

Florida Tech TODAY

A magazine for Alumni and Friends of Florida Institute of Technology

SPRING 2012

CARmax

NOTHING BUT NET-WORKING!

TOM FOLLIARD JR. '89

IN THIS ISSUE >

PASSION FOR SPACE—AND SMALLNESS
SERENDIPITY OF THE SINGING FISH
LESSONS LEARNED IN PERSEVERANCE
UNFORGIVING FUN

President's Perspective

Dear Florida Tech Alumni and Friends,

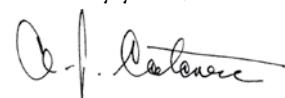
It was Pablo Picasso who said, "Action is the foundational key to all success." Your university believes this deeply, and our alumni, students, faculty and staff are constantly in motion making contributions felt far and wide.

This issue's cover story profiling CarMax CEO Tom Folliard Jr. is a great example. I hope you enjoy reading about an alumnus who turned hard work on the basketball court into phenomenal success on the car lot. Determination and action are key ingredients to any success in life.

So is preparation. I was pleased to get the call this spring that Florida Tech was one of only 24 institutions among 300 schools selected to receive the first NCAA Division II Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence. This prestigious honor recognizes athletics programs with four-year Academic Success Rates (ASR) of 90 percent or more.

Action on the athletic courts. Action in the laboratories. Action in the classroom. We are a university community in constant motion, and that is a foundational key to our future success.

Sincerely yours,

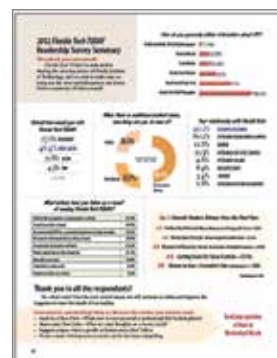


A.J. Catanese, Ph.D., FAICP
President



2012 READERSHIP SURVEY

Thanks to all who responded to the *Florida Tech TODAY*—Readership Survey and shared your insights for the magazine.



See the results on page 20

Florida Tech TODAY

<http://today.fit.edu>

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Marine biology may not be for everyone. But for Professor Jon Shenker, it's life.

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Feedback From Our Readers

Welcome to our revitalized “Mailbag” section, “Two Cents,” where we publish reader feedback to Florida Tech TODAY. Response to our recent readership survey indicated you would like to see a return of this section. Dwindling correspondence prompted its retirement, but we are happy to revive it and welcome your input on the magazine. *Have a comment or opinion you'd like to share? Email us at fltechtoday@fit.edu.*

Volunteer Spirit

In response to our story about industry leaders volunteering in the department of electrical and computer engineering, an alumnus reached out to Gretchen Sauerman, director of corporate giving, about participating in future events.



Hot Topic



Business Scientist

“I have been using the term ‘Process Engineering’ for two years. Many people at work didn’t get it. Some thought I’m making up words to legitimize the extensive work I was doing—‘creating a position.’ Then, when we cut 89% of our dependency on paper, automated all of our financial tracking, consolidated seven offline databases into one online data warehouse, and moved six admins to more important positions, my management started understanding it. Money speaks, I guess.

People say you either become a scientist or a business person—I believe in Business Science, and I’m excited to see someone else understands it.”

Amer Numan '07

Community Banking Client Solutions, FIS

Survey Summary

See a recap of responses to the 2012 Florida Tech TODAY Readership Survey on page 20.

It’s a Bird, It’s a Plane—It’s a Space Vehicle!

Just as the advent of the aerial age more than 100 years ago led to new safety regulations, the 21st century introduction of commercial space vehicles (CSVs) leads to unanswered and even unasked questions. How are CSVs to be part of the national airspace system? To begin asking this and related questions, a Florida Tech research team received almost \$90,000 in FAA funding, matched by Space Florida, for work that is well under way.

Florida Tech Professor Emeritus **Nat Villaire** and his team are researching the methodology to begin this integration.

“We are identifying top-level, pertinent questions which must be answered if commercial space vehicle operations are to integrate into the national airspace system using the existing air traffic control system,” said Villaire. “Our objectives are to examine the airspace-related Federal Air Regulations and FAA air traffic control orders for compatibility with commercial space vehicle operations.”

The team will build a guide for the FAA to help the organization address and analyze resulting issues.

Florida Tech team members include **Nicole Maillet** and **Nicholas Kasdaglis**, research assistants; **John Deaton**, professor of aeronautics; **Samuel Durrance**, professor of physics and space sciences; **Daniel Kirk**, associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering; and **Tristan Fiedler**, associate vice president for research.

Also, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) supports Florida Tech’s lead role with simulations in ERAU’s FAA-funded research laboratory. For more information, contact Villaire at natvillaire@cfl.rr.com.



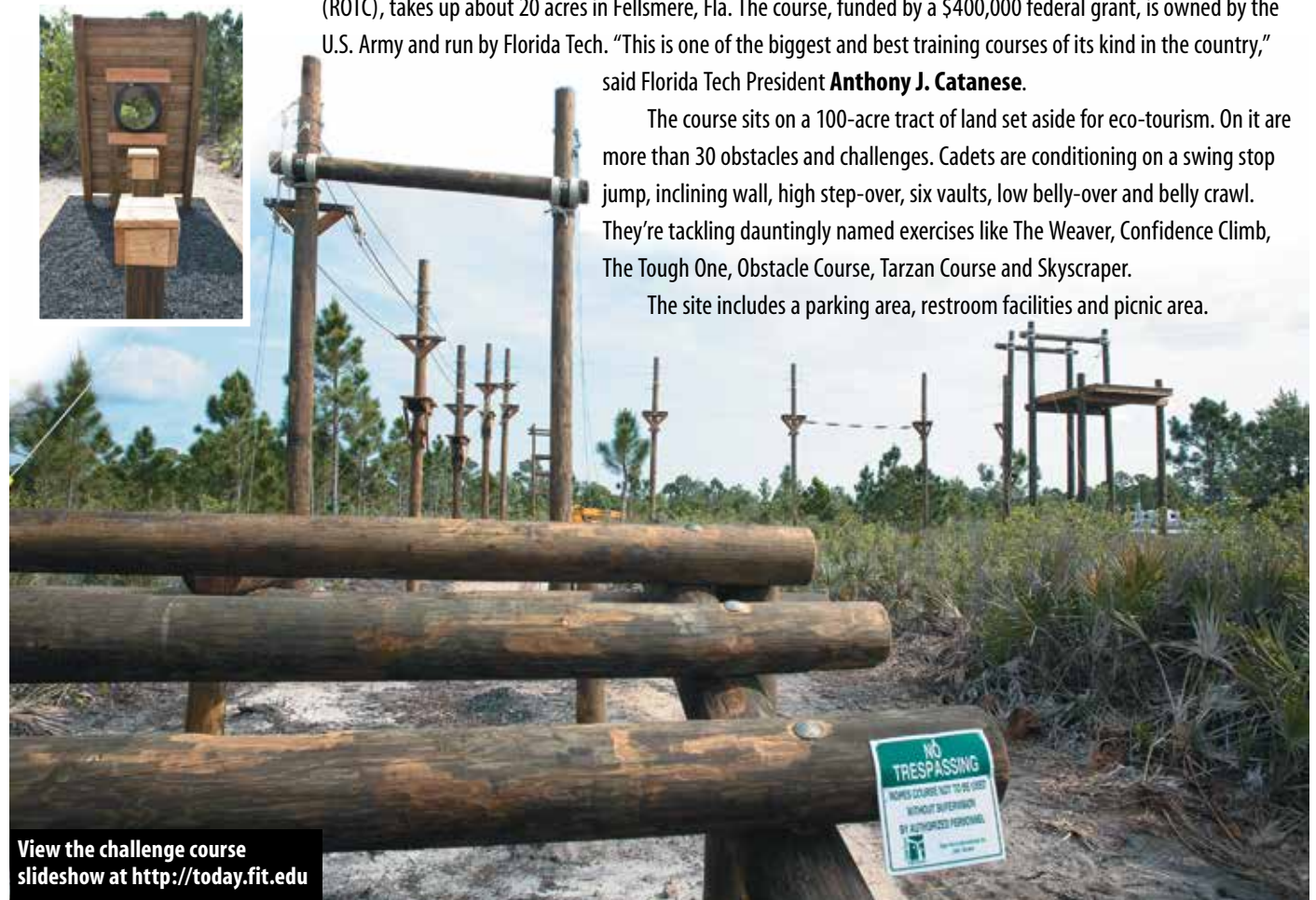
Nicole Maillet, John Deaton, Nat Villaire and Nicholas Kasdaglis

Choose Your Challenge

A new challenge course, mainly for use by the university’s Military Science Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), takes up about 20 acres in Fellsmere, Fla. The course, funded by a \$400,000 federal grant, is owned by the U.S. Army and run by Florida Tech. “This is one of the biggest and best training courses of its kind in the country,” said Florida Tech President **Anthony J. Catanese**.

The course sits on a 100-acre tract of land set aside for eco-tourism. On it are more than 30 obstacles and challenges. Cadets are conditioning on a swing stop jump, inclining wall, high step-over, six vaults, low belly-over and belly crawl. They’re tackling dauntingly named exercises like The Weaver, Confidence Climb, The Tough One, Obstacle Course, Tarzan Course and Skyscraper.

The site includes a parking area, restroom facilities and picnic area.



View the challenge course slideshow at <http://today.fit.edu>

Well-funded Researcher

Department of Computer Science Associate Professor **Marco Carvalho** brought over \$220,000 to the university through three funded projects in early 2012.



Marco Carvalho

First, Carvalho received more than \$123,000 from the Department of Defense. This contract supports his work in designing advanced computer network systems capable of dynamically changing configuration and structure to deter cyber attacks. He is collaborating on this project with the Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition (IHMC).

Second, Rockwell Collins Inc. awarded him almost \$66,000 to collaborate on the design of advanced new methods for cognitive networking and electronic warfare.

Third, \$32,000 from the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory funds work that has at its core designing, implementing and testing new hybrid wireless emulation environments. This project is also in collaboration with the IHMC.

Carvalho is affiliated with Florida Tech's Human-Centered Design Institute, the IHMC and is a member of the Center for Applied Optimization at the University of Florida. He is also an associate editor of *IEEE Transactions on Systems, Man, and Cybernetics, Part B*.



Award Winner Gives Creative Writing Institute Keynote

Kicking off the department of humanities and communication's Fourth Annual Creative Writing Institute May 13–17 was keynote speaker Lynne Barrett. She won first place and the Gold Prize in the 2011 Florida Book Awards, General Fiction category, for *Maggies*.

Classes and lectures throughout the week covered literary journalism, Internet publishing, the short story, the novel, science fiction, beginning fiction, flash fiction, memoir writing and other genres, such as poetry, playwriting, songwriting, thriller and mystery writing, comics and film.

Of special note, author of the ethical vampire series and last year's keynote speaker, Susan Hubbard, taught a novel-writing class and 2010 institute keynote speaker John Dufresne taught a course in flash-fiction—never before offered at the institute.

For more information, visit <http://411.fit.edu/cwi>.

'iPhones in Space' Coming This Summer

Hosted by Florida Tech and NASA Kennedy Space Center this summer, the International Space University/Space Studies Program (ISU) will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2012. Also, the

Our Beemat Islands in the Sun

The buzz around campus is that people appreciate the beauty added by the floating plant islands in the stormwater pond in front of the Allen S. Henry Building. Those flowery islands, supported by beemats, offer more than aesthetic appeal; they serve a purpose.

"Our ponds are too rich in nutrients because of the lawns around them," said **Mark Bush**, professor of biological sciences. "We need to reduce fertilizer applications and remove nutrients from the ponds. The beemat island is a first experimental step in that direction."

With a commission from Trustee **Elizabeth J. (Jonni) Swann**, Steve Beeman, Beemats owner, installed the beemats in 2011. "The beemat allows plants to take up and store nutrients in their tissues naturally," said Beeman. Beemats are made of interlocking foam rubber mats that can accommodate any species of emergent aquatic plants in perforated pots.

Regulatory agencies may soon limit the use of harmful chemicals to control algae. So why wait? Florida Tech, true to its trailblazing tradition, isn't waiting.



Commencement Times Two

On May 5, for the first time in many, many years, the Florida Tech Spring Commencement took place in two ceremonies. The first ceremony, at 9:30 a.m., was for undergraduates receiving degrees; the second, for graduate students, was at 2 p.m.

The increasing number of graduates is the reason; 650 with their friends and families received diplomas this day. The actual number of graduates was over 1,000. The numbers in 2011 were growing too large to accommodate everyone comfortably in one ceremony.

"The time has come to do this for the comfort and convenience of the graduates, their families and friends," said Registrar Charlotte Young.

Space Studies Program (ISU/SSP12) session on the Space Coast will be the 25th to convene from June 4 to Aug. 3.

The SSP offers participants a unique and comprehensive education covering all aspects of space programs and enterprises. About 130 students are expected for ISU/SSP12. For more



information, visit www.isunet.edu.

A highlight will be the free TEDx (technology, entertainment and design) lectures July

6, from 9 a.m. to noon, at the Gleason Performing Arts Center on the Florida Tech campus. Florida Tech alumni and the general public may attend.

The TEDx invited speakers include ISU alumni Michael Potter on "Geeks without Frontiers" and Brian Rishikof on "iPhones in Space" as well as NASA astronaut Col. Ron Garan on "Fragile Oasis." Also scheduled are musician Davy Knowles and Gia performance art. For more information, visit www.ted.com/pages/about_tedx.

Additionally, Florida Tech, as hosting organization, seeks sponsorships to help underwrite the costs of bringing TEDx to campus. To lend support and for more information, contact **Delilah Caballero** at dcaballe@fit.edu.

Board Welcomes Travis Proctor

Travis Proctor, CEO of ndtArtemis and co-founder of ndtHOST, was named a new member of the Florida Tech board of trustees at the January meeting. He earned a bachelor's degree in computer science information systems from the university in 1998, graduating first in his class.

Proctor founded Artemis in 1995, while a sophomore at Florida Tech. The company employs 34 people and provides IT department services to clients throughout the Central Florida region from its offices in Melbourne. Always an entrepreneur, Proctor co-founded his first company, a computer support business, while a high school junior in his home community of Montrose, Colo.

Recipient of community honors, Proctor's firm has been selected as Melbourne Regional Chamber of East Central Florida Small Business of the Year and Cocoa Beach Area Chamber Business of the Year. Proctor has been honored as one of Brevard's top four emerging leaders under 40, a Space Coast Economic Development Council "Super Hero of Industry," and the first inductee of the Montrose High School Hall of Fame. He also earned a Florida Tech Alumni Association GOLD Award.



Travis Proctor '98

Croaking Good for Healthy Habitats

Where frogs and toads flourish so do healthy habitats. To identify these habitats and keep one hop ahead of emerging ecological issues, Florida Tech researchers are creating a frog call recognition application. Funded by a National Science Foundation grant of more than \$348,000, the project makes novel use of mobile devices and local youths.

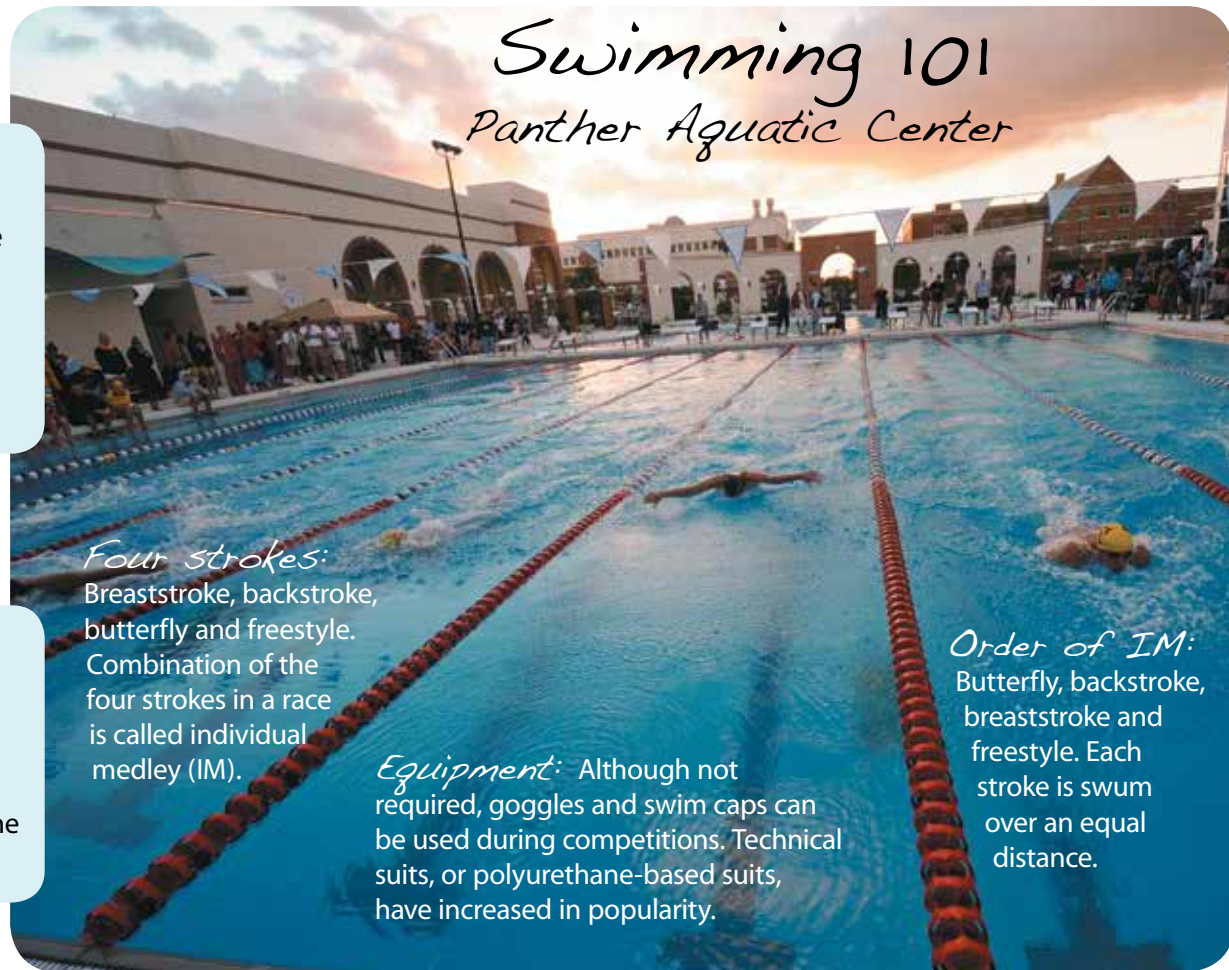


The project is led by **Mark Bush**, professor of biological sciences. **Eraldo Ribeiro** and **Ronaldo Menezes**, both Florida Tech associate professors

Continued on page 9

Swimming 101

Panther Aquatic Center



Course:

Competition pools may be short course (25 yards or 25 meters) or long course (50 meters).

Events:

Range from 50 meters to 1,500 meters, which is considered the mile event.

Four strokes:

Breaststroke, backstroke, butterfly and freestyle. Combination of the four strokes in a race is called individual medley (IM).

Equipment: Although not required, goggles and swim caps can be used during competitions. Technical suits, or polyurethane-based suits, have increased in popularity.

Order of IM:

Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle. Each stroke is swum over an equal distance.

Important skills: Technique, strength, core strength, race strategy and coordination.

Rules: Technical rules are in place to provide fair and equitable conditions among swimmers for competition. Officials are present at meets to enforce the rules.

Meets: Tend to include competitions in all four strokes, the individual medley (IM) and relays. The meets can occur indoors or outdoors between two or three teams.

Race: Swimmers line up on the starting blocks. The race begins on the official's signal. Most races are timed using a computerized system, which includes touch pads installed on at least one end of the pool.

Collegiate swimming season: Training begins in September and competitions can run through the championship season in March.

FIT's practices: Each practice includes 6,000 yards (240 lengths) to 7,000 yards (280 lengths) of swimming. Occasionally, the teams will practice twice a day.

Training: Can consist of pool workouts and dry land training, such as core exercises and weight lifting.

FLORIDATECHSPORTS.COM

Calling all masters swimmers!

Florida Tech head swimming coach Jeni Ritter is compiling an alumni database for current masters swimmers who graduated from Florida Tech. If you're interested in receiving updates on the Panther swimming program, email Coach Ritter at jritter@fit.edu.

Continued from page 7

of computer science, will develop the application and students will be involved in beta testing and in recording frog calls for a sound library.

The application will automate frog voice recognition to identify and map where frogs live. Because it will work on popular mobile devices such as iPods, cell phones and tablets, the potential is great for an "army" of volunteers to take to the field and support the effort.

"There are about 30 species of frogs and toads living locally and about 100 in the country. Our application will cover all species in the nation," said Bush. Scientific evidence suggests that faltering amphibian populations may presage wider ecological problems, making it important to document where species are most affected.

The web domain is WhatFrog.org



Ali Wiegand, Sam Kozaitis and Becky Werle

Marathon Benefits The Scott Center, Inaugurates Running Club

The Scott Center for Autism Treatment got a leg up when partial proceeds from the Melbourne and Beaches Music Marathon, Feb. 4-5, were received. The event and online fundraising campaign with Crowdrise raised \$2,000 for the center.

The Scott Center launched a running club for the first time last fall. While some members were just happy to finish their 5K, 8K, half or full marathon race, others were awarded for their top finishes.

In the 8K race were **Becky Werle**, running club trainer and Florida Tech graduate student in the Applied Behavioral Analysis program, who finished first in her age group; **Ali Wiegand**, a Scott Center behavior analyst, finished third in the same age group; and **Sam Kozaitis**, department head,

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for Ages 3-5, and Grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6
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www.foosanerartmuseum.org

Florida Artists
From the Permanent Collection
June 2-July 8, 2012
Foosaner Art Museum
www.foosanerartmuseum.org

Florida in Fabric
May 19-Aug. 18, 2012
Ruth Funk Center for Textile Arts
<http://textiles.fit.edu>

Visit the websites for information on exhibits, lectures, workshops and classes offered.

upcoming arts events

electrical and computer engineering, finished second in his age group. **Susan Erickson**, clinical operations, The Scott Center, ran in the 5K race and finished third in her age group. Special thanks go to *Florida TODAY*, 107.1 A1A and ESPN 95.9 radio for marketing support, and the Florida Tech football players who worked the water tables.

Rocket Society Flies High

Eight members of the Florida Tech Student Rocket Research Society (SRRS) earned certification earlier this year from the National Association of Rocketry. Seven of the students earned a level one license in high-powered rocket flying. The eighth earned a level two certification for his rocket, which reached 6,000 feet and for AGL (above-ground-level) flight and recovery. The students designed, built and successfully flew their own rockets.



The Florida Tech Student Rocket Research Society

Students earning level one certification were **Joe Bussenger, Alan Cruz-Gerena, Kristen Ericson, Brock Hedlund, Gabrielle Leesman, Matt Levy** and **David Rollins**. **Jake Kafphamer** earned a level two certification.

The 60-member organization is designing a large-scale rocket and launch program, developed according to requirements for the Carmack prize. The prize is a \$10,000 award for a group that can launch a rocket to over 100,000 feet—very high for an amateur rocket—and log GPS data.

"We aim to launch the rocket over 150,000 feet and have received significant funding from Northrop Grumman to move forward on the project," said society president Bussenger.

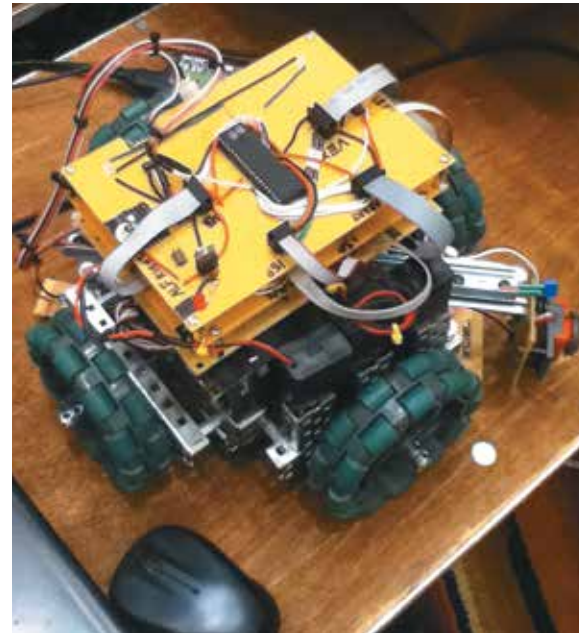
"Using rocket flights for research is a phenomenal method to test extreme environments, capture atmospheric and solar data, and perhaps provide short-time orbit insertion," said Bussenger. "We hope to show the benefits of using a rocket's unique acceleration and flight profile for experiments in micro-G environments."

Strong Showing at SoutheastCon

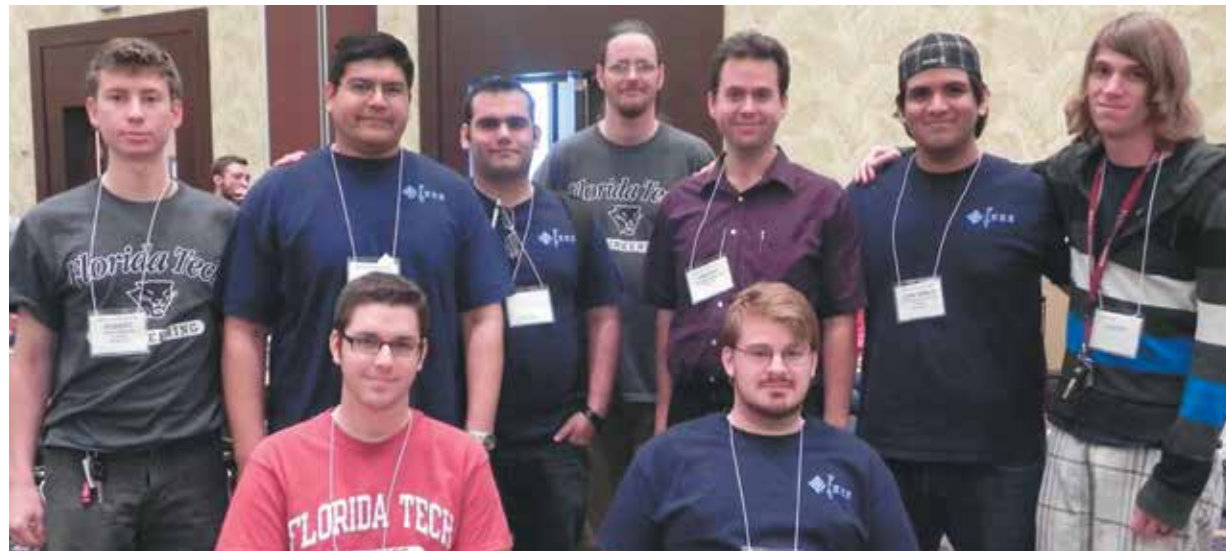
For the first time in several years, the Florida Tech student chapter of IEEE competed in the 2012 Southeastern Conference Hardware Competition, an IEEE robotics competition for student chapters throughout the southeastern United States. Florida Tech placed 18th among the 52 teams, outperforming schools like USE, Clemson, Embry-Riddle, Virginia Tech and Georgia Tech.

Mentored by **Tim Atkinson** '03, '08 M.S., the team has already begun planning for next year's competition.

"It takes years of consistent financial support and motivated students for a school to go from no showing to top placement in these competitions," said **Jessica Beahn** '03, '07 M.S., chair of the IEEE Melbourne Section. "I believe that this is the beginning of even stronger placement by the Florida Tech IEEE Student Team and the prestige for Florida Tech that goes with top placement in competitions."



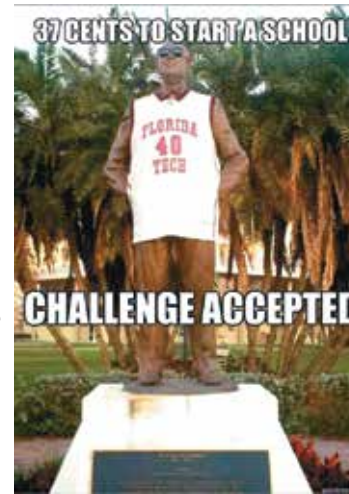
Above: The teams prepares their robot, WALLE, for competition at the IEEE Southeastern Conference. Below: The Florida Tech team is (back row, from left): Robert Ritter, John Castro, David Alvarado, Robert Sheffield, mentor Tim Atkinson, Juan Pablo Leon, Kyle Desrosier, (front row, from left) Evan Stoner and Michael Finch.



etc.

Meme Me

Pop culture + pervasive technology + social media = FIT Memes, a student-run Facebook page full of comic relief and camaraderie. Inspired by the Internet phenomenon, FIT Memes distills some of the funniest aspects of FIT student life into joyful bits of absurdity. www.facebook.com/FITMemes



Full of Fest

From festive flowers to exotic aromas, spring fills the campus with festivals. (above left) Botanical Fest brightened the Crawford Green on March 3, 2012, welcoming an estimated 4,000 visitors to campus. (above right) The Sixth Annual International Festival brought tastes, sights and sounds from around the world to the Panthereum on Feb. 25, 2012.



Community Zumba

Panther Football players swung their tails for a community cause at Promise in Brevard's Zumbathon on St. Patrick's Day. Community service is a key component of Head Coach Steve Englehart's vision for the team.

Hawk Haven

A pair of Red-shouldered Hawks called campus their home for a few months this spring, demanding a private oasis in a palm tree along the public path to the Olin Life Sciences Building. When their unneighborly behavior became a serious safety issue, officials from the Florida Wildlife Hospital, acting in concert with the Audubon Center for Birds of Prey and with all proper permissions from the federal government, successfully relocated the unlikely Panther Cubs to a foster facility in Maitland.



Pinnacle of Pilot Training

A B737-800 Flight Training Device (FTD) shell gifted to the College of Aeronautics (COA) by Q4 Services has led to a partnership that will provide Florida Tech aviation students with unique and valuable opportunities for years to come.

Q4, which conducts upgrades, modifications, relocations, repairs and refurbishments on all types of simulation hardware, had no practical use for the FTD shell. "We had initially planned to use it as a demo," said Martin Rolls, manager of development and technology at Q4. "But we just got too busy."

So the device sat at Q4 for a while. That is, until Dave Santo, co-owner and founder of another company, AeroStar Training Services, LLC, noticed it and suggested Q4 make a charitable donation of the device to Florida Tech. That was just the beginning.

After several meetings in early 2011 between the two companies and FIT Office of Development Assistant Vice President **Beverly Sanders** and COA Assistant Professor **Peter Dunn**, it was apparent the benefit of the \$800,000 simulator would extend far beyond the gift-in-kind itself.

What emerged was a groundbreaking partnership between FIT and AeroStar, which resulted in the development of a one-of-a-kind academic program.

Now, Florida Tech flight students may enroll in a three-course airline pilot training sequence and graduate with a type rating—an industry certification that allows a pilot to fly a large jet airliner. The partnership program makes FIT the only university to offer type rating courses for academic credit.

For Santo, the partnership with FIT provides the answer to a question he and his partner Royce Jones have often asked themselves: "What can we do to take our resources and experiences and give back to the future of aeronautics?" Santo says he and Jones have both had fabulous careers in the industry, but are aware of the difficulties students face on their path to becoming pilots.

"There were no mentors to guide me to schools like FIT," he says. "This advanced training will allow FIT students to stand out much more than their competitors in interviews."

Dunn agrees that the partnership offers FIT students the edge in the professional world. "Partnering with a school that can provide advance training truly paves the way for a career as an airline pilot or in business aviation," he says. "Having a type rating is the crown jewel of pilot training."

The first two students to enroll in the program, **Juan Navarro** and **Sidney Callaghan**, completed their airline pilot courses this past April, each earning an Airbus A320 type rating.

Lisa M. Onorato



FIT students Sidney Callaghan and Juan Navarro earned Airbus A320 type ratings in April.

"Recently, the U.S. Congress mandated airline pilot standards for first officers. We are responding to what the new law intends. We want to give our graduates the ability to compete for major airline jobs. Students in this track graduate as crew members, not simply as pilots. Airline recruiters understand the difference, as well as the value of a type rating."

Aero-News Network
Quote of the Day by Peter Dunn

The Endowment Aquatic

Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink.

That phrase, coined more than 200 years ago, in the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, captures eloquently the issues facing civil engineers working in the field of water resources.

One alumnus hopes Florida Tech graduates will help address the humanitarian crisis. "Water is power," said **Amvrossios "Ross" Bagtzoglou '87 M.S.**, civil engineering. "Too much causes flooding and too little causes drought." Recently, Bagtzoglou pledged \$125,000, to be paid over 10 years, to create an endowment for graduate students studying water resources.

Alumni and friends are challenged to match Bagtzoglou's annual pledge payments, thereby doubling the strength of the endowment. Additionally, Florida Tech has also pledged a tuition remission match of three credit hours per semester, further enhancing the value of the gift.

Already, nearly a dozen supporters have donated to the endowment, and more are encouraged to step up, said **Ashok Pandit**, professor and head of the department of civil engineering. "Establishing fellowships and research-related endowments creates instant credibility and prestige for the research being conducted in our department, both among peers and prospective students," said Pandit.

When fully endowed, the fund will top \$250,000. "We are most grateful for this visionary gift from Dr. Bagtzoglou, as well as the alumni, faculty and friends who have contributed to our annual challenge," said Pandit. For more information, or to make a gift to the A. C. Bagtzoglou Civil Engineering Fellowship Endowment for the Study of Water Resources, please email **Gretchen Sauerman** at gsauerman@fit.edu, or call (321) 674-6162.

Gretchen Sauerman



Amvrossios "Ross" Bagtzoglou '87 M.S. and President Anthony J. Catanese ink a 10-year commitment, creating a fellowship endowment that will attract the best and brightest graduate students to Florida Tech to study in the field of water resources.

Gift Receipt

In today's unsteady market with the volatility of the economy and the low interest rate environment, a defined income stream for life is attractive. A charitable gift annuity (CGA) is a simple contract between you and Florida Institute of Technology that offers a tax-advantaged way to provide income for yourself or someone you love. The amount of the payment is determined at the time the gift is made and will not fluctuate with the market. A CGA can even be established to benefit a friend or relative. Florida Institute of Technology follows the recommended annuity rates published by the American Council on Gift Annuities (ACGA). For more information, contact **Beverly Sanders**, assistant vice president, (321) 674-6155.

This information is not intended to be legal or financial advice. Consult a professional advisor to be sure that your estate or financial needs are addressed.

| Charitable Gift Annuity | | | | |
|---|-----------|---------|----------------------|----------------|
| Single Life Immediate Annuity, \$10,000 cash | | | | |
| Age | 2012 rate | Payment | Charitable deduction | Effective rate |
| 55 | 4.00% | \$400 | \$2,269 | 5.40% |
| 60 | 4.40% | \$440 | \$2,582 | 6.03% |
| 65 | 4.70% | \$470 | \$3,231 | 6.62% |
| 70 | 5.10% | \$510 | \$3,901 | 7.40% |
| 75 | 5.80% | \$580 | \$4,426 | 8.62% |
| 80 | 6.80% | \$680 | \$4,908 | 10.33% |
| 85 | 7.80% | \$780 | \$5,282 | 12.24% |
| Two Life Immediate Annuity, \$100,000 in securities with a cost basis of \$25,000 | | | | |
| 55/55 | 3.50% | \$3,500 | \$19,120 | 4.28% |
| 60/60 | 3.90% | \$3,900 | \$19,708 | 4.80% |
| 65/65 | 4.20% | \$4,200 | \$24,507 | 5.27% |
| 70/70 | 4.60% | \$4,600 | \$29,678 | 5.89% |
| 75/75 | 5.00% | \$5,000 | \$36,949 | 6.57% |
| 80/80 | 5.70% | \$5,700 | \$42,551 | 7.67% |
| 85/85 | 6.70% | \$6,700 | \$47,731 | 9.21% |

Note: Effective rate is for those who itemize their charitable deduction with a 28% tax rate, tax deduction based on 2.00% AFR, and quarterly payments.

Educational Altruism

What inspires you to give back to your community? This kind of question can be a tough one to answer for some, but ask Sarah Balda what inspires her and the Balda Family Foundation, and she will quickly tell you that it is the power of education to change a person's life.

The mission of the Balda Family Foundation is to motivate, inspire and educate academically promising, at-risk and underserved youth in Brevard County. Since 2007, the foundation has generously granted \$50,000 to Florida Tech in the form of scholarships for students in the College of Engineering and the College of Aeronautics.

It may appear the foundation simply doles out financial assistance and that is the end of the story, but it is not. "We want to get to know our scholarship recipients, foster a relationship with them, provide motivation and encouragement as they continue along their path of education, it's like being part of our extended family," said Balda.

By doing what is right for today's and tomorrow's generations of leaders, the Balda Family Foundation is leading the way to educating Brevard's best and brightest and FIT is honored to be part of that partnership.

Michelle Verkooy



Recipients of the 2011 Balda Family Foundation scholarships meet with members of the Balda family. From left: Rick Balda Jr.; Brandon Fontaine, student recipient; Jonathan Kucharyson, student recipient; Danielle Roy, student recipient; Dan Balda.

Corporate Connection

Ask any career counselors and they'll tell you: One of the best ways to find a good job is by networking, networking and more networking. A group of more than 30 engineering students recently had the opportunity to do just that—thanks to more than a dozen corporate partners.

The Missile, Space and Range Pioneers, an organization of retired aerospace workers, invited students from two senior design teams to present their projects to the National Space Club membership during a luncheon at Cape Canaveral. MSRP already supported the Lunabotics competition team and the Hybrid Rocket team with a generous cash gift, and followed up by helping the students get the chance to meet industry leaders along the Space Coast.

Once the word got out, other companies stepped up by hosting additional engineering students at their corporate tables during the luncheon. Delaware North, the company that provides bus transportation to Kennedy Space Center (KSC) Visitors Complex, teamed with KSC to donate the use of a charter bus to take the student delegation to Cape Canaveral. Additionally, luncheon tickets were donated by Boeing, Lockheed, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, United Space Alliance, URS, ATK, Qinetiq, Chenega Security, Space Coast Launch Services, Abacus, Sierra Lobo, Yang Enterprises, BRPH, Indyne, The Aerospace Corporation and United Launch Alliance.

"Seeing these corporate leaders host students at this networking event was heartwarming," said **Gretchen Sauerma**n, director of corporate giving at Florida Tech. "So many of these organizations have financially underwritten senior design projects, and we tried to match those students with their sponsors wherever possible."



from the FTAA President

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

Summer is upon us, and the semiannual board meeting has come and gone. On March 16, the board held a retreat, facilitated by Chuck Loring, a national leader and consultant in board development. Topics included: optimizing the size of the board, orientation training for new/existing board members, improving participation and attendance of board members, responsibilities of board members, and the addition of task forces to the organization.

Those in attendance were enthusiastic about the retreat and carried that spirit to the semiannual meeting, where a number of task forces were formed to accomplish specific goals.

As stated in our bylaws, "The purpose of the Alumni Association is to promote a lifelong relationship of mutual benefits and assistance to both the university and alumni." We want each of you to feel you are a welcomed part of the organization, and that we are here to serve you and the university. One part of that service will be to continue our fundraising efforts for the FTAA and the university. There are a number of ways to get involved: volunteer for board activities, work with the Office of Admissions to find quality prospective students and student-athletes in your area, participate with active alumni chapters or start a new chapter. We are working on the challenge of making our online degree alumni feel that they are as much a part of our family as those who attended the "bricks and mortar" campuses. So, we are looking to increase *your* participation. If you have any comments or suggestions, I *welcome* your input.

In closing, I welcome *all alumni* to join the alumni association. There are *no dues*. All you need do is register! Our goal is to provide you with information and services that bring *you* value, and to further the participation of the alumni in the activities of the university and the alumni association (including our chapters). In order to do this, we need a valid email address for you. We also encourage you to support the association by becoming a sustaining member, a Panther4Life member, or contributing what you can to the association. It is my duty to ensure that the FTAA serves your best interests!



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Houston Area Alumni Chapter Update

Join In—The Houston Area Alumni Chapter is new and growing. Interested in joining? Email FITalumniHouston@gmail.com.



Picnic in the Park

The Houston Area Alumni Chapter met for a Sunday afternoon picnic on March 28, enjoying a great turnout and perfect weather. Alumni in attendance included Derek Novak '94, Steve Barrow '94, Todd Allen '07, Pete Sack '86, Stephanie Lee '98, James Latimer '05 and Tyler Robbins '08. The group included a nice mix of recent graduates, spouses and children (who had a great time running around the park and playing with Steve's dog, Obi).

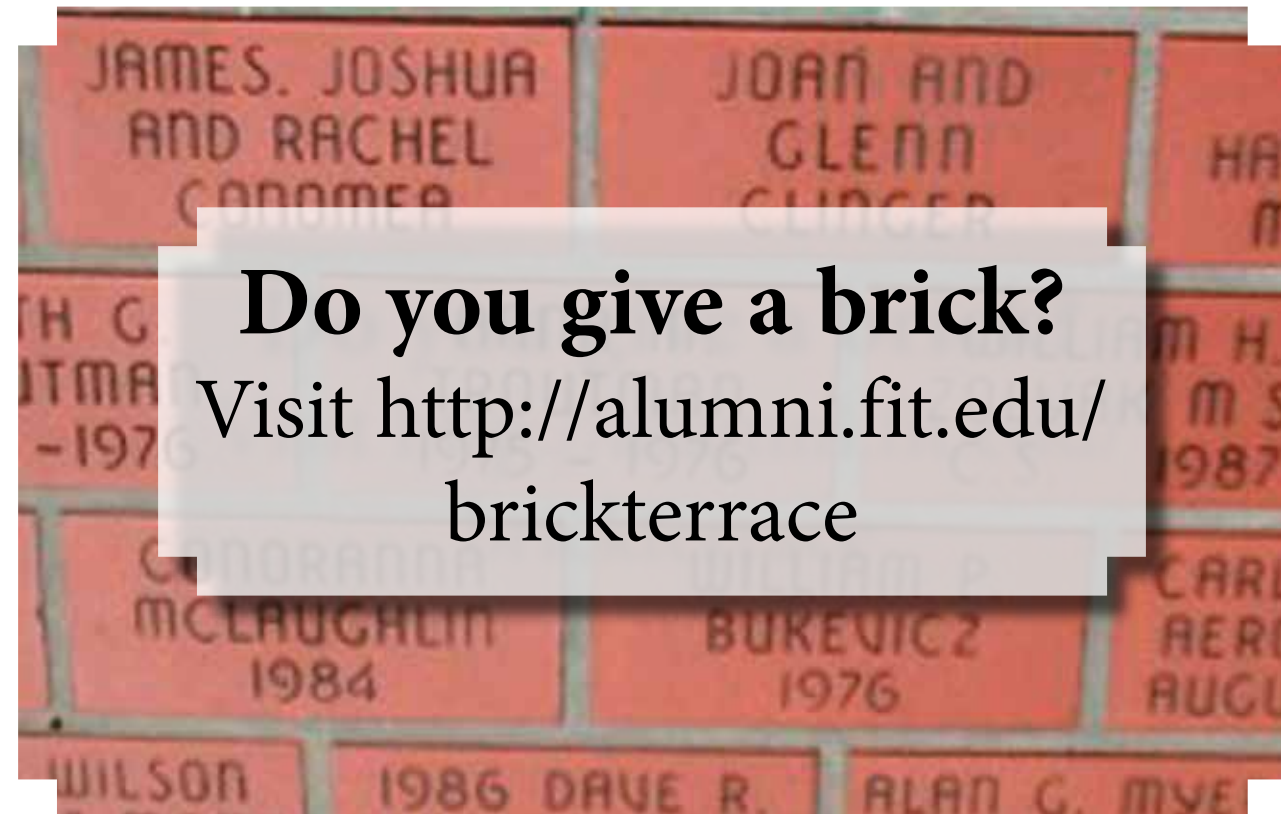
The tasty fare included grilled hot dogs with all the fixings, side dishes and desserts. Though the group brought along various games, the most popular activity of the laid-back afternoon was just sitting and chatting—reminiscing on the FIT days and sharing stories of people's latest adventures. When the afternoon ended, all agreed to do this again—after the brutal heat of summer in Houston passes!



Walk for a Cause

In February, the chapter participated in a walk to raise funds for the It's My Heart Foundation—dedicated to heart defect research, treatment and education. Derek and Laura Novak's daughter has a heart condition, so this event has a personal connection for the chapter. Despite cold weather, torrential rain and severe thunderstorm warnings, several alumni and their families came out to support the cause. The team raised \$1,465, and IMH raised a total of \$195,069!

Alumni pictured include Todd Allen, Lindsay Quandt '09, Steve Barrow, Derek and Laura Novak.



Do you give a brick?
Visit <http://alumni.fit.edu/brickterrace>

Washington, D.C.



1) Michael Jeck '91, Thomas Ervin '88, Chris Deegan '97 2) Tristen Katz '10, President Catanese 3) Deborah Bennett '11, Mike Bennett 4) Tom Barlow '96, Bino Campanini 5) Stacey Bach, Todd West '95 6) Virginia Barry '95, Kristen Stelzer '96 7) Ivan Montalvo '09, Christina Nutting '07, Chris Fernando '02, Terry Ann Hayes 8) Jack Sabba '03, Doug Second, Nicholas Michaels '08, Daniela Natali '11, James Susini '11

Orlando



1) David Simon '98, Bino Campanini, Wilbur Mathurin '99
 2) Rebecca Lambert '91, John Lambert 3) Nathan Falk '96
 4) Doug DiCarlo '94, Steven Cotton '92 5) Leslie Hielema '84, Gaby Hawat '85
 6) Aziza Baan '05, Nikhil Arora '07, Joe Baan '04 7) Duane De Freese '81, Alumni Association Board of Directors, Bino Campanini

Baseball Alumni Reunion



1) Tim Wakefield greets the baseball team 2) Fred Hood '95, Tom Finney '91 3) Dave Schwefler '93, Tim Wakefield, Brian Crane '91, Chad Shultz '96 4) Janet Stephens '94, Jeff Faino '96, Tim Wakefield 5) Joel Stephens '93, Phil Campbell, Jeff Faino '96, Peter Labbe '92, Jim McGinnis, Paul Ouellette '92, Brian Crane '91

San Diego

Members of the newly formed San Diego Alumni Chapter with Alumni Director Bino Campanini celebrating their first chapter happy hour.

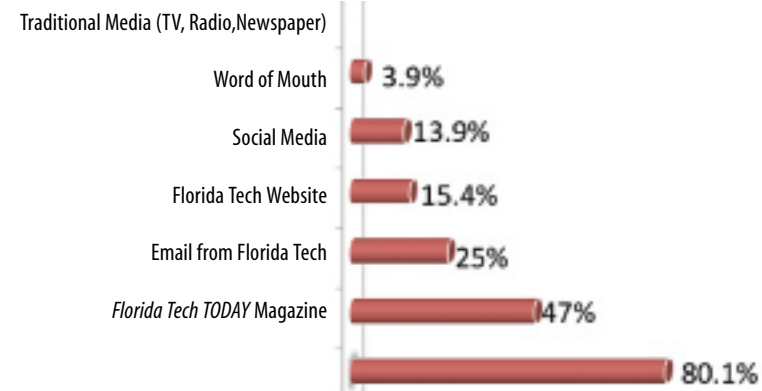


2012 Florida Tech TODAY Readership Survey Summary

We asked, you answered!

Florida Tech TODAY is dedicated to sharing the amazing stories of Florida Institute of Technology, and we want to make sure we bring you the news and information you desire. Here's a summary of what you said:

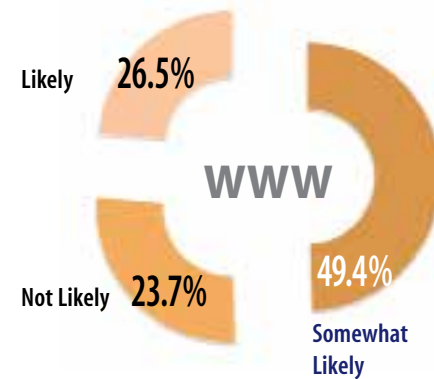
How do you generally obtain information about Florida Tech?



Overall how would you rate Florida Tech TODAY:

27.2% EXCELLENT
46.5% VERY GOOD
21.8% GOOD
4.5% FAIR
0% POOR

When there is additional content online, how likely are you to view it?



Your relationship with Florida Tech:

90.2% ALUMNUS/ALUMNA
60.2% ATTENDED MELBOURNE CAMPUS
12.6% DONOR
10.3% ATTENDED OFF-SITE CAMPUS
9.6% ATTENDED ONLINE
6.9% FACULTY/STAFF
3.4% PARENT
0.8% ATTENDED/DID NOT GRADUATE

What actions have you taken as a result of reading Florida Tech TODAY?

| | |
|---|-------|
| Visited the magazine's or university's website | 42.4% |
| Saved an article or issue | 36.8% |
| Recommended FIT to a potential student or family member | 32.6% |
| Discussed or forwarded an article or issue | 24.8% |
| Contacted a classmate or friend | 23.6% |
| Made a donation to the university | 21.3% |
| Attended an event | 19.4% |
| Submitted a class note | 8.5% |
| Volunteered for an activity | 5.0% |

Top 5 Favorite Feature Stories from the Past Year:

- #5 Panthers Pay It Forward (Rebecca Mazzone, Sara Fieberg and Vic Ross)—30.5%
- #4 Phenomenal Forecast: Meteorologist Kassandra Crimi—33.6%
- #3 Research in Recovery: Florida Tech Tackles Oil Spill Aftermath—50.8%
- #2 Getting Ready for Some Football—51.1%
- #1 Mission to Mars: A Scientist's Tale (John Deaton)—55%

Total Responses: 333

Thank you to all the respondents!

So, what's next? Over the next several issues, we will continue to refine and improve the magazine to meet the needs of our readers.

Interested in contributing? Help us discover the stories you want to read:

- **Send in a Class Note**—What's new in your personal or professional life? Include photos!
- **Share your Two Cents**—What are your thoughts on a recent article?
- **Suggest a topic**—Have a profile or feature story idea? Tell us.
- **Write a story**—First-person accounts can be the most compelling.

Email your questions or ideas to fltechtoday@fit.edu

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Prizes!
The best photo will receive a Panther Pride Package that includes fun Florida Tech gear.

MIT-205-412

NOTHING BUT NET-WORKING

Forget the golf course! For CarMax CEO Tom Folliard Jr., business connections begin at center court. The leader of the largest used car retailer in the world ascended from small-town obscurity to Fortune 500 success with a basketball in hand.



With a new baby on the way and a freshly earned business degree, Panther Basketball Hall of Famer Tom Folliard Jr. '89 realized it was time to buckle down and get a job. He had always done his best work on the basketball court, and as fate would have it, it was his key to career success as well.

A fellow baller at the Grant Street Community Center court was an auto wholesaler who bought and sold cars at auction. He needed a driver, and Folliard needed a job.

"I was kind of like an independent broker," explains Folliard. "That's how I got into the car business. I drove all over the state of Florida and bought and sold cars."

This was wholesale, not retail. Folliard interfaced with dealers and auction houses, not individuals. It wasn't glamorous—he earned straight commission with no benefits—yet the charismatic basketball star was creating his shot.



As a Panther Basketball stand-out, Tom Folliard Jr. was inducted in the Florida Tech Sports Hall of Fame in 1996. The 1987–88 Men's Basketball Team included Coach Tom Folliard Sr. (left) and his sons Kevin Folliard (front row, first from left) and Tom Folliard Jr. (front row, fourth from left).

Around the same time, bygone home electronics giant Circuit City had decided to diversify their retail business. They wanted to get into used cars, and they needed a buyer—someone with the know-how to build their used car inventory.

While conducting market research, the CEO of Circuit City read a trade article ranking Jim Rathmann Chevrolet as the biggest used car dealer in the country (in little Melbourne, Fla., imagine that!). Eager to learn the tips to their success, a team of Circuit City executives traveled to Melbourne to investigate.

Turns out, the figures reported in the article were wholesale, not retail, and the sales were made by Folliard's broker gig, which had an informal partnership with the dealership for financing.

Folliard met with the unidentified executives (who were keeping the Circuit City thing quiet) and tried to sell them some cars.

"They said they were going to buy a ton of cars, like 400 cars a month, which was ridiculous. I could tell they didn't really know what they were talking about. And, they looked like they had money. They were wearing suits, and I was wearing an FIT practice jersey and flip-flops," laughs Folliard, in his fast-talking, light-hearted Bostonesque swagger. "It was like the trifecta. I showed them around the shop and tried to convince them they should buy cars from me!"

A few months later, the mystery executives called with a job offer—they were a Fortune 500 company expanding into the car business and they needed a buyer. But ... the job was in Richmond, Va.

The Boston native, who had once aspired to return to the Northeast, had now comfortably settled into a

Melbourne Beach home—complete with half-court basketball court, painted Celtics green—and life was good. He wasn't interested.

They insisted. All expenses paid. Fly to Richmond for an interview and see what you think.

He agreed.

Unexpectedly, Folliard was among four finalists of a national recruitment search for the first CarMax buyer. And a pick-up game helped seal the deal.

"On my second interview, they told me to bring my sneakers," says Folliard. "I played basketball at the corporate headquarters with a bunch of Circuit City people, two of whom I later hired on at CarMax and are in top leadership positions today."

Folliard went to work for CarMax in 1992, a year before CarMax even existed.

"We actually had a name-the-company contest," he quips. "The winner got a set of steak knives."

Market research, focus groups and industry analysis helped the fledging enterprise craft its core concept—no hassle, no haggle car buying. And selling.

In the past 20 years, Folliard has grown from senior buyer to director of purchasing to vice president of merchandising to senior vice president of store operations to executive vice president of store operations and, currently, president and chief executive officer. In that same span, CarMax has grown

from one superstore in Richmond with a 500-vehicle inventory to 108 superstores nationwide earning \$10 billion in revenue.

So, what does the CEO of this automotive powerhouse do on a daily basis?

"It's different every single day," he admits.

He travels a lot—meeting with investors, interacting with employees, attending board meetings, surveying real estate possibilities for new stores—Portland, Seattle, Denver, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles.

"I've been to 65 stores in the last 18 months," he says. "I grew up in our stores. I was the original buyer in our original store. Of our 16,000 employees, 95 percent of them are in our stores. I think it's really important to be visible and to be approachable."

His casual, carefree manner certainly puts people at ease. (He still rarely wears a suit.)

Yet despite his corporate successes, he credits basketball as the winning advantage.

"Basketball was my chance at a college education," he says. The sport helped him connect with the right people at the right times and filled the role you might expect golf to monopolize among the corporate elite.

And, it's really no surprise. Basketball is in Folliard's blood. His father **Tom Folliard Sr.**, FIT's head men's basketball coach from 1984 to 1991, is included in six basketball halls of fame, as both a player and coach. His brother **Kevin Folliard '90**

played Panther basketball. His wife **Mary Kispert Folliard '92** played Panther basketball. His son plays college basketball for Tufts University. His daughter plays high school basketball. And his two younger daughters, ages 10 and 8?

"I'm going to force them to play basketball, too," he jokes.

The 6-foot-3-inch family man still plays two to three times per week at his home court—adorned with the original backboard and score clock from the Hedgecock Gymnasium, where Folliard made his mark on the Panther record books. He's on the board of the National Association of Basketball Coaches Foundation. And, of course, he's an avid fan.

From small town wholesaler to Fortune 500 executive, Folliard has enjoyed great success—showing that hoop dreams don't always end on the court, but they might put you in the sky box.

Christena Callahan

This spring, Folliard returned to his alma mater as a visiting lecturer in the Nathan M. Bisk College of Business (left) and attended an SSC Tournament game at the Clemente Center (pictured at right with Head Coach Billy Mims).



CarMax STATS

Largest used car dealer in the world
Fortune magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" eight consecutive years

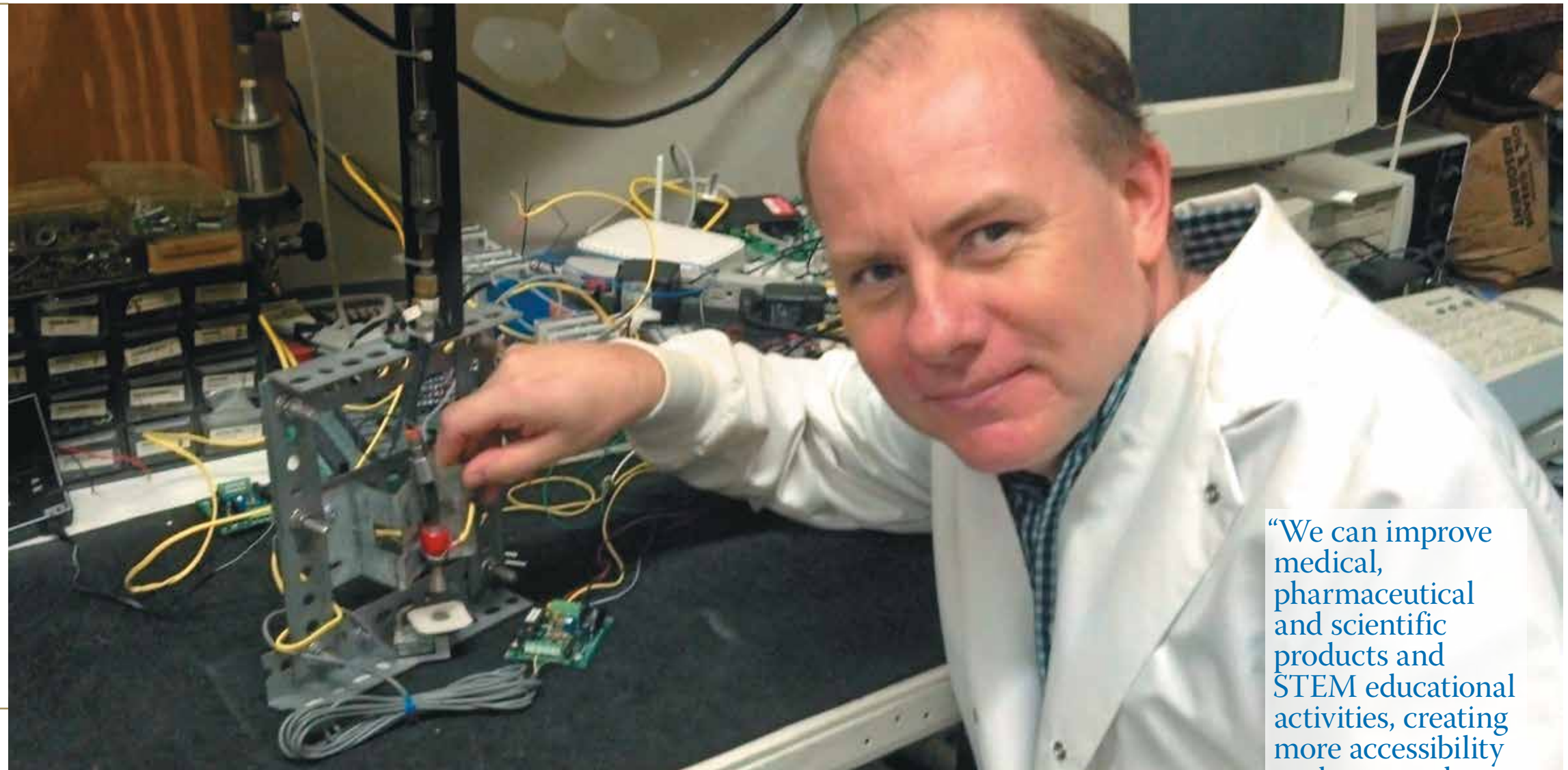
Aside from retail sales, CarMax also operates:

- A finance arm, which originates \$3.5 billion in financing a year (\$280 million in profits)
- A wholesale arm, which is the third largest auction chain in the United States with \$1.5 billion in revenue
- Entering a growth phase with plans to open 10 stores a year for the next four years

Don Platt:

Passion for Space—and Smallness

*The space shuttle may be gone, but the Space Coast stays true to its name. Florida Tech remains pre-eminent in space studies, on campus and at its Extended Studies Spaceport site in Titusville, while area and university researchers continue to pioneer space technology frontiers. An embodiment of the Space Coast scientist is doctoral student and entrepreneur **Don Platt** '97 M.S., '01 M.S.*



“We can improve medical, pharmaceutical and scientific products and STEM educational activities, creating more accessibility to the general public.”

Don Platt

Director of the Florida Tech Space Systems Master's Degree program, where he has taught since 1998, Platt is also completing a doctoral degree at the university's Human-Centered Design Institute. In 2000, he founded Micro Aerospace Solutions (MAS) Inc. to provide consulting and lower-cost engineering solutions for space and commercial products. He has expanded his company in the past year to now total seven workers, including three alumni, **Melissa Mierzwa** '05, **Dave Borzillo** '10 and **Kara Schmitt** '06, '09 M.S. Schmitt, a former student of Platt's, has doctoral studies under way and, like Platt, will soon claim three Florida Tech degrees.

The company's latest contract teams it with L'Garde on a NASA technology demonstration mission employing solar sail technology. The mission will test propellant-less navigation in deep space. MAS provides the spacecraft component guidance, power systems, control and communication for the solar sail of L'Garde. The ultra-thin sail will be seven times larger than any ever flown in space, using solar energy as a sailboat uses wind.

The MAS-L'Garde team was among three selected out of 47 proposals because of its affordability, said Platt. “A reason they chose us was the commercial aspect. We're taking advantage of technology developed for very small satellites, which lets us fly this mission for one tenth of what it might have cost,” he said.

Another MAS contract is with the MIT Lincoln Laboratory, making small rocket engines for small satellites.

“Smaller is better” underpins the MAS philosophy. Most of the company's work involves small satellite- and space-based software development and flight projects. The satellites and cubesat systems MAS works with are small, reliable, cost-effective miniature versions of full-scale satellites that use standard, off-the-shelf software.

“This allows us to do more in space for a lower cost. We can improve medical, pharmaceutical and scientific products and STEM educational activities, creating more accessibility to the general public,” said Platt.

Platt has a long-held interest in making things smaller. As a graduate student, he pursued interests in space colonization, which, with mass and volume constraints “would require miniaturizing organisms, even livestock—and perhaps humans to make space exploration and colonization easier,” he said.

Before founding MAS, he spent five years at Boeing. As an aerospace engineer there, he made propulsion systems—smaller.

Platt's doctoral thesis work at Florida Tech's Human-Centered Design Institute focuses on human-robot interactions in space exploration. He is developing a virtual camera concept to assist astronauts in exploring a remote planetary surface.

Platt also mentors other students and lectures at the center.

“Don Platt is one of the best Ph.D. students I have ever worked with. He already has a solid background in physics, aerospace engineering and space systems. He is a very talented man and a pleasure to work with,” said University Professor **Guy Boy**, director of the Human-Centered Design Institute.

The origin of Platt's passion for space dates back to his boyhood in Connecticut, where he was interested in astronomy from when he was very young and was given his first telescope to watch the stars at night. He earned his bachelor's degree in physics and astronomy at Connecticut State University.

Platt develops that passion for space in others, leading the Florida Tech Space Systems Master's Degree program. The program is located at the Extended Studies Spaceport site at Titusville Airport near Kennedy Space Center.

“I'm looking at growing the program—making it more international and I want to expand it to offer the program online,” said Platt. “The space shuttle is over, but there is still tremendous work to do in commercial and orbital space operations.”

Karen Rhine

Serendipity of the Singing Fish

A shared fascination over fish sounds united three biology alumni years and miles removed from their days at Florida Tech. Their research collaboration began before they were even really acquainted.

In 1995, the paths of **Allison (Krause) Coffin '96**, **Paul Forlano '97 M.S.** and **Joseph Sisneros '99 Ph.D.** intersected in the lab of biology professor **Tim Tricas**. Coffin was a marine biology undergrad in Tricas' Fish Biology course, supported by graduate assistant Forlano who taught the laboratory. During the same period, Sisneros was pursuing a Ph.D. in the Tricas lab.

"It was in Tricas' class that I learned how some fish use acoustic cues to communicate, leading to my fascination with fish sound production and communication," says Coffin.

Their mutual research interest ignited, though it would be years before they became collaborators.

Post FIT, Sisneros and Forlano converged again while studying in the lab of Andrew Bass in the department of neurobiology and behavior at Cornell—where Forlano was a Ph.D. student and Sisneros, a postdoctoral fellow.

"I had the good fortune to follow Paul where we were able to work together on the plainfin midshipman fish, which has become a good model to investigate the neural basis of acoustic communication in all vertebrates," says Sisneros.

In the subsequent years, the pair collaborated on several projects, which took them to the California coast including Monterey and Tomales Bay areas. They co-authored two manuscripts and a book chapter, including Sisneros' groundbreaking study published in *Science* in 2004 that showed for the first time (in any vertebrate) that hormones can affect the frequency sensitivity of the inner ear.

Meanwhile, Coffin had continued graduate studies at the University of Minnesota (M.S.) and the University of Maryland (Ph.D.).

Half a decade later and 1,200 miles from Melbourne, she reconnected with the doctoral student she had likely passed during her undergraduate days in the lab, but never met, Sisneros.

The pair interacted at a Fish Bioacoustics Conference in Chicago.

"We started talking and quickly learned of our FIT connection," she recalls. And, they kept in touch.

In 2007, Coffin started a postdoctoral position at the University of Washington, where Sisneros was an assistant professor.

"I emailed Joe when I arrived on campus and asked to come by his lab to see the fish," she said. "The rest, as they say, is history."

Sisneros invited Coffin to join a midshipman-related project at the UC Davis Bodega Marine Lab, where she spent a week conducting experiments with Sisneros and her former teaching assistant, Forlano.

"It had been years since Paul and I had seen each other," she exclaims. "I think we both enjoyed working together in a professional setting—a far cry from our initial relationship as teaching assistant and student!"

Today, the trio holds faculty positions—Sisneros at the University of Washington, Coffin at Washington State University, Vancouver, and Forlano at City University of New York, Brooklyn College—and continues to collaborate.

"It would be hard to imagine my life and career without the scientific and collegial connections that started through the Tricas lab and FIT almost 17 years ago," says Forlano.

Coffin concurs, "It's remarkable that our paths and research interests have intersected so many times over the years, and I look forward to many more years of research, conversation and the occasional happy hour with Paul and Joe."

And Sisneros agrees. "Both Paul and Alli are not only valued colleagues but also very good friends that I expect to have for the rest of my career," he says. "The common bond that we share comes from our FIT roots and our shared training, education and love of science that was instilled to us as students at FIT!"

George White

Christena Callahan contributed to this story.



About the Research

Coffin, Forlano and Sisneros collaborate on a curious creature—a singing fish called plainfin midshipman.

Behavior Basics In the spring and summer, the males build nests under rocks in very shallow water, then sing to attract females. Females swim in the shallow water, listen for the males, and pick a mate for spawning.

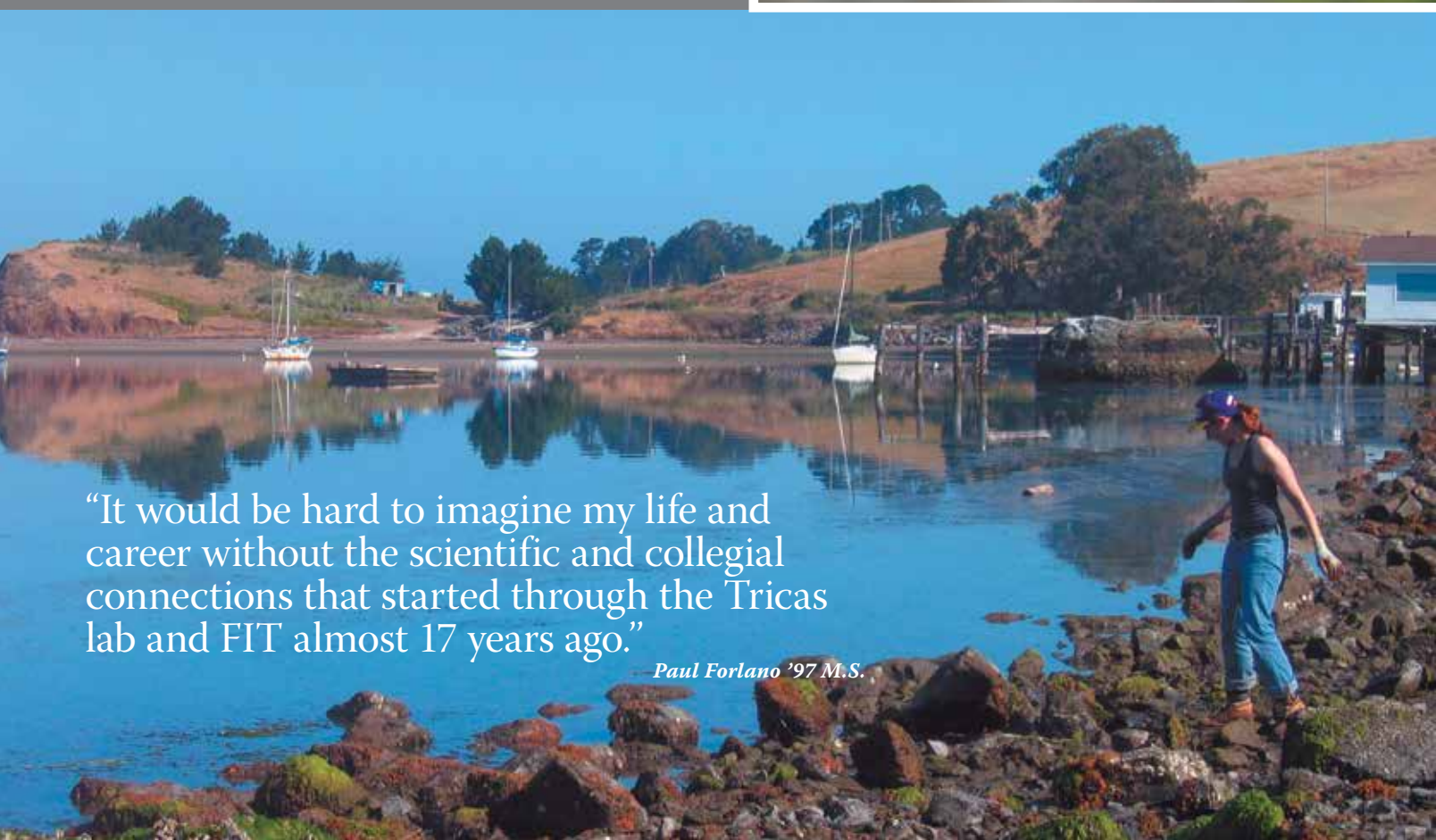
The Habitat The fish thrive in the cold waters of the West Coast of North America. Fieldwork occurs in coastal estuaries in California and Washington.

Sound Science The colleagues are investigating how female hearing changes seasonally so that her hearing is actually better suited to detect the male mate call during the breeding season than during the winter, non-breeding season. Goals include understanding how hormones influence hearing as well as understanding the cellular and molecular mechanisms of the vocal-acoustic pathway—in other words, what's going on in the brain when the fish hears sound and when it produces sound.

Learn more at <http://faculty.washington.edu/sisneros/sisneros.htm>

Listen in Hear the male's mating call at <http://today.fit.edu>

Plainfin midshipman fish build nests in very shallow water under rocks. Fieldwork occurs along the coast in California and Washington. Pictured above: Joe Sisneros, Paul Forlano, Karen Maruska '96 M.S. and Allison Coffin. Top right: Joe Sisneros and Allison Coffin



"It would be hard to imagine my life and career without the scientific and collegial connections that started through the Tricas lab and FIT almost 17 years ago."

—Paul Forlano '97 M.S.

Colleen McAleer:

Lessons Learned in Perseverance



Colleen McAleer '89 is much stronger than she may appear. An Operation Desert Storm veteran and mother of 12- and 14-year-old boys, McAleer credits Florida Tech with teaching her to persevere in the challenges she would face in the military and beyond.

One of five children, McAleer frequently moved all over the world with her mother and Army officer father. Although a product of different school systems, she grew up knowing the importance of a good education. After graduating high school in Germany, she attended Florida Tech's computer science program armed with a full ROTC scholarship.

"Going to Florida Tech was certainly a transition for me. I was on my own for the first time with so much freedom," said McAleer. "I had a lot of fun in the first two years of college, but what Florida Tech taught me was that I could juggle having fun and being a responsible adult. That to have a great education, I had to be persistent and that to effectively operate in the world, I had to possess great analytical skills."

After earning her bachelor's degree in 1989, McAleer enlisted in the military intelligence branch of the U.S. Army. In 1990, at just 23 years old, she became the first woman to serve as an electronic warfare platoon leader in Operation Desert Storm, commanding a platoon of 66 men and two women on the front line. Under her leadership, all 68 made it out alive.

In 1991, after her time in Operation Desert Storm, McAleer enrolled in flight school in Rucker, Ala. There, she was one of only two women in her class. Despite the rigors she faced, the war veteran earned not only her helicopter wings, but also her air assault and airborne wings. She served a total of 10 years in the military.

"Women have done what I've done before," said McAleer. "I love challenges and making a difference in my community. What drives me is changing things for the better."

Changing things for the better is exactly what McAleer strives for in her current position as marketing director and property manager, managing 106 leases for the Port of Port Angeles in Washington State. "Clallam County, in March 2012, has a high unemployment rate of 10.4 percent," said McAleer. "We can tackle this issue by creating more jobs and a cleaner environment through composite manufacturing."

Composite materials, according to McAleer, are being developed because they offer special properties. They are lightweight, strong and corrosion resistant. The Port of Port Angeles has developed a 6.5-acre manufacturing campus for composites, which will serve aerospace, marine and alternative energy producers. According to McAleer, "Composite manufacturing is growing at a rate of six percent a year,

"I love challenges and making a difference in my community. What drives me is changing things for the better."

What's your story?
Send thoughts to fltechtoday@fit.edu

and in my opinion, it is a new way of manufacturing products. The lighter materials used to build airplanes and cars, for example, mean less fuel, which means a cleaner environment."

Throughout her life, McAleer has faced many challenges that were overcome with hard work and perseverance. In her current job, she continues to serve her country through fostering job creation and advocating a greener environment, though what she most cherishes is her time with her two boys. "I love my work, but when I go home, I'm just a mom helping my boys with their homework."

Maya Oluseyi



Alumni Spotlight

Michael Bradvarevic '00 aviation management

SIM Check Airman and Captain, JetBlue Airways

Describe yourself in three words: Caring, Passionate, Driven

Describe your work: SIM instructor at Orlando Support Center full time and fly two days a month to maintain pilot currency

Favorite Florida Tech memory: Meeting up with friends to play racquetball in the, then "new" gymnasium

Little known fact: Local guy from Brevard County, graduated from Eau Gallie High School in 1997

Notable Achievement: Graduated with highest honors 3.8 GPA

Hobbies: Kiteboarding, beach volleyball



Stephanie Link '08 psychology

Marine Mammal Trainer at Gulfarium Marine Adventure Park

Describe yourself in three words: Dedicated, Caring, Positive

Describe your work: I work with a team of animal trainers to ensure the health and wellbeing of the Gulfarium's marine animal population, including dolphins, sea lions, harbor seals, penguins and otters. Daily responsibilities include the preparation and delivery of animal diets, public presentations and guest interactions, and providing a stimulating environment for the animals through training and enrichment. My job is extremely rewarding but requires a dedication to the animals in the way of long hours and endless cleaning responsibilities. My favorite animal to work with is Lolita, a female California Sea Lion (pictured with me), because she has a very sweet demeanor and is always doing something to make me laugh!

Favorite Florida Tech memory: Watching the Florida Tech Hockey Team play. I will never forget seeing how into the game the players and fans were and making lasting memories with my friends there.

Little known fact: My job does not involve simply interacting with marine mammals all day, we actually do a lot more than that including sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation. Once, I even met a fellow Florida Tech alumnus on a sea turtle release in Alabama!

Notable achievement: Simply being hired for a position in the marine mammal field is a big achievement! It is a highly competitive field with very few job openings!

Hobbies: Beach volleyball, swimming, photography





Jon Shenker is an internationally known fish biologist who, during his 22-year career at Florida Tech, has directed over \$1.9 million in sponsored research, published 35 papers, and graduated nearly 50 master's and doctoral students from his lab. Today, his students are working with the Florida Marine Fisheries Enhancement Initiative to rebuild wild fishery stocks, analyzing the historical distribution of snapper spawning stocks along Florida's east coast, and conducting research on larval fish production, aquaculture and ecology. Shenker holds an informal world record in tarpon fishing—for catching the smallest ever. It was a quarter inch long.

Jon Shenker:

Unforgiving Fun

Marine biology is not for you. Unless it is.

The smell is jarring, a pungent blend of decaying leaves and rotten eggs, as a dozen or so fresh-faced teenagers descend into the warm, still water of a mangrove swamp at the edge of the Indian River Lagoon, sticky black silt oozing between their toes.

Most smile eagerly, as if this is some sort of lark—a ripe, guess-what-I-did-today survival story they'll eagerly share later with friends. A few cringe with varying degrees of horror, shock and dismay at their unspeakable discomfort.

No, these are not fraternity pledges. They are first-year marine biology students under the tutelage of professor **Jon Shenker**, who's been subjecting Florida Tech freshmen to baptism by muck for more than 20 years.

"Hey, I want students to learn early on that marine biology is quite often a wet, muddy, uncomfortable enterprise," he says, his whitening beard framing a slight grin. "It's not all 'Shark Week,' Jacques Cousteau and 'Flipper.' We often wade around up to our necks in slime."

But it's not slime for slime's sake. Shenker takes his students to the mangrove swamps because these ecosystems are prime nursery habitats for juvenile

tarpon. Studying the early life history of the Silver King—from egg to larva to juvenile—is one of his specialties.

It's also a great way to introduce students to the profession. "I do this to get students to start thinking as scientists in a quantitative fashion. Being a fish biologist, I can't think of a better thing to do than give them a seine net and have them collect and begin to analyze data," he says.

During this initiation, many of Shenker's students fall in love with getting dirty in the name of science. Others quickly realize a preference for more climate-controlled laboratory work. "It's important for students to learn the reality of marine biology early on," he says. "We expose them to as many research experiences as possible. As a result, many publish as undergraduates."

Over the years, Shenker has introduced students to the Australian outback, coral reefs in the Bahamas, the St. Johns River, Florida's Everglades and the open waters of the Northern Pacific, where he says conducting research while being rocked to and fro by 10- to 12-foot swells is "just a normal day."



Some of what Shenker asks of his students is borderline reality TV material. One example: He plans to have the volunteers currently assisting him in his lionfish research—which focuses on how to impede the invasive species' proliferation—taste the spiny, venomous creature's roe.

"We want to determine what qualities make lionfish so resistant to predation, what makes the species so good at spreading. I expect one of the factors is that their gelatinous egg mass tastes horrible," he explains. "First, we have to get them to spawn in captivity. Then, we'll do our taste test."

Shenker doesn't pull punches when it comes to the prickly aspects of pursuing marine biology as a profession. He happily describes it as a tough way to make a living—a modest one, he cracks—that requires dedication and determination. At the same time, it's obvious he takes great joy in what he does.

"It really is a tremendous career because you get to do things that very few other people will get a chance to do," he assures. "It's a chance to be an explorer and a scientist, as well as an advocate for the restoration of habitats and fishery resources. I always communicate this to future marine biologists."

Shenker's passion for the ocean and marine life took hold in him at age 4, when his father took him fishing for the first time off a dock in Long Island, N.Y. He caught a perch and witnessed a neighbor landing a striped bass. "That was it. That did it to me. Flipped a little switch in my brain," he says. "I was hooked."

Today, Shenker shows no signs of becoming "un-hooked." Asked how he sees himself after a lifetime of marine research, education and advocacy, Shenker quips: "Tired." Then, after a moment, he adds: "I see somebody who really enjoys doing what he does."

Marine biology may not be for everyone. But for Shenker, it's a great way of life.

Andy McIlwraith

Faculty Spotlight

Marco Carvalho, Associate Professor, Computer Sciences

Years at Florida Tech: Less than one (started in January)

Teaches: I will be teaching a class in Cross-Layer Design for Wireless Network this coming fall, an Advanced Networks class at the CS Department.

Research interests: Tactical networks and information management systems, cognitive MANETs, cyber security, and critical infrastructure protection.

Teaching style: In my view, it is critical that students are engaged in some practical application of what is being taught. Involvement in academic or research projects are generally useful to help students connect what they are learning with why they are learning it.

What attracted you to your field: The complexity and the dynamics of some distributed systems is fascinating to me. For example, in communication networks, cyber security and biological systems, I have an opportunity to bring together different aspects from many disciplines to create new ideas and approaches for modeling and control. Florida Tech has other great researchers in these areas, and it is a very exciting for me to be working and collaborating with them in my research.

Hobbies: I enjoy running and hiking.

Favorite thing about Florida Tech: The environment and the positive attitude of faculty and students. I enjoy the area very much and feel privileged to be able to work on research with faculty and students from all over the world—without leaving Florida.

Peter Dunn, Chair, Flight Education Programs

Years at Florida Tech: 5-1/2

Teaches: Advanced Aircraft Systems; Advanced Operations; Airline Operations; and Air Transportation Management

Research interests: Next Generation Airspace and cockpit instrumentation

Hobbies: golf, grandkids and foreign travel

Notable achievement: Flew a single engine plane across the Atlantic from Canada to Ireland

What attracted you to your field: Aviation was in the family. I do not know a life without airplanes.

Favorite thing about Florida Tech: There are a lot of great young people here.





Florida Tech

Indelible Ink

Recruits, relief and a white hat highlight FIT's first National Signing Day

Wednesday, Feb. 1—a day known across the college football landscape as National Signing Day—sealed the first win for Panther Football.

Following months of active recruiting, the future of the inaugural team awaited the ring, the hum and the buzz of a Sharp fax machine delivering the binding paperwork to the Panther Football offices.

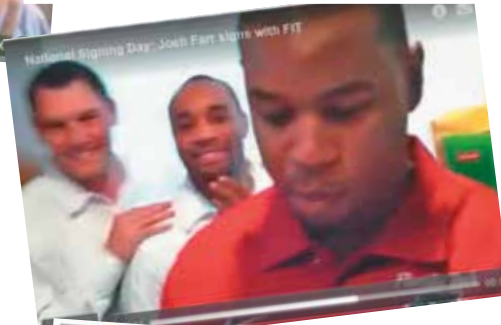
Head Coach Steve Englehart and his staff visited more than 250 Florida high schools, basked in the Friday Night lights and talked to prospective student-athletes, parents and coaches over a five-month period—forming their vision for the team and making recruitment offers.

Of the 2012 recruiting class, 22 student-athletes verbally committed to sign a National Letter of Intent (NLI), a document signaling their commitment to FIT. However, the decision is not finalized until pen hits paper. With other schools showing interest in the same recruits, nervousness enveloped the football offices on Country Club Road as Signing Day approached.

Game day. Nervous energy morphed into excitement, amidst media buzz, tweets and web coverage.



Relive the action at www.floridatechsports.com/football/2012signingday
Video by John Torres | Florida TODAY



At 6:45 a.m., Englehart, his coaches and athletics personnel gathered at Panther Football headquarters in anticipation of 7 a.m., the official start to Signing Day. One minute past the hour, the gears of the fax machine spun and the first NLI rolled off the press from Lauderhill, Fla., native and defensive back **Aneus Sangster**. The first Brevard County commitment—**Mike Ferguson** from football powerhouse Cocoa High School—rolled in at 8:55 a.m.

One minute past 7 a.m. Pacific Time, the coaching staff roared—Los Angeles Valley College quarterback **Daniel Owen** committed to FIT. Thrilled to recruit a talented quarterback (who will begin his FIT career as a junior), Englehart absorbed highlight clips of the team's newest leader on YouTube.

In front of every quarterback is an offensive line, and three linemen sent in their NLIs through mid-morning. Still, the coaching staff anxiously awaited the fourth, **Josh Farr**. Englehart envisioned Farr as the left tackle—his job: to protect the blind side, or the back, of a right-handed quarterback.

As the tension mounted, offensive coordinator **Jayson Martin** received an email from Farr's father. In it, a photo taken at a signing day ceremony showed Farr wearing a white hat. But what was the logo above the brim?

The coaching staff scrambled. Does FIT's bookstore sell white hats? Did Farr purchase a hat during his visit to campus?

Confusion erupted in elation as the fax machine hummed again. Farr signed on the dotted line.



Undefeated. Each of the Panthers' 22 verbal commits signed to play football at FIT. They will redshirt this fall to maximize their athletic eligibility and begin practicing for the first kickoff in fall 2013.

Ryan Jones

FLORIDATECHSPORTS.COM

The official website of Florida Tech Athletics



Florida Tech President Anthony J. Catanese, athletic director Bill Jurgens, head baseball coach Greg Berkemeier and baseball alumni honored former Panther Tim Wakefield for his 200th Major League Baseball victory prior to the team's season opener on Feb. 4. Photo by Amanda Stratford.



Florida Tech President Anthony J. Catanese presents head men's basketball coach Billy Mims with a plaque in recognition of his 100th Florida Tech win on Feb. 22. Photo by Amanda Stratford.

Florida Tech head lacrosse coach Ryan McLeavey speaks to his team before the Panthers take the field for their inaugural lacrosse game on Feb. 14 at Melbourne Central Catholic High School. Photo by Amanda Stratford.



The Panthers celebrate the program's first outright Sunshine State Conference Championship following their 82-74 win over the University of Tampa on Feb. 25. Photo by Andy Meng

share your news!

Submit your Alumni News Notes to alumaffr@fit.edu

1970s

Mike Ussak '72, former Alumni Association board member, has retired and enjoys sitting with his first grandchild, Peter.



Michael D. Wilson '71, M.S.S.M., was recently recognized on the *Barron's* "America's Top 1,000 Advisors: State-by-State" list, which published in the Feb. 20 edition of *Barron's* magazine. Wilson has been working in the financial services industry for over 36 years, joining Merrill Lynch in 1976. He is a senior vice president at Merrill Lynch, as well as a member of the Directors Circle and the Circle of Excellence.



Edward C. Koenig III '75 and **Deborah King Koenig '74** are the proud grandparents of Sonoma Capri Straits, born in October 2009. Sonoma is the daughter of Christopher and Kristen Straits, currently stationed at Ft. Rucker, Ala.



1980s

Whitney Ghoram '81 has worked for the State of California—San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board for 25 years. She is also a private pilot.

David Rueh '88, '93 MBA welcomed daughter Marcella on Nov. 1, 2011. David lives in Melbourne and oversees Space Coast Launch Services, directing facility operations on the Launch Operations Support Contract with the U.S. Air Force at Cape Canaveral. His organization hosted two FIT students at the March 13 National Space Club Luncheon for Brevard county. (See story page 14.)



Miguel Adao '89, director of Smart Marketing Suite at Hewlett-Packard,



lives in San Diego with wife Lyndie and children Olivia, 4, and Nicolas, 2. Miguel received his M.B.A. at Ohio University in 1991, and a D.B.A., Doctorate of Business Administration, at ISM Paris in 2005. He is the founder of the San Diego Chapter of the FIT Alumni Association. (See story page 19.)

James Jacobs '89 is the managing director of worldwide operations at CamVFX.com. He has lived in San Diego for the last 18 years with his wife and two kids.

1990s

Jay Strimel '91 M.S. recently became a new partner with the Jackson Walker firm. Strimel worked for 14 years in the aerospace industry at Kennedy Space Center in planning, scheduling and project management for the Ground Communication and Launch Processing System areas of the space shuttle program. He received his B.A. from Malone College, his M.S. from Florida Institute of Technology and his J.D. from South Texas College of Law, where he was assistant editor of the *South Texas Law Review*.



Sean Quinn '93 is a systems engineer. He's been married 13 years to a woman he met at a Chi Phi party in 1992. The couple has one daughter, Rori Vivian, 3. Quinn still plays guitar and is currently in two bands.

Vincent F. Cervellieri '94 is enrolled in the Executive M.B.A. program at Auburn University with expected graduation in May 2012.

Rosanne J. Danziger-Karr '95 works as a technical editor consultant. She is married with two children—a daughter, 14, and a son, 11.

Martin Schmidt-Bremer Jr. '96, '99 M.S., runs three companies, including one in the wind energy industry. He represents overseas companies in the U.S. and is active in the firearm industry. He and wife Melissa have one son and one daughter.



Trustee **D. Travis Proctor '98** and **Teresa (Ho NG) Proctor '98** welcomed son John Donovan Proctor on Christmas Eve, 2011. Travis is CEO of ndtArtemis and co-founder of ndtHOST. He served as the student body president from September 1996 until May 1998, and joined the Florida Tech board of trustees in January 2012. Teresa is the CFO of ndtArtemis.

Jill (Andrews) Demko '99 and husband Stephen welcomed son Derek Otto on Feb. 21, 2011. Jill is a senior aviation analyst/air safety investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board.



2000s

Davlyn Williams '03, '06 M.S., has a new baby boy, Anderson Jerome Williams, who is eight months old.

Chris Rosemeyer '04 works in analytical chemistry and blogs about food, beer, wine and travel at hrtw.blogspot.com. He lives in San Diego with his new wife April.

Claire Surrey-Marsden '04 and husband **Chad Marsden** (FIT 1999–2003, Pi Lam fraternity) welcomed son Hudson on Aug. 27, 2011. Claire is currently a lieutenant in the NOAA Corps stationed in La Jolla, Calif., working with marine mammals in NOAA Fisheries with the Cetacean program.



Nelson Llabona '05 MBA graduated from FAMU Law School in 2009 and joined wife Lusan Llabona in her existing law practice. Their practice is dedicated to family law and estate planning in Orlando, Fla.

Nikhil Arora '05, '07 M.S.E.E., '10 M.S. engineering management, is a project engineer and marketing specialist.

Mehul Patel '07 M.S. and **Erin (Emerson) Patel '07** M.S. welcomed their first son Dhevin Mehul on Dec. 26, 2011. Mehul is a civil engineer with Envisors, and Erin is a marine biologist/aquarist with Walt Disney World.



Online Accolades

"Online education was growing in popularity when I started my graduate school search in 2008. An online program was the right fit for me as I needed maximum flexibility with my full-time job as operations manager at Verizon Telecom. Foremost, I wanted my MBA degree from a university I could be proud of. I chose FIT because of its scholarly classroom reputation, the quality of professors, and finally because I read on the university website that the online MBA at FIT was the same degree as a traditional classroom MBA candidate received.

My MBA classes were challenging and competitive. The caliber of students I worked with on assignments and in discussion boards was extraordinary. My professors challenged me to think outside my comfort zone and always welcomed my business experiences as value added to the course content. During my two and a half years of study, I felt like I was a member of the Florida Tech family!

With my MBA proudly displayed on the wall in my home office, I am confidently pursuing my next career choice in collegiate academia, as an administrator or adjunct helping people get the outcome they expect from their education."

—Deborah Bennett, '11 MBA, Laurel, Md.



Deborah Bennett

Andrew Goetz '08, aerospace engineering, and **Beth (Dunlap) Goetz '09**, mathematical sciences, were married May 2011 on Anna Maria Island. They purchased their first home in June 2010. They currently reside in New Port Richey, Fla. Beth is a high school math teacher at Genesis Preparatory School teaching algebra I, geometry, algebra II, statistics and precalculus. Andrew works in Tampa at BCPeabody Construction Services as a project manager.



Edgar Blanchette '10 M.S. is the proud grandfather of Barron Shomphe (left) and Jenna Blanchette. Edgar resides in Northborough, Mass.

Bernard Strafaci '10 M.S., '11 MBA, was recently promoted to lieutenant in the Navy Reserve and currently applying for the Navy War College in April. He also accepted a new position with Northrop Grumman.

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*.

Email hrosskam@fit.edu to receive your shirt.

Eric Freeman '10 retired from the U.S. Marine Corps after 21 years and was promoted to program manager USMC DoD IT. He is married to Tasha from Plant City, Fla., and is a So Cal USATF (Track & Field) national finalist.

Jaymes Tran '11 is a systems engineer and Test CAB manager. He also operates a BBQ catering business.

Faculty/Staff

Tom Couperthwaite, Tech Support, and his wife **Renee**, Women's Business Center, welcomed son Alexander Hunter in February 2012.



VISIT THE ALUMNI ONLINE COMMUNITY ALUMNI.FIT.EDU

share your news!

Send your information to: advs@fit.edu

or send this form to: Florida Tech, Office of Alumni Affairs, 150 W. University Blvd., Melbourne, FL 32901-6975

First Name _____ MI _____ Last Name _____ I'VE MOVED. Please change my mailing address to: _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Year Graduated _____ Degree _____

Employer _____ Business Title _____

Email _____

Maiden Name (if applicable) _____ Spouse's Name _____

Children's Names and Ages (if applicable) _____

Your news (please print) _____

_____ (0412)

_____ (Attach additional sheet, if necessary)



Bino Campanini '90, '92 MBA
Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations
Executive Director,
Alumni Association

Q: Did the FTAA recently launch an e-newsletter?

Yes. The goal of the newsletter is to stay connected with alumni and highlight campus and alumni community news of note. We encourage you to get involved! Become a part of this communication by sending your news, personal and professional updates, and story ideas. We want this to be a space where the FTAA can update you on alumni activities and where you can update your peers on your achievements as well.

Q: We have Florida Tech TODAY, so why produce a newsletter?

Our print magazine is published three times per year. An electronic newsletter offers the flexibility and reduced production costs to distribute news more frequently. Also, the e-newsletter is targeted specifically to alumni news.

Q: In what other ways does the alumni association communicate with graduates?

Our primary communication tool is email. We send out a

variety of messages throughout the year—most often, targeting specific segments of our alumni base who are interested in the news. For example, College of Aeronautics news goes to aero graduates. To avoid email overload, we make a special effort to be selective in our communications. We are also growing our social media engagement through Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and we use our alumni website and snail mail, as appropriate.

Q: What if I'm not receiving any communication, including invitations, from the FTAA?

One of our biggest challenges is maintaining up-to-date records on our alumni, especially email addresses. The easiest way to update your contact information is through Panther Connect at <http://alumni.fit.edu/pantherconnect>. This will also activate your free alumni association membership.

Q: What's new with the Gleason "Name a Seat" Campaign?

Action is under way in the FTAA's key project—the Gleason

"Name A Seat" campaign, dedicated to renovating the Gleason seats and supporting the university. Feedback has been positive, and seats are already being claimed! We will be contacting all our alumni individually to offer you an opportunity to name a seat. We also plan to engage affinity groups—for example, with fraternity rows honoring the founders or athletics team rows, recognizing a championship season.

Q: How can I learn more about the campaign or name my seat?

To learn more, visit <http://alumni.fit.edu/gleasonseats>. Here, you can read more about the program, purchase your seat and specify the inscription for your plaque. Or, call the Alumni House at (321) 674-7190, and we will be happy to help you.

Announcing

Gleason

NAME A SEAT

Campaign

to refurbish Gleason with new seating



alumni.fit.edu/gleasonseats

"I invite all alumni to purchase a seat and join me in leaving our legacy in Gleason for future generations of Panthers, supporting our Alumni Association, and keeping Florida Tech traditions alive."

Tom Folliard Jr. '89





Florida Institute of Technology

Office of Marketing and Communications
150 W. University Blvd.
Melbourne, Florida 32901-6975



Nostalgia

Smiling, happy graduates mark spring commencement 1990.

Are you in this photo or can you identify these graduates? Email us at fltechtoday@fit.edu.

Go Green, Get Online!

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

today.fit.edu



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