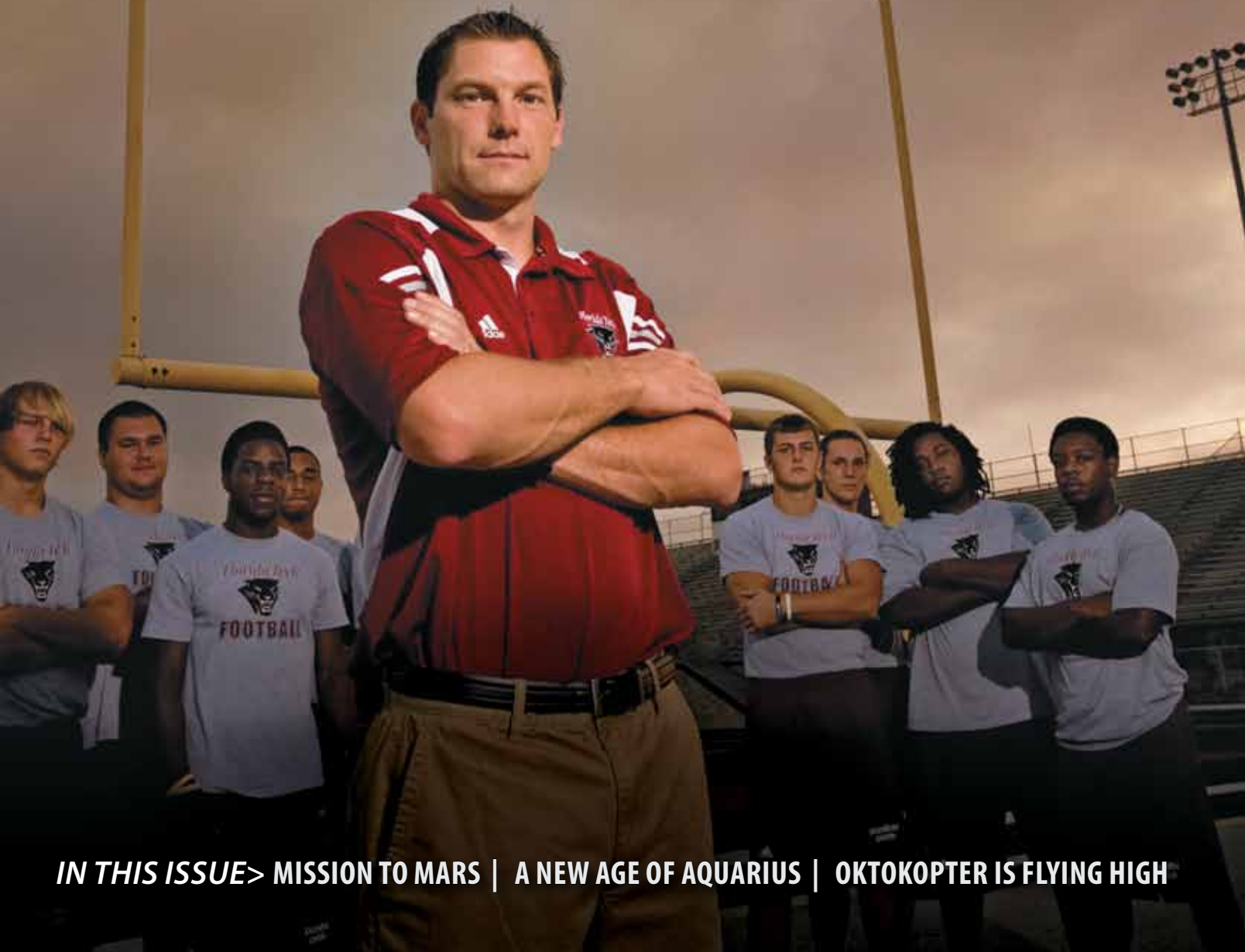


Florida Tech TODAY

A magazine for Alumni and Friends of Florida Institute of Technology

FALL 2011

FOOTBALL IS HERE!



IN THIS ISSUE > MISSION TO MARS | A NEW AGE OF AQUARIUS | OKTOKOPTER IS FLYING HIGH

President's Perspective

Dear Florida Tech Alumni and Friends,

Your university is again receiving outstanding accolades of which we can all be proud. Just released this fall and for the second straight year, *U.S. News & World Report* lists us as a Tier One Best National University. Among the 1,500 institutions assessed by the publication (leaving many unranked), Florida Tech was among the top four national universities in Florida (UM, UF and FSU were also listed).



Additionally, we are one of only nine public and private schools in Florida chosen by the *Fiske Guide to Colleges*. Fiske listed us among just 330 nationwide in their top-rated guide. Fiske also places Florida Tech in the “inexpensive” category for private schools.

Princeton Review once again named Florida Tech a “Best in Southeast” college—their rating is based on what students at their schools report through a student survey. *Forbes* recognized Florida Tech as among America’s top undergraduate institutions in a ranking of just 650 schools.

Our alumni are financially successful, too. *Payscale.com’s 2011–2012 College Salary Report* ranks Florida Tech graduates’ mid-career median salaries in first place among Florida’s universities. Nationally, Florida Tech climbed 17 spots compared to 2010–11. Student success remains our primary focus and it’s great to see that our grads continue to rank among the top earners in the nation, confirming the value of their degrees.

Looks like it’s going to be another great year for Florida Tech! Thanks for all you do to support your university.

Sincerely yours,

A.J. Catanese, Ph.D., FAICP
President

Accolades with altitude—Florida Tech was spotlighted in the August 2011 issue of Delta Sky, the airline’s in-flight magazine.



Florida Tech TODAY

<http://today.fit.edu>

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Don't leave copies of your alumni magazine behind. Send your new address to Florida Tech, Office of Development Services, 150 W. University Blvd., Melbourne, FL 32901-6975, advs@fit.edu



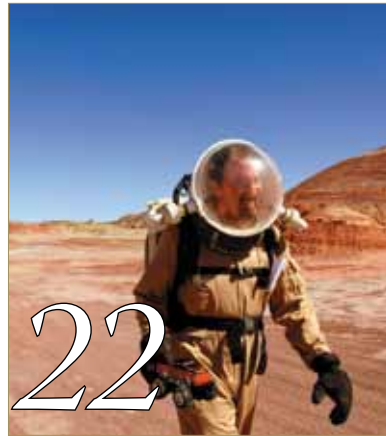
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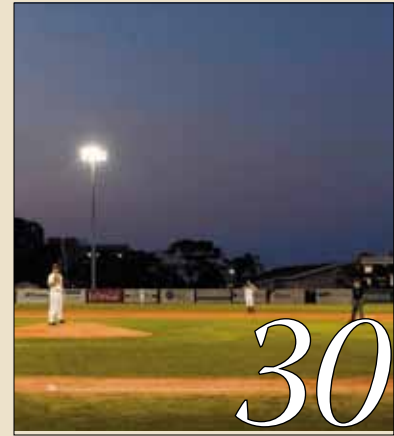
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Cover: Panther Football Is Here!



Feature: Ever dream of becoming an astronaut? John Deaton did ...



Alumni Profile: Illuminating the baseball field for evening games.

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- 20 Getting Ready for Some Football?**
Florida Tech is diligently preparing to rush the field for competitive play in 2013.

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On the cover: This summer Steve Englehart joined Florida Tech as the first head coach of Panther Football. Photo by Dominic Agostini.

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etc.

Hang 10 for Autism

Professional surfer Clay Marzo is donating 1.5% of net proceeds from his Quiksilver boardshorts line debuting in spring 2012 to the Scott Center for Autism Treatment. The Scott Center logo will appear on the hang tags of the boardshorts as well as Marzo's signature tees available at retail stores worldwide.



Crossword Craze

New York Times crossword puzzle clue for 61 Across: Sunshine State School

Answer: Florida Tech!

ACROSS

1 Show anger
5 Round before the final
9 Washroom tub
14 Ph.D. awardee
15 Gave the boot
16 Blessing-induced sound
17 Flank
18 Glimet garish
19 Crookpot comedienne
20 Relax during a drill
23 Temp's work unit
24 Polite affirmation
25 Brazilian dance
30 Big Apple awards
30 Llan hair, usually, after combing
33 Post-O.R. stop
36 Craps natural
38 Impoverished
38 Sgt. Friday's org.
41 Calendar units hidden in 20- and 61-Across and 11- and 35-Down
43 Worker's pay
44 Like a brainiac
46 Film remakes
48 The "IT" in Floyd G. Silly
49 Trojan War hero
61 Popular snack chip

DOWN

1 Hard to please
2 Bring together
3 Greedy monarch
4 "Nevertheless..."
5 On the payroll
6 Lighted sign in a theater
7 Hand-waver's cry
8 They may be bright
9 One in the infold
10 Follow direction?
11 Show address
12 Political caucus state
13 Like a yenta
21 "That's mine!"

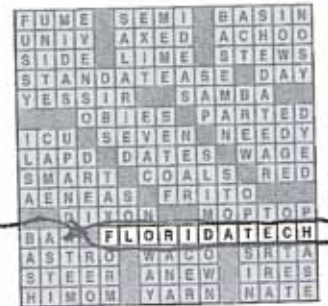
ACROSS

53 Surveyor Jeremiah, for whom a famous line is partly named
55 Beasts, endearingly
61 Sunshine State school
64 Minor league baseball player
66 Baylor's city
67 Sp. girl
68 Rodeo animal
69 From the top
70 Ticks off
71 TV shout-out from the team bench
72 It's sold in skins
73 "Groat" Mid-II detective

DOWN

22 Deplete, as energy
26 Cold one
28 FEMA recommendation, briefly
29 Play by a different rules
31 Upper hand
32 Like bulk fabrics
33 Ingrid's role in "Casablanca"
34 Showed up
35 "Time to rise, sleepyhead!"
37 Within earshot
40 Zwei follower
42 Lose the spent tire
45 Schedule B or C, as
47 Ancient Greek colonnade
50 La brecedar
52 Choices to gamble
54 "Impossible!"
56 _____
57 Largin combo
58 Terrible twos, e.g.
59 Bad-mouth
60 Sparkling wine city
62 _____ deficit (lost money)
63 Pasty prettier
65 Vintage auto

The New York Times



The Final Countdown

Rachel Power '98, math education, hosted NASA's Digital Learning Network coverage of the final space shuttle countdown live. The historic webcast captured the final launch of Atlantis and featured special guests including experts on spacesuits and Sesame Street's Elmo.

New Deans Lead Two Colleges

The university ended the spring semester with major personnel transitions. **S. Annie Becker**, professor and associate dean for research in the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business, became dean of that college and **Fredric Ham**, vice president for research and interim dean, College of Engineering, was named dean of that college.

Robert Niebuhr, former dean of the College of Business, was named senior vice president for financial affairs and chief financial officer.

“We are lucky to have such a talented pool of administrators and educators at Florida Tech,” President **Anthony J. Catanese** said. “These individuals are well-suited to serve our campus in these expanded capacities.”



S. Annie Becker



Fredric Ham



Robert Niebuhr

\$1 Million Gift Creates FOOSANER ART MUSEUM

This summer, Florida Tech merged with the Brevard Art Museum—further expanding its creative and artistic offerings. Thanks to a \$1 million gift from the Foosaner Foundation in July, the museum was renamed the FOOSANER ART MUSEUM.

“The Foosaner family has a long history of philanthropy in Brevard,” said President **Anthony J. Catanese**. “This generous gift will help perpetuate the important efforts of education and cultural enrichment started by the museum in 1978, and now continued by Florida Tech.”

Samuel J. Foosaner, a noted philanthropist, started the Foosaner Foundation in 1980. He died in 1988 but his foundation continued under the direction of his

daughter Dione L. (Dee) Negrone-Hendrick. During his life, Samuel J. Foosaner served on the Florida Tech board of trustees. Previous gifts from the Foosaner Foundation have supported the main campus, including a pedestrian bridge in his memory and a gazebo in the Botanical Garden.



Photo of Dione L. (Dee) Negrone-Hendrick by Craig Rubidoux, courtesy of Florida Today

Cool Pool Panther

A life-size bronze Florida Panther is an elegant addition to the new Panther Aquatic Center where it now stands. The panther is on permanent loan from Trustee John Slack who has been a Florida Tech trustee since the late '80s. He is chairman of the board of competitive intelligence company ARDAK Corp.



“We are very fortunate to have this beautiful and appropriate original piece of art on our campus,” said Ken Stackpoole, senior vice president and chief development officer.

University's Fifth Year on Honor Roll

Florida Tech was named to the national President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for the fifth consecutive year. The recognition lauds the university for exemplary community efforts.

“Civic engagement is not simply taught; it is a lived experience,” said President **Anthony J. Catanese**. “Our students, faculty and staff engage very seriously in their commitment to helping others.”

According to **Cassandra McGuire Carnley**, assistant dean for student activities, through December 2010, 1,993 individual student, staff and faculty volunteers donated more than 83,000 service hours. These volunteers assisted 51 nonprofit organizations through service and fundraising, collecting over \$161,000.

RUTH FUNK CENTER FOR TEXTILE ARTS
at Florida Institute of Technology

INTERWOVEN

Contemporary Textile Art by Alejandrina Cué, Andrea Donnelly and Jennifer Glass

September 10 – December 17, 2011



INTERWOVEN features the work of three contemporary artists—Alejandrina Cué, Andrea Donnelly and Jennifer Glass—whose visual imagery exploits the inherent quality of fabric materials to portray both the fragility and depth of the human psyche.

RELATED EVENTS: Fall 2011 Friends of Textiles Lecture Series, \$10 FREE for Friends of Textiles members and full-time Florida Tech students

October 6—**Andrea Donnelly**
Reception 5:15 p.m. | Lecture 6 p.m. | Gleason Performing Arts Center

December 16—**Alejandrina Cué**
Reception 5:15 p.m. | Gallery Talk 6 p.m. | Ruth Funk Center for Textile Arts

Artwork: From left: A. Cué, *Restauradora de Sueños*, textile collage with oil paint, 2011; A. Donnelly, *Holding In (detail)*, Hand-woven cotton, pigment-painted warp, dyed weft, stitching, 2009; J. Glass, *Untitled*, Cyanotype on canvas, 2007.

Tues. – Fri. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sat. Noon – 4 p.m.

<http://textiles.fit.edu>

Award-winning Scientist Takes Chair in Engineering

Noted scientist and metallurgist **Martin E. Glicksman** joined Florida Tech in the fall as the Allen S. Henry Chair and university professor of engineering. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering—Florida Tech’s first NAE member—and was recently elected chair of the Materials Engineering Section for 2011–2012. Glicksman is a recognized expert on the solidification of metals and semiconductors, atomic diffusion processes, the energetics and kinetics of material interfaces, and micro-structure evolution.



Martin E. Glicksman

“Dr. Glicksman will be a mentor and inspiration to both students and faculty, augmenting our offerings in the College of Engineering,” said **T. Dwayne McCay**, executive vice president and chief operating officer.

Glicksman was appointed by the National Academy of Sciences as a postdoctoral associate in metal physics at the Naval Research Laboratory, where he eventually became head of the Transformations and Kinetics Branch and Associate Superintendent, Solid-State Division. He joined the faculty of Rensselaer as chair of the materials science and engineering department, and Horton Professor of Engineering. In 2006, he was named a Florida 21st Century Scholar at the University of Florida.

Glicksman’s experiments aboard Space Shuttle *Columbia* led to his receiving NASA’s Award for Technical Excellence and the 1998 National Space Processing Medal. In 2010 he was awarded the Sir Charles Frank Prize of the International Organization for Crystal Growth for his fundamental contributions to dendritic crystal growth.

State Poet Laureate Retires from Florida Tech

Edmund Skellings, Florida’s Poet Laureate and professor of humanities in the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts, retired from the university in May. Skellings taught at Florida Tech since early 2008.



Edmund Skellings

“We have been honored to have Dr. Skellings at our campus,” said Florida Tech President **Anthony J. Catanese**. “His work exemplifies our Florida Tech slogan, ‘High Tech with a Human Touch.’”

The Skellings archives are now accessible online at <http://research.fit.edu/edmundskellings>.

Hey Alumni! Wanna Run in Sunny Melbourne?

Get a 20% discount, just for being an alum!

Choose from the 5k or 8k on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012 or the Marathon, 1/2 marathon or 1/2 marathon relay on Sunday, Feb. 5.

FREE! Kids Run on Saturday morning right after the 5k and 8k runs.

Florida Institute of Technology
The Scott Center
for Autism Treatment

To register or get more details, log on to www.themelbournemarathon.com

Discount Code: FLTech20off

Proceeds from the Melbourne Marathon will benefit the Scott Center for Autism Treatment.

MK-630-811

Honors Go to Student Design Showcase Winners

Congratulations go to winners of the Northrop Grumman Corp. Champion Award and Florida Institute of Technology President's Cup Award, which were presented this spring at the annual Northrop Grumman Engineering and Science Student Design Showcase.

Northrop Grumman Champion Award in Engineering:

Gannet, an unmanned aerial and submersible system, a project combining aerospace, electrical and ocean engineering. Team members are **Joshua Higginson, Kaleb Smith, Jimmy Brennan, Mark Panaguiton, Kevin Clark, Robert Decarreau, Yan C. Rodriguez, Sam Maling and Andrew Verderame**. Faculty advisers are **Barry Grossman, Paavo Sepri and Stephen Wood**.



Northrop Grumman judges surround student Judson Locke, holding the plaque for "Detecting Shielded Nuclear Contraband Using Muon Tomography." From left, John Blakely, David Keldsen, Scott Hoffman and Wayne Stratford.

Northrop Grumman Champion Award in Science: Detecting Shielded Nuclear Contraband Using Muon Tomography, a physics and space sciences project. Team members are **Judson Locke, William Bittner, Leonard Grasso and Kondo Gnanvo**. Faculty adviser is **Marcus Hohlmann**.

Florida Tech President's Cup Award in Engineering: SIREN Wave Energy, a green energy project. Team members are **Nick Avery, Jim Susini, Joseph Hammond, Kandice Lord, Matt Wills and Charles Anodjo**. Faculty advisers are **Stephen Wood and Youngsik Choi**.



Northrop Grumman judges from left are John Blakely, David Keldsen, Scott Hoffman and Wayne Stratford with "Gannet" team members Mark Panaguiton (holding plaque), Kevin Clark, Sam Maling, Yan C. Rodriguez, Joshua Higginson, Jimmy Brennan and Kaleb Smith.

Florida Tech President's Cup Award in Science: How Sensitive Is Your MAPK, a biomath project. Team members are **Dawn McDonald, Cristina Mazzone and Christine Chater**. Faculty advisers are **David Carroll and Semen Koksol**.

Florida Tech Shines in East Coast Surfing Championships

Justin Ellingham, a junior majoring in ocean engineering and co-captain of the surfing team, won the men's overall in the college division of the National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA) East Coast Championships. Ellingham also received the DNA Energy's Performer of the Day award for his high scores on the third day of the competition. His co-captain **Sebastian Moreno**, a graduate student, placed third and **Frankie Brown**, a senior majoring in marine biology, placed fifth in the women's overall. The Panthers team placed fourth overall.

The NSSA, a nonprofit organization, is the highest profile amateur competitive surfing association in the United States. The NSSA National Interscholastic Championships were held on June 16–18 in Dana Point, Calif. The Florida Tech team finished seventh overall and remains the #1 Florida Collegiate Surfing Team. Team member Moreno ranked fifth in the College Mens category.

The team seeks corporate sponsors for next year. For more information, send email to **Alex Ferencz** at aferencz@my.fit.edu or **Sebastian Moreno** at smoreno@fit.edu.





Edward W. Scott Jr. and President Anthony J. Catanese

Global Philanthropist Scott Earns Honorary Doctorate

Local business executive and philanthropist **Edward W. Scott Jr.** received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from President **Anthony J. Catanese** at the university's spring commencement.

"Mr. Scott is a pillar of the community who has enriched our university and our world with his time and resources. And, as an internationally recognized activist for humanitarian causes, he is an extremely worthy recipient of this honor," said Catanese.

An active supporter of several philanthropic initiatives, Scott has been a member of the Florida Tech board of trustees since 2003 and was the major funder of the Scott Center for Autism Treatment.

About 1,080 students earned degrees in May. This was the largest commencement in at least 30 years.

Tornado Postpones Graduation at Huntsville Site

More than 100 tornadoes ravaged several counties in Alabama at the end of April, with some tearing through the Huntsville area, terrorizing faculty, staff and students. Though the facility was left undamaged and no member of the site community was harmed, power was out for a week.

Madison County, home to Huntsville, was under a dusk-to-dawn curfew for most of the week after the tornado outbreak. With power out and the entire area in recovery mode, spring commencement ceremonies were rescheduled from May 12 to Aug. 19.

Site Director **Tim White** said the site administration was aware of four students whose homes were literally blown away with all their possessions.

The site's Delta Mu Delta, Eta Epsilon chapter rose to the occasion through pizza and soft drink sales, raising more than \$650 to support tornado relief.

Among those initiating recovery efforts, **Cindi Courbat '80** staged fundraising events and led a round-up of essential items with the help of WFIT-FM radio station at Florida Tech.

Said White, "When and where needed, Florida Tech was there."

Harris Institute Is Officially, Nationally 'Excellent'

The Harris Institute for Information Assurance on campus was designated a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Research for academic years 2011–2016 by the National Security Agency (NSA)/Central Security Service (CSS). Harris Institute Director **Richard Ford** and Harris Corp. Senior Secure Systems Engineer **Ronda Henning '90** M.B.A. were recognized in a ceremony at the 15th Annual Conference of the Colloquium for Information Systems Security Education in June in Fairborn, Ohio.

"Although our Harris Institute is relatively new, I am not surprised, and am, indeed, very pleased that it should receive such prestigious recognition," said President **Anthony J. Catanese**. The Florida Tech institute is one of just two in



Florida designated a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Research.

Harris Corp. Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer **Howard Lance** calls the designation a significant milestone.

"This designation recognizes the institute's abilities to address global information security problems that are faced by businesses, governments and individuals," he said. "Equally important, the institute is developing highly qualified individuals for this fast-growing field by providing postgraduate and research opportunities."

RESEARCH NEWS

Navy Honors Professor with Young Investigator Award

Stephen Jachec, assistant professor, department of marine and environmental systems, College of Engineering, was awarded the Young Investigator Award by the Department of the Navy's Office of Naval Research (ONR) program. Jachec's research, "Acoustic Properties in the Presence of Shoaling and Breaking Internal Waves over Complex Topography, a Numerical Modeling Study," is one of the 21 proposals selected from 18 colleges and universities. Of the \$10.8 million prize allocated to the winning scientists and engineers, Jachec received approximately \$170,000 over three years

Teams Compete for \$100,000 Grand Prize

Two Florida Tech student teams were among 10 teams chosen to compete for the \$100,000

grand prize in the MegaWatt Ventures competition to develop a commercially viable clean energy technology. Finalist teams were each awarded \$10,000 from the U.S. Department of Energy to develop their commercially viable green technology company for the Sept. 8–9 final event held at the Florida Solar Energy Center in Cocoa.

The Florida Tech finalists Team Bladeworks and Team OrgSolar consist primarily of graduate students.

Team BladeWorks is developing unique wind turbine blade designs. The faculty adviser is **Chelakara Subramanian**, professor and program chair of mechanical and aerospace engineering.

Team OrgSolar is developing cost-effective photovoltaics. The team's adviser is **Kunal Mitra**, professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering.

Faculty, Students Take Initiative in Summertime Learning

For Faculty

- Professor of Humanities **Gordon Patterson** and wife **Joy Patterson** '00 M.S., adjunct instructor, were awarded a paid three-week summer Asian Studies Development Program China Field Seminar, titled "Frontiers: Culture, Nature and Industry from China's Northeast to the World Expo."

- **Heidi Hatfield Edwards**, associate professor in the department of humanities and communication, was awarded a \$3,900 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to attend a five-week long NEH Summer Institute—"The Dynamics of Cultural Unity and Diversity in Southeast Asia"—held at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu.

- **Tim Muth**, director of student/program assessment, Nathan M. Bisk College of Business, participated in a two-week faculty development trip to Eastern Europe—visiting Budapest, Hungary;

*Tim Muth*

Sofia, Bulgaria; and Istanbul, Turkey to study these countries' business practices.

For Students

- **Jenni Larmore**, a molecular biology major and senior, earned a prestigious biomedical internship with the National Institute on Aging in Baltimore, Md. During the internship, her research focused on a gene only expressed during pregnancy. Larmore conducts research on cell growth regulation in *E. coli* in the laboratories of **Alan Leonard** and **Julia Grimwade**.

*Jenni Larmore*

- **Keren Rosado**, a master's degree student in meteorology, participated in the 2011 East Asia & Pacific Summer Institutes (EAPSI) in Taiwan, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Her research uses satellite data from the Constellation Observing System for Meteorology, Ionosphere & Climate (COSMIC), also known as Taiwan's Formosa Satellite Mission #3 (FORMOSAT-3) to simulate Hurricane Helene 2006. Rosado's adviser is **Sen Chiao**, associate professor, College of Engineering.

Fowler and Heystek: Making a Difference 30 Years Later

Little did **Clarke Fowler** '80, ocean engineering, and **Deborah Heystek** '79, biology, imagine when they met in the Jungle at Florida Institute of Technology in 1975, that they would end up back in Brevard County, married, and becoming active alumni making a difference on campus 30 years later. Both had great experiences at FIT and established enduring friendships.

"Many of our very best friends today are people we met while at FIT," says Fowler.

Fowler has worked for Harris Corp. for the past 14 years, and currently does avionics development for defense systems. He has continued his involvement with the College of Engineering, participating on their board of advisers, supporting various events and serving as a judge for the annual Northrop Grumman Engineering and Science Student Design Showcase.

Heystek worked for a research institute and defense contractors as a software architect doing modeling and simulation (wargaming) and is currently pursuing her dream as an entrepreneur, creating her own line of clothing from South African fabrics. She is a member of the alumni board and active on the Botanical Garden Committee, which hosts the annual Botanical Fest. She also serves as an alumni adviser to the Squamish fraternity and created the Squamish Scholarship Endowment to help fund deserving students at Florida Tech. This scholarship fund is very close to reaching the \$25,000 level, or full endowment, and an annual scholarship will be awarded.

"The Squamish Scholarship has been funded by past and present Squamish Brothers and will serve as a legacy to the organization," says Heystek.

Together, in 2007, they decided another way they could give back to Florida Tech was by establishing a bequest. The Fowler-Heystek bequest will benefit engineering, by funding the creation of a student lab in their name.

"We both value the education we received at FIT and recognize the importance of continued investment in infrastructure, equipment and technology. We hope that through our bequest future engineers are inspired in a lifelong passion for science and engineering," says the couple.

"FIT is a unique place and tends to attract rugged individualists. That may be one of the things I like best about it," says Heystek.

"My experience at FIT enabled me to pursue a career I truly enjoy," says Fowler.

To explore ways your family can make a positive impact at Florida Tech, visit <http://give.fit.edu> or contact **Beverly Sanders** at (321) 674-6155 or sandersb@fit.edu.





Florida Tech's Concrete Canoe Team at Nationals



Florida Tech Motorsports FSAE Team

Competition Teams Thrive, Thanks to Corporate Partners

Whether competing by air, sea or land, Florida Tech's student organizations know what it takes to be the best: hard work, lots of practice and strong, consistent financial support. Each year, generous corporate partners underwrite the costs associated with several successful academic teams.

Once nicknamed "a night school for missile men," it's no wonder Florida Tech's Student Rocket Society is a title-holder. Thanks to generous corporate supporters such as Northrop Grumman, this year's team took first place in the Fifth Annual Hybrid Rocket Competition.

"Judging by the incredible results this team produced at the competition, it is clear they learned how to work as a team. This project also helps to prepare them for life after college. They can take their excellent technical and teambuilding skills with them as they advance in their careers in aerospace—hopefully at Northrop Grumman," said Dave Keldsen, manager, University Recruiting and Relations for Northrop Grumman.

When it comes to competing on the water, Florida Tech's award-winning rowing teams aren't the only successful "Panther Paddlers." The legacy of the Concrete Canoe Team, part of the student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers, includes five top-10 finishes at the annual national competition. Designing, building and transporting a concrete canoe as well as a team of more than two-dozen students to Evansville, Ind., in 2011, was an undertaking that wouldn't have been possible without contributions from corporate sponsors.

An international architectural and engineering firm headquartered in Melbourne began supporting the Concrete Canoe team's efforts in 1998. "There are synergies between the work our firm engages in and that of Florida Tech's ASCE student chapter," said Brian Curtin, president of BRPH Architects—Engineers, Inc. "The students partaking in these efforts today will be the industry leaders of tomorrow. As supporters of this program, we couldn't be more pleased to aid in that transformation."

Students with a need for speed often gravitate to the Florida Tech motorsports program, which includes both the Formula Society of Automotive Engineers (FSAE) and the Mini-Baja vehicle teams. The teams build vehicles and drive them in timed events, competing against other university teams. **Nelson Cambata** '78, president of Starport Aviation, recently entered a multi-year pledge to support the motorsports program. "This program incorporates the challenges inherent to the racing world and the camaraderie that can translate into great life experiences for the students," Cambata said.

To learn more about sponsoring Florida Tech's student teams, contact **Gretchen Sauerman** in the Office of Development at (321) 674-6162 or gsauerman@fit.edu.

Timely Options for Making Big Gifts

Good news for 2011 and 2012: the unified gift and estate tax exemption is \$5 million per person and \$10 million per married couple and includes a new spousal portability provision. This means older individuals may make outright gifts to heirs or fund irrevocable trusts in 2011 or 2012 to "lock in" these transfers. This "lock in" is the ability to give away \$5–\$10 million estate tax free—the highest level in history. The catch is this is a "window of opportunity" that could go all the way back to \$1 million after 2012. Time is of the essence.

Also in 2011, individuals with IRA funds may take advantage of the option to make tax-free transfers to charities. The donor must be at least 70½ years of age, and the funds must be transferred directly from the IRA to the charity. Up to \$100,000 can be directly transferred in 2011. This action helps some individuals satisfy their minimum required distribution for the year without having to incur income tax liability on the distribution.

2011 and 2012 are great times for high income taxpayers—regardless of age—to use IRAs and other qualified pension plans as their charitable checkbooks, as long as they itemize deductions and can deduct 100 percent of the gifts on their tax returns.

For more information on what might be possible in 2011 and 2012 that could benefit the individual as well as Florida Tech, call a professional adviser or contact the Development Office at (321) 674-8962.



from the FTAA President

From the desk of John A. Valente '76, '81

“Lights, Camera, Action!”

“Hollywood Nights” is the chosen theme for the Homecoming 2011 festivities occurring on campus and at selected alumni chapter sites throughout the country, Nov. 2–5. We’re inviting our distant alumni chapter members, who may not be able to attend in person, to plan special Homecoming themed meetings and happenings that week too!

Spotlighted in the line-up of events this fall will be the annual campus-wide talent show, the Homecoming parade on Saturday morning and the free community-wide BBQ immediately afterwards. A new addition to the calendar will be the Homecoming 5K Run, which will feature a course that winds through campus. Other departmental and athletic events will be interspersed throughout the Homecoming timeframe, and there will be a special celebration for Gleason Performing Arts Center and the College Players.

Saturday night’s Oscar-themed alumni association awards gala at the Clemente Center will feature representatives from every college on campus and individuals who have been selected as outstanding alumni award recipients. The banquet will also feature a special recognition ceremony for our ’60s-era alumni. The red carpet will be out for all of you to arrive in style, with flashbulbs popping and autograph hounds cheering! It is bound to be a wonderful evening as we top off the weekend’s events. I urge you to come back to Melbourne and celebrate with us, as our world-class university continues to celebrate our alumni, faculty, students and our future. Keep watching the alumni website www.fit.edu/alumni and the Alumni Association’s Facebook page (www.facebook.com/FloridaTechAlumniAssociation) for details and updates on Homecoming events. The board of directors of your alumni association, on campus that week, will hold their annual fall meeting to discuss the latest plans and efforts to benefit our graduates, the university and the community. The board meeting will be on Friday, Nov. 4, and you are welcome to sit in and learn more. A quick email to alumaffr@fit.edu will hold a place for you.

It’s not too early to start making plans to attend Florida Tech’s Homecoming this fall. A list of hotel rates is available if requested through the email address above or by calling (321) 674-7198. I hope to see many of you on campus!

Homecoming Awards Gala 2011

Homecoming is a special time for alumni to renew old friendships, share memories and rekindle their college years. It is also an opportunity for the university to recognize alumni and their many successes. The Homecoming Awards Gala presented by the Florida Tech Alumni Association (FTAA) does this magnificently.

This annual event has grown into the signature gathering for alumni, faculty and friends during Homecoming Weekend. This year, the FTAA expects upwards of 350 guests to join together at the Clemente Center to honor our outstanding award recipients and celebrate their achievements. Awards are presented from each of the five colleges. And, this year, the FTAA will introduce the Jerome P. Keuper Distinguished Alumni Award to recognize an alumna/us who has made significant contributions to society and whose accomplishments honor the legacy of our founding president.

For more information, visit www.fit.edu/alumni or email mklos@fit.edu.



Recipients of last year’s honors were, from left, Sungjin Park (College of Engineering), Randy Muns (Outstanding Achievement), Alexis Loo (College of Science), Gordon Patterson (University Advocate), Svafa Grönfeldt (College of Psychology and Liberal Arts), Milton Garces (Outstanding Achievement) and David O. Brock (Nathan M. Bisk College of Business). Not pictured is Clara Bennett (Skurla Award).

Farewell to the Shroom

*A long long time ago
I can still remember
How that music used to make me smile
And I knew if I had my chance
That I could make those people dance
And maybe they'd be happy for a while*

On July 9 the Mighty Mushroom served its last slice of pizza and poured its last mug of cold beer as it closed its doors for the last time. In doing so, it also closed a chapter in Florida Tech's history. The Shroom was a central part of many students' lives, especially during the '80s and '90s. It was then the main gathering place for students who wanted to hang out with friends and enjoy a slice, a cold one and some good tunes from the famous Shroom jukebox. It was like the bar in the classic sitcom "Cheers" where everybody knew your name. You could walk in at anytime, and you would be welcomed by friendly faces and more often than not the sound of Don Maclean's "American Pie" blaring out of the jukebox. And of course, Joyce would be there to make the famous calls during beer bingo and to ensure you paid your tab or at least negotiated a deal.

It was over 29 years ago when as a Florida Tech student **Joyce Shuba** '80, '82 M.S., decided to open a pizzeria on Babcock Street next to Florida Institute of Technology. She wanted to create a place where students could feel comfortable to hang out and get good food at a fair price. In the mid-2000s, Joyce relocated the Shroom to Dairy Road and created more of a family restaurant. Joyce says the heyday of the Shroom was probably from 1987–1997 and those were great years with so many fond memories, but it was now time to move on. "It is a sad time and a happy time for me—having made my life the Mighty Mushroom, right after graduating from FIT. I hope all will say some prayers for my success in my future endeavors."

When the news that The

Shroom was closing was posted on the Alumni Association's Facebook page, it received more comments than any other previous post. **Jana Vander Loop** '01 reminisced, "I still can't go to bingo without recalling the beer bingo responses. It always brings me back. I will probably still be giggling at 0-69 when I am in a nursing home."

Ross Morby posted about having to work for Joyce in order to pay off his tab. "Thanks for a ton of memories. Probably spent more time there than in class!"

Before it closed for good, the alumni association organized a last get-together at the Shroom. Over 40 alumni turned out for a last game of beer bingo including **Danny Anderson** '92, who flew down from Kentucky to attend.

"I saw the news on the alumni Facebook page as well as all the old pictures that were posted ... most were from the early '90s when I was there. I was looking for an excuse to visit the campus again, and I was able to work it out to attend, so I did."

Danny, who flew down with his wife Kim, shared that he had many great memories of his time at Florida Tech, and the Mighty Mushroom was a part of that experience.

"I lived in College Forest apartments with my roommates, **Adam Wronowski** '94, '95 M.S., and **Thomas Borrenson**, and we always made it over to the Shroom at least once a week as it was in easy walking distance and they had the best songs on the jukebox. It was simply a place that always made FIT students feel welcome, we all could relax a little while there and let our freak flag fly for a little while until it was time to get serious again."

Many local alumni also attended and enjoyed a final



Bino Campanini at the Shroom in 1991.



Danny Anderson '92 and Bino Campanini at the Mighty Mushroom Farewell Event. See page 17 for more photos.

game of beer bingo including two of Florida Tech's finest baseball players **Brian Crane** '91 and Sports Hall of Fame member **Tom Finney**

who spoke of how they developed friendships with athletes from all different sports at the Shroom ... especially with the soccer players. **Andy Kirbach** '90, who runs a local engineering company, spoke of spending many nights with his fraternity brothers at the Shroom and how it was a great place to meet other students, while **Rebecca Lambert** '91 shared, "I have great memories of ending up at the Shroom at the end of an evening out. Cold beer, pizza and good friends—nothing better. It was fun to experience some of that again."

For those who attended Florida Tech during the heyday of the Shroom, it will always be linked with their college experience and the good times shared will live long in the memory except perhaps for **Michael Hall** who posted "Senator, I have no recollection of events at the Shroom!"



Alumni
Receptions
Reconnect
Old Friends
and Make
New Ones

Boston



1) Mark Ricci '09, Bernie Fuchs '70, Doug Campbell '09 and Bryan Schollin '09 **2)** Senior Vice President Ken Stackpoole and Jill Edwards '06 **3)** Nicholas Goodwin '04, Sam Ogren '05 and Bino Campanini '90, '92 M.B.A., alumni association executive director **4)** John and Caroline Jacobson '97 **5)** Sara Fieberg '01 and Sarah Kays '03

Dad Vail



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

1) Florida Tech fans cheering on the Men's Heavyweight 8 **2)** Florida Tech Rowers—Past and Present with Athletic Director Bill Jurgens **3)** Florida Tech alumni, students, parents and friends along the riverbank. **4)** Women's Rowing Head Coach Adam Thorstad '01, Bino Campanini and Men's Rowing Head Coach Jim Granger **5)** Joe Caruso '71 (University Trustee), right, and Jeb Brethauer '92 **6)** Keiran Breslin '94 and Jamie Breslin '95 **7)** Nancy Orbell '88, Dee Dee Cronin '87, Kathy Wojtas '87, Megan Mellinger '89 **8)** Florida Tech Rowers—Past and Present

New Jersey



1



2



3

- 1) Bennett DeSapio and Bino Campanini
- 2) Prospective student with President Anthony J. Catanese
- 3) Jessica Jimenez '03 and Carlos Jimenez

AAAE



1



2



3

- 1) Aero alumni and current students
- 2) Juan Moreno '87, Bino Campanini and Shaka Lake '02
- 3) Allen Penska and Michael Mullaney '88

Mighty Mushroom



1) Brian Stahl '87, '88 M.S.; Vice President for Facilities and University Architect Greg Tsark; Bino Campanini; Andy Kirbach '90; Duane De Freese '81,'88 M.S.; Brian Crane '91 **2)** Rebecca Lambert '91, Mighty Mushroom Owner Joyce Shuba '80, '82, and Lisa Cantino **3)** Danny Anderson '92 and wife Kim **4)** Brian Crane '91 and Tom Finney **5)** Current grad students enjoy the evening

Homecoming
Hollywood Nights 2011
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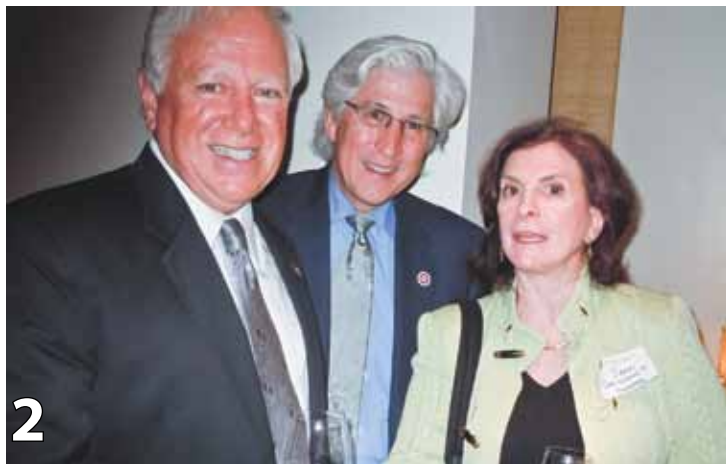
Yellow Dog
Cafe

For more information contact:
 Melissa Klos
 Office of Alumni Affairs
 mklos@fit.edu • (321) 674-6826

Homecoming Awards Gala
Dinner, Music & Dancing
 Saturday, November 5, 2011
 at 6 p.m. at the
 Clemente Center
 on the Florida Tech
 Campus

<http://homecoming.fit.edu>

N.Y.C.



1) Talal Qureshi '01, Fabrizio Barrasti '89, Trustee Joe Caruso '71 **2)** President Anthony J. Catanese, Ken Stackpoole, Jane Wilkins '82 **3)** Bino Campanini and Weyni Nazon '01 **4)** Suzanne Stempel '05 and Matthew Murtha '05 **5)** Bob Azzollini '03, Fabrizio Barrasti '89, Rob Kovner '03 **6)** Members of the future New York Tri-State Alumni Chapter

CHECK
IT OUT!

<http://homecoming.fit.edu>



Florida Institute of Technology

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Are you a Lifetime Panther?

If you are not already a lifetime member of the Florida Tech Alumni Association, now is the time to join!

Go to http://alumni.fit.edu/alumni_membership to join online.

For a limited time, your \$500 lifetime individual membership dues not only show your support of your association and provide you with many discounts and services, but will also earn you a 4" x 8" brick inscription on the Florida Tech Terrace!



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A group of people are playing football on a field at sunset. The sun is low in the sky, casting long shadows on the grass. The players are in various positions, some running and some blocking. The field is green and has white yard lines. In the background, there are buildings and trees.

Getting **READY**
for some
FOOTBALL!

Florida Tech is diligently prepping to rush the field for competitive play in fall 2013 as a member of the Gulf South Conference. As the GSC's first-ever football-only member, Florida Tech will join Delta State University, University of North Alabama, Valdosta State University, University of West Alabama and University of West Georgia in the football league. Florida Tech is already ranked a top tier national university committed to teaching research and service. Why football?

W "We believe in the full college experience, of which collegiate athletics is a major component," said President Anthony J. Catanese. "We're adding to our athletic programs to improve the quality of life for our students, our alumni, our faculty and staff, and for the community and the region."

Collegiate football programs are expanding across the state and the nation. Neighboring Florida universities Ave Maria, in Naples, and Stetson, in DeLand, are fielding football in 2012 and 2013, respectively. And, more than 30 other universities across the country have new or emerging programs, according to the National Football Foundation.

The Foundation has found that football programs help boost enrollment, increase visibility, build school spirit and engage alumni.

Florida Tech hopes to achieve these goals and more.

Recruiting

Since spring 2010, after approval by the board of trustees to initiate a football program, Director of Football Operations **John Thomas** has been forming a game plan. Together with Recruiting Coordinator **Ray Herring**, the duo has recruited a cohort of 46 outstanding student-athletes enrolling at Florida Tech this year. These talented young men will share the unique distinction of being members of the inaugural Panther Football team.

"We will be part of a team that is just starting out," said **Jace Browne**, incoming freshman from Seminole, Fla., who plans to major in business. "How often does that opportunity appear ... basically never! I am excited to be a part of it."

Recruitment will be ongoing as the team continues to take shape.

Head Coach

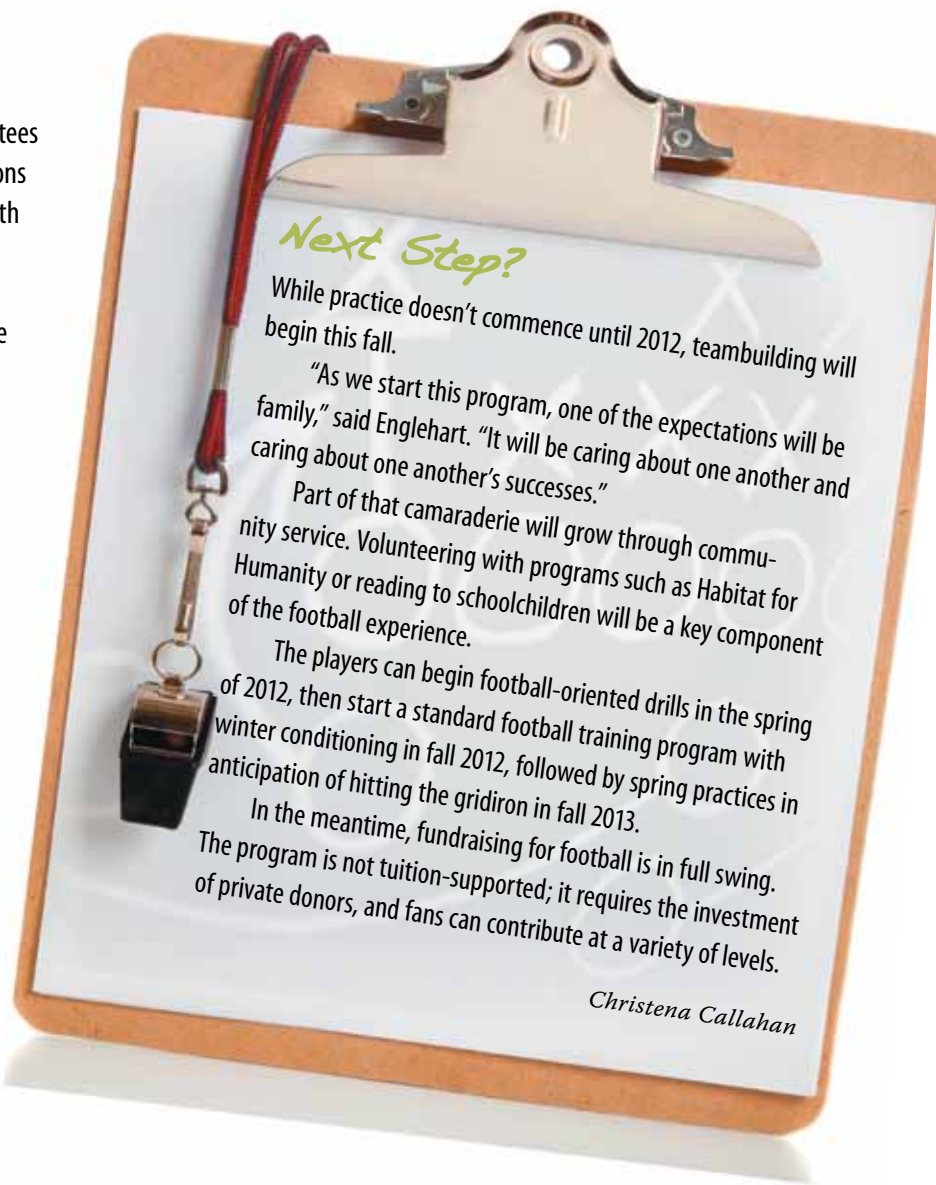
This summer, **Steve Englehart** joined Florida Tech as the first head coach of Panther Football.

"I'm very excited to have this opportunity," he said. "It's a rare privilege to be invited to literally build a program from the ground up."

Born and raised in Indiana, Englehart is a family man with a passion for football. He is experienced on all sides of the playbook—as player, coordinator and coach. He played quarterback at Indiana State University from 1996–99, then went on to serve Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Ind., as assistant coach for quarterbacks and offensive coordinator before being named head coach in 2006. His all-time record there was 26-14, where he had the highest winning percentage in school history (.650). Prior to joining the Panthers, Englehart was offensive coordinator at his alma mater, Indiana State.

With football, as with all Florida Tech sports, academic achievement will be as important as athletic achievement.

"Education is our number one goal," said Englehart. He is committed to coaching leaders who will excel in the classroom, on the field and in the workplace.



Next Step?

While practice doesn't commence until 2012, teambuilding will begin this fall.

"As we start this program, one of the expectations will be family," said Englehart. "It will be caring about one another and caring about one another's successes."

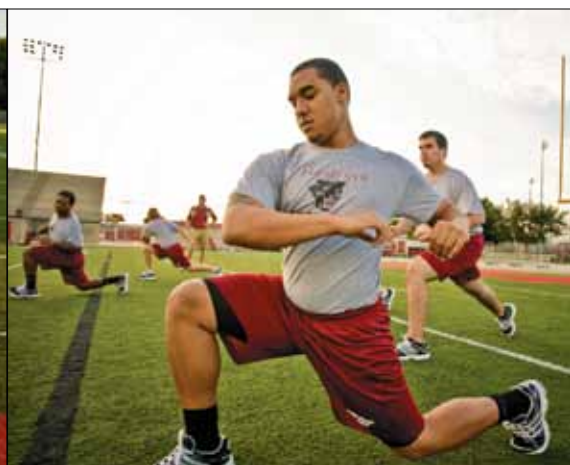
Part of that camaraderie will grow through community service. Volunteering with programs such as Habitat for Humanity or reading to schoolchildren will be a key component of the football experience.

The players can begin football-oriented drills in the spring of 2012, then start a standard football training program with winter conditioning in fall 2012, followed by spring practices in anticipation of hitting the gridiron in fall 2013.

In the meantime, fundraising for football is in full swing. The program is not tuition-supported; it requires the investment of private donors, and fans can contribute at a variety of levels.

Christena Callahan

For more information about supporting Panther Football, contact **John Thomas** at (321) 674-6220 or johnthomas@fit.edu.



Mission to Mars:

A Scientist's Tale



Professor **John Deaton**, director of research and chair, human factors program, College of Aeronautics, lived and worked at the Mars Desert Research Station (MDRS) in Utah for two weeks this spring. MDRS is a simulated Mars surface exploration habitat operated by the Mars Society, an international, nonprofit space advocacy group. This is his personal experience on his mission to Mars.



Yes, it's true and I will admit it. I have always dreamed of being an astronaut.

I got close some years ago when I applied to the astronaut training program while an officer in the U.S. Navy. Got to the semi-finals, but someone else was selected. So when the opportunity came about to spend two weeks on Mars (simulation, of course), I grabbed the opportunity not really knowing what I was getting into. I told Tony Gannon at Space Florida (a friend with connections to the Mars Society, the sponsor of this experience) to put in a good word for me (to Dr. Zubrin, the president of the Mars Society), and within a few weeks, I was told I was selected to be part of Crew 102.

I was to report to the Mars Desert Research Station (MDRS) in southern Utah on March 26. I had mixed feelings, but in general, was very enthusiastic about being a part of an international crew

Do I have the “right stuff” to be able to go two weeks in close quarters with strangers, getting little sleep, eating what is loosely defined as food (freeze dried), and living in relative isolation without much outside contact?

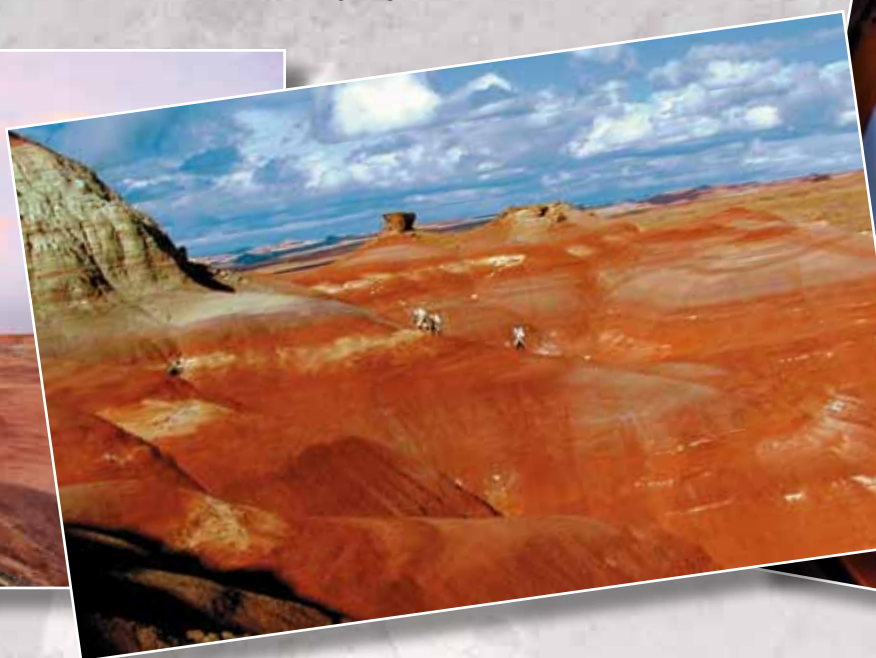
of five others getting a taste of what it would be like living on the planet.

The MDRS is a small two-story building in a remote area of Utah, about four hours from Denver. It is run, as I mentioned earlier, by the nonprofit Mars Society. The habitat (or hab as we called it)

was created to simulate the red planet and to serve as a test bed for scientists from all disciplines.

So starting on March 26, the 26-foot diameter building was my home until April 9. I shared it with five others, basically strangers, from around the world (Italy, Greece, Canada and, of course, the U.S.). My goal, as was that of the others, was to study what it would be like living on the planet Mars. My specific objective, being a psychologist, was to collect data focusing on human factors issues and group dynamics, including how well people perform in stressful environments like this. Specifically, I was interested in the experience's effect on participants, including how they handle being in such close quarters with strangers for two weeks. My other goal, not to be understated, was to see if I could do it! Do I have the “right stuff” to be able to go two weeks in close quarters with strangers, getting little sleep, eating what is loosely defined as food (freeze dried), and living in relative isolation without much outside contact? How would I survive without the use of my iPhone? Actually, the idea of not getting email or not receiving phone calls all day was not all together a negative from my perspective.

So what was it like on Mars, you ask? Let me just say this ... months ago I would have jumped at the chance to travel to Mars. But that was BEFORE I spent the two weeks at the MDRS. Obviously, I changed my tune. It was a lot harder than I expected, and I think it's going to be an extremely difficult mission going to Mars.



For the first couple of days, I questioned why I was doing this. I wasn't sleeping well. I was either too hot or too cold. I didn't eat well (I lost 8 pounds; someone told me I should write a book and call it *The Mars Diet*) mainly because the food was freeze-dried and not very appetizing. I eventually lost my appetite (a bit scary). We certainly had no fresh food for the two weeks (I couldn't wait to have a real salad once we completed the rotation). All of this produced a certain amount of anxiety (for me at least), and you have to adapt to it (all of us did to a certain extent). Sleeping quarters were smaller than a prison cell. A problem I had to deal with was a medical issue. I developed bacterial conjunctivitis ("pink eye" or eye infection). This necessitated breaking sim for a few hours to go to a clinic about two hours away to get the antibacterial drops. But this episode drove home an important point: The crew that goes to Mars will have medical issues. They're not going to be able to get in the car and drive to Walgreens. Thus, a mini-pharmacy is going to have to be brought aboard the spacecraft to serve the crew for the trip as well as the sojourn on the planet. Not only that, but one of the crew will need to be experienced in surgery. What if a crew member has an appendicitis attack? A relatively simple operation, IF you know what you're doing, and IF you have a sterile environment, and IF you have the proper equipment.

Leaving the hab to go on specific EVAs (Extra Vehicular Activities, or "space walks") required that we wear a spacesuit. The bulky attire, complete with helmet, boots and gloves would take considerable time to put on, and it became quite hot inside the spacesuit after a few minutes of an EVA outside.

Conservation was important, as it would be on Mars. Water left over from washing dishes was used to flush the toilet (toilet rules: If it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down). Showers were only permitted every four days and consisted of about a 1.5-minute "Navy shower" (water on, water off, soap on, water on, soap off, etc.).

My biggest surprise was how well everyone got along. We had a good leader, and he knew when to make the difficult decisions and when to go along with the crew consensus. We got to know each other quite well, and even keep in close contact today. I've had one crew member visit me in Orlando already, and most of the others planned to visit for the last shuttle launch. They stayed with me at my house; certainly more room than what we had at the hab!

So what did I learn, you say? Would I go to Mars? No, I don't think I'm the right guy to go to Mars. However, I would go back to the hab again next year, if I could go with the same crew members. We bonded—there's no doubt about that. I appreciate things more today than I did before.

I also realize the first mission to Mars will be difficult, and selecting crew members will be a challenge. I suspect they will be young, perhaps single, no children, and highly educated (some with medical backgrounds and certainly engineering expertise).

The challenge in going to Mars will not be in getting there (we have the technology to do that today), but in how crew members interact, deal with medical issues and cope with the isolation. I'll admit I'm too comfortable with life on Earth ... now where did I put that salad dressing?

John Deaton

MDRS Crew 102 members are, back row, from left: Lara Vimercati (Italy), John Deaton (U.S.), Yuval Brodsky (Canada); front row, from left: Kavya Manyapu (U.S.), Franco Carbognani (Italy), Angeliki Kapoglou (Greece).

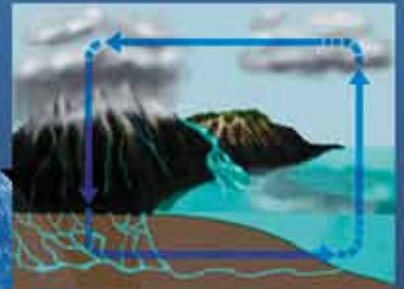
**So what did I learn, you say?
Would I go to Mars?**



MEASURING SEA SURFACE SALINITY FROM SPACE

Alumnus Helps Launch New Age of Aquarius

On the morning of June 10, 2011, Gary Lagerloef '71 watched as a Delta II rocket with the Aquarius/SAC-D spacecraft payload aboard launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. The moment was a culmination as well as a beginning for what Lagerloef calls "a dream come true in many ways."



NASA appointed the ocean scientist as principal investigator of the Aquarius/SAC-D satellite mission in 2003. He played a major role in getting approval for the project, which will study the interactions between the ocean circulation, global water cycle and climate by measuring ocean salinity from space. Since then, Lagerloef has set science objectives and coordinated the effort among hundreds of participants. He will continue for at least three more years as the satellite cuts swaths 657 kilometers above the Earth to map the salinity in all the Earth's ice-free oceans. The satellite could be viable for as many as 10 years.

"Ocean salinity is already measured intermittently from ships and buoys, but Aquarius will provide a global view. Salinity is a missing link that ties ocean circulation with rainfall and evaporation patterns and connects how these relate to climate variations. These interactions are poorly understood. Measuring ocean salinity over time can clarify this understanding and lead to improved climate forecasts," he said.

The concentration of salt at the ocean's surface tells scientists about global ocean circulation and how fresh water moves between the ocean and other reservoirs. Ocean circulation plays a key role in distributing solar energy and maintaining climate by moving heat from Earth's equator to the poles.

Aquarius salinity data, combined with data from other satellite missions that measure sea level, rainfall, temperature, ocean color and winds, should provide a much clearer picture of how the ocean works. The Aquarius mission will help climate modelers to better understand the ocean-atmosphere processes that are changing Earth's climate.

"With this data," Lagerloef said, "we can create more accurate computer models that connect the ocean-atmosphere-land-ice systems, and we'll be in a better position to make long-term climate forecasts."

Lagerloef's oversight of the mission includes NASA's development of the Aquarius instrument and close collaboration with NASA's partner, Argentina's space agency, Comision Nacional de Actividades Espaciales, who built the SAC-D satellite that carries Aquarius as well as other Argentine and European sensors. He also oversees NASA science teams representing numerous research institutions and universities as well as the collaboration with a European project to measure soil moisture and ocean salinity. In his 40-year career since earning his Florida Tech sheepskin, Lagerloef has acquired skills and experiences that all bear directly on his leadership of Aquarius.

Today he is senior scientist and president of Earth and Space Research (ESR), a small nonprofit research institute he co-founded in Seattle, Wash., in 1995.

During his time at Florida Tech, oceanography and physics were taught in close cooperation, he recalled, a combination he enjoyed while developing his expertise in physical oceanography. "It was very interesting and theoretical, and I applied what I learned when I went to graduate school," he said.

After Florida Tech, he taught marine science at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy while earning a master's degree in oceanography from the University of Connecticut. He then put to sea, working for NOAA as a seagoing officer on research ships in the Pacific and at the Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in Seattle while completing a physical oceanography doctoral degree in 1984 from the University of Washington. He then spent a few years in private sector marine science.

In 1988 NASA tapped Lagerloef to become physical oceanography program manager: it was at about this time that he became interested in satellite remote sensing.

"I found the new field very exciting. It gave me a sense of being involved in something on the frontier," he said. He has sustained that excitement at ESR where he has developed several research projects devoted to studies of the upper ocean dynamics and climate variability using satellites.

"I found the new field very exciting. It gave me a sense of being involved in something on the frontier."

Gary Lagerloef '71

At this writing, it has been exactly one month since the launch of Aquarius. Happily, the satellite is performing as expected. It separated and jettisoned from the rocket; its signal was acquired by ground controllers and its solar arrays deployed to provide power. The satellite's attitude control parameters have been tuned to keep it on course and its telemetry, which allows remote measurement and reporting of information, is activated. By the end of August, transmission of scientific data is set to begin and Lagerloef's work will begin a new phase.

"It's a very significant, quite complicated, sophisticated mission," Lagerloef said. "It's really thrilling to be involved in a project like this."

Karen Rhine

OktoKopter Takes to the Skies

It's the ultimate techno-toy. And Patrick Lewis gets to play with it.

Working on his master's degree in systems engineering, Lewis is a member of the university's Information Characterization and Exploitation (ICE) Laboratory. He's the systems integrator on the eight-rotor, 2 kilogram (4.4 pound) OktoKopter, the tool for his thesis project. For his thesis he will geo-reference the imaging data collected from the OktoKopter's camera payload.

Lewis says, "I got really lucky. This project was a gift that just dropped into our laps and my interests were a great match."

With the support of faculty adviser and engineering systems professor **Adrian Peter**, Lewis was going to conduct his thesis project as a simulation. However, a small Melbourne defense contractor, RadiantBlue Technologies, funded the work by purchasing the \$6,200 battery-powered, German-made OktoKopter for mutual benefit.

"RadiantBlue asked us to do a feasibility study and collect some video from the UAV," said Peter, the ICE Lab's co-director.

Lewis is in charge of the project. He made the copter flight-ready, oversaw the camera integration and wrote its geo-referencing algorithms. Out in the open air with remote control in hand, he's also the test pilot.

The fact that he learned some German in high school has helped him over the challenges of the drone's software being written partly in German.

He's programming the OktoKopter's smartphone camera to transmit video to a laptop running software that calculates the GPS coordinates of objects or people on the ground.

His work involves merging the video signal with a computer program so the coordinates may be viewed. For this, he says, "You need to make a bunch of mathematical transformations related to aerial photography concepts."



Photo Courtesy of Florida Today

Lewis, who holds a private pilot's license, says that flying the device is, in a way, more difficult than flying a full-size aircraft. "It requires more sensitivity of touch."

The microcopter can carry up to two pounds, fly as long as 15 minutes on a single battery charge and reach an altitude thousands of feet above the ground. Federal Aviation Administration regulations, however, limit it to 400 feet. "You can barely see it up in the sky," says Lewis.

For RadiantBlue, the data from the feasibility analysis for streaming video applications will ultimately result in a demonstration of the company's capabilities and potentially attract new customers.

Not just for the military, anymore, unmanned multi-rotor helicopters such as the OktoKopter, can with mounted cameras, be used for mapping operations, as in this work, and for many other applications. These include traffic monitoring, sports and TV news aerial photography, law enforcement



“I’ve always been interested in aviation and robotics. This brings it all together for me.”

Patrick Lewis

assists, search and rescue, firefighting, building inspection and crop health analysis. They save costs and can go where it may be unsafe to send a human.

For Lewis, the result will be his thesis: geo-referencing the aerial video and registering it to a map of the Earth. Geo-referencing refers to defining the existence of something in physical space. That is, establishing its location in terms of map projections or coordinate systems.

He’s on his way to a successful thesis, according to Peter, who said, “Patrick exemplified hard work and dedication throughout the research project. He is very self-motivated, researching issues on his own and finding the best way forward when problems occur. He was in the lab daily working on the copter and ensuring that we were always making progress. As an adviser, these are the qualities that we like to see in students, and they will undoubtedly make him successful in his professional career.”

With assistance from **Ken Wallenstein**, adjunct professor, Lewis hopes to simplify the approach to geo-referencing aerial video. “At the very least, I hope to make the process much more understandable and establish a good knowledge base for continuing research,” he says.

With his new micro-UAV technology expertise, the project should open up many opportunities for Lewis after he graduates. His experience as a Boeing flight test engineer in an internship in Seattle last summer won’t hurt, either. He’s undecided right now if he will go right into industry or continue his education and pursue a doctoral degree.

“I’ve always been interested in aviation and robotics. This brings it all together for me,” says Lewis. “It’s a tremendous learning experience with, I hope, some quite valuable outcomes.”

Karen Rhine

JOEL STEPHENS AND BRIAN CRANE:

Champions of Light

Dogged baseball alumni make team dream a reality

It wasn't one person's idea, to light the Andy Seminick-Les Hall Field, but more of a collective dream, ever-present in the hearts and minds of Florida Tech players, coaches, administrators and alumni with a love for the game.

Today, the lights over the Panthers' diamond are a shared reality.

"It had always been a vision," says **Joel Stephens** '93, who along with friend and former teammate **Brian Crane** '91 worked tirelessly to rally support and raise funds for the lights, which were switched on for the program's first night game on May 7, 2011.

Efforts toward illuminating the baseball field for evening play began in early 2006, when former head baseball coach **Paul Knight** and athletic director **Bill Jurgens** reached out to alumni and friends of the university for help.

An all-star team of lifelong Panthers stepped up to the plate and, with the continued support of Jurgens and President **Anthony J. Catanese**, formed a committee devoted to seeing the field light project through to fruition.

"Brian and I took the reins," says Stephens, who volunteered to chair the committee and serve as its chief liaison to the university. "We wanted to give back."

"When we saw how much money it would take to fund, the task felt insurmountable," says Crane.



Joel Stephens '93



Brian Crane '91

"But lights were something all the guys who ever played at Florida Tech had wished for, so we had to try."

Stephens and Crane initially focused on spreading awareness and enlisting the support of fellow alumni. Together, they turned the traditional "Baseball Alumni Weekends" into successful field light fundraising events.

"We did them in '06, '07 and '08, and had great turnout. About 50 alumni came every year. We had a lot of fun and laid a great foundation," says Crane.

He and Stephens often faced the somewhat unsavory task of soliciting donations from former teammates and other alumni, most of them long-time friends and colleagues. But that didn't stop them.

"Asking people for money is not easy," says Crane. "But having to go back and ask the same people for more money is even harder. We were able to do it because we wanted to see this school grow and succeed."

From left: President Anthony J. Catanese, Brian Crane '91, Joel Stephens '93, Chad Shoultz '96, Jeff Blackstone '96, Athletic Director Bill Jurgens, Randy Muns '78, '80 M.B.A., Head Coach Greg Berkemeier and former head coach Les Hall.





Early innings of the massive undertaking—the project would require no less than \$230,000—were promising, but slow going. “It often felt like we weren’t making as much ground as we needed to,” says Stephens. “We realized it was going to take a lot of time.”

Crane credits Stephens with keeping the committee united in their enthusiasm for the project. “It’s easy to lose momentum over five years,” he says. “Joel’s persistence kept us focused.”

Stephens, on the other hand, calls Crane the big hero. “Brian was champion of this from day one,” he says. “He rallied baseball alumni around the campaign and played a major role in getting us where we needed to be.”

Team players through and through, both men attribute the final success of the endeavor to others.

They couldn’t have done it, they say, without the undying support of Jurgens and Catanese, the dedicated involvement of **Greg Berkemeier** (who stepped up as head baseball coach in 2008), or the generosity of the many donors whose gifts funded the purchase and installation of the new field lights—especially the support of major contributors **Tim Wakefield** and **Randy Muns**.

“A lot of people gave till it hurt,” says Crane. “All of them deserve a big ‘Thank you.’”

Andy McIlwraith

Alumni Spotlight

Melissa Meeker '95 M.S.

environmental resource management

Executive Director, South Florida
Water Management District

Describe yourself in three words: Focused,
energetic, collaborative

Describe your work: The South Florida Water Management District oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state, covering 16 counties from Orlando to the Florida Keys. The agency provides flood control for 7.7 million residents and is partnering with the federal government to restore the Everglades—the largest environmental restoration project in the nation’s history. It’s complex, challenging, never dull and never done.

Favorite Florida Tech memory: Studying with fellow alums **Stacy Ranieri** and **Brian Proctor**, who I met at FIT and have remained two of my closest friends.

Little known fact: My first job out of the undergrad was “picking plankton” (identifying ichthyoplankton) and paid \$7.40/hour.

Notable achievement: Career and personal achievements that have exceeded my dreams.

Hobbies: Reading, hiking, fishing, planning our cabin in Colorado



H. Jason Ferreri, A.A.E., ACE, '01
aviation management with flight

Airport Properties and Airline
Affairs, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta
International Airport

Describe yourself in three words: Ambitious,
innovative, personable

Describe your work: I manage airport infrastructure for the airport. The majority of my work these days is focused on growing air cargo operations in Atlanta.

Favorite Florida Tech memory: Early morning crew practice on the river, we had a good time!

Little known fact: I went to elementary school in Puerto Rico, middle school in South Korea and high school in Austria.

Notable achievement: I was awarded a NASA fellowship for my research work on the impact of NextGen on public use airports.

Hobbies: Triathlons, flying, coaching



Kevin Johnson:

Ocean Educator Extraordinaire

“The subjects I teach are, to me, the most fun and exciting subjects in the world. I want my students to walk away with that same feeling!”

Statements like these define **Kevin Johnson**, not only in what he does, but also how he does it.

Johnson is an associate professor of oceanography in the department of marine and environmental systems. What he does though, and the impact of it, cannot be encapsulated by a title.

He teaches all levels at Florida Tech. From the first footsteps a student takes on campus, through courses like University Experience and Introductory Oceanography, all the way up to graduate classes including Biological Oceanography, Johnson takes the acquisition of knowledge and skills to another level.

He received the College of Engineering’s Walter M. Nunn Jr. Award for Teaching Excellence in 2008, and the university’s Kerry Bruce Clark Award for Teaching Excellence in 2010.

Creative learning endeavors like “Dress as Your Favorite Zooplankton Day” also add hands-on understanding to what would ordinarily be bookwork.

Students often express comments such as: “College has been a breath of fresh air for me, because for the first time since I was in elementary school, I have had the honor of being educated by enthusiastic and dynamic people who love what they do. You are one of those people Dr. J!”

Johnson says he “likes to stay familiar with the attitudes and problems presented by the youngest generation of incoming college students.”

But it’s more than just the classroom that Johnson uses to teach students. He takes undergraduates on research cruises aboard oceanographic research vessels, such as those operated by the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS). The oceanography program at Florida Tech is one of the only programs in the country providing undergraduate students time at sea aboard a major vessel ... the best imaginable ground for Florida Tech students to get hands-on experience.

He also advises and directs an active research laboratory. His students can get involved in research as course projects, or help with graduate research out of class. As a result, Johnson’s students have presented 30 talks at state, national and

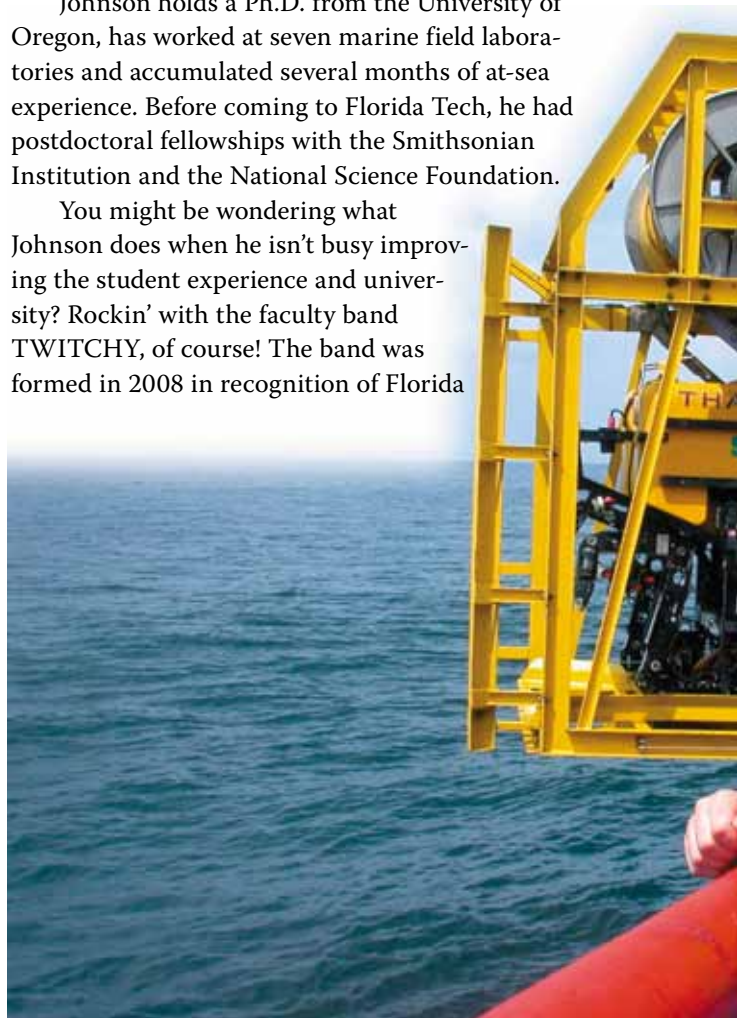
international science meetings over the last five years.

Johnson serves on the College of Engineering’s College Curriculum Committee and oversees the department’s interdisciplinary, hands-on summer research program for seniors (DMES Field Projects). Field projects include time at sea aboard an oceanographic vessel and culminate in students giving scientific presentations of their research at a symposium.

At times, Johnson has conducted campus seminars that educate Florida Tech students on the process of research grant applications using the National Science Foundation as a model. He has served as a panelist and panel chair for the Graduate Research Fellowship Program at NSF five times.

Johnson holds a Ph.D. from the University of Oregon, has worked at seven marine field laboratories and accumulated several months of at-sea experience. Before coming to Florida Tech, he had postdoctoral fellowships with the Smithsonian Institution and the National Science Foundation.

You might be wondering what Johnson does when he isn’t busy improving the student experience and university? Rockin’ with the faculty band TWITCHY, of course! The band was formed in 2008 in recognition of Florida



Tech's 50th anniversary and has a CD for sale in the bookstore with proceeds benefiting Florida Tech's music program.

He is also a Cub Scout Leader in the local community and has earned a first degree blackbelt in karate.

Johnson's first love, however, is the education of young scientists about life in the world's oceans. And it appears he is getting through to them: "I never felt more engaged or at 'home' than when I was sitting in your classroom or in your laboratory. I am grateful to you for many things!"

Statements like these define Johnson, not in what he does or how he does it ... but why.

James Wolfe



Faculty Spotlight

Heidi Hatfield Edwards, Associate Professor and Chair, Undergraduate Communication Program

Years at Florida Tech: 5

Teaches: Mass Communication and related courses

Research interests: Communication and social issues; the cultural and societal implications of communicating social issues; and how audiences use mediated messages, interpreting those messages and engaging in discourse with the message creators.

Hobbies: Writing (for fun)

Notable achievement: This summer I received an NEH grant to study Southeast Asia's cultural unity and diversity at the East-West Center in Honolulu. It was an opportunity to learn and contribute to the growing internationalization efforts at Florida Tech.

Describe your teaching style and/or teaching philosophy: I try to have a lot of discussion in my classes when possible, engaging students in the material and asking for their contributions. Strict lectures limit students' ability to learn from each other and they often have much to add to the understanding of communication concepts.

Read more about Heidi Edwards at <http://today.fit.edu>



Marcus Hohlmann, Associate Professor, Physics and Space Sciences

Years at Florida Tech: 10

Teaches: Undergraduate and Graduate Particle and Nuclear Physics, Advanced Physics Labs, Introductory Physics 1 & 2

Research interests: Particle Physics at the Large Hadron Collider, Particle Detector Development, Muon Tomography

Hobbies: Scuba diving, Softball, Badminton

Notable achievement: Co-discoverer of the top quark—an elementary particle—at Fermilab

Describe your teaching style and/or teaching philosophy: Lots of demos and examples

What attracted you to your field: Three years of an intense physics course in high school

Favorite thing about Florida Tech: It's in Florida!





Florida Tech

Panther Aquatic Center Makes Its Debut



The Panther Aquatic Center opened to Florida Tech alumni, faculty, staff and students on June 13. Since its much-anticipated commencement, members of the Panther community and campus visitors have marveled at the state-of-the-art facility.

Nestled between the Clemente Center and the Panther Dining Hall, the aquatic center features a nine-lane, 25-yard competition pool complete with diving boards and an adjacent recreation pool that includes three warm-up lanes. Varsity locker rooms, a public changing room and offices for coaches and lifeguards are on site.

Covered seating overlooks the competition pool.

“I love the facility,” **Spencer Jenkins**, an ocean engineering major, said. “I often swim laps in the morning to begin my day. I think students will enjoy both pools and relaxing in the lounge chairs on the pool deck.”

Since the pools will be utilized throughout the year, geothermal heating and cooling systems were installed. Energy- and cost-efficient, the systems were furnished by Symbiont Service Corp., owned by Florida Tech alumna **Sandy L. King** ’84, a former student at the Jensen Beach campus.

Jeni Ritter was appointed the head men’s and women’s swimming coach and director of aquatics in June. The Ohio native arrived in Melbourne with experience as a swimming coach at Florida International University, Ohio State University and Saint Francis University. Prior to joining the coaching ranks, she swam at Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio.



Jeni Ritter

“Florida Tech has a beautiful facility the campus community should be proud of and excited to use,” Ritter said. “It provides a new opportunity for alumni, faculty, staff and students to not only improve their wellness, but meet people and socialize.”

The Panthers will open their inaugural season this October. They will compete in NCAA Division II’s Sunshine State Conference with Florida Southern, Nova Southeastern, Rollins, Saint Leo and Tampa.

“I’m really excited for our inaugural season,” Ritter said. “I’m looking forward to helping the student-athletes grow as individuals and as a team and help them achieve their goals. I’m also eager to see the swimmers in their first competition as collegiate athletes. Both the student-athletes and I will take a great deal of pride in our brand new program.”

Ryan Jones

FLORIDATECHSPORTS.COM

The official website of Florida Tech Athletics



Florida Tech's varsity eight sprints to the finish line in the opening day of the Henley Royal Regatta.

Head Coach Jim Granger stands alongside (from left) coxswain Casey Dalal, Jonas Karalius, Mindaugas Beliauskas, David Croke, Spencer Freeman, Plamen Ivanov, Frank Campione, Troy Toggweiler and Alec Bertossa following the race. Photos courtesy of Aberdeen Dad Vail Regatta (www.dadvail.org).

A Rare Opportunity to Compete Overseas

Following a second-place finish at the Aberdeen Dad Vail Regatta in May, Florida Tech's varsity eight was presented with a generous opportunity. Aberdeen, a global investment company, and Dad Vail Regatta organizers inquired about the possibility of sponsoring a trip for the boat to compete in the Henley Royal Regatta June 29–July 3.

The event is held annually on a one-mile, 550-yard (2,112 meters) stretch of River Thames in Henley-on-Thames, England. Viewed as a great sporting event and a social occasion, it is attended by people across the world.

Before Head Coach **Jim Granger** could say yes to the opportunity, he needed to explore some avenues. One challenge was gathering the crew after it expectedly disbanded following finals. Four members left the United States to return home, while the five other oarsmen remained in Florida.

After ironing out the logistics required to take a crew overseas, Florida Tech accepted the proposal.

"This opportunity gives us a chance to grow on the world stage," Granger said following the decision. "Most of our guys have never

had an opportunity such as this one. The ability to row internationally against international competition is an honor and a privilege. We're going to do our best and give it our all."

The Panthers were one of 64 entries fighting for the Temple Challenge Cup. Also representing the U.S. in the race were California-Berkley, Harvard, Hobart and William Smith, Virginia and Yale.

Tech's fourth-year head coach registered his usual varsity eight lineup consisting of coxswain **Casey Dalal**, bow **Alec Bertossa**, **Troy Toggweiler**, **Frank Campione**, **Plamen Ivanov**, **Mindaugas Beliauskas**, **David Croke**, **Spencer Freeman** and stroke **Jonas Karalius**. **Wes Rabusseau** also made the trip as an alternate.

Cambridge University Lightweight Rowing Club was Florida Tech's first opponent in the opening round. Despite not competing in over six weeks, the Panthers won by 1 ¼ boat lengths.

"Going into the Cambridge race, there was a level of uncertainty with it being a new opponent who we really had very little information on," said Dalal, a

senior aviation management major. "It was definitely a relief to get the first race out of the way. It was exciting to beat a school we never had before, but I think immediately after that race our focus turned to Yale the next day."

Yale marched into the race after winning the Intercollegiate Rowing Association Lightweight Varsity Eight Championship. Granger's crew manufactured its best piece of the season, but the Bulldogs won by a half-boat length.

"I was really proud of our result against Yale," said Freeman, a sophomore aerospace engineering major. "It's always a shame to go out, but it was a really good, close race against a very fast crew. To be able to push them like we did made for a respectable finish."

Freeman, who occupies the five seat in the boat, hopes to return to Henley to compete with his teammates again in the near future.

"The regatta was a completely different atmosphere unlike anything else in the world," he said. "It has its traditions and the rowing was incredible. It was a culture shock for a few days, but being in a new country was a lot of fun."

Ryan Jones

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Submit your Alumni News Notes to alumaffr@fit.edu

1990s

Charles R. Fletcher '91 has joined GrayRobinson in Tampa as of counsel. Fletcher concentrates his practice on the areas of government, civil litigation, and regulatory and administrative law.

Rob Auriana '91 has achieved MetLife's 'Super Starter' status in recognition of superior sales achievement. The Super Starter program recognizes outstanding production by newly hired producers during their first quarter of active service with MetLife.



Donald B. Davis '95, wife Wendy and 4-year-old Lauren welcomed second daughter Sloane Morgan in December 2009. Don works for the Department of Homeland Security as a civilian at U.S. Coast Guard Sector Lake Michigan in Milwaukee, Wis., and is a lieutenant in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserves stationed in Port Clinton, Ohio. The family lives in Waukesha, Wis.



Melissa Meeker '95 M.S. was named executive director of the South Florida Water Management District (see Alumni Spotlight, page 31). The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency responsible for managing and protecting water resources in 16 counties of South Florida.

Harry Friebel '97, '00, Ph.D., P.E., and wife April welcomed their second child, Juliet Elizabeth Friebel, on Nov. 9, 2010. Juliet's big brother is Nathaniel Ross.



Joi Bynan Silva '98 and husband Junior Silva are parents to Noah Byrne Silva, born May 2009. Joi and Junior keep wondering if they should move the family to Dubai for two years, but, until then, they are happy and healthy enjoying the benefits of Florida's beautiful weather.



Yasi and **Eugene Martineau '98**, industrial/organizational psychology, welcomed daughter Zara Francine Martineau on March 8, 2011. Eugene currently works in the health care field in Tampa, Fla.



2000s

Sarah Frias-Torres '02 Ph.D. was recently interviewed by the team of Dr. Sylvia Earle, the deep sea explorer, about the relevance of marine protected areas and the need to conserve marine megafauna, the ocean giants. The interview can be viewed at <http://blog.sylviaearlealliance.org/2011/05/interview-with-sarah-frias-torres-at.html>.

Anne Riquier-Brisson '03 and husband James welcomed their daughter Julia on Nov. 26, 2010. Anne graduated with a B.S. in molecular biology and is a postdoc at the University of Southern California. James is a software engineer at the NASA-Jet Propulsion Laboratory. They live in Los Angeles.



RoriAnn (McGowan) Shonk '04, aviation management with flight, and husband Jim welcomed their first son, James Francis, on April 5, 2011.



Scott Berninger '05 and **Sarah (Woodbury) Berninger '04** welcomed daughter Noelle Alexa on Nov. 22, 2010. Sarah is an engineer with Harris Corp., and Scott is a pilot for Atlantic Southeast Airlines.



Josh and **Mirela (Dalanaj) Barry '06** of Portsmouth, Va., became the proud parents of Lukas Patrick in August 2010. Mirela works as a naval architect for NAVSEA, and Josh is finishing his Ph.D. in space physics at the University of New Hampshire.



Jessica (House) Bunkers '07, psychology, and **Paul Bunkers '09**, mechanical engineering, were married in Winter Park, Fla., on Jan. 1, 2011. Both were captains and varsity rowers at Florida Tech; Jessica for four years and Paul for five! Jessica is a law student at the University of Miami, and Paul is a field engineer with Northrop Grumman working with nuclear turbine engines on U.S. Navy subs and carriers.

Matthew R. Allen '07 has joined Fish & Richardson as an associate in its Patent Group in Atlanta. Matthew received his J.D., magna cum laude, from Michigan State University School of Law in 2010 and his B.S., cum laude, in computer science from Florida Tech.

Navy Ensign **Brain R. Spears '09** recently completed a 10-month shipyard availability aboard the guided missile cruiser USS *Mobile Bay*, forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan. USS *Mobile Bay* is the second guided missile cruiser to undergo the most comprehensive upgrade and modernization program in Navy history.

Faculty/Staff



President **Anthony J. Catanese** and grandsons Anthony and Robert show their Panther pride during the Dad Vail Regatta.

Men's Lacrosse Head Coach **Ryan McAleavey** welcomed daughter Lilly in May 2011.



In Memoriam

Jody Connor '79 M.S., environmental science, passed away June 9, 2011, in Concord, N.H. Described as Concord's "Aquaman," his obituary by Ray Duckler for the *Concord Monitor* recalls his life's work and love of water:



"Mention Jody Connor of the state Department of Environmental Services and those who knew him instantly think water. Clean water. Clear water. Water to drink, to swim in, to love as part of the state's personality.

In life, Connor submerged himself in his work, and bodies of water everywhere should weep. His contributions to the state's lakes and streams and shoreline stretch like the horizon, showing a person who worked 32 years for a cause many take for granted."

Visit <http://today.fit.edu> to read the complete tribute to Connor.

Longtime Martin County educator **Mary Catharine Casey Scott**, 84, died Aug. 6 at her home in Stuart. She taught at Florida Tech's Jensen Beach campus. Survivors include her husband, one son, three daughters, 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Patrick Stevens, 86, former professor in the School of Aeronautics, passed away Sept. 4, 2011, in Spring, Texas. He was the founder of the Houston Area Alumni Chapter and worked diligently to get the chapter up and running with the support of his daughter Pamela Rhodes. Survivors include two sons, three daughters, nine grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Joseph "Jack" Armul, 61, senior vice president for management services, passed away Sept. 22 after a lengthy illness. He served as chief financial officer of the university for seven years and was a trusted adviser to President Anthony J. Catanese as a member of the Executive Council. Survivors include his wife Sharon and children, B.J., Scott and Katy. Donations can be made to the Prostate Cancer Foundation or Health First Hospice.



Calling all Panther Cubs!

Congratulations! If you've recently welcomed a new Panther Cub to your family, contact us for your **free infant T-shirt**. Your only obligation is to send us a photo of your baby wearing the shirt—we will proudly display it in *Florida Tech TODAY*.

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*Bino P. Campanini '90, '92 M.B.A.
Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations
Executive Director,
Alumni Association*

Q: Can you tell us about your alumni receptions?

The first thing I can share is that they are not fundraisers or a way for us to strong-arm our alumni for a check. Receptions are complimentary and open with a social/networking hour, which provides our alumni an opportunity to get to know each other as well as meet our staff in attendance. We then show a brief video about Florida Tech and introduce President Catanese who provides an update on the university. The receptions are a great venue for alumni to stay connected and engaged with the university as well as to network with their fellow alumni in a fun and welcoming atmosphere. We have posted video clips, which include alumni testimonials, on our website to provide a flavor of the receptions. Alumni who attend all leave with a positive experience.

Q: How many do you host and where are they held?

We host between 12–15 receptions around the country each year for our alumni and prospective students. We primarily visit areas of the country with the greatest alumni populations, but we are always looking at new locations. We also try and target receptions around affiliate groups. This year, we hosted a reception for Aero alumni at the AAAE

conference in Atlanta and once again attended the Dad Vail Regatta where we had a great turnout of rowing alumni.

Q: You mentioned prospective students attend the receptions ... is that something new?

We have included prospective students for over a year now, and it has been a great success. The students have the opportunity to meet with our alumni and talk with them about Florida Tech and their major as well as get a first-hand account of how Florida Tech prepared them for their careers. In turn, our alumni have an opportunity to share their experience and insights with the next generation of students. In addition, the students and parents have the opportunity to meet President Catanese and other senior faculty/staff in attendance. This combination has proved very successful and has not only enhanced the receptions it has yielded positive results for student recruitment.

Q: It is also a great way to get face-to-face feedback from alumni.

There is no better way to get the pulse of our alumni than by getting out and meeting them one on one, and the receptions provide the ideal opportunity for me and my staff to do that. I have learned a great deal about the perceptions our alumni have of Florida Tech and what they want from their alumni office through talking to hundreds of them across the country.

Q: So you consider the receptions a success?

Absolutely. As I mentioned earlier, we have seen a positive correlation between the students

who attend receptions and their decision to attend Florida Tech. The receptions have also been a powerful tool for re-engaging alumni, and we have seen growth in existing chapters as well as the formation of new chapters from these events. The bottom line is when you are able to attract a large group of Florida Tech graduates in a venue where they can interact and reconnect, the result is they want to get involved and help their alma mater. Of course, each generation of graduates has different memories of their college years and how “FIT” or Florida Tech was like in their day and that shapes their perspectives. But there is always common ground each generation shares as alumni and that is what shines through at the receptions and that is very powerful. I should point out we have seen an increase in attendance at all our receptions this past year, and so I think the word is getting out that they are worth attending.

Q: You also had a significant increase in attendance at the Homecoming Banquet last year?

That is correct. It was the best-attended homecoming banquet, except for the 50th anniversary, that the alumni association has hosted. We had 264 guests joins us in the Panther Dining Hall for the cocktail hour, dinner and awards ceremony. We are hoping to attract over 300 alumni and friends to this year’s banquet, which will once again be a great night of renewing friendships, celebrating Florida Tech and highlighting the achievements of our alumni.



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Nostalgia

Fall marks the return to classes and the arrival of a new generation of Panthers during Orientation. Flashback to September 1984—when new students arrived on campus and checked in at the Hedgecock gym.

Go Green, Get Online!

To see more photos and videos, visit *Florida Tech TODAY* online at:

today.fit.edu



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