

# USF

UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA  
MAGAZINE

The OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the  
USF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
SPRING 2021



## ALUMNUS IN THE LEAD

**Chris Sprowls '06**  
Speaker of the Florida House

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# USF

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Photo: Florida House of Representatives

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**COVER PHOTO:** House Speaker Chris Sprowls during a recent appearance on the USF, St. Petersburg campus. Photo by Cliff McBride, USF St. Petersburg campus.



Photo: Courtesy of GORDON CLARKE

# From the President



Photo: SANDRA C. ROA | USF News

## Dear alumni, friends and supporters of USF:

I HOPE YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES are staying safe.

With the Florida Legislature in the midst of its annual 60-day session, this is an opportune time to share our appreciation for our Bulls in the legislature and the entire Tampa Bay region's delegation.

Speaker of the House Chris Sprowls, who earned his bachelor's degree in political science from USF in 2006, continues to be a strong supporter of our university and our students. He proposed consolidating our three separately accredited campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee in 2018, and guided the measure through the legislative process. We began operating under a single accreditation, as One USF, on July 1, 2020. Among other initiatives, Speaker Sprowls was an important advocate for state funding for the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine and Heart Institute building in downtown Tampa.

We're also proud of five additional Bulls serving in the legislature — Sen. Daniel Wright Burgess Jr., Sen. Joe Gruters, Rep. James Buchanan, Rep. Linda Chaney and Rep. Jackie Toledo — and appreciate the efforts of all the legislators representing the Tampa Bay region. These individuals are dedicated public servants and they play a critical role in the success of our university and our region.

Also in this issue are articles that highlight two of the many initiatives we continue to implement as part of our ongoing

commitment to dismantling racism in society and to actively promoting racial equity across our campuses and in our communities. In her column on the facing page, now a standing feature in USF magazine, Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman, senior advisor to the president and provost on diversity and inclusion, discusses the Diversity, Anti-Racism and Equity (DARE) Dashboard that she created in collaboration with the Office of Decision Support. This is an important resource designed to track the success of our efforts to support equity for faculty, students, staff and institutional support units at USF. As Elizabeth says, this is a bold effort at institutional self-assessment.

The article that begins on page 10 will introduce you to Dismantling Racism Team Study Circles. Presented by USF's Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity, this wonderful program brings a diverse group of faculty and staff members together for guided, candid discussions designed to enhance understanding. The conversations don't end at the conclusion of the six-week program. Participants develop an action plan to help them facilitate similar discussions with their colleagues. The DIEO team's goal is to involve as many members of our faculty and staff as possible in the ongoing study circles, which one participant describes as "an opportunity to learn how to be an anti-racist."

In recent weeks, we have marked two very somber milestones: One year since COVID-19 began to sweep across the United States (and the world), and surpassing the devastating loss of more than 500,000 people due to the virus. Our hearts go out to the families and friends of the victims. Far too many in our communities, as in communities throughout the nation, continue to face ongoing health and financial challenges. Like so many of you, I am hopeful that we are turning the corner thanks to adherence to risk mitigation measures, such as wearing a face covering, and the distribution of vaccines. In the story that begins on page 18, USF Health virologist Michael Teng, one of the many scientists and researchers within the university who continue to make such a positive difference, discusses the remarkable science behind the vaccines and their safety.

You also will find multiple stories in this issue that highlight the selflessness of our USF community. Students pursuing any major on any of USF's campuses will benefit from BOLD (Bulls of the Last Decade) donors who started an endowed scholarship, the Future Entrepreneur Endowed Scholarship. In the story that begins on page 24, you will learn about what motivated these alumni to generously support our students.

I also am inspired by the six recipients of the 2020 Outstanding Young Alumni award, presented by the USF Alumni Association. As you'll read in their profiles, which begin on page 48, they are richly deserving of this recognition of their outstanding professional success and their civic contributions. Congratulations to Dr. Marlene "Joannie" Bewa, John Brennan, Dr. Nicholas DeVito, Rogan Donelly, Dakeyan C. Graham and Dr. Chinyere "ChiChi" Okpaleke.

Whether it's on our campuses, in our communities, or in Tallahassee, we appreciate the ongoing support of USF and our students from our alumni and friends. I wish you and your families continued good health.

**Steven C. Currall**  
President and Professor

# The DARE Dashboard: Innovative approaches to data transparency

By Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman

*“For there is always light. If only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.”*

THESE STIRRING WORDS, written and spoken by Amanda Gorman at the 2021 Presidential Inauguration ceremony, reminded Americans that our ability to forge a more equitable future requires courage to “see” and confront injustice. At the University of South Florida, we have increasingly relied on data to “see” racial and gender disparities and identify opportunities for growth. In August 2020, Provost Ralph Wilcox tasked me with developing the Diversity, Anti-Racism and Equity Dashboard, in order to identify systemic inequities, establish new goals and track our progress across all three campuses. Fitting of this bold effort at institutional self-assessment, the dashboard is referred to as the DARE dashboard.

To be sure, our ultimate goal has never been to simply compile standard data, but rather to consider new data, analyze the data in innovative ways, and apply this data to embed equitable practices across campus. In partnership with the Office of Decision Support, led by Valeria Garcia '00 and Terri Chisolm, our teams have worked to execute the DARE dashboards, which are organized around four key quadrants: access, achievement, belonging, and engagement. The DARE dashboards are distinct because of their magnitude, as they will eventually include comprehensive data about student, faculty, staff, academic and institutional units. The DARE dashboards also leverage multiple survey data and sources of data that reflect a wide range of metrics (including those related to perception of safety, quality of advising, perceptions of diversity). These data are often under-utilized, but we believe they offer a more holistic understanding of people’s sense of inclusion on campus. Collectively, these data should inform the work of chairs, deans and senior administrators so inclusive excellence is prioritized, measured and managed.

After the launch of Phase 1 of the student dashboards, we noted the need for target-



ed efforts to bridge the recruitment gap for Black student undergraduate enrollment and programs to address the low enrollment of Latino students in graduate school. Moreover, our findings about campus culture have informed our intentional cultivation of spaces for intellectual exchange, and the creation of programs that will teach all USF community members to acknowledge inequities and respond in productive ways. I invite you to visit USF’s anti-racism page to view the DARE dashboards and learn about the programs, workshops and progress updates.

The innovations of the DARE dashboards notwithstanding, the partnership between the anti-racism initiative and the Office of Decision Support reflects a model for how to build institutional capacity through synergistic collaborations across different units and across traditional faculty and staff boundaries. With the launch of an updated Survey Research Hub, which brings together several campus data sets, the Office of Decision Support has created the infrastructure for the anti-racism initiative and other entities to walk bravely toward a new future together!

*(Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman is an associate professor of sociology and senior advisor to the president and provost for diversity and inclusion.)*

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# First Look



## The search for **VARIANTS**

Mikayla Maddison '19, a graduate research assistant, is part of a College of Public Health team trying to determine the prevalence of COVID-19 variants in the region. Researchers have been conducting genomic sequencing of positive pooled samples collected from Tampa General Hospital and USF's Tampa campus and comparing their makeup to the highly contagious variants that have originated in other countries, as well as other lesser-known mutations. Tom Unnasch, professor of epidemiology, and his graduate students have been analyzing samples collected by the hospital in spring 2020, prior to the arrival of variants, as a baseline for detecting potential trends.



COVID-19 Positive Pools

COVID-19 RNA

# First Look



Above, Matthew Wamsley's elaborate tombstone in Greenwood Cemetery sits among those of city pioneers and war veterans. The graveyard dates to 1892.

Right, Ken Betz pauses during the cleanup for a moment of reverence and reflection.

USF alumni and friends observed MLK Day by volunteering in small, safe groups during USF's Stampede of Service. Cleaning up historic Greenwood Cemetery were, far right – left to right: Ken Betz, Donna Betz, Pam Haber, John Fraser and Diana Fraser.





# In memory of ...

PINELLAS COUNTY ALUMNI EMBRACE community service, winning multiple awards for volunteerism. So when the pandemic curbed in-person Stampede of Service projects, chapter leaders were disappointed. They asked alumni to continue USF's Martin Luther King Day tradition by arranging small projects on their own.

John Fraser, '74, said he had one, but he and his wife, Diana, couldn't do it alone.

"He said, 'I really want to clean up Greenwood Cemetery,' " recalls Donna Betz, '86, the chapter's community service coordinator. She quickly agreed to help and contacted Pam Haber, '86 and MAcc '97, Life Member and chapter chair, who also jumped at the opportunity.

"We did not want this weekend to pass without doing something," Betz says.

And so, on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the Frasers, Haber, Betz, and her husband, Ken, arrived at the historic cemetery on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street in St. Petersburg. They sent three truckloads of dead brush to the city's yard waste site and filled five 30-gallon lawn bags with cans, bottles, food wrappers, and discarded clothing.

"It was a good day," says John Fraser, who'd learned only weeks before that his great-great grandfather William Preston Scott was buried at Greenwood, which dates to 1892.

Scott, a Civil War veteran wounded at Gettysburg, died in 1915. When Fraser and his wife went looking for his grave, they were appalled by Greenwood's condition. They later learned the cemetery's trustees have little funding for upkeep.

Pinellas alumni will likely return for more cleanups. As the final resting place for many war veterans, Betz says, Greenwood is a good place for a meaningful observation of Memorial Day or Veterans Day.

Alumni Stampede of Service projects will continue through June 30 this year. Virtual projects can be found at [usfalumni.org/events](http://usfalumni.org/events).

— PENNY CARNATHAN, '82 | USF Alumni Association



PHOTOS: DONNA BETZ '86

## Dismantling RACISM

Study circles are opportunities for candid discussions

**T**HE CONVERSATIONS CAN be challenging. Candid. Emotional. They also can be enlightening. Empowering. Transformational. For two hours a week over a six-week period, a half dozen USF faculty and staff members came together to discuss issues of race. They were part of a pilot program for Dismantling Racism Team Study Circles, organized by the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity (DIEO).

The program is ongoing, and DIEO officials expect to offer several study circles simultaneously. The program is among USF's many efforts to develop anti-racist practices, resources and initiatives.



**This became a close network of people who realized that while they might be different, we all have so many similarities that bring us close together.”**

— Shari Wilson

“Racism is a complex issue,” says Dr. Haywood Brown, who led DIEO during development of the study circles and currently serves as Morsani College of Medicine dean of faculty affairs. “We didn’t just get here yesterday and we won’t get out of this in a day. The study circles follow what leaders around the country are calling for: a frank dialogue on racism.”

Brown calls the study circles “a big, big part of the initiatives” within DIEO and “an opportunity we cannot let pass us by.”

“Part of this is gaining perspectives from each other and learning how to use these new ideas to not just help ourselves, but also help the people we interact with every day,” he says. “Prejudice/bias is learned behavior. An individual’s mindset impacts attitude and attitude impacts behaviors.”

Cecil Howard, DIEO’s associate vice president and the Tampa campus’s chief diversity officer, says the goal is to reach as many faculty, staff and administrators as possible.

“If everybody has this opportunity, it’s going to change some mindsets,” he says. “We still get a lot of complaints in our office, a lot of allegations of bias, especially racism. We want to put ourselves out of a job by creating a place that’s more welcoming, a place where people feel respected.”

Howard proposed the program to the DIEO team in the wake of the killings last year of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and other Black individuals and the subsequent protests in the Tampa Bay region and across the country. He has seen the effectiveness of the study circles in Gainesville, where he served as chief diversity officer, and while serving in the same position on the USF St. Petersburg campus, prior to moving to the Tampa campus in 2017.

“The basic concept is to bring a diverse group of people together to talk about race candidly, in a safe space, in a way they’ve never done it before,” Howard says. “The one thing you want to make sure of is that nobody is afraid to speak their mind.”

As DIEO staff and the study circle participants emphasized, that meant the “Las Vegas rule” applied: What was said in the weekly sessions stayed among the participants and facilitators.

Patsy Sanchez ’95 and MA ’98, describes the study circles as “an invitation for introspection.” As DIEO’s director of diversity and inclusion, Sanchez was responsible for organizing the pilot program, including the selection of participants.

“We want study circle participants to delve into their own long-held beliefs, to really look inside themselves before anything else,” she says. “It gives them an opportunity to look at the way they view others, pause, and then learn about them. Why do we see things the way we do? The ultimate goal is not only that they feel comfortable expressing their ideas and feelings, but that they try on somebody else’s ideas.”

That means diversity within the study circles is critical. As she selected participants for the pilot program, Sanchez made sure they didn’t work together and she looked closely at a variety of demographic factors, including age, gender and ethnicity.

Jimmy Myers, DIEO equal opportunity and compliance consultant, and Shari Wilson ’04, DIEO’s Americans with Disabilities coordinator, co-facilitated the pilot study circle.

“It wasn’t necessary for us to encourage participants to share their viewpoints and their feelings,” Myers says.



“They thought of it as an opportunity. They had something to say about racism, discrimination, unfair treatment.”

In this COVID-19 environment, the sessions were virtual. Myers wishes they could have been in person.

“It’s OK to shake a person’s hand, to embrace someone because of the difficulties they have faced,” he says. “Some people needed that. Some people teared up. And others were comforting. A certain bond was formed that was unique to that group. And they would do anything to lift up, to guide, to console others who were there based on their common experiences with being treated less favorably.”

Wilson agrees.

“Toward the middle and continuing to the end of our sessions, we developed a family,” she says. “This became a close network of people who realized that while they might be different, we all have so many similarities that bring us close together.”

One example of that bond, Wilson notes, is that the conversations did not end with the conclusion of each weekly session.

“They would email each other with information about an article or book they had read or movie they had watched,” she says. “I can’t stress enough that even though there were different ethnicities and ages, there were links among them, experiences they had with discrimination.”

As the study circle was coming to a close, the participants were asked to develop a single project through which they could engage others in important conversations about diversity and inclusion. However, rather than coming up with a group project, each of the participants created their own initiative – a pleasant surprise to the DIEO team.

“Our motto was: ‘Let’s not just sit around and talk about it. What are we going to do to bring about change?’” says Wilson, who continues to work with the participants.

Following the six-week program, JoAnn Urofsky, general manager of WUSF Public Media, worked with her leadership team to develop a survey of the organization’s 70 employees. A new diversity, equity and inclusion committee is reviewing the results of the survey and prioritizing strategies and actions. She is not part of the committee.

“Their work is ongoing,” Urofsky says. “I don’t see this as something we wrap up in a neat package and put away in six months.”

One of the survey questions asked whether employees believe WUSF is an inclusive place to work.

“On a scale of 1 to 10, the average was 7,” Urofsky says. “Not bad, but that means we can do better. The survey also asked if employees felt respected by their colleagues. The responses ranged from 4 to 10, with an average of 7. Again, not bad, but we have to do better.”

She wants to make sure that diversity is front and center in the hiring process.

“When you bring someone new into your department, how do you help them with the culture, how do you understand and respond to their culture, how do you make sure their colleagues are respectful and receptive to them?” she says.

Another study circle participant, Ariadne Miranda ’91, MA ’97 and PhD ’19, associate director of INTO USF’s English Language Program, followed up on the experience by suggesting to her colleagues that they form a working group to regularly explore a variety of issues, including race, gender and sexual orientation. Six have volunteered so far.

“We need to do something, we need to commit to taking action,” Miranda says.

In addition to getting to know other members of the USF community, Miranda appreciated the opportunity the study circle offered “to understand the bias that we all have in different ways, the discrimination we’ve either seen or been subjected to.”

She can speak from firsthand experience.

“I have been in situations where, for example, the point has been made – and not necessarily in a positive way – that I have a certain accent, a certain ethnic background,” says Miranda, a native of Panama. “Beyond sharing my own experience, I wanted to learn about others’ experiences and what actions we can take here at USF and within my own department.”

She describes the study circle as “a really powerful experience.”

“We all have blind spots, no matter where we come from, whether about skin color, gender or religion, to cite a few examples,” she says. “We all see things from our own perspective, and we may think ‘I’m not a racist’. This is an opportunity to learn how to be an anti-racist.”

**Above, from left**

**Patsy Sanchez: This is ‘an invitation for introspection.’**

**Ariadne Miranda: ‘This is an opportunity to learn how to be an anti-racist.’**

**Cecil Howard: Study circles can help create ‘a place that’s more welcoming, a place where people feel respected.’**

## ENGINEERING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

### Partnership brings safer drinking water to Madagascar

USF COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING Professor James Mihelcic was visiting Tamatave on the east coast of Madagascar to see the work some of his former graduate students were doing on water sanitation and hygiene. That's where he stumbled upon local artisans building hand pumps used to access shallow groundwater.

"Right in front of us, one of these artisans melted down old lead car batteries over a charcoal fire," he says. "He poured some molten lead into a small depression in the ground he'd made from a soda pop top. Then, bingo. He had a piece for the two check valves you find in a suction pump."

#### Troubled Waters

Just watching the demonstration was enough to tell Mihelcic and his colleagues that lead in the drinking water probably exceeded the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommended amounts, but they tested samples anyway. Some of them came back at 100 micrograms per liter, 10 times what the WHO says is acceptable.

Lead in drinking water is neither a new problem nor one unique to developing countries like Madagascar. Consider the public health crises surrounding drinking

water in places such as Flint, Mich., Newark, N.J., and Jackson, Miss. Lead is a toxic chemical pervasive in the environment. How long and how significant one's exposure determine the severity of the health problems it causes, but overall lead exposure can damage the brain, kidneys and nervous system and slow physical and intellectual development in children.

#### Pumping Iron

With the help of funding from a variety of sources, including Water Charities, Pure Earth, a USF Strategic Investment Pool award and his own personal savings, Mihelcic and his team developed a training program for local manufacturers of hand pumps that would teach them how to replace lead components with locally manufactured iron ones.

The team consists of Assistant Professor Mahmooda Khaliq Pasha, PhD '16, from USF's College of Public Health, Professor Jeffrey Cunningham and Assistant Professor Katherine Alfredo from the College of Engineering, and some dedicated graduate students. They're partnering with Ranontsika, a Malagasy non-governmental organization whose aim is to improve public health by promoting access to high-quality drinking water. Local health clinics are also involved in testing the blood levels of children in the community and educating their parents about the health problems associated with lead exposure.

"After our intervention of retrofitting hand pumps with iron valve components, lead water concentrations were



Above: An inside look at the pump.

Right: The project did a preliminary pump adaption at this woman's house. Here, she is using the pump after adaption.



Photos: LUKE BARRETT



**Above:** Malagasy health-care worker performs a blood lead level test on a baby in a community health clinic.

**Right:** Two Malagasy health-care professionals run through the protocol for blood lead level testing using a machine that analyzes lead levels using a single finger stick.

reduced below the WHO drinking water guideline of 10 micrograms per liter in 98 percent of pumps,” says Mihelcic, who also directs USF’s Engineering for International Development program. “The percent of pump systems that had lead concentrations reduced below our analytical detection level increased from 9.6 percent to 64 percent. It’s quite a striking improvement for a very simple fix.”

Changing out the lead components to iron ones costs about \$4 per pump, Mihelcic says — a worthy expense when you factor in what lead poisoning can cost a community.

“When you consider how a country’s economy suffers because of the loss of IQ of its children, the return on the investment is extremely high,” Mihelcic says. “Prior to the intervention, we estimated that 35 percent of exposed children had a blood lead level greater than the CDC action level [5 micrograms per deciliter or less] and after the intervention we estimated only 14 percent of exposed children possessed elevated blood lead levels.”

### Selling Safety

Turns out engineering a non-lead valve replacement was the easy part. Getting the local technicians to use it — and the community to demand it — proved harder.

That’s where Pasha’s expertise came in.

Pasha is an expert in social marketing, which is behavior change — founded on commercial marketing principles — that brings about social good. She’d been collaborating with Mihelcic and some current and former students on the project on an informal basis but got more involved when she applied for an internal College of Public Health grant inviting collaboration across strategic areas.

“As you can imagine, in a community with not a high level of understanding of lead and its health consequences, sudden change in the norm can create a sense of unease,” Pasha explains. “That’s especially true if it’s initiated by folks who aren’t necessarily representatives of your community.”

Pasha and her team decided to target their social marketing campaign to the technicians locals used to fix and maintain their water pumps.

They spoke to the technicians and translated their findings into a strategy and branded initiative, holding informational and technical sessions and providing in-the-field assistance. After their training, the technicians received certificates signed by the Ministry of Health and Water along with T-shirts and overalls with the project’s branding -- all important signals to the community that the project was professional and the technicians trustworthy, Pasha says.

With technicians on board, Pasha and her team are now turning their attention to the community.

“We found that sometimes the technicians didn’t want to use lead, however, a customer would insist on it because of the look of the metal or the perception that it’s heavier and better for the pump,” Pasha says. “We have intervened midstream through our work with the technicians, and now we’ll focus our work downstream so that there’s a common understanding among the community. Our project is a model for translational science. Any work that the engineers do in the future is complemented by the expertise of behavioral scientists who work to better position the product, service or behavior.”

More information about this international, interdisciplinary project is available at [global-lead-pollution.eng.usf.edu](http://global-lead-pollution.eng.usf.edu).

- DONNA CAMPISANO | College of Public Health



Photos: Courtesy of JAMES MIHELICIC

## A REAL ACHIEVEMENT

### SpaceX hosts SmallSats – miniature satellites built by USF students and faculty

THREE OF THE 143 SATELLITES ABOARD spaceflight company SpaceX's first dedicated rideshare mission that launched in January were engineered by students and faculty at the USF Institute of Applied Engineering (IAE).

The mission hosted satellites from dozens of nations and set a world record for the most satellites launched into space on a single mission.

Called SmallSats, the miniature class of cubic satellites that USF students and faculty built are around the size of a softball. SmallSats have a history of use in low Earth orbit, and the team at USF IAE aims to use theirs to research inter-satellite networked communications.

Dubbed SXRS-3 by Spaceflight, the January launch was the company's first mission of the year and the debut flight of the Sherpa-FX vehicle.

USF electrical engineering doctoral candidate and IAE Senior Research Engineer Peter Jorgensen said the satellites will communicate both with each other and with IAE headquarters.

"Effectively, the network is supposed to behave like the Internet here on the ground," Jorgensen says. "Something like that doesn't really exist in space right now."

Ongoing since August 2017, the project to create this network of SmallSats is titled Articulated Reconnaissance and Communications Expedition (ARCE-1). Before finding a home at IAE, it began at the U.S. Special Operations Command innovation incubator known as SOFWERX, with Jorgensen as program manager; Tim Baxter, IAE executive director of programs and customer engagements, as co-PI; and Robert Bishop, dean of the College of Engineering and president and CEO of IAE, as principal investigator.

Bishop said the launch marked a vital milestone for the project and the creation of research opportunities for potentially years to come.

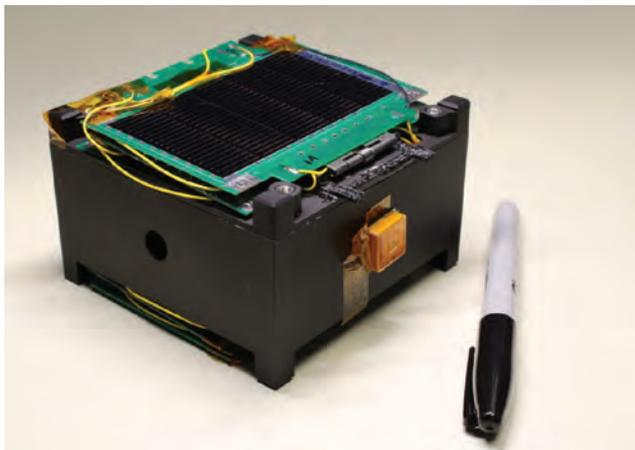


Photo: PETER JORGENSEN | Courtesy USF Institute of Applied Engineering



"Having witnessed this project's progress over the last 3 1/2 years through collaborations with multiple university partners, seeing all three ARCE-1 SmallSats enter orbit was a testament to this mission's beginnings and its future potential," he says. "This current success is the result of the intellectual and creative talents of the IAE's students and staff in tackling tomorrow's technological endeavors."

A notable local partner to the project is the Florida High Tech Corridor Match Grants Research Program, which has multiplied the impact of ARCE-1 sponsor awards across different phases of the project and is focused on research and student engagement.

While full-time staff engineers worked on the project last year, Jorgensen said that the satellites were built and tested primarily by USF students of various STEM backgrounds who joined the team.

"Students have been at the center of this project," he says.

More than 20 USF students across most engineering majors have worked on the project in some way, with a maximum student team size of almost a dozen at one point. Currently, the team consists of four USF students who spent the weeks leading up to the January launch completing and testing each of the three satellites.

Catherine Wood, a fall 2020 USF physics alum, joined the project in September 2020 and said she joined near

Above: SpaceX flight Transporter-1 launched from Space Launch Complex 40 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida.

Left: An ARCE-1 satellite.



Photo: SANDRA C. ROA | USF News

Above: USF electrical engineering doctoral candidate and IAE Senior Research Engineer Peter Jorgensen says the satellites will communicate with each other and with IAE headquarters.

Photo courtesy of SPACEX

the end of the satellites' physical development during the project's testing and deployment integration phases.

Wood said she's always wanted to work in the aerospace industry and that getting hands-on engineering skills and experience from this project as part of her current internship with the U.S. Department of Defense has given her a valuable look at a future in the field.

"This was a perfect and absolutely outstanding experience to have as an undergraduate student and now recent graduate," she says. "A constellation of small cube satellites built primarily by young college students, then being launched by one of the biggest aerospace companies? It's a real achievement. It made me feel really proud about what I've been learning and doing at USF, and I'll carry this experience and what I've learned in every aspect of my life."

David D'Angelo is a recent graduate from a USF mechanical engineering master's program and joined the IAE team in May 2019. D'Angelo said that building and testing SmallSats has been an interdisciplinary experience and an opportunity to professionally branch out beyond his field. The rigorous process of ensuring each satellite functioned nearly identically and could withstand a suite of tests and simulations — from the force and heat of a rocket launch to power consumption while in orbit — has also made him

a more confident engineer.

"Watching our work enter orbit was a great moment to reflect on the culmination of all of our past and present team members' efforts," D'Angelo says. "We accomplished something that takes a lot of time and dedication, and seeing that realized was special."

With all three SmallSats in orbit, Jorgensen says the team's next task is to complete an orbital analysis of the satellites' path around the Earth and use the next several weeks to prepare for the project's next research phase. Then, they can push software updates to the satellites to expand their functionality.

While this initially includes the ability for each Small-Sat to autonomously sense how far it is from a message target — maximizing messaging efficiency — the network could one day provide mobile communication services to locations almost anywhere on the globe.

"The intent would be to expand communications capabilities to less connected areas of the Earth," Jorgensen says. "For example, if a major disaster happened that wiped out all cell networks and all Internet in a large area, these satellites could theoretically be used for communications from that area."

- RUSSELL NAY '18 | College of Engineering



Photos: MATT MAY for the USF Foundation

President Emerita Judy Genshaft and husband Steve Greenbaum celebrated the groundbreaking of the Judy Genshaft Honors College building with, from left, Jordan Zimmerman, Chair of the USF Board of Trustees, and USF President Steven Currall.

## Construction begins on new home for Judy Genshaft Honors College

CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERWAY on the new home of the Judy Genshaft Honors College.

A small groundbreaking ceremony was held on Dec. 1, 2020, for the five-story, 85,000-square-foot facility on the Tampa campus.

“The Judy Genshaft Honors College building will be a remarkable enhancement to our world-class Honors College and will benefit our university, students and faculty,” USF President Steven Currall said at the ceremony. “The new building will advance USF’s strategic goals and long-term aspirations to attract and support Florida’s most accomplished students. We are deeply grateful for the generosity of Judy Genshaft and Steve Greenbaum.”

Private gifts totaling \$43 million have been pledged and received for the project, including a historic college-naming gift of \$20 million from USF President Emerita and Professor Judy Genshaft and her husband Steve Greenbaum.

“President Emerita Genshaft’s and Steve Greenbaum’s philanthropy continues to transform USF,” USF Board of Trustees Chair Jordan Zimmerman said. “On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we thank them for their steadfast commitment to student success and their vision that help propel the university to new heights.”

Additional generous gifts have been made by friends of the college, including an anonymous foundation which has provided a challenge gift that will match any future gifts to the building dollar for dollar.

The new facility will feature interwoven spaces for

classrooms, study areas, faculty and advisor offices, event areas, a computer lab, performance and creative spaces, and numerous areas for student collaboration — expanding the range of academic opportunities for students and giving them a true “home” on campus. Fittingly, it is being built along the renamed USF Genshaft Drive (formerly USF Maple Drive).

“Having one of the premier honors colleges in the nation is just one way USF will distinguish itself as one of the most elite and forward-thinking institutions in the world,” Genshaft said. “This stellar new home for our already excellent college will help attract top talent to USF, making an indelible impact on our community for years to come. We are delighted to see this dream become a reality.”

By moving from the current location on the second floor of the John and Grace Allen building, the college expects to grow from its current 2,400 students to a total of 3,000 students.

“Shortly after becoming USF’s president, Dr. Genshaft decided to elevate the university honors program to the status of a college,” said Charles Adams, Judy Genshaft Endowed Honors Dean. “She and Provost Ralph Wilcox provided the college with the university resources needed to support its expanding population, and she and Steve provided very generous scholarship support. All this work, and the work that she has inspired in others, has been directed to one goal — to build one of the premier public honors colleges in the country.”

The state-of-the-art building is expected to be completed in late 2022. “We look forward to welcoming our students to our new home and seeing all the amazing work they will do there,” Adams said.

- AMY HARROUN '05 | Judy Genshaft Honors College



Illustration: FLEISCHMANGARCIA Architecture | Planning | Interior Design



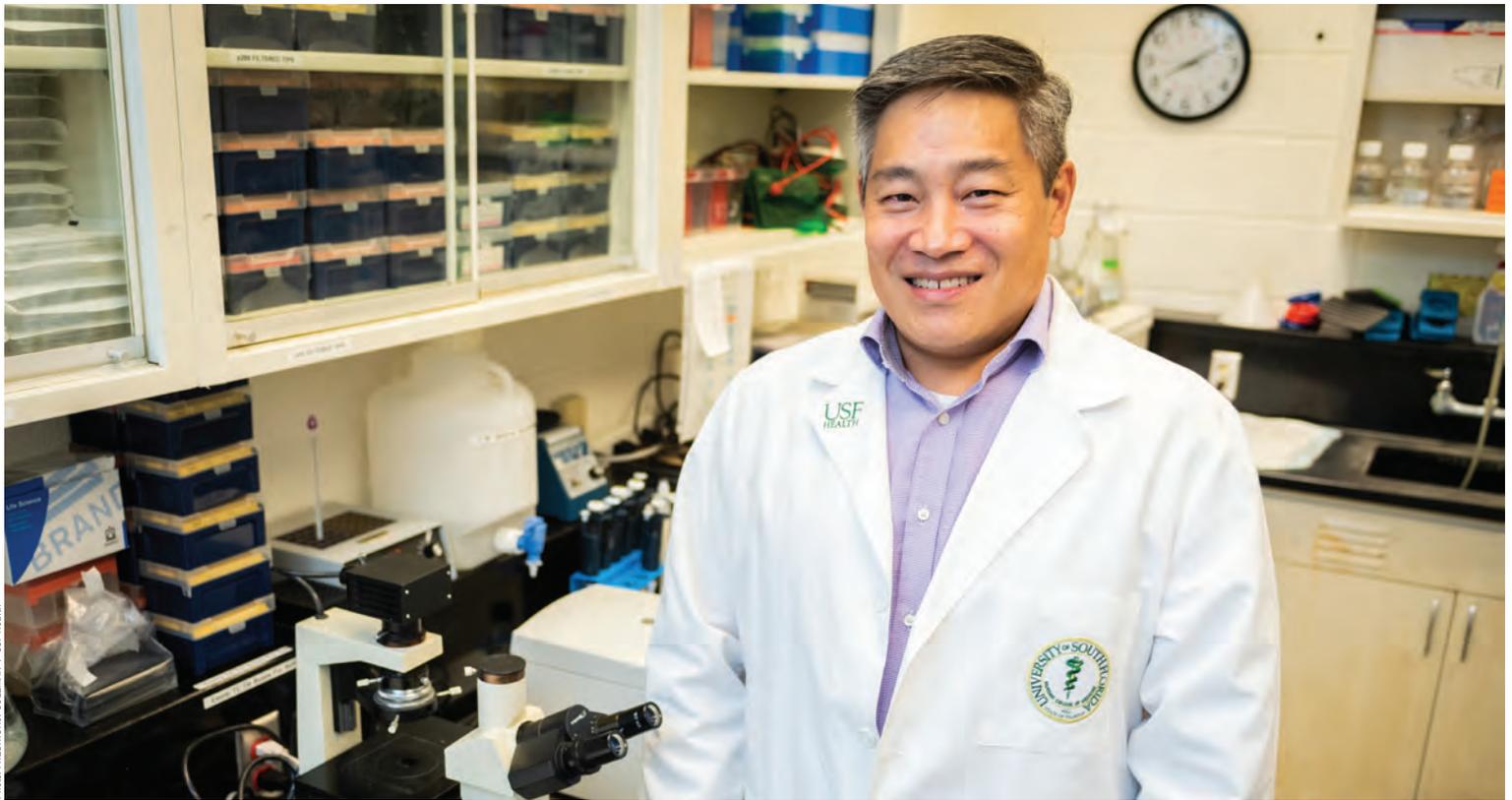


Photo: FREDRICK J. COLEMAN | USF Health

USF virologist Michael Teng calls vaccines a 'tremendous achievement.'

## Q&A WITH AN EXPERT

### Virologist lauds vaccine technology

THE RACE FOR A COVID-19 VACCINE BEGAN when Chinese scientists published the genetic sequence for the SARS-CoV-2 virus on Jan. 11, 2020 – a full two months before the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic. Less than a year later, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved two vaccines for emergency use within a week of each other (Dec. 11, 2020 and Dec. 18, 2020). Shortly thereafter, the initial COVID-19 vaccine distributions began in the United States. Both these frontrunner vaccines – the first made by Pfizer and its partner BioNTech, and the second by Moderna – are based on new messenger RNA (mRNA) technology.

“As someone who has worked on vaccines for decades and studied RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), which still has no vaccine 60 years after its discovery, I’m excited about the tremendous achievement of this new mRNA technology,” said USF Health virologist Michael Teng. “It’s been an incredible story to watch unfold – just 11 months from identifying a new pandemic virus to actually getting a safe and effective frontline vaccine.”

We caught up with Teng recently to find out more about the science behind the mRNA vaccines, each requiring two doses several weeks apart. He comments on some other vaccine issues as well. The following Q&A has been condensed and edited for clarity.

### How do these mRNA vaccines work?

The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna mRNA vaccines are based on the same principle as other COVID-19 vaccines in advanced stages of development. These vaccines deliver genetic material that provides the instruction code for your body’s cells to produce a viral protein (antigen). Your immune system recognizes that viral protein as foreign to your body and mounts an immune response to protect against it. For SARS CoV-2, the antigen is the viral spike (S) protein, which is located on the outside of the virus and allows the virus to enter a human cell in order to replicate.

The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA) as the genetic material and encase it in a protective lipid nanoparticle (small bubble of fat) for delivery. Once inside your cells, the mRNA can be translated directly by your cells to make the crown-shaped SARS CoV-2 S. The first (priming) dose of the mRNA vaccine trains your immune system to recognize the viral protein and the second dose boosts your immunity. So, after vaccination, if you are exposed to the actual virus your immune system is ready to neutralize the virus quickly.

In contrast, adenoviral vector vaccines, such as those developed by Oxford/AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen), employ a DNA gene that encodes the SARS CoV-2 S protein as the genetic material and uses common cold virus particles (rendered harmless) as the delivery system. For these vaccines, the DNA first has to get into the cell nucleus where your cells can make the mRNA coding instructions, which must then be translated into production of the spike protein.



### **If the mRNA vaccine uses brand new technology, how could it be turned around so quickly?**

While mRNA technology is relatively new and was never approved before COVID-19, the research on vaccines using a genetic approach is not.

Both companies (BioNTech and Moderna) have been testing the application of this platform against other infectious diseases and cancers for several years (i.e., Moderna has worked on mRNA vaccines for Zika and the flu). But, until now, none of the mRNA vaccines or therapeutics have made it through advanced clinical trials.

The challenge has been delivering the mRNA, which is very unstable, to its target human cells without the vaccine being degraded too quickly by the body's naturally occurring enzymes. You want to make sure the mRNA stays around long enough to make sufficient protein to stimulate an immune response, but not so long that it overstimulates the immune response. ... Both Pfizer and Moderna found a way to chemically hide the mRNA from the immune system so once it gets into your cells it has enough time to make the viral protein needed to trigger antibodies and activate T-cell production. The mRNA never enters the cell nucleus or alters a person's genetic makeup.

### **What are the advantages of mRNA vaccines?**

Well, we know they are relatively safe — and 90-plus percent efficacy for a vaccine (94-95%) is really very high. That level of protection rivals what we see with the measles and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines. Seasonal flu vaccines are only about 50 to 60 percent effective in a good year.

Another big advantage of this mRNA platform is that it's easy to change (mRNA coding instructions) based on the disease you are targeting. You just need to swap in the gene sequence of the protein you want encoded to produce an immune response. So, theoretically, you can easily adapt the vaccine to respond to new viruses – or even mutations of the existing virus.

### **What are the drawbacks?**

The major drawback of the mRNA vaccines is that we have not had yet fully marketed this particular type of vaccine. So, we still do not know the long-term effects of the vaccine, or how long immunity lasts.

The mRNA vaccines are significantly more expensive than the adenovirus vaccine and others in the pipeline for COVID-19. And the cold-storage requirements (-94° F for the Pfizer vaccine and -4° F for the Moderna vaccine) may limit distribution.

### **SARS-CoV-2 variants recently emerged that may make the virus more contagious. Will current COVID-19 vaccines protect against the mutated virus, or will we need new ones?**

It will take some time to get answers. But, it's important to know that RNA viruses like coronaviruses mutate, or change, quite frequently. Not every mutation makes the



Photo: Courtesy USF Health

COVID-19 virus more dangerous or contagious; most have no effect, and others may even weaken the virus. Also, there are several sites (epitopes) on the SARS CoV-2 S protein that are recognized by antibodies. It is likely that multiple sites would have to mutate for the virus to escape the immune response from the vaccines. The current vaccines should cover the newly emerging 20B/501Y.V1 variant originally identified in the UK that has recently been found in Florida.

The bigger question is if we can vaccinate everyone within the next year, or year and a half. How much pressure will that put on SARS-CoV-2 to develop variants that escape immunity? It could happen; I don't think this virus is going to magically disappear.

The most recent study I saw indicated that natural immunity to other coronaviruses seems to last about three years. The COVID-19 virus may become endemic like these other human coronaviruses that cause the common cold. That means you might need to return for a booster providing better immunity against new viral protein mutations — kind of like we do with the seasonal flu vaccine, which changes a little each year.

### **Would you get one of these first COVID-19 vaccines?**

Absolutely, I'll get vaccinated as soon as I can.

Most short-term side effects are in line with other established vaccines we're familiar with – including injection site soreness, muscle stiffness, fever, headache, maybe some chills. These symptoms may occur more commonly with the second dose when your immune system is ramping up. It's not the vaccine itself causing the side effects, but rather the routine response of your immune system to a vaccine that's working.

The risk-benefit calculation is simple for me. I'd rather take my chances of getting a headache than being on a ventilator with COVID-19.

- ANNE DELOTTO BAIER '78 | USF Health Communications

# Athletics



## ALUMNI

### The sky's the limit for former Bulls linebacker Sam Barrington

WHETHER IT'S WEARING A HELMET OR A HARDHAT, former standout Bulls linebacker Sam Barrington was destined for great things as a proud pillar of a USF community he was drawn to for special reasons.

"I had (scholarship) offers from everybody, but I came to USF because I knew that the school was going in a wonderful direction," Barrington says. "Here it is 12 years later, and the university is building and I'm involved in it."

After serving as a staple of his alma mater's defense from 2009 to 2012, Barrington recently played another important role for the Bulls by successfully contributing to a key construction project in the USF Research Park.

Sky Limit Equipment LLC, a minority-owned business managed by Barrington, used one of its cranes, capable of lifting 250 tons, to hoist the final beam on USF's new structure. Prior to the "topping off" ceremony, Sky Limit was setting more than 60 pieces of steel per day since beginning work before the Thanksgiving holiday, ensuring a strong structural foundation for the 120,000-square-foot building located at the corner of Fowler Avenue and Spectrum Drive.

"We understood the significance of time in terms of performance and what we had to get done, so we could stay on schedule," Barrington says. "Fortunately, we were able to exceed those expectations."

Barrington, COO of Orlando-based Sky Limit Equipment LLC, oversaw the massive task from start to finish while visiting the jobsite at least twice each week. He does the same for many other company projects, constantly checking in with operating engineers and making sure the customer remains happy, especially one near and dear to his heart like USF.

"It's just amazing," Barrington says of the Bulls' most recent building development. "A lot of hard work goes into it and you want to make sure you do a good job because it's your alma mater."

Tireless efforts started right away, with 14 trucks hauling the Manitowoc 888 crane to USF before six Sky Limit representatives assembled it in one day. It required another six people to complete the crane disassembly after an immense amount of steel filled the three-story structure.

USF Research Park's new building, located at the gateway to the Tampa campus, will feature a state-of-the-art, mixed-use lab and offices, with space for retail and dining options on the first floor. Thanks in part to Sky Limit Equipment LLC's steady progress, the \$42 million building remains on track to be finished by late 2021.

"I'll be able to walk the halls of that building, not only as an alum who is proud that we have these types of facilities but knowing that my company was able to build here," Barrington says. "It shows USF's commitment to alumni as well."

Although he received numerous All-Big East individual accolades with USF football, Barrington always remained a team-first Bull who praised his peers. Naturally, he credits numerous others for making the USF Research Park project possible.



Photos: RYAN NOONE | USF News

Former Bulls linebacker Sam Barrington '12, and his Sky Limit Equipment team have played a key role in the construction of the new USF Research Park building.



One person Barrington made sure to mention by name is Terrie Daniel, USF's assistant vice president of supplier diversity.

"It's an amazing opportunity and there's so many people to thank for helping us along the way," Barrington says.

Developing great working relationships previously paved the way for Sky Limit Equipment LLC to work on the Morsani College of Medicine building in downtown Tampa.

Different field, same work ethic for Barrington

Much like his playing style at USF and as a five-year NFL veteran, Barrington relentlessly pursues success as a versatile professional.

In the midst of major work projects, USF's 10th all-time leading tackler (258 stops) has been an analyst on Bulls football radio broadcasts for three seasons and still finds time to reach new heights.

On April 22, he'll receive the 2021 USF Outstanding Young Alumni Award and this May, the Renaissance man is scheduled to graduate from USF with an Executive Master of Business Administration degree. That will add another shining chapter to the family book of Barrington accomplishments. In earlier chapters, his father, Sam Sr., used his longtime construction experience and personal initiative to become founder of Sky Limit Structure Builders, LTD in Ghana along with Sky Limit Foundation, LLC in the U.S.

"My dad has always been a hard-working man and my mother has always been a hard-working woman," Barrington says. "That's the legacy of our family – hard workers."

Once Barrington's pro football career came to a close in 2017, he joined the family business and eventually earned his way up to acting president of Sky Limit Equipment LLC.

"I think it's just about finding a purpose and finding things you enjoy and having meaning to them and including those in your purpose," he says.

Now instead of tackling ball carriers, Barrington runs a business that steel erectors regularly lean on in addition to Sky Limit's fleet capabilities, such as crane rental, rigging and hauling.

Construction is a different arena than football, but all the elements of achieving gridiron greatness translate well outside the lines, according to the Green Bay Packers' seventh-round pick in 2013. Perseverance, teamwork and precision can apply well to other professional platforms and Barrington certainly practices what he preaches.

"I think an important takeaway is former players have to understand they have everything it takes to do well as an entrepreneur or business leader," he says. "They just have to employ the same character traits and skills they used to make them successful on the field in their new professions."

Soon enough, USF football players of the past and present will be able to look to the new building at the USF Research Park as inspiration. Other motivational monuments come in the form of rollercoasters at Disney, buildings at Tampa International Airport, and the JW Marriott Tampa on Water Street.

Stay tuned to see what Barrington's Sky Limit venture accomplishes next.

"We're a small business, but we're growing," he says. "We value new customers because we understand they could have gone anywhere in the world, but they're right here with us."

- TOM ZEBOLD | USF Athletics

# HANDS-ON Philanthropy

**E**LIZABETH MOORE IS NOT your typical philanthropist.

Whether scaling the rainforest canopy to study lemurs, scuba diving alongside scientists to harvest coral or slogging through the mud on her 1,200-acre wildlife refuge, Moore is a spirited, all-in woman who isn't afraid to get her hands dirty.

A locally renowned citizen scientist, Moore's giving follows her heart, and then hands, as she digs to find the root cause of various problems.

"One of my favorite things is making contributions to science," explains Moore, whose interests focus primarily on the environment and education. "I especially enjoy when I can get personally involved in the initiative."

Since her arrival in Bradenton in 2007, Moore has established herself as a prominent community leader and philanthropist. Some of her more visible contributions include the Elizabeth Moore Sarasota Open tennis tournament, the Moore Athletic Complex and Marine Science Center at Saint Stephen's Episcopal School, the Mote Marine Laboratory's Elizabeth Moore International Center for Coral Reef Research and Restoration in the Keys, and the Elizabeth Moore Lemur Forest Habitat in Myakka City.

Moore also serves on several local boards, including the Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium, the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast, the Lemur Conservation Foundation and the WUSF Advisory Board.

For the past six years, the self-proclaimed "jazz fanatic" has impacted her local community as a benefactor of listener-supported WUSF 89.7. Between sponsoring giving challenges, investing in science programming like Ira Flatow's Science Friday and waking up early to listen to All Night Jazz, Moore has proven herself to be a round-the-clock friend of the radio station.

Recently, Moore has taken the next step in furthering her relationship with the university. After attending as a guest for a handful of years, Moore is stepping up to serve as the 2021 chairperson for Brunch on the Bay — the premier fundraiser for USF's Sarasota-Manatee campus.

Brunch on the Bay is a uniquely compelling experience centered around samplings of exquisite local cuisine. Each year more business leaders join as sponsors and participants in this event that raises funds for student scholarships. Since its humble beginnings in 1994, Brunch on the Bay has raised more than \$5.5 million in funding and awarded nearly 1,800 student scholarships.

With an enthusiastic leader like Moore at the helm, this year's Brunch on the Bay — scheduled for Nov. 7 — will undoubtedly be the fundraiser of the year for the Suncoast region.

Moore is diving feet-first into preparations for the 2021 Brunch on the Bay. She attends all the planning meetings, replete with fresh ideas, natural leadership and genuine enthusiasm. Marrying her love of jazz with her passion for philanthropy, Moore is putting a personal spin on this year's event. For the first time, two live jazz bands — both featuring USF alumni — will serenade the Brunch on the Bay audience.

For one whose giving philosophy centers on building long-term solutions, supporting scholarships at USF is a natural fit for Moore.

"USF is a pillar of the Sarasota-Manatee community," says Moore. "Providing scholarships gives these great kids the ability to stay local while getting a top-notch education. It starts a pipeline that keeps graduates here, in our community, boosts our economy and develops our work force."

Seeing the impact of her giving is something that has become increasingly important to Moore.

On her birthday last year, Moore publicly proclaimed that the next chapter of her life would focus on philanthropy.

"I don't want to wait to the end to give it away," she says. "I want to know where my dollars went, and the impact they make, firsthand. I'm lucky to be in a position where I'm still young, active and ready to put on work boots."

For a tactile philanthropist like Moore, the ability to keep her hands on the wheel and her boots on the ground as she forges her legacy is priceless.

- MELISSA WOLFE '13, Life Member | USF Foundation



# Philanthropy



One of my favorite things is making contributions to science. I especially enjoy when I can get personally involved in the initiative.”

– Elizabeth Moore



Photo, Courtesy USF Advancement

# FIVE BOLD DONORS

## create endowed scholarship for entrepreneurs

**T**HOUGH THEY EACH FOLLOWED a different path to and through the University of South Florida, five Bulls who have graduated in the last decade found common ground in their love for the university and a passion for entrepreneurship. The idea of starting a scholarship began with George Papadeas '13, who was soon joined by four other young alumni — Raymond Fajardo '16, Ryan Frankel '15 (together with his wife, Stephanie), Nikolina Kosanovic '17 and Kevin Kovac '15 — to create the Future Entrepreneur Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship, which is renewable for two semesters, is open to full-time students studying any major on any of USF's campuses who have an interest in entrepreneurship. We recently spoke with the donors to learn more about the scholarship and the journey to making it a reality.

### Where did the idea for this scholarship come from, and how did you get involved?

**Fajardo:** The brains behind the scholarship from the very beginning was George Papadeas. He was the one that pitched the idea. I have a background as a student entrepreneur at the university, and I plan on starting my own business in the future. Currently at my job, I deal with a lot of different entrepreneurs, so I thought this would be a very worthwhile endeavor and effort to join.

**Papadeas:** I had a personal goal of creating a scholarship in 2020 with individuals who share the same values. With the help of Nevena Pehar, '12, Life Member, associate director of development for young alumni engagement and philanthropy at the USF Foundation, we were able to find really great individuals to partner with. What's even better is these networking relationships have now turned into friendships.



Papadeas



Frankel

Photos: Courtesy USF Advancement

# Philanthropy



## The Donors:

### George Papadeas '13

**Major at USF:** Marketing

**Current role:** Chief Operating Officer, The HOTH, a digital marketing company

**USF involvement:** Life member, USF Alumni Association; BOLD Council

### Ryan Frankel '15 and his wife, Stephanie Frankel

**Major at USF:** Finance

**Current role:** Certified Financial Planner with the Adcock Financial Group, a boutique wealth management company in Tampa

**USF involvement:** Alumni Engagement Chair, Muma College of Business Alumni Advisory Board; Mentor, Corporate Mentorship Program; BOLD Council

### Kevin Kovac '15

**Major at USF:** Management Information Systems

**Current role:** Cloud/DevOps Engineer at Trellance Inc.

**USF involvement:** Life member, USF Alumni Association; USF BOLD

### Raymond Fajardo '16

**Major at USF:** Geology and Economics

**Current role:** Account Executive, Gulf Coast Bank and Trust Co. dba United Capital Funding Group, LLC

**USF involvement:** USF Latino Alumni Society; USF BOLD Council

### Nikolina Kosanovic '17

**Major at USF:** Economics

**Current role:** Strategic Communications Consultant at USI Insurance Services

**USF involvement:** Member, USF Alumni Association; Corporate Mentor, Muma College of Business; USF BOLD

**Frankel:** Endowed scholarships resonated with me, because of the fact the scholarship has a lasting impact on the university. After joining the BOLD Council, I met George Papadeas, the current co-chair. He mentioned to me he was looking into creating a small group of young alumni to make an endowed scholarship, and I was instantly sold.



**Kovac:** I was told by Ryan Frankel, a close personal friend about this scholarship opportunity, and I am excited and grateful I can begin to give back to current and future USF Bulls in any way to help them succeed.

**Kosanovic:** I was approached by Nevena, who is a friend. She told me about the idea for this scholarship. I had always wanted to contribute to an endowed scholarship to help students fund their college experience at USF, and I loved that this one specifically would focus on entrepreneurial spirit and corporate social responsibility.

## How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the process?



**Kosanovic:** Like in many industries, it presented a lot of challenges, but it showed the resilience behind our mission, because we were able to make it happen. It felt like it was even more necessary to help students during a time when many of them were disproportionately affected and stressed about a loss of income.

Especially since young entrepreneurs in college tend to own small businesses, which have been stunted or closed through the pandemic.

## Why did you all choose to aim the scholarship toward students interested in entrepreneurship?

**Papadeas:** My personal theory is that by supporting the student entrepreneur financially, upon graduation they will

have the ability to accelerate their professional growth and accomplish their entrepreneurial goals much faster.

**Frankel:** Along with the entrepreneurship focus, we also asked that one of the questions for applicants is how they plan to bring corporate responsibility into their entrepreneurial endeavors. This was important to us, because we want future leaders and entrepreneurs coming out of USF thinking about how to impact our community socially as well as economically.



**Fajardo:** All of us, in some form or another, are really interested in entrepreneurship and have done ventures before or worked with entrepreneurs before. We all realize the importance of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.

## It is also pretty broad, open to students with any major, on any of USF's campuses. Why is it important to you all to make this available to a wide range of students?



**Papadeas:** It's important to make this available to a wide range of students, because entrepreneurs have very diverse backgrounds. There are medical entrepreneurs, art entrepreneurs, advertising entrepreneurs, etc. To make this scholarship exclusive to one college or school would not be in line with the spirit of entrepreneurship.

**Frankel:** Consolidation at USF is going to be a major impact on the university's growth, and we felt like having students from every campus have an opportunity to earn this scholarship would provide a broader impact.

**Kosanovic:** We wanted it to be inclusive and ensure that no matter what the recipient's individual circumstances are, we wouldn't allow anything but their merit and work to be judged. All USF Bulls are part of an inclusive community, and they should be afforded the same opportunities.

## You all graduated within the last decade, and yet you are already giving back so generously to your alma mater. What was your motivation to give back financially?

**Papadeas:** My USF experience gave me the opportunity to become the person I am today. I will always see myself indebted to the university for these experiences. Giving back will continue to be a priority for me to make sure others have those same experiences.



**Frankel:** My parents supported me financially through college. I wanted to be able to use the opportunity my parents gave me to help other students at USF.

**Kovac:** USF set me up for life success, not just career success. Because of the opportunities and knowledge the university has given me, it is an honor and sincere pleasure to give back to the Bulls community.

**Fajardo:** Even though I'm only 27, some of the best years of my life were at USF. USF gave me a lot of confidence, skills and knowledge. I don't think I'd be where I am if it wasn't for them. I want to make sure other students have the same opportunity — and more.

**Kosanovic:** I have worked extremely hard for everything I've accomplished, but I know my life would be different if I didn't have support from those who believed in me and gave me opportunities along the way. Helping students financially is one important way to break down barriers and provide opportunities.

## What would you say to other young alumni? Why do you think it's important for them to give?

**Frankel:** It is vitally important to the success of USF to have alumni support current students. Giving financial support to USF starting as a young alumnus creates a closer bond to the university, as well as a good habit of giving. My hope is our scholarship will motivate young alumni to give back financially in any amount, but I especially want to show how a group of alumni can band together in order to make an endowed gift possible.

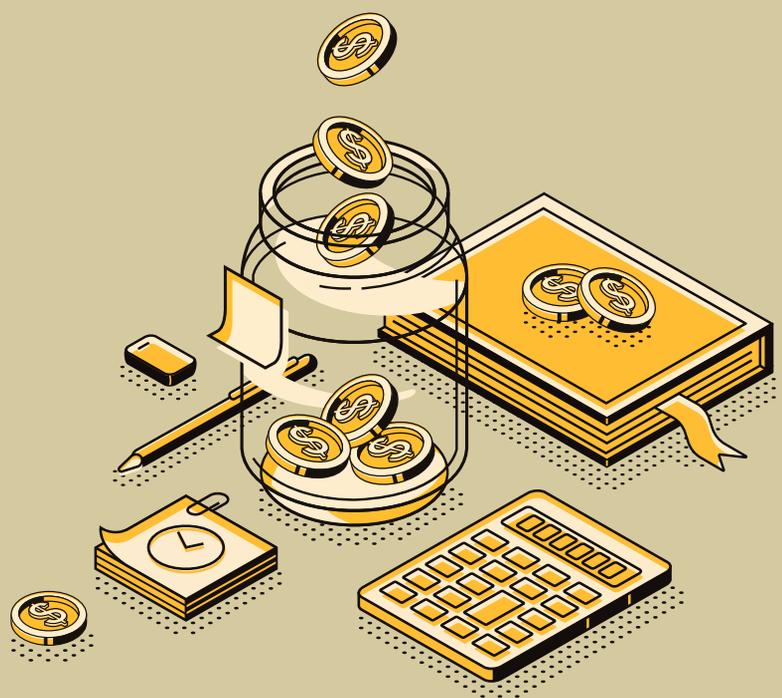
- KILEY MALLARD | USF Foundation

## Are you BOLD?

ALL USF ALUMNI who graduated within the last 10 years are BOLD — Bulls of the Last Decade.

BOLD alumni are encouraged to connect, engage and give to USF.

- Attend BOLD-sponsored activities, such as Career Connections, or other university events, whether athletics, art exhibitions and performances, or group travel opportunities.
- Give back to the university with an annual or recurring gift. Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference.
- Follow @usfbold on Instagram, as well as the university's other social media channels, and by subscribing to university publications.



# Mr. Speaker

## USF alumnus focuses on creating opportunities

By TOM WOOLF | USF News

**W**HETHER THE TOPIC IS USF and higher education, literacy, the workforce or myriad other issues of concern to Floridians, Chris Sprowls is focused on creating opportunities. First elected to represent District 65 in northern Pinellas County in 2014, the Palm Harbor Republican now leads the Florida House of Representatives as speaker. Sprowls continues to be a strong advocate for USF — his alma mater — and students.

“The University of South Florida — and the State of Florida — are fortunate to have Chris Sprowls’ leadership as speaker of the Florida House of Representatives,” USF President Steven Currall says. “He’s been an important advocate for USF’s policy and budgetary legislative priorities, and he has been an important partner in USF’s multi-year process to successfully unify our campuses as One USF.”

**“By bringing the campuses together, it allows USF to work toward one vision with separate, unique parts. It creates an opportunity for all students to attend an academically rigorous, Preeminent State University ...”**

— Chris Sprowls

Jordan Zimmerman ’80, Life Member, chair of the USF Board of Trustees, notes, “Speaker Sprowls has continuously shown tireless support and unwavering commitment to the advancement of the University of South Florida and all of its campuses while always putting our students first. He has played an integral role in so many of our recent accomplishments and we are so proud to have leaders like him among USF’s distinguished alumni.”

Sprowls, who earned a bachelor’s degree in political science in 2006, proposed consolidating USF’s three separately accredited campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and

Sarasota-Manatee in 2018 and shepherded the measure through the legislative process. USF began operating under a single accreditation on July 1, 2020.

Among the USF-related issues he has worked on as a legislator — including his advocacy for state funding of the new USF Health Morsani College of Medicine and Heart Institute in downtown Tampa — Sprowls believes consolidation will have the greatest long-term impact.

“Creating the multi-campus system, which was done well over a decade ago, was done for good reasons at the time,” he says. “By bringing the campuses together, it allows USF to work toward one vision with separate, unique parts. It creates an opportunity for all students to attend an academically rigorous, Preeminent State University where they have a wealth of opportunities to learn. It means a greater number of faculty from throughout the state and the country will flock to USF to teach and do research at a Tier 1 research institution.

“It isn’t the most glamorous thing when you’re talking about a united accreditation. It isn’t something people stand up and cheer about. But in the long term, it will be the thing that will truly have the most significant impact on the success of the university.”

Raising the prominence of USF in Florida, nationally and internationally is among the keys to growing the Tampa Bay region’s economy.

“That creates opportunities for businesses to come here because they realize the talent is here, which benefits their recruiting,” Sprowls says. “USF and the business community play a role in ensuring we have the ability to incubate small businesses and tech start-ups that can blossom and stay here.”

He cites Cincinnati as an example of how a community can nurture businesses. The city is home to a number of Fortune 500 companies, including Kroger, Procter & Gamble and Fifth Third Bancorp.

“Cincinnati has a large concentration of Fortune 500 companies because that’s where they started,” Sprowls says. “The Tampa Bay region needs to be a place where people come to start their business, not just move their business.”

Education at all levels is critical to Sprowls. During his inaugural address as speaker last November, he proposed



Photo: Florida House of Representatives



**If children read at grade level, they are more likely to graduate high school, get a job or pursue higher education, be more prosperous.”**

— Chris Sprowls

the New Worlds Reading Initiative. This would be the first statewide program in Florida to deliver free books to elementary school students identified as struggling readers. Legislation that is currently pending calls for an organization to administer the program statewide and contract with a book distribution organization to deliver books to eligible students. Support materials would be provided to parents to help them engage with their children in reading.

Participating school districts would work with local organizations that raise awareness and funds for the book distribution program. The legislation directs the state organization to provide 50 percent of the program cost, with the remaining funds generated at the local level.

“The most important sign of a healthy community is a healthy family,” Sprowls says. “One of the things I’ve said in the legislature is that we can’t always make sure a child is born into a family that loves them or make sure that they have an easy upbringing. We can make reading a priority. If a child can learn to read, that opens possibilities for their future that they never would have had before.”

While Florida has done well compared to other states in terms of students reading at a fourth-grade level —

fourth in the nation — Sprowls maintains that the state must do better.

“The reality is that if we continue current trends for closing the achievement gap, it would take 230 years before every child is reading at grade level,” he says. “Eighty-eight percent of third graders who don’t read at grade level don’t graduate high school.”

The legislature recognizes that Florida is at “an inflection point,” Sprowls says.

“If children read at grade level, they are more likely to graduate high school, get a job or pursue higher education, be more prosperous,” he adds. “All of those come from reading at grade level, and that’s something we can impact. I want to ignite a passion for reading in our children as they begin elementary school and that we continue that commitment to reading and literacy throughout K-12 education.”

An education of a different kind — that which comes from adversity — is something Sprowls encourages today’s USF students to embrace.

“Challenges and adversity are your friends, not something to be shied away from,” he says. “When you talk to most successful people and ask them to describe something they place the greatest value on, that was the best thing they did, chances are they’ll tell you about something that was extremely difficult for them to do.

“When it comes to the university setting, find people to challenge you intellectually, who think differently, and engage them in a free exchange of ideas. Facing adversity in academic life will help you be successful in life more generally.”

**Sprowls and USF President Steven Currall exchange a physically distanced fist bump during the speaker’s recent visit to the USF St. Petersburg campus.**



Photo: CLIFF MCBRIDE | USF St. Petersburg campus



## About Chris Sprowls

*Age:* 37

*Hometown:* Palm Harbor, Fla.

*Education:* Earned bachelor's degree in political science from USF, 2006; earned law degree from Stetson University College of Law, 2009.

*Career:* Currently speaker of the Florida House of Representatives; has represented District 65 in northern Pinellas County since 2014.

*Attorney with Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC*

Served for seven years as assistant state attorney for the state's Sixth Judicial Circuit, which covers Pinellas and Pasco counties.

*Family:* Wife Shannon; two sons, Prescott and Conrad

*USF Honor:* 2019 Outstanding Young Alumnus

Photo: Florida House of Representatives

Sprowls knows something about adversity. During his senior year of high school, he was diagnosed with Hodgkins' lymphoma and went through eight months of chemotherapy.

"Having that experience allowed me to recognize a major challenge and the benefits of experiencing it," he says. "Let's be honest — most people might not experience cancer, it also could be a terrible tragedy, a difficult upbringing — each of us has something and the question is how we handle it."

Some of the lessons he learned came from people he was around during his treatments.

"Since I was so young, I was usually around people who were much older, and they were willing to share their stories, their courageous moments," Sprowls says. "That experience allows you to understand that sometimes you can borrow courage from other people. We all have difficult moments and when others are facing adversity, it's also important that we allow them to borrow courage from us."

Many valuable lessons come from engaging with others. Yet today, thanks to technology and social media, "we're engaged all the time and yet not at all," Sprowls says.

"If I could go back to my younger self, my time as a student, I'd try to be more cognizant of the fact that engaging with people, living in the moment, is a richer experience," he says. "I would ask today's young people — 'do you feel so much better after spending an hour on Facebook? Do you feel more energized about life?' If the answer is no, why are we doing it? I'd encourage students to avoid having their computers open or their phones on during class. Block off time to be totally engaged." ■



Photo: GUYF. MCBRIDE | USF St. Pete campus

**Top:** Judge Chris LaBruzzo, sixth Judicial Circuit Court, administers the oath of office for Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives to Sprowls during the legislature's November 2020 organization session. Also pictured are Sprowls' wife, Shannon, and their sons, Prescott and Conrad.

**Above:** Sprowls met with USF President Steven Currall and regional Chancellors Martin Tadlock, USF St. Petersburg campus, and Karen Holbrook, USF Sarasota-Manatee campus, during a 2019 visit to the St. Petersburg campus.

# BULLS in Tallahassee

By PENNY CARNATHAN, '82

IN ADDITION TO HOUSE SPEAKER Sprowls, five USF grads represent Floridians in the state House and Senate. USF appreciates their advocacy and the Bulls alumni family is proud of these outstanding grads and their accomplishments.



## Rep. James Buchanan, R-Sarasota MBA '09

Rep. Buchanan is serving his second term representing south Sarasota County's House District 74, including the cities of Laurel, Venice, South Venice, North Port and Englewood. He is chair of the Environment, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee and vice chair of the Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee. Buchanan first won election to the House in 2018 and worked on issues of special concern to his constituents, including environmental protection, affordable health care and small-business concerns. He was re-elected in 2020.

The son of incumbent U.S. Rep. Vernon Buchanan, he's a Michigan native who moved to Florida as a child. Buchanan played football for Florida State University while double majoring in finance and entrepreneurship. He has worked as a real estate professional since 2006 and owns James Buchanan Realty. He and his wife, Lea, are the parents of Lexington and Caroline.

**Sen. Daniel Wright Burgess Jr., R-Zephyrhills**  
Political Science '08

First elected to the state Senate in 2020, Sen. Burgess represents District 20, including portions of Hillsborough, Pasco and Polk counties. While still a freshman at USF, he became Florida's youngest elected official when he won a seat on the Zephyrhills City Council at age 18. He became mayor of the city at 26, and in 2014 was elected to represent Pasco County's House District 38. He served two terms and was re-elected in 2018 but stepped down when he was appointed executive director of Florida's Department of Veterans' Affairs, where he served until announcing his run for Senate. He chairs the new Select Committee on Pandemic Preparedness and Response.

A 2017 USF Outstanding Young Alumnus, Burgess is a captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the U.S. Army Reserve and works as a business and contractual law attorney with Lucas Magazine. He and his wife, Courtney, are the parents of Adeline, Daniel III and Eleanor.



**Rep. Linda Chaney, R-St. Pete Beach**  
Mass Communications '82

A freshman legislator, Rep. Chaney has a long history of experience in local governance. She represents District 69, which includes Pinellas County beach communities from Redington Shores to Tierra Verde, and serves on six subcommittees, including Early Learning & Elementary Education and Environment, Agriculture & Flooding. She served as a St. Pete Beach city commissioner from 2007 to 2009, and is a former member of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, the Pinellas County School Board, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Barrier Islands Governmental Council.

A New York native who moved to Florida in 1982, Chaney is a manager for AdventHealth Mobile Mammography, a business she co-founded with her husband, Bill Yovic. She previously worked as director of partnership marketing for HSN Inc. (Home Shopping Network) and as a marketing director at Eckerd College, among other organizations. She and her husband are the parents of Taylor.





**Rep. Jackie Toledo, R-Tampa**  
Civil Engineering '00

In her third legislative term, Rep. Toledo represents House District 60, which includes south Tampa and neighborhoods in unincorporated Hillsborough County. She chairs the Local Administration & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee and is a member of the Rules Committee, among other assignments. Toledo served as deputy majority whip from 2016 to 2018, and is the former state director of the National Foundation for Women Legislators.

She owns her own business, Florida Engineering and Consulting, specializing in transportation engineering. Past projects have included work on master transportation plans for USF and Hillsborough Community College, Hillsborough County's Long Range Transportation Plan, and the 2012 Olympic bid process. Toledo attended USF as a Latino Scholarship recipient and later became the first graduate from that program to establish her own Latino scholarship fund. She's the co-founder of the nonprofit Walk Bike Tampa, and regularly hosts food, clothing and blood drives. She has five children: Samuel, Julia, Anthony, Alec and Joselyn.





## Sen. Joe Gruters, R-Sarasota MBA '02

Sen. Gruters is serving his second term in the state Senate, District 23, which includes Sarasota County and part of Charlotte County. He chairs the Committee on Education and is vice chair of the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability. He also serves as chair of the Republican Party of Florida. Gruters previously served in the state House, representing Manatee County's House District 73 from 2016 to 2018. A longtime community activist, he has served as chair of the Sarasota County Planning Commission.

A fourth-generation Sarasota resident, Gruters is a certified public accountant, small business owner and is a partner in Robinson, Gruters & Roberts, P.A. He and his wife, Sydney, are the parents of Spencer, Jack and Elle.



## Meet your Tampa Bay Area state legislators

The USF region is represented in the state House and Senate by 30 lawmakers who are neither alumni nor former students, but are nonetheless among our most ardent supporters. USF thanks these legislators for their leadership!

### Senate President Wilton Simpson *(pictured)*

President Simpson represents District 10, including Citrus, Hernando and part of Pasco counties and has served in the state Senate since 2012. A lifelong Florida farmer and entrepreneur, he founded, owned and operated several businesses, including a large-scale egg-laying operation that supplies eggs for Florida's families through supermarkets all over the state. We are honored to have him hail from the Tampa Bay region and represent the Bay Area Legislative Delegation.

### Senators

Sen. Ben Albritton  
Sen. Jim Boyd  
Sen. Jeff Brandes  
Sen. Janet Cruz  
Sen. Darryl Rouson  
Sen. Kelli Stargel

### Representatives

Rep. Melony Bell  
Rep. Mike Beltran  
Rep. Colleen Burton  
Rep. Ben Diamond  
Rep. Nick DiCeglie  
Rep. Fentrice Driskell  
Rep. Tommy Gregory

Rep. Diane Hart  
Rep. Fred Hawkins  
Rep. Blaise Ingoglia  
Rep. Sam Killebrew  
Rep. Traci Koster  
Rep. Chris Latvala  
Rep. Andrew Learned  
Rep. Randy Maggard  
Rep. Amber Mariano  
Rep. Ralph Massullo  
Rep. Lawrence McClure  
Rep. Fiona McFarland  
Rep. Michele Rayner  
Rep. Will Robinson  
Rep. Josie Tomkow  
Rep. Susan Valdes

# Quality of Life

USF study helps guide business, community leaders

By KEITH MORELLI '78 | Muma College of Business

**T**RYING TO GAUGE THE QUALITY OF LIFE in the Tampa Bay region is no simple task. It relies on traditional data, such as census reports, employment numbers, graduation rates and income statistics. Some data comes from sources that cover the past year, two or 10 to uncover trends that point to where the area is going.

Other, unconventional sources, mined by the USF Muma College of Business Center for Analytics and Creativity, focus on real-time information. Information systems faculty and a group of hand-selected graduate students dove into Google searches, Indeed job classified posts and Zillow real estate listings to find out how the Tampa Bay region fares against 19 other cities of similar size and demographics.

The resulting document: The Tampa Bay E-Insights Report 2021, an exhaustive study that reveals the attitudes, culture and economic viability of the Tampa Bay region.

The 68-page report, which includes analyses, charts and graphs that back up its findings, was delivered to



**“Most economic conclusions are based on data drawn from a year — or even a decade — ago and if the pandemic and economic crises have shown us anything, it’s how quickly markets and consumer behavior can change and that fresh data must drive decisions as much as historic data.”**

— Moez Limayem

some 1,300 business and governmental leaders at a virtual State of the Region conference earlier this year. It was accompanied by the Regional Competitiveness Report, put together by the Tampa Bay Partnership, and together they were presented to inform decisions made by leaders in how to improve the quality of life and boost the economy within the region.

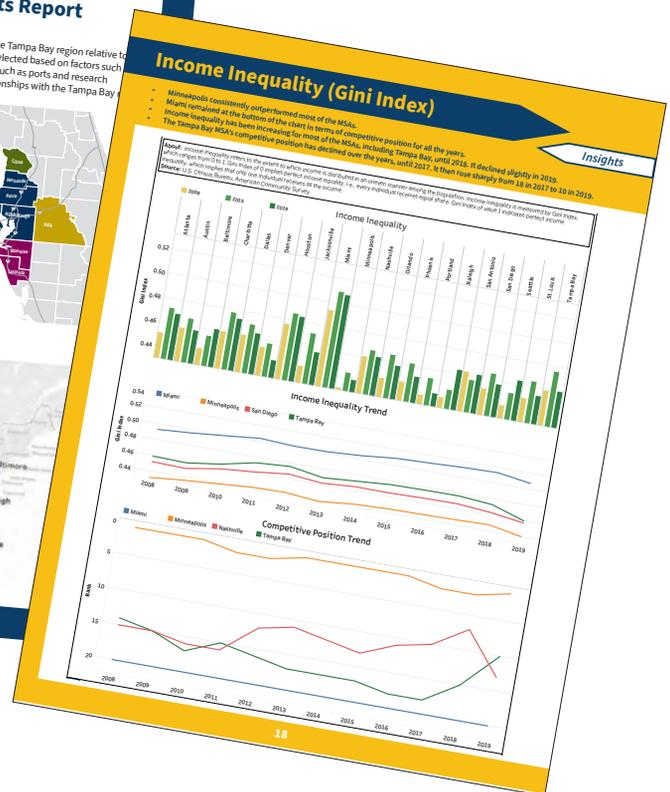
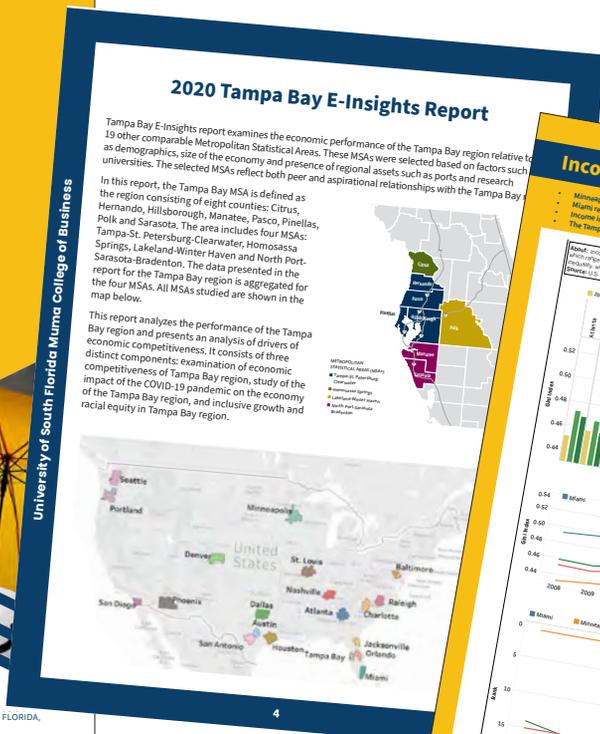
The difference between the two reports is that the E-Insights Report relies on real-time, big-data tools that provide insights not found in traditional measures.

“Most economic conclusions are based on data drawn from a year — or even a decade — ago and if the pandemic and economic crises have shown us anything,” says Moez Limayem, dean of the Muma College of Business, “it’s how quickly markets and consumer behavior can change and that fresh data must drive decisions as much as historic data.”

By looking at real-time data to get a snapshot of the current mood and concerns of the region, USF scholars found that transit availability, STEM education and increasing the median household income are the three variables that can most readily help the Tampa Bay region make the greatest strides in almost all areas measured in the report.

“These three things, more than anything else, are the drivers that will improve the region’s GRP (gross regional product) and prosperity,” Limayem says.

This is the fourth year the partnership and USF have combined to compile the comprehensive reports, but this



year, researchers had to navigate some unusual circumstances: COVID-19 and the social injustice unrest that swept the nation over the summer.

The data give a more current picture of the attitudes, standings and economics — both positive and negative — about the region in comparison with 19 other similar municipalities around the nation.

*Among the takeaways of the Tampa Bay E-Insights Report 2021:*

- Investments in transit infrastructure, education and labor force participation are key to economic growth.
- The Tampa Bay region is less impacted by COVID-19 when compared to Miami and Orlando.
- The economy in the Tampa Bay region is recovering after suffering a dip in the month of April.
- Regular commerce and travel in the Tampa Bay region have been less affected than in most other regions in the study.
- By mid-October, consumer spending levels in the Tampa Bay region recovered to 100 percent of the January value.
- The Tampa Bay region stands in the lowest quantile in terms of number of job openings per million individuals.

Dave Sobush 'MBA 03, director of policy and research with the Tampa Bay Partnership, says rising unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic hit the local economy hard.

“In February, there was 3 percent unemployment,” he says. “In April, there was 13 percent, the highest on record.”

Travel and tourism also were hit hard, he says, “and

that will take some time to recover.”

Conversely, the real estate market remained strong here, Sobush says. From June to November, the rate of home sales was double digit over the same period the previous year.

Reflecting the summer’s Black Lives Matter demonstrations, Sobush says the issues of racial inequality were addressed in the Regional Competitiveness Report. Research revealed that the widening gap of kindergarten through 12th grade passing rates between white and Black students was significant. Between 2018 and 2019, there was a 30 percent difference between white and Black student passing rates, he says. That likely reflected a lack of access to digital resources, perhaps no computers in Black households or lack of Internet availability, and that can result in further lost educational and, ultimately, job opportunities down the road.

The Tampa Bay region ranked No. 18 out of 20 cities in the study in digital access.

“There are severe repercussions of these educational gaps,” he says.

However, there were some marked improvements more recently, says Shivendu Shivendu, a professor in the Center for Analytics and Creativity. The gap between Black and white student access to digital resources over the last year or so is narrowing, he says.

“We are on the right path,” he says. “If we continue to do what we are doing, we can bridge that gap.”

A couple of snapshots in the E-Insights Report showed that inquiries on social media and other online platforms between June and August revealed a reduction in inquiries into divorce, says Balaji Padmanabhan, director of the Center for Analytics and Creativity. Online searches for regional malls, retail outlets and restaurants fell off during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Above: The report reveals the attitudes, culture and economic viability of the region.**

# Students play important role in generating useful insights

“But this has recovered,” he says, “though we are not close to where we were pre-pandemic.”

“Overall,” he says, “the Tampa Bay area seems to be recovering (from the summer’s economic hardships) quite well.”

Brian Lamb ‘98 and MBA ‘17, Life Member, the global head of diversity and inclusion with JPMorgan Chase and vice chair of the Florida Board of Governors, lauded the effort that went into the research, commenting on the focus on systemic racial inequality and its impact on American culture.

“Diversity and inclusion have to be built,” Lamb says. “Diversity and inclusion have to be woven into the fabric of business. Businesses have to set goals and achieve certain levels of accountability that can be measured. And businesses must invest in education, from high schools to universities.”

Limayem says the collaboration between the Muma College of Business and the Tampa Bay Partnership has resulted in research that is relevant and impactful. It can spark real action region-wide.

“We need private organizations to enter public-private partnerships,” he says, “where very high-quality, real-time data can be used to accurately measure the health and prosperity of the vulnerable population, if we want to have a better real-time handle on policy issues to promote inclusive growth.” ■

**S**OME RESEARCH CAN GO deep into the weeds, so much so that only erudite academics can fathom the meaning of the data, understand the findings and apply the conclusions.

But an annual project in which Muma College of Business faculty collaborate with business graduate students in School of Information Systems and Management is different. Though the charts and graphs generated can be a bit daunting, within all the raw data lies a clear pathway to improve the quality of life for everyone in the Tampa Bay region. It is a unique collaboration between teacher and student. Faculty members add to their body of work and graduate students learn the science of big data. They also become more attractive for potential employers.

Since 2017, Balaji Padmanabhan, director of the college’s Center for Analytics and Creativity; Shivendu Shivendu, a professor who teaches analytics; and a handful of hand-picked graduate students work together on ways to gauge what Tampa Bay life is like in real time and compare that to life in 19 other U.S. cities of similar size and demographics.

They delve into social media such as Indeed for job listings, Zillow for real estate transactions and search engines such as

Google trends and much more. Through this, they are able to paint a current picture of the region’s culture and economics, not based on traditional statistics that are a year or more old, but data that are perhaps days old.

Their findings are contained in the 2021 Tampa Bay E-Insights Report, a companion to the Regional Competitiveness Report compiled by the Tampa Bay Partnership. Together, the reports inform the decisions of business and governmental leaders on how to improve the quality of life in the region, from reducing unemployment rates to narrowing the wealth gap and to entertainment and hospitality options.

This collaboration between faculty and graduate students is key to the success of the endeavor.

“It is important to have graduate students as an integral part of the project, both for the quality of research and the professional growth of the graduate student,” Shivendu says. “The research for the project analyzes a very large volume of data on traditional economic variables as well as real-time indicators of inclusive economic growth. Participation of graduate students ensures integrity of data collection and preparation, data analytics, data visualization and statistical analysis.

“Moreover,” he adds, “it is an excellent oppor-



The graduate students who researched the Tampa Bay E-Insights Report are, from left top row, doctoral student Roohid Ahmed Syed MS '18; MS students Sharon Neethi Manogna Vuchula; Gokul Shanth Raveendran; Yusi Wei; and Munja Dnyanoba Solanke.





Photos: Courtesy USF Muma College of Business

From left: Balaji Padmanabhan, director of the Muma College of Business's Center for Analytics and Creativity, speaking at USF Research's AI forum; Shivendu Shivendu, above, says students are excited to work on a major project.

tunity for our graduate students to work on a real-world, high-impact project and gain practical experience in implementing concepts and tools learned in class to generate insights on key regional economic indicators.”

To successfully capture and analyze the data, the roles of each researcher must be clearly defined. The research mentors are the faculty. A doctoral student in the School of Information Systems and Management serves as project leader and advanced students in the MS in Business Analytics and Information Systems program are the research associates.

“It is important to have graduate students as an integral part of the project, both for the quality of research and the professional growth of the graduate student.”

— Shivendu Shivendu

Getting students motivated is not an issue, Shivendu says. Graduate students typically are excited about working on this high-profile project.

“Not only does it give them an opportunity to have hands-on learning of data analytics concepts but it also allows them to work on a real-world project with immense policy implications,” Shivendu says. “It provides them with a strong credential on résumés and the visibility in front of a large business community, which also acts as a positive in job searches.”

Choosing the right graduate students is a detailed process, he says.

“We interview shortlisted applicants,” Shivendu says,

“and select the three to four students who best fit the requirements based on interest, past experience, personal qualities like leadership, initiative, ability to work with marginal supervision, and the fit of the project with their career goals.”

Roohid Syed, MS '18, is the doctoral student who supervises the work of the graduate students.

“The academic projects that graduate students do in graduate courses typically give hands-on experience to the students,” he says. “Students take on those projects to learn how to implement the theoretical concepts learned in class. The focus is more on learning rather than the outcome itself.

“On the other hand, in the case of the E-Insights Report, the outcome is extremely crucial since it is consumed by the civic and the business leadership of the region,” Syed says. “Grad students working for this project strive to come up with innovative and creative ideas to produce useful insights.

“Also, the scope of this project is much wider and deeper than regular graduate projects.”

There were challenges along the way, he says, noting that the biggest obstacle was devising new data sources and new ways to study the data sources to produce novel insights. The data-gathering process can be an extremely painstaking process, and it requires enormous amounts of creativity to extract and analyze the data.

“The rewards are that this project will give good experience to the students to work with complicated data sources,” Syed says. “Learning from the data is sometimes extremely difficult. It requires a lot of preprocessing, formatting and application of suitable method to analyze the data. The labor that the students go through in this project will prepare them for real-world challenges of data analysis.” ■

# 5 minutes with the CHAIR



Photo: PENNY CARMICHAEL | USFPA

## Hello fellow Bulls!

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE we're marking a year since COVID-19 first separated us. I find this incredible because, in many ways, I've never felt more connected to you.

That's a testament to generations of students, faculty and alumni, here at USF and at universities around the world. Thanks to the work of engineers, educators and entertainers, we have the tools to communicate, learn and laugh during these strange, distanced times. Entrepreneurs find new ways to supply us with life's necessities, and our health-care professionals innovate tirelessly to protect and heal us.

These are powerful reminders of why I support USF, both as a volunteer and donor. Our university is one of the nation's top 50 for research. It pumps about 13,000 highly trained graduates into the workforce each year. I depend on them and, I believe, they depend on me.

So it has been an honor to serve as your Alumni Association board chair these past 15 months, working alongside a group of smart and principled fellow board members dedicated to USF's continued success. To that end, we recently approved the association's 2021-24 strategic plan, a blueprint to keep the association advancing in its mission to foster lifelong relationships between you and your university, inspire pride, and advocate for excellence. While our plan builds on past initiatives with goals for engagement and communica-

tion, for instance, we've also added a new focus – Inclusive Excellence.

We have always strived to ensure all students and alumni feel welcome, respected and included in our activities, but we needed to bring structure and accountability to those efforts. I hope you'll help! If you receive a survey asking about your views on association inclusivity, please take the time to respond. And continue to reach out and connect with fellow Bulls of different decades, ideologies, ethnicities and abilities, just as we were encouraged to do as students here at USF.

We plan to give you plenty of opportunities in the weeks and months ahead. For the time being, our events will be virtual, but if you attended November's Tailgate or our 2020 Outstanding Young Alumni Awards, you know we've elevated remote to remarkable. You'll find all the fun, surprises and entertainment of our in-person events – everything but the food, drink, and that nasty virus.

Our monthly Trivia Nights have become a staple for Bulls around the world; all you need is an internet connection to vie for great USF-themed prizes. Play on your own, team up with your household, or pull together a virtual team of far-flung friends and families. Don't tell anyone I let this slip, but you'd be wise to binge-watch "Seinfeld" by March 23, and brush up on your Jedi Knight training by April 27. Visit [www.usfalumni.org/trivia](http://www.usfalumni.org/trivia).

On April 22, we'll celebrate another amazing group of USF Outstanding Young Alumni. During a live question-and-answer session hosted by the always astute and entertaining Eric Eisenberg, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, you'll learn secrets for success, enjoy plenty of laughs and marvel at the accomplishments of these six Bulls aged 35 and younger. Visit [www.usfalumni.org/2021oyaa](http://www.usfalumni.org/2021oyaa).

And cross your fingers! We hope to host the sold-out Birdies for Bulls Golf Tournament on May 17 – with face masks and safely socially distanced across 235 gorgeous rolling acres. It'll be great to see at least a few of you again!

In the meantime, as we await our vaccines, please stay patient, take care of yourself and your loved ones, and take a well-deserved break by participating in one of our events. You'll find more, including educational get-togethers hosted by our alumni groups, on our website, [www.usfalumni.org](http://www.usfalumni.org).

They're a great way to stay connected and support each other, our Preeminent University, and the world-class instruction and research that keeps hope alive for so many people.

### **Randy Norris, '79**

*Chair, USF Alumni Association Board*

*Life Member No. 786*

## Your Alumni Association Board

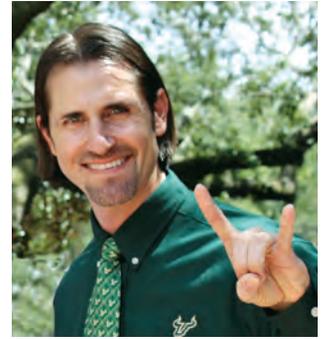
The USF Alumni Association's board of directors includes Bulls who've demonstrated a firm commitment to USF's success and are association Life Members and Circle of Excellence donors. It also includes the USF president or designee; a USF Board of Trustees representative; and two students – the student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

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



These board officers will serve through June 30, 2021.

*Clockwise from top left:*  
 Chair: **Randy Norris**, '79  
 Chair elect: **Monique Hayes**, '01 and MPA '06  
 Past chair: **Merritt Martin**, '04 and MBA '06  
 Secretary: **Justin Geisler**, '04 and MBA '06  
 Treasurer: **Bill Mariotti**, USFSM '15



*Directors:*

- Jennifer Condon**
- Troy Dunmire**, '00
- Maggie Fowler**, '93
- Raymond Gross**, '69
- Dwayne Isaacs**, '05 and MEd '09
- Andrew Jones**, '11

- Andrew Ketchel**, '10 and MPA '12
- Maja Lacevic**, '09
- Andy Mayts**, '93
- Chris Reyes**, '93
- Dr. Valerie Riddle**, '84 and MD '89
- Carla Saavedra**, '87
- Lauren Shumate**, '10 and MA '14
- Juan Soltero**, '10

- Christine Turner**, '97
- Bruce Van Fleet**, '73
- Liz Wooten-Reschke**, '01 and MPA '06

- Student representatives:*
- Rajay Dockery**, USF Ambassadors president
  - Gustavo Spangher**, Student Government vice president

- Ex-officio directors:*
- Jay Stroman**, senior vice president for USF Advancement and Alumni Affairs; CEO USF Foundation

- Bill McCausland**, MBA '96, vice president and USF Alumni Association executive director



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# USF Alumni Association 2019 Annual Report Summary

Fiscal year July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020

Your Alumni Association membership supports programs and communications that provide Bulls with meaningful ways to help USF, its students and alumni succeed. Thanks to all the association members – alumni, students, staff, faculty and friends – for helping your Alumni Association continue to grow and make a difference in 2020.



### Association members – 42,053

32,170 annual members  
5,831 Life Members  
4,052 student members



### Scholarships – \$365,259 to 175 students



### Net position – \$5,999,835

### Revenue – \$3,021,644

*Percentages attributed to:*

Membership	18%
Budget support	29%
License plates	13%
Affinity partnerships	13%
Investment income	8%
Gifts	7%
Event revenue and other	12%

### Expenses – \$2,733,364

*Percentages attributed to:*

Administration costs	12%
Membership	16%
Programs and events	17%
Student programs	14%
Alumni groups	13%
Communications	17%
Development	11%

### Social media followers – 239,298

Facebook	215,678 followers
LinkedIn	11,560 followers
Twitter	8,980 followers
Instagram	3,080 followers



So many of you faced tremendous challenges in 2020, and yet, as these numbers demonstrate, you remained committed to supporting the University of South Florida through your Alumni Association. Your efforts have helped the USF community, and far beyond, continue to learn, grow and overcome – together. I’ve never been prouder to be a member of our amazing Bulls family.”

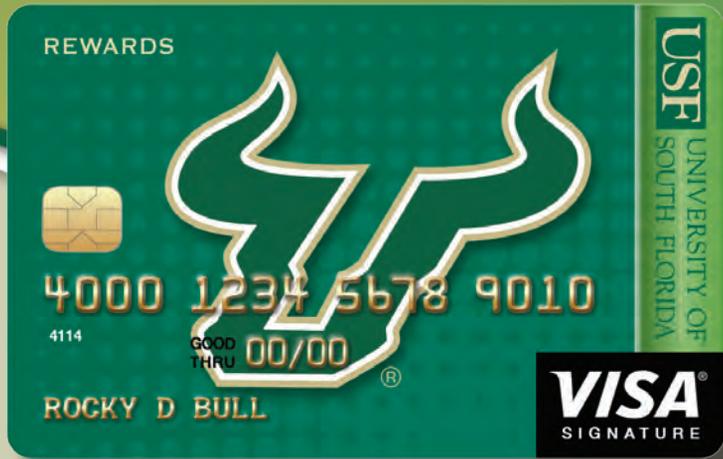
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Gordon Clarke poses in front of the traditional Jamaican copper pot still he had built in Scotland. He reintroduced rum production at his centuries-old Worthy Park Estate.

Right, the estate's sugarcane fields supply most of the molasses used to produce Worthy Park's world-renowned Rum-Bar Rum.

# SWEET Tradition

Centuries of sugarcane meet Bull business savvy

By JOEY JOHNSTON, '81

**G**ORDON CLARKE VALUES TRADITION. And he lives it every day at Worthy Park Estate, a 10,000-acre sugarcane plantation nestled in the heart of Jamaica, an island nation known for its rainforests, reggae and rum.

Clarke, the fourth-generation owner of Worthy Park, produces Rum-Bar Rum, an authentic Jamaican spirit distilled from sugarcane and known the world over. He credits the lessons learned at USF, where he earned a degree in management from the Muma College of Business in 1989.

He's teaming up with fellow Bull business owners in Jamaica to start a new tradition at his alma mater. They envision a synergy where their companies benefit from USF research—perhaps environmental, geological or tourist-based—while providing preferred employment opportunities for USF graduates who want to work in the Caribbean. Additionally, they hope to steer Jamaica's best and brightest—in academics and athletics—toward USF.

"Early on at USF, I learned you need to work first, then play after that," says Clarke, who lives in a home built by his grandfather and guides a process that began on the property in 1741. "When you go to college and gain that independence from your parents, you also

realize something else: It's now on you.

"It's on you to study. It's on you to prepare. It's on you to learn how to make it. USF taught me responsibility and exposed me to a wide array of people. Those are the things that stick with you and prepare you for the world."

Worthy Park Estate dates to 1670, when it was gifted to British Lt. Francis Price for his services in defeating Spain to capture ownership of Jamaica. Since then, only four families have owned the estate.

Where once hundreds of sugarcane manufacturers thrived, today Worthy Park is one of just two and the largest producer of raw sugar on the island.

"You see this happen in business," says Clarke. "The strong survive. We believe we have the best cane quality, the best factory and the best sugar in Jamaica. We have strengthened our brand. You stick to your principles and beliefs."

Worthy Park produced rum on and off until 1962, when it stopped due to overproduction on the island. But Clarke saw an opportunity in the early 2000s and helped to bring it back. A modern distillery, which produces the rum and vodka, was completed in 2005.

All of the sugarcane used to create the molasses that eventu-



Photos: Courtesy of GORDON CLARKE

ally becomes rum is grown on the estate or on three nearby properties leased for cane cultivation. So Worthy Park can accurately say that the entire process reflects the estate's heritage—from planting to harvest to refining, right through to the aromas and flavors in Rum-Bar Rum.

Worthy Park produces 100,000 cases of its rum annually, as well as 24,000 tons of sugar and 8,000 of molasses. Each year since 1968, it has been rated the most efficient sugar factory in the Caribbean.

Clarke has many professional admirers, including the fellow USF alumni who also own Jamaica-based businesses.

"Gordon has taken a family tradition and taken it to a much higher level," says John Bailey, Finance '83, who has holdings in food manufacturing, tourism and real estate development. "The production and the efforts in retail are very impressive."

"Worthy Park has a wonderful brand name and image," adds Paul Facey, Marketing and Management '88, Clarke's friend since their time together at USF. He has major real estate and equity holdings through his company, Pan-Jam Investment Trust Limited. "It's the No. 1 sugar estate in Jamaica. Once they got back into rum, they very smartly infiltrated the market and got past some fierce competitors. I think their business has a very, very bright future."

He finds it interesting that a cross-section of USF alumni found business success in diverse enterprises back home.

"It makes sense that we would take advantage of that commonality and all work together for everyone's benefit," he says.

Nearly two years ago, Clarke organized a gathering of Bulls at his estate, inviting a contingent of school officials, including Provost Ralph Wilcox. There they discovered the win-win potential of a partnership between USF and its Jamaican business alumni. The talks are expected to acceler-

ate once the COVID-19 crisis has passed.

"We're just a hop, skip and jump from Tampa," Bailey says. "It seems like there could be a very natural connection between Jamaica and USF. I loved the place when I went there. Word got around and there was a contingent of Jamaicans who came to school at USF.

"Now some of them are doing very well in all sorts of businesses. It's a great thing to want to give back, but there's help USF can provide, too. It's something that could grow bigger and bigger. There are certainly some big things that are happening in Jamaica."

That includes the renaissance of Worthy Park Estate, which was purchased by Clarke's great-grandfather Frederick in 1918.

Clarke has hazy memories of the estate as a small child; his family moved to Broward County in South Florida when he was 7. He attended boarding school in Canada and returned to Florida to attend USF, where he connected with other students rooted in the Caribbean.

He knew he would return to Jamaica, but didn't know if he was interested in the family business. He began working with an electrical and air-conditioning repair company owned by his father and branched off into other ventures. Eventually, he looked into the feasibility of bringing Worthy Park back into the rum business, and executed that plan while acquiring controlling interest of the estate.

"It's actually quite awesome to think any family has a business going for 102 years," he says. "It's awesome to think I'm a part of it."

"We all make choices in our life: where we go to school, the path that we take. I am very grateful to have attended USF and I take great pride in continuing our family business. I feel like it has happened the way it was meant to happen." ■



Photos: Courtesy of GORDON CLARKE



Far left: Worthy Park Estate is located in Worthy Park, also known as Lluidas Vale, in Jamaica's lush St. Catherine Parish.

Left: Some of Jamaica's USF-educated business leaders are working to form a partnership with their alma mater. A recent get-together included, standing left to right: USF Provost Ralph Wilcox; Richard Rogers '88; Clarke; USF World's Tracy Overstreet; Kim Mair '90; and USF Alumni Association's Kemel Thompson '96, Life Member. Seated from left: Bailey; Facey; and Donovan Perkins '84.

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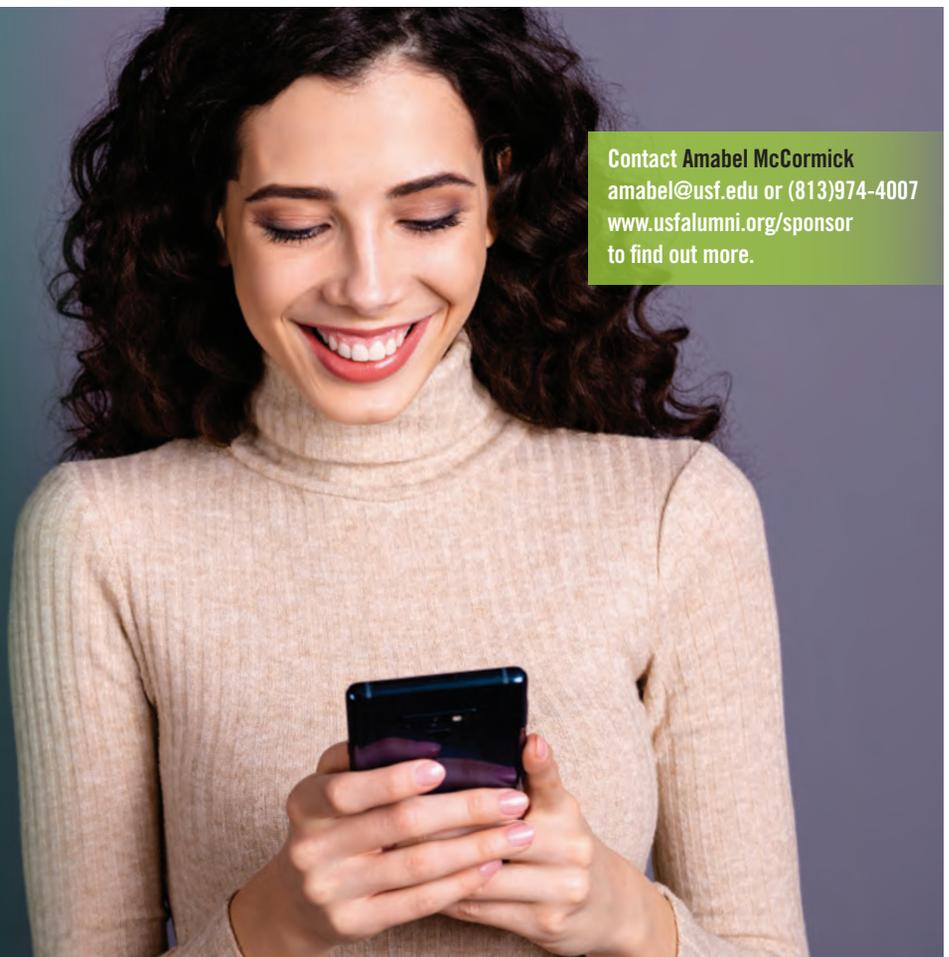
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# Success starts with **‘Y’**



2020 Outstanding Young Alumni share a motivating sense of purpose

By PENNY CARNATHAN, '82

**U**SF'S SIX 2020 OUTSTANDING YOUNG ALUMNI credit at least two common factors for their exceptional professional success and civic contributions, all achieved by their 35th birthdays.

The first: A powerful sense of purpose. When the struggle becomes disheartening, they recharge by reminding themselves why they chose this path, why it's important and why it excites them.

The second: The emotional support of families who believe in them – be it parents and siblings, spouses and kids, even surrogate USF family.

The honorees shared those and other insights during a Nov. 19 celebration that included a live, remote panel discussion facilitated by USF's dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Eric Eisenberg. The often humorous exchange included questions about secrets for success, current events and USF memories, among other topics.

The USF Alumni Association award recipients are:

- Dr. Marlene "Joannie" Bewa, MPH '18
- John Brennan, Music Studies '12
- Dr. Nicholas DeVito, Microbiology '08 and MD '12
- Rogan Donnelly, MBA '18
- Dakeyan C. Graham, PhD Music '15
- Dr. Chinyere "ChiChi" Okpaleke, Biomedical Sciences '08 and MS Medical Sciences '10

"There's a bigger purpose than just me," said Dr. Chinyere Okpaleke, who excelled in rigorous pre-med courses while putting in long hours on the Bulls basketball court. "With that mindset, I try not to give up, to be just one step ahead of what's out there."

Having a family that supports your dreams and encourages you to pursue them is equally important, the honorees agreed.

"The first hurdle for an artist is having a family who believes you can achieve success in the business," said John Brennan.

"I don't think any of us would be where we are, certainly myself going through medical school and residency and fellowship, without a supportive family," added Dr. Nicholas DeVito.

Their time at USF contributed as well.

"It was incredibly important to me," said Rogan Donnelly. "I was put in my position as president of an extremely large company at 31, so I didn't have a lot of outside experience ... The people that I met and the experiences that I had being in the executive MBA program – the network, the courses I was exposed to, the professors – it was very beneficial for both myself and my company."

Dr. Marlene Bewa, who earned a medical degree in her native Benin before coming to USF as a Fulbright Scholar, found a new family and an exciting focus at the College of Public Health.

"I'm so happy to be alive to see this moment when public health is acknowledged for its contributions," she said, referring to the role public health professionals have played during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Everything is public health. Making seatbelts mandatory is public health; making sure we have access to clean water; making sure there are immunization programs ... I feel, with my medical and public health backgrounds, I am whole."

Each also offered advice for today's USF freshmen.

"Make the most of your time," suggested Dakeyan Graham. "Learn who you are; learn to love that person; and understand that every day is an opportunity to get it right."

**Watch the 2020 Outstanding Young Alumni Awards:**  
[www.2020usfoyaa.com](http://www.2020usfoyaa.com)

**Celebrate the 2021 Outstanding Young Alumni Awards**

**When: 6 p.m. April 22**

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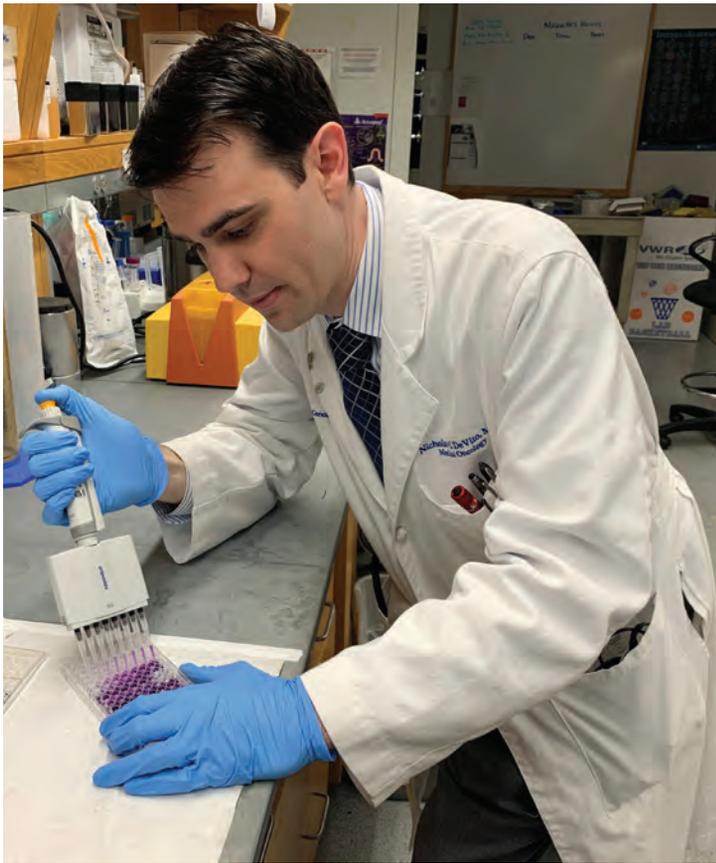
**What has helped her become successful:** Being resilient and going for whatever I was dreaming; even the sky is not the limit. Whatever I can do to improve not just my community's health but people's lives, that is what drives me.

**Dr. Marlene "Joannie" Bewa**, MPH '18, nearly died during an asthma attack in her native Benin, West Africa. Inspired by the physician who saved her life, the 9-year-old decided she, too, would become a doctor. Joannie achieved her dream. As a physician, she focused on creating a more just world, founding the Young Beninese Leaders Association in 2010, which has reached 10,000 youth on reproductive health and HIV, and served governments and the United Nations. As a Fulbright and USF Women in Leadership & Philanthropy Scholar, Joannie conducts research in reproductive health and cancer in Florida and Africa, while pursuing a doctorate at the USF College of Public Health, graduating in 2021. She is a Merck for Mothers Board member – a \$500 million investment to improve maternal health. She is recognized by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and her work is featured in a documentary, *ONE Yours in Power*.



**Early influences in music and art:** My childhood in the Caribbean gave me an appreciation of the smaller things, especially spending time in nature. I didn't have a lot of the distractions young people have today — the smart phones, social media — so I was able to focus on the things I was extremely passionate about.

**John Brennan**, Music Studies '12, grew up on the island of St. Maarten in the Caribbean, where he developed a deep appreciation for art and the world's natural beauty. When he moved to Florida in 2000, his creativity took wing. John began to study music in school and quickly became an accomplished flutist, performing at Carnegie Hall with the Patel Conservatory Youth Orchestra. His passion for painting also flourished, and in 2007, he became the youngest artist accepted into Tampa's Gasparilla Festival of the Arts at the age of 17. At the age of 24, he became one of the youngest members of the prestigious Society of Animal Artists, representing the greatest in the world of wildlife art. John has received numerous awards for his work and has raised tens of thousands of dollars for wildlife habitat conservation through his celebrated duck stamp contest paintings. He's the owner of John Brennan Art LLC.



**Advice to today's freshmen:** Talk to a lot of people; learn what you don't want to do; learn what mistakes have been made, then find something where your purpose intersects with what the world needs.

**Dr. Nicholas DeVito**, Microbiology '08 and MD '12, researches ways to advance our understanding of cancer and the immune system to develop immunotherapies for metastatic melanoma and gastrointestinal malignancies. His work at Duke University includes patient care, teaching, and research investigating how tumors manipulate the body's immune system. Nick's interest in oncology blossomed during his undergraduate years at USF, when he worked with oncologists and in a cancer vaccine laboratory at Moffitt Cancer Center. In 2018, he was one of five recipients of the highly competitive Physician-Scientist Training Awards presented by the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation. This award recognizes scientists who show exceptional promise in finding new cures for cancer. He also received the Conquer Cancer Foundation's 2017 Young Investigator Award and the American Society of Clinical Oncology's 2017 Merit Award. Even as a USF student, Nick was a trailblazer, creating the Morsani College of Medicine's peer-taught Step 1 licensing exam course and its Undergraduate Physician Shadowing Program.



**Keys to successful business leadership:** It's very important to have your vision fully outlined; to make sure you communicate that vision; and to get yourself and your team members on board. Clearly expressing the vision and supporting it with metrics and milestones has been critical.

**Rogan Donnelly**, MBA '18, played in the Tervis Tumbler Factory Store in Venice, Fla., as a toddler, was decorating tumblers at 9, and helped out in the Tervis warehouses as a teenager. In 2016, he was appointed president of the company, which has manufactured more than 150 million of the iconic tumblers since 2000 alone. His grandfather, John C. Winslow, purchased Tervis in the 1950s and his father, Norbert Donnelly took over in 1989. Rogan became a board member in 2008 while working in Boston and moved to Sarasota to continue working his way through the company. Since becoming president, he has introduced Tervis' popular stainless-steel line, ramped up customer service, and positioned the company as a champion of conservation efforts. An avid angler and outdoorsman, Rogan gave away 10,000 Tervis tumblers in 2018 to people who pledged to stop using disposable cups. He has been named to Tampa Bay Business Journal's "40 Under 40" list.



**A reminder for beleaguered teachers:** We do what we do because teachers are world changers and we are creating future world changers. When you feel undervalued, remember that we have the most noble profession. No other profession exists without teachers.

**Dakeyan C. Graham**, PhD Music '15, planned to become a physician, though he excelled as a member of Tampa's King High School Marching Lions. He did eventually become a doctor – of music, not medicine. The director of instrumental studies at his alma mater from 2009 until accepting a position with the Florida Department of Education last year, Dakeyan is the state's 2020 Teacher of the Year. In 2013, he was a semi-finalist for GRAMMY Music Educator of the Year. Known at school as "Dr. Dre," Dakeyan directed King's band, orchestra and ensembles, all of which excelled. The music program consistently received superior ratings at district and state music performance assessments and in 2016, the symphony orchestra and wind ensemble performed at Carnegie Hall. But Dakeyan's talents extended beyond the band room. He worked to turn his belief in each student into belief in themselves, resulting in scores of motivated graduates who leave high school with solid goals and a firm grip on their futures.



**Juggling Bulls basketball and academics:**

I realized 'This is tough. Life is not easy!' There are so many demands! But being on a team, you learn to bond, to adapt to other personalities, to develop time-management skills. I owe a lot to playing basketball, to my coaches and teammates.

**Dr. Chinyere "ChiChi" Okpaleke**, Biomedical Sciences '08 and MS Medical Sciences '10, juggled rigorous coursework with the demanding schedule of a student athlete during her years at USF. The star basketball player went on to become a family medicine hospitalist physician for BayCare Health System dedicated to charitable work. In 2014 she founded Reality Speaks, a nonprofit that began with a mission to help Tampa Bay area student athletes prepare for life beyond sports. It has since broadened its focus to assisting local families and students in need, and her Be Dope Do Yoga offers free community yoga classes. "Dr. Chi" also donates her skills as a physician to the medically underserved, participating in mission trips to Nigeria, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. Her charitable work has earned her BayCare Medical Group's Golden Compass Award for Service. A Life Member of the USF Alumni Association, Chinyere is a former member of the association's board of directors.

## 2020 Circle of Excellence and Life Member

# Honor Roll

A special thank you to all Alumni Association U Club donors; 2020 Circle of Excellence donors; and those who became Life Members in 2020\*



**USF** ALUMNI ASSOCIATION Life Members are among our university's most dedicated supporters. When you purchase a Life Membership, 90 percent of the money is deposited into an endowed fund that supports programs and activities for students and alumni now and for countless generations to come.

Even if you never contribute another dime, as a Life Member you

continue to actively support USF. And you never have to renew your membership! The names of the Bulls and friends of USF who became Life Members in 2020 are published here. Thank you.

**We gratefully acknowledge all of our Life Members with a tribute page at [usfalumni.org/LMhonor](https://usfalumni.org/LMhonor).**

Many Life Members go above and beyond, providing additional gifts that support USF's success via the Alumni Association.

The Circle of Excellence recognizes Life Members who made

additional unrestricted annual gifts in 2020, as well as all 29 donors in the prestigious University Club. U Club alumni and friends have made a significant impact on the USF Alumni Association through endowments of \$25,000 or more.

Your generosity allows the Alumni Association to provide programs that make it easy for anyone to have a direct impact on the success of USF and its students.

*\*Life Members who joined Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2020*

## Life Member Circle of Excellence Donors

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**- Tonjua Williams, MA '96**

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 Andrew Cannons, #5354  
 Betty Carlin, #2078  
 William Carlin, #2079  
 Edward Caron, #1064  
 Susan Caron, #1063  
 Sheila Carpenter-van Dijk, #1272  
 William Carter, #271  
 Jose Castellanos, #1087  
 Kimberly Choto, #1019

Pamela Cladakis, #3146  
 Danny Clay, #3805  
 Andrew Coe, #2293  
 Christine Coe, #2637  
 Nikole Collins-Puri, #2793  
 Karen Colteryahn, #2591  
 Jennifer Condon, #5645  
 Robin Conley, #2641  
 Edward Corrigan, #3123  
 James Council, #1184  
 Rebecca Craig, #2047  
 Janis Crews, #1168  
 Angela Crist, #1576  
 Victor Crist, #1575  
 Jason Cunningham, #4309  
 Nancy Curtis, #2340  
 Frances Darrach, #1598  
 Arthur Davidson, #3121  
 James Davies, #2922  
 Catherine Davis, #5116  
 Denise Davis, #3894  
 Jeffrey Davis, #5115  
 Brooke Dean, #4630  
 Robyn Dearth, #4796

Robin DeLaVergne, #5220  
 Derek Dewan, #583  
 Adriana Cecelia Diaz, #4992  
 Fermin Diaz, #3259  
 Mario Diaz, #4993  
 Matthew Diaz, #2357  
 John Doll, #4158  
 Randall Dotson, #2347  
 Vicki Dotson, #2348  
 Debbie Doyle, #3238  
 Dorothy Drapp, #2203  
 John Drapp, #2202  
 Toby Drew, #4868  
 Margaret Drizd, #2000  
 Ernestine Dunn, #1301  
 Neal Dwyer, #2982  
 Walter Edgerton, #2584  
 Brandon Faza, #4011  
 Carol Fernandez, #2520  
 Frank Fernandez, #2519  
 Michael Fimiani, #647  
 Aleta Fisher, #3602  
 Janet Flood-Cole, #3867  
 Amanda Foust, #4548  
 Vergil Foust, #2738  
 Donald Frashier, #1691  
 Sarah Fry, #534  
 Robert Fuller, #2569  
 Kevin Gaffney, #2638  
 Frank Galdony Jr., #3225  
 Frank Gallant, #3812  
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 Deepak Gangadharan, #2783  
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 Luis Garcia, #4573  
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 Kathleen Gaston, #937  
 Lisa Gear-Smith, #1415  
 Justin Geisler, #2094  
 Rebecca Gerberding, #2303  
 Thomas Gerberding, #2302  
 William Gibbs, #159  
 Jeffrey Gillespie, #1777  
 Julie Gillespie, #1776  
 Carla Glaser, #4928  
 Scott Glaser, #4927  
 Michael Glave, #3394  
 David Gordon, #2724  
 Andrea Graham, #4791  
 Sharon Gray, #2721  
 Jeffrey Greenberg, #264  
 Gail Greene, #4700  
 Paul Greene, #4701  
 Catherine Gregos, #4304  
 John Gregos Jr., #4303  
 John Guarino, #1354  
 Robert Guay Jr., #3391  
 Susan Guay, #3392  
 Roland Guidry Jr., #4957  
 Cynthia Gurey, #117  
 Mary Ann Hall, #2700  
 David Hall, #2570  
 Cynthia Harper, #588  
 John Harper, #587

Jill Healey, #2417  
 Rennie Heath II, #4677  
 Cynthia Hevner, #2677  
 Fadwa Hilili, #3961  
 Betty Hill, #3393  
 Sylvia Hill, #2794  
 WayWay Hlaing, #1554  
 David Hollis, #3869  
 Julianne Holt, #3496  
 David Hood, #2866  
 Lisa Hood, #2867  
 James Horne Jr., #1593  
 Polly Horne, #1592  
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 Nicholas Houmis, #2439  
 Arian Howard, #5469  
 Celia Howe, #1865  
 Joseph Howe, #1864  
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 Reginald Jefferson, #3204  
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 James Jimenez, #827  
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 Bruce Kamelhair, #2279  
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 Andrew Ketchel, #5165  
 Christopher Koehler, #837  
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 Amber Kotowski, #4707  
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 Jessica Lauther, #3773  
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 Bette LoBue, #872  
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 Howard Lowell, #5137  
 Judith Lowry, #3917  
 Michael Lozano Jr., #4650  
 Victor Lucas, #1028  
 Clara Lugo-Emondi, #2349  
 James MacKay, #1146  
 Matthew Mackenzie, #3094  
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 Lora Maggio, #396  
 Michael Maiorana, #3439  
 Michele Maiorana, #3438  
 Michael Malanga, #4272  
 Lloyd Maliner, #3164  
 Robert Mallett, #1610  
 A. K. Bobby Mallik, #1344  
 Stacey Manley Paskowski, #3549  
 Deann Marasco, #3223  
 Patrick Marasco, #3222  
 George Marks, #3745  
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John Martin, #5670  
 Kelsey Martin, #5671  
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 Richard McConnell, #372  
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 Carol McGlaughlin, #2546  
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 Cleveland McKenzie, #1439  
 Nick McLane, #3832  
 Leo Mediavilla, #2524  
 Wilda Meier, #266  
 Jenny Meirose, #2271  
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 Penni Meyer, #2715  
 Stephen Meyer, #2939  
 Thomas Meyer, #2714  
 Diana Michel, #600  
 Karen McKay Miller, #3756  
 William Miller Jr., #3755  
 Leila Mills, #3618  
 H. Lee Moffitt, #30  
 Holly Mooneyhan, #4115

Ronald Mooneyhan, #4114  
 Curtis Moreau, #1662  
 Leslie Moreau, #1663  
 Paul Morrison, #155  
 Phillip Muldowney, #4924  
 Dennis Mullis, #2511  
 Gilbert Munoz, #2248  
 Raymond Murray, #144  
 Adrian Musial Jr., #1803  
 Mark Nash, #1211  
 Willard Neel, #3865  
 Chelsea Newberry, #4012  
 Eric Newman, #400  
 Lyris Newman, #399  
 Varrick Nunez, #970  
 Catherine O'Connor, #404  
 Kristin O'Donnell, #5647  
 Judy Orton, #301  
 Brittany Outar, #3714  
 Keval Outar, #3715  
 Amy Padgett, #3135  
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 Todd St. John-Fulton, #4596  
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 Alan Steinberg, #1978  
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 Louis Struikman, #3303  
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 Duncan Taitt, #4209  
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 Merrily Taylor, #1109  
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 Tracie Thompson, #4479  
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 Lynn Timmons, #2966  
 Mary Titano, #3938  
 Karl Tramer, #2175  
 Veronica Tramer, #2176  
 Richard Tron, #1435  
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Sudsy Tschiderer, #4498  
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 Ginger Wald, #1303  
 Selinda Walden, #1126  
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 William Walters III, #3457  
 David Wandel Jr., #2272  
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 Suzanne Ward, #1516  
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 Mark Yonchak, #116  
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I am ever grateful to USF for the unparalleled experience I received as a student. I continue to thrive because USF is committed to my success. It is my privilege to pave the same path of success for generations to come.

- Lukas Oest  
 Spring 2019 Outstanding Graduate

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 Lauren Adams, #5520  
 Karina Aguiar Goncalves, #5533  
 Melissa Albano, #5491  
 Antonio Albornoz, #5660  
 Ariomar Alejo, #5492  
 Feras Alhlou, #5591  
 Taylor Allen, #5662  
 Timothy Allen, #5493  
 Dania Alvarez Carcach, #5588  
 Gwenda Amey, #5690  
 Katie Anders, #5626  
 Katharine Anderson, #5567  
 Shannon Annis, #5673  
 Taylor Armstrong, #5630  
 Nathan Arnold, #5714  
 Antonia Aviom, #5499  
 Hansen Baizan, #5668  
 Katya Bakal-Schlomann, #5561  
 Mariliese Beck, #5475  
 Norma Bedell, #5636  
 Samuel Bell, #5546  
 Sharon Benson, #5528  
 Joseph Benton, #5379  
 Laura Benton, #5380  
 Marisa Blackwood, #5605  
 Kristina Blaha, #5697  
 Carrie Blaustein, #5642  
 Dee Ann Boehm, #5389  
 Mark Bouknecht, #5386  
 Michelle Bouknecht, #5387  
 Gregory Bowers, #5468  
 Dominique Boyer, #5613  
 Carter Brantley, #5701  
 Ryan Brautigam, #5597  
 Valeria Brewer, #5418  
 Sonya Brock, #5661  
 Jacqueline Brooker, #5691

Amber Brown, #5461  
 Christopher Brown, #5460  
 Jillian Brown, #5719  
 Steven Buchanan, #5554  
 Ian Burke, #5720  
 Kevin Burke, #5498  
 Jeffrey Burnett, #5464  
 Summer Burnett, #5465  
 Casey Butcher, #5549  
 Heather Cacciatore, #5424  
 Nelson Cacciatore, #5423  
 Marc Camacho, #5393  
 Liliana Carbo, #5483  
 Robert Carter, #5412  
 Anthony Carvalho, #5454  
 Jordan Chang, #5480  
 Francis Cheshire, #5394  
 Bijal Chhadva, #5552  
 Jeffrey Chilcott, #5384  
 Lorie Chilcott, #5385  
 Landerick Coley, #5505  
 Jennifer Condon, #5645  
 Sandra Cooke, #5455  
 Santiago Correa, #5397  
 Anita Coto, #5402  
 Ruan Cox, #5628  
 Katherine Cullaro, #5633  
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 Joseph A. Cuteri, #5445  
 Alexis Daubney, #5695  
 Spencer Daum, #5448  
 Carisa Davis, #5414  
 Kyle Day, #5544  
 Alain Del Rio, #5658  
 Andrew DeLong, #5679  
 Jimmy Dennard, #5715  
 Dwight Dew, #5572  
 Annie Dix, #5706  
 Genevieve Dobson, #5381  
 Amy Drake, #5598  
 Chad Drummond, #5513  
 Jessica Duemig, #5382  
 Megan Duffey, #5631  
 Jason Duplantis, #5504  
 Ryan Durant, #5395  
 Oceana Dwyer, #5479  
 Kathleen Edmiston, #5600

Marcos Edmiston, #5601  
 Sarah Eisel, #5556  
 Vickie Ellis, #5422  
 Christopher Emerick, #5537  
 Samantha Emerick, #5536  
 Monika Endredi, #5555  
 Natasha Epperly, #5664  
 Maria Estock, #5563  
 Cassandra Everly, #5466  
 Jennifer Fantauzzo, #5525  
 Keith Fantauzzo, #5524  
 Tyler Fawcett, #5431  
 Mark Felix, #5516  
 Jason Ferguson, #5432  
 John Ferrua, #5615  
 Roy Fleming, #5594  
 Samuel Froio, #5416  
 Benjamin Furman, #5426  
 Brianna Furman, #5427  
 Traci Gabler, #5693  
 Carolyn Gallagher, #5383  
 Tatiana Garcia, #5476  
 Karen Gard, #5494  
 Stephanie Georgiades, #5618  
 Joseph Gerding, #5608  
 Henry Giacinto, #5415  
 Curtiss Gibson, #5429  
 Lisa Gidula, #5406  
 Matthew Gilbert, #5596  
 Ida Gilchrist, #5718  
 Susan Giles Wantuck, #5458  
 Vincent Gillen, #5532  
 Dean Gionis, #5622  
 Stephanie Goforth, #5652  
 Veronica Gomez Frederick, #5436  
 Ashley Gonzalez, #5703  
 Shaina Gonzalez, #5643  
 Shaun Gonzalez, #5644  
 Edith Graham, #5677  
 Nikita Green, #5425  
 Sara Green, #5595  
 Mark Greenwald, #5667  
 Maria Gregory, #5452  
 Ronald Gregory, #5453  
 Randy Guillen, #5396

Tyler Gunnells, #5616  
 Matthew Guyaux, #5526  
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 Julia Jackson, #5421  
 Thomas Jackson, #5713  
 Deanna Jaimes, #5488  
 Peggy Javery, #5705  
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 Darryl Johnson, #5512  
 James Johnson, #5451  
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Kelly-John Knigge, #5404  
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 Kenneth Knowell, #5442  
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 Douglas Linkhart, #5444  
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 Sean Lloyd, #5417  
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 Mandi Loayza, #5657  
 Sean Lopretto, #5438  
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 Peter Lynn, #5434  
 Vickie Lynn, #5640  
 Maddison Magan, #5684  
 Jonathan Maldonado, #5560  
 Ralph Mallory, #5545  
 Kathleen Maloy, #5648  
 Moses Mangasar, #5433  
 Sheryl Markov, #5577  
 John Martin, #5670  
 Kelsey Martin, #5671  
 Previn Martin, #5518  
 Sandra Martin, #5517  
 Susan R. Martin, #5669  
 Shari Martinez, #5579  
 Celine Mason, #5472  
 Barry Matheney, #5473  
 Jessie Matheney, #5474  
 Nina Mcdaniel, #5539  
 Nicole McKinzie, #5568  
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 Alexandra Mendoza, #5478  
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 Patrick Odell, #5619  
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 Lukas Oest, #5435  
 Darik Olson, #5569  
 Robin Olson, #5570  
 Isabella Orsini-Brophy, #5676  
 Paula Ortiz, #5621  
 Janae Owen, #5482  
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 Michael Parsons, #5575  
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# Are You on the List?

**Be recognized in next year's Salute to New Life Members** by becoming a Life Member of your USF Alumni Association today. It's a great year to make the commitment. Visit [www.usfalumni.org/membership](http://www.usfalumni.org/membership).

**Already a Life Member?** Get your name published in the spring 2022 Salute by becoming a Circle of Excellence donor. Visit [www.usfalumni.org/COE](http://www.usfalumni.org/COE).

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 Natesh Persaud, #5430  
 Katherine Peterson, #5710  
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 Theresa Pietruszka, #5674  
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 Zachary Reeves, #5521  
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 Chris Reyes, #5578  
 Jean Reynolds, #5407  
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 Alessandra Smith, #5632  
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 Sheila Waddill, #5696  
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 Crystal Wallace, #5649  
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 Shirley Waltmire, #5607  
 Frank Wantuck, #5459  
 Jason Warnke, #5390  
 Jennifer Warnke, #5391  
 William Wary, #5437  
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 Catherine Wood, #5692  
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**Circle of Excellence** donations are placed in the **Executive Director's Fund for Excellence. Recognition is based on giving to the Executive Director's Fund for Excellence and the Alumni Endowment.**

The honor roll reflects **Life Members' Circle of Excellence** donor designations as well as their individual ordinal Life Member numbers. This number serves as a source of pride in commemorating a Life Member's unique place in this prestigious group. We have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of our honor roll. Please accept our sincere apologies for any omissions or errors.

Interested in information about including a gift to USF in your will or living trust? Contact **Kemel Thompson**, kemel@usf.edu.



# Celebrate Your favorite Bull-Led Businesses

The prestigious **USF Fast 56** awards recognize the 56 fastest growing Bull-owned and Bull-led businesses in the world.

- Nominations deadline: **May 28**
- Event and countdown to No. 1: **Sept. 10**
- Visit [usfalumni.org/fast56](http://usfalumni.org/fast56) for details



Thank you to our Presenting Sponsor

# WHERE'S Rocky?



**a** Diehard friends and Bulls fans, the **Summas** and **Benvenuti** go beaching with Rocky and their traveling RayJay sign in North Captiva Island, Fla. They've had season tickets in section 208 of Raymond James Stadium since it opened, so when they found the sign on the ground, it was serendipity. The sign has traveled the world with them ever since. Back row, left to right, **Michelle Benvenuti**, '99, Life Member; **Paul Benvenuti**, '09, Life Member; **Marc Summa**, '99, Life Member, and **Amanda Summa**, '98, Life Member. Front left to right, future Bulls **Natalina Benvenuti** and **Daniel** and **Madelyn Summa**.

**b** Rocky explores Skara Brae, a settlement older than the Great Pyramids, in Scotland's far north Orkney archipelago. He joined **Peggy Tyre**, '77 and MS '86, on the journey back in time.

**c** **Sophia Sorolis**, '80, left, and **Tracey Shadday**, '80 and MPH '94, visit Goody Goody Burgers to give Rocky a taste of the Tampa landmark. They were also promoting awareness of the USF Women in Leadership & Philanthropy Alena Frey Memorial Scholarship in Public Health, which honors Sorolis' daughter, a 2019 public health grad. The family will match donations to the fund up to \$5,000; visit [usf.to/AlenaFreyScholarship](http://usf.to/AlenaFreyScholarship) or email [wlp@usf.edu](mailto:wlp@usf.edu).

**d** **Kevin Jackson**, '85, Life Member, shows Rocky the mural being painted at Helen P. Gay Rocky Mount Historic Train Station in Rocky Mount, N.C. Kevin and his wife, **Karla Jackson**, '88, Life Member, were day-tripping from their home in Franklinton, N.C.

**e** With Rocky peeking out from his backpack, **Frank Cheshire**, '06, Life Member, and his wife, **Lindsay Cheshire**, thru-hiked 1,100 miles of the Appalachian Trail, starting at Harper's Ferry, W.Va., and summiting Mount Katahdin in Maine on Columbus Day.



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 school day, 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



Psychology alumni participate in a number of events with students, including a recent book drive for refugees.

### Psyched to help students

**G**RADUATING FROM COLLEGE IS A CHALLENGE in itself, but psychology grads face an especially intimidating job market because of the many options — not all of them readily apparent. To ease the transition to post-graduate life, the Undergraduate Psychology Alumni Society connects with students to

help them find a career.

That helped the society win the Most Improved award at the 2020 Alumni Academy, a USF Alumni Association event that honors alumni groups and leaders.

“Winning the award was a big achievement for us because we tried to get more involved in different events,” says society co-chair **Samera Ahmed** '13. “One event we’re a part of is USF’s Undergraduate Conference and Psych Expo for undergraduate psychology students. We tabled that event — and other similar ones — to let students and graduates know that they can be involved with our group before and after graduation.”

It’s a great opportunity to invite alumni to join because the group will also support their research she said.

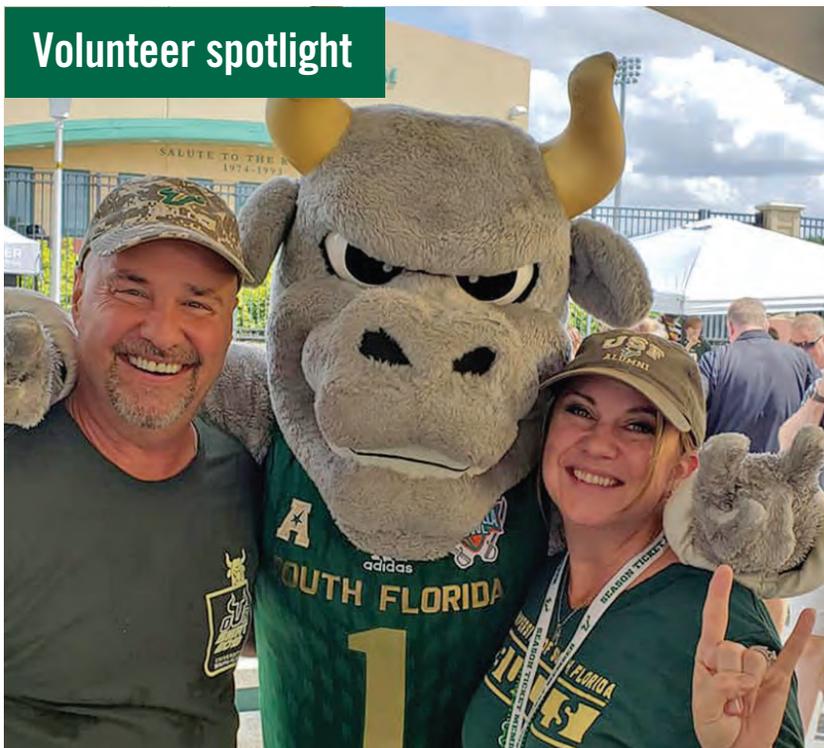
Bridging the gap between alumni and students is a key pillar in the group’s foundation.

“It really helps new grads feel like they are a part of something after they graduate,” Ahmed says. “It’s important in the field of psychology because it’s so broad, and there are a lot of ways you can go. It helps undergraduates feel less intimidated when they have us to help them find a path.”

Watch for the society’s “love languages” event — coming soon! — and meet fellow psych Bulls by visiting the USF Undergraduate Psychology Alumni Society page on Facebook.

- ERIN RYAN '20 | USFAA

### Volunteer spotlight



### Alumni group volunteer

**Lisa Ann Gidula**, MPH '10 and MA Gerontology '14, Life Member USF Tallahassee Alumni Chapter

**Career:** Florida Department of Health government analyst

**Favorite Travel Destination:** Belize

**Hometown:** Chicago

**Favorite USF memory:** Taking my 80-year-old dad to his first USF football game – War on I-4!

**Pets:** Two dogs, Ryder and Roulette

**Favorite USF event:** USF Day at the Capitol

**Hobby:** Golf

## 'We're all USF'

**W**HEN MARRIAGE, BIRTHS AND JOB changes swept her fellow chapter leaders out of their volunteer jobs, **Courtney Hawk** was suddenly the last Bull standing.

It couldn't have come at a worse time. She was working full time and finishing up a master's degree. Then the pandemic hit, so she had a young child home all day.

"I had our Alumni Association staff liaison, **Samantha Cleveland**, who's a big help, but as far as volunteer leaders, it was just me," says Hawk, '16 and MLA '19, a member of the Sarasota-Manatee Alumni chapter. "I didn't have the time, but I didn't want to let anyone down."

During the annual Alumni Academy in August, when chapter leaders gather (virtually in 2020) for workshops and awards, Hawk asked for help.

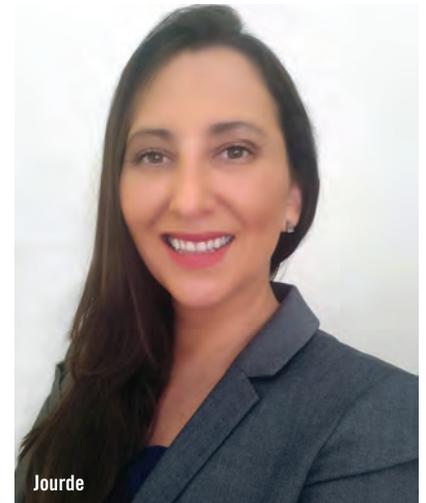
**Delia Jourde**, '00 and MA '07, quickly responded.

A volunteer with the Latino Alumni Society, she put together a communications and marketing strategy for revitalizing the Sarasota-Manatee group and attracting new leaders. Through the fall, she, Hawk and Cleveland, '16, Life Member, re-established the chapter's social media presence, surveyed local alumni, organized meetings.

"Now we're absolutely kicking butt," Hawk says. "We've got new leadership, new ideas, and a lot of



Hawk



Jourde

events coming up."

Jourde, who lives in Tampa and never attended USF's Sarasota-Manatee campus, says she helped because that's what Bulls do.

"We're all USF. The alumni groups are all good people in it for the greater good."

Adds Hawk: "Not only were we using the skills USF gave us, we were uniting. We watch out for each other; we're a Bull family."

- PENNY CARNATHAN '82 | USFAA



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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

Tina James  
blackalumnisociety@usfalumni-  
igroup.org

### College of Business Alumni

Samantha Fitzmaurice  
sfitzmaurice@usf.edu

### DBA Alumni Network

Andy Hafer  
USFDBAAlumni@gmail.com

### Engineering Alumni

Robert Andrew  
randrew@tampabay.rr.com

### 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  
Samera Ahmed  
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

# Join us on TEAMS!



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

USF chapters and societies host 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.

**Austin, Texas**  
Brett Bronstein  
usfaustin@gmail.com

**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

**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**  
Rick Sanchez  
fgi.ricksanchez@gmail.com

**New York City**  
Michelle Scheblein  
usfalumniny@gmail.com

**Orlando**  
Chem Jackson  
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**  
Heather Agatstein  
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

## What if you could advance the future of USF and guarantee income for life?

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# Class Notes

## 1970s

**COLETTE BANCROFT**, English '74, was awarded the national Robert L. Fish Memorial Award presented by the Mystery Writers of America for best short story by a previously unpublished American author. Her story, "The Bite," appears in the anthology, "Tampa Bay Noir," which she edited. Bancroft has been the book critic for the Tampa Bay Times since 2007.



**MIKE PRIDE**, American Studies '72, has published "Storm Over Key West: The Civil War and the Call of Freedom" through Pineapple Press. The military history is the seventh book authored

or co-authored by the former newspaper editor.

## 1980s



**BRIAN ARMSTRONG**, Geology '86 and MS '04, received the 2020 USF Geology Alumni Society Award for achievement and career success. Armstrong has been the executive director

of the Southwest Florida Water Management District since 2016.



**THOMAS BECKER**, Psychology '82, ranked in the top 1.25 percent of business and management researchers, and in the top 11.6 percent of ranked scientists worldwide, in a

new database created by Stanford University. Becker is the interim dean and a professor of management in the Muma College of Business at USF's Sarasota-Manatee campus.

**MARK J. BENNETT**, Geography '89, has been appointed development services director for Lake Wales, Fla., where he oversees urban planning and zoning, building, and code compliance. A USF Army ROTC graduate, he's a retired U.S. Army Reserve colonel.



**CALVIN R. HAGINS**, Finance '86, Life Member, received the Leadership Excellence Director's Mission Achievement Award, the highest honor bestowed by the federal Bureau of

Consumer Financial Protection. Hagins is the deputy assistant director for originations at the bureau in Washington, D.C.

**NOEL MCCORMICK**, Mechanical Engineering '86, has been elected to the National Armaments Consortium executive committee as a small business class representative. He is the president of McCormick Stevenson Corp. engineering design firm, a multi-year USF Fast 56 Award recipient.

**ELIZABETH MENENDEZ**, Finance '84, Life Member, has been named the 2021 vice president of finance for the Florida Certified Commercial Investment Member Chapter. She is a senior associate with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Florida Properties Group – Commercial Division in Tampa.

**TOBIAS WINRIGHT**, Political Science '87, published "Serve and Protect: Selected Essays on Just Policing," a collection of essays about policing, and "T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics," a book about Christian ethics.

**ROBERT WISLER**, Management Information Systems '88, was named chief information officer and director of the Management Information Center at Vincennes University in Vincennes, Ind. Previously, he served as principal consultant of Wisler & Associates LLC in Grand Rapids, Mich.

## 1990s

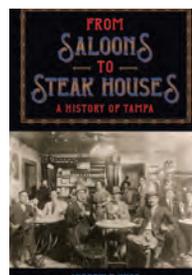
**KRISTIN H. DARBY**, Accounting '96, has been elected to the board of directors of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati. She is the chief information officer for Envision Healthcare national medical group and serves on the board of the Nashville Technology Council.



**LAKECIA GUNTER**, Computer Engineering '95, was appointed to the IDEX Corp. board of directors. Gunter is vice president and

general manager of IoT (Internet of Things) Global and Strategic Engagement at Microsoft Corp. In 2016, she was named one of the 26 Most Powerful Female Engineers by Business Insider.

**SAMANTHA PARKER HOPKINS**, Accounting and Finance '93, Life Member, was named to Working Mothers/SHOOK Research's list of Top Wealth Advisor Moms for 2020. She is the senior retirement plan consultant, portfolio manager and institutional consultant for UBS Wealth Management USA in Tampa.



**ANDREW T. HUSE**, History and Creative Writing '96, MA '00 and MA '05, has released "From Saloons to Steakhouses," published by University Press of Florida, a history of

what and where Tampa residents ate and drank. Huse is the USF Libraries special collections librarian.

**JONATHAN LEWIS**, Political Science '95 and MPA '98, received the 2020 Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce's Chair's Cup Award. The administrator for Sarasota County was recognized for his dedication to supporting and advancing the chamber's work.

**TRICIA MCMANUS**, Elementary Education '90 and MEd '93, has been named interim superintendent of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, N.C., Schools. She was previously the district's deputy superintendent.

**DR. TIMOTHY NIELSEN**, MD '91, joined Advanced Dermatology and Cosmetic Surgery when it acquired his practice, Nielsen Dermatology in Boynton Beach, Fla. Nielsen is board-certified in dermatology and dermatopathology.

**JENNIFER PERMUTH**, Spanish '98 and Public Health PhD '10, is the new vice chair of research for Moffitt Cancer Center's department of gastrointestinal oncology. She previously worked as an applied research scientist and epidemiologist at the Tampa hospital.



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

**BILL PERUSEK**, Microbiology '99, has been named vice president of U.S. sales for BIOMODEX in Boston. The company provides 3D-printed products for the health-care industry. Perusek previously served as a vice president for sales with Corindus Vascular Robotics.

**MELISSA SEIXAS**, MA History '96, Life Member, was appointed to the USF Board of Trustees by the State University System and was promoted to president of Duke Energy Florida. She also serves on the USF St. Petersburg Campus Advisory Board. Seixas previously served as vice president of government and community relations at Duke Energy Corp. in Pinellas County, Fla.

**DAVID IRVING SHINER**, Political Science '99, is now licensed to practice law in Georgia. He is an attorney with Shiner Law Group, P.A., with offices in South Florida.



**PAUL STEVENSON**, Mechanical Engineering '95, has been appointed to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers board of governors, where he will serve a three-year term. He is the executive vice president of McCormick Stevenson Corp. engineering design firm, a multi-year USF Fast 56 Award recipient.



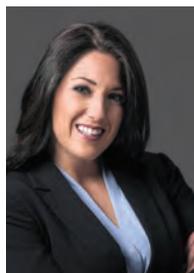
**ALAN M. WEST**, General Business Administration '96 and Accounting '05, Life Member, was appointed university assistant vice president and treasurer at the University of Florida. Previously, he oversaw UF's Division of Finance and Accounting.

**MITCH YORK**, MA Economics '93, was named chief investment officer for Concord Asset Management in Abingdon, Va. He was previously portfolios and investments manager for Edelman Financial Engines.

## 2000s

**JASON BARTZ**, Finance '02, was promoted to executive vice president of NDC Asset Management, with offices in Pittsburgh and Bradenton. Bartz was previously a vice president of the firm.

**STEVEN BLICKENSERFER**, Political Science '06, was appointed chapter co-chair of the Association of Privacy Professionals KnowledgeNet in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He works as a technology lawyer at Carlton Fields in Miami and Fort Lauderdale.



**SHANNON CIESLUK**, Accounting '05 and MBA '14, has been promoted to director in the forensic and financial services department at CBIZ in Tampa.

She was previously a senior manager at the financial services company.

**BERTHA HARLEY**, Nursing '06, has joined Watson Clinic as a nurse practitioner at Lakeland Regional Hospital in Lakeland, Fla. She is board-certified in adult-gerontology.

**MONICA JENKINS**, MA Library and Information Science '03, Life Member, retired in December 2020 after 26 years in public education, including 19 years as a school librarian in Florida and Texas. She most recently worked with the Arlington Independent School District in Arlington, Texas.

**RYAN LIGON**, Geography '07, was promoted to associate at Dewberry professional services firm in Tampa. He is a project manager who previously worked for the National Park Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

**JOSÉ VALENTINO RUIZ-RESTO**, Music Studies '09 and PhD '16, and his production team won the Audio Visual Arts Digital Awards' gold medal for Best Music Video for their NPR and PBS production, "A Caroler's Gift:



Conquering COVID with a Carol." Ruiz served as lead music producer, supervisor of music and audio production, and mastering engineer. He is a two-time Latin GRAMMY award recipient and a 2021 USF Outstanding Young Alumnus.

**GARRETT SHINN**, Accounting '08, has been named partner-in-charge of the Bradenton and Sarasota locations of Carr, Riggs & Ingram CPAs and advisors. He was previously a partner at the firm.

## 2010s

**DR. JAEHOON BANG**, MD '13, has joined Watson Clinic in Lakeland, Fla., as a diagnostic radiologist. Previously, he performed his fellowship at Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa in the breast imaging department.



**ASHLEY BELL BARNETT**, MPA '10, was reappointed to the Polk State College District board of trustees by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis. A former teacher and workforce development analyst for Polk County Public Schools, she serves as vice chair of the board.

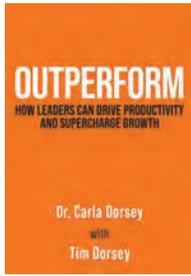


**RACHEL BOZICH**, Physical Education '14, has joined the St. Pete Young Professionals 2021 executive board as programming chair. She works as a wellness educator at Tampa General Hospital.

**ASHLEY CHRISTIE**, Criminology '11, has joined the Greater Tampa REALTORS 2021 board of directors. She's the broker and owner of Flourish Real Estate in Tampa.

**RYAN CLAUSEN**, Finance '17, has joined Englewood Bank & Trust in Englewood, Fla., as a commercial lender. He previously worked for Crews Banking in Sarasota.

# Class Notes



**CARLA DORSEY**, DBA '19, released "Outperform: How Leaders Can Drive Productivity and Supercharge Growth," a book about increasing productivity, growth and value within an organization. She's the CFO of The Dorsey Group, LLC, in Coral Springs, Fla.



**SOPHIA EDEN**, Accounting '16, has joined St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce's St. Pete Young Professionals 2021 executive board as leadership chair. She works as manager

of global office administration and meetings with the Women's Tennis Association in St. Petersburg.

**ARNEL GARCESA**, MA Global Sustainability '17, has joined Seminole Electric as an environmental specialist in Tampa. He was previously a research assistant at Florida State University's DeVoe L. Moore Center.

**CHRIS GRIFFIN**, Political Science and Economics, '17, Life Member, has joined St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce's St. Pete Young Professionals 2021 executive board as membership chair. He's a budget management analyst for the City of St. Petersburg.

**BRITTANY CONNOLLY HERNANDEZ**, Public Health and Religious Studies '15, has joined Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas, as director of executive communications and special projects. She is a freelance writer and editor who previously worked as director of the dean's office at the Yale School of Public Health.

**TODD HUGHES**, History '14, received the John H. McLain Veteran of the Year Award from the Sarasota County Veterans Commission. The U.S. Army veteran was recognized for his service to other veterans, active military and their families. He's the manager of the Goodwill Manasota Veterans Services Program.

**MICHAEL KEELAN**, English Education '13, English '17 and MA '20, has published "The Social Black Belt" to help spread mental health awareness to children, adolescents and adults. The book placed first in the 2020 Graphic Design USA American Graphic Design Awards.

**CATHERINE KOHN**, English '81, is the new editor of Moultrie News in Mount Pleasant, S.C. She was formerly an editor and writer for Translation Waves in Beijing.

**NICCI LAMBERT**, Nursing '10, has joined Winter Haven Women's Hospital in Winter Haven, Fla., as director of patient care services. A nurse practitioner, she previously worked in the hospital's mother/baby unit and education department.

**JORDYN LISTRO**, Health Sciences '17, was invited by the Canadian national soccer team to play in the SheBelieves Cup 2021 invitational women's soccer tournament. She plays for the Orlando Pride soccer team in Orlando, Fla., as a midfielder.

**BROOKE (VEITH) LIVINGSTON**, MS Nursing '16, has joined Watson Clinic Highlands in Lakeland, Fla., to work in family medicine. She previously worked at Jay J. Garcia, MD Weight Loss & Wellness Centers in Brandon, Fla.

**KEILA LÓPEZ**, Biomedical Sciences '15, has joined the USF Foundation philanthropy team as a development officer for diversity initiatives. Previously, she was a teacher with Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa.

**TRAVIS MALOTT**, MA Global Sustainability '17, has joined ICIX in San Mateo, Calif., as a solutions engineer. He was previously a Hiring Our Heroes Salesforce Fellow.

**ANGELA MANN**, Nursing and MS '11, has joined pulmonary specialist Dr. Naem Shahrour at the Watson Clinic Main location in Lakeland. A nurse practitioner, Mann previously worked in endocrinology.

**CHASE MEYERS**, MArc '17, has joined Sweet Sparkman Architects and Interiors of Sarasota as a project director. Meyers, who holds USF's indoor high jump record, previously worked for Gilchrist Ross Crowe Architects in Tallahassee, Fla.

**LAUREN MORINA**, Criminology '16, has joined Maynard Cooper & Gale law firm's cybersecurity and data privacy practice in Birmingham, Ala. She was previously a student attorney at Washington and Lee University School of Law Community Legal Practice Center.



**BRANDI MURPHY**, Environmental Science and Policy '15 and MA '19, received a Fulbright Research Award to study agricultural value-chain improvements to increase food security in East Africa's Malawi. She was previously the Coverdell Fellow at the USF Patel College of Global Sustainability.

**DARRELL NICHOLSON**, MFA Creative Writing '14, was honored at the ninth annual Eco-Comedy Video Awards hosted by the Center for Environmental Filmmaking at American University. He works as a group director at Belvoir Media Group in Sarasota.

**JORDAN NOYES**, Professional and Technical Communication '18, earned the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority's Series7 license and is now a registered assistant with Access Advisors LLC in Sarasota. Noyes was previously a client relations manager.

**MICHELLE NUNEZ**, MA Mass Communications '19, landed a recurring role on "Tyler Perry's Ruthless," a BET+ streaming service series. She is a creative associate at expressedly creative services, a marketing company in Largo, Fla.

**KAYLA RICHMOND**, Political Science and Management '10, was recognized at the Lee County (Fla.) Bar Association's Pro Bono Awards. Richmond is a stockholder in Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A. and the 20th Judicial Circuit Young Lawyer's Division governor for the Florida Bar.



**VANESSA RIVERA**, Communication '18, has joined eXp Realty as a real estate agent serving Pinellas, Hillsborough and Pasco counties. She's also a promotions coordinator assistant

for Beasley Media Group.

**ADRIAN GONZALEZ RODRIGUEZ**, MA Global Sustainability '17, has joined the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as an environmental specialist in Tallahassee, Fla.

**JENNY VERNA**, Management '15, has been named Holland America's business development manager for South Florida. She was previously Unique Vacations, Inc.'s business development manager for Central Florida.



**MICHAEL ZACCARI**, Hospitality Administration/Management '19, received JMX Brands' first Category Manager of the Year Award for increasing

office furniture sales revenue 77 percent in 2020. Zaccari has been with the online retailer since February 2020.

## 2020s

**TESSY OBEL**, Public Health '20, has joined the Agency for Community Treatment Services in Tampa as a behavioral health technician specialist. She previously worked at USF Health's BRIDGE Clinic as an HIV testing counselor.

**CARSON RAGSDALE**, Marketing '20, was drafted by the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team. A relief pitcher and first baseman, he previously participated in the 2020 Florida Instructional League.

**SHARA WESLEY**, DrPH '20, received Georgia Trend Magazine's 40 Under 40 award, a recognition of the state's "best and brightest" professionals younger than 40 years old. She is the executive director of Wellstar Center for Health Equity and Community Health in Atlanta.

### USF (USPS #025203) Number 55

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## In Memoriam

**JUANITA (BELL) ANDREWS**, Management '79, Dec. 8, 2020  
**PATRICIA L. BADGER**, Elementary Education '93, Oct. 27, 2020

**JOAN SHANNON BARRENTINE**, Special Education '64, MA '68 and Interdisciplinary Education '84, Life Member, Nov. 11, 2020

**STEPHEN CHRISTOPHER BARRETT**, Accounting '71, Dec. 11, 2020

**LAURENCE "LARRY" BART**, Psychology '71, MA '77 and PhD '82, Oct. 13, 2020

**JOHN LEWIS BEAUFIT**, Sociology '73, Dec. 4, 2020

**ERNEST A. BELLO**, Accounting '70, Dec. 1, 2020

**CAROLE ANN (LEININGER) BENNETT**, Science Education '64, Nov. 20, 2020

**SHARON LEIGH BOND**, MLA '94, Jan. 23, 2021

**SALLY SAIS BRUYNELL**, Nursing '82, Dec. 18, 2020

**WILLIAM G. CHANDLER JR.**, History '75, Jan. 27, 2021

**LISA A. CONTI**, MPH '93, Nov. 6, 2020

**SUZANNE CAMP CROSBY**, MFA Art '76, Dec. 9, 2020

**KATHLEEN MELISSA CUNNINGHAM**, MA Rehabilitation Counseling '80, Oct. 21, 2020

**MARTHA FRANCES WOODWARD DAVIS**, MA Reading Education '91, Dec. 13, 2020

**CAMERON DELISE**, Communication '04, Dec. 28, 2020

**JAMES C. FOSTER**, Chemistry '69 and MS '72, Nov. 19, 2020

**DR. REYNALDO G. GEERKEN**, Biology '93, Jan. 11, 2021

**SUSAN HOLLY HARRIS**, Elementary Education '78, Jan. 20, 2021

**JAMES "JIM" W. HAYS**, ME Engineering '68, Jan. 12, 2021

**PAUL HODGES**, Computer Engineering '90, Mathematics '90 and ME '08, Jan. 11, 2021

**CAROLE LYNN (BEETLE) HOLLAND**, Accounting '77, Oct. 31, 2020

**PETER D. HOLLINGER**, Geography '70, Dec. 17, 2020

**VINCENT T. JACKSON**, Management '16, Life Member, USF Outstanding Young Alumnus, February 2021

**KENNETH A. KELLEY**, Geology '81, Jan. 5, 2021

**BRYON LEE MALPHURS**, Political Science '68, Jan. 12, 2021

**ISMAEL MARTINEZ**, MA Guidance and Counseling Education '72, Nov. 21, 2020

**LT. COL. RUBEN MATOS**, MPH '92, Life Member, USF Alumni Association Board Member, Feb. 14, 2021

**GERALD E. MCGORY**, Mathematics and Science Education '74 and MEd '80, Jan. 13, 2021

**MICHELLE MARIE MEZEY-SEARS**, MPH '93, Jan. 15, 2021

**JAMES EUGENE MILLER**, Accounting '78, Dec. 25, 2020

**EDUARDO JOSE MIRANDA**, Finance '90, July 17, 2020

**JOYCE ANN (MCCOY) MISNER**, Special Education-Behavior Disorders '98, Oct. 23, 2020

**MARCI SUE MOORE**, Accounting '86, Dec. 19, 2020

**DIANE J. MUSGRAVE**, MS Nursing '12, Oct. 11, 2020

**EVE LYNN PERRY**, Information Technology '09, March 29, 2020

**SR. MARY PATRICIA PLUMB**, MA Elementary Education, Jan. 8, 2021

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**EARL RAYNER**, Sociology '73, Dec. 30, 2020

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**ROBERT H. ROTTLOFF**, Electrical Engineering '72, Nov. 15, 2020

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**BARBARA JEAN WILKIE**, MA Distributive and Marketing Education '71, Oct. 30, 2020

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