The Student Support Services Program (SSS) has experienced another successful year. We are pleased to present you with our 2014-2015 newsletter. In this edition we highlight our student success at the University of South Florida and beyond. Our students have leadership roles in national associations and received internships, research, USF Education Abroad, and scholarship opportunities including the President Genshaft Scholarship. Check out the video on page 2 with a SSS student receiving national recognition in one of her television appearances. The program’s success yields an average 99%-100% in good academic standing at the end of the first semester, our Summer Bridge Program, and an average of 90% annually. Student Support Services provides effective academic and personal support for a diverse population. The program is intended for students who have been identified as having an academic need and either first generation college student, as having low-income family status, or both. SSS is designed to significantly increase the retention and graduation rates of the 220 participants it is funded to serve. We are committed to providing proactive, intrusive, comprehensive and innovative services to enhance our students’ success at USF. SSS provides a plethora of services including academic advising, coaching, computerized tutorial assistance program, financial aid assistance, SSS scholarships, social and cultural enrichment programs, employment and workshops that broaden career perspectives, improve academic skills, promote self-confidence and address various non-cognitive factors. The SSS staff also serve as instructors for the Academic Foundations course in which our students are enrolled. In order to meet the University of South Florida’s goal of program sustainability I have acquired over approximately 7 million dollars in federal grants to maintain the program at the university. Recently another SSS grant proposal to acquire continued 5 year funding for September 1, 2015- August 31, 2020 was submitted to the Federal Department of Education as the current grant expires on August 31, 2015. Our goal is to continue such a successful program at USF. We are waiting for results…stay tuned. I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. We are “BULLISH” about student success!
Maryah Sullivan, of Orlando, Florida, is an exceptional young woman who was selected as Youth of the Year for The Boys & Girls Club of America (BGCA). The award is an honor given to one outstanding youth each year from the national organization. The award represents the highest recognition one can receive within the BGCA organization. Being selected as The Youth of the Year for BGCA is a premier achievement that is earned by promoting service to the Club, community, and family; academic success, strong moral character, life goals, and poise and public-speaking ability. Maryah earned this prestigious award because she has effectively balanced school, sports, and service for more than a decade. A dedicated public servant, Maryah has volunteered with the Ronald McDonald House where she works with families who have children with medical problems. She has also volunteered at a Florida nursing home.

Since 1860, BGCA has made a difference in the lives of children all over the country, especially Maryah. Maryah is part of the Joe R. Lee branch of BGCA in Eatonville, Florida. Her neighborhood has a disturbingly high poverty and crime rate, which can have negative effects on children. “My mother is a single mother. She worked really hard for my siblings and I. I did the best she could to provide for us,” said Maryah. “The neighborhood that I grew up in had a lot of crime. It was not a good neighborhood, especially for kids,” according to Maryah. “I remember when I would get off from school and would go to the Boys and Girls Club.” This was the community in which Sullivan attended the Boys and Girls Club, and it was the community she loved. It is clear to see that Maryah’s future aspirations reflect her dedication, her hard work, and her compassion for the community. Presently, Maryah is part of a new community — she is a participant in SSS and just completed her first year at USF. Maryah is majoring in Biomedical Sciences and is a Pre-Med student.

Maryah aspires to be a neurosurgeon so that she can help save lives. Her first year in college was quite challenging, as she has had to balance her Youth of the Year for BGCA duties with her academic studies. In the past few months, Maryah has flown all over the country to make appearances on behalf of BCGA. For instance, she has visited the White House in Washington, D.C. twice; she has been to Los Angeles to film an episode of The Queen Latifah Show, where she also met actor Denzel Washington (see video*); she has been to New York City where she participated in an NBA All-Star Weekend event with LeBron James; she has appeared on the Today morning television show; and she threw out the first pitch at an MLB game during the World Series.

With this level of devotion Maryah has proven that she can accomplish whatever she dreams. “My SSS counselor has given me excellent assistance and support as I stepped into a challenging situation as a first generation student at USF. SSS has helped me to succeed by helping me with not only academics, but lifestyle decisions as well”, reports Maryah. SSS is happy to offer support for Maryah as she balances her studies with her BGCA Youth of the Year duties.

**We are proud to have such an accomplished BULL in our midst!**

*Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t14&v=uiFMSqSkPM
Camila Moraes, Freshman, BMS/PreMed: “SSS has helped me succeed when there were times in the semester where I did not believe I could achieve something and SSS helped me achieve it and believe in myself!”

Daniel Blasco, Sophomore, Mechanical Engineering: “When I first came to USF I was a little nervous. Thanks to everyone at SSS I was quickly made to feel at home.”

Patrycja Monforton, Freshman, Pre-English Education: “SSS has helped me become acclimated to USF and become more involved (than I would otherwise) and I have met some of my forever friends here.”

Maya Forbes, Sophomore, Integrative Animal Biology: “SSS has helped me to succeed at USF by providing me with the opportunity to have strong starting GPA, get familiar with Tampa and the campus prior to fall and make lasting friendships. Overall, the most beneficial was the support system of people that cared and continue to care about your success.”

Antonio Alsaleh, Sophomore, Psychology: “SSS has helped me succeed by making me much more familiar with USF, including the programs and facilities. Most of all, it gave me an adviser who would watch over my academics, and even check to see how I was doing mentally, which is critical when dealing with all the stress college delivers all at once.”

Charity Ward, Freshman, Pre-Social Work: “During my first summer, SSS students were enrolled in a class taught by our SSS advisors. From that class, I gained more skills (i.e. organization/study/communication than I did in all 12 years in school! SSS has been a support group as well, which was very beneficial.”

Shawn Ramrup, Freshman, International Studies: “SSS has made the transition to university life a lot easier for me. It helped me create a connection with other students who are in the same situations as I. I was able to create a second family away from home. The SSS Counselors are always accessible for me and whenever I need help I can always go to them.”

Rada McKinnon, Freshman, Psychology: “SSS has definitely helped me succeed at USF. SSS helped me become acclimated with USF’s campus before the fall semester, as well as help me become a successful college student. Having an SSS Counselor throughout college keeps me on track and focused.”

Steven Riley, Freshman, Pre-Medical Sciences: “SSS has helped me succeed at USF because the program gave me great Counselors who I can talk to about anything and who keep me on the right track. The program also gave me good friends who I probably would not have met if not for SSS.”
“Student Support Services has exposed me to resources that I did not realize were available here at USF.”

~Javonte Brown, Freshman, Psychology
SSS Students Experience Success at USF

♦ Stepby Oge is honored to receive the Dr. Israel "Ike" Tribble Jr Endowed Scholarship for 2014-15. Named for Dr. Ike Tribble, a champion of African-American history and scholarship and the first black chairman of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. This scholarship has been established to assist outstanding disadvantaged and/or minority students who have proven themselves academically but lack financial resources to attend the University of South Florida. Stepby just concluded her first year at USF and she is majoring in Communication. Stepby hopes to use her degree to pursue social justice issues to help improve our society. Stepby is also the Public Relations Chairperson of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, and a member of the Black Student Union, where she participates in the mentoring program helping high school students reach their academic and personal goals. Stepby was also nominated for the Bullitzer Prize, which recognizes outstanding student writers at USF. Congratulations to Stepby for this wonderful achievement!

♦ Congratulations to the SSS students who presented research at the Undergraduate Research and Arts Colloquium in April 2015:

  Samantha McQueen
  Yara Perez del Castillo
  Nakaissia Reed
**PROUD OF SSS STUDENT SUCCESS**

- **Imani Lee** is senior SSS student majoring in Mass Communication, with a concentration in Broadcast — Program and Production, and minor in Entrepreneurship. Imani was honored to be selected for the Disney College Program internship. According to their website, “As a part of the Disney College Program, participants have the incredible opportunity to advance their strengths and interests, meet guests and cast members from around the country and take part in educational opportunities students can’t get anywhere else. This truly unique program allows participants to network with leaders, take part in personal and career development classes, and build transferable skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, guest service and effective communication” ([http://cp.disneycareers.com/en/about-disney-college-program/overview/](http://cp.disneycareers.com/en/about-disney-college-program/overview/)).

  Imani found this experience very beneficial and says he also learned a lot. According to Imani, “I had the opportunity of learning from my coordinators, managers, and leaders how to properly interact with guest during transactions. This eye opening experience has exposed me to so many races, religions, and cultures around the world. I have a deeper appreciation for people. All day I talked to hundreds of people learning tad bits here and there about numerous cultures. I have learned that every customer at Disney wants one thing in common no matter the race, gender, or culture. Everyone wants to be happy. The evolution of communication enables companies like Disney to perform faster and more efficiently while increasing profit, guest retention and satisfaction. I take these concepts and apply them to my life and pursuit of a future career. I have learned to always be courteous and respectful. At Disney, you really do not know whom you are meeting. I treat everyone the same and put my full effort into every interaction. I will continue to hold all the things I have learned, close to my heart.” *Sounds like Imani made the most of this opportunity, and we are proud of him for representing SSS and USF so well!*

- SSS partnered with the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity to send **Julian Mesa**, an SSS sophomore majoring in Mechanical Engineering, to the Black, Brown & College Bound annual conference held at Hillsborough Community College. The theme of the 2015 conference was: “*Turning the Page: Transforming the African American and Latino Male experiences in Higher Education*”. The conference was held at the Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel in February and Comedian/Actor/Talk Show Host Steve Harvey was the keynote speaker. Julian was honored to participate in this conference on behalf of USF and he believes he benefitted greatly from the networking opportunities and from the information shared. *Way to go Julian!*

- SSS rising sophomores **Camila Moraes** and **Waleska Santiago-Datil** were selected to attend Pre-Health Scholars Program (PSP) sponsored by The University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine, Office of Student Diversity and Enrichment (OSDE), and the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program. PSP is a multi-year academic enrichment and career exploration program for pre-health students. The program components include academic and clinical experiences that highlight exciting components of healthcare. PSP is a multi-year program, with this initial 6-week summer experience serving as a starting point and a gateway for students’ journey toward a health career. The program will provide support and services to students throughout their undergraduate experience. Just two weeks into the summer program, and Camila reported to her SSS Counselor, “I would first like to thank you a million times for helping me with the letter of recommendation and application process for the USF Morsani PSP Program. It's been only two weeks and the most amazing experience I've had since coming to USF. Waleska from SSS is in it too and loves it just as much as I do. Thank you again.” *Keep up the good work Camila and Waleska!*

- SSS is excited to announce rising sophomore **Deidra Rogers** has been selected to participate in the USF Legislative Internship Program (LIP) during the fall 2015 semester. LIP allows students to work in the offices of federal, state and local legislators, public policy think-tanks and policy boards. Each student is paired with an official who is actively involved in Tampa Bay’s economic development, transportation, environmental protection, education, health, social welfare and/or public finance issues. A USF liaison and faculty members maintain regular contact with the student and official to ensure each party’s goals are being met. Students earn class credit for the successful completion of this internship. *We are excited for Deidra and will keep you posted on her progress!*
Waleska Santiago-Datil (l) and Samantha McQueen (r) both just completed their first year at USF and ended the year in spectacular fashion — they participated in the USF Education Abroad program in London and Paris! Waleska was also fortunate enough to win the President Genshaft Scholarship to help finance her trip. *Bull pride is global!*

Hillary Rogers just completed her second year at USF and she spent the fall 2014 semester studying abroad in Florence, Italy. Hillary had an amazing experience in which she was able to travel to several European countries, including Sicily, France, and Germany. *The radiant happiness on her face is enough evidence that Hillary had a wonderful experience abroad!*

Kimberly Pusey just finished her first year at USF and she is studying in Italy during the summer 2015 semester. *What a great way to celebrate completing freshmen year!*
SSS workshops are designed to give students important information and announcements to help them be successful at USF and in life beyond. These workshops cover topics such as:

- How to register for classes using OASIS
- College major exploration and career decision
- Embracing diverse perspectives in a global world
- The benefits of undergraduate research
- The benefits of living on-campus and joining campus organizations
- How to read a DegreeWorks report and calculate a college GPA
- Tips for college success, including non-cognitive factors such as time management, stress management, study and test-taking skills
- Financial aid and scholarship information, including how and when to complete a FAFSA and Bright Futures renewal criteria
- Preparing for graduate or professional school

Thank you to the many USF departments who contribute to the success of SSS seminars via presentations and handouts for students...

Career Services
Wellness Education
Campus Recreation
USF Federal Credit Union
The USF Counseling Center
Academic Success Center
Office of Multicultural Affairs
Office of Graduate Studies
Office of Undergraduate Research
Students with Disabilities Services
Financial Education & Outreach Program
University Scholarships & Financial Aid Services
Center for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention
Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity

We greatly appreciate our many collaborative partners on campus!
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2014 AND 2015 SSS GRADUATES OF USF!

Alysha Alston, Public Health
Thelisha Aluc, Public Health
Marjorie Arias, Health Sciences
Paul Baldwin, History
Knakeera Bason, Business Advertising
Bridgitte Batista, Anthropology
Stephanie Bayly, Criminology
Windell Blair II, Criminology
Balee Booser, Theatre
Nadia Boyd, Psychology
Stephen Bravo-Brown, Psychology
Judy Brown, Criminology
Kaleena Burns, Marketing
Euan Burton, Geography
Chelsea Carini, Behavioral Healthcare
Shilah Carroll, Elementary Education
Anthony Carson, Public Health
Yahir Casanova, Communication
Cameron Casanova, Public Health
Beau Cherry, English
Caitlin Clarke, Public Health
Andrew Coet, Criminology
Manuel Colorado, Finance
Clinton Coutain, Social Work
Devane Daley, Health Sciences
Andrew Davis, Management
Nrec Dedaj, Biology
Daphne Dieudonne, Women's Studies
Christina Dong, Public Health
Lentz Dorcely, Public Health
Zachary Dugowson, Psychology
Ego Ekenta, Psychology
Steven Fan, Industrial Engineering
Jerilys Fernandez, Public Health
Alyssa Gagne, Health Sciences
Julian Gines, Communication
Harvey Gladden, English
Yuri Godinez, Management
Mayra Gomez, Elementary Education
Amanda Gonzalez, Behavioral Healthcare
Deborah Grana, Elementary Education
Coralys Guzman, Science Education
Amanda Hall, Criminology
Ryan Hatchett, Hospitality Management
Alessandra Haynes, Public Health
Warren Henry, Public Health
Shaneese Hernandez, Management
Tyechia Hobbs, Public Health
Racquel Hylton, Political Science
Cindy Innocent, Criminology
Vonika Jack, Health Sciences
Radim Jacob, Biomedical Sciences
Cintli Jauregui, Nursing
Herby Jean, Civil Engineering
Aarian Johnon, Mass Communications
Christelle Joseph, Information Tech.
Robert Kazanowski, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
Rosa Leath, Psychology
Jomar Lopez, Chemistry
Gina Lopez, Mass Communications
Diana Louis, Psychology
Francia Luke, Public Health
Anthony Macedo, Public Health
Wendy Malagon, Psychology
Peyton Mccoy, Athletic Training
Janeesha Mcfadden, Psychology
Alicia Mclean, Health Sciences
Jeremy Mclymont, Criminology
Shakeem Mills, Criminology
Kadijah Moore, Public Health
Anthony Morales, Civil Engineering
Gladys Munoz, Public Health
Dylan Myers, Psychology
Henna Patel, Public Health
Vanessa Pelaez, Public Health
Olivia Pierre, Psychology
Eric Pillock, Mechanical Engineering
DestineePinkney, Business Advertising
Wilbur Powell, Public Health
Tiffany Rivers, Gerontology
Chantell Robinson, Public Health
Micheal Roxton, Accounting
Dalis Ruane, General Business Admin.
Sandy Saintfleur, Criminology
Kymoye Samuel, Psychology
Leiakasbea Scott, Criminology
Elizabeth Sigler, Public Health
Jerry Silva, Criminology
Brian Speller, Health Sciences
Mandy Spielvogel, Public Health
Shantay Stagger, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
Harley Stanley, Health Sciences
Aneika Stephenson, Electrical Engineering
Cherlie Sterling, Health Sciences
Marlena Szczesniwicz, Marketing
Tanisha Thermidor, Health Sciences
Fiyori Tsegaye, Psychology
Travis Tyson, Economics
Elianna Valcimond, Public Health
Alexandria Westcarr, Communication Sciences & Disorders
Amber Young, Public Health

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Aneika Stephenson,
Electrical Engineering,
USF Graduate
Hello Ms. Thomas,

I'm officially a USF graduate! Go Class of 2014! Undergraduate was a great experience, and I will always appreciate the support provided by SSS. Acquiring an education paid off!

I am working in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. I learned about this profession through class-related field experience while at USF! I was an intern and then got hired!

I implement individual behavior programs written by the Certified Behavior Therapist. For example, I teach daily living skills and social skills to children with developmental disabilities, such as autism. I am a Behavior Tutor also known as a Behavior Technician. I work one on one with a very special student! The first week of work was challenging, but thankfully I am a fast learner. I am happy because I am representing USF as an alumni! I am pretty sure they will hire more USF grads at this academy because BULLS work really hard!

Sincerely,

Wendy Malagon
Student Support Services

University of South Florida
Division of Undergraduate Studies
First Generation Access Programs
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Website: http://www.us.usf.edu/sss/sss.htm

SSS Award: 5yr. Federal $1,442,806 (61%); State $563,269 (39%).