MCC leads way with new cutting-edge Dream Lab for project-based learning

By Ken Datzman

The Melbourne Central Catholic High School campus, more than 50 years old, has never looked better. Recent years of progress are on display in the form of various new cutting-edge facilities which have been constructed on the roughly 40-acre site.

The transformation began five years ago when the private institution rolled out its new master plan for the campus, which also kicked off MCC’s “Build-to-Serve” capital campaign.

The campaign successfully raised more than $3 million for a phased construction and expansion project spread over several years.

The newest construction project to be completed at MCC is the 5,500-square-foot “Dream Laboratory.”

The technologically advanced facility positions the school to be a leader in the region in collaborative, team-based learning. The process hones critical thinking, creativity, and communication, among other in-demand workplace skills.

“We have created an entire facility for this type of learning,” said MCC President Michael Burke. “This is where students can ‘design, collaborate, explore, create, and imagine’ all types of projects in an inquiring hands-on learning environment.

The facility has dedicated spaces ranging from a robotics laboratory to a design zone to a cybersecurity room and a three-dimensional printer laboratory. As a technology, 3D printing has been lauded for its ability to give small-scale manufacturers the opportunity to create prototypes of new products quickly and cheaply. For example, 3D printing of medical devices is quickly becoming a promising reality, according to a report by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Patients have already benefitted from 3D-printed medical products through access to personalized devices that have led to significant health improvements, says the FDA.

The Dream Lab has both independent learning and collaborative workstations for students. Burke, an industry veteran in his field of expertise, calls the new Dream Lab “a major program enhancer for MCC.”

“It’s all about collaboration. It’s all about the students coming together and using their knowledge to create and finish a project,” he added. “All of them together — their collective wisdom — know more than any one single student knows.”

The building’s flexible design allows students to become “enthusiastic learners” and it helps drive the learning process toward creating and identifying problems, and then finding solutions.

MCC teachers use the facility for special project-based learning that can’t be performed in a general classroom setting.

Researchers, educators, and students are discovering the benefits and advantages of cooperative, active, and engaged learning.

And MCC, a striving, visionary institution, has made a commitment to innovation and to improving student outcomes through this type of learning, which is seen as the future of education.

“The great thing about the Dream Lab is there are so many different formats available for student learning,” said Burke.

“Our kids are now just getting in there and using the Dream Lab. They will find a hundred different ways to use all the technology and all the equipment. We want to turn the students loose in their imagination. We’re MCC has just opened its newly constructed 5,500-square-foot Dream Lab on campus. The entire facility is dedicated to innovative learning technologies, including robotics, cybersecurity, and virtual reality. The flexible learning spaces and equipment help drive collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity — skills employers embrace in the workplace. MCC President Michael Burke calls the Dream Lab a ‘major program enhancer’ for his school. MCC invested about $900,000 in the building and another $150,000 in furnishings. The Dream Lab was modeled after the Florida Institute of Technology’s Digital Scholarship Laboratory.
By Ken Datzman

In an industry that has been ravaged by a costly citrus disease that invaded the state more than 10 years ago, longtime businessman Frank Sullivan may be the last survivor of his kind in Brevard County.

Sullivan Victory Groves is still shipping fruit locally and nationwide, and mailing a catalog. It is offering special holiday gifts with free shipping. Fruit, tropical marmalade and chocolate-dipped coconut patties are some of the Sullivan Victory Groves selections.

The various fruit boxes and offerings can be purchased at www.SullivanGroves.com or call (800) 672–6431. Sweet juicy navels, fragrant tangerines and grapefruit are among the choices. For guaranteed Christmas delivery, orders must be made by Dec. 12.

Brevard County has long been known for its citrus, but in 2005 a scourge, in the form a citrus disease, descended upon the industry. The disease was first spotted decades.

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“Florida has gone from producing 250 million boxes of oranges 10 years ago to producing 46 million boxes last year. And we would have had a bit more last year, but we had a hurricane come through on top of the greening problems,” said Sullivan, adding that early estimates from forecasters call for 79 million boxes this season.

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Sullivan Victory Groves shipping a range of holiday fruit baskets; growers, packers have suffered problems, said Sullivan, adding that early estimates from forecasters call for 79 million boxes this season.

Since 2009, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has invested more than $400 million to address citrus greening, including $157 million through the “Citrus Research and Extension Program.”

Among various projects, the University of Florida developed “bactericides” to help recover fruit production in Huanglongbing-affected orchards.

In addition to the greening disease, citrus growers in Florida have faced hard freezes and multiple hurricanes through the years.

Sullivan said his family got out of the packing-house business years ago. Their fruit-packing house was near Rockledge Gardens.

“When we had the packing house,” he said, “we were doing a lot of gift packages as well as a couple hundred thousand commercial packages that were going to supermarkets and places like that. We also had a pretty good business in the Pacific Rim, mainly Japan. We exported a lot of grapefruit.”

The Indian River District — a geographical area from the Volusia County/Brevard County line down into Palm Beach County — has gone “from 48 packing houses 10 or 12 years ago to six today. You just don’t have the production anymore and a lot of people got out of that business,” said Sullivan, whose company back then employed 125 people.

He said it made sense and became “good business to consolidate with a group doing the same thing we’re doing. So today, we’re packing together with others and leveraging economies of scale. We have one person sourcing the fruit, and we have a call center. We have other people working, too. Business has been pretty good this holiday season.”

Sullivan added, “I don’t think I’m sticking my neck out saying this, but I believe we are the last ones doing this in Brevard County.”

Sullivan Victory Groves shipping a range of holiday fruit baskets; growers, packers have suffered problems, said Sullivan, adding that early estimates from forecasters call for 79 million boxes this season.

Artists create holiday gifts to be sold at nonprofit Studios of Cocoa Beach

Each month, the Studios of Cocoa Beach showcases a featured artist. For December, the featured artist is not one individual, but 19 artists who have created gifts to be sold in the Studios of Cocoa Beach’s Holiday Gift Shoppe.

Also, visitors can enter a drawing for a free gift created by the Holiday Gift Shoppe artists or by a resident artist. One winner will be selected daily now through Christmas Eve. Your purchase helps support this nonprofit gallery, which brings local art, events, and art education to the beaches. The gift selections include petite paintings, greeting cards, palm fiber fish, ornaments, jewelry, pottery, gourds and more.

The Holiday Gift Shoppe is open daily through Jan. 4 at the Studios of Cocoa Beach, 165 Minuteman Causeway in downtown Cocoa Beach.

For more information on exhibits, artists and the workshop schedule, visit www.StudiosOfCocoaBeach.org or call (321) 613–3480.
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By Curtis L. Proctor
UCF Forum columnist
University of Central Florida

Some of us have had moments in life when things align and preparation meets opportunity to launch us toward purpose. At 18 years old, for me, that moment was my first year at UCF. As a minority male and first-generation college student with a terminal degree, I have said that I truly believe that education is the last great equalizer in our country.

I grew up in Tallahassee, Florida, as the youngest of three sons, and my parents poured into me the importance of loving God, caring for family and education. As a child I didn’t notice it at the time, but they were instilling into me a set of principles that would guide me through-out life.

When I arrived at UCF, my first thought was that this campus is huge and this place is going to swallow me whole. For my peers who weren’t first-generation college students, maybe it didn’t feel so big. Perhaps they felt normal or they were able to lean on the experiences of their family to navigate in and around college. For me nothing was familiar and there was no family around to guide me through the process.

I sometimes smile that my parents dropped me off a few days before classes at a hotel near campus with a few dollars, a hug, kiss and prayer. They either had a lot of faith or were completely out of their minds! Either way, after they left, I drove to campus and stood in front of the Reflecting Pond, with Millican Hall to my right and the library to my left. I stood in that spot for a while and I let it all sink in. This was my moment.

I knew, that at least for the foreseeable future, this would be home. I knew that this was the place that I would grow into a man, where my dreams would become reality and where I would meet some of the people that would be my friends for life. It wasn’t something I hoped for. I knew it.

This was 17 years ago and since then I have graduated from UCF three times, been an instructor and administrator at private universities in Central Florida, and now, of course, I’m back to the place where it all began. I can’t help but be reflective; I did grow into a man, many of my dreams did become reality and the friends that I made here are my kids’ godparents, my travel buddies and really a part of my extended family.

It’s amazing how far this university has come since I first walked on campus in the fall of 2001, but what’s even more exciting is the passion I see others have for UCF regardless of whether they are alumni, faculty, staff, friends and/or students. I have to think that they, too, “get it.” They get that this is the launching pad for so many. They get that this is “the moment” that can change everything, level the playing field just a little for those that weren’t historically allowed to play.

Case in point, I had an opportunity to talk with someone who attended UCF many years before I did and that conversation provided me a glimpse of why they choose this place — and it sounded all too familiar: “There weren’t a lot of options back then for us, we couldn’t afford to go out of state for school and the other in-state schools just didn’t fit. But when we got word that a new school was opening on the east side of Orlando, we knew it was for us. At UCF you could do anything that your heart desired, whatever you wanted to accomplish, whatever you wanted to be, this was the place to do it and for me that was music to my ears.”

This sentiment is shared by so many other individuals that have used higher education as a catalyst to ignite their dreams and to break generational cycles of poverty. With UCF’s more than 68,000 students and one of the largest enrollments in the country, I am proud to be a part of an institution that embraces inclusion and access.

It has been the great equalizer and I am honored to be a part of this moment for so many students.

Curtis L. Proctor is the associate director for advancement for the University of Central Florida’s College of Community Innovation and Education. He can be reached at Curtis.Proctor@ucf.edu

Florida Attorney General–Elect Ashley Moody announces her Transition Advisory Committee and her executive director

Attorney General–Elect Ashley Moody has announced her Transition Advisory Committee and the executive director of her transition. The Transition Advisory Committee will focus on advising and gathering information on Moody’s top priorities as Attorney General: the opioid epidemic, elder abuse, law enforcement, human trafficking, and mental health.

Any transition inquiries can be sent to AshleyMoodyTransition@myfloridalaw.com.

John Guard, partner, Quarles & Brady LLP and a former assistant United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida, will serve as the transition executive director.

The Transition Advisory Committee members are:

- Mike Adkinson, Sheriff Walton County
- Phil Archer, State Attorney, 18th Judicial Circuit
- Lisa Carlton, Attorney, former senator and Constitution Revision Commissioner, Sarasota
- Darryl Daniels, Sheriff Clay County
- Brian Haas, State Attorney, 10th Judicial Circuit
- David Hardin, Sheriff Gadsden County
- Julie Hilton, Attorney and Hotelier, Panama City
- James Hurley, Chief of Police, Fernandina Beach
- Tom Knight, Sheriff Sarasota County
- Marty Lanahan, former bank executive and community leader, Tampa
- RD Lazear, State Attorney, 7th Judicial Circuit
- Dennis Lemma, Sheriff Seminole County
- Diamond Litty, Public Defender, 19th Judicial Circuit
- Renee Lopez-Cantera, business development, Commission on the Status of Women, Miami
- Dennis Ward, State Attorney, 16th Judicial Circuit
- Billy Woods, Sheriff Marion County

All Transition Advisory Committee members are not lobbyists and have been asked to agree to an ethics pledge that includes a one–year prohibition on lobbying the Office of the Attorney General. Transition Advisory Committee members are also advised their work product is subject to the state’s public records laws.

Florida Attorney General Bondi files amended complaint in her opioid suit

Attorney General Pam Bondi has filed an amended complaint in the Pasco County Circuit Court action against opioid manufacturers and distributors. The amended complaint provides additional details of the defendants’ collective efforts to increase the supply of opioids in Florida and nationwide.

Imax Therapeutics Inc., Walgreens Co., CVS Healthcare Corp. and CVS Pharmacy Inc. are named as additional defendants for their roles in creating the opioid crisis.

“We will continue to pursue those companies that played a role in creating the opioid crisis,” said Bondi. “Thousands of Floridians have suffered as a result of the actions of the defendants.”

In the amended complaint, the Attorney General’s Office added claims for gross negligence and civil conspiracy against the defendants.
‘Based upon my investigation as a criminal investigator with the Craven County Sheriff’s Department there is probable cause to arrest Timothy Michaud for sexual assault on R(xxxx) Michaud.’

John Whitfield
May 7, 2010

‘Loyalty is everything to me!!!’
Sheriff Robert Wayne Ivey to Dana Delaney Loyd at 5:19 p.m., April 29, 2015

‘I need to report suspected abuse.’
Dana Delaney Loyd aka Theresa Smith to Florida Abuse Hotline at 11:12 a.m., April 29, 2015

THE EIGHTEENTH CIRCUIT: AN ONGOING CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE?
BBN 3650 PAGE 5
To Be Continued …
By Lee H. Hamilton

Patriotism has been on a lot of people’s minds lately. French President Emanuel Macron recently criticized President Trump and other world leaders for their “us versus them” view of patriotism. “By putting our own interests first,” he said, “with no regard for others, we erase the very thing that a nation holds dearest, and the thing that keeps it alive: its moral values.”

Meanwhile, just ahead of the midterm elections, “The New York Times” noted that two clashing visions of patriotism were heading to the polls. President Trump and Republicans saw patriotism as “conspicuous displays of respect for the traditional expressions of America — the flag, the military, the Pledge of Allegiance.” Democrats, by contrast, saw it as protecting the norms and institutions of our democracy.

I don’t entirely buy this distinction, at least when it comes to partisan labels. I’ve known plenty of Democrats who consider it patriotic to honor the flag, the military, and the Pledge. And I’ve known a lot of Republicans who value our democratic traditions.

The vast majority of Americans consider themselves patriots — even if, as Gallup found in June, less than half of poll respondents considered themselves “extremely proud” to be American. This was the first time this has happened in almost two decades of polling on the question.

The two broad strands outlined by The Times inarguably exist. We all remember the naval hero Stephen Decatur’s famous toast in 1816. “Our country, right or wrong.” And Senator Carl Schurz’s amendment a half-century later: “My country, right or wrong — if right, to be kept right; if wrong, to be set right.” We may criticize our country, in other words, but this is not motivated by malice. It’s motivated by special affection and a belief that a great country can be made greater.

“There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America,” President Clinton argued, laying out a vision of patriotism that is not about symbols, but about building on a nation’s intangible strengths.

I buy that. I believe that patriotism means getting on with the serious business of improving our country. It means that we strive to ensure that we live up to our pledge of liberty and justice for all. In this formulation, patriotism is best expressed not in parades or speeches or exhortations or conspicuous displays, but in what we do.

Perhaps the most persuasive description I’ve heard on this score was Adlai Stevenson’s. “True patriotism is not manifested in short, frenzied bursts of emotion,” he said. “It is the tranquil, steady dedication of a lifetime.”

Stevenson hit the nail square on the head. So much of our national discussion of patriotism is about military heroes. This is important, but it’s an incomplete view of love of country. I’d argue that we encounter patriotism at all levels of American life. The teacher in the classroom, the parents who raise their children to be good citizens, the clerk who keeps town records and helps people vote, the ordinary working person who goes about her tasks with dedication and proficiency — patriotism can be found everywhere in our communities, among all kinds of people who pursue their lives with the good of the country at heart.

We have inherited a magnificent political legacy, a set of customs and traditions and, yes, moral values that give ordinary people the tools and power to improve life for themselves and succeeding generations.

Patriotism lies in our efforts to enlarge that legacy so that it applies to all citizens. It means we defend civil liberties, the right to dissent, and the equality before the law of all Americans. And it means that upholding our core values — tolerance, mutual respect, the right of everyone to be heard, the belief that in pursuing our own lives and interests we all are capable of contributing to the vibrancy of our democracy — is every bit as patriotic as placing our hand over our heart while reciting the Pledge.

Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government, a Distinguished Scholar of the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies, and a Professor of Practice, IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Judicial Nominating Commission seeks applicants for Statewide Prosecutor

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Supreme Court Judicial Nominating Commission is accepting applications to fill the position of Statewide Prosecutor which becomes vacant on Jan. 8, 2019. Applications may be obtained from https://www.floridabar.org/directories/jnc/applications.

Applicants must submit: an original application (including all attachments); an electronic copy of the original application (including all attachments) in pdf format; and an electronic redacted copy of the original application, which excludes all material that is exempt or confidential under applicable public records laws.

The original signed, unredacted paper application must be provided to JNC Chair Jason L. Unger, GrayRobinson, 301 S. Bronough St., Ste. 600, Tallahassee, FL, 32301–1724. The application deadline is Dec. 12.

Additionally, an unredacted copy of the original application (including all attachments) and a redacted copy must be emailed, in pdf format, to all Commission members by the same date and time.

Applicants who are selected by the Commission for personal interviews will be informed of their interview times by e-mail.

The members currently serving on the Supreme Court JNC are:

- Chair Jason Unger, Tallahassee, jason.unger@gray-robinson.com
- Vice Chair Nilda R. Pedrosa, Coral Gables, nildapedrosa@gmail.com
- Cynthia G. Angelos, Port St. Lucie, cynthiaangelos@gmail.com
- Fred Karlinsky, Fort Lauderdale, karlinsky@gtlaw.com
- Heather Stearns, Tallahassee, hstearns@libertydentalplan.com
- Jesse M. Panuccio, Miami, panuccio@gmail.com
- Israel U. Reyes, Coral Gables, ireyes@eyeslawfirm.com
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Abby Sutton didn’t know it yet, but her career plans were fated to veer off in a new direction the moment she signed up for a college class in Russian fairy tales.

“It was a random thing,” says Sutton, who is now an account strategist for Google.

She was a pre–med major at the University of Pittsburgh, but the fairy tales course sounded interesting enough to round out her class schedule as an elective.

One day in the class fairy tales took a backseat as someone made a presentation about College Works Painting, an internship program that provides practical business experience for college students.

Sutton was intrigued.

“I realized this could help make my medical school application different from everyone else’s,” she says. “I would have a better chance of getting into med school.”

She signed on and soon the undergraduate student was learning to run her own business, and managing a crew painting houses in Pittsburgh neighborhoods. She learned to sell her services to homeowners, plan a budget, estimate expenses, and hire and manage employees. It was such a life–changing experience that Sutton switched her major to business administration, happily giving up her plans to become a doctor.

“What we try to do is give students a truly entrepreneurial experience,” says Matt Stewart, co–CEO of College Works Painting. “For employers, the most impressive recent college graduates are those who are both ambitious and have a proven track record through hands–on leadership experiences.”

Based on her College Works Painting experience, Sutton offers a few career tips for college students and for young adults just getting started in the workforce:

Be open to alternatives. College students often are just 18 years old when they choose a major and begin mapping out their careers. But those decisions are based on limited life experiences, so students should never close the door to other possibilities, Sutton says.

Make the most of every minute. Time management is critical for any job and something many college students and young professionals struggle with. Sutton says she learned to make good use of what others might consider downtime. She even scheduled business phone calls during her 10–minute class changes at college. “You learn not to waste any seconds in a day,” Sutton says.

Don’t underestimate yourself. Sutton was 20 when College Works handed her the responsibility of being a district manager overseeing other interns, which meant she would mentor people her own age — or in some cases several years older. That was daunting — but not for long.

“I was more worried going into it, but I came to realize their age didn’t matter,” she says. “A lot of times they had more respect for me because of it. I would be talking to a 26–year–old guy who would be blown away that this was a 20–year–old girl doing this. They wanted to figure out what they could be doing differently so they could be in that spot.”

Sutton’s medical school plans and those Russian fairy tales are just memories now, but the College Works Painting experience still influences her every day.

“It was the best decision I’ve made and it changed the course of my life,” Sutton says. “I realized how much I loved sales and business. If I hadn’t done that, I would be miserable reading science books right now.”

College Works Painting (www.collegeworks.com), founded in 1993, provides real–world business experience for thousands of college students each year. The award–winning internship program also offers high–quality house–painting services for homeowners. The company operates in more than 35 states, hires more than 2,000 students each year, and paints more than 10,000 homes annually.

U.S. Department of Labor honors local firm Kegman for its work with military veterans

Melbourne–based Kegman Inc. was honored by the U.S. Department of Labor with the 2018 Hire Vets Medallion Program Demonstration Award–Platinum Medallion, at a ceremony held in Washington, D.C. at the Department of Labor’s Great Hall.

This award recognizes the company leadership in recruiting, employing, and retaining America’s veterans. “All of our company executives retired from military service and brought with them a special commitment to helping veterans’ transition from military service to civilian life,” said Susie Glasgow, president and CEO. “At Kegman, we pride ourselves in supporting veterans in our company and throughout the Space Coast.”

In 2017, President Trump signed into law the Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing Veterans (HIRE) American Military Veterans Act, creating the HIRE Vets Medallion Program. In issuing a Final Rule last year establishing criteria and processes for the program, the department announced that 2018 would be a demonstration of the program prior to full implementation in 2019.

“America’s veterans are proven leaders who bring skills, dedication, and determination to our nation’s workforce,” said U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. “To earn a HIRE Vets Medallion Award, job creators must demonstrate a solid commitment to providing veterans with the opportunity to build a meaningful career. This program recognizes a standard for excellence in veterans hiring, and helps veterans identify employers who are committed to advancing veterans in the workplace.”

Kegman is a provider of scientific, engineering, and technical support services. It is veteran–owned and woman–owned small business with more than 40 employees and annual revenue of $5.2 million. More information about Kegman Inc. can be found at www.KegmanINC.com.
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Reggie Brown, who grew up in 4-H, to be honored by UF’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

By Brad Buck
braduck@ufl.edu
UF/IFAS Communications

GAINESVILLE — Raised on a family farm in Orange Heights, Reggie Brown recalls taking his chickens to the Gainesville town square for a 4-H contest when he was about 9 or 10.

“I won the blue ribbon. I was really proud,” Brown said.

As a child, Brown immersed himself in such Florida 4-H projects. For another project, he helped set up a roadside market to sell fruits and vegetables from the family farm. His brother and sister-in-law now operate the roadside market, in business for more than 50 years.

Brown eventually worked for the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension for about 15 years. He also led or worked with grower groups. Additionally, Brown has served on numerous committees to help farmers and to assist UF/IFAS in advancing its teaching, research and Extension goals. He was inducted into the Florida 4-H Hall of Fame in 2002.

For his dedicated service to Florida agriculture and commitment to the land-grant mission, UF/IFAS recently recognized Brown as the 2018 Friend of UF/IFAS.

“I was surprised and quite shocked,” Brown said of the honor, which was given to him in October at the UF/IFAS Dinner of Distinction. “I was very honored to be included. It’s one of the most significant honors I’ve received.

“I have great respect for what UF/IFAS does,” he said. “I have many close friends who have worked within that system and around that system. Having been singled out was a significant honor to me, personally.”

In addition to growing up in Florida 4-H — which is part of UF/IFAS Extension — Brown earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Between getting his college degrees, Brown spent two years in the military and later married his wife, Lanita.

Brown began his career teaching horticulture in North Carolina. He returned to Florida as a UF/IFAS multi-county Extension agent for vegetable crops and horticulture, and later served as a vegetable crops agent and director of UF/IFAS Extension Collier County.

In 1989, Brown joined the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, handling marketing and membership. Ten years later, he was hired as executive vice president of the Florida Tomato Exchange and manager of the Florida Tomato Committee, retiring in January 2018.

Brown worked tirelessly throughout the Tomato Suspension Agreement and in the establishment of the NAFTA-based Dispute Resolution Corporation. In 2008, the United Fresh Produce Association recognized Brown for his work toward improved food safety in fresh produce nationwide. He continues to serve on the USDA/U.S. Trade Representative Agricultural Advisory Committee for Horticultural Crops.

Brown has served UF/IFAS in many roles — founding member and past president of the UF/IFAS CALS Alumni and Friends Board, from which he received the 2001 CALS Award of Distinction; member and past chairman of both the UF/IFAS SHARE Council and UF’s Leadership and Education Foundation; and advisory board member and inaugural class alumnus of the Wedgeworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources.

“Philosophically, I believe in paying it back or paying it forward,” Brown said of his continued involvement in UF/IFAS. “Whether it’s teaching, Extension or research, the overall contribution of UF/IFAS motivates me to do anything.”

“UF/IFAS provides the opportunity to advance people, whether it’s through 4-H or leadership,” Brown said. “It’s also the cornerstone to advance food and fiber. The system is the envy of the world.”

FSU recognizes Fay, a member of Public Service Commission

TALLAHASSEE — Andrew Giles Fay, one of the youngest Commissioners ever to serve on the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC), was named a Florida State University 2018 Notable Nole on Nov. 16.

The award honors individuals for “their significant contributions to their professions, communities, or alma maters.”

“I appreciate the recognition and thank the FSU Alumni Association for this honor,” said Fay. “FSU provided the education, opportunities, and experience that led to my early success in law and public policy. I’m grateful and hope to continue making a difference for Florida as a Florida Public Service Commissioner.”

Fay received his bachelor’s degree in 2007 and his law degree in 2010 from FSU. Before his PSC appointment, Fay served as special counsel and director of legislative affairs, cabinet affairs, and public policy for the Office of the Attorney General.

In 2016, Fay was named “Government Attorney of the Year” by the Florida Government Bar Association for his work assisting victims of the attack on the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando. He has also been repeatedly recognized by “Florida Trend” magazine as a “Legal Elite Government Lawyer.”
Syracuse University’s College of Law Library receives collection of books from Ronald and Joanne Goldfarb

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Syracuse University’s College of Law Library is now home to the Goldfarb Family Collection, an assortment of more than 1,500 books generously donated by Syracuse University alumni Ronald L. Goldfarb (1954, 1956) and Joanne J. Goldfarb (1897) on behalf of their family.

The Goldfarb Family Collection spans Goldfarb’s broad and rich career and touches on a diverse array of subjects from law and politics to literature and art. The Goldfarb Family Collection is located directly off the first-floor reading room of the library. Volumes are displayed and ready for circulation.

“Choosing to donate the collection to my alma mater was an easy decision as I knew they would be used by future generations of College of Law lawyers in their understanding of the law and of society in general,” said Ronald Goldfarb. “I am honored to have them prominently displayed where students, faculty, staff, and scholars can easily use them.”

Ronald Goldfarb’s legal career started in the military, where he was a U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General, and then the government, where he was a member of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy’s Organized Crime and racketeering Section of the Department of Justice. He was later Kennedy’s speechwriter.

After working on the Kennedy campaign, Goldfarb became a successful trial attorney who focused on corrections reform, farmworkers rights, and other public interest areas. He was Counsel to a House Judiciary Committee investigation, and served on several national studies such as the Kerner Commission. Later, he became a highly regarded literary agent through his firm, Goldfarb & Associates. Through the years, he has written and contributed to 16 books and written about 500 articles and reviews.

“Ronald’s exciting, varied career and interests are reflected in the breathtaking collection he’s graciously given to the College of Law,” says Dean Craig M. Boise. “We are fortunate to have this fascinating collection of material that our students, with their diverse interests and career aspirations, can draw on for inspiration and knowledge.”

Some of the unique items in the collection include The Enemy Within, which as written by Robert F. Kennedy and inscribed by him. Other volumes in the collection also are inscribed from their authors to Goldfarb. Law library staff have spent several months sorting, researching and cataloging the books to get them prepared for display and use. While the majority of the volumes will stay at the College of Law Library, some will be located in other collections across Syracuse University.

Joanne Jacob Goldfarb graduated from the architecture school with honors and has practiced in Virginia for many years, having won design awards from the American Institute of Architects. The Goldfarb’s daughter, Jody Goldfarb, graduated from the Liberal Arts College and has master’s degrees from Columbia University and New York University in social work. Their son, Maximillian Goldfarb, graduated from Syracuse University’s College of Visual and Performing Arts with a degree in fine arts, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a master of science in visual studies. He now teaches at the University of Buffalo School of Art.

“A donation of this magnitude and importance does not happen very often, and its impact on the student experience will reverberate for years to come,” said Jan Fleckenstein, director of the Law Library and associate teaching professor. “On behalf of the College of Law library staff and community, I want to thank the Goldfarbs for their unselfish gift.”


Florida Tech professor Otero updates ‘Information Technology Control and Audit’

Angel R. Otero, assistant professor, chairman of Florida Tech’s accounting and finance online program and a 20-year industry veteran, has written an updated edition of the influential textbook, “Information Technology Control and Audit.” Now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Google Books and elsewhere, the fifth edition of the book has been significantly revised to include a comprehensive overview of the information technology (IT) environment comprising revolutionaryizing technologies, legislation, audit process, governance, strategy and outsourcing.

The new edition includes up-to-date audit concepts, examples, tools and techniques as well as sample documentation to design and perform actual IT audit work. It provides cases featuring practical IT audit scenarios which require students to work individually or in teams, engage in classroom discussions, perform analysis, and come up with decision-making strategies. The fifth edition is also tailored to auditing topics and other technological skill sets and concepts typically tested on both Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) and Certified Public Accountant exams.

According to Otero, the book “recognizes the continuous need for organizations and auditors to effectively manage and examine IT systems in order to meet business goals and objectives.”

Constant attacks on information, along with enactments of recent laws and regulations related to the protection of information, “have turned IT audit into a critical, dynamic, and challenging profession with a future that brings growth into new and exciting areas,” he added.

“Information Technology Control and Audit” was published in August by CRC Press and Auerbach Publications (Taylor & Francis Group). It is currently used by several U.S. and international universities.

Otero has more than 20 years of industry experience in the areas of public accounting/auditing, information systems auditing, internal control audits and information technology consulting.

Before joining Florida Tech, Otero worked at Deloitte & Touche, LLP for 10 plus years and attained the position of senior manager overseeing offices in Florida and Puerto Rico.

Local chapter of ABWA to host holiday luncheon

The Space Coast Women’s Express Network of the American Business Women’s Association will host a holiday luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 11, at the Eau Gallie Yacht Club in Indian Harbour Beach. The event is titled “Lunch with the Old Bags.” You can bring friends, family or colleagues to this luncheon and “leave with some holiday gifts. There will be many new and very gently used purses, as well as gift baskets up for auction. The luncheon fee is $35. To register, send an email to SCWExpress@gmail.com.

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The holidays are a time to be spent with the whole family. Today, pets are considered members of the family. So don’t forget your pets when planning and celebrating. Pets love their owners.

And with the merry season upon us, be sure to keep your pet away from unhealthy treats, toxic plants, and dangerous decorations, veterinarians advise.

Nothing can spoil good cheer like an emergency trip to the veterinary clinic, knowing that it could have been avoided if precautions were taken around the home.

During the holiday season, make sure you keep your pets away from the dining table and unattended plates of food. Keep “people food” away from pets, especially chocolates.

Chocolate is an essential part of the holidays, but it is “toxic” to dog and cats.

“Avoid feeding your pets any kind of people food. Chocolate, raisins, macadamia nuts, onions, garlic, and other human foods, for example, can cause indigestion and much more. They are toxic to pets,” said Dr. Curt Barchard, the managing veterinarian at the newly rebranded Animal Specialty and Emergency Center of Brevard on West Eau Gallie Boulevard in Melbourne.

He says “one of the most common things we treat pets for in the emergency room every holiday season is chocolate indigestion.”

Although the toxicity can vary based on the type of the chocolate, the size of the pet and the amount they eat, “consider all chocolate off limits for pets.”

The 24–hour Animal Specialty and Emergency Center of Brevard, formerly known as the Animal Emergency and Critical Care Center of Brevard, is part of National Veterinary Associates Inc. (NVA), the largest independent owner–operator group of veterinarians in the United States.

“The new name better emphasizes our focus on the many specialty services we offer, such as surgery, neurology, and rehabilitation, for example,” said Sharon Love, practice manager at the Animal Specialty and Emergency Center of Brevard, where a growing team of board–certified veterinarians care for pets.

“We are trying to increase awareness of our expertise with referring veterinarians. The new name indicates we are a specialty practice — in addition to being a 24–hour emergency clinic — and that was the main reason for rebranding.”

Dr. Barchard and Love both said it has been a smooth transition to NVA and the resources of that company are already having an impact in several areas of the practice.

“We will be getting a new CT scanner in December, which is a nice upgrade,” said Love. A computed tomography scanner provides three–dimensional diagnostic images of animal anatomy with clear spatial resolution between tissues. A CT scanner enables veterinarians to provide convenient, effective care for pets.

“We have also started a mentoring program for emergency room doctors,” she said. “The program is through NVA.”

Love added, “The mentors will work under an ER doctor for four to six months at the Animal Specialty and Emergency Center of Brevard. There is a shortage of ER doctors in the veterinarian field. NVA has its own training program as it looks to bolster the ER veterinarian pipeline.”

During the holidays, the outdoor area of the Animal Specialty and Emergency Center of Brevard, located at 2281 W. Eau Gallie Blvd., is decorated brightly with lights.

All the oak trees on the property sparkle in what has become an annual ritual for the practice. The holiday lights not only cover the trees, but are also strung around the portico of the facility. “It’s a beautiful site to see, and we do it every holiday season,” said Love.

With the holidays here, make sure you know how to get to your 24/7 emergency veterinary clinic before there’s an actual emergency. Talk with your veterinarian in advance to find out where you would need to take your pet, and plan your travel route so you’re not trying to find your way when stressed. Always keep those numbers posted in an easy–to–find location in case of an emergency.

In addition to avoiding chocolate, Dr. Barchard said...
Zonta Club’s Historic Brevard Ornaments are popular Christmas items — sold at Meehan’s and online; ‘Sams House’ newest release; Chocolate Festival set

By Ken Datzman

The Zonta Club of Melbourne, an organization of community-minded women, has made holiday shopping easy for area consumers for the last 20 years.

In 1999, the local club launched its first Historic Brevard Ornament — the “Flatiron Building.”

The item sold briskly and one new ornament depicting a landmark or a well-known establishment in the region has followed each year, creating a holiday collector’s series for a lot of people.

“We started with the Flatiron Building ornament in 1999 and have continuously produced a new Christmas ornament each season,” said Donna Melcher, president of the Zonta Club of Melbourne.

“We’re now in our 20th year and have seen interest in the collection really grow. There are people who collect the new ornament each year. It can be hung on a Christmas tree or placed on a stand. It’s a popular item at this time of year.”

“It seems that some people purchase one ornament and then start collecting the entire series,” said Meg Vona, the vice president and secretary for the Zonta Club of Melbourne. “That’s how I am. If I start collecting something in a set, I will eventually have the whole set.”

Vona is the operations support manager for the Hampton Inn and Courtyard by Marriott in Cocoa Beach.

“We can reorder the original ornaments in the series. So the entire set is available for purchase,” added Melcher.

The Zonta Club of Melbourne was chartered 35 years ago and is a member of Zonta International. Zonta International’s objectives include working to improve the health, educational, and professional status of women.

The Flatiron Building in downtown Melbourne was inspired by the triangular-shaped building of the same name in New York City. The local Flatiron Building opened its doors in 1925 and housed businesses such as The Fan Tan Shop, Brotchie Jeweler, and Miles Barber Shop.

The Zonta Club of Melbourne has released its 20th Historic Brevard Ornament — ‘Sams House at Pine Island’ on Merritt Island. The holiday collector series has grown in popularity through the years. The portfolio of ornaments showcases pieces of Brevard County’s unique history. From left, the Zonta Club members are: Cathy Greene, Donna Melcher, Deb Buza, and Meg Vona.

As a community service to our organization, Meehan’s has assisted us in selling the ornaments since the very beginning,” said Melcher. “We’re thankful for their help.”

Sales from the ornaments go toward Zonta Club of Melbourne’s scholarship fund. Proceeds benefit the Young Women in Public Affairs Scholarship, the Jane M. Klausman Business Scholarship, the Zonta–Meehan Scholarship, the Zonta–Yellow Dog Café Culinary Scholarship, and other community programs that are designed to improve the lives of women.

“The Historical Brevard Ornament series is a great way for the Zonta Club to do a fundraiser while at the same time raise awareness of historical buildings and sites in Brevard County,” said Deb Buza, a longtime member of the Zonta Club of Melbourne.

“I am quite surprised how many people purchase the ornaments for their kids. It’s a short history lesson for them. The ornaments preserve Brevard’s history in a way and show what it was like here many years ago. It’s a great thing, and we’re hoping this year’s addition to the collection is just as popular as those in past years,” added Buza, who is with the Brevard Regional Hyperbaric Center.

The Zonta Club of Melbourne’s newest ornament release is “Sams House at Pine Island,” a conservation area on North Tropical Trail on Merritt Island. The 2018 ornament showcases “the oldest standing structure in Brevard County,” according to Smithsonian.com.

Built in 1875 in the Eau Gallie area of Melbourne, the cabin was “dismantled, rafted upriver, and reassembled at the present Merritt Island location in 1878.”

The Sams family descendants occupied the land until 1994. Sams House at Pine Island houses articles and interpretative displays depicting the history of the site, including “Pleistocene Megafauna, fossils of mammals who roamed the area up to 11,000 years ago.”

Also, on display are Native American artifacts dating to 4,000 years ago, as well as 19th century exhibits from the Pioneer families of that area.

“We are really excited about this year’s release — Sams House at Pine Island. I find all of the ornaments in the series very interesting, and have gone back and collected some of the other ones,” said Cathy Greene, a board member—at-large of the Zonta Club of Melbourne and a Realtor at Ellingson Properties in Rockledge.

She added, “Certain people are interested in certain ornaments in the collection, like Dragon Point (2001) and Del’s Freez (2014), for example. The ornaments are nostalgic and it reminds them of where they grew up, or a place they frequently visited as a child or as an adult.”
Comcast expands military hiring goal to 21,000 veterans by 2021; has VetNet employee resource group

PHILADELPHIA — In recognition of the start of Veterans and Military Families Month, Comcast NBCUniversal announced it will hire an additional 11,000 veterans, military spouses, and National Guard and Reserve members, bringing its total to 21,000 military hires by the end of 2021.

Comcast’s previous commitment, made in 2015, was to hire 10,000 military community members by the end of 2017, which it exceeded.

“Comcast NBCUniversal has greatly benefitted since we began our focus on hiring members of the military community in 2010, and we are pleased with our progress,” said Dave Watson, president and CEO of Comcast Cable.

“We now have thousands of military employees across the country who have translated their valuable experiences in the armed forces to our workforce. We are so thankful that these individuals chose to serve our country, and we are proud to call them teammates as they now help to serve our customers and make a meaningful difference in our company.”

Comcast NBCUniversal has an expansive program to support veterans who have recently transitioned into the workforce, including peer-to-peer mentorship with other veteran employees, digital and in-person professional development opportunities designed specifically for veteran and military spouse employees, and opportunities to stay engaged with the military through volunteering with local veteran-serving organizations. The company also has an 8,400-member–strong VetNet employee resource group dedicated to supporting the military workforce.

“I’m incredibly proud that the entire Comcast NBCUniversal family embraced our commitment, showing our support for the military community through not only our hiring efforts, but also through support of veteran-serving nonprofit organizations and work with veteran-owned businesses,” said retired Brig. Gen. Carol Eggert, senior vice president of Military and Veteran Affairs at Comcast NBCUniversal.

In August, the company announced that its Internet Essentials program expanded eligibility to low-income veterans, nearly one million of whom live within the Comcast’s service area. The expansion will be furthered through new nationwide partnerships with the Elizabeth Dole Foundation and the PsychArmor Institute, two of America’s leading veteran-serving, non-profit organizations that will help support the creation of veteran-specific digital skills training videos and supplementary materials, which will be made available online and delivered in classrooms at Comcast-sponsored computer labs in 10 markets. The goal is to connect more low-income veterans to Internet resources, including: online support networks, health benefits, access to colleges and scholarship programs, digital and technical skills training.

Florida Power & Light celebrates installations at KSC; part of SolarNow program

CAPE CANAVERAL — Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is home to five new, distinctive solar trees. A combined vision to advance clean energy has brought life to a new kind of solar that harnesses the sun and provides visitors of community parks, zoos and museums with shade and covered parking across the state, thanks to the Florida Power & Light (FPL) SolarNow program and its 44,000 participants.

“We are always looking for ways to incorporate new technologies into our guest experience,” said Therrin Protze, chief operating officer at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. “When FPL approached us to be part of their SolarNow program, we jumped at the opportunity to provide a site for clean energy generation and a learning opportunity for our guests.”

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex joins 14 other FPL SolarNow locations on the Space Coast, including Port Canaveral, that are powering the grid with clean, emissions-free energy. At the Visitor Complex, five solar trees are comprised of 60 solar panels and add an educational and interactive component to solar that inspires visitors to learn more about renewable energy. Their design allows solar to be easily integrated into urban landscapes, providing people an opportunity to see and learn about solar energy up close.

“We are excited that Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex has joined our SolarNow family,” said Matt Valle, vice president of development at FPL. “As we continue to advance solar in Florida, the visitor complex is the perfect location to educate people of all ages about the benefits of solar energy.”

FPL is in the midst of one of the largest solar expansions in the United States.

In addition to the community solar installations, FPL has 14 universal solar power plants including two located in Brevard County — the FPL Space Coast Next Generation Solar Energy Center and FPL Barefoot Bay Solar Energy Center.

‘Weird Al’ Yankovic to perform at the King Center in Melbourne

The King Center in Melbourne has added “Weird Al” Yankovic to its concert schedule as part of his “Strings Attached Tour.”

His performance is set for 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 8. Few would have guessed that “Weird Al” Yankovic — who as a shy, accordion-playing teenager got his start sending in homemade tapes to the Dr. Demento Radio Show — would go on to become a pop culture icon and the biggest-selling comedy recording artist of all time, with classic song and music video parodies such as “Eat It,” “Like a Surgeon,” and “Smells Like Nirvana.”

Now in his fourth decade as America’s foremost song parodist, he has been the recipient of numerous awards, including four Grammys and a string of Gold and Platinum albums.

Tickets for his concert may be purchased by visiting KingCenter.com or by calling (321) 242–2219.
Crowley Maritime Corp. merges its liner services unit into integrated logistics organization led by Steve Collar

JACKSONVILLE — To better serve customers with integrated supply chain solutions, Crowley Maritime Corp. announced that it will complete the merger of its liner services group into Crowley Logistics on Jan. 1, under the leadership of Steve Collar, senior vice president and general manager.

The Crowley Logistics business unit provides a singular source for customers to receive end-to-end services, including ocean, land and air transportation; commercial transportation management; supply chain and distribution services; freight forwarding and warehousing; and cargo risk and customs compliance.

“This restructuring is essential for us to compete more effectively in our markets while providing clarity to our customers and business partners that we are a fully integrated logistics organization with a focus on our customers’ supply chains,” said Tom Crowley, company chairman and CEO. “We add a lot more value when we help customers increase the velocity of their supply chains and reduce their landed costs.”

“We have been moving in this direction for a while, and with the pending retirement of John Hourihan at the end of this year, this is an opportunity to restructure,” said Crowley. Hourihan is senior vice president and general manager, Puerto Rico services, and has been a major contributor to Crowley’s success for the past 31 years. Most recently he has overseen the delivery and deployment of the first of two new LNG powered ConRo ships and the transformation of the Crowley’s San Juan, Puerto Rico terminal, raising the company’s U.S. mainland–Puerto Rico supply chain to world-class standards.

Collar will have responsibility for all aspects of the Logistics organization — now a $1 billion–a–year enterprise — including commercial, operations, offshore and financial.

“The integration of the liner services and logistics organizations into a singular, highly focused resource for our customers will allow us to take a holistic approach to maximizing the efficiency of their supply chains,” said Collar. “I’m looking forward to working with our highly experienced and dedicated team to bring innovative solutions to our customers.”

Integrating liner services into logistics was planned as part of a corporate restructuring announced earlier this year that yielded four business units: Crowley Fuels, Crowley Solutions, Crowley Shipping and Crowley Logistics. This structure better aligns operations and increases the company’s ability to bring solutions to customers by leveraging its strong culture and high-performance capabilities.

Collar is a longtime Crowley veteran. He joined Crowley in 1977 and has worked in a wide variety of roles and businesses within the company.

Additional information about Crowley, its subsidiaries and business units may be found at www.crowley.com.

Lagoon–restoration technology hackathon event brings innovative solutions to the table, over 100 participants

Recently, more than 100 tech enthusiasts went to work to identify and develop technology solutions to restore health to the Indian River Lagoon (IRL).

Hosted by high-tech incubator Groundswell Startups, the 36-hour marathon event, “Hack the IRL,” brought together 16 diverse groups who worked collaboratively to compete for prizes worth over $4,400.

Supported by The Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast, Hack the IRL is a segment in a series of events which aim to promote and enhance innovation on the Space Coast. The event was also sponsored by the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program.

“Hack the IRL is a representation of the innovation and forward-thinking of our community,” said Lynda Weatherman, president and CEO of the EDC. “Congratulations to the winning team, and all the teams who took the time to support such an important issue.”

“This is why Groundswell exists, to foster innovation and bring talent together to make things happen. It only takes 36 hours to build something impactful,” said Micah Widen, CEO of Groundswell Startups.

The grand-prize winner, Team SensiDock, blended technology with community involvement. Developed by a team comprised of students from the Florida Institute of Technology, SensiDock provides a way for residents who live on the lagoon to provide data to researchers that are seeking solutions to the lagoon’s issues.

By using homeowners’ docks, which would be equipped with a SensiDock device, important data can be crowd-sourced from up and down the lagoon. A fully outfitted SensiDock will be capable of measuring temperature, pH, salinity and dissolved oxygen. This data will be available on the user’s dashboard, as well as uploaded to a cloud-based repository that researchers and the public could access.

For more information on this event, visit www.hacktheirl.com or email info@hacktheirl.com.
Ways chief executive officers can change their behaviors to lead their organizations more efficiently, effectively

By Miguel Casellas–Gil
mcasellas–gil@newsandexperts.com

In business, the adage “it starts at the top” can prompt an uncomfortable question: “Can the boss finish what he or she started?”

Many CEOs and entrepreneurs wrestle with this challenge, with both short– and long–term implications. Meanwhile, a disconnect develops between the CEO’s initial big–picture vision for the company and its seemingly sporadic execution toward those goals.

The Global Leadership Forecast 2018 highlights issues of greatest concern to CEOs; among them is a lack of alignment among senior leaders. The last problem any CEO wants is an inability to get everyone on the same page, aligned and executing their strategy.

“I’ve witnessed CEOs struggle with this question: ‘Why is it so difficult to execute what I already know I should be doing?’” says Mark E. Green, a speaker, coach to CEOs and author of “Activators: A CEO’s Guide to Clearer Thinking and Getting Things Done” (www.Activators.biz). “They and their teams generally know what to do and how to get it done. But they avoid the decisions and actions they know could advance their success.

“All roads lead back to obstacles within your mind. New behaviors leading to execution require new ways of thinking.”

Green lists five ways for CEOs to change behaviors that obstruct them from leading their company efficiently and effectively:

1. “When, then.” Green points to a study on influencing behavior by German researchers, who found that formulating an “if/when, then” plan — stating a specific time to accomplish a task — provided a cue to provoke the desired response. “I’ve worked with many CEOs who were not classically trained in accounting and finance and are overwhelmed by numbers,” Green says. “Such fears drove them to avoid financial information and reports. Making an if/when, then statement compels them to change the behavior.”

   • Relate and repeat. To change, one needs to believe that change is possible. “Cultivate relationships with those who can help you see that the change you desire is attainable,” Green says. “Then repeat by testing out the new behavior or thought pattern and seeking feedback.”

   • Know when to say no. As the company leader, being a giver is important — but not to the point where sacrifice damages your own performance. “Credible research shows that high–performing givers knew when to say no,” Green says. “Track your yes–to–no ratio. It’s the only way to protect your time, energy, and focus as a leader.”

   • Forget perfectionism. Green says perfectionism is a waste of time and energy for a CEO. He references the 80/20 Rule — also known as the Pareto principle, first articulated by Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto — which holds that roughly 80 percent of the effects come from 20 percent of the causes. “The 80/20 Rule also applies to perfectionism — the majority of the value in any endeavor comes from a small amount of the overall effort,” Green says. “Perfectionism frequently limits our progress and fuels our fears. If you can keep the 80/20 Rule in mind, you can reduce your fears and accomplish more.”

   • Hold yourself accountable. One way CEOs and entrepreneurs can judge their performance is by asking themselves self–assessment questions daily. “You need accountability strategies that require you to evaluate your progress and focus on the importance of your goals,” Green says.

   “Often, the best way to modify a behavior is just to jump in,” Green says. “Seek out examples of the behaviors you want to employ, embrace some discomfort, and emulate them until they begin to feel natural.”

Associated Builders and Contractors elects its chairman, executive committee

LAS VEGAS — The Associated Builders and Contractors Board of Directors elected Tony Rader, telecommunications vice president for National Roofing Partners, to serve as the 2019 national chairman.

The announcement was made here during the association’s annual Leadership Institute. Ray Zamora, president of AnchorBuilt Inc., was elected chairman–elect, and Steve Klessig, vice president of architecture and engineering at Keller Inc., was elected secretary.

“Strong leadership is indispensable to ABC’s mission to ethically and profitably in our communities across the United States,” said Michael Bellaman, ABC president and chief executive officer. “I look forward to working closely with Tony, Ray, Steve and our 2019 Executive Committee to continue to strengthen our efforts to promote and advocate on behalf of the merit shop construction industry.”

Members of ABC’s 2019 Executive Committee who will take office Jan. 1, joining Rader, Zamora and Klessig, are:

   • Kenneth Hedlund, principal, Somerset CPAs, P.C., Indianapolis, treasurer

   • George Nash Jr., director of preconstruction, Branch & Associates, Herndon, Va., immediate past chairman

   • Tim Keating, president, R.C. Stevens Construction Co., Winter Garden, Fla., Southeast region vice chairman

   • Paul Lemley, executive vice president, BC Construction Group LLC, Brighton, Mich., Mid–America region vice chairman

   • Milton Graugnard, executive vice president, Cajun Industries LLC, Baton Rouge, La., South Central region vice chairman

   • Diane Koester–Byron, founder and owner, J.E.–Pacific Inc., Escondido, Calif., Pacific region vice chairwoman

   • Buddy Henley, president, Henley Construction Co. Inc., Gaithersburg, Md., Mid–Atlantic region vice chairman

   • Stephanie Schmidt, president, Poole Anderson Construction, State College, Penn., Northeast region vice chairwoman

   • Chris Garvey, president and CEO, ABC Chesapeake Shores Chapter, chapter presidents’ liaison

   • Michael Bellaman, ABC National, president and CEO

The ABC Mountain West region chair has yet has yet to be appointed.

Associated Builders and Contractors is a national construction industry trade association established in 1950 that represents more than 21,000 members.

IEEE Melbourne Section will host its 2018 Awards Banquet, Holiday Party

The IEEE Melbourne Section will host its 2018 Awards Banquet and Holiday Party from 7–10 p.m. on Dec. 15, at the POW/MIA Park Clubhouse, 5995 U.S. Highway 1 in Melbourne. The event will be catered by Green Turtle Market. The registration deadline is Dec. 12. You may register yourself and up to two guests. Contact Ed Kirchner at Ed.Kirchner@IEEE.org, or Mary Flavin at Mary.Flavin@IEEE.org for more information.
International leadership management expert Cooke was seminar speaker at Marine Bank & Trust event

VERO BEACH — At the invitation of Marine Bank’s President and CEO Bill Penney and his leadership team, area business leaders attended an informative breakfast seminar presented by international leadership management expert James Cooke.

“Europe in Crisis and the Effects on the USA” highlighted current European economic developments and their possible effects to the U.S. market and economy. The informative breakfast was held at the Quail Valley Club and concluded with a lively question-and-answer segment.

“At Marine Bank, we feel that being a true community bank is a distinction that must be earned,” said Bill Penney. “We strive to find new ways to be a community resource every day. In addition to being a source of capital for businesses wanting to grow and consumers seeking a mortgage, we want to provide helpful insights as well.”

This was the third such event hosted by Marine Bank and its mortgage lending team. In 2017, Tom Essaye of “The Sevens Report” presented “2018 Interest Rates and the Luxury Home Market” and in 2016, “The Luxury Home Market and the Trump Administration’s Impact on the Residential Market” was delivered by Gary B. Smith of Fox Business News.

Cooke received his master’s degree in English literature at Oxford University and earned his MBA at the London Business School. He joined PA Management Consultants, then Europe’s leading consultancy, becoming one of 11 worldwide managing consultants for the company.

He has advised three British Government administrations, the EU Directory XIII, and worked with a wide range of commercial, professional and not-for-profit clients.

Marine Bank, chartered in 1997, has $268 million in assets with four full-service branches in Vero Beach, Sebastian and Melbourne. As the only community bank headquartered in Vero Beach, the “bank’s growth ties into the national trend of customer’s choosing local.”

Marine Bank has earned the coveted 5-Star Superior rating from Bauer Financial, the nation’s premier bank rating firm. In 2018, Marine Bank & Trust was named among the “Top Extraordinary Banks” in the United States by The Institute for Extraordinary Banking and received the Institute’s “Banky” award for its commitment to strong community banking. The bank is an active community supporter providing over $200,000 to more than 125 area nonprofit organizations in the market over the last five years.

For more details on this financial institution, visit www.marinebankandtrust.com.

Palm Bay Mayor’s Ball gets a new date – Jan. 26; funds to support the Disaster Relief Committee

The Palm Bay Mayor’s Ball is making some changes. Because of “unforeseen circumstances,” the Palm Bay Mayor’s Ball will have a new beneficiary and a new date. The event has been rescheduled to Saturday, Jan. 26, and will now be supporting the Palm Bay Disaster Relief Committee. “While some details have changed, you can still look forward to a night of drinks, dining and entertainment.”

The City of Palm Bay’s Disaster Relief Committee was established, Oct. 3, 2017, following the disastrous effects of Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Harvey. The Disaster Relief Committee was born out of the simple idea that “we, as individuals, can help to make a huge difference in the lives of those who have experienced a major disaster when we come together and combine our efforts.”

The Committee is intended to serve as a conduit between those in need of assistance following a disaster and the generous members of our community who wish to help.

As a supporter of the Mayor’s Ball, you will play an important role in helping the efforts of Palm Bay’s Disaster Relief Committee. “By purchasing tickets or becoming an event sponsor, you will be doing your part to help bring relief and support to those impacted by natural and man-made disasters.”

For more information and to purchase tickets for the event, call (321) 409-7187 or visit www.palmbaymayorsball.org.
LEAD Brevard set to honor Keith Wisten with the 2019 Rodney S. Ketcham Leadership Award Feb. 8

ROCKLEDGE — LEAD Brevard’s 2019 Leadership Awards and 15th Anniversary of its “4–Under–40 Recognition” event is set for 6 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 8, at the Space Coast Convention Center, 301 Tucker Lane in Cocoa.

At the event, LEAD Brevard will honor the 2019 Rodney S. Ketcham Leadership Icon Award recipient Keith Wisten, executive director of the Brevard Zoo.

Previous Ketcham Leadership Icon Award recipients include: Dr. Maxwell King, 2009; Roger Dobson, 2010; Bunny Finney, 2011; Barbara Moore, 2012; Bernie Simpkins, 2013; Robin Fisher, 2014; Joseph A. Dula, 2015; Dr. Anthony Cutaneous, 2016; Dr. George Mikitarian, 2017; and David Brock, 2018.

LEAD Brevard has announced the 2019 “Top 12” 4–Under–40 finalists who will be featured during the Leadership Awards event. The final 4–Under–40 recipients will be revealed that evening.

The Top 12 finalists are: Joshua Adams, Rock Paper Simple; Mike Artelli, Space Coast Association of Realtors and RE/MAX Solutions; Bryan Bobbitt, Keep Brevard Beautiful; Valeta Cameron, Brevard County Legal Aid Inc.; Trevor Howard, Neighbor Up Brevard; Dr. Kelli Hunsucker, Florida Institute of Technology; Elizabeth “Lizi” Huy, Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast; C.J. Johnson, Break Point Law, LLC; Andrew Pickett, Andrew Pickett Law, PLLC; Cordell Rolle, Liberty IT Solutions; Sarah Stoeckel, Eastern Florida State College/City of Titusville; and Dr. Ashish Udeshi, Florida Pain Institute.

The “Top 12” finalists are selected by a group of independent community leaders based on a number of factors, including their demonstrated excellence, creativity, and community service.

Early bird tickets for individual seats and reserved tables for LEAD Brevard’s signature fundraiser are available for purchase at www.LEADBrevard.org or by calling (321) 632–8222.

Limited sponsorship opportunities are still available for this “prestigious event. Contact LEAD Brevard to reserve your company’s position as a sponsor.

LEAD Brevard was founded in 1985. It manages several leadership programs and oversees community initiatives that help to achieve its mission of “working together to strengthen our community by inspiring people to lead.”

King Center in Melbourne to host ‘Little Feat’ in concert; tickets now on sale

The King Center in Melbourne will present the band “Little Feat” at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 18. Little Feat is a seven–member “powerhouse” that carries on the group’s tradition in both the recording and touring arenas. “Time has loved these musical heroes for more than three decades now,” as have legions of fans and countless fellow musicians, many of whom they’ve played with over the years.

Feat’s fabled collaborators have included Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson, Brian Wilson, Bonnie Raitt, Robert Plant, John Lee Hooker, Johnny Lang, and Leftover Salmon.

Tickets may be purchased by visiting kingcenter.com or by calling (321) 242–2219.
Tinsel and other holiday decorations can also be tempting for pets to eat. Consuming them can cause intestinal blockage, sometimes requiring surgery for the pet. Breakable ornaments or decorations can cause injuries, too.

“If you have a pet, you may want to consider leaving tinsel off the tree,” said Dr. Barchard. “Pets chew it. It gets wrapped around their tongue and can trail down into the intestinal track and cut into the intestinal track, particularly with cats. So it can be potentially fatal.”

He also said “don’t keep a pet in a room with lit candles or a Christmas tree,” adding that electric lights can “cause burns and serious damage” when a curious pet chews the cord.

Keep wires, batteries, and glass or plastic ornaments out of paws’ reach. A wire can deliver a potentially lethal electrical shock, and a punctured battery can cause burns to the mouth and esophagus, while shards of breakable ornaments can damage your pet’s mouth and digestive tract.

Candles are attractive to pets as well. Never leave a pet alone in an area with a lit candle; it could result in a fire.

Flowers and festive plants can result in an emergency veterinary visit if your pet gets hold of them. Amaryllis, mistletoe, balsam, pine, cedar, and holly are among the common holiday plants that can be dangerous and even poisonous to pets who decide to eat them. Dr. Barchard said “poinsettias can be troublesome as well.”

Holly, when ingested, can cause pets to suffer nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Mistletoe can cause gastrointestinal upset and cardiovascular problems.

And many varieties of lilies can cause kidney failure in cats if ingested. So it’s best to opt for just-as-jolly artificial plants made from silk or plastic, or choose a pet-safe bouquet, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Potpourris should also be kept out of “reach of inquisitive pets.” Liquid potpourris post risks because they contain “essential oils and cationic detergents” that can severely damage your pet’s mouth, eyes, and skin. Solid potpourris could cause problems if eaten.

For holiday travel with your pet, veterinarians recommend a number of safeguards.

If traveling in a vehicle, pets should be safely restrained and should never be left alone in the car in any weather. Proper restraint means using a secure harness or a carrier, placed in a location clear of airbags. Never transport your pet in the bed of a truck. If you’re traveling by air and considering bringing your pet with you, talk to your veterinarian first.

Air travel can put some pets at risk, especially short-nosed dogs, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Your veterinarian is the best person to advise you regarding your own pet’s ability to travel.

“Travel can be stressful for pets, just like it can be for humans,” said Dr. Barchard, “especially when the pet is traveling to some place it has never been before. Sometimes it might be easier to take your pet to a boarding kennel or have a pet-sitter.”

“We wish everyone a joyful holiday season. And we’re here 24 hours a day providing emergency care,” said Love.
American Specialty Institute survey says more firms planning to give corporate gifts this holiday season

TREVOSE, Pa. — The annual corporate gift–giving report released by the Advertising Specialty Institute (ASI) found more companies are planning to give gifts this holiday season, with 42 percent rewarding employees, up from 40 percent in 2017.

“The economy is booming in many sectors and the job market is very tight, so smart companies hoping to stand out from their competition are thanking hardworking employees and loyal customers through money or cool gifts,” said Nathaniel Kucsma, ASI’s executive director of research and corporate marketing.

Nearly 80 percent of companies surveyed nationwide said they expect to spend about the same as in 2017 in total on holiday business gift–giving. On average, employees giving gifts to customers/prospects will spend an average of $48 on each, up from $46 last year.

Respondents to ASI’s 2018 Corporate Gift Spending Survey said the main reasons they give gifts to clients/prospects is to express appreciation and help develop relationships. Other reasons were to generate company goodwill, increase company awareness, obtain a referral, generate a lead and obtain a sale.

When asked to describe in a word how they feel upon receiving a holiday gift from a company they do business with, the majority said “appreciated.”

Of the companies planning to thank employees, 75 percent expect to include all workers.

However, the survey also showed that while more companies plan to engage in employee gift–giving, they’ll spend less per employee, averaging $65, down $14 from last year.

The most popular gifts include gift cards, apparel, food/beverages, drinkware and desk accessories.

The ASI serves a network of 23,500 suppliers, distributors and decorators in the $23.6 billion promotional products industry.

‘An Evening of Hope XI’ set Feb. 16 at Buescher residence on Merritt Island

“An Evening of Hope XI,” the Scott Center for Autism Treatment’s annual fundraiser, is set to “captivate” the Space Coast on Feb. 16, 2019, from 6:30–9:30 p.m.

The 11th annual celebration, featuring the theme “Sunset on the Seine,” will take place at the Merritt Island home of Keith and Lila Buescher.

Sponsorships are available for the gala, which helps support the Florida Tech–based center’s scholarship and subsidy efforts. There are six sponsorship levels, from the $500 Felicite (Happiness) to the $15,000 Esperance (Hope), which is the event’s title sponsor.

Each level includes at least two and as many as 16 tickets to attend An Evening of Hope XI.

Introducing a new fundraising element, An Evening of Hope XI will feature “mystery boxes.” Each mystery box will contain a unique gift and can be purchased at the event for $100.

For more information on this event, visit https://give.fit.edu/evening–of–hope–sponsorship or send questions to the Scott Center’s Courtenay Porter at cporter@fit.edu.
The collection includes The Strawberry Mansion (now called The Mansion), Melbourne Beach Pier, The 1900 Building, Old Brevard County Courthouse in Titusville, Historic Cocoa Village Playhouse, Ashley's Restaurant in Rockledge, the Gleason home of Eau Gallie, the Big Orange Welcome Stand, and the Melbourne Ice Plant Building.

"A lot of people in the area remember the Ice Plant Building," said Melcher. "It has a lot of history.

The building is on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was started in December 1926 by Florida Power and Light Co. as a 150-ton ice plant. The plant was to be built in units, with the first unit having a 50-ton capacity," according to "The Historical Marker Database.

However, the Melbourne Ice Plant "never went beyond the 50-ton capacity, probably because other ice plants were built close to the South Florida vegetable fields."

Before the Melbourne Ice Plant was constructed, one in Fort Pierce shipped ice to Melbourne on the Florida East Coast Railway.

The Zonta Club of Melbourne has a committee that "brainstorms and comes up with ideas for each year's ornament selection," said Melcher. "We always make sure everyone is in agreement and that the ornament will look good and have appeal in the community among consumers.

The ornaments are manufactured in Marblehead, Mass., in the shop of Hestia Creations. That company has been creating handmade and custom-made commemorative gifts and home-decor accessories since 1986.

Most of Hestia's productions are custom designs, created for "gift-sellers who know the value of being able to offer items that can't be found anywhere else," according to the company. "They do a fabulous job for us," said Melcher. "We send photos to Hestia and they create a prototype and send it to use for approval. They make the ornaments of a plaster-type material. The ornaments are all hand painted. They're beautiful."

In addition to raising money through the sale of ornaments, the Zonta Club of Melbourne puts on an annual "Chocolate Festival" that raises awareness of the organization's fight against "Human Trafficking and Violence Against Women."

The 2019 event will be hosted from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 3, at the Melbourne Auditorium. General admission is $25 in advance and $30 at the door the day of the festival. There is also a $40 "With-a-Kick" adult admission ticket which includes a "chocolate martini" or wine. Tickets to the event are sold at www.ZontaSpaceCoast.org.

To inquire about being a sponsor for the 2019 Chocolate Festival, visit the website or send an email message to ZontaMelbourneSpaceCoast.org.

The Chocolate Festival, a family event, was founded 14 years ago by Christine Tomasetti, a longtime Zonta Club of Melbourne member and office holder. It is now the club's flagship fundraiser, attracting hundreds of people annually. The event features "ethically sourced" chocolate, cookies, and brownies. The products entered in the contest must be made in a Brevard County-licensed kitchen.

Attendees of the event will be treated to samples of chocolate confections, cakes, and desserts. Each guest will vote to select the competitor to be honored as "Brevard's Best Chocolate Fix of 2019."

"The annual Chocolate Festival is our big fundraiser each year," said Melcher. "We enjoy putting this event on for the community, as we have been working hard to raise awareness of human trafficking."

Human trafficking involves the commercial exchange and exploitation of people, including forced prostitution and pornography, involuntary labor, servitude, and debt bondage, according to the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

Currently, there are roughly 20.9 million people enslaved throughout the world. Human trafficking is a growing problem worldwide, recently rising to the second most common criminal activity behind the illegal drug trade, says the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking. Florida has been identified as a "hub" for this type of activity.

"I had no idea how prevalent it is in Florida," said Greene, who is a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity of Brevard and the Salvation Army's Sue M. Pridmore Center for Women and Children. "The plight of Human trafficking really hit me. Many people do not want to address this issue. They see it as a 'back-burner' issue. But these things are happening in communities and something needs to be done about them. The Zonta Club of Melbourne really sparked my interest and it got me involved in being a club member. This is a great organization. I’m proud to be part of it. We strive to empower women through service and advocacy," added Greene.

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Important safety information from Florida City Gas

Every day, underground pipelines safely transport natural gas to homes and businesses throughout the area. Florida City Gas is responsible for the security and maintenance of pipelines in our service territory.

Natural gas is colorless and odorless so we add an odorant with a distinctive, rotten-egg scent for easy detection. It is non-toxic, lighter than air and displaces oxygen. In the event of a leak, it may lead to asphyxiation and has a risk of ignition near a spark.

Call before you dig
Before digging around your property, state law requires you call 811 to have your utility lines professionally marked — for free! You must wait the required amount of time before you begin your project. Pipeline markers indicate the presence of pipe and right-of-way. While they're not present in all areas, it's always best to call 811.

If right-of-way is adjacent to your property, it is your responsibility to ensure no new landscaping or physical structure interferes with access to the pipeline, and with our ability to keep it safe through routine monitoring and maintenance. Information about transmission pipelines operating in your community is available through the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) and is available online at npms.phmsa.dot.gov.

Water heater safety
The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission urges all users to lower their water heaters to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Carbon monoxide
Incomplete combustion of any fuel — produces carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is poisonous and has no odor, taste or color. Carbon monoxide gas is colorless, odorous and so deadly that in one year a certified contractor.

Appliance safety
According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

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- Be sure all furnace controls and emergency shut-offs are in proper working condition.
- Keep trash and other combustible material away from your air heating and water heating systems.

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If you smell gas, act fast
Although natural gas pipeline incidents are uncommon, these tips will help you identify a possible leak and know what to do.

LOOK for blowing dirt, discolored vegetation or continued bubbling of standing water.

LISTEN near a natural gas appliance or line, there may be a hissing or roaring sound when natural gas is leaking.

SMEI, the distinctive, rotten egg odor associated with natural gas. Natural gas is colorless and odorless so we add an odorant with this scent for easy detection. You should take action any time you detect even a small amount of this odor in the air.

AVOID touching anything that may cause a spark. This includes starting a car engine or using cell phones, lighters, matches, cigarettes, light switches or lighters.

Natural gas is non-toxic, lighter than air and displaces oxygen. Keep people away from the leak area due to natural gas can burn near a spark, possibly causing a fire or explosion. In severe cases, if not used properly, it can also lead to asphyxiation.

LEAVE the area IMMEDIATELY if you detect a natural gas leak. Don't try to identify the source or stop the leak. CALL Florida City Gas at 888.352.5235 or 911 once you are safely away from the possible leak site. Stay away from the area until a Florida City Gas representative or emergency personnel indicate it is safe to return.

Note: Always leave if you suspect a leak. Do not rely on sense of smell or aware that gas is around. Some people may not be able to detect the odorant because they have a diminished sense of smell, allergy-like fatigue, or because the odor is being masked by other odors in the area. Certain conditions may cause the odorant to diminish so that it is not detectable.

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trying to encourage students to be responsible for their own education, to take ownership of their education. So when they go off to a university, they are better prepared to thrive and succeed.

There is seating for 24 students at the high-top tables in the Dream Lab. Around the perimeter of the facility “is where all the project-based learning takes place, in the individual dedicated rooms, like the cybersecurity room and the video room, for instance,” he said.

Studies show that the quality of physical learning environments, as well as access to resources, go hand-in-hand with academic performance.

MCC’s Dream Lab, an investment of $900,000 for construction of the facility and another $150,000 for the furnishings, provides flexible and engaging spaces featuring areas for independent experiments and collaboration.

The inspiration for the Dream Lab came from focus groups who wanted the school to provide the opportunity for students to achieve their full potential,” said Burke, who has led MCC to new heights since being named to his position in July 2010.

Two years ago, Burke was selected as one of two school presidents in the nation to be recognized with top honors from the National Catholic Education Association. There are more than 1,200 Catholic schools in America.

He was honored during the NCEA’s 2016 Convention & Expo held in San Diego, Calif., the largest annual private education association meeting in the country.

The Dream Lab showcases these rooms for concentrated student engagement:

● Virtual Reality. “The students can experience virtual reality on a preset Google tool. The goal, eventually, will be for students to code and write their own programs and experience them through virtual reality,” said Burke.

● Makerspace/Robotics. “This space is set up to be a robotics and drone lab. The kids can learn to build robotics and learn how to operate a drone. It’s totally a hands-on learning experience for the students.” Robotics is a multidisciplinary field of study. The traditional areas of study — mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and computer science — have broadened into biological systems and cognitive science, according to the Robotics Industry Association.

● Cybersecurity/Coding. Among young people, this is one of the hottest career fields. The results of a new study, “Immersive Technologies and the Future of Cybersecurity,” which surveyed people ages 16 to 24 in the United States, revealed that nearly three-quarters of respondents (74 percent) say the presence of virtual reality tools increase their likelihood of pursuing cybersecurity careers. Organizations are struggling to fill a shortage in cybersecurity professionals. “I think there will be a lot of interest in this particular part of the Dream Lab,” said Burke.

● Video Conference. This space can be used for all kinds of “brainstorming” initiatives. It can also be used by the students who are applying for admission to colleges out of the country. Most of the top schools now require an in-person on-campus interview, or interview via webcam. “This is going to be a big part of the college-enrollment process going forward. Recently, an MCC student who applied for admission to Wake Forest University was interviewed in the Dream Lab’s Video Conference Room. And more MCC students will be doing the same as part of the admission process,” he said.

● Video Broadcast Studio. Here, students can record themselves as well as record groups. “We also do morning announcements in the Video Broadcast Studio. The students can learn to do all types of things working in this space and using the available technology.”

● Collaborative Design Space. “This is going to be great for students as they collaborate. Four students, for example, can work on one document at the same time. They can collaboratively build that one document.”

The capabilities of the Dream Lab will be in a constant state of upgrading as new technologies develop and come to the market.

“As technologies change, we will replace them to keep up-to-date. And the technology cycle moves at a pretty good pace. So in just three years, something could be obsolete in the Dream Lab. We will roll out the old technology and bring in the new technology. We designed the building to accommodate change,” said Burke.

Dream Lab. “This is the eighth project we have finished with Steelcase and we have one more remaining, which will be a multipurpose facility. So we will have done nine projects — both new construction and renovation — with CGC in four years,” said Burke.

American Business Interiors in downtown Melbourne is also a longtime project partner with MCC. Most of the furniture used in the Dream Lab features the Steelcase brand.

Steelcase has been a leader in designing furniture for the education sector and conducts a lot of research on the most effective learning environments.

“Students today are preparing for futures they can’t predict and jobs that have yet to be invented. At the same time, employers complain graduates lack the critical skills for real-world success — collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity. It’s these gaps and recent research that has led many leading educators and institutions to implement active learning pedagogies. These new teaching and learning strategies involve engaging students with hands-on group work, synthesis, and engagement,” he said.

Three years ago, Steelcase Education launched an “Active Learning Center” grant program. The grant invests in “visionary educators and educational institutions” that promote the advancement of active learning. Steelcase Education “seeks to identify leading educators and educational institutions looking to implement and expand active learning initiatives by leveraging their learning spaces.”

Steelcase says it has invested $3 million in classrooms in the first three years of the grant program.

The Dream Lab is modeled after Florida Tech’s Digital Scholarship Laboratory. The Digital Scholarship Laboratory is a facility within the Evans Library that allows researchers to access, integrate, and share current and future information across all disciplines using digital tools and resources, such as Data Curation, Digitalization, Special Analysis, and Visualization, for example.

MCC has long benefited from a consultative and collaborative relationship with Florida Institute of Technology, whose campus is just across the street. Through this opportunity, MCC students “will gain access to a first-rate faculty and state-of-the-art research and laboratories,” said Burke.

Students participating in the MCC Emerging Scholars program will take classes during the school day at the Florida Tech campus in conjunction with their traditional high school classes.

The entrance requirements for rising juniors and seniors include admission to Florida Tech, a minimum of a “B” in related high school course work, required SAT or ACT scores, and a counselor recommendation.

Credits taken at Florida Tech may be used to fulfill MCC graduation requirements.

During the spring of their sophomore or junior year, interested students will work directly with MCC Student Services to begin the application process, Burke said. Once accepted, the students will be required to attend MCC/Florida Tech Orientation.

In addition to credit hours, MCC students may be eligible to earn an MCC Honors Diploma and enter college as a sophomore. They will also be guaranteed admission to a Florida Tech degree program at least six semester credit hours have been completed with a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or higher.

Some of the Florida Tech courses MCC students have taken include: Calculus, Economics, Financial Accounting, Civilization, Introduction to Computer Applications, Managerial Accounting, and Psychology.

“It really is nice to have a cooperative neighbor like Florida Tech. This is a relationship we greatly value,” said Burke.

He continued, “They’ve worked with us on our Dream Lab and now we’re offering this value-added Emerging Scholars program for MCC juniors and seniors. Around our campus, it’s already being referred to as ‘MCC plus one.’ Students graduate from MCC and then three years later they graduate from college. We’re doing everything we can to prepare our students for college and beyond.”
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