

Intramural team is flagged as national champions

Titelton has struck again. Even though the University of Florida is the proud winner of two NCAA basketball championships and one football championship in a little more than a year, a group of students decided that simply wasn't enough.

For the first time since 1989, the University of Florida intramural flag football men's team has earned the national championship and added another title to the university's pantheon of sports achievement.

Fox College Sports filmed a documentary of the New Year's Eve victory in New Orleans and will be airing the film at 7 p.m. on Feb. 19.

Under the leadership of quarterback John Cox, College of Journalism and Communications senior, the Gator Escort Service beat the University of Central Florida 20-18 to win the American Collegiate Intramural Sports tournament.

"I had always figured that if we weren't good, people could still laugh at our



Adam Langston, recent UF graduate, and students John Cox, Gary Palsis and Tim Hillmann helped lead the team to victory.

Kristen Grace

name," Cox said, "but when we did well at the regional tournament, we knew that we had to try for the title."

On top of winning the championship, the team also boasts five of the 24 All-American Players awards and Most Valu-

able Defensive Player Adam Langston.

Gator Escort Service played for the regional title in Pensacola, Fla., on Nov. 11. The team lost to the SU Jags of Southern University and A & M College, but as the runner-up, UF Gator Escort Service won free entry to the national competition and a \$750 travel stipend.

"It wasn't a bad drive for the guys from around Gainesville," Cox said, "but one guy drove 18 hours from South Florida and brought his whole family with him."

The team had overwhelming support during their championship game, with more fans in attendance than players, Cox noted. "We had a lot of girlfriends there," he said.

After posing for pictures with their championship T-shirts and jackets, some team members watched the famous Gumbo Pot Drop at midnight in New Orleans' Jackson Square before going to sleep.

"We were going to go out and celebrate after that, but after that game, we were all pretty exhausted," Cox said.

By Kimberly Cruts

UF Voices

Community Relations enhances relationships

Although The Gator Nation is everywhere, the focus of the University of Florida office of Community Relations is North Central Florida. We work to enhance relationships with Gainesville and Alachua County, and with the other cities and counties in our region. We interface with chambers of commerce and with the Heart of Florida Coalition, which is working to promote collaboration among Alachua, Marion and surrounding counties.



Susan Crowley

The regional economic impact of UF extends well beyond the Gainesville city limits. Approximately 40 percent of our more than 25,000 employees, including UF, Shands and direct support organizations, live outside of Gainesville. Approximately 25 percent live outside Alachua County. As a regional employer, UF has a stake in area issues that involve the university directly, and those that impact our quality of life. Our office works to facilitate communication on these issues.

Economic development is high on the agenda for North Central Florida. We are involved in area efforts for economic development, including on Gainesville's east side through the UF Community Room for public use at the UF Eastside Campus, and participation in the Waldo Road Steering Committee.

Since 1993, our faculty and staff have responded to community needs with the annual UF Community Campaign (UFCC) that has raised more than \$1 million a year for the past three years. Charitable agencies throughout our region depend on these contributions to continue their work with the elderly, animal protection, disease research, the homeless and more. The office of Community Relations assumed the coordination of this campaign in 2007.

The resources and efforts of UF, combined with those of our cities, counties, and businesses and industries, will serve to greatly enhance our growing North Central Florida community.

Susan Crowley
Assistant Vice President,
Community Relations

Top Stories

The Gator Nation is No. 1 in license sales — again

For Josh Simmons, the rule of the road is simple: If the car has a Gator license plate, smile with pride and be extra nice if they want in the lane ahead of you.

The University of Florida junior and his Honda Civic have joined a "club" with more than 100,000 members by purchasing a UF license plate.

"It's like my own personal championship ring," Simmons said.

The Gator Nation plate continued its own championship run in 2007 by outselling every other specialty plate in Florida for the second year in a row.

UF took over Florida's roads in 2006 when sales of the specialty plates reached 90,436, ending the "Protect the Panther" plate's four-year winning streak. Sales of the UF plate continued to boom, increasing by more than 16 percent since 2006.

The new plate, issued in 2006, was redesigned to align with The Gator Nation

branding campaign and promote university spirit. The orange- and blue-bordered design features the university's Gator head logo above the famous slogan, "The Gator Nation."

UF Director of Marketing Dan Williams believes that the plate is popular because of the pride that people have in their association with the University of Florida.

"Gators are proud of their association with UF, and the popularity of The Gator Nation license is a perfect example of that pride," he said.

Williams has his own Gator plate, and noted that the increase in sales was almost certainly affected by the recent national football and basketball championships, but pointed out that Gators are also proud of the university's significant contributions in academics and research.

To complement the official state license plate, a tag that is very similar in appear-

ance with the letters "CHAMPS" is now available for the front of vehicles, and can be purchased in most Gator shops.

Part of the original DMV plate's success can be attributed to marketing promotions in DMV tag agencies. The UF marketing department sent posters with a picture of the plate and the phrase, "Have The Gator Nation behind you wherever you go," to every agency in the state.

If you have an interesting Gator Nation plate, email a photo to danwill@ufl.edu

The DMV charges an extra \$25 for the specialty plate, with the entire \$25 going to UF. Of the \$2,634,025 in revenue from the plate in 2007, \$1,580,415 went to scholarships while the remaining 40 percent was added to the university's general fundraising total.

Sales of the plate were highest in Alachua County, the university's home, but every county in the state has some drivers representing The Gator Nation. Even Glades County, with one of the lowest populations in the state, boasts 36 drivers showing university pride.

For Simmons, Williams and the 105,628 other Gator plate owners, the record-high sales simply prove that even though the University of Florida is in Gainesville, with so many drivers throughout the state choosing the UF license plate, The Gator Nation is truly everywhere.

By Kimberly Cruts



A UF supporter celebrates three national championships with The Gator Nation plate.

Kristen Grace

Happenings

Listings in this section are a sampling of events at the University of Florida, compiled from entries listed in the full calendar that appears on the Web at calendar.ufl.edu. To submit an event online, visit <http://calendar.ufl.edu/submit/>.

Feb. 12
UFPA and Dance Alive! present "Ladybug Action Hero." Phillips Center, 10 a.m. Open to the public. Call 352-392-1900 for more information.

UFPA presents "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels." Phillips Center, 7:30 p.m. Reserved seating \$35-\$50. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS (2787) for tickets.



Feb. 13
"Dirty Rotten Scoundrels." Phillips Center, 7:30 p.m. Reserved seating \$35-\$50. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS (2787) for tickets.

Feb. 14
University Relations/Community Relations presents "Community Campus Council Breakfast Meetings." UF Hilton Hotel and Conference Center, 7:30 a.m. Open to the public. Call 352-392-4567 for more information.

Feb. 15
University Gallery presents "Annual Student Arts Juried Exhibition Reception." University

Gallery, Fine Arts Building B, 7-9 p.m. Free and open to the public. Call 352-392-0207 for more information.

Feb. 16
Meridian presents "Cirque Extravaganza." Phillips Center, 7:30 p.m. Reserved seating \$35-\$65, \$35 for students and children. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS (2787) for tickets.

Feb. 18
Florida Blue Key presents "Miss UF Pageant." Phillips Center, 7 p.m. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS (2787) for more information.

Benton is a licensed psychologist and a diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology.

Her publications span various topics, including college-student drinking and substance abuse, psychological assessment and college-student mental health.



Pamela Pallas

Gator Child Development and Research Center and a clinical associate professor in the department of Early Childhood Education.

NCCCC is a nonprofit educational membership organization that supports research and activities relating to early childhood education and services.

WUFT awarded top honors

WUFT Television's production, "Where the Wild Things Live," recently was named 2007's finest science and nature program in the small-market category by the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA).

The documentary on America's national wildlife refuges featured the music of Grammy Award-winner Paul Winter, and the poetry of Pulitzer Prize-winner Mary Oliver. The panel of industry judges praised "Where the Wild Things Live" for its integration of art and nature.

The NETA Awards are annual recognition of member-produced excellence in public broadcasting by the Southern Educational Communications Association.

Feb. 23
Dance Alive! presents "Robin Hood." Phillips Center, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Reserved seating \$15-\$30 for general public, \$12 for children and students, \$20 for seniors. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS (2787) for tickets.

Feb. 24
Gainesville Community Band. Phillips Center, 2 p.m. Visit the Phillips Center Box Office or call 352-392-ARTS (2787) for tickets.

Note This

Faculty development program offered

The Provost's Diversity Speaker's Series is proud to present "Traditional and Non-Traditional Work-Life Challenges: A Conversation about Career Flexibility" at 8:30 a.m. on Feb. 19 in the Reitz Student Union. The day-long event will consist of three main sessions and feature speakers from across the country.

Please visit the Faculty Development Web site at www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/facdev for more information.

Display space available at Marston Library

The Marston Science Library invites individuals and campus organizations to reserve the display case located at the building's entrance. This space is available for any UF-affiliated person or group, including students, faculty and staff, to highlight a project, program or collection. Reservations are taken up to a year in advance and displays are scheduled for a month-long duration.

For more information on policies or to apply to reserve the display, visit www.uflib.ufl.edu/MSL/Display/.

Sign language classes offered to families

The Baby Gator Child Development and Research Center is offering sign language classes for families with young children beginning in mid-February. The parent-targeted strategy and activity sessions will give parents resources to begin using American Sign Language (ASL) with their children at home. Classes will be held on four consecutive Saturdays, for a total of four hours.

For more information, visit www.babygator.ufl.edu or contact Karen Shea at karenshea@ufl.edu.

Food policy expert to speak

Per Pinstrup-Andersen, an internationally recognized expert on international trade and food policy, will speak at 2 p.m. on Feb. 26 at Emerson Alumni Hall. The lecture, "Research and Policy Priorities for the Global Food System," is part of the York Distinguished Lecturer series.

New UF photos now available

The University of Florida News Bureau has a new Web site which offers UF images for walls, gifts for friends and family, or for use by UF communicators in publications. The site features more than 1,000 professional images of UF campus, student life and athletics. For more information, visit <http://photos.urel.ufl.edu/>.