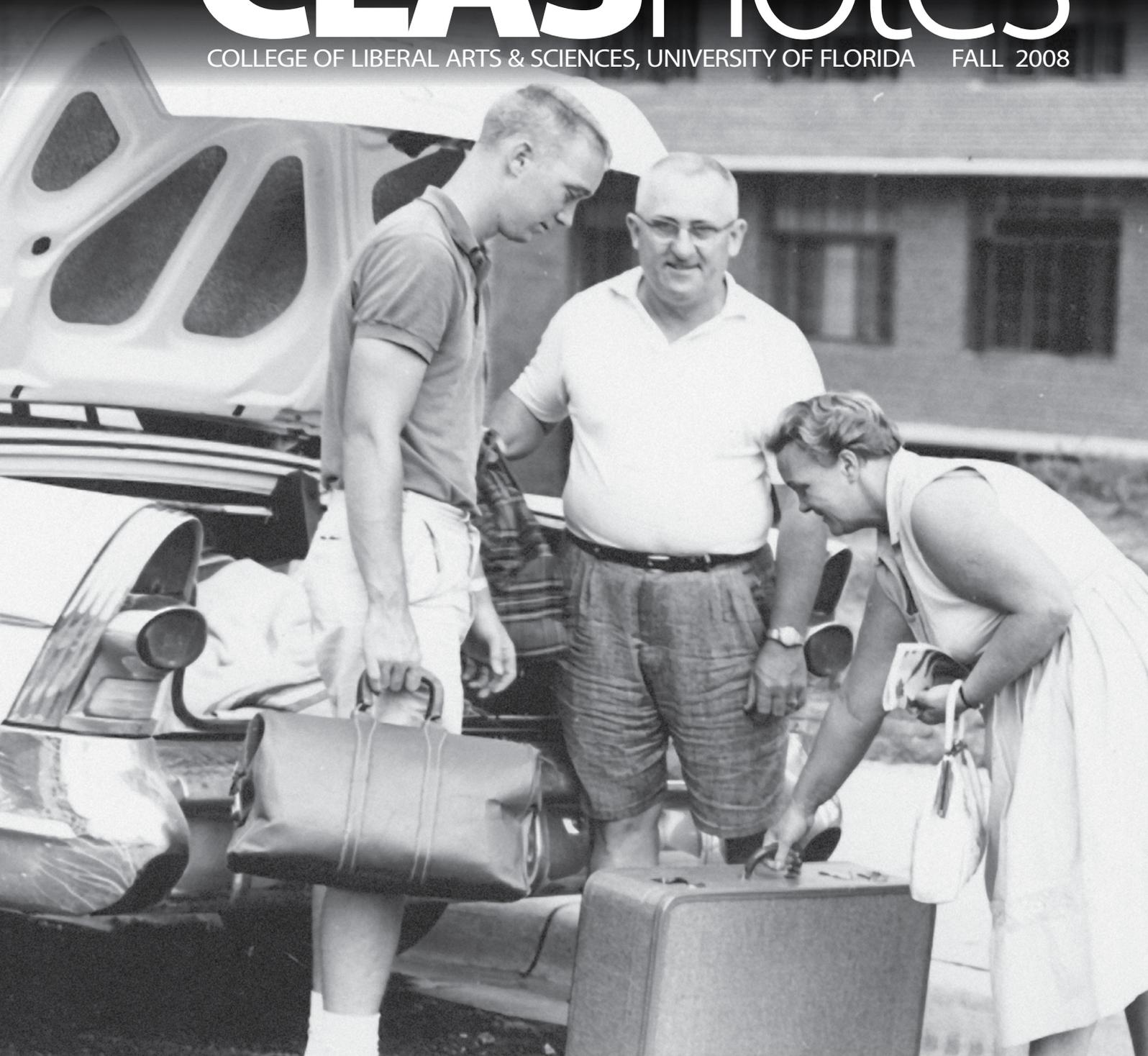


alumni

# CLASnotes

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA FALL 2008



100 years of students  
A HISTORY OF CLAS

# CLASact

Kate Sweeny is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Riverside.

**Kate Sweeny**  
Ph.D., Psychology, 2008

**ACn:** What is your favorite memory as a student at UF?  
**KS:** Some of my best memories of the University of Florida were at football and basketball games. I was very lucky to be a Gator during some of the most exciting years in college athletics' history. There's nothing more exciting than being in the Swamp or the O-Dome during a big Gator game, and it's even more fun when they win!

**ACn:** How are you using your degree?  
**KS:** I'm the poster child for a Ph.D. in social psychology. I fell in love with research during graduate school, and after six years of hard work I found a position at a university that will allow me to continue my research in a supportive environment with opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate teaching. I'm in both the social/personality and health areas of the psychology department at the University of California, Riverside, and I feel like I found my dream job.

**ACn:** What advice do you have for students currently studying in your field?  
**KS:** Get research experience early and as broadly as possible. As an undergraduate, I imagined research to be a boring and lonely activity, but it turned out to be far different than I had imagined. I now see research as a process of problem-solving, of asking questions that interest me and using the tools I gained in graduate school to answer them. I study why people avoid information, how people should give bad news, and how people accept unchangeable situations. Far from boring, I have the opportunity to answer questions that have the potential to make a difference in people's lives.

**ACn:** Who had the greatest influence in helping to guide your studies and career?  
**KS:** My graduate advisor, Dr. James Shepperd's excitement about research is contagious, and from my very early days in graduate school I think he saw a similar excitement in me and did everything he could to cultivate it. Graduate school can be incredibly discouraging at times, but my advisor was my biggest cheerleader while challenging me to do my best work. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the incredible support I received from the other social psychology faculty at UF, including Dr. Greg Neimeyer and Dr. Martin Heesacker. Finally, my parents and my husband always encouraged me to do what I loved; without them I'm not sure I could have pushed through to make it where I am today.



COURTESY KATE SWEENEY

**UF** UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

## About CLAS

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida is the largest college on campus, with more than 700 faculty members responsible for teaching the majority of the university's core curriculum to at least 35,000 students each year. CLAS has more than 12,000 undergraduate students pursuing a variety of disciplines through its 42 majors and 42 minors. Additionally, nearly 2,000 graduate students are attaining advanced degrees in the college.

## About Alumni CLASnotes

*Alumni CLASnotes* is published twice a year by the University of Florida College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for its alumni and friends. Please send all correspondence to Editor, CLAS Dean's Office, PO Box 117300, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611-7300 or [editor@clas.ufl.edu](mailto:editor@clas.ufl.edu).

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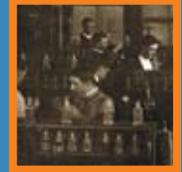
Moving onto campus, early 1960s.  
(University Archives)

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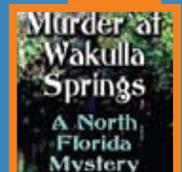
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# 100 years of students

## A HISTORY OF CLAS

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Few can dispute the central role played by the arts and sciences in any university. Since the earliest incarnation of the university system, the skills offered by study within the realm of the arts and sciences—from rhetoric and grammar to philosophy and astronomy—have played an essential role in the concept of higher learning. Although it might be a cliché to refer to the arts and sciences as representing the heart of the university, there is little doubt that the University of Florida would be an entirely different place without its College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The history of CLAS stretches back almost as far as the founding of the university itself. It was 157 years ago when the state legislature of Florida, which itself had only been around for six years, voted to set up two institutions of higher learning in Florida: one to the east of the Suwannee River and one to the west. In setting up these institutions, the local government looked to the community to assist with cash or land donations. Although the first-generation of Floridians were not overly enthusiastic in their support of Florida's fledgling higher education, one property was offered for use: a small private school for children in Ocala called the East Florida Seminary. This was the only proposal that the state of Florida received.

Despite the rather humble beginnings, two years later, in 1853, which is given today as the university's founding date, Governor Thomas Brown signed off on legislation that enabled the state to provide financial backing for the East Florida Seminary. Essentially, this marks the birth of the University of Florida. Many of the core

courses that make up areas of study in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences today—such as history, English, and zoology—began at the seminary. However, the Civil War subsequently interrupted the development of the university and it wasn't until 1866 that the university moved to Gainesville, starting on the path towards becoming the institution we know now.

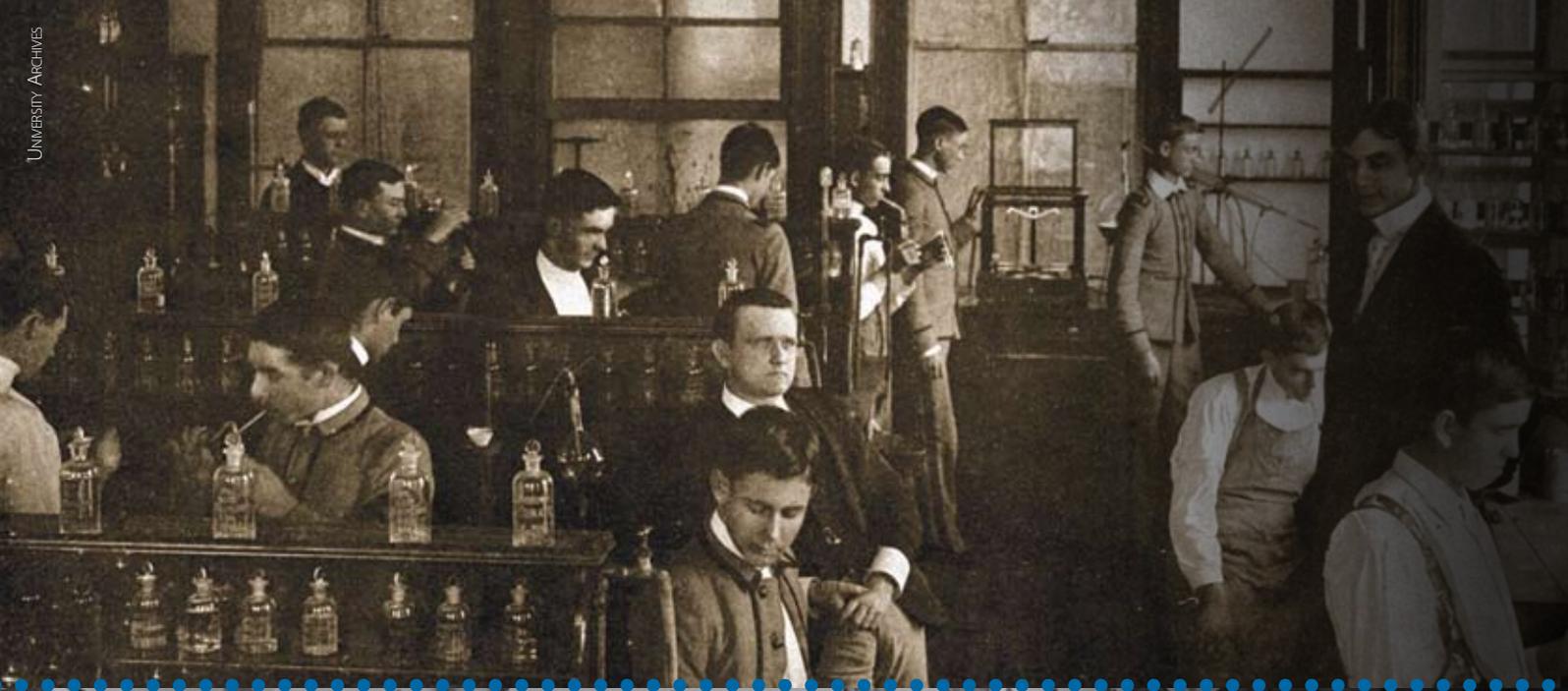
By the end of the 1800s, the state of Florida was having some difficulty supporting eight institutions of higher learning. Interviewed by *Alumni CLASnotes* in 2003, the late Samuel Proctor, who was the University of Florida's official historian, argued that the number of schools contributed to a weak educational system. "The state was trying to support these institutions and was not doing a very good job at it," Proctor said. "None of them compared well with other schools in the South, much less the nation."

That all changed with the passing of the Buckman Act in 1905. Created by Henry H. Buckman, chairman of the Florida House Judiciary Committee, the bill combined the eight institutions

in Florida into three: the University of Florida, Florida State, and Florida A&M universities. After UF was established in Gainesville (Lake City had also bid to be the home to state's future flagship university), arts and sciences classes were taught in the School of Language and Literature and the General Scientific School.

The demarcation of UF's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as a specific entity within the greater university occurred in 1909. It was during that year that the four original colleges were first created—Agriculture, Engineering, Law, and Arts and Sciences. Perhaps one of the most remarkable aspects of the earliest incarnation of the college is that while there were only 12 staff members, the college offered degrees in 15 separate disciplines. Showing the fluidity of academic definitions, some departments moved in and out of the college, while a number of new departments were added over time: religion, biology, sociology, psychology and speech are just some of the disciplines that came to exist under the arts and sciences banner.

Since that time, a number of other



Despite the emphasis on endowments, buildings, budgets, and national rankings, two of the clearest measures of a university's success are its history and the achievements of its students. On the 100th anniversary of UF's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, it is worth taking a moment to explore the birth of the college and reflect on the lives of those who have helped shape CLAS' reputation at home and abroad.





significant moments in the college's history have helped it become what it is today. University College, created in 1935 by UF President John J. Tigert, was an initiative that attempted to bolster the liberal arts education of freshman and sophomores at UF. Through the University College, students could earn an associate's degree before undertaking a bachelor's degree in the college of their choice. "Tigert believed you needed less specialization," Proctor said. "A doctor needed to know more than just medicine; he needed to know about the arts, literature and so on." There was another major reason behind University College: it allowed poorer students, who might not have had the means to study for four years, a more general education than specializing before dropping out.

Shortly after the end of World War II, UF became a co-educational institution. In 1947, CLAS was the first college to hire a woman faculty member—Dorothy Rethlingshafer joined the psychology department to assist in the development of the Ph.D. program and to teach courses in learning, testing, and motivation. In 1962, UF integrated with the first enrollment of African-American students. Eight years later, UF hired its first African-American staff and faculty members: two of whom, English professors Ronald Foreman and Betty Ingram, became CLAS' first African-American faculty.

In 1978, University College became a part of CLAS, merging to establish the largest college on campus. Furthermore, the home of CLAS, Turlington Hall, was built at a cost of \$5.7 million dollars the same year. Named in honor of the former UF business professor and state education minister Ralph Turlington, the building now serves as the center of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

## A BIRTHDAY FOR CLAS

Birthdays are often as much a time for reflection as celebration. While acknowledging the passing of the years, it also allows the opportunity to think about events and achievements, as well as the people and interactions that make up the course of one's life.

The birthday of an institution is no different. In the case of the academic institution, the most important products are not the research reports or publications but rather the students. Although most only spend four years within the lecture halls, libraries, and grounds that make up a campus, the influence of the university experience on the individual is immense. As proven by the strong ties that alumni feel to UF, while the students make the university, the university also shapes the students.

Although many universities across the United States boast of particular strengths in particular areas, one of the University of Florida's most attractive features is its array of renowned programs. From the Levin College of Law to the College of Journalism and Communication, the Warrington College of Business Administration to the College of Nursing, the University of Florida has managed to promote excellence across many fields.

Yet it is the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the achievements of the many thousands of students who have taken courses and graduated with majors from within its numerous subject areas, which might best display the type of scholastic diversity fostered at UF. Whether in the study of changes and preservation in the Everglades or the necessity of new critical approaches to Shakespeare studies, measuring quantum mechanical forces or examining the role of Florida in national elections, the wide spectrum of subject areas offered within CLAS is represented by the eclectic types of careers that CLAS Gators pursue.

Thus, on the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Alumni CLASnotes presents seven short portraits of some of the students who call UF's CLAS their alma mater:

### **Dexter Filkins, B.A., Political Science**

Driving north toward Baghdad in a rented SUV, foreign correspondent Dexter Filkins scans the horizon. The luminescent orange of the burning oil wells flickers against the backdrop of the sky. He drives on. For some time he counts the Iraqi uniforms that have been abandoned on the side of the road by Saddam Hussein's retreating army. Empty trenches and discarded tanks and trucks litter the immediate landscape. Soon after, Filkins happens upon some marines and three Iraqi prisoners. The Iraqis had been sleeping under a bridge when the marines came upon them. Filkins takes out his notebook, asks the marines and the Iraqis some questions, and begins to jot down notes for his next story for the New York Times, one of the world's most renowned news organizations.

### **Marshall Nirenberg, B.A., M.A., Zoology**

Walking on to the stage, Marshall Nirenberg prepares to receive one of the most prestigious prizes in any field in the world. His groundbreaking work in deciphering the genetic code has led him to be recognized by both his peers and the scientific world, resulting in his being awarded with the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. Despite the publicity surrounding Nirenberg's research, it is difficult at the time to anticipate just how far reaching his work will turn out to be. After winning the Nobel Prize, Nirenberg will be awarded the National Medal of Honor, go on to research within the expanding realm of neuroscience and neural development, and eventually be elected to the American Philosophical Society.

### **Jonathan Demme**

With the pale winter light and craggy trees of rural Pennsylvania providing a spooky backdrop, Jonathan Demme calls for quiet on the set. The cast and crew take position and ready themselves for the director's next words. Demme is in the process of directing a dark thriller, *The Silence of the Lambs*, which will introduce one of movie history's most infamous and iconic characters, the murderous genius Dr. Hannibal Lecter, to a worldwide audience. A couple of years later, Demme will repeat his success by directing Tom Hanks' Oscar-winning performance in *Philadelphia*, one of the first films to deal with the discrimination suffered by those with HIV and AIDS. As well as directing feature films, Demme will travel to the impoverished capital of Haiti,

Port-au-Prince, to make the critically acclaimed *The Agronomist*, an account of the life of Jean Dominique, the assassinated Haitian journalist and activist. (Demme studied chemistry at UF in the 1960s.)

### **Deborah Dunger, B.A., English**

After her appointment as the president of Disney Publishing Worldwide, Deborah Dunger takes a moment to explain to an interviewer that in Italy Mickey Mouse is known as Topolino and is a truly Italian character. She also mentions how in Finland another of Disney's "American" icons, Donald Duck, is not American but Finnish: a character who embraces all the specifics of Finnish culture. As the head of the largest children's book publisher in the world, with publications in more than 55 languages and spread across 74 nations, Dunger continues Disney's legacy of reaching across cultures.

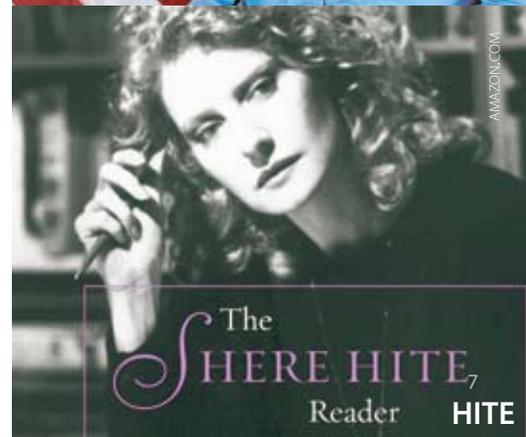
### **Bill Nelson**

As he hurtles through the sky towards outer space, Bill Nelson prepares to join some elite company. Not only is he one of a very small percentage of people to have experienced spaceflight, he is just the second sitting member of the United States Congress to do so. After returning from his time aboard the space shuttle *Columbia* as a payload specialist for NASA, Nelson continued his career in politics. After unsuccessfully running for Governor of Florida in 1990, ten years later Nelson aimed for a position in the Senate. In 2000, he defeated Bill McCollum and becomes Senator, a position he continues to hold to this day. (Nelson attended UF in the early 1960s.)

### **Shere Hite, M.A., History**

Few scientific reports sell 48 million copies worldwide. Shere Hite, the sex researcher/ cultural historian behind *The Hite Report: A Nationwide Study of Female Sexuality*, achieved just that, and in the process became one of the leading voices of the sexual revolution. Following in the steps of Alfred Kinsey and Masters and Johnson, Hite focused primarily on female sexuality and used personal questionnaires to investigate sexual practices amongst women from a variety of different backgrounds. Although controversial and considered shocking by some facets of society, Hite's work stands as an important moment in the study of human sexuality.

— Christopher Garland



A man with dark hair and a goatee, wearing a blue dress shirt and a red patterned tie, stands outdoors with his hands on his hips. In the background, a tall brick tower with arched windows is visible against a blue sky with light clouds. The quote "You're not in Kansas anymore." is overlaid in white cursive font on an orange horizontal bar at the bottom of the image.

*“You’re not in  
Kansas anymore.”*

I’ve heard these words often since coming to UF in July from the University of Kansas to be Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Sometimes the humorous remark has an ominous undertone, referring to the budget problems facing the state and UF. Implied are two questions: What do UF and CLAS look like to someone coming in from the outside? How worried are you about the budget? Having answered the questions many times in person, I thought I should answer them for readers of *Alumni CLASnotes*.

The qualities of UF and of CLAS are real and enduring, and they have made a deeper impression on me than the budget issues. As I get to know the College and the University two things strike me: quality and passion. Both of these things refer primarily to people. CLAS has immensely talented students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends—much more talented than is often recognized on campus or beyond. These talents are converted into accomplishments through passion—passion for inquiry, for discovery, for changing the world.

The student body at UF is among the most talented in the nation. We know this from measures such as SAT scores. The 2008 freshman class has an average combined SAT score of 1293. This puts UF on the heels of the very top public universities, such as Virginia and Berkeley, and not far behind some of the elite private schools. Beyond the numbers, however, I am repeatedly bowled over by the students I meet at various events I go to around campus. At a reception for the Florida Opportunity Scholars, I met first-generation college students from disadvantaged backgrounds who spoke with great clarity and vision about what they hoped to do with their college education. Talking with students outside University Auditorium following the Convocation ceremony, I met a young student going into nursing who is also taking advanced Chinese—and carrying a 4.0 grade point average—who talked about how a visit to Mongolia had spurred her desire to improve health care in East Asia. Meeting with the Political Science undergraduate student organization, I was put on my heels by incisive questions about the links between academic political science and policy making. Visiting UF's innovative Undergraduate Core Lab for freshman science students, I had a freshman explain to me in detail how she was preparing a sample of her own DNA for a set of procedures that would compare her genetic composition to that of the overall population distribution. Students in CLAS are “scary smart,” but they're not only smart. They are passionate about what they are doing, and they are committed to making a difference.

I am trying to meet with every department, and therefore every faculty member, this year. While I am only part way through, I again am amazed by what I see. The impression I have halfway through my first semester is that when the reputation of CLAS catches up with reality, we will be seen as one of the very best public research universities in the world. We are, in many respects, already there. Shortly after arriving, I toured the lab in the Space Sciences Building where Steve Eikenberry and his colleagues were building an infrared detector for a gigantic new telescope being built in Chile. I was amazed not only by the complexity of the task and the fact that UF's instrumentation program had been asked to build it, but by the fact that Steve and his colleagues could explain the science behind the project in a way that a layman such as myself could easily understand. Later, I met David Leavitt from our highly ranked Creative Writing Program, whose recent novel *The Indian Clerk* was featured on the cover of *The New York Times Book Review*.

*“As I get to know the College and the University two things strike me: quality and passion.... CLAS has immensely talented students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.... These talents are converted into accomplishments through passion—passion for inquiry, for discovery, for changing the world.”*

CLAS continues to attract top-notch new talent as well. Among new faculty in CLAS this fall is Alyson Young, a medical anthropologist who studies preventive medicine among pastoral populations in East Africa—work that will have profound impact on people's lives, as well as being of scholarly value.

Beyond the scholarly accomplishments of these faculty members is their commitment to their students. Stop a faculty member walking across campus, and ask “what are you teaching this semester,” and they are likely not only to tell you the names of the courses, but how they are trying a new approach this semester, about the innovative projects they are requiring of students, and about the issues they're grappling with. This brings us back to the students: when I sat down to dinner recently with a group of students at a Graham Center event, several of them talked with great excitement about a policy analysis course they were taking. Their professor had them developing policy proposals for an issue facing the city of Gainesville. Clearly the passion of the professor had engaged that of the students. This was work they were eager to throw themselves into.

Among the most rewarding parts of my new job is meeting with alumni, to hear about their experiences at UF, sometimes recently, and sometimes

many years ago. My favorite question to ask alumni is what class at UF had the most impact on their lives. Almost everyone can answer that question immediately. Some point to a professor who set off a spark in them—UF legends like Manning Dauer, Bob Ryan, and Julian Pleasants seem to come up often. Others talk about a class that provided a skill that has been essential in their success, and writing courses are mentioned often. Alumni tell me over and over again that “this is a special place.” They are right, and they continue to make it so.

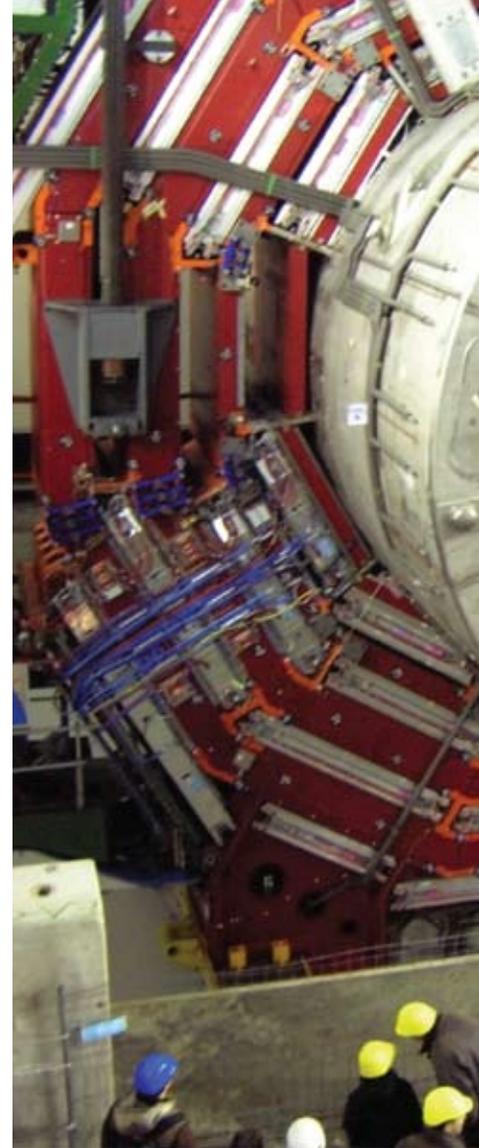
I have not had space to discuss everything that has impressed me in my first months at UF—the beautiful campus, the staff (who are as committed to UF as anyone), the academic programs, and the progress on the Florida Tomorrow campaign. All these things merit attention and will get it in future issues of *Alumni CLASnotes*.

For all these reasons, it is a great time to be at CLAS, despite the budget problems. The budget occupies a great deal of my time, and it should. The more frugally we spend our money, the more we will have to invest in our students and faculty. But the budget does not define us. We are defined by our people, and by our passion for what we do and our commitment to UF.

—Paul D'Anieri

UF PHYSICISTS TAKE PART IN

# the world's most ambitious science experiment



When the world's largest particle accelerator went live, University of Florida physicists joined thousands of scientists working to crack the last major mysteries of the physical universe.

A team of UF physicists has a leading role in one of the two major experiments planned for the Large Hadron Collider, a 17-mile-long, \$5 billion, super-cooled underground tunnel that has been under construction outside Geneva, Switzerland, for 14 years. It has been described as the largest scientific project in history. The European Organization for Nuclear Research propelled the first beam of protons through the accelerator on September 10—the official start of experiments designed to reveal the origin of mass, the nature of mysterious dark matter and to solve other conundrums of the physical universe.

“The Large Hadron Collider

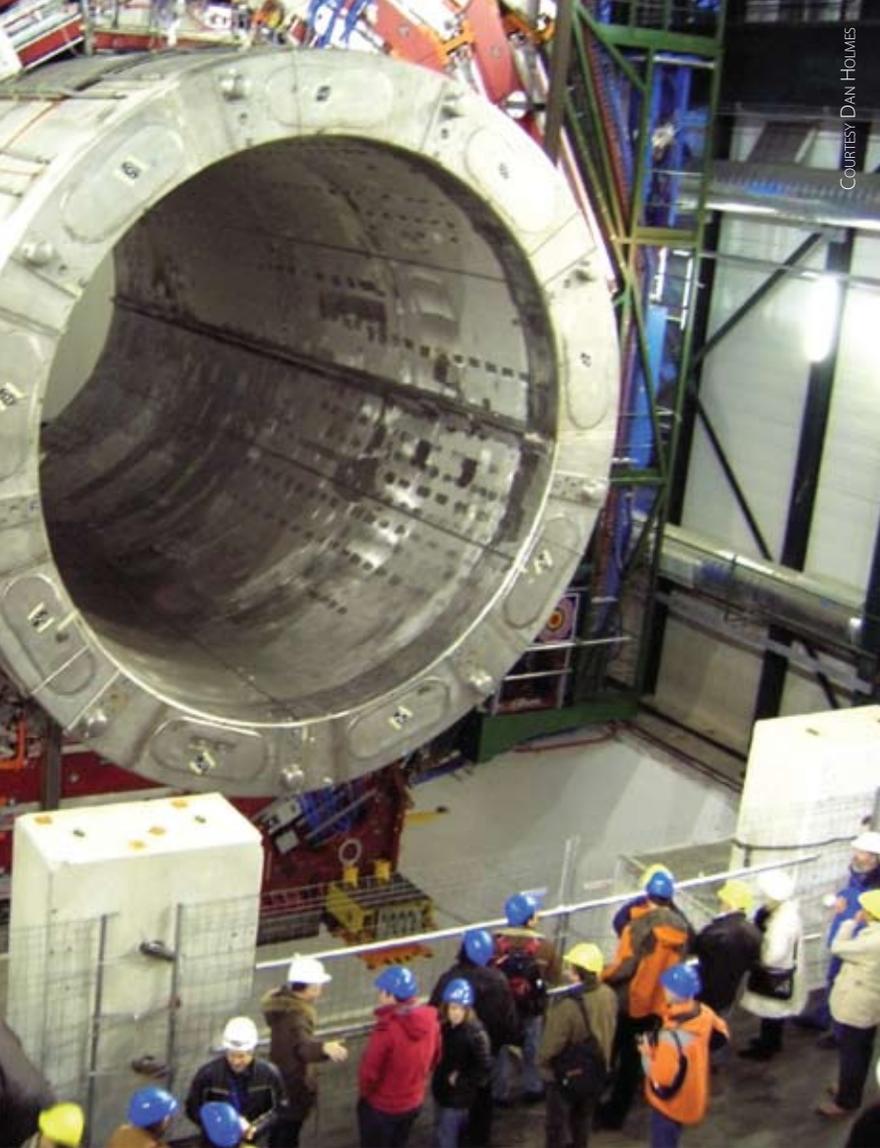
will give us a deeper understanding of what's going on with the basic forces of nature,” said Darin Acosta, a UF professor of physics and one of more than two dozen UF faculty or students involved in the experiment.

The accelerator is intended to smash together protons energized with seven trillion electron volts—recreating in miniature the conditions thought to have existed in the first moments of the “Big Bang” more than 13 billion years ago. Physicists hope at least a few of those collisions will result in new, if extremely rare and fleeting, forms of matter. They believe subsequent analysis could yield clues to the most fundamental mysteries in physics—mysteries about which there are many

theories but few observations.

For example, Acosta said, physicists have explained the presence of mass by theorizing the existence of the Higgs boson, a subatomic particle believed to endow particles with mass. But the Higgs—sometimes called the “God particle” because it is the last unobserved particle in the so-called Standard Model of particle physics—has so far eluded other colliders. Physicists hope the Large Hadron Collider is powerful enough to give them a first glimpse.

Also, there is considerable evidence that the universe contains abundant “dark matter”—matter that has never been observed but that obeys gravity and other physical forces.



COURTESY DAN HOUMES

# CREATED IN PART BY UF WORLD'S LARGEST COMPUTING GRID LAUNCHED

The world's largest computing grid, pioneered in part by University of Florida researchers, was launched on October 3 to crunch the mammoth amounts of data produced by the Large Hadron Collider particle accelerator in Europe.

Three weeks after the first particle beams were injected into the collider, the Worldwide LHC Computing Grid will combine the power of more than 140 computer centers from 33 countries to analyze and manage more than 15 million gigabytes of LHC data every year. The part of the grid located in the U.S., known as the Open Science Grid, is a direct outgrowth of two earlier grid projects led by the University of Florida.

The principal investigator and director for those grids, known as GriPhyN and iVDGL, was Paul Avery, a UF professor of physics.

"There were basically three national projects that merged to form the Open Science Grid, and two of those were our projects," said Avery, who serves as OSG's Council co-chairman.

The LHC is currently down for repairs. But when it is running at full speed, it is expected to produce enough data to fill about 100 million CDs per year. The data consists largely of the record of hundreds of millions of collisions of protons per second, protons moving at close to the speed of light within the accelerator.

The Open Science Grid not only contributes computing power for LHC data needs but also for projects in many other scientific fields including biology, nanotechnology, medicine and climate science. Avery said those projects include projects at UF, which is tied into the Open Science Grid through its LHC effort and the UF High Performance Computing Center.

"Particle physics projects such as the LHC have been a driving force for the development of worldwide computing grids," said Ed Seidel, director of the National Science Foundation's Office of Cyberinfrastructure. "The benefits from these grids are now being reaped in areas as diverse as mathematical modeling and drug discovery."

—UF News Bureau

Physicists hope some smashed particles will yield the first observation of the mysterious stuff.

"We could directly see a neutral particle which could be what makes up 90 percent of the universe," Acosta said.

More than 30 UF physicists, postdoctoral associates and graduate students are involved in the collider's Compact Muon Spectrometer, or CMS, experiment, one of its two major experiments. About 10 are stationed in Geneva. The group is the largest from any university in the U.S. to participate in the CMS experiment, said Guenakh Mitselmakher, a UF distinguished professor of physics who heads the project. All told, the Large Hadron Collider involves about 600 U.S. physicists and 5,000 physicists worldwide.

The CMS is the collider's workhorse: It is designed to capture and measure all phenomena resulting from

the proton collisions in the collider, Acosta said.

The UF team designed and oversaw development of a major detector within the CMS. The detector, the Muon system, is intended to capture subatomic particles called muons, which are heavier cousins of electrons. Among other efforts, UF scientists analyzed about 100 of the 400 detector chambers placed within the Muon system to be sure they were functioning properly. The bulk of the UF research was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy.

The UF team will remain very much involved with the collider and its experiments throughout the next decade, Mitselmakher said.

"We expect to continue playing leading roles in these experiments and contribute strongly to future discoveries," he said.

—Aaron Hoover, UF News Bureau



# a measure of success

## U.S. AMBASSADOR TO PANAMA REFLECTS ON HER CAREER AS A DIPLOMAT

Barbara Stephenson measures success by the humdrum activities of daily life: toddlers and mothers playing in local parks, children from different neighborhoods learning at the same school, and even bureaucrats using Microsoft Excel as a budgeting tool. Stephenson, the newly appointed United States Ambassador to Panama, has lived through earthquakes, floods, and illness. It's a part of her working life she can't change. What she does aim to change is the daily experiences of those around her—a desire triggered by her experiences as a student at the University of Florida.

"I grew up in a small town south of Gainesville and never went anywhere," says Stephenson. "I had a wanderlust and UF gave me the opportunities, intellectual and actual."

University life gave Stephenson the opportunity to live in a wider world and the skills to understand it. Summers abroad in Colombia, Greece and Austria as part of UF's study abroad program for undergraduates sparked a sense of adventure and an appetite for more.

René Lemarchand, a political science professor, fed some of that appetite with his classes in comparative politics. It was Lemarchand, says Stephenson, who suggested a career as a diplomat. In 1985, the day after

Stephenson defended her dissertation in English, she began work at the State Department. "I developed a fascination with American foreign policy. I feel I was born to be an American diplomat and can't think of anything that would have suited me as well."

Diplomacy does have its downsides, Stephenson admits. Constantly pulling up roots, leaving friends behind—especially hard for her two children, and the difficulties of day-to-day life in a foreign language take their toll. Once, during Stephenson's time as Consul General and Chief of Mission in Curacao from 1998-2001, the normally desert-like island turned into a mosquito-ridden swamp, sickening members of her

family. Earlier, in El Salvador, a war combined with an earthquake produced contaminated water, little food, and an unreliable electricity supply.

Stephenson quickly returns to the upbeat aspects of her job—the ability to see the world and the lives and cultures of its peoples. Mostly, though, it's hard work and small improvements, as during her time in Northern Ireland, where she played a part in the peace process. By the time she took up her duties as Consul General in 2001, violence had faded. "But," says Stephenson, "the political process had stalled. The two communities, Protestant and Catholic, were getting more separated. Most kids went to separate schools and neighborhoods

Ambassador Stephenson in Panama, clockwise from left: signing documents to provide support to GOP efforts to improve policing, including community policing; receiving book on Panama Canal from Alberto Aleman, ACP administrator; seated with President Torrijos at credential presentation; admiring that new baby in Chorrera.

saw increasing segregation.”

On the other side of the Atlantic, Stephenson drew on her childhood in Wildwood and her experiences of school integration to help others. Working with community leaders on both sides of the religious divide produced one of her biggest highlights—increasing public support, including financial support from American donors, for integrated schools in Northern Ireland. American integration and Irish integration worked in ironically different ways, says Stephenson. While here the U.S. government pushed for integration, in Northern Ireland the government refused to fund integrated schools for their first three years of existence. “Parents had to trail blaze and we became an important force for breaking down barriers and taking risks for the future,” she says.

Slow and steady characterized Stephenson’s work in El Salvador, where she worked on a peace agreement from 1990 to 1992. Despite the distractions of shootings and a sky lit up by tracer bullets, Stephenson continued to work on Legislative Assembly elections. “They didn’t attract massive attention, but the elections were hugely important as they allowed El Salvador’s leftist politicians to come home and campaign safely.”

But Stephenson’s largest canvas must surely be Iraq. Based in Washington, from late 2006 she coordinated the interagency effort for reconstruction, with the official title of Deputy Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Coordinator for Iraq at the U.S. Department of State. As well as leading the U.S. delegation at international meetings, she synchronized all donor contributions, American and foreign.

“I came in at a grim time, with violence going up, the displacement of people, and a high death toll – all heartbreaking,” says Stephenson. Her group expanded the scope of provincial reconstruction teams, basically small consulates whose job is to overcome

obstacles that keep provincial governments from functioning. “Sometimes it was as simple as training people how to do Excel spreadsheets so they could come up with a budget.”

One of her greatest contributions, Stephenson believes, was her efforts to measure success in Iraq by numbers and by quality. How many mothers and toddlers in the parks this week versus last week? Can this government deliver services to its people?

Says Stephenson: “I’m a huge fan of judging achievements by whether people can live their lives in peace, whether ethnic tensions are diminished, and whether people have confidence in their government.”

Panama brings Stephenson full circle. She began her diplomatic career there, during the final years of General Manuel Noriega’s reign. The changes since then, she says, are astonishing, from the Hong-Kong-like skyline to the people’s humdrum expectations of generally free and fair elections. Despite their occasionally tense history, Stephenson holds high hopes for U.S.-Panama relations. Education, political and economic accountability, and keeping the Panama Canal safe for world commerce head the ambassador’s to-do list of cooperative projects. In addition, given Panama’s geographic position, Stephenson must battle narco-trafficking and money laundering.

As to the future, Stephenson, casts a nostalgic eye back to her English teaching days at UF. “I’d love to come back to a teaching environment, it’s one of the richest ways to spend your days. The grass isn’t always greener elsewhere; it’s pretty green in Gainesville. I learned a lot from teaching—how to present information, how to bring a group along, how to portray complex ideas that make people excited about learning.”

Such experiences help Stephenson in her public speaking before dozens or hundreds of people. For the next three years, though, she’ll be speaking in Spanish.

—Michal Meyer



ALL PHOTOS FOR THIS ARTICLE COURTESY U.S. EMBASSY PANAMA PRESS OFFICE

# CLASmates

## 1950s

**Charles Dils** (M.A., Psychology, 1956) recently completed 4 years on Board of Trustees of Tacoma Unitarian Congregation, with one as president. He is a retired marriage and family therapist.

**Betty Ann Good** (B.A., Liberal Arts, 1954) is the founder of Youth Crime Watch of America. She previously founded organizations including the Crime Commission of Greater Miami's Court Watchers in 1968 and Citizens' Crime Watch of Miami-Dade County in 1975. The Florida Grand Jury Association, the International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners, and President Ronald Reagan, have recognized her work. In 1977, B'nai B'rith named her as the Dade County Outstanding Citizen of 1977. In 1996, President Bill Clinton honored her with the Presidential Service Award. She was a national Points of Light Award recipient in 1994.

## 1960s

**John P. Hudock** (B.S., Biology, 1969) joined the management staff of the Arizona Department of Financial Institutions (AzDFI, then known as the Arizona State Banking Department) where he revised, and modernized the chapter of Arizona's Administrative Code. He has served as the President of the Public Lawyers Section of the Maricopa County Arizona Bar Association, and was recently promoted to Administrative Counsel of AzDFI.

**Capers Jones** (B.A., English, 1961) published a translation of his 14th book, *Estimating Software Costs*, in both Japanese and Chinese. He was the keynote speaker at the annual Japanese Software Testing Conference in Tokyo in February and was the keynote speaker at the World Quality Congress in Washington, DC, in September. His 15th book, *Applied Software Measurement*, was published earlier this year.

**Henry S. Katz** (M.S., Physics,

1962 and Ph.D., International Studies, 1982) was hired by the Boeing Company to work on the Apollo mission, after receiving his master's degree. In 1963, he moved to the Martin Company to work on re-entry of nuclear-powered Navy satellites. This was followed by a stint at the Goddard Space Flight Center working on the Delta Launch vehicle, then by the National Security Agency, working as a director of an overseas deep space Collection site. He also was a part-time faculty member at the University of Maryland Baltimore County in the Computer Science department.

## 1970s

**Thomas R. Lindlof** (B.A., English, 1973) is a professor in the School of Journalism and Telecommunications at the University of Kentucky. The University Press of Kentucky published his latest book, *Hollywood Under Siege: Martin Scorsese, the Religious Right, and the Culture Wars*, in 2008.

**Wallace L. McKeehan** (B.S., Chemistry, 1965) is the Endowed John S. Dunn Professor and Director of the Center for Cancer and Stem Cell Biology at Texas A&M Health Science Center's Institute of Biosciences and Technology in the Texas Medical Center in Houston. Dr. McKeehan was named Texas A&M Regents Professor in 2003, the highest honor for service in the system. This year he was named Texas A&M Distinguished Professor, the highest academic honor in the system.

**Richard J. Oman** (M.A., Theater, 1970) was married to Jennie Marie Naffie on May 6, 2008. He retired in July from a 37-year career as college instructor, the last 34 years of which were spent at Muskegon Community College in Michigan where he served more than twenty years as Director of Theatre and five years as Chair of the Creative & Performing Arts Department. As scenic and

lighting designer he designed more than 150 productions for the college as well as community and professional theaters.

**David B. Richman** (Ph.D., Zoology, 1977) was named Curator of the Arthropod Museum in the Department of Entomology, Plant Pathology and Weed Science, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces New Mexico in 2006. He was promoted to faculty as a College Associate Professor in 2007. He was also presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from New Mexico Cooperative Extension and made a Friend of New Mexico 4-H in 2007. He authored three chapters in the *Encyclopedia of Entomology* (2008) and co-authored eight chapters in *Spiders of North America* (2005).

**Bruce Rocheleau** (Ph.D., Political Science, 1974) is the author of two books: *Public Management Information Systems* (2006) and *Case Studies in Digital Government* (2007). He is Professor of Political Science at Northern Illinois University.

**Michael Shay** (B.A., English, 1976) was chosen to represent Wyoming in the State Blogger Corps at the 2008 Democratic National Convention. His blog, [www.hummingbirdminds.blogspot.com](http://www.hummingbirdminds.blogspot.com), focuses on Wyoming politics.

**Chuck Sheehan** (B.A., Political Science, 1978) has worked for the Hazelden Foundation Treatment center in Palm Beach, Florida and recently was hired as a Case Manager in the Synergy Substance Abuse Module of the Oakwood Mental Health Center of Palm Beach County.

**John W. Sheets** (B.S., Zoology, 1975) was recently named Corporate Vice President and Chief Technology Officer of Bausch & Lomb.

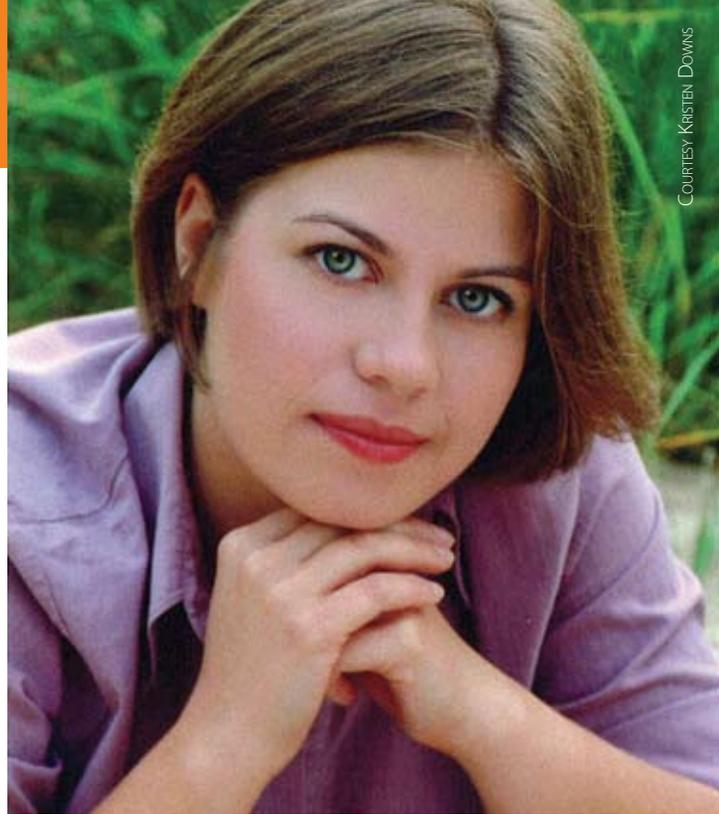
**Carol M. Towbin Greenberg** (B.A., English and Speech, 1976) is the founder and Creative Director of MorningStar Cultural Arts Group which will be celebrating its 20th year in 2009.

An educator for over thirty years and a Cultural Arts commissioner for Savannah for nine years, she holds many local, regional and national civic positions, has won many awards, and is a consultant for grant writers, curriculum developers and event planners. It's always a beautiful day in her neighborhood (though she is a proud Gator among Bulldogs) because she has made her home with her high school sweetheart of 36 years—the last 22 in Savannah—and is most proud of the accomplishments of her two wonderful children.

**Geoffrey S. Yarema** (B.S., Environmental Sciences, 1975) is the chair of the Infrastructure Practice Group at the law firm Nossaman, LLP. He was appointed by U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters to serve on a congressionally mandated commission to study transportation infrastructure. The blue ribbon commission is expected to issue its report with recommendations to the Congress and the Administration in November 2008.

## 1980s

**Preston L. Allen** (B.A., English, 1987) received his MFA in creative writing from Florida International University in 1994. Since 1994, he has been Associate Professor of English at Miami-Dade College. His short story collection *Churchboys and Other Sinners* (2003) was awarded the Sonja H. Stone Prize in Fiction, and was shortlisted for the Hurston-Wright. His novel *All or Nothing* (2007) received great reviews from the New York Times Sunday Book Review (Sunday June 15, 2008). His short stories have appeared in the literary journals *Seattle Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Gulfstream Magazine*, *Drum Voices 2000*, and *Asili*. He has also been published in anthologies *Miami Noir*, *Las Vegas Noir*, *Here We Are: An Anthology of Southern Florida Writers*, and *Brown Sugar: A Collection of Erotic Black Fiction*.



**Harry Averell** (B.A., English, 1985) lives in Gainesville, Florida, where he has his own consulting practice. He is a single father, raising his two high school children and coaching high school basketball in his spare time.

**Catherine Russo Cobb** (B.A., Political Science, 1986) is currently Southeast Bureau Chief with Nation's Restaurant News ([www.nrn.com](http://www.nrn.com)), a subsidiary of NY based publisher Lebhar Friedman.

**Laura Jane Deleruyelle** (B.A., Speech Pathology and Audiology, 1984) is a family nurse practitioner in Palmetto, Florida. She is currently completing a doctorate in Nursing Practice from Case Western Reserve University.

**Jeffrey Hocutt** (B.A., Political Science, 1985) owns Hocutt's Chemical Company and, in 2008, wrote a book *Stories From the Back of an Envelope*.

**Mark W. Klingensmith** (B.A., Political Science, 1982) was elected in March 2008 to a four-year term as Commissioner for the Town of Sewall's Point, Florida.

**David P. Milian** (B.A., Political Science, 1986) was selected as one of the Best Lawyers in America in the specialty of Commercial Litigation. In September, David joined the Miami/Washington, D.C., commercial litigation and intellectual property firm Carey Rodriguez Greenberg & Paul as a partner, following 15 years as a partner with the Miami firm Kozyak Tropin & Throckmorton. David is a member of the Florida Bar's Civil Rules Procedure Committee and was listed by Florida Trend Magazine as one of Florida's Legal Elite in commercial litigation.

**Sandra Pavelka** (B.S., Political Science, 1985) is an Associate Professor and Division of Public Affairs and Director, Institute for Youth and Justice Studies at Florida Gulf Coast University.

**Mitchell Roop** (B.A., Philosophy, 1989) graduated in 1991 from the University of South Florida with a Master's Degree Eastern Religion and a Master's Degree in Information Sciences. In 2003 he was a graduate of Leadership Tampa. In 2005 he was a graduate of Leadership Tampa Bay. In 2003 he formed Mitch Roop Inc., a management-consulting firm in areas of operations, internal audit, and management accounting. He has a corporate partnership in NPC Creative Services LLC, a public

relations firm which focuses on technology and healthcare technology.

**Gregory Thompson** (B.A., Political Science, 1981) is currently Director of Sponsored Research Services at Florida State University.

**Larry Nash White** (B.A., History 1988) was named Program Director of the Master in Library Science program at East Carolina University and recently received a 2008 Excellence in Teaching Award from the North Carolina Distance Learning Association.

**Dwight D. Wilson** (B.A., Criminology, 1988) graduated from Leadership St. Petersburg Class of 2008. Wilson feels that leadership is his strong suit, as he has graduated from Leadership Gainesville, Focus on Leadership, American Council of Young Political Leaders, and the Executive Leadership Institute.

## 1990s

**Tyrone L. Adams** (B.A., Speech Communication, 1990) is the D'Aquin Endowed Professor of Journalism and Communication at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette. He specializes in computer-mediated communication and Internet discourse, but has a deep love for all things rhetorical. He is currently working on a book (which is being translated into Spanish) with the University of San Martin de Porres Research Institute titled *Communication Shock: The Acceleration and Integration of Everything*. His latest book, *Electronic Tribes: The Virtual Worlds of Geeks, Gamers, Shamans, and Scammers*, was published summer 2008.

**Cheryl Priest Ainsworth** (B.A., Political Science, 1998) practiced law with Holland & Knight LLP in Tampa for a few years, but recently accepted a position with Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP in Los Angeles. She practices in the areas of commercial litigation, antitrust and trade regulation litigation.

**Larissa R. Baia** (M.A., Latin Am. Studies, 1996 and Ph.D., Political Science, 2004) worked as an administrator in international programs and admissions at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida, for 5 years. She and her family recently moved to Concord, New Hampshire where she accepted a position as Associate Vice President of

*continued on page 16*

## Congratulations to Kristen Downs

(B.A. 2006, Chemistry and French), who recently won a Jack Kent Cooke Fellowship for up to six years of graduate study at \$50,000 a year. This scholarship is one of the largest and most competitive graduate scholarships in the country. She is attending Johns Hopkins University pursuing a master's degree in Environmental Sciences Engineering. Nominated for the award based on her outstanding performance in a challenging major, wide-ranging undergraduate research, and extensive international experience, she has a powerful motivation to make a difference in the developing world in the area of water and sanitation.

Recruited to UF as a National Merit Scholar, in her second semester Kristen began undergraduate research with Professor Valeria Kleiman. She spent her junior year in Grenoble studying chemistry (taught in French). Her senior thesis on biophysics allowed her to graduate summa cum laude. Her professor's have called Kristen a citizen of the world. Before the age of nine she lived for six years in Japan and Palau. She spent her junior year of high school in Grenoble. After graduation, the Peace Corps took her to Kenya as a secondary math and science teacher where she worked with students to address issues related to AIDS. On her return she volunteered in Ecuador in a Child Family Health Project. Each of these international experiences has helped her acquire a highly developed sense of the nuances of different cultures, which have shaped her intense desire to make an impact on the developing world.

## send us your updates

Let us know what you're up to by completing an update form online at [www.clas.ufl.edu/alumni/](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/alumni/). Want to promote your new book? E-mail the cover art and jacket information to [editor@clas.ufl.edu](mailto:editor@clas.ufl.edu). We look forward to hearing from you!

Enrollment Management at Manchester Community College. She is enjoying the challenge that the position brings, but missed the warmth of Florida this past winter!

**Aileen Easterbrook**, formerly Cheryl Aileen Russo, (B.A., English, 1990) was published in *AppleSeeds Magazine* for children. Her article, "Pathways into the Library," detailing the life of former UF professor James Haskins appeared in their February 2008 Civil Rights Issue.

**Mike Garner** (B.A., M.A., and Ph.D., Political Science, 1990, 1992, and 1999) was appointed President and CEO of the Florida Association of Health Plans (FAHP). Garner spent years analyzing Florida health care policy in his role as analyst at BCBS, OPPAGA, and most recently as the chief health policy staff person within the state senate.

**Gavin I. Handwerker** (B.A. and M.A., Political Science, 1991 and 1993) is a principal of Nissenbaum Law Group, LLC and the head of its litigation practice. He is a member of the New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania State Bars. He was also admitted in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, the District of New Jersey, and the Second and Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

**Rebecca L. Harris** (B.A., Anthropology and Classics, 1993) was appointed to UF/IFAS Extension Faculty, 4-H, Youth Development, Orange County Extension in May 2008.

**Bobby J. Hollis, II** (B.A., English, 1996) is Assistant General Counsel of Invenergy LLC, a leader in the field of renewable energy generation, which is based in Chicago.

**Richard Hujber** (B.A., Political Science, 1993)

recently opened his law firm, Law Offices of Richard Hujber, P.A., in conjunction with the Hujber Law Group, in Boynton Beach, Florida. He previously worked as an Attorney-Advisor in the U.S. Department of Justice, Executive Office for Immigration Review, at the Miami Immigration Court and the Board of Immigration Appeals.

**Robert McCormes-Ballou** (B.A., Political Science, 1992) received his Master of Science in Management with a concentration in Leadership from the HuiZENGA School of Business at Nova Southeastern University in 2006. In 2007, *Minority Business News* named him one of the Top 100 Men Impacting Supplier Diversity and *DiversityBusiness.com* named him one of America's Top Diversity Advocates.

**Melinda (Myrick) McMaster** (B.S., Zoology, 1995) received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction of Science Education from the University of Central Florida in May 2007.

**Jason D. Montes** (B.A., English, 1991) graduated from Nova Southeastern University School of Law in 2002. In August, he ran for Circuit Court Judge in Hillsborough County, Florida. He is currently an associate with the law firm of Luks, Santaniello, Perez, Petrillo & Gold in Tampa.

**Luis J. Perdomo** (B.A., Political Science, 1992) is a trial litigator and resides in Palmetto Bay, Florida, with his wife, Julie, and twin girls, Kaitlyn and Kelsey. He recently became a named partner at Lane, Reese, Summers, Ennis & Perdomo, P.A.

**M. Maximillion Wilson** (B.A. and Ph.D., Sociology, 1990 and 2000) works as the Statewide Evaluation Consultant in the Florida Department of Health's Bureau of HIV/AIDS. His role is to provide research expertise to community-based agencies around the state that are developing new and innovative strategies for fighting HIV and AIDS.

## 2000s

**Florent Allais** (Ph.D., Chemistry, 2004) was nominated as a Senior Scientist at the French Institute of Agronomics and Food sciences in Versailles, France, in September 2007. She received a tenured position in July 2008.

**Leslie (Schaefer) Ballard** (M.A., Sociology, 2002) is an Instructional Design Specialist at the home office of Cracker Barrel Old Country Store in Lebanon, Tennessee. She is also the Southeast Region Director of Cadet Programs for Civil Air Patrol, the USAF Auxiliary. She was the escort and coach of the 2008 Civil Air Patrol National Color Guard Competition champion team from Gainesville.

**Victoria Eads** (B.A., Religion, 2006) graduated from the University of Texas Medical Branch's School of Nursing and received her registered nurse license. She began work in August at Duke University Hospital as a Medical Intensive Care Unit Intern.

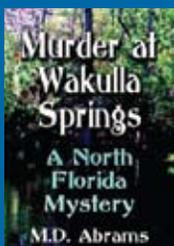
**Michael Gale** (B.S., Zoology, 2003) has completed his Masters of Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Syracuse University and currently works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a Special Assistant in the Office of External Affairs, Washington, D.C.

**James Andrew "Andy" Howard** (B.A., Criminology, 2003) was recently promoted to Director of Education and Community Relations for the Orlando Opera Company.

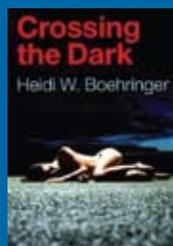
**Alexis Lambert** (B.A., Spanish, 2000) has a "day job" as Deputy General Counsel to Attorney General Bill McCollum of Florida, but is also an adjunct professor of Communication at Florida State University, teaching media law. She was recently featured in Florida Trend on the subject of public records law.

## alumni bookshelf

**Murder at Wakulla Springs: A North Florida Mystery.** Marjorie Abrams (writing as M.D. Abrams), B.A. 1958. The latest entry in Abrams' North Florida Mystery Series highlights the history and ecology of Wakulla Springs and Apalachicola.



**Crossing the Dark.** Heidi W. Boehringer, B.A. 1983. Police officer Mona rescued her daughter from a criminal who used her as a sex slave. Can Mona save her daughter from a depression that threatens to overwhelm her, or will she fall victim to her own fury and despair?



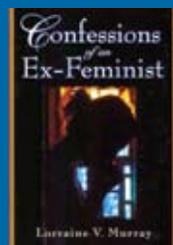
**Criminals in the Making: Criminality Across the Life Course.** Stephen G. Tibbetts, B.A. 1991. This interdisciplinary book examines criminal behavior, highlighting interventions and illustrating how the life-course perspective contributes an understanding of the causes of crime.



**Living by the Dead: A Memoir.** Ellen Ashdown, Ph.D. 1974. This mixed-genre book combines a memoir of loss and grief with a meditation on place: the cemetery by which the author lived and where she walked daily.



**Confessions of an Ex-Feminist.** Lorraine (Viscardi) Murray, Ph.D. 1981. The religion columnist for *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* tells the story of a prodigal daughter who found her way back home, crushed by guilt and driven by repentance.



**Library Performance and Service Competition Developing Strategic Responses.** Larry Nash White, B.A. 1998. A resource for library administrators, this book identifies factors impacting customers, strategic needs, and methods to drive a service environment.



**Clifton Molina** (B.S., Computer Science, 2006) is webmaster for the City of Pensacola, Management Information Services Department.

**Thaddeus D. Phillips** (B.A., Political Science, 2002) graduated from the Thomas Jefferson School of Law in 2005. From 2005 to 2007, he was the Assistant State Attorney for the 19th Circuit State Attorney's Office of Florida. He is currently an intelligence officer in the United States Navy.

**Eva Rosales** (B.A., Political Science and French, 2005) enrolled in Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs master's program. Her main concentration is in International Security Policy with a regional concentration in the Middle East, focusing research in the military doctrine, political policy, and counterterrorism strategies in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Lebanon.

**Matthew Schaefer** (B.A., English, 2000) resides in Franklin, Tennessee, and is working for Cisco Systems as a Channel Account Manager covering Central and East Tennessee.

**Tara (Williamson) Underwood** (B.A., Political Science, 2000) is a budget analyst for SAIC at the Kennedy Space Center for Constellation program. She earned a Master of Science in Management from FIT in 2005. She and her husband had a little girl in November 2006, who is already a huge Gator fan.

**Brian P. Williams** (B.A., Political Science, 2004) previously worked for the Executive Office of the Governor (2004-2008) and is now at the U.S. Department of Commerce (2008-Present).

**David E. Winchester** (B.S., Microbiology, 2000) (B.A., Sociology, 2000) is completing his residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Virginia and will be returning to Shands for a fellowship in Cardiology. He was recently appointed to the American Medical Association's Council on Legislation.

## WHERE IN THE WORLD? ALUMNI WRITE IN AND LET US KNOW WHAT THEY'VE BEEN UP TO

### Mosul, Iraq

My buddy and I are both graduates of UF—and we are both graduates of the UF Army ROTC program as well. We are stationed together in the 43rd Combat Engineer Company as platoon leaders. My name is 1LT Benjamin Weaver (B.A. 2005, Political Science) and his is 1LT Andrej Mikulski (B.A. 2004, M.A. 2006, Urban Planning). Our company assures mobility, counter mobility and survivability, which support the troopers of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment "Brave Rifles" who are currently conducting combat operations in the pivotal city of Mosul, Iraq. One of our primary roles is to conduct route clearance, basically hunt roadside bombs or Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) that injure and kill so many soldiers. Together, with Explosive Ordnance Detachments we have found over 250 and provided much of the current force protection in Mosul.

We have seen quite a bit of action, and the leadership taught to us by the CLAS and UF Army ROTC has been extremely useful. My fellow Gator and I have been instrumental in developing a positive security situation for the one-time insurgent stronghold of Mosul, Iraq. It is pretty rare that two members of the same university are stationed together. Here's a photo of us pictured on a Bradley Fighting Vehicle. Go Gators!

—Benjamin J. Weaver, 1LT, EN, U.S. Army



COURTESY BENJAMIN WEAVER

### Easter Island

I graduated in 1991 with a B.A. in Criminal Justice and have been employed as an international currency trader since 1992. I was in Iceland 6 months prior to heading to Easter Island. In Iceland I had a Gator Hat but no banner, then someone asked how far I would go to take a picture with a Gator banner and that is when Easter Island came into the picture. From Iceland it is almost as far as one can go in the opposite direction. I decided to take my own photo of the most remote place in the world in front of the Maoi (statues) with my Gator Flag.

—Howard Goldstein



COURTESY HOWARD GOLDSTEIN

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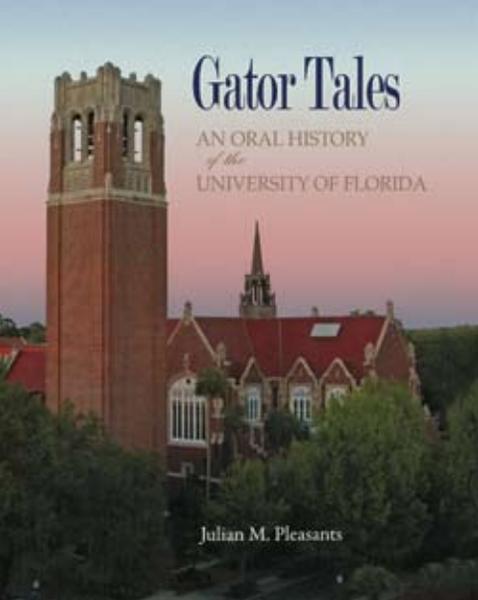
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Compiled by Julian Pleasants, former director of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program, *Gator Tales* weaves together the recollections of faculty, administrators, students and athletes into an entertaining and fascinating read for Gators everywhere. This lively, anecdotal new book provides an intimate glimpse into the University of Florida's past 100 years—following its evolution from small provincial campus to major university.

—University Press of Florida, 2006

## Journal of Undergraduate Research Turns 10

In celebration of its 10th anniversary, the *Journal of Undergraduate Research* is publishing a special issue, *The Ten Best*, including the most impressive academic articles appearing in the on-line journal since its inception. The *Journal of Undergraduate Research* is a cross-disciplinary journal seeking to publish outstanding research of University of Florida undergraduates and showcase University Scholars. As part of the celebration, two of the scholars recognized in the anniversary issue will speak at the spring symposium and awards ceremony of the University Scholars Program. Creed Greer, the editor of the journal, hopes that this celebration will bring recognition to the work of undergraduate scholars and highlight the quality of research being conducted at every level at the University of Florida. Visit [www.clas.ufl.edu/jur](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/jur) to view articles.

—Creed Greer

# Device Aids Parkinson's Patients

For the last six years, Christine Sapienza, a professor in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, has been working in the area of one of contemporary medical science's biggest challenges: Parkinson's disease. In the last year, her findings in the study of Parkinson's have gained national recognition.

However, her research wasn't originally focused on individuals with Parkinson's. Starting in 1999, she and her team of researchers had been studying respiratory muscle strength training, using a number of different patient groups. In that time, they developed a handheld device, about the size of an asthma inhaler, with an internal spring-loaded valve that works much like the pin in a weight machine.

When a patient blows through the device, the patient's respiratory muscles and neck muscles, which are primarily used for swallowing, are forced to contract and create the pressure necessary to release the valve. "The pressure is set high enough that the muscles are working on overload and therefore increase their strength," Sapienza said. "The neural and biomechanical mechanisms are more complex than that, but that is the short version."

It was the founding of the University of Florida's Movement Disorder Center that prompted Sapienza to the possibility of dealing primarily with patients affected by Parkinson's.

She realized that patients with Parkinson's disease could benefit from the device's ability to change breathing strength. From there, she and her team applied for grants to study the benefits of their muscle-training program specifically for patients with Parkinson's.

Parkinson's disease is characterized by weak, rigid, and slow-moving musculature. To combat this, the muscle-training program targets two essential functions: the muscles that control swallowing and breathing. In patients who have followed the regimen, the device's ability to "cross-train" the muscles used for swallowing has resulted in tremendously positive outcomes for improving swallow function.

This cross training has witnessed some remarkable results over a relatively short time, which include the overall strength of respiratory muscles increasing in some patients by up to 30 percent. Furthermore, after another month of training, patients have enjoyed improved swallowing movement and lessened levels of aspiration: where food, as Sapienza describes it, "goes down the wrong pipe."

The benefits of the muscle training program come from two significant factors: the speed with which results are achieved and the ability for the patient to rehab from home. This speed and effectiveness makes the trainer an excellent treatment option for Parkinson's patients.



JANE DOMINGUEZ

In September 2008, Sapienza presented her findings to the Michael J. Fox Foundation, the largest private funding agency for scientists studying Parkinson's in the U.S. This foundation strives to drive science forward to help with the cure. "We are so thankful for their support for our project (and) their willingness to invest in a new and innovative project," Sapienza said.

—Christopher Garland



Sisler's family, pictured left to right: Hannelore Wass, Betty Ann Rainbow, Fred Rainbow, and Brian Wass

# campus views

## UF Astronomy Keeps Breaking Records

In 2008 Stephen Eikenberry's most luminous star was the record breaking star listed in 2008 Guinness book of records. Now the Gran Telescopio Canarias will be featured in the 2009 Guinness World Records as the biggest Optical Telescope in the world. The University of Florida owns a five-percent share of the telescope with our partners in Mexico and Spain. The GTC had his first light in July 2007 and will be officially inaugurated in 2008.



## Sisler Hall Renamed

On October 22, the Chemistry Research Building was renamed Harry H. Sisler Hall, in honor of the remarkable academic's enduring legacy. Sisler was educated at Ohio State (B.Sc., 1936) and Illinois (Ph.D., 1939). He was a successful chemist and professor at Kansas and Ohio State before being called in 1956 to a new challenge at the University of Florida. The University of Florida Department of Chemistry needed leadership to realize its potential, and Harry Sisler knew how to lead. As head of the department from 1956 to 1968, Sisler made sweeping changes, hired outstanding faculty, and started UF Chemistry on its way to becoming a first-rank unit. He is widely remembered as father of the modern UF Department of Chemistry.

Having jump started the Department of Chemistry, Sisler moved on to other leadership positions at the University of Florida. In 1968, he was named Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; in 1970, Executive Vice President of the university; in 1973, Dean of the Graduate School; in 1976, Director of Sponsored Programs; in 1979, he returned full time to teaching and research as Distinguished Service Professor. Harry passed away in December 2007.

In his career, he published over 200 research papers and numerous research monographs. But he never lost sight of what to him was most important—the students. His textbook in general chemistry was responsible for encouraging many students to see the excitement in chemistry. And, not least, he published several volumes of his own poetry.

The dedication of Sisler Hall provided a fitting memorial to the man who did so much to bring the Department of Chemistry to national prominence.

—Will Harrison

# mark your calendar!

**December 1**

**The People and the Book: The Invention of Print & the Transformation of Jewish Culture**

**December 5**

**Implications of Reproductive Politics for Religious Competition in Niger**

**January 12**

**Between Syria and Egypt: Alms, Work and the Origins of Christian Monasticism**

**January 23**

**Gender conversations brown bag lunch series: Gender and Family Law Issues**

**February 19–21**

**Lenguaje & Espacio / Language & Space, the Fourth Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Hispanic/Latin American Literatures, Linguistics and Cultures**

**February 26–March 2**

**49th Sanibel Symposium. Forefront Theory & Computation in Quantum Chemistry, Condensed Matter & Chemical Physics, Nanoscience, Quantum Biochemistry & Biophysics**

**March 18**

**Gender conversations brown bag lunch series: Incarcerated Women & Juvenile Girls**

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