

That gave his mom a real scare.

But throughout Clennon's journey, one thing remained constant: his passion for telling good stories. Clennon, '10, sees things differently. He has a journalistic eye honed by USF reporting classes and an outgoing spirit cultivated during his time as a USF student Ambassador and president of his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha.

And so it was on the morning of May 30, when a Black Lives Matter protest passed by the window of his Harlem home. Five days earlier, police officers had killed George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, in Minneapolis. Clennon was tired of being cooped up by the coronavirus and work had dried up with the economic shutdown it triggered. He was collecting unemployment assistance. He grabbed his camera and a face covering and followed the growing crowd.

He witnessed the anger, the desperation, the resistance. He saw friends getting arrested. He captured images of rage and confusion, but also tranquility amidst the turmoil. As the crowd moved deeper into Manhattan, he sprinted several blocks ahead, accurately guessing where the protesters might be headed.

He positioned himself across the street from 725 Fifth Ave. He framed the scene, waiting for just the right light. A man walked by, his back to Clennon's camera, stopped in front of the Trump Tower and waved his fists in defiance. Clennon shot.

"Oh, that's a good one," he thought to himself as he studied the image.

After a very long day, Clennon went home. He posted the Trump Tower shot on his Instagram, spent some time with his wife, Jasmine, and baby daughter, Myla, then logged back in.

20,000 likes.

A short time later, he refreshed.

40,000 likes.

This picture clearly resonated. Clennon was excited to see his work affirmed. He got something to eat, put his daughter to bed, and wound down. He thought about the day. He checked Instagram one more time.

Half-a-million likes.

At 1 a.m., Clennon received an e-mail from an editor at Time Magazine.

"Can we talk about this image first thing in the morning?"

Clennon licensed the Trump Tower photo, along with others from the day, to Time. For a while, it was considered for the cover. It ended up as a full-page image opposite the lead article with another of Clennon's photos above the Table of Contents.

"I never thought in a million years something like this would happen," he says.

Life has changed since then. Opportunities abound. The Whitney Museum of American Art has acquired some



**My goal is continuing to tell the story in its totality. If it means more protests, it means more protests. But I want to tell the joy, the pain and the triumph of Black lives in America. It's a very American story."**

— Mark Clennon



**Left:** This photo shot by Clennon during a Black Lives Matter protest in New York City brought worldwide attention to the artist and the cause.

**Above:** Clennon shot this portrait of model Fredrique Willis in front of a public housing apartment window for the CultureCon conference.

**Opposite page:** Titled "Flame," this image was shot in a Bronx library.

of Clennon's pieces. He appeared on the PBS News Hour and gave an online lecture at Duke University. Now, an agency represents him, sets his schedule and solicits his work, including licensing images to places like Australia, Brazil, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Clennon's mother remains stunned.

"As Mark was growing up, I truly had no idea he had such creativity," says Dr. Vickie Pinder Clennon, MD '03, an obstetrician in Phoenix. "But I love the way he develops a story. If you look at his picture once, it makes you want to look at it three more times.

"He's such an incredible person and a gentle spirit. I see a person who is building his path one brick at a time. When I heard he was moving to New York, when I heard he quit his corporate job, I was very nervous. I truly thought he had lost it. But he knows what he's doing. He's a worker and he's always going to be OK."

Even before his breakthrough photos, and pre-

pandemic, Clennon was doing just fine. He directed a television commercial with the NFL. His images have appeared in Vogue, GQ and the New Yorker, among others. He has worked with brands such as Netflix, Nike, Gucci, Spotify, Pepsi, Marvel and Target. Now he's inundated with requests and having to pick and choose what he can make time for.

While editorial and commercial photography comprise most of his work, his professional mission — even before America's current social-justice movement — is to document the Black experience.

"If I had a gallery of photos on the Black experience, the protest photos would be part of it, but not all of it," he says. "My goal is continuing to tell the story in its totality. If it means more protests, it means more protests. But I want to tell the joy, the pain and the triumph of Black lives in America. It's a very American story.

"It really does go back to all the things I learned in



journalism classes at USF. That's where I truly realized the impact that journalism can make. That's the foundation I'm standing on."

Clennon's success comes as no surprise to Kelli Burns, an associate professor in USF's Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communications.

She remembers a student always on the cutting edge of social media and popular culture. In 2009, she was amazed that Clennon thought to grab a video clip from the MTV Music Awards – when rapper Kanye West stole the microphone to upstage pop singer Taylor Swift – and shared it online.

"That would be very common today, but nobody was doing things like that online in 2009," Burns says. "Mark was always ahead of his time. ..."

"I knew he was destined for something big. He might not have known his dreams exactly, but he was going places. He's out there in the streets, documenting the

real world, but he's doing it with the soul of an artist."

Clennon's mother was only 20 at his birth. She broke it off with Clennon's father and mother and son forged ahead on their own. Vickie Clennon began undergraduate work at Florida A&M University. Money was tight. A big night out was splitting a McDonald's Happy Meal.

She met her wife, Nedra King, when Mark was 6. That gave him stability during his mother's rigorous years in medical school. He was a regular on USF's Tampa campus, a familiar face to students and med-school faculty alike. Even back then, he says, he knew he would attend USF.

There he would meet and fall in love with the former Jasmine Fowlkes, a 2010 mass comm grad and the 2009 Miss USF. Like Clennon, she was a member of USF's Ambassadors, an elite leadership development group sponsored by the USF Alumni Association.

Both stay connected to USF as members of the New

# FOREVER BULLS



Above and right: Clennon's "whimsically defiant" images aim to capture the Black experience in its totality.



York City Alumni Chapter.

Clennon ponders the ways his life has changed since May. Some things make him proud; others, uneasy.

"I can tell you that I felt angry that day," he says. "We're in the house with a new baby and my parents couldn't come see her. I was collecting unemployment. I was angry and that emotion comes out in my images."

"Now I'm conflicted. My career has taken off largely because George Floyd was killed on camera. There's tremendous guilt associated with that. I would rather have taken a viral photo of Beyonce. I don't like what's happening in America. But I didn't plan this."

That level of introspection, Clennon's mother says, is typical.

"Mark cares about people and I don't just say that because he's my son," she says. "He believes in the value of the Black experience. It's not just lip service for him. I have immense pride in what he stands for. Whether he's making a lot of money or none at all, he's living his life to uplift all people." ■



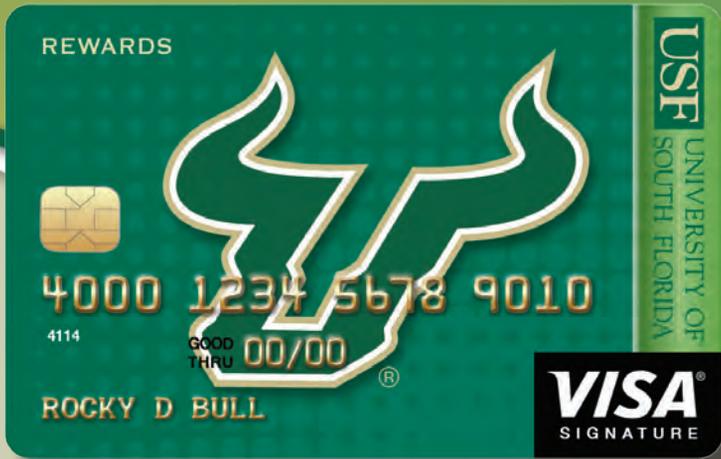
Above: Clennon and his future bride, the former Jasmine Fowlkes, pose during a USF Ambassadors orientation session spring 2009.

Left: A young Clennon gives his mom, Vickie Pinder Clennon, a proud hug following her white coat ceremony at what is now USF Health Morsani College of Medicine.

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# And the fastest growing Bull-led business is ...

**T**HE 73 LEADERS OF THE 2020 fastest-growing Bull-led businesses include owners and executives representing six USF colleges. They're builders, brewers and restaurateurs; accountants, architects and filmmakers.

"When we talk about USF as a transformative force in the Tampa Bay region, across Florida and beyond, that's a credit to you," USF President Steve Currall told the award-winning business leaders during the first virtual Fast 56 celebration in September. "The future is brighter because of your commitment to innovation, invention and best practices. And USF is with you all the way."

The dramatic countdown to the fastest-growing Bull-led business ended with No. 1 – Fresco Foods, founded by Tracy Povolny, '12. The company's popular Eat Fresco brand of prepared foods is sold at Publix Super Markets and other locations across the Southeast.

Others singled out for special honors include VIRTEX and CEO Brad Heath, '85, Life Member. VIRTEX, which provides strategic electronic manufacturing services, received the

Accelerator Award for having the largest percentage of cumulative growth of all the 2020 Fast 56 recipients with more than \$50 million in annual revenue.

Jabil and CEO Mark Mondello, '87, received the Apex Award for having the highest annual revenue of all the Fast 56 companies. Jabil, which delivers design, manufacturing, supply chain and product management services, is one of the Tampa Bay area's largest companies. Last year, it launched a \$1 million partnership with USF, the USF Jabil Innovation Institute, to benefit students.

The Alumni Association's annual Fast 56 awards recognize 56 businesses – a nod to USF's creation in 1956 – based on revenue growth over a three-year period. It debuted in 2013 to celebrate exceptionally successful Bull-led businesses and has become a valuable vehicle for professional networking. The USF Fast 56 scholarship, funded by recipients, provides awards to students based on their innovative business ideas.

The deadline to nominate a business for the 2021 Fast 56 is Jan. 5. Visit [usfalumni.org/fast56](http://usfalumni.org/fast56) for more information.

– PENNY CARNATHAN, '82 | USF Alumni Association



1

**Fresco Foods, Inc.**  
Tampa



[eatfrescofoods.com](http://eatfrescofoods.com)

**Tracy Povolny, founder/VP marketing, '12**

Fresco Foods' brand, Eat Fresco, brings a fresh, local approach to prepared food, creating healthy and delicious meals made with only all-natural and organic ingredients.



2

**Pipas Law Group**  
St. Petersburg



[pipaslaw.com](http://pipaslaw.com)

**Christian Pipas, owner, '07**

Pipas Law practices personal injury and civil litigation, providing clients with a high level of service and care while remaining closely connected to them throughout the process.



3



**BFrank Studio, LLC**  
Tampa

[bfrankstudio.com](http://bfrankstudio.com)

**Beverly Frank, principal, '01 and MArc '05**

BFrank Studio is a professional architecture practice engaged in all aspects of design for institutional and commercial clients throughout Florida.



4



**ComplianceQuest**  
Tampa

[compliancequest.com](http://compliancequest.com)

**Prashanth Rajendran, CEO, MS '91**

ComplianceQuest is a highly flexible, 100 percent native Salesforce platform-based enterprise quality management system, streamlining workflows across the enterprise.



5



**Drummond Carpenter, PLLC**  
Orlando

[drummondcarpenter.com](http://drummondcarpenter.com)

**Chad Drummond, president, '97, Life Member**

Drummond Carpenter specializes in environmental and water resources engineering and applied research. It serves federal and municipal clients.



6



**So Good So You**  
Minneapolis

[sogoodsoyou.com](http://sogoodsoyou.com)

**Rita Katona, founder/board chair, '02**

So Good So You is a plant-based beverage company that manufactures premium probiotic juice shots in a zero-waste facility run on 100 percent renewable energy.



7



**Skynet Integrations**  
Tampa

[skynetintegrations.com](http://skynetintegrations.com)

**Joshua Williams, CEO, MBA '14**

Skynet Integrations is a security systems integrator focusing on access control, video surveillance and alarm systems in health care, government and commercial vertical markets.



8



**Intex Builders, LLC**  
Tampa

[intexbuilders.net](http://intexbuilders.net)

**Shantell McLean, managing member, '03**

Founded in 2009, Intex is a general and roofing contractor specializing in multi-family housing renovations. It offers complete interior and exterior renovation services.

# FOREVER BULLS



9

**LEE'S ICE**  
of Central Florida

**Ice of Central Florida, Inc.**  
Orlando

leesicf.com

Stephen Wolfson, sales manager, '15

William Wolfson, secretary, '80



Ice provides bagged ice and freezers on a scheduled basis to construction sites, airlines, grounds maintenance and retailers, and on an emergency basis to other enterprises.



10



**Matcon Construction Services, Inc.**

Tampa

matconconstruction.com

Derek Mateos, president, '99, Life Member

A family-owned construction management and general contracting firm, Matcon specializes in commercial construction, specialty contracting and real estate services.

## The 2020 Fast 56

Accelerated Waste Solutions,  
dba JUNK SHOT App

ALLMAG Auto Parts

Altieri Transco American Claims (ATAC)

AspirEDU

Baldwin Risk Partners

Belleair Market

BFrank Studio, LLC

BlueGrace Logistics

Cardinal Roofing

ClearTrust, LLC

ComplianceQuest

Dart Tech - FKA Lair Services

DCE Productions

Diamond View

Drummond Carpenter, PLLC

Dynamic Communities

Element Engineering Group, LLC

Flatwoods Consulting Group Inc.

Fresco Foods, Inc.

Guardian Restoration Services Inc.

Home Care Connect

Ice of Central Florida, Inc.

ICON Consultant Group, Inc.

Identity Fusion, Inc.

Infinity Engineering Group, LLC

Intex Builders, LLC

Jabil

Kinney Engineering LLC

Kirkpatrick Price, Inc.

Little Greek Franchise Development, LLC

Mastry's Brewing Co.

Matcon Construction Services, Inc.

McCormick Stevenson Corporation

MyArea Network, Inc.

Naples Heart Rhythm Specialists

Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

Patel, Greene & Associates

Pipas Law Group

Playbook Public Relations, LLC

Priority Marketing

Raney's Inc.

RAOK boutique

ReedTMS Logistics

RSA Consulting Group

Seal Swim School

Service Planning Corporation

Skynet Integrations

So Good So You

Tampa Civil Design

TeleVolPs

The Joint, The Chiropractic Place

Triton Construction Group

VIRTEX

VoltAir

WG Communications Group

Wildlands Conservation



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# FOREVER BULLS

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## New Lineup

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89.7      wusf.org      "Play WUSF"

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CPAs & Advisors

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813.251.1010  
[cbh.com](http://cbh.com)

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**Congratulations to all Fast 56 Winners!**

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Education Foundation

Learn more at [www.helios.org](http://www.helios.org)

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# Your University. Your Reporters.



**Divya Kumar**  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
AND NONPROFITS  
REPORTER

@divyadivya  
dkumar@tampabay.com

I cover nonprofits and higher education and want to hear the stories, big and small, that make up these worlds. I got my start in journalism at King High School's student newspaper and the University of South Florida's *The Oracle*. I joined the *Times* in 2016 after earning a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. Is there something about a nonprofit, college, university or higher education related issue you think people should know about? I'd love to hear from you.



**Joey Knight**  
COLLEGES AND  
RECRUITING  
REPORTER

@TBTimes\_Bulls  
jknight@tampabay.com

I'm a fourth-generation Floridian born at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa, which makes me somewhat of a demographic outlier. My family arrived in Zephyrhills before McDonald's, and I've resided there most of my life. When I was a grade-schooler, my passions were sports and creative writing, in that order. Today I'm an old-schooler (don't be dissing on '80s hard rock), and that order has been flipped. I love telling stories, be they about first basemen or first responders. These days, I cover college sports with an emphasis on USF, but I'll dabble in other stuff (Rays, Gasparilla Distance Classic, etc.).

## Tampa Bay Times

For a better Tampa Bay

# In a class of **THEIR OWN** USF to celebrate 2020 Alumni Award recipients next fall

**USF'S NEWEST CLASS of Alumni Award recipients includes ground-breaking leaders in their fields and two – one graduate and one non-grad – whose devoted service to the university has contributed immeasurably to its success.**

**The 2020 Distinguished Alumni**, grads who've achieved the pinnacle of success in their professions, are:

- Arnie Bellini, MBA '82, an information technology pioneer whose work transformed the industry's service-provider sector
- Tina P. Johnson, Accounting '80, Life Member, longtime senior executive at Publix Super Markets, the nation's largest employee-owned company
- Richard King, Art '80, a Hollywood sound engineer who holds the record for Academy Awards in that category

**The Donald A. Gifford Service Award**, recognizing a graduate who has given countless hours to USF, goes to Mike Griffin, Marketing '03, Life Member. Griffin was a two-term student body president and is currently a USF trustee.

**The Class of '56 Award**, recognizing a non-graduate for outstanding service to USF and the Tampa Bay community, goes to Steven Greenbaum, Life Member. The husband of USF President Emerita and Professor Judy Genshaft, Life Member, Greenbaum represented USF with distinction for 19 years while also quietly and generously supporting the university.

**The Alumni Awards** are the highest honor bestowed on USF alumni by the university. Recipients are celebrated during Homecoming Week at the Alumni Awards Dinner, in the Running with the Bulls Parade, and during the Homecoming game. However, due to COVID-19 safety precautions this year, that recognition was postponed. Instead the five 2020 award recipients will be celebrated next fall alongside the 2021 Alumni Award honorees.

## USF DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

### Arnie Bellini

An entrepreneurial pioneer, Bellini's work defined and scaled the technology industry's \$213 billion managed service segment. In 1982, he and his brother, David, co-founded an IT support business in Tampa, ConnectWise, Inc. Over the next four decades, ConnectWise created technology and business platforms that revolutionized IT support and managed services. In 2019, ConnectWise sold for \$1.4 billion. Bellini is widely known as a leader who "drives the channel agenda" and in 2014, he was named Florida's Entrepreneur of the Year. Bellini also holds seven software patents and is the 50th person over 50 to swim the English Channel.

### Tina P. Johnson

Johnson joined Publix Super Markets, Inc. in 1986 as a tax manager and went on to serve as senior vice president of the grocery retailer – the largest employee-owned company in the nation. Today, she's an advisor to the CEO and treasurer for Publix Super Market Charities, which donates millions of dollars to nonprofits. A member of the USF Foundation board of directors for 19 years, Johnson is also a longtime member of the Lynn Pippenger

School of Accountancy's Accounting Advisory Council, a former director of the USF Alumni Association board, and a 1995 recipient of USF's Donald A. Gifford Service Award.

### Richard King

King holds a record four Academy Awards for sound editing, the most won by anyone in that category. He won Oscars for "Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World" (2003); "The Dark Knight" (2008); "Inception" (2010); and "Dunkirk" (2017). He was also nominated for his work on "War of the Worlds" (2005) and "Interstellar" (2014). King, who has nearly 100 film credits for sound editing, grew up in Tampa making Super 8 and 16mm movies with his friends. He was studying painting at USF's College of The Arts when he got involved in film projects at the school and discovered "painting with sound."

## DONALD A. GIFFORD SERVICE AWARD

### Mike Griffin

Griffin has dedicated his exceptional leadership skills to USF and the community for nearly 20 years, dating to his college years when he served as the university's two-term Student Body President and a

charter member of the Board of Trustees. Today, the market leader and senior vice president of Savills is a USF trustee; recent chair of USF's Consolidation Planning Task Force; and past chair of the USF Alumni Association. An active community leader, he is a past chair of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and past Port Tampa Bay board commissioner, among other posts. Griffin is a 2007 USF Outstanding Young Alumnus.

## CLASS OF '56 AWARD

### Steven Greenbaum

As USF's "first spouse" for 19 years, Steven Greenbaum proudly represented USF locally, nationally and internationally. A marketing research consultant, he has been the heart of USF's beloved Rocky mascot program, directing Rocky's 2003 costume redesign and providing continual guidance and financial support. He and his wife, President Emerita and Professor Judy Genshaft, have donated over \$30 million to USF, supporting many programs including: athletics, medicine, the arts, veterans, diversity, and study-abroad scholarships, as well as the Judy Genshaft Honors College. He has also served on the boards of the Florida Holocaust Museum and Jewish Family Services.

USF DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

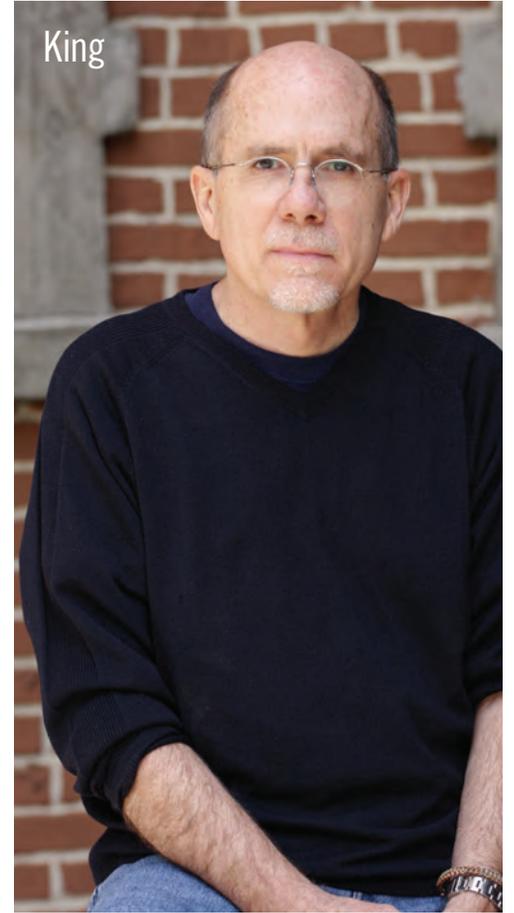
Bellini



Johnson



King



DONALD A. GIFFORD SERVICE AWARD

Griffin



CLASS OF '56 AWARD

Greenbaum

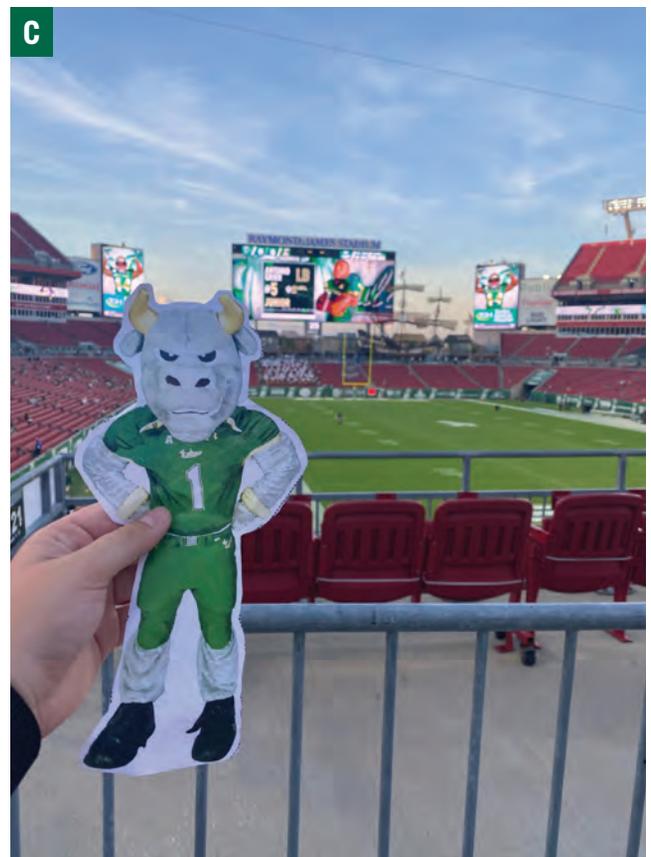


# WHERE'S Rocky?

**a** After a toasty ascent to the summit of Mount Washington, N.H., tucked in **Jeff Ulm's** jacket, Rocky pops out for a quick photo opp. He visited with Ulm, '81, Life Member, and Ulm's girlfriend, **Katia Ettus**.

**b** Rocky enjoys a view of the Mediterranean Sea at the border of Israel and Lebanon. He joined **Anne Schulz**, '01, Life Member, on a tour.

**c** We may not have won, but Flat Rocky was thrilled to be back at Raymond James Stadium for the 2020 Homecoming game against Eastern Carolina. His pal **Erin Ryan**, Class of '20, made sure he had a bird's-eye-view.





**d** Hadley, left, and Selah Wright keep a firm hold on their favorite mascot during a visit to Amicalola Falls State Park, near their family's cabin in Georgia. The future Bulls are the daughters of **Tonya** and **Jonathan "J.B." Wright**, '05, Life Member.

**e** Cuddling up for a Teams meeting, Rocky joins the home office companion of **Merit Greaves**, '88, Life Member. Greaves' spirited workmate was sharing his Bull pride during Homecoming Week.

Whether Rocky escaped to the great and socially distant outdoors with you, is keeping you company in your home office, or has been helping the kids Zoom through their schoolday, email your high-resolution pictures (300 ppi) and details to Penny Carnathan at [pcarnathan@usf.edu](mailto:pcarnathan@usf.edu), or mail to her at USF Alumni Association, 4202 E. Fowler Ave. ALC100, Tampa, FL 33620-5455.

# ALUMNI Roundup

NEWS FROM USF'S  
VOLUNTEER-LED  
ALUMNI GROUPS

## Pulling together in hard-hit New York City

IT'S CHALLENGING ENOUGH for a young newcomer to find a foothold and a circle of friends in New York City. Add a virus raging unchecked and subsequent economic shut-down and even well-established New Yorkers struggled.

"It's a hard world out there," says **Michelle Scheblein**, '13, interim chair of the USF New York City Alumni Chapter.

So she took the lead in organizing the chapter's first Network-a-BULL Professional Development event to help Bulls and others start – or jumpstart – their careers. Three panelists shared tips, answered questions and became important new links in attendees' networks.

**Ashley Washington**, '11, Life Member, a senior manager at Deloitte, "was really inspiring about being intentional and believing in yourself," says Scheblein, who lost her job at JPMorgan Chase as a result of the shutdown.

Former chapter president **Nate Collins**, '10, Life Member, an account manager at Informa, and **Doug Meyn**, career consultant at the Muma College of Business, shared valuable advice for getting hired and getting ahead.

The Zoom event was a natural progression for an alumni group focused on creating a circle of support in a sometimes-intimidating city.

"It takes longer to make friends here," says Scheblein, who grew up in Orlando, Fla. "The chapter is a community – we're here to build each other up."

## New LGBTQ+ co-chair says 'It's important to be a role model'



GROWING UP IN THE 1960S and '70s, **Robert Wallace** had no role models, no one to show him that it was safe and even good to be open about his sexual identity. At USF, he joined a group of gay and lesbian students but, in his senior year, was gently advised to quit because it could hurt his job prospects.

Now he's 61, a longtime successful professional, and the new co-chair of USF's LGBTQ+ Alumni Society. The society aims to give alumni a vehicle for supporting USF and each other, but for Wallace, '86, Life Member, it's as much about students.

"Throughout most of my life, being gay was a strike against me; something I was supposed to be ashamed of,"

he says. "I don't want anyone in college today to go through that. In this chapter of my life, I feel it's important to be a role model."

This fall, the society launched a series of chats designed to get people thinking, talking and socializing. Like all its events, the chats are open to anyone, regardless of whether they identify as LGBTQ+.

The Zoom calls are held the last Tuesday of the month; the Nov. 24 topic will be holiday safety. Dec. 29 will be the culmination of raffle-style ticket sales for prize drawings to benefit charities.

To get involved, sign up for the LGBTQ+ Society newsletter at <http://bit.ly/LGBTQnews> or follow them on social media.



## For public health alumni, a time to shine

BEFORE COVID-19, **Brittney Blair**, '12 and MPH '15, usually got blank looks when people asked what she did for a living.

"Now, everyone knows what public health is. People are interested in what you have to say," says the chair of USF's College of Public Health Alumni Society. "It's a good time to be reviving our alumni society."

The society kicked back into gear in the summer of 2019 after being dormant for about 16 years. Through focus groups, organizers learned that tops on grads' wish list was professional development – exploring career options.

The field is so wide open, even they were sometimes confused.

The society's October career panel attracted about 45 students and alumni. In November, they offered pre-holiday stress relief via virtual yoga led by **Aditi Desai**, MPH '13, and this month they're gathering donations for local charities and planning a holiday party.

In many ways, being in public health right now is exciting, Blair says. Immunologist Dr. Anthony Fauci has become a household name and public health terms like "contact tracing" are part of the general lexicon. But it's also a difficult time for many in public health, Blair says.

"People have lost their jobs, and while they usually find new ones, there's the stress of changing jobs. And some things in public health you can't do from home," Blair says. "But it's also nice that we're doing things virtually now, so our alumni beyond Tampa Bay can get involved. It's a great opportunity to really think about what we can do to expand engagement."



### Alumni group volunteer

**Chem Jackson**, '01 and 'MPH '04

**USF Orlando Alumni Chapter**

**Career:** Pharmaceutical sales

**Volunteer length of service:** Four years

**Time-killer:** Watching YouTube

**Favorite USF memory:** 1st USF football game, 1997

**Hobby:** Watching sports

**Degree:** Political science and master's in public health

**Favorite meal:** Spaghetti



## USF's "Number 1" Self Storage Facility

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# ALUMNI Roundup

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

The USF Alumni Association's chapters and societies connect Bulls with one another – across the country and around the world. Through social events, professional networking, fundraising and community service, among other activities, alumni groups help USF grads and friends support one another, our university, and current students. They play an important part in the Alumni Association's mission to provide meaningful ways for Bulls to make an impact; protect USF through advocacy; share pride in our great university; and stick together.

It's easy to get involved! Just email the contact person of the group you'd like to visit.

### Interest-Based Groups

#### Black Alumni

Erica Daley  
blackalumnisociety@usfalumnigroup.org

#### College of Business Alumni

Samantha Fitzmaurice  
sfitzmaurice@usf.edu

#### Engineering Alumni

Robert Andrew  
randrew@tampabay.rr.com

#### Entrepreneurship Alumni

Samantha Cleveland  
sdpimentel@usf.edu

#### Geology Alumni

Matt Wissler  
usfgas@gmail.com

#### Kosove Scholarship Alumni

Justin Geisler  
justingeisler@hotmail.com

#### Latino Alumni

Melizza Etienne  
Luz Randolph  
latinoalumni@usfalumnigroup.org

#### LGBTQ+ Alumni

Todd St. John-Fulton  
Robert Wallace  
lgbtqalumni@usfalumnigroup.org

#### Library and Information Science

Megan O'Brien  
usflisalumni@gmail.com

#### Medicine Alumni

Valerie Riddle  
valerie25@usf.edu

#### Music Alumni

Arupa Gopal  
Tanya Bruce  
usfmusicalumni@gmail.com

#### Nurse Alumni

Ashley Souza Gerb  
asouzagerb@usf.edu

#### Patel College of Global Sustainability

Julie Cornwell  
Arnel Garcesa  
patelnetwork@usfalumnigroup.org

#### Pharmacy Alumni

Patti Shirley  
shirleyp@usf.edu

#### Psychology Alumni

Markia Lumpkin  
usfpsychba@gmail.com

#### Public Health Alumni

Brittney Blair  
COPH@usfalumnigroup.org

#### Rugby Alumni

James Callihan  
Sean Masse  
usfbullsrugbyalumni@gmail.com

#### Veteran Alumni

John Cranston  
usfvets@gmail.com

### Geographical Groups

#### Asheville, N.C.

Chad Johnson  
USFAshevilleBulls@gmail.com

#### Atlanta

Lara Martin  
usfalumniatlanta@gmail.com

#### Austin, Texas

Brett Bronstein  
usfaustin@gmail.com

# Join us on TEAMS!



Check for get-togethers at [usfalumni.org](http://usfalumni.org)

Since March, USF chapters and societies have hosted virtual happy hours, Bulls football meet-ups with Coach Jeff Scott, speaker series and other events. Alumni group leaders, some of whom are pictured here sharing ideas in a planning meeting, have found creative ways to stay together at home.

**Broward County**

Ruth Rogge  
ruthrogge@gmail.com

Alan Steinberg  
usfbrowardalumni@gmail.com

**Charlotte, N.C.**

Marisa Varian  
usfcharlottebulls@gmail.com

**Chicago**

Steven Hammond  
usfchicagoalumni@gmail.com

**D.C. Regional**

Khari Williams  
usfbullsdcc@gmail.com

**Denver**

Matt Sprigg  
Msprigg24@gmail.com

**Greenville, S.C.**

Mike Nascarella  
Michael.nascarella@gmail.com

**Houston**

Megan Duffey  
meganduffey@gmail.com

**Jacksonville-St. Augustine**

Ellen Rosenblum  
usfjax@gmail.com

**London**

Raquel Collazo  
londonusfalumni@gmail.com

**Los Angeles**

Garin Flowers  
garin.flowers@gmail.com

**Miami-Dade County**

Heather Agatstein  
hwa2@usf.edu

**Nashville, Tenn.**

Melinda Dale  
nashvilleusfbulls@live.com

**New York City**

Michelle Scheblein  
usfalumniny@gmail.com

**Orlando**

Stephen Simon  
usfbullsortlando@gmail.com

**Palm Beach County**

Jon Rausch  
USFbullspbc@gmail.com

**Pasco County**

Samantha Cleveland  
sdpimentel@usf.edu

**Philadelphia**

Mike Waterhouse  
usf.tri.state.alumni@gmail.com

**Pinellas County**

Pam Haber  
pinellas@usfalumnigroup.org

**Polk County**

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hwa2@usf.edu

**Raleigh, N.C.**

Benjamin Wadsworth  
bwadswor@mail.usf.edu

**San Diego**

Josh Vizcay  
josuevizcay@gmail.com

**Sarasota-Manatee**

Courtney Hawk  
cfhawk@usf.edu

**Saudi Arabia**

Hussein Alrobei  
alrobei@mail.usf.edu

**Tallahassee**

Alexa Mitsuda  
usfalumnitally@gmail.com

**Tampa (Greater Tampa)**

Chloe Lipking  
usftampaalumni@gmail.com

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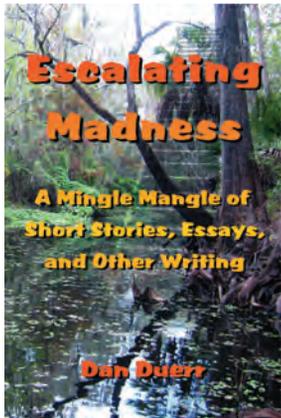
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# Class Notes

## 1960s



**DAN DUERR**, Geology '69, Life Member, published "Escalating Madness," a collection of memoirs and short stories, some dating back to the early days at USF. He is a retired geological survey hydrologist for the federal government.



**ANDREW GAMSON**, Sociology '77, Life Member, is the new director of sales for Kaivac, Inc.'s Latin America and Caribbean regions. The Hamilton, Ohio-based company manufactures specialty cleaning equipment. Gamson was previously its South Central U.S. region manager.



**GIANNA RUSSO**, Social Sciences Interdisciplinary '78 and MA '83, has been named the City of Tampa's first Wordsmith, a two-year honorary position that involves creative outreach to communities. She is an assistant professor of English and creative writing at Saint Leo University in Saint Leo, Fla., and a published poet.



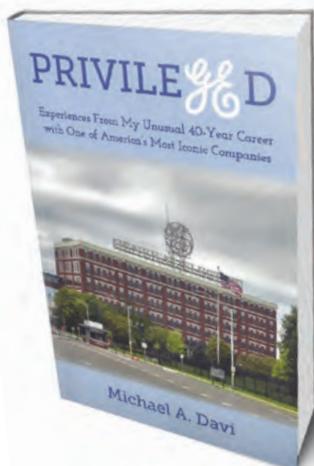
**PAMELA FORD**, Public Relations '89, has been promoted to vice president of sales for Silverado Vineyards, a Napa Valley, Calif., winery. She'll lead the company's national sales effort. *(pictured above)*

**LUCINDA GRANT**, Management '80, has been named chair of Leadership St. Pete for 2021. She oversees front desk administration and park permits for St. Petersburg Parks and Recreation Department.

## 1970s



**MICHAEL A. DAVI**, General Education '74, published his first book, "PrivileGED – Experiences from my Unusual 40-Year Career with One of America's Most Iconic Companies." The memoir recounts his technology career with General Electric.



## 1980s

**JOHN BIDDLE**, MBA '83, joined Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, Ind., as an assistant professor of physics. He was previously a post-doctoral researcher at Harvard University

The Honorable **J. MICHELLE CHILDS**, Management '88, has been named chair of the American Bar Association's Judicial Division. She has been a federal judge for 10 years and works for the U.S. District Court in Columbia, S.C.

## 1990s



**DR. PETER EMBI**, MD '97, has received the designation of Fellow in the International Academy of Health Sciences Informatics in Geneva. He is president and CEO of Regenstrief Institute



**NORA FEELEY**, Marketing '89 and Advertising '90, is the new vice president of marketing and the direct to consumer department at Silverado Vineyards. She was previously director of marketing and communications at the Napa Valley, Calif., winery.

in Indianapolis; professor of medicine and associate director of informatics with Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences; and vice president for Learning Health Systems with Indiana University Health. He is a USF Morsani College of Medicine Distinguished Physician Alumnus.

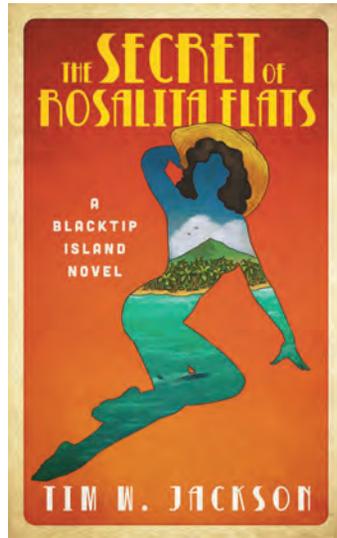


**CHRISTINA GESMUNDO**, Communication '96 and MA '03, received the Banking Endowed Teaching Chair at Polk State College in Lakeland. She is a professor of speech and director of forensics at the school, coaches its award-winning forensics team, and has twice received the Florida College System Activities Association Forensics Coach of the Year Award.

She is a professor of speech and director of forensics at the school, coaches its award-winning forensics team, and has twice received the Florida College System Activities Association Forensics Coach of the Year Award.



**SYRETTA HILL**, Journalism-Magazine, '95, has received the 2020 Betsy Alden Outstanding Service-Learning Award from Duke University for her commitment to the ideals of service-learning. She is the executive director of StepUp Durham, a nonprofit focused on employment training and placement services, primarily for individuals with challenges to employment.



**TIM W. JACKSON**, English '96, recently published his second novel, "The Secret of Rosalita Flats," with Devonshire House Press. It continues the comic mystery narrative of his award-winning novel, "Blacktip Island."

**MELISSA YANES TESTON**, Elementary Education '92, was selected as a Florida regional literacy director to work within Just Reads Florida on early literacy, coaching, and new educational standards. She is a doctoral student at the USF College of Education.

**MANNY VIERA**, Social Sciences Interdisciplinary '94, Life Member, joined CoAdvantage in Tampa as corporate vice president of human resources. He was previously director of human resources for Tampa Maid.

## 2000s

**PAULA BARACALDO**, International Studies '09, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. She is the Pasco County chief of staff.



**ROBERT CARPENTER III**, Business Management '02 and MBA '04, Life Member, has been promoted to vice president of talent acquisition with Hertz in Atlanta.

He was previously the company's senior director of human resources.



**JESSICA COLLOGAN**, International Studies '01 and MA '05, has been named dean of library services at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. She was previously library director at Jacksonville University in Jacksonville, Fla.



**JESSICA DUEMIG**, Mass Communications '07, Life Member, has released her book, "WARRIOR," with Bright Publishing, LLC. The book shares her journey as a young woman diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of breast cancer.

**JOYONNA GAMBLE-GEORGE**, MHA '05, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. A neuroscientist, she is COO and chief scientific and medical officer of SciX LLC and a National Institutes of Health fellow.

**KENDRA GRAHAM-PAULK**, Applied Science '06, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. She is vice president of compliance and CCO of Wipro Limited.



**GORDON GREENE**, Civil Engineering '03 and MBA '08, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. He is executive vice president of Patel, Greene & Associates and a multi-year USF Fast 56 Award recipient.



**SHAYLA JOHNSON**, Women Studies '09, Life Member, has been promoted to USF Advancement human resources manager. She has been with the division since 2007 when she was hired as a legal assistant.

**JOHN MCRAE**, Finance '03, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. He is vice president of sales operations for Kforce.

**CLIFFORD MERZ**, PhD Engineering Science '08, was named a senior member of the National Academy of Inventors. He is a senior research ocean engineer with the USF College of Marine Science and holds the patent for a seawater-based sustainable and renewable energy technology.

**DARLA PORTMAN**, Criminology '01, has been appointed to the Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission. A master police officer with the Tampa Police Department, she is president of the Tampa Police Benevolent Association and serves

on the board of the state Police Benevolent Association.

**JERMAINE ROLLE**, Psychology '05, has been appointed deputy director of athletics at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. He was previously associate director of athletics overseeing compliance and student life at Minot State University in North Dakota.

## 2010s

**RANY AHMAD**, MS Nursing '18, has joined Lakeland (Fla.) Regional Health Physician Group as an urgent care nurse practitioner at the Lake Miriam Urgent Care. He previously worked as a family nurse practitioner for the Lakeland Regional Health-Florida system.

**JESSICA BRASSEUR**, Studio Art '17, is Loyola University's new assistant to the vice president of mission and diversity. She was previously a staff assistant for USF Women in Leadership & Philanthropy.

**DR. KATELYN "KATIE" (CHITWOOD) BRIGGS**, MD '14, has joined Memorial Hospital at Gulfport, Miss., in the practice of hospice and palliative medicine. She's also a physician with Aspire Health,

Inc., in the Mobile, Ala., area and an assistant professor with the Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans.

**KRISTY HERRINGTON**, MSM '19, is the new director of annual giving at the University of North Florida. She was previously assistant director of annual giving for the USF Foundation.

**ANGELA MANN**, Nursing '11 and MS '11, has joined pulmonologist Dr. Naem Shahrour at Watson Clinic Main in Lakeland, Fla. Mann previously worked with endocrinologist Dr. Khanh Pham.

**JASMINE NAZIRBAGE**, MS Nursing '19, has been promoted to physical medicine and rehabilitation nurse practitioner at the Bannasch Institute for Advanced Rehabilitation Medicine at Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center. She previously worked as a registered nurse in the hospital's trauma Intensive Care Unit.

**NERIDA NIEVES**, MS Nursing '17, has joined Lakeland (Fla.) Regional Health Physician Group as a family practice nurse practitioner. She previously worked as a family practice nurse practitioner at Florida Medical Clinic in Wesley Chapel, Fla.

**DUSTIN PASTEUR**, MBA '17, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. He is the director of design and construction for Tampa General Hospital.

**BRIANA PULIDO**, MA Global Sustainability '18, has joined Terracon in Miami as a staff scientist. She was previously a sustainability coordinator intern for the Tampa Bay Local Organizing Committee

**BRIAN PULLEN**, MA Global Sustainability '15, has joined Albertsons Companies in Boise, Idaho, as an energy specialist. He was previously the sustainability manager for Perchanga Resort and Casino in Temecula, Calif.

**JANAE THOMAS**, MPA '18, has been recognized by Tampa Bay Business Journal as a 2020 "40 Under 40" – the Tampa Bay area's 40 top business professionals aged 40 and younger. She is the assistant state attorney for the 13th Judicial Court.

**RANA VAN VOORHIS**, MS Medical Sciences '12, has joined Holy Cross College at Notre Dame, Ind., as a visiting instructor of biology. She was previously an instructor at Lake Michigan College in Niles, Mich., and Ivy Tech Community College in South Bend, Ind.



**Send us your class notes!**

Send Class Notes submissions and high-resolution (at least 300 ppi) photos to [pcarnathan@usf.edu](mailto:pcarnathan@usf.edu) or mail to Penny Carnathan, USF Alumni Association, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., ALC100, Tampa, FL 33620-5455

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A) Total number of copies printed (Net Press Run)	33,876	32,000
B) Requested distribution:		
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H) Total	33,875	32,000
I) Percent requested circulation	72.85%	76.68%
J) Electronic Copy Circulation	0	0

16. Electronic Copy Circulation  
17. The Statement of Ownership will be printed in the Winter (December) 2020 Issue.  
18. Rita B. Kroeber, Managing Editor

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## In Memoriam

**EVELYN MARIE (WYATT) BAER**, Music Education '68 and MM '73, Sept. 18, 2020

**ELLEN M. BAILEY**, Finance '01, Aug. 23, 2020

**JASON ANDREW BLANK**, Religious Studies '05, Sept. 13, 2020

**JOAN HODGES BLEVINS**, Art '85, Sept. 27, 2020

**LOIS CORINNE SANCHEZ CALLEN**, MA Library and Information Science '73, Oct. 14, 2020

**ROBERT CLIFTON CHAUNCEY JR.**, Geography/General Business Administration '84, Aug. 15, 2020

**DAVID ALAN DALE**, Accounting '93, Life Member, Sept. 9, 2020

**LINDSAY GRACE ESPOSITO**, English '12, Aug. 3, 2020

**RANDALL ROY "RANDY" HOLCOMB**, Accounting '91, Life Member, Sept. 15, 2020

**PETER HORN**, Mass Communications '73, Oct. 20, 2020

**RICHARD ANTHONY KOTOSKY**, Engineering Technology '78, Aug. 1, 2020

**DICK JOSEPH LAROSA JR.**, Environmental Engineering '97, Sept. 21, 2020

**PATRICK EUGENE MASON**, Finance '71, Sept. 14, 2020

**KENDEL NERONHA MOTT**, Political Science '13, June 13, 2019

**CAROLYN SUE (COX) MOYER**, Criminology '79, Oct. 18, 2020

**NUALA (HEALY) REYNOLDS**, MA Library and Information Science '86, August 9, 2020

**DR. SAM SCOLARO**, Zoology '67, Aug. 7, 2020

**BEVERLY SEWELL WEAVER**, MA Elementary Education '67, Aug. 7, 2020

**SANDRA (NIELSEN) WEST**, Special Education '80, Aug. 11, 2020

**SARAH JANE WITTSTRUCK**, MA Library and Information Science '91, Oct. 14, 2020

**CAROL LYNN (AIREY) YANCAR**, English/Psychology '80, Sept. 3, 2020

### Faculty/Staff

**JOSEPH GABRIEL CORY**, Morsani College of Medicine Founding Faculty Member, Aug. 19, 2020

**JIL (RADER) PREUSS**, USF Federal Credit Union, May 12, 2020

**MARLENE DELILAH REESE**, Executive Assistant to the Provost, Aug. 4, 2020

**DR. WILLIAM "DOC" TAYLOR**, Morsani College of Medicine Associate Professor of Plastic Surgery, Aug. 6, 2020

**ROSARIO "ROSS" URSO JR.**, Math Professor, Sept. 24, 2020

**MARY FRANCES (WALKER) WAUGH**, Assistant to the Controller, July 16, 2020

### Friends of USF

**BARBARA EDNA (COLLINS) PILCHER**, Supervised USF Archeological Excavations, Aug. 25, 2020

**JAMES C. "JIM" PIRIUS**, USF Washington, D.C., lobbyist, June 16, 2020



## Harold William "Bill" Heller

1935 – 2020

THE DEAN AND CEO of USF's St. Petersburg campus from 1992 to 2002, Heller then served as a professor, dean of the campus' College of Education and director of the Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership until announcing his retirement in 2018.

Heller also served as a representative in the Florida House from 2006 to 2010. In 2019, the St. Petersburg campus' education building was renamed H. William Heller Hall.

Heller was the "heart and soul" of the campus, regional chancellor Martin Tadlock wrote in announcing Heller's death on Sept. 12, 2020.

"He was an unflinching advocate for the campus and the city and leaves a tremendous set of accomplishments that will never again be matched."

He's credited with helping transform the campus from a small commuter school serving only upperclassmen and graduate students to an institution with top-rated bachelor's programs, student housing, and a tight-knit family feel.

He also served as board president for Bayfront Medical Center; Pinellas Cultural Foundation chair; and president of SPCA of Tampa Bay, among other posts.



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