



Florida Institute of Technology
High Tech with a Human Touch™

CAMPUS OBSERVER

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FLORIDA TECH COMMUNITY

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Law Firm Wins Top Chopper Dropper Prize

Sporting Affair's Seventh Annual Chopper Dropper, held March 19 at the Suntree Country Club, delivered cash prizes to 13 lucky winners, including the Melbourne law firm of Platt, Jacobus, Fielding & Ville Trial Lawyers LLC who took the \$25,000 grand prize. The event, part of Sporting Affair XVIII, raises money for Florida Tech athlete-scholars.

The \$10,000 prize for the ball landing second closest to the pin went to Mark Thompson of Melbourne, Fla.; the \$5,000 prize for third closest was claimed by William Muns of Dallas, Texas. Ten runner-up prizes of \$1,000 each went to Robert Martin, PKA House Foundation, Sam Sentz, Andrew Clark, Rick Baney, Jane McCallum, Kyle Culver, Steven Konrath, Joe Glover and Bisk Education.

Major sponsors included Audi of Melbourne; Beachside Physical Therapy; Berman, Hopkins, Wright & LaHam; Bisk Education; Bright House Networks; Coca-Cola; Dean Mead Attorneys at Law; MIMA Sports Medicine; National Management Resources; and Platt, Jacobus, Fielding & Ville.



Pete the Panther is flanked by John Fielding and Jeff Ville, of Platt, Jacobus, Fielding & Ville. Also pictured, from left, are Bill Jurgens, President Catanese and John Thomas.

Faculty Explore Lightning Origin in Thunderclouds

With a recent grant by the National Science Foundation (NSF), lightning research continues to be an active and well-funded research program at Florida Tech. Ningyu Liu, assistant professor of physics and space sciences, seeks to solve the mystery of lightning origin in thunderclouds under a \$240,000 grant from the NSF.



Ningyu Liu

Liu and his team, which includes professors Joseph Dwyer and Hamid Rassoul and graduate student Burcu Kosar, will develop advanced physics-based computer simulation models of the thunderstorm environment. Their research will focus on the role that rain droplets and ice particles may play in lightning initiation inside thunderclouds.

By comparing theory with field observations, the goal will be to understand the exact physical mechanisms of the lightning initiation process.

600 Pitch In for Annual Campus Cleanup

In collaboration with Disney's "Give a Day, Get a Day" program, President Anthony J. Catanese led the university's annual Campus Clean-Up on March 20. Participants who registered on Disney's Web site were given free one-day passes to the park. An estimated 600 people attended this year's event.



Volunteers picked up 800 bags of trash across the Melbourne, Fla., grounds. President Catanese awarded prizes in a variety of categories, including Largest Group in Attendance, Most Trash Bags Collected, Oldest Piece of Trash and Most Unique.

After the event, all volunteers were rewarded with a free barbecue in the Panther Plaza in recognition of their hard work and dedication to a trash-free campus.

Chinese Summer Institute Runs May 10–June 18

Florida Tech will offer its first Intensive Summer Institute in Chinese May 10–June 18. The institute was made possible through a grant from Project GO, funded by the Department of Defense and the ROTC Language & Culture Project.

The institute offers six hours a day of instruction in the Chinese language Monday through Thursday. On Tuesdays and Thursdays one hour will be spent each day on the capstone research project. On Fridays participants will engage in cultural activities. These include speakers, films, music and a field trip to the Epcot Center Chinese Pavilion.

The institute offers six credit hours. For more information, visit http://cpla.fit.edu/hu-com/cscl/summer_institute.doc or contact JoAnn Parla Palumbo at jparlapalumbo@fit.edu or (321) 674-7491.

Faculty and Staff News

Office of the President

President **Anthony J. Catanese** delivered the keynote address at the Brevard Neighborhood Development Coalition's Anchor Breakfast March 18 in Melbourne.

Office of the Provost

Provost **T. Dwayne McCay** has been appointed to a two-year term on the Education and Public Outreach committee of the NASA Advisory Council. This is the senior external advisory body for addressing important program and policy matters related to the U.S. civil space program. As a member, he will report directly to NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden Jr.

College of Aeronautics

Paul Davis spoke to an audience of about 180 pilots at the Sebastian Airport on April 3. He discussed his flying experience, including his time flying support missions for the Apollo moon launches. Davis will also share his stories as a rescue helicopter pilot in Vietnam at Sun 'n Fun in Lakeland on April 14.

John Deaton co-authored "Reducing system latency errors in training systems using Helmet Mounted Displays (HMD)." The paper was accepted for the Proceedings of the SPIE Defense, Security and Sensing Conference to be held in April in Orlando.

Nathan M. Bisk College of Business

Michael Workman published "A structuration agency view of investor-officer power struggles and conflict in a private firm: A tale of two agendas" in *Performance Improvement Quarterly*.

College of Engineering

A paper, titled, "Evaluation of data reduction algorithms for real-time analysis" was published in *American Meteorological Society*. The paper is the collaborative project of professors **Steven Lazarus** and **Michael Splitt**, and alumni **Michael Lueken '08 M.S.** and **Bradley Zavodsky '02 M.S.**

Ken Lindeman earned a \$20,000 grant from the Louisiana State University Foundation to complete a book surveying all research on the 19 species of snappers from North Carolina to Brazil. The support funds completion of a long-term project by a collaborative research team from Cuba, Florida and Louisiana.

George Maul addressed a luncheon meeting of the Propeller Club of Port Canaveral. He spoke about the university's current research activities and offered insight into the impacts on marine and environmental systems.

Ashok Pandit, **Howell Heck** and doctoral student **Nawazish Ali** recently made an invited presentation at the West Palm Beach office of the South Florida Water Management District. The presentation, "Nutrient loading in the Indian River Lagoon from groundwater," was attended by more than 50 engineers and managers.



Ashok Pandit

Jean Paul Pinelli, **Chelakara Subramanian** and **Ivica Kostanic** received \$100,000 from the Florida Division of Emergency Management for their project, titled, "Mitigation of hurricane damage on residential structures: Direct measurement and characterization of hurricane wind load."

A paper by **Y.I. Sharaf-Eldeen**, titled, "Performance of add-on, Heat Pump Water Heater systems (HPWH) and their impacts on electric utility loads" has been accepted for presentation at the ASME 2010 4th International Conference on Energy Sustainability in Phoenix, Ariz. The paper, to be published in the proceedings, is co-authored by **Eric Gay '07**.

John Trefry presented a paper, titled, "Trace metals in seawater, sediments and the Northern Neptunean Whelk (*Neptunea heros*) from the Chukchi Sea, COMIDA Project" at

the 2010 Alaska Marine Sciences Symposium in Anchorage, Alaska. Co-authors included **Robert Trocine**.

College of Psychology and Liberal Arts

Pat Converse, with students **Jaya Pathak**, **Joshua Quist**, **Matthew Merbedone**, **Tomer Gotlib** and **Edward Kostic**, published "Statement desirability ratings in forced-choice personality measure development: Implications for reducing score inflation and providing trait level information" in *Human Performance*.

Zohra Fazal and **Annie Caza** recently presented "Self-assessment and reflection: Pathways to greater independence in writing" at the 3rd Annual TeamUP Developmental Education Conference organized by Cengage Learning in Austin, Texas.

Gordon Patterson delivered the keynote address and received the Presidential Citation Award from the board of directors of the American Mosquito Control Association at the annual convention in Lexington, Ky. His presentation was titled "Acting well our parts: Mosquitoes, humans and the environment."

Robert Taylor and Major **Matt Elliot** of the ROTC Panther Battalion attended the Institute for International Education's Project GO Leadership Conference in Tempe, Ariz. The March meeting was focused on critical language and culture training for ROTC students in all branches of the military.

Lisa Steelman was elected to a three-year term as editor of *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*.

David Wilder published "Noncompliance and oppositional behavior" in *Teaching and Behavior Support for Children and Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A "How To" Practitioner's Guide*.

Wanfa Zhang was interviewed about American relations with China on the *Florida Today* TV show that aired April 7.

College of Science

Debra S. Blenis and **Judi Marino**, undergraduate admission, attended the

National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics, Science & Technology's annual conference in Nashville, Tenn. The conference theme was "Tuning in to STEM education." Blenis was on a panel discussing undergraduate research at affiliate universities. She also presented "Ease on down the road: Strategies for handling the stress of teaching."

David Cook presented an invited poster at the American Association for the Advancement of Science's annual meeting in San Diego, Calif. The title of the poster is "Supporting science fair success: A pre-science fair conference for students, their parents and teachers."

Gordon Nelson was invited to the American Chemical Society National Meeting in San Francisco, Calif. He discussed program approval requirements for undergraduate chemistry.

Undergraduate student **Keri Hoadley** presented work she did with **Hakeem Oluseyi** at an American Astronomical Society meeting in Washington, D.C. The project involved simulating the ability of the future Large Synoptic Survey Telescope to measure the characteristics of pulsating variable stars. The research helps to map galactic structure. **Chris Culliton '09 B.S.** and **Muhammad Furqan '08 B.S.** also contributed to this work.

Shaohua Xu published an article about his Alzheimer's Disease research with colleagues from the University of Pennsylvania in *Alzheimer's & Dementia*.

Evans Library

Rebecca Weber was selected to participate in the week-long Association of College & Research Libraries' Immersion '10 conference at Champlain College, Burlington Vt., in July. Weber will participate in the Teacher Track.



Rebecca Weber

Undergraduate Admission

In March, **Mike Perry** was promoted to Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves at the Change of Command of the 1st Battalion, 265th Air Defense Artillery, at Daytona Beach Halifax Harbor Marina Field.

University Architect

After the earthquakes, **Greg Tsark** and a local structural engineer offered their expertise in a six-day trip to Haiti. The two evaluated the safety of about 20 buildings left standing, especially schools that are in the rural and mountainous areas. Their goal was to help return children to their schools by April 1.

Sponsored Scholar

Since fall 2008 Florida Tech has sponsored a Young Adult of the Month Award at each Melbourne Chamber of East Central Florida monthly breakfast. In March, James Stern of Satellite High School was honored. He will receive a Florida Tech scholarship each of his four years if he chooses to attend the university.

March MVP



The March Most Valuable Panther was **David Cook**, science and math education.

To nominate a staff or faculty member for this award, send your letters to MVP Committee Chair **Leslie Savoie** at lsavoie@fit.edu.

We're Fantastic!

Florida Tech was cited twice in the April issue of *Space Coast Living's* "The Fantastic 50," that is, the magazine's favorite people, places and things on the Space Coast. Our Botanical Garden was #1 and Chopper Dropper was also listed. To see all 50, visit <http://www.sclmagazine.com/fantastic-50>



From left are Ali Faisal, Jennifer Neuhard, Sarah Stern, James Stern, Eric Stern and Ken Stackpoole.

Campus Calendar

April 16

The Passion of Joan of Arc: A 1928 silent film
With concert by the Florida Tech Orchestra and Choir
7 p.m., Gleason Performing Arts Center, free
For information, call extension 8073 or e-mail kkiser@fit.edu

April 16

One Book, One Campus
Florida Tech Common Reading Program
2:30 p.m., Information session,
Link Multimedia Room
For information, call extension 7115

April 21

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi Initiation
6 p.m., Gleason Performing Arts Center
All faculty and staff are invited to join
For information, call extension 7397

April 22

Honors Convocation
3:30 p.m., Gleason Performing Arts Center

April 23

Florida Tech Jazz Ensemble
7 p.m., Gleason Performing Arts Center
Jazz, soul and funk favorites
Free

April 25

Brevard Symphony Orchestra
The Met Meets Melbourne
With tenor Mark Baker and baritone Dean Peterson
4 p.m., Gleason Performing Arts Center,
\$50 for general admission; \$25 for students
For tickets, extension 8865 or svbragdon@yahoo.com

May 7

Spring Commencement
10 a.m., Clemente Center

June 6-13

Creative Writing Institute
For information, visit <http://411.fit.edu/cwi>

Chamber Honors Florida Tech

In March, Florida Tech, with Harris Corp. and the Melbourne International Airport, were honored with an IMPACT Award from the Melbourne Regional Chamber of Commerce. The award, according to chamber officials, represents recognition of the three entities' remarkable contributions to the economy of South Brevard.

The acknowledgment read: "We especially want to congratulate Florida Tech on its forward thinking partnership with Harris on the opening of the Harris Center for Assured Information; your partnership with the airport on the technology park, and of course, the autism center."


Florida Tech Covers Remaining Tuition for Two Haitian Students

Florida Tech has responded to the earthquake tragedy in Haiti by providing more than \$10,000 from an endowed fund to cover this year's remaining tuition for the two Haitian students currently attending the university. One of the students being assisted is Sarah LaMothe, a senior majoring in aviation management.

"The Haitian students have enough concerns at this time. We don't want them to be affected by the extraordinary difficulties of paying tuition in the face of family worries and the usual rigors of academic life," said President Anthony J. Catanese.

Florida Tech Students Attend Future Educators Conference

More than 400 Florida high school and college students recently attended the Florida Future Educators Conference's "To Teach a Child Is to Change the World" in Orlando. Florida Tech students Michael Greene, Melissa DiTucci, Courtney Treubert and Jessica Phillips attended the event with their adviser, Debra S. Blenis. Phillips, a physics education junior, won second place in the postsecondary division for her outstanding lesson plan. Florida Tech's Future Educators of America organization won second place in the postsecondary division for their chapter display.



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From the President's Desk



Anthony James Catanese

The Golden Anniversary Campaign was quite an exhilarating experience. Last September we celebrated its successful conclusion as we exceeded our \$50 million goal by almost \$10 million. The results are evident from one end of campus to the other.

But, what's next? Although we haven't announced another major capital campaign, fundraising continues. Fr. Doug Bailey, for example, just raised \$8,000 on an Endowment Sunday. If you listened to WFIT last month you know their fall fund drive was in full swing for 10 days, raising more than \$43,000. And, the effort never lets up elsewhere, especially in the Office of Advancement or in my office.

Our next priority is to revitalize the Anchorage property at Melbourne Harbor. Although we've received many proposals to sell or take advantage of joint-venture opportunities, we continue to commit ourselves to keeping this tremendous asset part of our university, for our students, faculty, alumni and the community.

Last month we launched a \$5 million fundraising campaign to redevelop the Anchorage. The goal is to restore the boathouse, add a dock master's office, create a 16,250-square-foot rowing center and develop what was Roberts Annex into an alumni and athletics office center.

Other high priorities are new buildings for psychology and business, and renovations at the Vero Beach Marine Laboratory.

Athletics needs draw our attention as well. Fundraising is ongoing for athletics field lighting and an athletics field concession and restroom facility. With the proper approvals, and plans in place, we intend to do much of the construction ourselves and hope to see structures going up sometime this summer.

There are so many other projects we can't wait to sink our teeth into—academic labs, athletics facilities, renovation of the residence quad, to name a few.

Seeing this university as always in a process of transformation, I recall the ancient adage, "If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking."