

Alligator Hall of Fame Banquet

He was Chairman of the House Ethics Committee and of the Florida Delegation in Congress. He was vice president of the House Armed Forces Committee, and he offered many laws to strengthen the US defenses, conserve the environment, help the disabled, and to improve education. He was known as “Mr. Clean” in Congress. For many years he returned his pay that he was paid as a US Representative to the US Government. And [for] many years he fought every attempt to increase pay to the Congress. After his retirement from the US House, he became a distinguished professor of history at Jacksonville University. He authored several books on Florida history and he also, not surprisingly, authored a book on ethics. He, during the time of the Alligator’s independence, worked behind the scenes, trying to see that the Alligator survived. I would like to ask you, if you would, to pause for a moment of silence in his remembrance. [moment of silence] Thank you.

For those of you who don’t know it, Campus Communications is governed by a board of directors consisting of five students and two non-students. The manner in which the board handles its various matters is vital to our operations and our survival. I would like, at this time, to ask all of our current board members to please stand to be recognized. [applause] Thank You.

The reason I wanted to separate the board’s introduction from all the others you will hear tonight is that I felt that they needed to be singled out for special recognition for the tremendous responsibility they shoulder and the

excellent work that they do. In addition, I feel that it is a good segue into the introduction of our master of ceremonies this evening since he is the chair of the board of directors. [pause] He just said keep it short. [laughing] Have you ever known me to keep anything short? [laughing]

No matter how much I list his accomplishments and awards, I'm not going to be able to do justice to his work or to him as a teacher and as a human being. But I'm going to give it a shot. Professor Alexander _____'s most important role is as a husband and as a father. He is also a tenured professor of journalism at the University of Florida. He holds a B.A. from the University of New Orleans, an M.A. in Journalism Communications from the University of Florida, and a J.D. from Tulane. Professor Alexander _____ was the editor of his college newspaper, the *Driftwood*, and he later went back to be its faculty advisor. Besides student press and law journal experiences, he has been a working journalist at the *Times-Picayune*, the ***Humma Currier***, and the *Philadelphia Enquirer*. He was once the coordinator of journalism at the University of New Orleans, the director in news editorial sequence at Temple, and, 1994 to 1998, he was the chair of the Department of Journalism at UF. He has covered a wide range of subjects [such as] media law and ethics, news reporting, public affairs reporting, and news editing, to name just a few. Besides his teaching and administrating, he has led seminars and workshops. He didn't write this, by the way, I did. [laughing] So he doesn't have to be embarrassed. He has been a part of many seminars and workshops on subjects ranging from

journalism and ethics to computer assisted reporting to web publishing. He has been a guest lecturer and guest speaker across the campus and other colleges at UF and across the nation. He has served on dozens of university, local, state, and national committees, including being the chair or moderator. He holds memberships in many academic, legal, and journalistic organizations including the Society of Professional Journalists, the American Bar Association, the Louisiana Bar Association, and the Florida Bar. He has been a judge of countless journalism and media law awards, a juror for academic papers, and [he] has even judged speech contests and talent shows for UF student organizations. He has done broad research in many important areas of journalism, and [he] has published extensively. Now, please understand that this, believe it or not, is an abbreviated list of his recognitions. Bear with me, please. [He has won] Teacher of the Year in the College of Journalism and Communications, 1992-1993; Teaching Improvement Program Award, recognizing outstanding teaching productivity and instructional quality, 1994-1995; Top Faculty Research Paper, Visual Communication Division in the National Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, 1998-1999. [He has won a] faculty award for effectiveness and productivity, 1998-1999; faculty award for outstanding service, 1998-1999; faculty award for outstanding teaching or teacher of the year in the UF College of Journalism and Communication, 1999-2000. [He has won] the faculty award for outstanding research. I'm winding down. [laughing] Really, you know, he deserves it. He received the faculty award for outstanding research, 2000-2001. He was chosen

from among all the faculty at the University of Florida to be named the distinguished alumni professor for the two year term of 2001 to 2002. He was awarded the Florida Blue Key Distinguished Faculty Award for 2001. He received the Faculty Service Award from the UF College of Journalism and Communications in 2002. Also that year, he was selected as a Freedom Forum National Journalism Teacher of the Year. This year he was named to a full professorship in the College of Journalism and Communications. I hope that you will help me welcome journalist, attorney, teacher, researcher, advisor, mentor, great champion of the press, and beloved husband and father. Ladies and gentlemen, as chairman of the Board of Student Publications, I am proud to present to you the master of ceremonies, **Lawrence Alexander**. [applause]

A: Thank you, Ed, for that fine introduction. Unfortunately, we are out of time. [laughing] I would like to, first tonight, welcome you all to this wonderful occasion. [I would like to offer], particularly, a very great welcome to our honorees here tonight. I would like to begin tonight, if I can, by asking Hugh [to say a blessing]. Hugh, if you don't mind, would you please come forward and offer us a blessing on this evening? I would like to introduce Hugh Cunningham.

C: So many in this room have forged with me at the *Gainesville Sun*. I know I _____ . Our dear Lord and gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you for the fellowship of this hour, for the privilege of being together as champions of freedom. We thank you for the great honor that those are to be honored have brought to the *Alligator* and to the University of Florida, to this state and this nation. We thank you, O Lord, for the *Alligator*, for its long and illustrious history

that has served a mighty arm in the education of journalism from that wonderful school of journalists. The *Alligator* has contributed so much and we thank you for it. With this assembly, Lord, we thank you for freedom, freedom of this great country, a freedom that was established by you in a special way. We thank you for freedom of speech, for freedom of peaceable assembly, for freedom of petition, for freedom of the press, for freedom of religion. O Lord, these blessings we cherish. Help each of us to champion them in whatever realm of life we're in, that they may never be taken away by anyone. Lord, bless our time together. Bless the food for the nourishment of our bodies. O Lord, I thank you for the freedom, the freedom of religion that permits me to pause in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A: Thank you, Hugh Cunningham, professor emeritus from the College of Journalism and Communications here at the University of Florida. Thank you. [He] has played an instrumental role with the Independent Florida Alligator. At this time, if you will, I would like to introduce the persons who are sitting at the head table. I would like to begin on my far left. [Here is a] fellow you have already met this evening, Mr. Ed Barber. He is president of Campus Communications and general manager of the Alligator. Next to Ed is his wife, Judy Barber. She is the internal auditor for the school board of Alachua County. While I've got the mic, let me also add that it was just a few weeks ago. We all know, we're all aware, of the great work that Ed does on behalf of the Alligator. Ed is the backbone of the Alligator. He is the glue that holds it together, and all the other great metaphors that you can come up with. We all know what a great

value Ed is, and has been for decades, at the Independent Florida Alligator, but it is so wonderful that just a few weeks ago Ed received national recognition for the work that he has done. Just a few weeks ago, at the National Convention of the Society of Professional Journalists, Ed was honored with the **Helen Thomas Lifetime Achievement Award**. [applause] [That was] just a bit of payback, Ed.

Next to Judy Barber is my wife, **Veronica Alexander**, who is the director of Human Resources for the University of Florida Foundation. Beginning on my far right, and to your left, is **Sasha Bayevsky**, the Alligator managing editor for new media and a member of the board of directors. To his left is the managing editor for the Alligator print and board member, Cameron Ackroyd. Next to Mr. Ackroyd is the editor of the Alligator, Mr. Joe Black. Joe Black is also vice president of editorial for Campus Communications and a member of the board of directors. We're going to hear a few words from Joe a little later in the evening. Next to Mr. Black is retired Judge **Nate Dutty**. Next to him is Jean Chance, who was our honored guest speaker and about whom you will hear more later in a longer introduction this evening. Now I would like to, if you will, introduce quite a few members of the audience. I'm going to introduce some of you, and most of you really. The Alligator is, and has always been, dependent upon the high quality of people who work there and all those who in some way contribute to it. People have helped the Alligator in many different ways. Tonight we would like to take a moment for some of you to stand according to the categories as I announce them. Would the members of the current staff of the Alligator please stand? Let's give them a round of applause. [applause] Would the members of

the current career staff please stand and be recognized. [applause] Other than current students, I would like all the persons who have worked for the Alligator staff as a student to stand and be recognized. [applause] Anyone here who as worked as executive secretary for the former Board of Student Publications, would you stand. [If you were] either part time or full time, please stand.

[applause] Those who have served as a member of the former Board of Student Publications or is a member of the board of directors of Campus Communications, would you stand? We've got a few of those. Yes, indeed.

[applause] Anyone here who has been inducted into the [Alligator] Hall of Fame in prior years, would you stand current members of the [Alligator] Hall of Fame?

[applause] Wonderful, thank you.

We would be remiss if we didn't recognize someone who is a friend of not only the Alligator but all of the newspapers in Florida. The executive director of the Florida Press Association, **Dean Writings**. [applause] We are please to welcome his wife, Kelly, who is also present as well. I would also be remiss if I did not recognize my dean emeritus, **Ralph Lowenstein**, and his wife **Baronia** who is here with us tonight. [applause]

Thank you, all, for your excellent work on behalf of newspaper journalism. And now, not only those of you who I've just recognized, but all of those who are friends and relations, who have supported those who have worked for the Alligator, how about a nice round of applause for them as well. [applause] Thank you. Now, having concluded the introductions, I would like to ask that you indulge the people at the head table in allowing us to buffet line first. [laughing]

Mind you, I'm keeping with Alligator tradition and great traditions.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you Mr. Joe Black, the editor of the Independent Florida Alligator. Even before becoming editor, Mr. Black distinguished himself by producing many excellent stories for the Alligator journalist staff more than three years ago. He has sat with student government and the University of Florida administration in higher education in Florida. [He is] a journalist news editor, new student edition coordinator, editorial page editor, and our inaugural Tallahassee bureau chief. He has interned for the *Staurt News*, the *Port St. Lucie News*, the *Florida Times Union*, and the *Kalamazoo Gazette* and the ***Muskegon Chronicle***. In his spare time, Joe is a freelance writer for the *St. Petersburg Times*, the *Palm Beach Post*, and the Associated Press. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to introduce to you the editor of the Independent Florida Alligator, Mr. Joe Black. [applause]

B: Well, I'll try to make all this kind of quick because I'm sure everybody is trying to get done eating and all that kind of good stuff. Basically, what I wanted to say was that I wanted to thank everybody for coming and showing up. It's been a great three years here at the Alligator. I'm getting ready to graduate soon. The first time I would have come to the paper would have been spring break just before my freshman year of college. I was deciding between University of Florida, Michigan State, and University of Michigan. So I made a trip down to Florida. The first time I came in I met the editor of the *Times*. She took me around the office. I saw *Chronicles of Higher Education* strewn about [and] random paperwork that no one probably had any idea of what it meant. I found

the office in complete disarray, but then I went to one of their budget meetings for the first time. In the same day, just before the student government elections were going to end [and] they had the final bid on the final four when the Gator basketball team was doing very well that year, I just saw how the paper all came together. I saw everybody was really trying to work; I saw everybody really pushing, trying to do the best journalism they possibly could. None of the other two student newspapers could match that. At the one at the University of Michigan everybody seemed to relax _____. I don't believe it came out five days a week. [At] the Michigan State one there was actually a riot that just happened a little bit before that and none of the people really seemed to care. It was only at the Alligator that even [during] student government elections and the final four they really just pushed through and were ready to work until one o'clock in the morning. Now it's sort of unusual, three years later, seeing what it is like to be in a budget meeting with the presidential search going on, student government elections going, [and] the Gator football team obviously not doing as good as the Gator basketball team did a couple years back. It's been an interesting three years here, and one [experience] that I probably wouldn't trade for anything else. It's been a great time here at the Alligator. I hope everybody here has the kind of memories that I would like to think I have here. So I'm going to sit down now so that everybody can back to eating and so that I can get done stuttering up here. I went into career journalism so that I would have to talk in front of large groups of people, but, hey, you know, somebody has got to do it. Thank you, guys, very much. [applause]

A: Thank you, Joe, for those remarks. You did well. We appreciate your fine leadership at the Alligator. Let me just tell you, when you are executive editor of some major daily newspaper you will be giving speeches on a regular basis. So just kind of get prepared for it.

It is now my distinct pleasure to introduce our special guest speaker for the evening. Until this year, Jean Chance was a highly respected professor of journalism in a college of journalism and communications. This past June, after more than thirty years, she added “emeritus” to the title of professor. Students and colleagues are still pleading for her to return. Before becoming a member of the UF faculty in journalism, Professor Chance was a UF student; a member of the Alligator; and, after graduating from UF, held a succession of reporting jobs at the *Miami Herald*, the *St. Petersburg Times*, the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, the *Gainesville Sun*, the *Tampa Times*, and the *Tampa Tribune*. At UF, Professor Chance has taught courses in reporting and news writing. She was course coordinator for an intro. writing course back when I was a graduate student at the University of Florida, so she trained me as well in some of the elements of teaching. I know she hasn’t forgotten that, and I know I haven’t either. Professor Chance developed and taught for many years a popular course called “Fact Finding.” In honor of her we dug a little known fact about her. For a short while she was a full time career staff employee of the Office of Student Publications, a division of which included the production of a magazine, a yearbook, and the Alligator. Without further ado, I wish to introduce to summon, to present to others, our speaker for the evening, Professor Jean Chance.

C: Thank you, **Lawrence**. What he didn't tell you was that actually got to the position of being a secretary three, and that's because I could type like hell. Boy, I could really type very fast. So the journalism school can get you into high places. Let me promise you that just in case the jobs look bad, and, some of you people who are on the staff now, don't give up. I really would like to find out how many people here remember a Disney movie called *Dr. Dolittle*. Do you remember a character in *Dr. Dolittle* that was one of the creatures called a "push-me-pull-you?" If I remember correctly, and let me know if I'm not, this was sort of a lama-like little creature and it had a head at both ends. Well, what I want to talk about tonight is the push-me-pull-you relationship between the Independent Florida Alligator and the College of Journalism and Communications here at the University of Florida. As I thought about what I wanted to talk about tonight, it really revolved around, first, my reading of the bios of these winners, the folks who we're going to recognize tonight. You will be truly astounded, I think as I was, with the accomplishments of these eight people. It did make me think about the push-me-pull-you, because one of the things that occurred to me was there's a lot of coming and going and pushing and shoving that occurs beyond ordinary day-to-day activities of being a student at the University of Florida that journalism students who happen to also be members of the Alligator staff [have] occur. So this is what made the push-me-pull-you come to mind. I thought back of my own years at the Alligator. At that time it was not the Independent Florida Alligator. You have to remember, this was the Jurassic era, 1956-1960. Dwight Eisenhower was the president, if that gives you frame of reference. [It was] not

necessarily the good old days. The relationship between the student paper and the journalism school has a history much like that, in my mind, of the movements of push-me-pull-you, sometimes going forward, sometimes going backward, sometimes at a dead stop, other times jerky and getting nowhere fast. My first experiences with the push-me-pull-you animal as a student reporter at the Alligator made me reflect on the comments of members of the staff. I was a freshman, out of a very small Central Florida high school, here in the big, huge University of Florida. I believe the enrollment was 13,500. This was the big time. Here I was hearing these staff members, the editors, [and] the senior staff criticizing the faculty of this college that I had come to the university to participate in for four years. It seemed very easy for them and [for me], as I joined them, to look down upon the _____ stories in textbooks and in lab workbooks because we were doing real things at the Alligator. We had a horde of allocated duties to perform, and here were these professors being very unreasonable in demanding that we attend class. [laughing] Then, I joined the faculty.

I had worked for several Florida dailies, I had come back to school as a wife and mother, I got my masters degree, and then I ran into the push-me-pull-you as I began to teach students who were challenging me to make my journalism classes important and significant. What on Earth could I possibly teach them that they didn't already know from their work at the Alligator. So then the push-me-pull-you was taking me into faculty meetings so that I could gripe with my fellow faculty members about students who suffered from what we sneeringly referred to as the "Alligator syndrom." Over a period of thirty-four

years of teaching probably a zillion students, plus getting to know Alligator staffers like Ron Sachs and **Randy Bellows**, I never figured out how I really got to know these guys. Somebody suggested tonight, just call them your Alligator cohorts. That probably works just as well as anything. My two grown children came to know them as my other kids. So however you want to categorize them, [these are] both my students and my Alligator cohorts; somehow they joined my flock.

Here are some conclusions that I have reached about the push-me-pull-you between the Independent Florida Alligator, the old Florida Alligator, the old school of Journalism and Communications, and now the College of Journalism and Communications. First, I think, it is the strength of the Alligator that it never came under the control of the J. School. On good days and bad, the reputation of the paper falls on the shoulders of the students and the staff that is unencumbered by the politics of college administrators and professors who just wanted to hold grades over students heads. Professors could be intimidated by administrators. The late **Don Grooms** from the broadcasting faculty was [here] in the early 1970s. He was required to turn over film coverage by his broadcasting students of student demonstrators to the university police. That film was reviewed on a daily basis by Tigert Hall deans [who were] anxious to repress campus protests during civil rights and Vietnam War demonstrations. Yes, in many ways it is a weakness in the overall scheme of things within the College of Journalism that there is no led newspaper to make class assignments more like the real things, forcing beginners to be totally responsible for the stories they

wrote or edited, for what headlines they put on those stories everyday, and what cut lines they would put under a photo. But the push-me-pull-you animal reminds me of the problems that Professor Ben **Patterson** had when his students in Magazine Journalism tried to make *Orange and Blue* magazine offer its students some stories of true substance. I remember a very fine cover story about why black students avoided UF and chose other colleges in Florida. The piece was direct, factual, and an in-depth look at a really uncomfortable truth. **Provost Bob Ryan** blew a fuse. He called the dean. He wanted Ben **Patterson's** hide, and student government allocated some funds to the always struggling *Orange and Blue* magazine. Student government leaders demanding that a horn-tooting logo be placed prominently on the cover. **Patterson**, not being stupid, figured out a way that he could get that logo on the cover. It did not make the student government leaders very happy, as I remember, because he had it reduced to a little, tiny microdot. It was on the shirt that made it look sort of like one of those little symbols. Somehow the student government folks didn't laugh at that, but we got a big laugh in the college. Hello, push-me-pull-you.

When you think about the achievements of tonight's hall of fame winners, consider their push-me-pull-you experiences. They leave a legacy to those of you who are currently working on all those long days and nights at the Independent Florida Alligator. They'll be the first to tell you that the push-me-pull-you beast wasn't always moving in the directions that they had first designated or chosen. They represent the best of what I think is unique to the University of Florida, the new herd of push-me-pull-you journalists direct from the

Independent Alligator and the College of Journalism and Communications. I think what I'm going to do for the new president of the university when he comes in January is send him a copy of tonight's hall of fame biography. I think he needs to recognize who we are and why the push-me-pull-you beast is really important. Thank you. [applause]

A: Thank you very much, Professor Chance. If you don't mind, would you come back for just a minute to the podium. I want to thank you. I would like to thank you for being with us, Jean, and for sharing your ideas and thoughts and whatever you wish at this appropriate time. As a small token of our appreciation, we would like you to have this collection of gifts from the Alligator. Thank you. [applause]

Our chief reason for gathering this evening is to induct new members into the Independent Florida Alligator Hall of Fame. It is our great honor to do so. Persons inducted into the Alligator Hall of Fame have been selected for this tribute due to their outstanding accomplishments. Through their dedication and service they've brought great esteem to themselves and great pride to those who are dear to them. Through association they also bring great distinction to the Alligator. In the years, many of them have contributed advice and assistance to the Alligator in a number of ways. All of them provide encouragement to the students at the Alligator by being the embodiment of achievement in their various professions. A special committee of hall of fame members selected these individuals from nominees throughout the nation. In addition to receiving engraved plaques at this banquet held in their honor, having their biographies

and pictures published in a book, their framed photographic portraits will be on permanent display at the Independent Florida Alligator building. It is only fitting and proper that we gather tonight so that these inductees may be recognized and honored for their fine achievements by inducting them into the hall of fame. At this time I'm going to ask Professor Chance to come back to the podium and to introduce each inductee while I will have the pleasure of greeting each one of you down front at the _____.

C: While Lawrence is coming down, before we get really formal and serious about this, people have asked about retirement and what it's like. I know Hugh can tell you good stories, as can Dean **Lowenstein**. My experience is that everyday is Saturday. Now that can become a problem, because we all begin to fade out quickly after this R word begins and kicks in. So one of the things that I have learned is when you get those little pill things [that] have all the days of the week, just look and see where your pills are and then you can figure out, ah, this is Saturday.

This is truly a great privilege to get to be here and look out at, first of all, so many of my former students. [And it is great to look at] my Alligator cronies and realize what [we] have achieved since those long ago days that we were either in classrooms together or maybe you were in my living room at two o'clock in the morning calling up the president of the university to tell him you were going to distribute something that wasn't going to make him and the administration and the governor and lots of those people happy. This, to me, is what is so special about this institution that we call the Florida Alligator.

Our first hall of fame recipient tonight is **Randy Idelos**. Interestingly, **Randy** was both the last editor of the Florida Alligator as we knew it in my Jurassic era and he was the first editor and chief of the Independent Florida Alligator. **Randy** was part of the team of students, business professionals, journalism faculty, members of the university community committed to ensuring the Alligator's survival. Much of his editorship was devoted to this cause. In 1973, **Randy** was third in the **National Heart Writing Competition Championships**. The next year he placed second. He graduated in 1974 after receiving the Dean's Cup Award, the **Ray O. Weimer** Award, the Sigma Delta Chi Award for outstanding graduate in the College of Journalism at the University of Florida. In 1977, he earned his JD [Juris Doctorate] Cum Laude at Harvard Law School. He spent most of the next twenty-five years as a federal prosecutor.

It is my recollection, correct me if I'm wrong, Randy, but at one point when you were considering the move to go to Harvard you were thinking about taking a car. They said, anybody who can afford to have a car when you're a student at Harvard doesn't need a scholarship, doesn't need any support. [Is that] a true story? [**Randy Idelos** answers from the audience to confirm her story.] I thought I was remembering right. I have another story that I'll say at the end of this, but I'll go in and tell you now. **Randy** has done so many incredible things that I'm going to tell you about. Before I tell you all that, because it is the propaganda part of this, he was the most unreliable babysitter I ever experienced. Not only did he teach my son and daughter how to make paper airplanes and sail them down into the livingroom from the balcony upstairs, he also bought into their story that

every night their dad and I would take them to Baskin Robbins for ice cream.

[laughing] Now **Randy's** daughter, **Kate**, is here tonight. Katie, I want you to know that your dad has great experience taking good children to Baskin Robbins for whatever ice cream they want. Just remind him about that. Okay, back to the formal part.

During the twenty-five years he was in the justice department as a federal prosecutor, as an assistant US attorney in the eastern district of Virginia, he served as lead council in the fraud prosecutions of fertility doctor **Cecil Jacobson** and former United Way president, **William Aramoney**. He also served as lead council in the espionage prosecution of former F.B.I. agents **Robert Philip Hassen** and **Earl Pitts**. In 1999, he was appointed by Attorney General Janet Reno to lead the internal inquiry into the F.B.I. in the main Justice Department's handling of the **Win Ho Lee investigation**. In 2002, he served as co-lead council in the prosecutions of the American Taliban, **John Walker Lynn**. In 1997, Randy