

# GATOR

FLORIDA

WINTER 2023



## BIG FINISH

The University of Florida's Go Greater campaign caps a record-breaking \$4.6 billion in fundraising with a \$100 million gift from Herbie Wertheim. *Page 30*

**Ben Sasse takes over as the 13th president of what he calls America's most interesting university. PAGE 24**





### Red-letter Day

With a \$100 million gift, **Herbie Wertheim** transformed UF Scripps into what he calls a “launchpad for science.”



# FLORIDA GATOR

WINTER 2023

## FEATURES

### 24 Welcome to the Gatorhood

U.S. Sen. Ben Sasse takes over in February as UF's 13th president. He says universities are becoming more relevant in a society where students will need to be re-educated again and again as the world of work evolves.

### 27 Getting to Know the Class of 2026

The Class of 2026 was UF's most competitive, with more than 66,000 applications for admission. We look at that class and other pathways to become a Gator.

### 30 4,547,291,739 Reasons to be Thankful

UF celebrated its historic Go Greater campaign in October, with two months remaining before the official conclusion, as the fifth-largest campaign at a public university. In a special section, we talk to just a few of the people whose lives were changed, thanks to generous Gators. For full coverage, please see the special campaign website at [www.uff.ufl.edu/ggcp/](http://www.uff.ufl.edu/ggcp/).

### 46 Farewell

For 100 years, the University Women's Club created community on the University of Florida campus for women relocating with spouses or for jobs and awarded more than \$600,000 in scholarships. In October, it celebrated its centennial and, to the strains of "Auld Lang Syne," shut down.

## DEPARTMENTS

4 UNIVERSITY AVENUE News from UF

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## ON THE COVER

UF benefactor Herbie Wertheim needs no introduction. When the red hat shows up, innovation



is close behind. Wertheim's \$100 million gift to UF Scripps in October is the single largest gift ever to the university. The Herbert Wertheim UF Scripps Institute for Biomedical Innovation & Technology will pioneer new medical discoveries and provide training for students at all

levels. Wertheim said he wants the research center to be "a place for humanity."

See story, **page 40.**

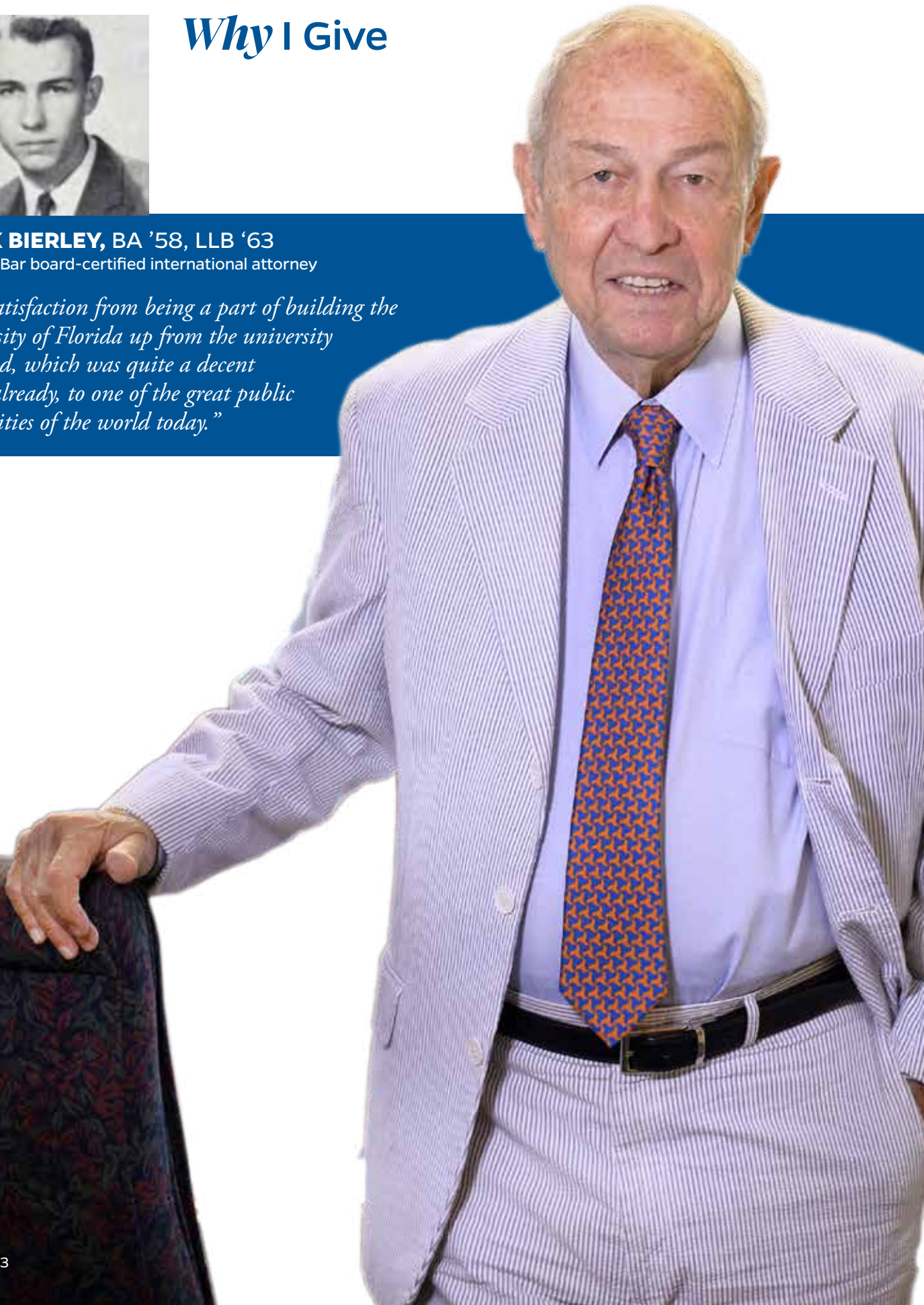


## Why I Give


**JACK BIERLEY, BA '58, LLB '63**

Florida Bar board-certified international attorney

*"I get satisfaction from being a part of building the University of Florida up from the university I entered, which was quite a decent school already, to one of the great public universities of the world today."*







**THEN:** In 1954, Bierley left home in Palm Beach County, skirting the east side of Lake Okeechobee on a rural, two-lane road trip north to UF. His freshman dorm, South Hall, had no air conditioning. The world revolved around the intersection of 13th and University. He didn't call home much; a long-distance call was a luxury. Few people had cars. "It wasn't assumed everyone would go to college, but I didn't consider any other school."

**TODAY:** "I think UF is still the place most people focus on." As a frequent visitor, Bierley has kept up with rapid change on campus. "New buildings are going up all over the place. I enjoy going to the Harn Museum and the Florida Museum of Natural History, and I support those things."

**THEN:** Bierley remembers a 1954 freshman assembly, when the dean of men told students: "Look at the person on your right. Now look at the person on your left. A year from now, one of those people won't be there." Bierley says UF was already kind of big – 9,500 students – and had strong academic standards. "If you didn't make the grades, you went into the military and finished up later."

**TODAY:** Bierley speaks to law students about international legal practice and keeps his finger on the pulse of UF. "I never ended my association with the university." He has been on the law school advisory board, is a life member of the UF Foundation Board ("they won't let me off") and supports scholarship funds and endowed professorships.

**THEN:** Bierley's interest in politics led him to classes with "Wild Bill" Carleton, who was on a first-name basis with politicians like

George Smathers and Claude Pepper. Carleton told students to stop reading their textbooks; they'd learn more from his lectures. "Fact was, it was true!"

**TODAY:** A career in international law has taken Bierley all over the world. He's the only American on the board of a bank in the Cayman Islands and travels for fun, too, most recently on expedition to Uganda.

**THEN:** Bierley was involved in Student Government and Florida Blue Key. "Oh, the egos. We were all going to at least be governor of Florida." It wasn't hubris. Classmates Bob Graham and Lawton Chiles did go on to be governor. Bierley was in law school when a young man asked for support in a bid to be freshman class president. That was former U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, now administrator of NASA. "All our leaders in Florida had gone to UF: governors, senators, congressmen, all to Florida."

**TODAY:** Bierley is a member of the UF Hall of Fame. He says UF makes a huge contribution to society. "I support that, and I enjoy the association with others who support that. I like the feeling of teamwork, with the faculty and the presidents and the students. It's like a family."

**THEN:** Bierley remembers walking out of his law school commencement ceremony in 1963 and encountering a young woman collecting for the UF fund. "I reached in my pocket and gave her \$5 or \$10, whatever was in my pocket."

**TODAY:** Bierley is the alum with the longest record of giving back to UF, making a donation of some amount each year since 1963. As Bierley approaches his 60th year of support for UF, he says, "It's payback time. I believe you have to give back, and I've been fortunate in life to be able to do it."



# WON'T BACK DOWN





The University of Florida celebrated the inaugural Tom Petty Day at the Swamp on Oct. 15 for the LSU game. Five years ago, the Gators played the Gainesville rock 'n' roll icon's song "I Won't Back Down" at the end of the third quarter — with a stadium full of fans singing along — and the song fast became a campus tradition. This year, the Petty family attended the game and took in the spectacle, including the Gator Lights show, an app that allows cellphone-wielding fans to keep time with the music.

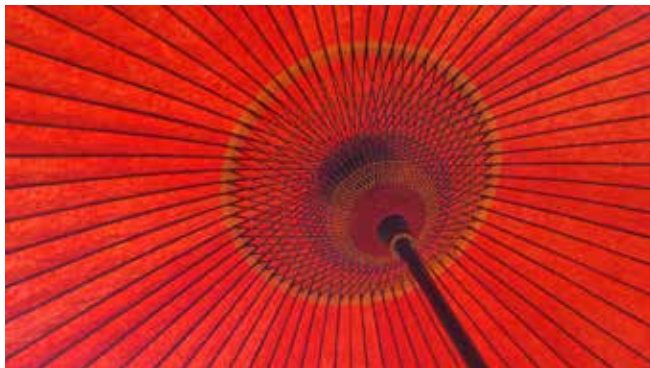


Ben Hill Griffin Stadium sounds like a rock 'n' roll arena at the end of the third quarter when fans sing "I Won't Back Down." On Tom Petty Day, the Petty family, below, was recognized on the field and joined in. University Athletic Association photos.





# A GLOBAL GAZE



The winners are in for the **Global Culture Photo Contest 2022**, sponsored by the **UF International Center**.

For 18 years, the juried competition has awarded a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each of three categories: Study Abroad and Service Learning Students; International Students, Scholars and Employees; and Faculty, Staff and Alumni. Winning photographs are displayed in the Constance and Linton Grinter Gallery in the lobby of Grinter Hall.

The Global Culture Photo Contest encourages the UF community to think and act globally. View all the 2022 winning photos online, at [uff.to/kq8sf8](https://uff.to/kq8sf8)

In the Faculty, Staff and Alumni category, above, **Susmita Gaire**, MS '21, placed 2nd with "Intricate" from Haneda Airport, Japan. Far right, in the Study Abroad and Service Learning Students category, **Alan Halaly** placed 1st with "Sitting on History" from the Reichstag Building in Berlin. Near right, in the International Students, Scholars and Employees category, **Ashpreet Kaur** placed 2nd with "Big Sur," a photo of the Bixby Bridge.



## UF International Center gets new dean

**Marta L. Wayne**, a researcher who has mentored University of Florida undergraduates, graduate students and postdocs both in the U.S. and abroad, took over as dean of the University of Florida International Center and associate provost this fall.

"It is hard to imagine a more urgent time for international engagement," Wayne said. "We face global challenges from pandemics to climate change to food shortages, challenges that no individual nation can solve on their own. We are poised at the edge of the fourth industrial revolution. AI and associated technologies could help the world solve global problems or worsen them by exacerbating inequality. It's an important

and exciting period for all of us to be involved in creating the future we want to see."

Wayne noted that the International Center thrived under the leadership of **Leonardo A. Villalón**, who stepped down Aug. 4. Wayne, a professor in the Department of Biology, has collaborated internationally in her research, which includes work on monarch butterfly migrations and infectious diseases. She has been a UF faculty member since 1998. She earned her Ph.D. in ecology and evolutionary biology from Princeton University. As dean, she will play a key role in the recruitment and success of international students.







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The logo features the text 'UFHealth' in a large, blue, sans-serif font, with 'UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA HEALTH' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it. An orange arc is positioned above the 'UF' part of the logo.

# Not your mom's dining hall

*Local eateries set up shop on campus*



PHOTOS BY ROB MACK

Local favorite SweetBerries opened at Newell Hall after closing its location a few blocks from campus.

BY JENNY ROGERS, 4PR

Waiting in line, tummy growling, sophomore Caroline Acosta looked forward to the bagel and smoothie she was about to order from SweetBerries at Newell Hall and was even more excited to grab local grub without leaving campus between classes.

"Aside from the convenience, it's great to be able to support a local Gainesville restaurant," Acosta said.

Chartwells Higher Education, the University of Florida's new food provider, was hoping for that reaction. Chartwells began integrating more local restaurants into its Florida Fresh Dining concept when it took over campus dining from Aramark in June, said Eddie Daniels, assistant vice president of Business Services.

Campus diners can still slide a tray along a shelf in many locations, choosing meal options as they go, but Daniels said modernized campus dining includes kiosks and mobile ordering, a redesigned meal swipe program and Pure Eats stations for meals made without the top nine allergens.

Across campus and at the Reitz Union food court's Taste of Gainesville, the local menu now include:

• **Kosher Gator**

- **Big Island Bowls**
- **Fat G's BBQ**
- **Chef JJ Creations**
- **Burger 352**
- **An expanded Mi Apá Latin Café**
- **SweetBerries**

Opus Coffee, a local favorite, replaced the Starbucks at Norman Hall, adding to its locations in UF Health buildings, the Innovation District and the Airstream at the Fourth Avenue Food Park.

Expanding Opus' footprint on campus had been suggested before, but it was not until the Chartwells switch that the idea took off, said co-owner Tim Larson.

"With Chartwells, it seems like it's about how much they can give back to the community, and that's such a breath of fresh air," he said.

Chartwells helped Opus ease into its new location, said Katie Larson.

"It's a beautiful spot," she said. "The students are such an intrinsic part of Gainesville, and we love to be a part of it."

Although Mi Apá Latin Café has offered fan favorites from arroz con pollo to ropa vieja at the Reitz Union since 2020, more space means more food options, said Chief Operating Officer Micah Baumstein.

"We're able to reach a lot more people," he said. "We have more staff, a bigger

location and of course, we're now able to offer more menu items."

Foodies distressed last summer when SweetBerries sold its property a few blocks north of campus were delighted to see it replace a chain restaurant at Newell Hall. The restaurant has served homemade, family recipes and its signature frozen custard since 2013, said co-owner Jane Osmond. Opening a campus location allowed SweetBerries to flourish while it establishes an off-campus location on Fifth Avenue.

"We really wanted to keep our staff and not lose them in the period of time it would take us to open our new location," she said. "So, this presented itself as a perfect opportunity for us to keep our business open."

Osmond applauded Chartwells' commitment to a strong connection between campus and community.

"It makes us—as a local restaurant—feel part of the university and not just outside of it," she said.





# Game-changing Gift to DCP



The University of Florida broke ground in October on the **Bruno E. and Maritza F. Ramos Collaboratory**, a revolutionary 50,000-square-foot facility intended to serve the College of Design, Construction and Planning (DCP) over the next 100 years.

The facility will strengthen collaborative work across all the built environment disciplines in the college, said Dean Chimay Anumba. The Ramos Collaboratory is named after two-time DCP graduate **Bruno-Elias Ramos** (BDES '82, MARCH '85) and his wife **Maritza**.

"The University of Florida shaped me professionally and is where I met my wife of 38 years, so it feels great to be able to give back to the institution that has given me so much," Bruno Ramos said.

## A GATHERING OF GRATEFUL GATORS



Food trucks line the Plaza of Americas.

A meal voucher distributed with University of Florida President Kent Fuchs' message declaring Oct. 12 a Day of Gratitude allowed faculty, staff and students to gather over lunch with colleagues and classmates, a reminder of what we missed during the pandemic.

Fuchs said he wanted to thank the UF community for its perseverance in the face of the pandemic. The voucher was good at a food truck rally at the Plaza of the Americas and eateries across campus.

*"I love having Gators on Saturday and NFL on Sunday. But for one weekend, I'll absolutely take it."*

— **Max Kilman**

## DELAY OF GAME

GATORS GO HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH THE NFL IN RARE SUNDAY GAME



Hurricane Ian kicked the Gators out of their Saturday time slot on Oct. 2, giving football fans a double header of sorts.

Faced with the cone of uncertainty, the University Athletic Association postponed the game a day in hopes of having a less swampy Swamp. The weather for the first Sunday game since the Sun Bowl in 1977 was beautiful, but with about 10 NFL games also on the Sunday lineup, football fans faced a decision: the NFL or the Gators.

Ella Haas, above, solved the issue by repping both her squads, the Gators and the Green Bay Packers. "I think that honestly, it's a great day," said Haas, a Buchholz High junior who attended with dad **Gregg Haas** (BA '91).

The Gators trounced Eastern Washington 52-17 in their first Sunday win (they lost that 1977 bowl game) in front of a sparse crowd of 72,462.

"It was a unique experience," said UF student **Max Kilman** (2LS). "I love having Gators on Saturday and NFL on Sunday. But for one weekend, I'll absolutely take it."

— **Aileyahu Shanes**, 2JM

# GATOR GREATS CELEBRATED AS HALL OF FAMERS

A night out to dinner with friends Scott Stricklin and Chip Howard ended with a surprise for former UF athletic director Jeremy Foley.

Stricklin, who replaced Foley in 2016, presented Foley with a video from former Gators men's basketball coach Billy Donovan.

"Foley," Donovan told him, "I want to be the first to tell you that you have been selected for the UF Athletic Hall of Fame Honorary Letterwinner."

"I was blown away," Foley said.

Foley began his career at UF in 1976 interning with the Gator Ticket Office and worked his way up to athletic director, serving from 1992 until 2016.

On Homecoming weekend, the 2022 UF Athletic Hall of Fame inductees were celebrated in front of friends and family, under the lights of Ben Hill Griffin Stadium.

"Tonight is a big night," Foley said.

## 2022 UF Athletics Hall of Fame inductees

**Jeff Demps** (Men's Track & Field & Football)

**Conor Dwyer** (Men's Swimming)

Honorary Letterwinner **Jeremy Foley**

**Joe Haden** (Football)

**Michelle Moultrie** (Softball)

**Chandler Parsons** (Men's Basketball)

**Christian Taylor** (Men's Track & Field)

**Mike Zunino** (Baseball).

Distinguished Letterwinner **Steve Beeland**  
(Men's & Women's Tennis)



PHOTOS BY JORDAN MCKENDRICK, UAA COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the UF Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2022: Christian Taylor, Steve Beeland, Conor Dwyer, Joe Haden, Chandler Parsons, Jeff Demps, Jeremy Foley and Michelle Moultrie, left to right. Not pictured, Mike Zunino.



Gators Great Chandler Parsons with his fiancée, Haylee Harrison, and their daughter. Parsons grew up wanting to play for the Gators.



Former Gators swimmer and Olympian Conor Dwyer said being around other goal-oriented athletes inspired him.

CRAIG HAAS, UAA COMMUNICATIONS



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SCAN ME





# THE *WOW* FACTOR

GATOR ATHLETES  
GRATEFUL FOR NEW  
FACILITY

The Heavener Football Training Center opened in August to rave reviews from athletes and coaches. Architect magazine touted the eco-friendly design and called the facility a recruiting magnet. Read more and watch the video of the unveiling at [uff.to/mwy3fk](https://uff.to/mwy3fk)



AARON DAYE







The new center has room for football to spread out with new locker rooms, a team-sized auditorium and coaches' offices. The ground floor dining hall serves all athletes three meals a day. The ground floor also includes a gameroom and a barber shop, and seating areas with televisions. The games area opens out onto a resort-style pool. A football weight room looks out onto the indoor practice facility.

AARON DAYE



ISABELLA MARLEY



# NEXT *PLAY*

2014 SEC Defensive  
Player of the Year  
Patric Young.





MADDIE WASHBURN/UAA PHOTO

Young spoke to the men's basketball team in October.

## *Patric Young urges players to stay in the moment*

Motivational speakers are a staple in locker rooms, and former players are often called upon to do the honors.

This former player, one of the most beloved UF athletes of the past decade, is unusual because he's holding court from a wheelchair.

And dominating.

**Patric Young** (BSTEL '14) was the SEC defensive player of the year and on a team that won 30 straight games and made it to the Final Four in 2014.

All that basketball talent, for now, is sidelined. But when you see the trademark Patric smile, you realize his real talent isn't basketball, it's attitude.

A June 29 single-car accident on a Nebraska back road left Young paralyzed from the waist down. For now, his legs don't work, but Young has found a calling.

"I refuse to believe this opportunity will be wasted," Young said. "I will be the one who defines this chapter of my life."

Young hearkens back to advice from Coach Billy Donovan during his playing days — stay in the moment — and in a preseason locker room visit with the 2022-23 men's basketball team, he passes that on and urges them not to make the same mistakes he made.

*"I'm not going to look back two years from now saying, 'dang, man, I could have done more. I'm going to walk again.'"*

— **Patric Young**

"I thought I was going to prove to Coach Donovan that I knew more than him," Young said. "That did not end well for me. ... Coach Donovan had to take me aside and say, 'hey man, if you're not going to let me coach you, you might as well think about transferring.'"

Young said he decided to trust the coaches, trust his teammates and approach the game with humility.

"There should be no day that you walk into this gym that you're dragging and you're thinking, 'oh man, we gotta practice today.'"

Coach Todd Golden said he met Young

soon after he took the job.

"I was always really impressed with the way he carried himself, with his positivity and his mentality. But when he came to speak to our team, you would have never known anything had happened to him — that he was dealing with this incredible adversity — if he wasn't in a wheelchair," Golden said. "His attitude was the same. His mentality was the same. You could not help but think about the impressive and strong person that he is."

Today, Young said, he has one to two years to maximize his recovery, so he treats every day like he's training for the Olympics.

"I'm not going to look back two years from now saying, 'dang, man, I could have done more,'" Young said. "I'm going to walk again."

Young urged the players to cherish their teammates and make the most of the opportunity.

"It goes by just like that. In a heartbeat, I would switch places with you guys to do this again. But guess what? That's not how life works," Young said. "And if you fall, get back on your horse."

For more on Young's journey, visit

 [uff.to/stws09](http://uff.to/stws09)

# TAKEAWAYS FROM **UF AI DAYS**

BY KAREN DOOLEY, MAMC '11

UF'S INAUGURAL AI DAYS SHOWCASED HOW UF IS BUILDING AN AI UNIVERSITY and included competitions designed to bring students' ideas to life with more than \$50,000 in prizes. Here are a few highlights from the two-day event in October, which was AI Month.

- **580** registered for competitions, poster sessions and panel discussions.
- **28 teams** registered for the **AI Days Pitch Competition**, sponsored by the UF Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center in the Warrington College of Business.
- **The student startup companies represented seven UF colleges**, with **15** undergraduate team leaders and **13** graduate student team leaders.
- **Two of the final four teams** in the AI Pitch Competition **were led by women**.
- Judges awarded prizes based on potential to grow and attract outside financing. First place received **\$12,000**, second place, **\$8,000**, and third place, **\$5,000**.
- The winning AI pitch was **Fire Neural Network, FNN**, led by **Istvan Kereszy**,

**MS '20, PHD '21**. The startup uses AI to locate **lightning-initiated wildfires**, reducing the time it takes to detect fires from **24 hours to 40 seconds**. FNN can locate ignition points within 40 meters instead of kilometers.

- A group of students and recent graduates from horticulture, computer science and business created **FarmPal**, a company that will use machine learning to give real-time recommendations to farmers.
- **The AI Days Hackathon** gave teams of two to five students 24 hours to create a machine-learning project to combat social inequality.
- The Hackathon attracted **236 registrants** who created **20 projects** and represented **42 academic departments**.
- **Sydnee O'Donnell**, a senior in astrophysics, and **Oscar Barrera**, a PhD student in astrophysics, won first place for their project **K-Boston Analytics**, which identifies the best areas to locate resources to help disadvantaged neighborhoods.
- During the AI in Health, Engineering and the Sciences panel, **Dr. Azra Bihorac** said the UF College of Medicine

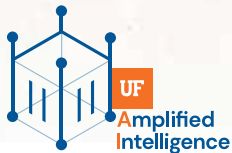


The winning AI pitch was Fire Neural Network. The startup uses AI to locate lightning-initiated wildfires.





Winners of the hackathon competition were Oscar Barrera and Sydnee O'Donnell.



is developing AI learning modules for all, from beginners to advanced health practitioners, with the goal of AI “literacy for everybody.”

- The panel also discussed a UF Health-designed **AI system** that uses data collected from patients’ vital signs to give doctors faster and **more accurate insight into a patient’s prognosis**.
- **Tina Tallon**, an assistant professor in the College of the Arts, highlighted her research into gender disparities in training datasets for AI-powered voice technologies during the AI Days poster session.
- **Tallon, who studies algorithmic justice within voice technology**, noted that a strength of UF’s AI initiative is its diversity: “Never before have I been part of a community of scientists, engineers, artists, and practitioners with such a diverse range of specializations. This is how we come together to solve some of the world’s most pressing problems — we need everyone on board.”

To learn more about UF’s work in AI, please visit: [ai.ufl.edu](https://ai.ufl.edu)

## A HUMAN-CENTERED AI



Joseph Glover, third from right, UF provost and senior vice president of academic affairs, was among the participants invited to the Global University Summit at Notre Dame University, where seven universities formally signed the Rome Call for AI Ethics.

The University of Florida is part of a new global agreement with seven other universities that are committed to the development of human-centered approaches to artificial intelligence that will impact people everywhere.

Joseph Glover, UF provost and senior vice president of academic affairs, signed the Rome Call for AI Ethics in October on behalf of UF at a Global University Summit at Notre Dame University.

The signing is a commitment to the principles of the Rome Call for AI Ethics: to ensure artificial intelligence serves the interests of humanity and to support regulations and principles to deliver emerging technologies that are ethically centered. UF joins a network of universities that will share best practices, tools and educational content, as well as meet regularly to share updates and discuss innovative ideas.

More information: [uff.to/61y6rq](https://uff.to/61y6rq)

# THIS GATOR IS “OVER THE



PHOTO COURTESY MIGUEL HERNANDEZ

As a simulation engineer and Mission Control operator, Miguel Hernandez assisted on 11 Apollo missions, including the historic moon landing in 1969. He is shown here, checklist in hand, at the Lunar Module Simulator, training Apollo 15 astronauts in 1971. The Apollo 15 Lunar Module was dubbed “Falcon.”





# MOON” ABOUT ARTEMIS 1

ON THE MORNING OF NOV. 16, MILLIONS of Americans awoke to the thrilling news that Artemis I, NASA’s first mission to the moon in 50-plus years, had launched from Cape Canaveral after months of anticipation. The launch held special meaning for one American in particular: Gator engineer and businessman **Miguel Hernandez** (BSMEng ’66).

As a simulation engineer for NASA in the late 1960s and early ‘70s — a position he secured at a 1967 University of Florida job fair — Hernandez trained the astronauts for all 11 Apollo missions, including the first moon landing in 1969. Hearing Commander Neil Armstrong announce, “The Eagle has landed” on that historic occasion was an “incredible feeling,” he said. So was receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1972 for his role in saving the Apollo 13 astronauts, stranded in space after an explosion.

However, witnessing Artemis’s takeoff was especially moving, Hernandez said.

It was at Cape Canaveral 55 years ago that he had begun his career supporting the Apollo and Space Shuttle missions and where his second son, Jorge, was born. Now that same son was leading the firm that oversaw safety and reliability for NASA’s Space Launching System for Artemis I — the most powerful rocket in the world, designed to send humans to deep space.

Like father, like son. Returning the United States to the moon, more than half a century later.

“It was an emotional experience for me and my wife, seeing the rocket lift off from the Cape,” said Hernandez. “To know that our son is continuing the work we had started with the Apollo missions, after all those years. It completed the circle for us.

“But now, the plan with the Artemis program is to continue further out,” Hernandez added. “To Mars!”

Read about Miguel Hernandez’s narrow escape from Castro’s Cuba and his behind-the-scenes role in the U.S. space effort at [uff.to/1whmxt](http://uff.to/1whmxt)





# IAN'S AFTERMATH

**H**URRICANE IAN MADE LANDFALL IN SOUTHWEST FLORIDA AS A CATEGORY 4 STORM SEPT. 28 AND CUT A SWATH OF DESTRUCTION ACROSS FLORIDA.

In its aftermath, teams from the University of Florida mobilized to assess damage and offer help.



JASON DEERINGER

## UF INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

Nearly 5 million acres of agricultural land took a hit of up to \$1.56 billion, according to an economic impact analysis by researcher Christa Court, of the UF/IFAS food and resource economics department. The acreage supports more than \$8.12 billion in agricultural products annually, including livestock, fruits and vegetables.

Citrus took the largest hit, suffering fruit drops, major flooding and damage to trees, with losses estimated between \$146 million and \$304 million, said Court.

In Ona, the UF/IFAS Range Cattle Research and Education Center saw major flooding in all office and lab spaces, but no losses of cattle, said Director Brent Sellers.

Beekeepers, a \$93 million industry, saw major damage as well. About 380,000 honey bee colonies were in Ian's path from Lee County to St. Augustine, said Amy Vu, of the UF/IFAS Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab.

Thousands of colonies were flooded, destroying hives, honeycombs, bees and equipment. The USDA says about one third of all crops require pollination, so the loss of honey bees could impact the food chain, Vu said. Bees that survived will find fewer blooms like citrus blossoms to use as food sources.





## UF COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

To help with animal care in the destruction zone, the **UF Veterinary Emergency Treatment Service** deployed to Fort Myers and remained for 10 days, treating 422 animals in its largest deployment since the group formed in 2003.

Most of the animals seen were dogs and cats, but the team also cared for rabbits, a potbellied pig, bearded dragons and one goat needing a blood transfusion. One dog was treated for alligator bite wounds, and several kittens found after the storm were brought in for assessments.



Dr. Lawrence Garcia led the veterinary team that deployed to Southwest Florida.



## UF COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS

Reporting students from the UF College of Journalism and Communications headed south, and one team, accompanied by WUFT director of content and executive producer Heather Van Blokland, produced half the content on Fort Myers' local PBS station to give staffers a break. Some of their work was featured nationally by NPR.





# Building Tradition Brick by Brick



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## The Emerson Alumni Hall Plaza Brick Paver Program

Support UF's future and become a part of its history with the Emerson Alumni Hall Plaza Brick Program. Pavers may honor relatives, businesses, friends and organizations, or commemorate a birthday, anniversary or graduation day. A special memorial area also enables you to honor a loved one who has passed away.

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# GATOR AGLOW



UF PHOTOGRAPHY

One of UF's newest traditions is the lighting of the holiday Gator, a steel sculpture that glows in the evenings on the University Auditorium lawn until after fall commencement. President Fuchs presided over the first lighting in 2019 and led the countdown one final time. The campus community gathered for hot chocolate, cider and holiday treats as student musicians played songs of the season.

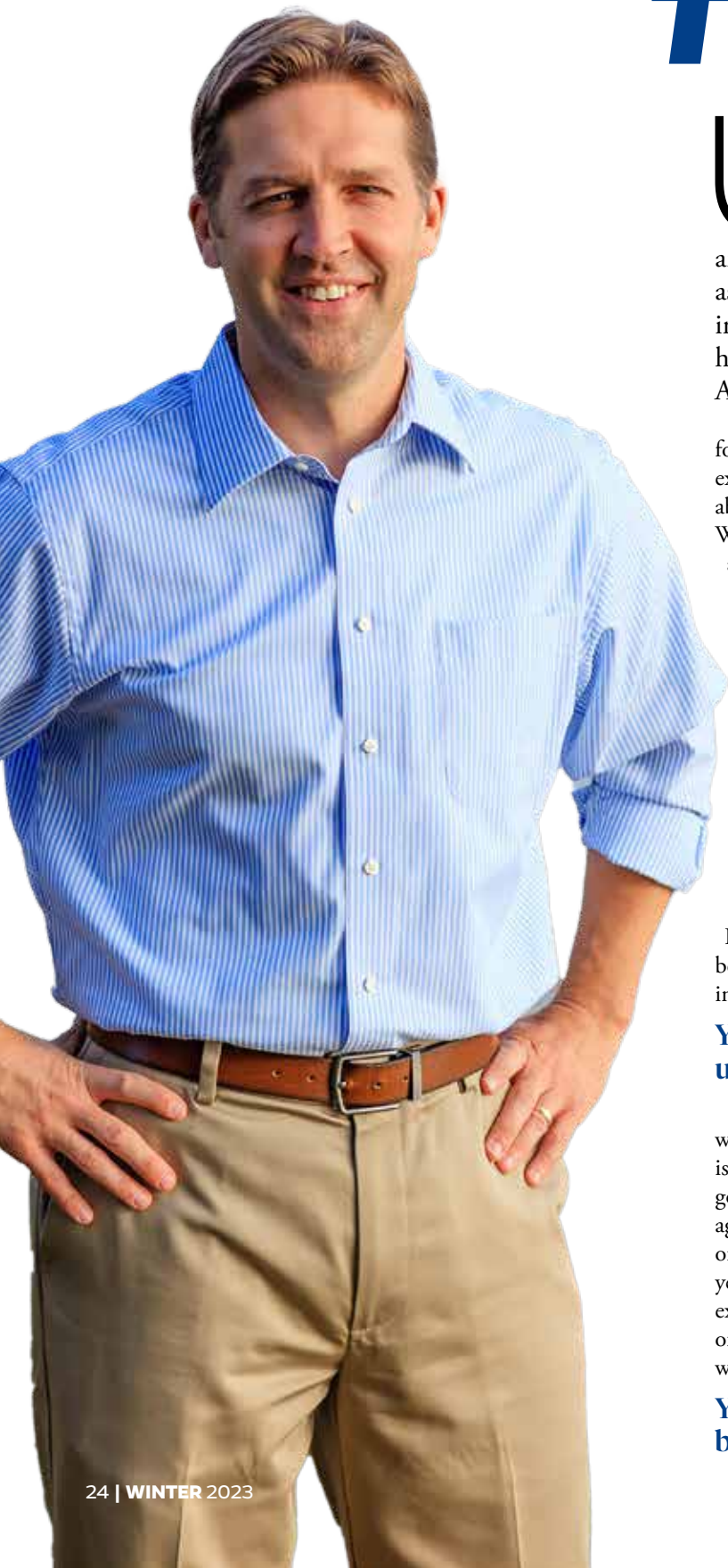
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# FROM CORNHUSKER TO GATOR



**U**.S. Sen. Ben Sasse was named the 13th president of the University of Florida in November and will begin in early February.

The Nebraska senator's career spans the private and public sectors, and he is the author of two books as well as articles on issues ranging from higher education to the importance of community in a functioning democracy. Sasse holds a Ph.D. in history from Yale University and a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University.

Following his selection, Sasse said he wants all Gators to share a vision for a world-changing institution: "Education properly understood isn't exclusively or even primarily about transmitting information. Education is about learning how to humbly and meaningfully engage with new ideas. We want Gators to engage with ideas. I want our students to be challenged and to rejoice in the challenge. We want Gators to go out and serve Florida and the world. Let's go out and build something great together."

Sasse spoke with Nicci Brown from UF's Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing, after his unanimous selection by the state Board of Governors. This Q&A has been edited. The original is at: [uff.to/n6aw20](http://uff.to/n6aw20)

## **What attracted you to this position? What is it about the University of Florida?**

I wasn't really on the job market, but when the chair of the search committee started his conversations with me, I realized that what's happening in Gainesville is changing the world. This is a place that is doing amazing things, yet nobody is satisfied here, nobody's complacent. It's "What can we build next? Who can we serve more? How do we do better for Floridians and beyond?" The dynamism in this community is incredibly compelling.

## **You've described this as the most interesting university. What do you mean by that?**

I really believe that universities are going to become more relevant in a world where you can't assume at age 20 or 25 that the work you're doing is going to be the same work you'll be doing when you're 45 or 50. You're going to have to go back and get retrained and re-educated again and again. And yet, many universities don't see that. They think the university of 30 years from now is going to look roughly like the university of 30 years ago. I don't think that's true at all. What's happening here is so exciting and compelling, and yet there's still a lot of humility. There's a lot of entrepreneurial energy and ambition about who we can partner with as well. So I think the potential here is endless.

## **Your experience spans public service, it spans business, it spans education as well. What do you bring**





UF PHOTO

At the UF Board of Trustees meeting, above, Sasse told the trustees he is a romantic when it comes to the importance of education and the role of a university: “Students are not machines, and education is not an assembly line.”

### to the University of Florida?

I believe in building big-cause, low-ego teams with people who want to return the gift of gratitude by benefiting their neighbor. And this institution has 6,000-ish faculty members, a giant number of staff, 57,000 students, more than 600,000 alums who still view themselves as part of Gator Nation and want to invest in this place. There is no one person who can possibly lead this. What you want is a servant leader who tries to bring together the many different skills and attributes across the broad range of this special community and says, “let’s go forward together and build more.”

### You’ve often written about the value of community and how you see it as being so vital to the way we move forward. What else do you see in Gainesville and in the UF community?

I think something like the AI across the curriculum initiative is very visionary and forward-thinking. I think everybody who leaves the university in the next five, 10, 15 years has to have an understanding of how quantification is becoming free. Computing power, the marginal cost of it, is going to fall toward zero, and every repetitive task is going to ultimately become automated. And yet, what makes us human is the qualitative. We need to understand the quantitative more because that’s where the disruption is coming from, and yet the things that are uniquely human are about the good, and the true, and the beautiful. We have bodies, we’re not abstract minds that upload our consciousness onto the internet. The internet is destroying barriers of time and space to reach all across the country and the globe. And yet, what’s essentially human is the people that you can hug, the table you sit around, the little league that you coach. I think that Gainesville is that kind of place, where people come for a time and then head out into the world, and yet they never really leave Gainesville.

### We are the flagship university of the state, and land-grant institutions are a uniquely American idea. Tell us what the land-grant institution of the future means to you.

I think we will be amazed 10 and 15 years from now about all that happens across the 67 counties where we have a footprint. Ag extension becomes educational extension in many of these communities. There’s a lot of energy transition and climate issues that are going to need to be managed across 67 counties. Some of the most interesting and dynamic metros in the country are in Florida. And yet this is a state with 67 counties, the majority of which are rural and agricultural, and those communities can’t be left behind. They need to be synched up to Miami, they need to be synched up to Tampa, they need to be synched up to Daytona, they need to be synched up to Gainesville. And our land grant mission and our ag extension across those 67 counties give us the footprint to reach there.

### I’m going to quote from one of your books. In “Them” you share a quote from Heraclitus: “Day by day, what you choose, what you think, and what you do is who you become.” So who do you see yourself becoming here at UF?

I want to serve this community by helping move us forward, by exploiting all the strengths that we have and getting more resources. The growth of the recurring funds from Tallahassee from \$320 million a year to \$600 million a year, this is not happening in other states across the country. And right now, the flagship brand and vision of this institution are being celebrated by people all across the state. We need everyone to know they’re welcome to be a part of Gator Nation, and I want to be a part of doing that sales work.

### One last question: How will you handle it if the Gators come face to face with the Cornhuskers?

Turns out we’re out of time!

### Touché sir.

I might have one chip to spend on all things athletic. Scott [Stricklin] is the guy we want to be making all the major decisions, but there are scheduling things that I will have veto power over!

### We’ll let you get away with that one!

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### 2-16-23

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# A Growing Gator Nation

Applications hit record levels in 2022

BY CINDY SPENCE, BS '82, MA '17

Decision Day 2023 is just weeks away, Feb. 24, a red-letter calendar day for legions of high school seniors. As the University of Florida gets ready to welcome a new class of Gators, the preliminary numbers are in on the previous class, a historic one in terms of applications.

UF saw its largest applicant pool ever in 2022 at 66,048. With only about 6,700 spots in the Class of 2026, that also meant a low acceptance rate — about 22 percent — and admissions officers faced their toughest decisions yet.

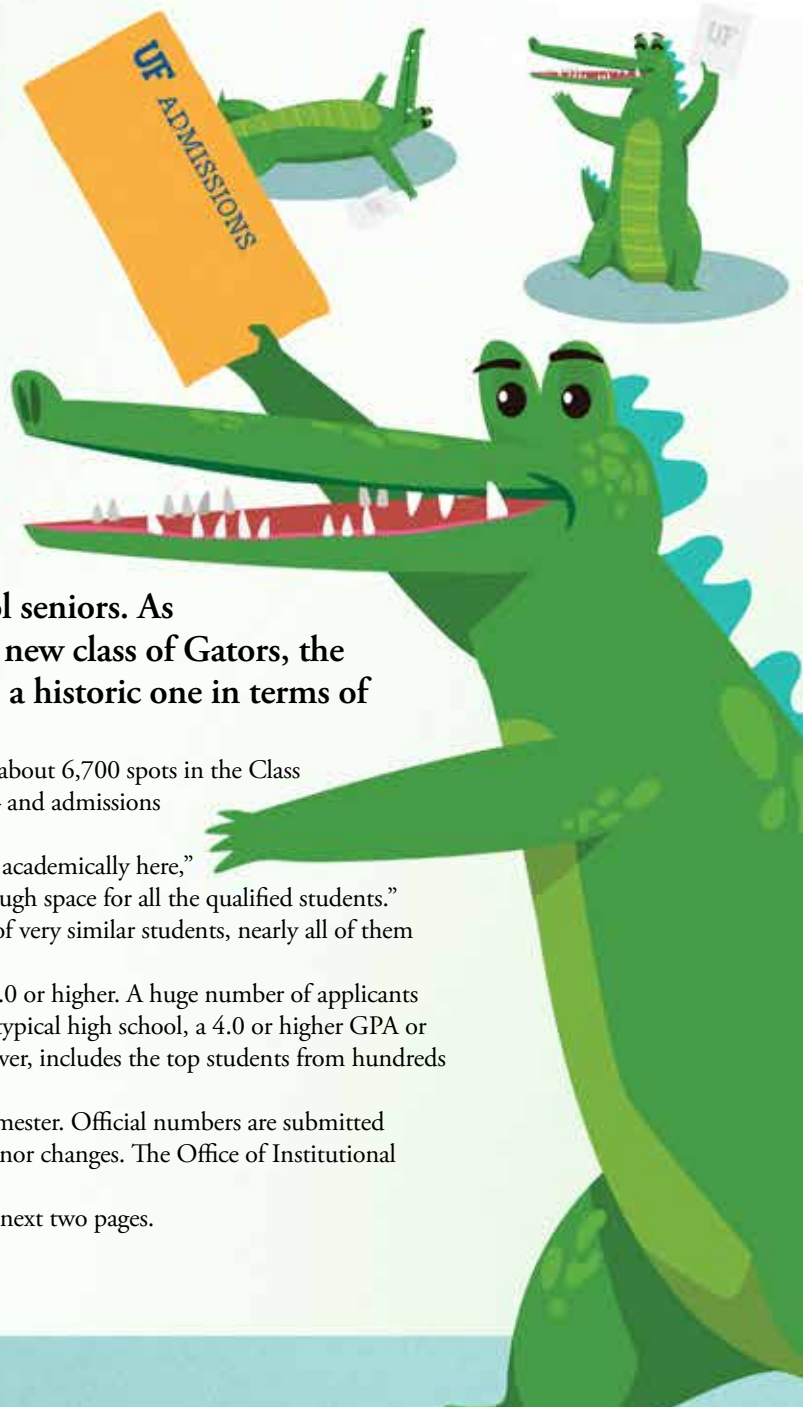
“About 85, even 90 percent of our applicant pool would do just fine academically here,” says Charles Murphy, director of admissions. “But we do not have enough space for all the qualified students.”

As application numbers grow, the applicant pool is increasingly full of very similar students, nearly all of them high school standouts.

The vast majority of the UF applicant pool has a weighted GPA of 4.0 or higher. A huge number of applicants have test scores in the 90th percentile. Compared to the students in a typical high school, a 4.0 or higher GPA or test scores in the 90th percentile is fabulous. The applicant pool, however, includes the top students from hundreds of high schools.

UF collects preliminary data on each class on the 10th day of Fall semester. Official numbers are submitted to the Board of Governors after the semester ends and may include minor changes. The Office of Institutional Planning and Research posts final numbers in February.

So what does the historic class of 2026 look like? Take a look on the next two pages.



## 4 Myths Busted

Admissions

Admissions Director Charles Murphy corrects some misconceptions about the admissions process:

**MYTH** INTENDED MAJOR CAN HELP OR HURT.

**REALITY** “With the exception of the performing arts, like music or dance, the major a student applies to has no impact on our application review. When we review, the reviewer does not even know the major a student has applied to. We know that many students change their major after enrolling, so we don’t want to consider major in the review process.”

**MYTH** HAVING FLORIDA PREPAID TUITION WORKS AGAINST YOU.

**REALITY** Prepaid tuition locks in tuition at a lower rate, so the theory behind this myth is that because the university would get less in tuition dollars that works against a prospective student.

“The admissions office doesn’t know who has prepaid or not unless a student puts it in their essay,” Murphy says.

**MYTH** THERE ARE LIMITS ON SPOTS FROM A PARTICULAR HIGH SCHOOL OR COUNTY, OR CONVERSELY, UF MUST TAKE SOMEONE FROM EACH HIGH SCHOOL OR COUNTY.

**REALITY** “We don’t have to take someone from each county, and we don’t allot spots by high school, giving the larger high schools more spots and the smaller high schools fewer spots.”

**MYTH** THERE IS A MAGIC CLASS OR ACTIVITY THAT GUARANTEES ACCEPTANCE.

**REALITY** “The biggest myth is that we’re looking for this very specific thing, and if a student does that specific thing, they’re in. We get a lot of questions like, ‘if I take this class, will I get in?’ But we look at more than that one class.”

# College applications are up for lots of reasons

Although UF's Top 5 rank is part of the explanation for increasing applications, other factors also come into play.

**Florida is growing.** State population grew 11 of the last 11 years, to more than 21 million in 2021.

There are **more high school graduates** in Florida than there were 20 years ago. Florida is the third largest state in terms of student enrollment.

**Electronic applications** make it easier to apply to more schools, and the Common App — UF is one of more than 1,000 schools that use it — makes it even easier.

Students are more **focused on ranked schools**, with the top 50-100 getting more applications.

The biggest increase came from **out-of-state applicants**. During the height of the pandemic, fewer students were traveling out of state to attend college, but now there is a greater willingness to travel.



## HISTORICAL DATA

2000		2010		2020	
Applicants	20,675	Applicants	27,987	Applicants	49,586
Admits	12,916	Admits	11,460	Admits	15,000
Admit %	62.5%	Admit %	40.9%	Admit %	30.3
Enrolled	6,972	Enrolled	6,329	Enrolled	6,336

## FRESHMEN AT A GLANCE

Female: 58.7%

Male: 41.3%

Alumni Parent: 14.8%\*

### On-campus Enrollment 6,618

Florida Residents	83.7%
First Generation College	18.9%
Top 10% of HS class	84%

### Application Info

Total Applications	66,048
Total On-campus Admits	15,055
Total PaCE Admits	3,014

### Total Enrollment

Undergraduate	38,018
---------------	--------

### PaCE Info

PaCE Freshman Enrollment	781
--------------------------	-----

\* Children of alumni is a self-reported figure, not tracked by UF



# Paths to gatorhood

there's more than one  
way to become a Gator



**UF Online**, ranked #1 among online bachelor's programs by U.S. News & World Report.

**PaCE, Pathway to Campus Enrollment.** Students begin in UF Online and transition to campus after completing 60 credit hours.

**Innovation Academy.** Students are admitted in the spring and follow an entrepreneurship track.

**Formal transfer programs**, such as Gator Engineering at Santa Fe College.

Once accepted, students are eligible for **Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars**, a program for first-generation college students, which had its biggest class yet, at 487.



## top 10 majors

- #1 Biology
- #2 Undeclared
- #3 General Business
- #4 Computer Science
- #5 Psychology
- #6 Health Science
- #7 Mechanical Engr.
- #8 Finance
- #9 Political Science
- #10 Biochemistry

## top 3 languages

First language, other than English

- #1 Spanish
- #2 Mandarin
- #3 Vietnamese

*\*2,363 are proficient in two languages*

## top 5 countries

U.S.	6,478
China	32
India	11
Canada	8
Germany	7

## top 3 fla. counties

Broward	671
Miami-Dade	598
Palm Beach	573

*\*Liberty, Holmes, Glades and Franklin sent no students to UF in 2022.*

## top 4 u.s. states

Florida	5,444
New York	179
New Jersey	137
Georgia	67

*\*Alaska, Idaho, Mississippi, North Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming sent no students to UF in 2022.*



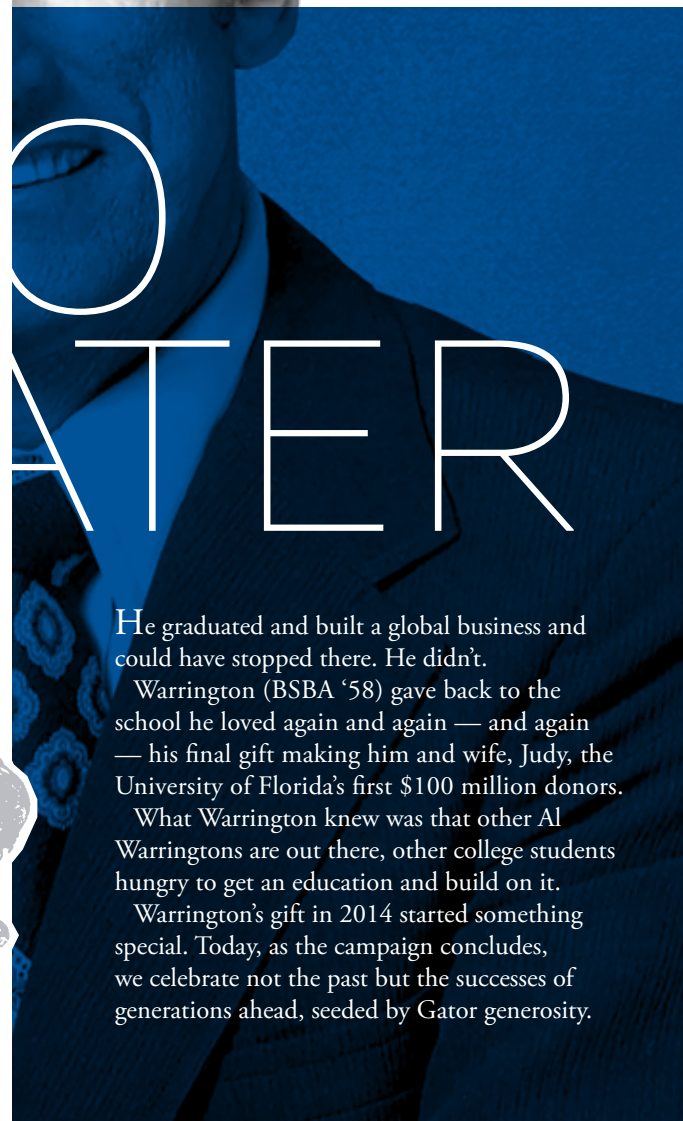
## Middle 50% of test scores and GPA for admitted students

GPA:	4.4 — 4.6
SAT:	1350 — 1490
ACT:	30 — 34

As a first-generation college student in 1954, Al Warrington worked odd jobs and could make an apple butter sandwich last a week.



For complete Go Greater coverage, please see:  
<https://www.ufl.edu/gogreater/>



Design: Robert Mack, Jim Baer

Text: Cindy Spence

Photography: Aaron Daye

Coordinator: Barbara Drake

He graduated and built a global business and could have stopped there. He didn't.

Warrington (BSBA '58) gave back to the school he loved again and again — and again — his final gift making him and wife, Judy, the University of Florida's first \$100 million donors.

What Warrington knew was that other Al Warringtons are out there, other college students hungry to get an education and build on it.

Warrington's gift in 2014 started something special. Today, as the campaign concludes, we celebrate not the past but the successes of generations ahead, seeded by Gator generosity.

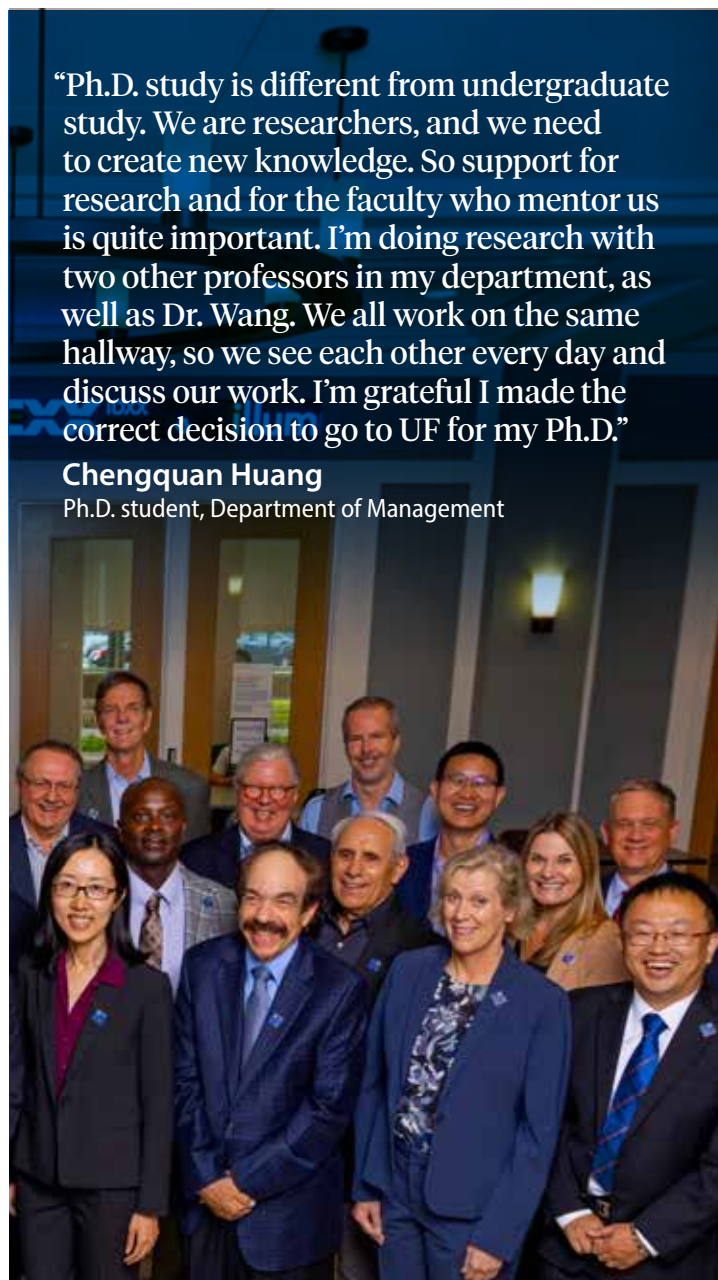
WATCH US  
GO GREATER >





# Warrington College of Business

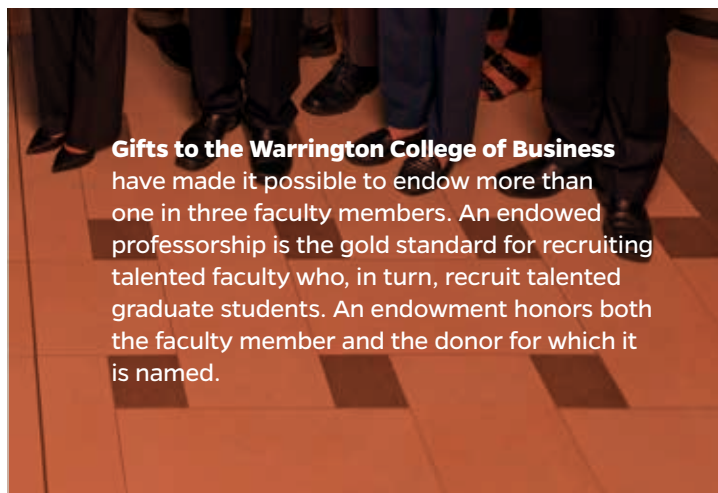
An endowed professor can touch hundreds of lives through teaching, mentorship and research. Doctoral candidate Chengquan Huang came to UF to work with Distinguished Professor Mo Wang, the Lanzillotti-McKethan Eminent Scholar Chair and an international expert on retirement and older worker employment and organizational behavior.



“Ph.D. study is different from undergraduate study. We are researchers, and we need to create new knowledge. So support for research and for the faculty who mentor us is quite important. I’m doing research with two other professors in my department, as well as Dr. Wang. We all work on the same hallway, so we see each other every day and discuss our work. I’m grateful I made the correct decision to go to UF for my Ph.D.”

**Chengquan Huang**

Ph.D. student, Department of Management



## **Gifts to the Warrington College of Business**

have made it possible to endow more than one in three faculty members. An endowed professorship is the gold standard for recruiting talented faculty who, in turn, recruit talented graduate students. An endowment honors both the faculty member and the donor for which it is named.



# University of Florida Athletics

Talitha Diggs' first visit to Florida Relays wasn't her freshman year, it was at the age of 2. Her mother and aunt were world champions, and Aunt Hazel Clark (BA '01) ran for the Gators. Now a world champion herself, Diggs says studying goes hand in hand with training. She is a double major in international relations and political science and is learning Mandarin. One of her favorite places on campus is the Otis Hawkins Center, an academic center for athletes, where she spends one or two hours a day.



"I can't even tell you how much time I've spent in the Hawkins Center, going back and forth from there to the weight room. I have goals that go beyond track and field, and I knew that the University of Florida would be a place that would align with my academic and athletic goals. My mother was an athlete in the first year of Title IX, so I appreciate the facilities we have today on another level. My mother and my aunt didn't have a Hawkins Center or a Heavener Center. The facilities help us balance academics and athletics."

## TALITHA DIGGS, Sophomore

2022 USTFCCA Outdoor South Region Women's Track Athlete of the Year and,  
2022 USTFCCA All-Academic Athlete



## Investments in UF athletics

have supported Gators on and off the field. The Hawkins Center, the Heavener Football Training Center, the Condon Ballpark and — soon — the Hathcock basketball facility contribute to building a championship experience.



# Anita Zucker

## Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies

Science shows 90% of brain development occurs in the first five years of life, making research partners like the University of Florida's Baby Gator Child Development and Research Center a key resource in early learning for children like 18-month-old Charlotte Gipson, shown here with teacher Jamie Krasnow.



“From birth to age 5, children’s interaction with their environment builds a foundation of brain architecture that influences the remainder of a child’s life. By pre-kindergarten, it’s three years too late if the child, as an infant or toddler, has not had responsive early interactions and learning experiences. We want our research, training and outreach activities to help ensure that each and every child has a chance to succeed. We have scientific reasons why we do our work, but we also have moral reasons. It’s the right thing to do, not only for children and families, but for society.”

**Patricia Snyder**

Director of UF’s Anita Zucker Center for  
Excellence in Early Childhood Studies

### **The Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies**

was renamed in 2014 to honor Anita Zucker (BAE '72), a strong early childhood advocate and a generous supporter of the university. Investments in the center have leveraged other research dollars; the center has attracted more than \$50 million in federal research funding.



# Shelter Medicine

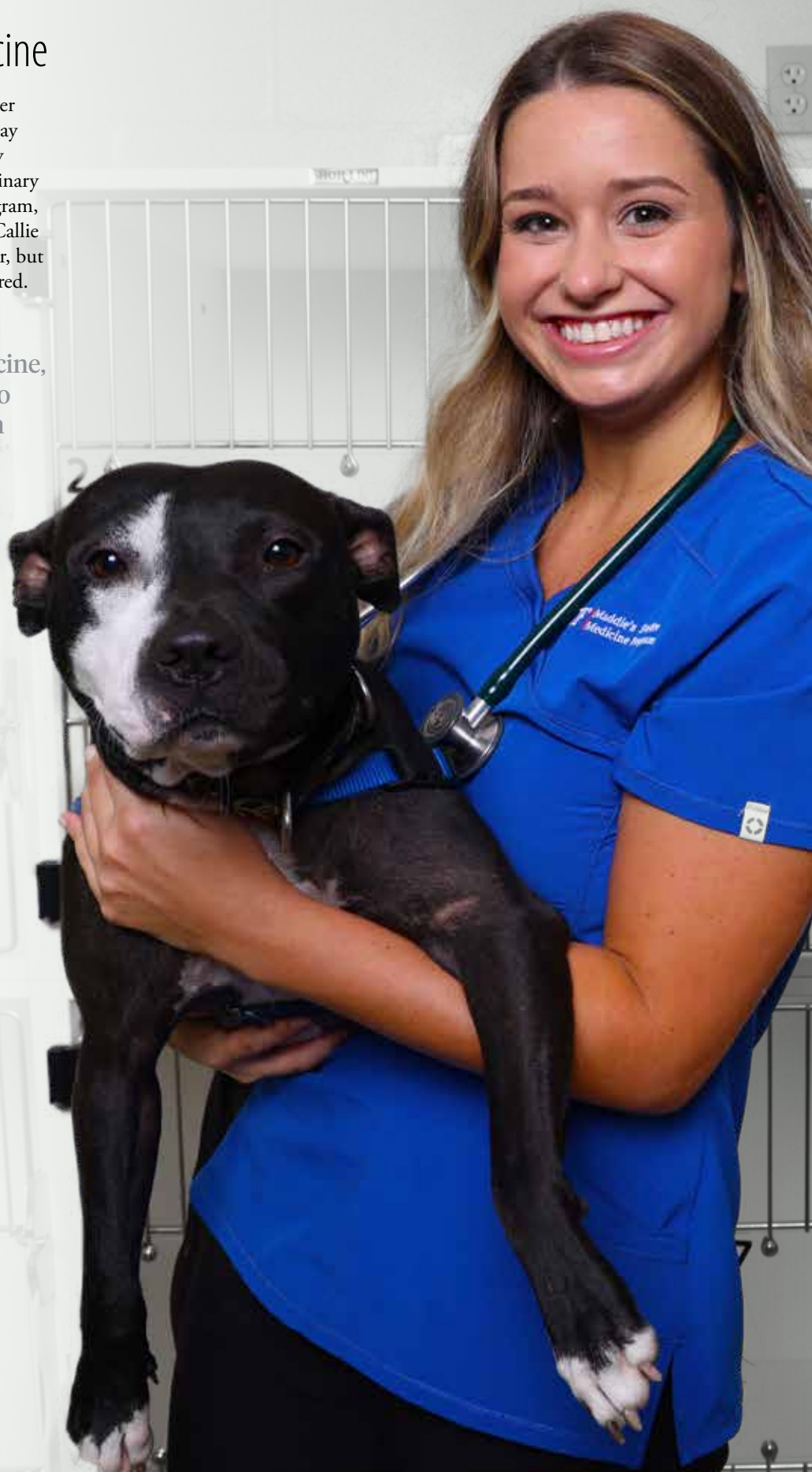
## College of Veterinary Medicine

Cassidy Schiefer (BS '19) fell in love with shelter medicine in high school, hanging out at the Clay County Animal Shelter and fostering medically needy kittens. Today, as she wraps up her veterinary medicine degree in UF's Shelter Medicine program, she works with strays like Callie, shown here. Callie was found outside and had been nursing a litter, but no puppies were found. She is now being fostered.

"I've never thought of this as an occupation. If I am in shelter medicine, I will wake up every day and just do what I love. The program has given me the tools and the experience to make an impact. These animals can't advocate for themselves, so I feel fulfilled when I can make a happy ending for someone and an animal. Everyone should have the joy of an animal in their life."

**Cassidy Schiefer,**  
fourth-year shelter medicine student

**The UF Shelter Medicine program** began graduating veterinarians with shelter medicine certificates 10 years ago and got a boost with a gift of \$25 million to educate veterinarians to care for animals most in need. About 6.3 million companion animals enter shelters in the United States each year. Animal shelters account for about a quarter of all dogs adopted each year and about a third of all cats adopted.





# The DeLuca Preserve

In 1997, Tom Hctor created a science-based map that pieced together chunks of rapidly disappearing undeveloped land, and the Florida Wildlife Corridor was born. There's a lot of land still to protect, says

Hctor, director of the Center for Landscape Conservation Planning, but donations like DeLuca Preserve make conservation dollars go further. What can UF do with 27,000 acres of Old Florida?



“Opening the DeLuca Preserve to research and learning is a really unique opportunity, and it’s a strategic location for the Florida Wildlife Corridor. It’s not only about panthers and bears, but about watershed protection and protection of the rare dry prairie habitat used by creatures like the endangered grasshopper sparrow. The more land we protect, the more likely we’ll be able to respond to future change, and the more resilient we will be.”

**Tom Hctor (MFRC '92, PHD '03)**  
UF researcher



**The DeLuca Preserve**, among the largest real estate gifts ever to a university, was donated to UF in 2020 by philanthropist Elisabeth DeLuca, instantly conserving a rural chunk of South Florida once slated for development. Already, UF’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences has hosted educational “biodiversity blitzes” and 23 scientists are at work there.

Photos this page: Carlton Ward

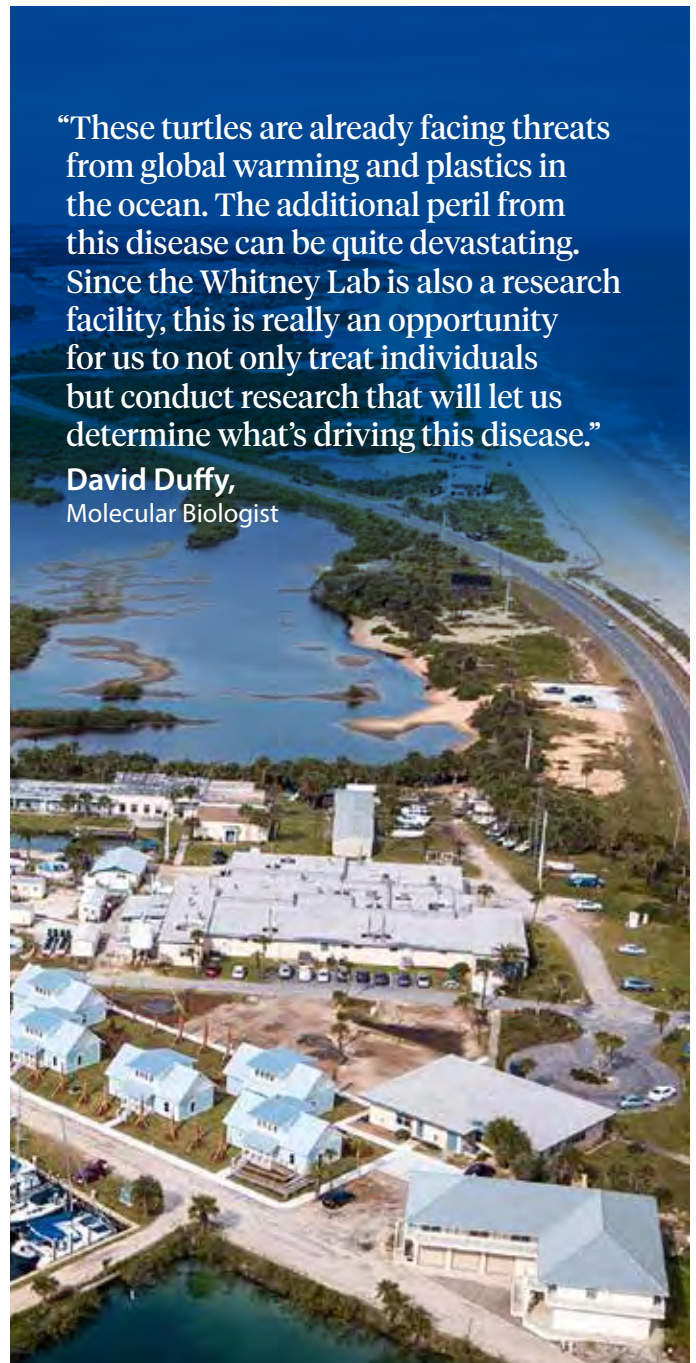




# The Condrón Family

## Sea Turtle Research Center and Hospital

Six of the seven species of sea turtles are threatened or endangered, and five are found in Florida. About 90 percent of all sea turtle nesting in the southeastern U.S. occurs on Florida beaches, making Florida ground zero for conservation. Recently, the hospital at UF's Whitney Laboratory for Marine Bioscience has seen more cases of the viral disease fibropapillomatosis, which causes debilitating tumors.



“These turtles are already facing threats from global warming and plastics in the ocean. The additional peril from this disease can be quite devastating. Since the Whitney Lab is also a research facility, this is really an opportunity for us to not only treat individuals but conduct research that will let us determine what’s driving this disease.”

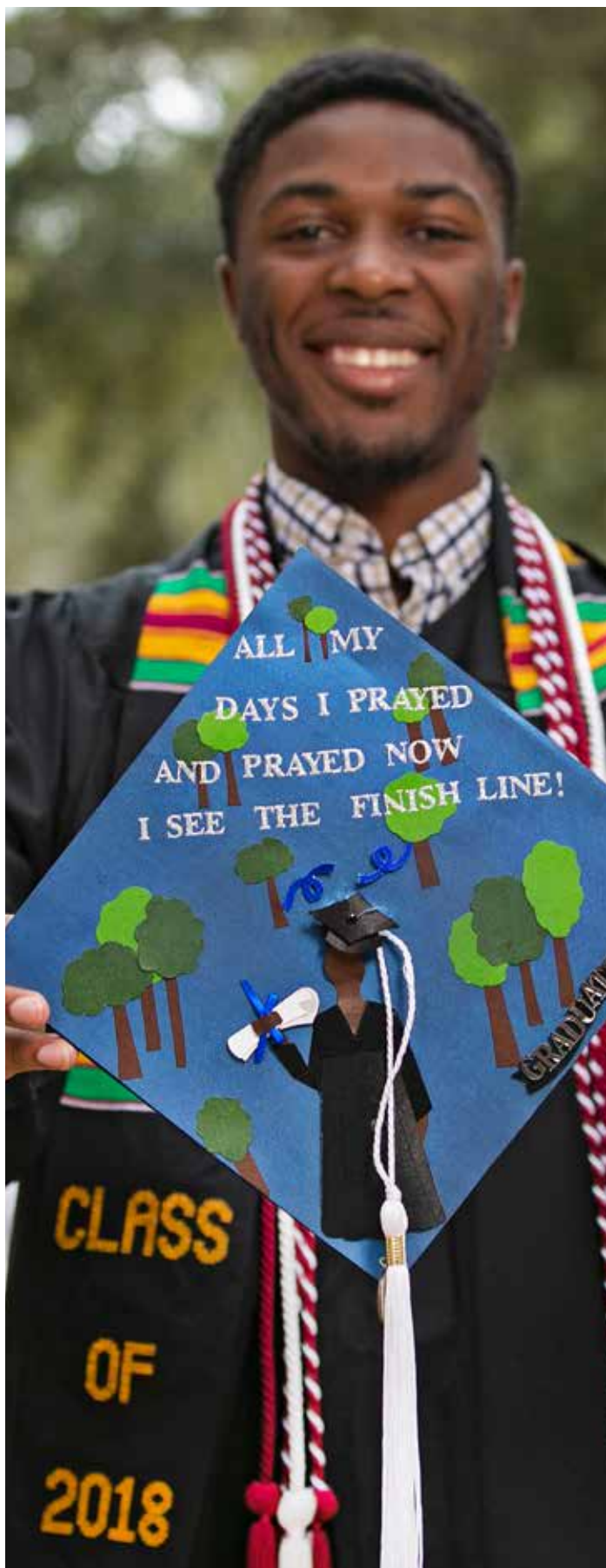
**David Duffy,**  
Molecular Biologist



**The Sea Turtle Hospital** opened in 2015, with seed funding from Nancy Condrón (MBA '86, JD '86) and her family. In all, the Condrón family has given \$6 million to support sea turtles.

Photos this page: UF Photography





## Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars

Bashon Robinson (BA '18) graduated from Glades Central Community High School in Belle Glade. Today, he is a graduate student in higher education and mentors first-generation students, including those from his hometown. "I want to show them, if I can go to college, they can do it, too."

"I've met a handful of MFOS donors, and I'm very, very grateful for each and every one. I wish I could meet more of them, just to tell them thank you. I tell the kids in my community, 'This is where you came from, this small town, but you have huge potential.' I really believe education can change your life."

**Bashon Robinson,**  
MFOS Class of 2018

**The Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars program** supports low-income students who are the first in their families to attend college. About \$2 million was committed for first-generation students in the first year, 2006-07. Today, MFOS is a \$12 million program, and 5,800 students have received scholarships.



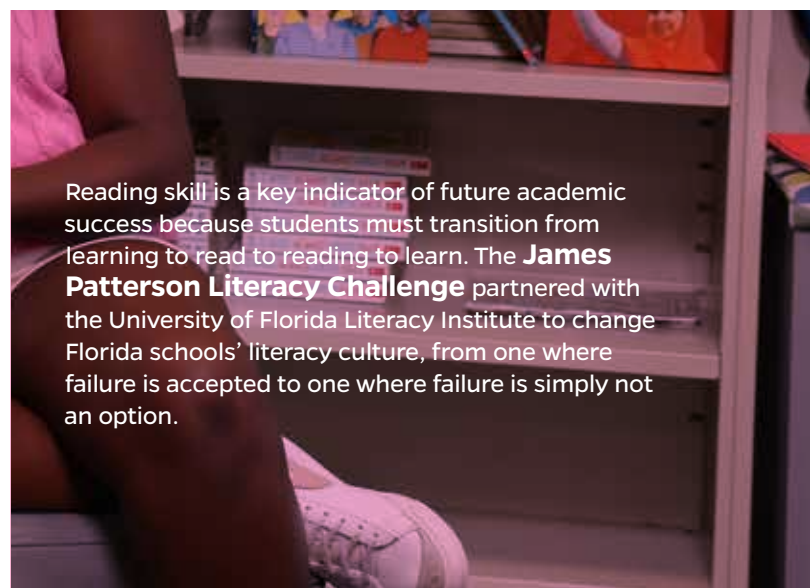


# James Patterson Literacy Challenge

Rachel Mundorf and Chioma Anumba, shown here in Assistant Professor Jon Mundorf's classroom at UF's P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School, bond through books they love. Chioma says reading lets her imagination run rampant. Rachel says reading recharges her: "I could be having an awful day or even a good one, and if I sit down and read, it lifts my mood . . . I find it really powerful how much printed text can make you feel."

"Think about what we love and choose to do in our free time. If you're not good at something, you're not going to choose it. Part of the love of reading comes when we find success. If you can't read, you are not going to be successful in math and social studies and science or any other content area. Reading holds the key and opens the door to knowledge in every other field."

**Paige Pullen,**  
UF College of Education researcher



Reading skill is a key indicator of future academic success because students must transition from learning to read to reading to learn. The **James Patterson Literacy Challenge** partnered with the University of Florida Literacy Institute to change Florida schools' literacy culture, from one where failure is accepted to one where failure is simply not an option.



# Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases

Twins Janis and Janet shared everything growing up, and they shared the heartbreak of essential tremor for 20 years before seeking help at UF's Fixel Institute. The debilitating neurological disorder affects 4 million Americans and makes it difficult to control a fork or take a sip of coffee or use a computer. One of the best outcomes of deep brain stimulation, the treatment they received? The twins say it is being able to write again.

“Before we even left the surgery room, they made sure we could write our name . . . I can go to the ballot box and be proud to write my name again. It makes me cry.”

Janis Mason

“Dr. Hilliard. He’s our hero.”

Janet Plum



## **The Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases**

uses the advanced therapy of deep brain stimulation to treat essential tremor. The procedure involves making a small hole less than the size of a dime in the skull to allow access to the thalamus. A wire carries mild electrical stimulation, which normalizes irregular brain activity and results in cessation of tremor.



UF PHOTO

When Herbie Wertheim announced his \$100 million gift in October, red hats were in order for, from left, UF Health Vice President David Nelson, Wertheim, UF President Kent Fuchs and Board of Trustees Chair Mori Hosseini.

## Red Fedoras All Around

### Wertheim Foundation provides lead gift of \$100 million to UF Scripps

BY CINDY SPENCE, BS '82, MA '17

When Herbie Wertheim walks through a crowd, you can chart his path by following his signature red fedora.

But on Oct. 11, red hats popped up on other noted noggins at UF Scripps Biomedical Research Institute, a sure sign something was up. The copycats — University of Florida President Kent Fuchs, UF Health Vice President David Nelson and Board of Trustees chair Mori Hosseini — donned the trademark red fedoras in thanks.

The three men flanked Wertheim as he made a historic announcement: The Dr. Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Family Foundation will provide \$100 million to elevate UF Scripps' pioneering work in biomedical research at its Jupiter campus. It is the largest gift from an individual donor in university history.

In making the announcement, Wertheim noted that he worked at NASA in the early days of the space race, when Cape Canaveral was a launchpad for space, and scientists achieved miracles. Scientists today, he said, can achieve miracles, too.

"I see Jupiter, Florida, as a launchpad for science," Wertheim said. "We have what I call science-nauts vs. astronauts, and what they're going to do is put us into a space that we've never been before. They're going to help us solve health care problems, not only when you're sick, but my number one emphasis is how do

we keep people well?

"So, let's think about Jupiter as a launchpad ... a launchpad for science."

Scientists at UF Scripps — now the Herbert Wertheim UF Scripps Institute for Biomedical Innovation & Technology — have an entrepreneurial record, spinning off companies aimed at designing new treatments at the rate of about one per year. The faculty also has produced about 170 clusters of patents. In 2021, a study showed the campus has produced more than \$3.2 billion in economic impact since opening in 2009.

The research programs include RNA structure and therapeutics, brain health and neurotherapeutics and finding a cure for HIV, among many others.

Wertheim's gift is the foundation of a 10-year, \$1 billion public-private partnership spearheaded by UF Scripps that will drive the future of biomedical research and innovation.

Wertheim noted that \$40 million will be earmarked for undergraduates to "study under the greatest scientists that we know." The undergraduates will be provided a stipend and a place to live, he said. The gift also will fund five chairs, including one in vision, Wertheim's own field of research and discovery. Wertheim said he expects the scientists to leverage UF's investments in AI, considering that UF has "the number one computer resource in



*Wertheim said he expects the scientists to leverage UF's investments in AI, considering that UF has "the number one computer resource in all of academia. That will make the difference in where we go over the next 10 years."*



all of academia. That will make the difference in where we go over the next 10 years."

Wertheim said the funding will support guest speakers and musicians and lecturers in a refurbished space for such gatherings.

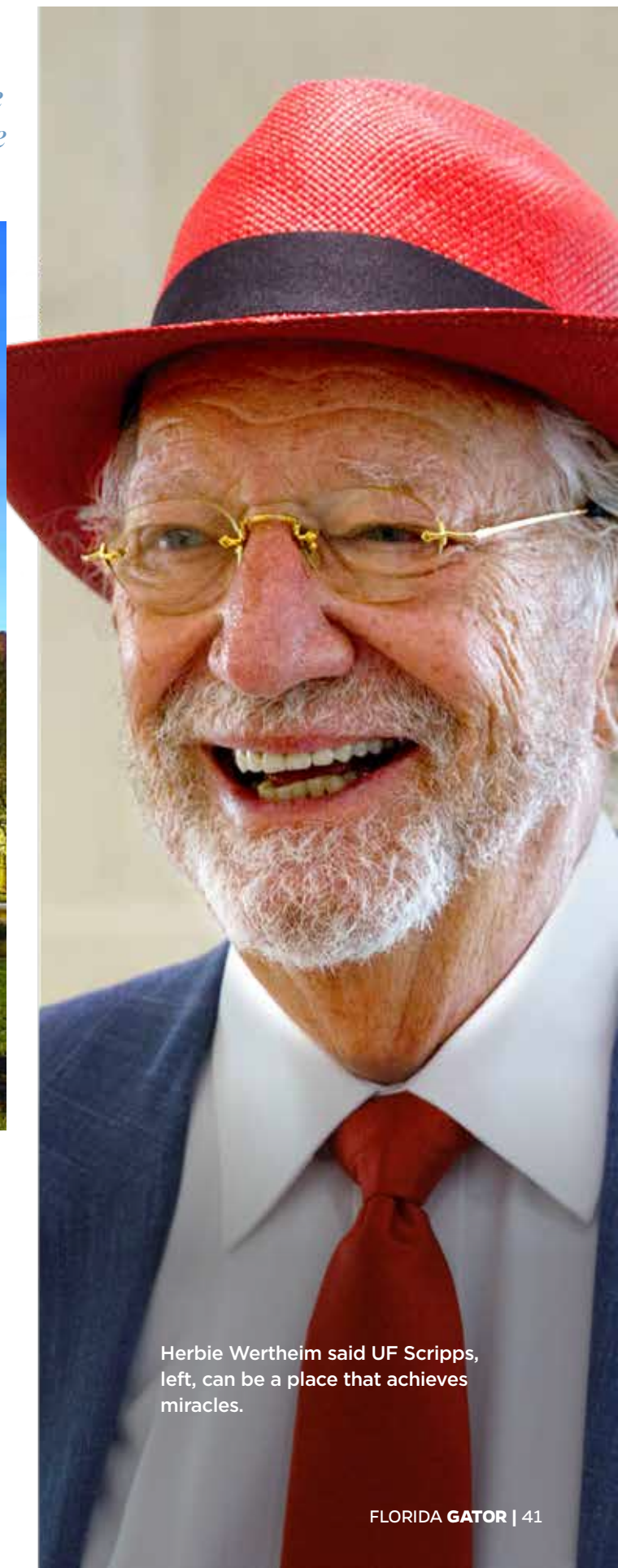
"Research these days is more than putting 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 people in a lab with a bunch of money. This is not going to be just a research place," Wertheim said. "This is going to be a place for humanity."

You can hang your (red) hat on that.

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To read UF's news release on the gift, please visit: [uff.to/n6aw20](https://uff.to/n6aw20)

[vuff.to/jtg6c9](https://vuff.to/jtg6c9)



Herbie Wertheim said UF Scripps, left, can be a place that achieves miracles.

# GO GREATER:

If the University of Florida's Go Greater campaign is any indication, generosity is contagious, especially when Gators work toward a common goal, like making the university — and the world — a better place. Here's a look at a few Go Greater highlights. **For a more complete list, please see [www.uff.ufl.edu/ggcp/](http://www.uff.ufl.edu/ggcp/).**

2014

Business college namesake **Al Warrington** (BSBA '70) and his wife, **Judy**, set the tone for Go Greater with a \$75 million pledge — added to previous gifts — and become UF's first \$100 million donors.



**Andrew** (BA '70) and **Pamela Banks** create the Banks Family Preeminence Chairs.



**Anita Zucker** (BAE '72) invests in education; the **Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies** is born.

UF sets — and later exceeds — a **\$100 million** goal for scholarships for low-income, first-generation **Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars**.



**Herbie** and **Nicole Wertheim** transform engineering with a \$50 million gift; the college is named in Wertheim's honor.

Go Greater goes public, with a **\$3 billion goal**.

Best-selling novelist **James Patterson** helps launch the James Patterson Literacy Challenge for Florida's schoolchildren.

**Jon** (BS '61, MS '62) and **Beverly Thompson** (MED '62) help establish the **Thompson Earth Systems Institute** and a Florida Museum expansion.



2018

**Lee** and **Lauren Fixel** (BSJ '07) invest in UF Health; the **Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases** is named for Lee's father.

UF holds its first **Stand Up and Holler: Gator Nation Giving Day**, raising \$12.6 million from 11,535 gifts in 24 hours.

**Dance Marathon at UF** celebrates its 25th anniversary, raising \$3.2 million for UF Health Shands Children's Hospital.

The UF Athletic Association announces an \$85 million football facility to be named for **James W. "Bill" Heavener** (BSBA '70).

**Chris Malachowsky** (BSEE '80) and **NVIDIA** launch an initiative to transform UF into a **global leader in artificial intelligence**; the new **Data Science and Information Technology** building is named in his honor.

About 27,000 rural Florida acres become an outdoor classroom, research and conservation area with a gift from **Elisabeth DeLuca**.

**Sam** and **Roberta Vickers** donate their Florida-themed collection of 1,200 artworks and books to UF's Harn Museum of Art.

**Fred Levin** (BSBA '58, LLB '61) makes a \$40 million bequest, bringing three generations of family contributions to more than \$60 million — most to Levin College of Law.

2019

2020

2021



# A TIMELINE OF *MOMENTUM*

2022

**Go Greater surpasses its \$3 billion goal**, more than a year early.

**The Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars program** celebrates its 15th anniversary by increasing its four-year scholarships to 400.

Land in downtown **West Palm Beach** is **donated for a satellite campus** aimed at graduate AI and finance education.

**UF climbs to No. 5** in U.S. News & World Report's annual list of best public universities.

Scripps Research in Jupiter becomes part of UF in a move to boost biomedical discoveries and later is named the Herbert Wertheim UF Scripps Institute for Biomedical Innovation & Technology.

UF is the **second public university ever to raise \$1 billion in a single year**.

For second year in a row, **UF ranks No. 5 in U.S. News & World Report's annual list of best public universities**.

**Go Greater tops \$4.5 billion.**





# *A vision for UF*

*A gala to celebrate the end of the Go Greater campaign drew generous Gators to campus*



UF celebrated the close of the Go Greater campaign in October by hosting a number of Gators whose work and philanthropy were a key to the campaign's success. Above, the gala made use of a 270-degree screen to show the impact of gifts. Left, key contributors were recognized on the field at halftime of the LSU game.





PHOTOS BY AARON DAYE



Gator philanthropists took part in many gameday activities, including events with students. Here, Anita Zucker serves breakfast at the student appreciation breakfast.





PHOTOS COURTESY OF GEORGE A. SMATHERS LIBRARIES

In this 1958 scrapbook photo, members plan a reception to welcome newcomers to campus.



# OPEN ARMS

For 100 years, the University Women's Club has built community on campus

**BY CINDY SPENCE, BS '82, MA '17**

**W**hen Barbara Bengston arrived in Gainesville in 1974, the trailing spouse to her husband, a new professor at the University of Florida, she didn't know anyone and didn't have a car.

Then an invitation arrived in the mail, to meet the ladies of the University Women's Club.

Suddenly, life in Gainesville was looking up.

As she got ready for that first meeting, she remembers tucking her gloves in her purse, so she'd have them if she needed to put them on.

"I was wearing pantyhose, and it's so blasted hot," Bengston recalls. "I was nervous."

"I came to Gainesville when I was 28, and I came from the North, a completely different culture," Bengston says. "These ladies were my first friends. Some of them were like moms to me. I didn't know much about being a faculty wife, and they took me under their wing."

"The club connected us to our university family," says Bengston, who tears up as she reminisces, proud of the club's history and sad at the same time.

The club celebrated a milestone in 2022, its 100th anniversary. And the club shut down.

## Come One, Come All

UF historian Carl Van Ness (MA '85) says the University Women's Club was different from the start. UF's second president, Albert Murphree, decreed the club would be open to any UF women who wanted to join, from faculty wives to





Punch bowls, like this one at a 1970 party, saw frequent duty, from the newcomers reception in fall until the Vesper Tea for graduates and their families at graduation.

### University Women's Club mission

The object of The University Women's Club shall be to provide social contacts, to promote a spirit of friendliness, to offer cultural opportunities, to promote student welfare, to advance the best interests of the University of Florida.

**PRESIDENT A.A. MURPHREE**, October 1922

librarians and other professional women on campus. Other women's clubs affiliated with universities around the country were invitation-only, but Murphree wanted an inclusive club that would create community for families connected to UF. Pay your dues – \$1 – and you were in.

In an early newspaper article, many of the 30 or so charter members recalled accompanying their husbands to the Gainesville of 1906, which seemed like a frontier town, “a sandy way station on the Tampa and Jacksonville Railroad line . . .” The club was small enough to meet in members' homes, “where each wife conscientiously took her sewing.”

But the group took its community-building mission seriously. By 1950, it had more than 500 members.

That year, on the recommendation of Mrs. J. Hillis Miller, an affiliate group called the Oldtimers was formed. Among its members: Mrs. J.N. Anderson, a 1906 arrival, Mrs. J.R. Benton, Mrs. Harry Trusler, Mrs. W.W. Little and Mrs. J.W. Norman. Recognize any names there? In 1958, the UF Mothers Club was formed, comprised of mothers of UF faculty and mothers of club members.

Along the way, UF admitted its first women students, in 1947, and student wives organized the University Dames under the sponsorship of the University Women's Club. UF reflected the post-World War II trend of rising membership in women's clubs.

One report noted more than 2 million women were members of women's clubs in the 1950s.

## Two Clubhouses

The club grew too big to meet in members' living rooms, and in 1956, President J. Wayne Reitz gave the group the white frame Tootie Perry House near the Law School, where nearly four decades of Vesper Teas, newcomer receptions, open houses, dances and dinners galore were planned.

Alas, athletics was growing, too, and by the 1990s, the land was needed for tennis. With some coaching from Cathryn Lombardi, President John Lombardi's wife and an honorary club member like presidents' wives before and after, UWC President Dee Ann Connor began bargaining with Athletic Director Jeremy Foley.

“When Jeremy wanted the land the house was on, Mrs. Lombardi told Dee Ann to ask for the moon,” Bengtson recalls,

*“I came to Gainesville when I was 28, and I came from the North, a completely different culture . . . I didn't know much about being a faculty wife, and they took me under their wing.”*

— **BARBARA BENGSTON**, PRESIDENT

giving Connor the credit for the club's spacious brick building next to the basketball practice facility.

Connor giggles when she recalls the deal with Foley.

“I asked for space to hold 100 and a catering kitchen and accessible restrooms,” says Connor, telling the story at the club's 100th anniversary gala at the clubhouse.

Foley, recognizing an ace negotiator, agreed.

“We shook on it,” Connor says, “and it was done. He was a gentleman of his word.”

The women paid for the rest – tablecloths, dishes, serving pieces – with proceeds from sales of the much-loved Gator Cookbook.

“I still have my cookbook,” Bengtson says of the collector's item. “I still use it.”

Recently, a historic marker was approved for the club, and it will sit near the clubhouse, which the UAA will convert to other uses.

The club grew to 829 members at its height in 1965, says treasurer Beverly Bartlett. The newcomers' receptions had sign-up tables for 22 interest groups, including speakers on international relations, book clubs, needlework, 6 O'clock Scholars, bridge, golf, bowling, daytime gourmet, mahjong and daytime explorers. Men, as their wives' plus-ones, met people from outside their departments, as the women knit the fabric of the university's social life.

The University Dames started the Mrs. UF pageant, to find the



In 1956, the women finally got a clubhouse, above. The Tootie Perry House was given to UF, and President J. Wayne Reitz turned it over to the club, which met there for nearly four decades.

exemplar of married student womanhood at UF. Student wives competed in poise and personality, but also in homemaking skills, such as cooking, sewing, ironing, bed making and table setting, assessed with a four-page written homemaking skills test.

The PHT – or Pushing Hubby Through – degree was popular, too, and recognized the wives' hard work in getting their husbands across the commencement stage.

Society, though, was on the brink of change.

## Women's Work

Women made up less than one-third of all U.S. employees in 1950. Today women are roughly half the workforce, and women outnumber men in enrolling and completing college. As the labor force changed, motherhood and marriage changed, too.

By 2010, membership in women's clubs had fallen to only about 100,000, and universities mirrored that trend. Bengston notes that the women's club at the University of Tennessee, founded in 1912, closed in 2021.

Bartlett says the club was holding steady at 300 members a few years ago, but there were signs of the end. The popular 6 O'clock Scholars group used to draw 70. One day, only 30 showed up.

"It was difficult to get younger members," Bartlett said. "Wives have taken on more, managing their careers and children's activities on top of their homes."

The pandemic didn't help, forcing many activities onto Zoom. The board elected in 2015 found no one to hand the gavel over to and became permanent officers.

"We knew it would take some planning to close the doors," Bengston says. And they knew they would want to make it to the 100th anniversary and celebrate with a proper sendoff.

## A Heartfelt Thank You

The club's contributions to UF are too many to name, including handmade gifts like curtains for the infirmary and buying a mantel for Bryan Hall. Students often benefited, with short-term

loans for emergencies and events like a holiday party for foreign women students far from home.

The club's scholarship endowment, however, may be its crowning achievement because it will live on.

In 1952, the Nell Critzer Miller Award – named after the widow of UF President J. Hillis Miller – was established to honor an outstanding woman student. Scholarships multiplied, with one named for each former UF first lady, and the endowment grew. Today, guided by Susan Robell, the endowment is fully funded and will support five \$5,000 scholarships a year in perpetuity.

Emory Wellman, a recipient of this year's scholarship, attended the 100th anniversary gala.

"I'm sad they won't exist when I graduate, but the fact that they are able to continue the scholarships speaks volumes about these women," said Wellman, whose doctoral research is on salt marsh restoration.

"It's bittersweet, being here. I wanted to thank them in person as one of the last scholarship winners who will be able to," Wellman said. "As a millennial, so much happens over social media and email, but those communications are more shallow. Being here, I can see the deep relationships this club fosters. It's a labor of love, and I want to thank all of them."

Kathy Kidder said that sense of community was the goal all along. She remembers reading "Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community" 20 years ago. The club was the antidote to isolation, an instant community.

"The club helped you understand the scope of the university. Otherwise, you only knew your husband's department. We created a face-to-face bond," Kidder said.

Most of the 77 members today, in their 60s and 70s, will say goodbye to the club, but hang on to their longtime friends.

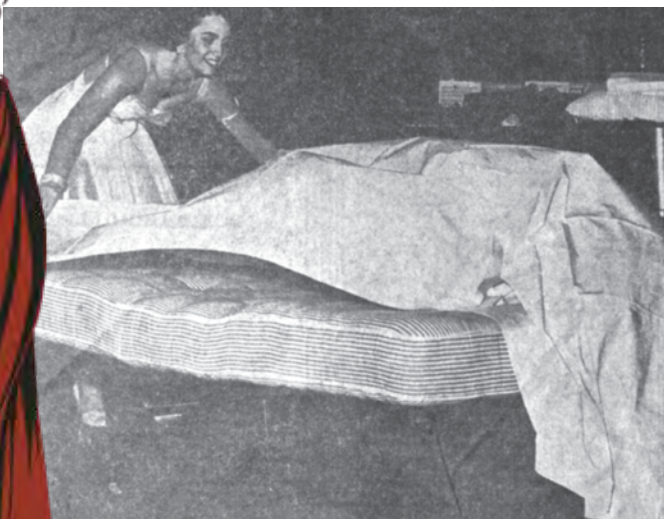
## Saying Goodbye

In July 2022, Bengston talked about the complications of shutting down. The Virginia Chen painting needed a home.



# Mrs. U of F Contest

OCTOBER 10, 8:00 P.M.  
P.K. YONGE AUDITORIUM  
ADMISSION FREE



The Mrs. UF contest included a bed-making category in the late 1950s.

Would the UF archives want the artifacts? Anniversary gala invitations needed to be printed. Peering at the display case in the foyer of the club, she notices the silver service – teapots, sugar bowls and creamers, trays – little used these days, could use some attention.

“I guess I’ll need to polish the silver one more time,” she says.

As the gala approached, she recruited helpers and found an army. Said member Caroline Yale, “If she needs me, I’ll be there.”

“We all came in with our cloths and jars of Wrights Silver Polish,” says Bengston. “Then here comes Joan Van Rinsvelt with an aluminum tray, dishpan and boiling water, washing soda and baking soda.”

Van Rinsvelt, a member for 55 years, used chemistry to tackle

the task of silver polishing. The silver pieces went into the concoction and came out gleaming. No elbow grease required.

“We are a resourceful bunch,” Bengston says.

The silver gleams for the gala, and as it draws to a close, the band strikes up a familiar tune for a final toast:

“We’ll drink a cup of kindness yet  
For the sake of auld lang syne.”

**To support the University Women’s Club Scholarship**, visit <https://ufgive.to/fh3x95>

The **Special and Area Studies Collections** of the George A. Smathers Libraries will archive a century of club records and memorabilia.

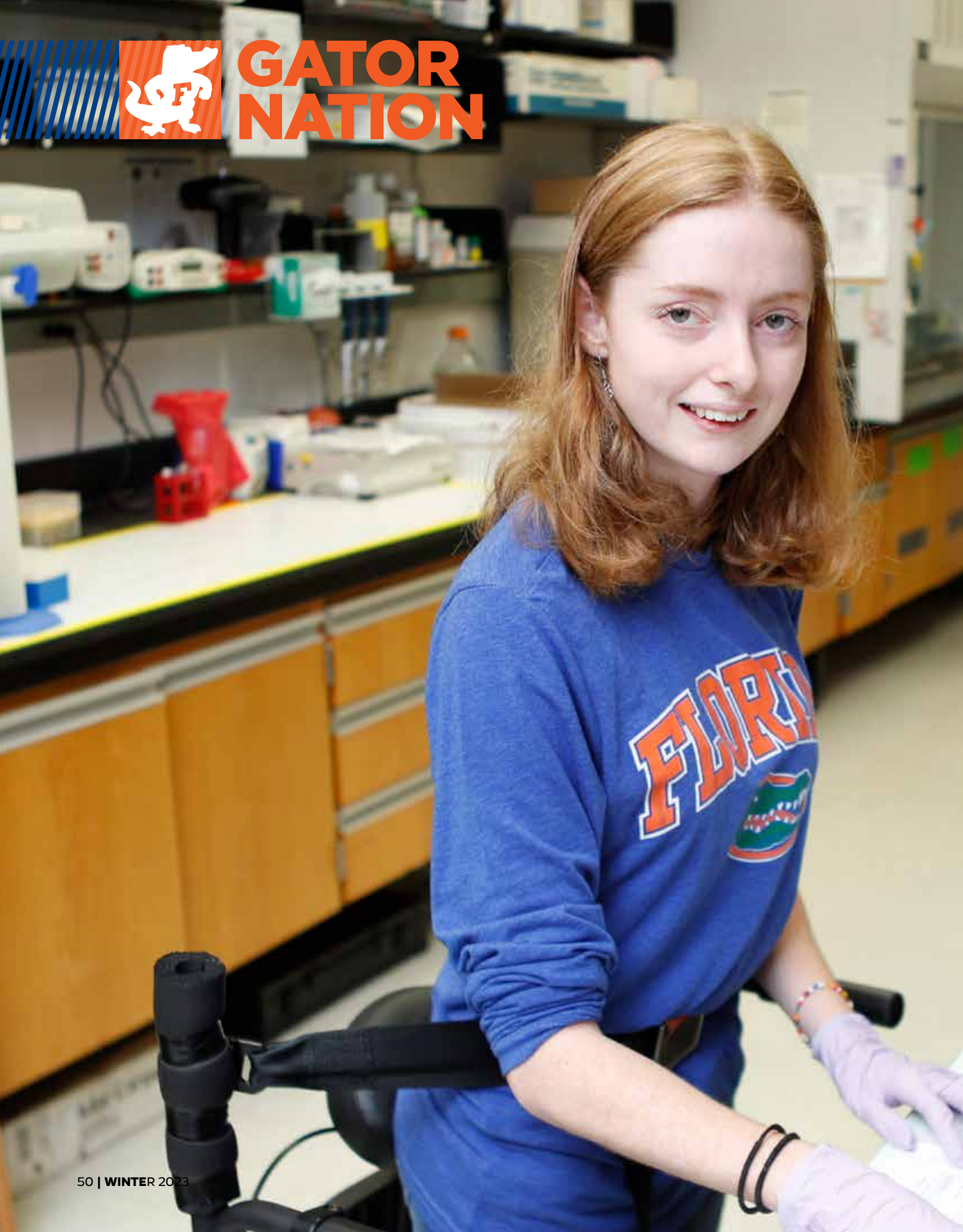


PHOTOS BY AARON DAYE

President Barbara Bengston, above, and other members of the board elected in 2015, planned the 100th anniversary gala as the club’s final event.



Scholarship recipient Emory Wellman, above with Treasurer Beverly Bartlett, attended the gala and said she was impressed that the women had created a scholarship endowment that would help students long after the club ends.



# GATOR NATION



# *No Time to Be Patient*

**She embarked on a mission to cure her rare disease. Now she's finding answers for one that's even rarer.**

**By Alisson Clark, BSJ '98**

**Shandra Trantham's** research into genetic disease began at age 13, when she snuck a look at her own medical chart.

She'd been having trouble with movement and balance since she was 9. Three years later, her doctors diagnosed her with Friedreich's ataxia (FA). Knowing it was untreatable, incurable and likely fatal, her parents didn't tell her right away. Trantham had been reading about her symptoms, though, and was pretty sure she had figured it out. The glimpse of the chart was confirmation of what she already believed.

What she did not believe was that the disease couldn't be treated. It was curable. She just hadn't started working on it yet.

## **Joining the FA Team**

Because FA progressively damages the nervous system, Trantham had no time to waste. After attending a medical magnet high school in Jupiter, she finished her bachelor's degree in molecular biology from the University of South Florida a year early. Along the way, walking became more difficult. She lost most of the feeling in her legs and required surgery for scoliosis, a common complication of FA, which is caused by a genetic mutation that keeps the body from making the protein frataxin. Without frataxin, cells in the heart, spinal cord and muscles can't function properly.

As she persisted through her studies, Trantham saw hope in genetics.

"When I was doing molecular biology, I learned that genetics is the root cause of pretty much everything," she says. "A lot of the promising treatments that are in development for FA are genetic-based therapies, so I really wanted to get more of an understanding of genetics."

She applied to the genetics and genomics graduate program at the University of Florida. There, she hoped to work alongside Powell Gene Therapy Center Director Dr. Barry Byrne, whom she first met as a patient, in the epicenter of FA science and clinical trials.

"It's really the combination of understanding the clinical aspect, the molecular aspect and the genetic aspect that's going to help us develop better treatments," she says. "I was really excited that UF is approaching FA from all those angles."

In 2018, Trantham was accepted to UF's doctoral program and celebrated with orange and blue cupcakes. Then came a curveball: The research had advanced so quickly that by the time she joined Byrne's lab the following year, the FA research had moved to AavantiBio, the company Byrne founded with fellow UF professor and gene therapy researcher Manuela Corti. While Trantham would still collaborate with the team pushing the cure forward, she wouldn't be able to center her Ph.D. project on FA.

As a patient, it was good news — Trantham was one step closer to a treatment. As a researcher, she wasn't sure where to focus her efforts.

Then two UF grads reached out in need of a miracle.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID OGMAN

**Dr. Barry Byrne, right, is guiding research on the rare disease that affects Jordan Ogman, center, shown with parents David and Stacey at UF Health Shands' Children's Hospital.**

When **David (BA '98) and Stacey (JD '08) Ogman's** 4-year-old son, Jordan, was diagnosed with the neurodegenerative genetic disease TECPR2 in 2019, they heard the same devastating outlook Trantham's parents had heard: no treatment, no cure. There are just 27 known patients in the world with TECPR2-associated disease. The Boca Raton couple reached out to 100 scientists and researchers, hoping someone would take on the challenge of creating a gene therapy for the fatal disorder.

Byrne and Corti answered the call — and so did Trantham.

"I knew how they felt, because when I was first diagnosed, there weren't a lot of clinical trials. Now there's a lot of different approaches in development for FA, but with TECPR2, there's not a lot of research and there's no clinical trials," she says. "I wanted to help them."

In the lab, Trantham—now in the fourth year of her Ph.D. program—is driven by knowing Jordan's fate rests in her hands. Because FA impacts her hand coordination, she works with a technician who helps her run experiments, and uses a mobility device called a LifeGlider that supports her body weight so she can move around the lab without her walker. At the bench, she's developing ways to deliver a healthy copy of the TECPR2 gene by encasing it in a harmless virus called AAV—a technique pioneered at UF in 1983 and first used in models of muscle and heart disease by Byrne.

Once the healthy TECPR2 gene is incorporated into the body, patients will be able to make the TECPR2 protein as if they didn't have the disease, Trantham explains.

It's similar to what she's hoping will happen for her own disease, as AavantiBio moves toward clinical trials. It's tantalizingly close. The gene therapy in development for FA sits in the freezer in her lab.

"It's right there," she says. "I could touch it if I wanted to."

## "I know what it's like to be waiting"

Corti understands the frustration of having a cure so close and yet not available.

"That is what goes on in our mind: Every day that passes, there is some progression of the disease," Corti says. "But at UF, we have all the components to be successful, from basic to translational science and a great clinical team that has experience with gene therapy. That's not easy to find."

With Byrne and Corti's guidance, Trantham is now testing five potential TECPR2 therapies in mice. The data could shed light on ways to target the nervous system and strategies to manage immune response to the therapy.

"When I'm working in the lab, I see the bigger picture: I'm testing the expression of a gene therapy that is going to help people," she says. "I know what it's like to be waiting for that treatment."

She may be one step closer. In 2019, the year after she started using a walker, Trantham began a trial of a medication that has kept her symptoms from progressing. She's hopeful it will gain FDA approval so she can take it until gene therapy is available to reverse the disease. For now, the drug has reduced her fatigue and improved her stability to the point where she can even wear shoes other than her signature high-top Chuck Taylors, previously a must for ankle support.

Once she finishes her doctorate, Trantham envisions working at the intersection of advocacy and science. She's seen the communication gaps between patients, scientists and the government and feels she's in a unique position to address them. Her mentors agree.

"Her perspective is invaluable, because she's been there," Byrne says. "She really understands the urgency."

For more on the Ogman family's journey, visit [SavingJordan.org](https://SavingJordan.org).







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# GATORS WITH GREAT NEWS



**Nick Nanton's film features more than 40 interviews about Dick Vitale, left.**

## Alum's documentary tells the Dickie V story

Emmy winner **Nick Nanton** (BA '01), who has directed over 60 films, took on the story of a college basketball legend for ESPN Films' "Dickie V."

"Everyone knows the Dick Vitale that shows up with an energetic smile and enthusiastic conversation, but there is so much more to his character beyond his 'Vitale-isms,'" said Nanton, an entertainment lawyer turned documentary filmmaker who produced the film under his Astonish Entertainment label in association with The Montag Group.

"In the process of making this film, I realized that his tenacity and heartfelt personality came from a place of deep hurt and a desire to help anyone who had felt the depths of loss he had felt. From childhood bullying by his peers due to the loss of his left eye, to a meteoric rise in coaching, only to be unceremoniously ousted from his dream job as head coach of the Detroit Pistons, to a 'second career' in broadcasting that turned out to be his true calling, Vitale's journey of resilience is one that I know will resonate universally. His is a story of loss, triumph, giving and humanity. It's one I simply had to tell."

The film, which debuted in July and is available to stream, chronicles the remarkable life and career of the Hall of Fame

broadcaster, who has been ESPN's voice of college basketball for more than four decades, and his battle with cancer, a disease he's been fighting on behalf of others for years. Vitale is credited with raising more than \$60 million for pediatric cancer research.

The film portrays Vitale's struggle against melanoma, lymphoma, and ulcerated lesions on his vocal cords but also serves up some of ESPN's history, considering Vitale's time at the network goes back to its origins. He called the first-ever college basketball game the network aired, Wisconsin at DePaul on Dec. 5, 1979. Since then, he's done more than 1,000 games. His catchphrases — "Awesome, baby!," "Get a T.O., baby!," "PTP'er" (primetime player), M&M'er (a mismatch), "Diaper Dandy" (freshman star) — are now part of basketball vernacular.

Nanton said he was surprised how many people wanted to share stories about Vitale. The film features more than 40 interviews including Magic Johnson, Billy Donovan, Mike Krzyzewski, Charles Barkley, John Calipari, Robin Roberts and Chris Berman.

"I had a blast speaking with all of them along the way," said Nanton, who has won 22 Emmy awards. "He has done so much for so many people, and the world doesn't know 10% of it."





## Jumping in with both feet

For **Dan Flynn** (BA '69) and his wife Joy, age knows no limits. The 76- and 75-year-old represented the United States at the World Masters Athletics Outdoor Championship in Tampere, Finland, and brought home medals.

The Quogue, New York, couple competed in the long jump, high jump and triple jump in the 75- to 79-year age division in the July event. Joy took first place in the high jump, second in the long jump and third in the triple jump, while Dan took seventh in the high jump, sixth in the long jump and eighth in the triple jump.

Dan competed on the Gator track team from 1966 to 1969, primarily as a middle-distance runner. Despite a nearly 40-year hiatus, Dan says, "I kind of got the itch to compete again."

One Christmas six years ago, he visited his high school's track and attempted a long jump for the first time since college.

"And I did it," he said. "Then, I said to myself, 'That's not so bad. You know what? Maybe I can do this.'"

Dan has participated in meets across the U.S. and Europe and has set a personal long jump record of 11 feet 7 ½ inches.



Inspired by Dan, Joy decided to learn the basics of long jumping and the 660- and 100-meter sprint.

"My wife is just amazing," he marveled. "She had never done it before, and she's really just a natural athlete."

He said he hopes he and his wife can encourage others their age to push out of their comfort zone and hit the track.

Dan says the best part is sharing the sport with the woman he has spent the past 50 years with.

"We have a ball," he laughed. "We set goals together, travel together and compete together." — *Jenny Rogers, 4PR*

## Thai program a unique experience

**Hayley Barnett** spent two weeks in Thailand last summer as a volunteer veterinary student.

The 21-year-old animal science major was chosen by the Loop Abroad Veterinary Service program to serve on a small team of volunteers alongside veterinarians from the U.S. and Thailand.



The fourth-year University of Florida student spent her first week at the Elephant Nature Park of northern Thailand, learning about elephant conservation and working with the gentle giants. The park houses over 60 elephants who have been victims of trekking, logging or forced breeding programs and largely relies on volunteers like Barnett.

Barnett worked with a veterinarian to learn firsthand how to feed and nurture injured elephants back to health.

"I was part of something much bigger than volunteering and studying abroad

as a college student," she said. "Loop Abroad made sure that I was able to learn and appreciate a different culture while also giving me the opportunity of a lifetime."

During her second week, Hayley volunteered at the Dog Rescue Clinic in Chiang Mai. Loop Abroad teams up with animal welfare programs in nine countries and offers experiences ranging from two weeks to a full semester abroad.

"Studying abroad alone allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and left me with skills that I will be able to incorporate into all of my future endeavors," Barnett said.



## Triple Gators win UNESCO honor

**Priscilla Zelaya** (BA '11, MED '12, PHD '16) and **Berthude Albert** (BA '12, MA '14, PHD '16) have won an award from UNESCO for PH4 Global, a nonprofit they cofounded to transform education in Haiti.

PH4 Global was one of three winners chosen for the international award, the UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development, and Zelaya and Albert were honored at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in October. The prize is given in collaboration with the Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Distinguished Academic Performance.

Zelaya and Albert launched the program to train teachers to transform Haiti in 2011. Albert told UNESCO the program is part of a new Haitian revolution in which victory will be achieved with books and pens.

Albert is in the UF Hall of Fame and both Albert and Zelaya have been recognized in 40 Under 40, a program that celebrates the achievements of alumni early in their careers.





# Pioneers gather to mark anniversary

THE FIRST BLACK STUDENTS TO ATTEND UF ARRIVED IN 1962

The first seven Black undergraduate students to set foot on the University of Florida campus in 1962 became pioneers the moment they became Gators.

Today, there is still enough work to do that barriers are still being broken.

The pioneers of yesterday and today were celebrated in October at a daylong event marking UF's 60th Anniversary of Undergraduate Integration. In addition to celebrating the first Black students, UF also recognized other firsts, including four deans who are the first Black deans of their colleges.

University of Florida Alumni Association Executive Director Brian Danforth kicked off the luncheon with some statistics he said would have shocked the first seven students.

"Today, UF has graduated nearly 24,000 Black students," said Danforth, who chaired the celebration and is also assistant vice president of development. "But it is not just a changed student body. This is now a campus with over 2,000 Black faculty and staff."

"While there is still progress to be made, we are at a point where we would have a problem recounting all of the contributions and accomplishments of Black students, faculty, alumni and leaders. What a fantastic problem to have."

The event started with a tour of the newly renovated Institute of Black Culture and included a recognition luncheon and panel discussion at the Harn Museum.



PHOTOS BY MATTHEW PENDLETON

**Sharon Glover**, left, and **Onye Ozuzu**, the first Black dean of the College of the Arts, chat over lunch at the Harn.

A panel discussion about the Black experience on campus included, left to right, African American Studies Professor **Rik Stevenson**, student **Marquelle Ogletree**, UF historian **Carl Van Ness**, Gainesville City Commissioner **Cynthia Chestnut** and UF Chief Diversity Officer **Marsha McGriff**.



**Brian Danforth** presents a plaque to **Pauline Lawrence**, the first Black person to have a UF building named in her honor.

**Betty Stewart-Fullwood**, left, takes in an exhibit on the history of Black students at UF while touring the Institute of Black Culture.



**Trent Dwight Williams**, above, was recognized at the luncheon as the first Black faculty member to earn tenure in the College of the Arts.

**Johncyna McRae**, left, one of the first Black undergraduate students, shares lunch, below, with **Deb Thomas** and **President Kent Fuchs**.





# THE GRAND OLD '70S

BELTBOTTOMS AND BLACK THURSDAY  
HERALD A NEW ERA ON CAMPUS

By Barbara Drake (MFA '04)



## TITLE IX & UF WOMEN'S SPORTS

Signed into law on June 23, 1972, by President Richard Nixon, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions that receive federal funding. The groundbreaking law made a lasting impact by increasing the participation of girls and women in athletics, and its effect was keenly felt at UF, where women's varsity sports were launched shortly before the passage of Title IX. The 1972-73 season saw the launch of five first-ever Florida women's teams – golf, swimming & diving, track & field/cross country and gymnastics – something no other school in SEC had yet to accomplish then. The following season, women's basketball, softball and volleyball vaulted to varsity status.

In November, three UF alumni classes – **1970, 1971 and 1972** – gathered on campus for their **50th anniversary Grand Guard reunions**, which included the **Breakfast of Memories**, **dancing** and a joyous **Robing Ceremony**.

These Gators lived through some of the most tumultuous times at the university, which got us thinking about the 1970s in general and how that decade impacted UF and the surrounding community. Here is a look at how the decade began.

For a scrapbook of reunion photos, please visit

[uff.to/txpv5b](http://uff.to/txpv5b)



The Robing Ceremony



The Robing Ceremony

## GOODBYE, DRESS CODES

By the early 1970s, many Gators were embracing counterculture fashion. Popular styles included bellbottoms, frayed jeans, midi skirts, maxi dresses, peasant blouses, ponchos and tie-dyed T-shirts. Hemlines went up as dress codes went down, and campus life changed forever for "Lady Gators."





An evening of dancing



The Breakfast of Memories

## BLACK THURSDAY

Early on Thursday, April 15, 1974, about 70 Black students marched to Tigert Hall with suggestions to improve diversity on campus (Black students then numbered only 341 in a total enrollment of 22,000+). For more than a year, they had been trying to meet with President O'Connell, to no avail. That morning, after O'Connell again refused to meet (three times), the students burst into his office and occupied the building's corridor. The morning culminated with their arrests and suspensions, the air thick with tear gas. Eventually 300 students, Black and white, returned to Tigert to stage a sit-in (see photo). After subsequent protests that saw police and demonstrators clash, 123 Black students withdrew from UF, two faculty members resigned, and Roy Mitchell, UF's coordinator for minority affairs and its first Black administrator, was fired. In response, the American Association of University Professors censured and suspended UF's membership for violating academic freedom.

The Black Thursday protests motivated university administrators to finally create support for Black and minority students. The Institute of Black Culture was established that fall, and UF embarked on diversity recruitment and retention initiatives such as Project Upward Bound and the Carnegie Exchange Program.



## FIRST EARTH DAY

By the late 1960s, more college students were speaking out against racism, war and the dangers of pollution. Harnessing the activist youth movement, Earth Day founder Sen. Gaylord Nelson, of Wisconsin, worked to raise ecological awareness by hosting teach-ins, rallies and demonstrations on college campuses at the dawn of the new decade.

In concert with 1,500 other colleges across the country, the University of Florida participated in the first nationwide Earth Day celebration on April 22, 1970 (shown here). Three UF students – including William Seaman Jr. (MS '69, PHD '72), now Professor Emeritus in Coastal Fishes, Habitats & Fisheries at UF – spearheaded the local effort, which was attended by about 250 people, reported the Independent Florida Alligator.

In 2020, UF celebrated its 50th Earth Day. By then, the UF Office of Sustainability was 14 years old and tackling energy use, food waste, land conservation and greening the campus infrastructure.







## GATOR REUNIONS

Homecoming weekend was busy on the reunion front, with four groups descending on campus to meet up with old friends.

Among the newest alumni affiliates is the Association of LGBTQ+ Alumni, which is expanding its membership. To connect with the group, please visit <https://uflgbtqalumni.com>

Old or new, hundreds of alumni attended reunion weekend for tailgates, breakfasts, football and more. Here are some highlights, and for more coverage, please visit [uff.to/4s32n6](http://uff.to/4s32n6), where you can sign in to see a gallery of photographs or sign up to join an affiliate group.



The clarinets get ready to rehearse.

Mike Powell, K. Shantè Bridges, Alisha Green Wyche, Tracey Paulfrey, and Quentin Morgan at the tailgate, right.



ABA President Quentin Morgan and Secretary Joyvancia Gaines, above. Right, Shay Conyers, Randall Dragon, Tyrone McCloud and Corey Bennett, of Alpha Phi Alpha.





Professor emeritus Gary Langford, left, conducts a rehearsal of the Gator Band alumni.



Gordon Van Owen, above, president of the Association of LGBTQ+ Alumni, welcomes alumni at the opening reception.

Tailgating, left, Klaus Bixler, Eddie Peña, Lila Bixler, volunteers director Arielle Gregory, Jake Stephens, Gordon van Owen and Ann Bixler.

Joshua Jackson, below, and current Cicerone Alejandro Ortiz catch up with other members of Students Today Alumni Tomorrow at the reception.



Mark Lewis, Students Today Alumni Tomorrow vice president, above, talks with Ayesha Whyte.



# Four-Legged Fans

## FURRY FRIENDS

Gators aren't the only ones who cheer for Florida. These furry friends rep the old orange and blue, too. Meet the pawsome pets of our UF alumni.

Send your photos (pet portraits only please, no humans) to:

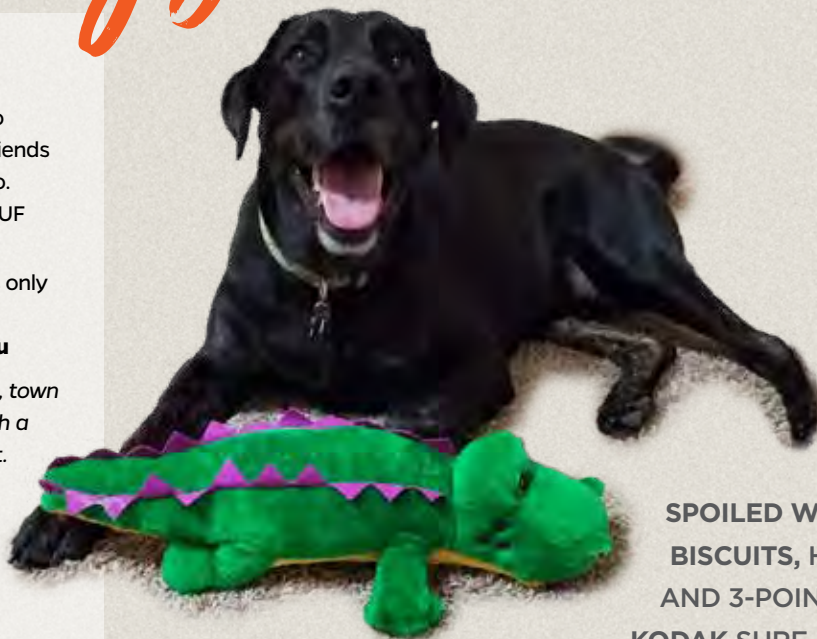
**FloridaGator@ufalumni.ufl.edu**

*Include your name, occupation, town and your pet's name, along with a sentence or two about your pet.*



Or, share online **@ufalumni**  
#gatorpets

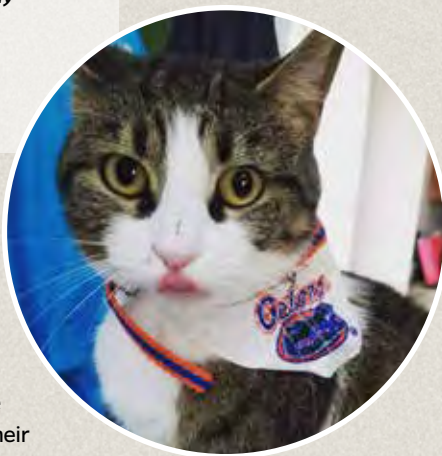
*This feature compiled by Jenny Rogers, 4PR*



**SPOILED WITH TOUCHDOWN BISCUITS, HOMERUN TREATS AND 3-POINTER MINI-TREATS, KODAK SURE DOES LOVE GAME DAYS. HE LIVES WITH OWNER MARYANNE SCHNEIDER (BS '93) IN COCONUT CREEK.**

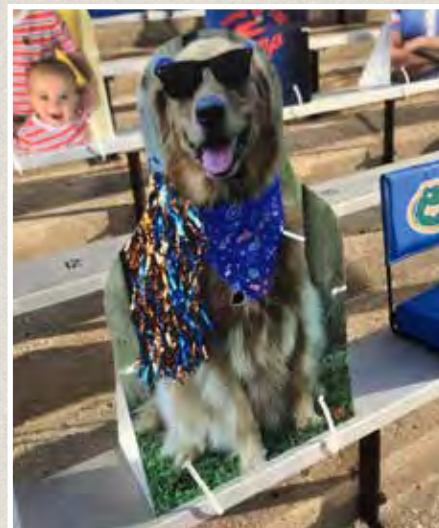
## Joey

**Joey** appeared at **Cindy Watts'** doorstep one cold North Carolina night in November 2016. Now, she and Watts (BA '93) keep up with their favorite Gator sports together.



## Summer

Nothing can stop this pooch from cheering on the Gators! During the height of the pandemic, owner **Deb Costabile** (BSAC '94), got **Summer** a cutout to be sure the pooch didn't miss a second of the action.



## Thurston Howell III

**Thurston Howell III** is looking dapper in his favorite Gators bow tie. The pup lives with owner **Bruno Ramos** (BA '82, MA '85) in Miami.





## Eliza

**Eliza** is a snowshoe cat and 100% Gator through and through. Eliza belongs to **Ann Pohira-Vieth** (BS '98), of Winter Park, who was a letter winner on the UF women's golf team.



## Boone



**Boone**, a gentle giant, loves watching all Gator sports from his home in Tennessee. Owner **William McDaniel** (BA '84) is a former Army ranger and now works as a project manager for TennCare, the state's Medicaid program.

## Narwhal

**Narwhal**, below, has never shied away from the spotlight. As @thechroniclesofnarwhal on Instagram and a certified therapy cat, Narwhal's superpower is bringing a smile to someone's face. He belongs to **MaryKate Rosack**, (BS '05, MBA '12), who works at Vanderbilt University.



## Sebastian

This rescue, above, channels his inner "rowdy reptile" while chasing lizards on the patio of his home in St. Augustine. **Sebastian** belongs to **Robin Vargas Collier**, (BABA '93), and her husband Michael.

## Spencer

**Spencer** (@spencerdoginthequeencity on Instagram) stole **Monica Dozier's** heart after his adoption from a Charlotte rescue center in 2017. Today he spends his days hiking the Carolinas and hunting backyard critters with Dozier (BA '07 JD '10).



## Loofa & Dobby

**Loofa** (right) and **Dobby** (left) were destined to be Gator fans. Their owner, **Adrianna Whibbs Williams** (BS '04, MS '05) and her husband are both UF alums who enjoy spending their football weekends with their pups in Pensacola.





# GATORS GO GLOBAL

*Reader-submitted photos from across the globe*



Left to Right: **Mason Worsham**, **Reese Worsham**, **Paul Rainone**, (BA Ed '74), **Barbara Rainone** (BS, MT '75).

## Lucerne, Switzerland

**Paul Rainone** (BA '74) and his wife, **Barbara** (BS '75), right, took a tour around Europe with their grandsons, **Mason Worsham**, Class of '26, and **Reese Worsham**, left. Here, they're atop Mount Pilatus in Lucerne, Switzerland.

### THE GATOR NATION IS EVERYWHERE



Please send your photos and captions to [FloridaGator@ufalumni.ufl.edu](mailto:FloridaGator@ufalumni.ufl.edu).

Include names left to right, degree and year, hometown, and a few words about what is going on in your photograph.



Or, share online @ufalumni #gatortravel

This feature compiled by Jenny Rogers, 4PR.



## Novo Airao, Brazil

On a mission trip to the Amazon jungle, **Sabrina Shelfer Pflug** (BS '91), of Franklin, Tennessee, found a fellow Gator fan from Novo Airao, Brazil.



## Udaipur, India

**Hemant Chandak** (MS '17) took the trip of a lifetime to the City of Lakes with his wife Sanjana, and his sons Shiven and Anant in Udaipur, India.





## Stonehenge, Wiltshire, England

**David Snively** (BSBA '82) and **Melissa Hagy Snively** (BA '93), of Lithia represented the Gator Nation at Stonehenge while making their way back to London from a British Isles cruise.

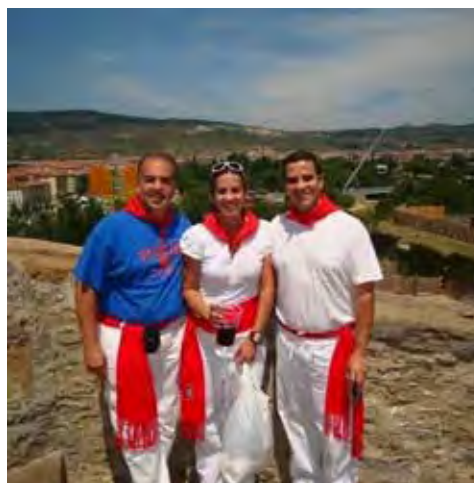
## Alaska

**Marilyn Reyes Burrows** (BS '81), took her Gator reading material with her in Alaska last summer, where she hosted a group of 28 fellow travel enthusiasts, including many Gators. Burrows spent 35 years in telecommunications marketing and now manages her own travel agency.



## Rocky Mountains

**Marta Larson Yelverton** (BS '69), of Bluffton, South Carolina, and her niece **Lesley Eden** (BSBA '06), of Boulder, Colorado, share Gator pride while hiking on the Walter Orr Weather Trail in the Rocky Mountains.



## Pamplona, Spain

**Edward Lasso** (BS '90), **Cynthia Ryan** and **Eric Lasso**, (BA '98 MBA '05) had a bucket-list summer in Pamplona, Spain, where they took part in the San Fermin Festival, or the Running of the Bulls. Edward even made it to the bull ring at the end of the run, all while wearing his Gator gear.



# GOOD GATOR READS

## Tossed to the Wind: Stories of Hurricane Maria Survivors



Framed by the stories of Hurricane Maria evacuees, “Tossed to the Wind” is the gripping account of the wreckage, despair and displacement left in the wake of one of the deadliest natural disasters on U.S. soil. It is also a story of hope and endurance as Puerto Ricans on the island shared what little they had and the diaspora in Florida offered refuge.

Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico as a high-end Category 4 in 2017, and the storm surge, flash flooding, and countless landslides created widespread devastation. One hundred percent of the island lost drinking water and electricity. More than 3 million U.S. citizens lived for months without power, making it the worst blackout in American history. The slow recovery led to a mass evacuation. Thousands gathered what they had left and traveled to Florida—already home to 1 million Puerto Ricans.

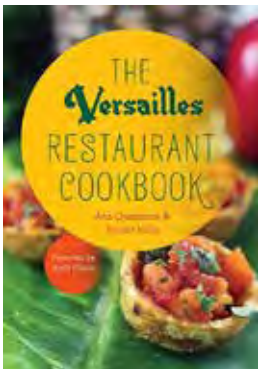
In “Tossed to the Wind,” María Padilla and Nancy Rosado interview Puerto Ricans from all walks of life who now live in Orlando and Kissimmee. Evacuees describe families living temporarily out of motels, parents anxious about providing for their children, children starting new schools, and everyone worried about the families and friends they left behind.

**María T. Padilla** is the former editor of La Prensa in Orlando and founding editor of El Sentinel, the Spanish-language sister newspaper of the Orlando Sentinel. **Nancy Rosado** is a retired NYPD sergeant, whose disaster response experience includes 9/11, the Pulse Night Club and Parkland shootings, as well as hurricanes Katrina and Maria.

**From University Press of Florida.**

### THE VERSAILLES RESTAURANT COOKBOOK

Featured on Food Network and named by Time as one of the Top 10 places to visit in Miami, Versailles Restaurant has been at the heart of the Cuban-American community for decades. Presidents, politicians and pop stars routinely stop in for a meal and a photo op.



Now, “The Versailles Restaurant Cookbook” helps chefs recreate beloved recipes from this Miami institution, including fried yuca, vaca frita (shredded beef with onions), lechón asado (roast pork), ropa vieja (shredded beef in tomato sauce), guava pie and, of course, the one, the only, the original Cuban sandwich.

**Ana Quincoces** has cohosted ABC’s “The View,” and has appeared on “The Chew” and “The Today Show.” She starred in seasons two and three of Bravo’s The Real Housewives of Miami. **Nicole Valls** is operations manager and public relations director for Valls Group Inc., the family-owned and operated parent company for the Versailles Restaurant. **From University Press of Florida.**

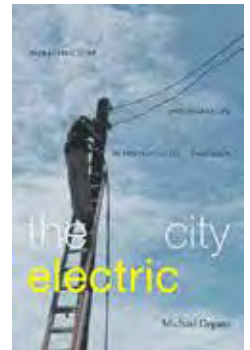


### FROM THE HEART

**Ralph E. Graham** (BBC ’68), also known as the Mad Poet, wrote this volume of poetry literally from the heart, committing the words to paper when his heart told him to write. Whether he was driving down a road or working on another project, when the words came to him, he stopped to write.

### THE CITY ELECTRIC: INFRASTRUCTURE AND INGENUITY IN POSTSOCIALIST TANZANIA

**Michael Degani** (MA ’08), explores the issue of electricity and its piracy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in “The City Electric: Infrastructure and Ingenuity in Postsocialist Tanzania.” This ethnography of infrastructure is a study of the relationship among citizens, the state and public utilities, as Tanzania confronts the complexities of nation building.



**TO HAVE YOUR BOOK CONSIDERED**, please send a short synopsis along with the title, the publisher, your name, your year of graduation and degree, your location and any other line of work, and a link to the book on the web or an image of the cover to [FloridaGator@ufalumni.ufl.edu](mailto:FloridaGator@ufalumni.ufl.edu). No self-published books.



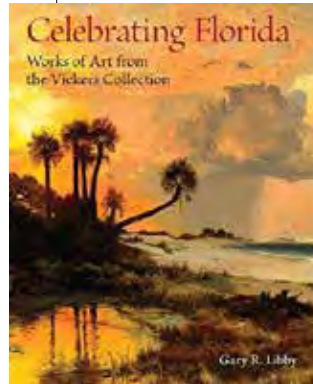
## METHODS, MOUNDS, AND MISSIONS: NEW CONTRIBUTIONS TO FLORIDA ARCHAEOLOGY

**Ann S. Cordell** (BA '76, MA '83, BS '93) and **Jeffrey M. Mitchem** (BS '77, PhD '89), are co-editors of "Methods, Mounds, and Missions: New Contributions to Florida Archaeology," a volume of archaeology papers dedicated to **Jerald T. Milanich** (BA '67, MA '68, PHD '71), curator emeritus at the Florida Museum of Natural History. The book updates current archaeological interpretations of Florida history, demonstrating the use of new and improved tools to answer larger questions while building on the work of Milanich. All contributors are UF anthropology graduates who were mentored by Milanich.

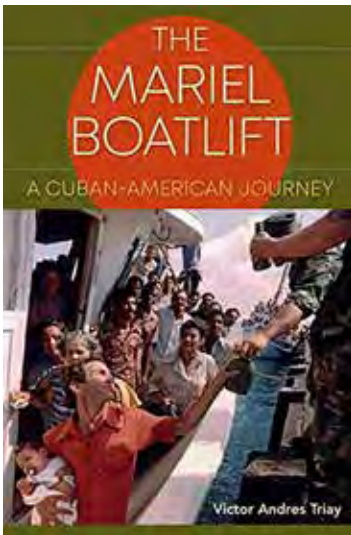


## CELEBRATING FLORIDA: WORKS OF ART FROM THE VICKERS COLLECTION

"Celebrating Florida: Works of Art from the Vickers Collection" illustrates in full color a generous selection of paintings, drawings, and prints by some of the world's most significant artists who came to Florida from 1823 to 1950 to capture the "Sunshine State."



Gary R. Libby, the director emeritus of the Museum of Arts and Sciences, Daytona Beach, draws on his own insights and also includes essays by other noted experts. The essays discuss Florida's history, explore its society and statehood in 1845, and introduce the Vickers Collection. The new preface in this paperback edition refreshes readers on the importance of this collection.



## The Mariel Boatlift: A Cuban-American Journey

Set against the sweeping backdrop of one of the most dramatic refugee crises of the 20th century, The Mariel Boatlift presents the stories of Cuban immigrants to the United States who overcame frightening circumstances to build new lives for themselves and flourish in their adopted country.

Award-winning historian **Victor Triay** (BA '88) portrays the repressive climate in Cuba as the democratic promises of Fidel Castro's 1959 revolution gave way to a communist dictatorship. Triay presents testimonies from former Mariel refugees who recall their lives in Cuba before the exodus of over 125,000 Cuban refugees across the Straits of Florida during the spring and summer of 1980.

Mariel refugees faced extraordinary challenges, yet despite the obstacles, the overwhelming majority successfully transitioned to new lives as Americans and many have emerged as leading professionals, scholars, writers, artists and businesspeople.

## JOURNEY BACK INTO THE VAULT



"Journey Back into the Vault: In Search of My Faded Cuban Childhood Footprints" invites you to travel with double Gator **Mario Cartaya** (BARCH '74 MBC '75), back to the land of his birth for the first time in 56 years in order to reclaim his forgotten Cuban childhood memories, original identity and once-promised destiny. This is the story of the psychological forces that help define us, the power of enduring hope and how by achieving purity of heart, reconciliation, and a soul at rest, we can evolve into better versions of ourselves.

## THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF THE MILL-VILLAGE BOY



From Check Point Charlie to the Greenland ice cap, **Ray Pettit** (PHD '64) has had some amazing adventures. Pettit used his natural ability in mathematics to become an expert in communications systems engineering and contributed to the development of global positioning systems. He details his travels and adventures in "The Amazing Adventures of the Mill-Village Boy."





# Gadabout Gator



## Chasing a Record

**Ben Chase** (BS '14) set out in August to break the record (70) for attending the most college football games in a single season.

Week 1 was Nevada at New Mexico State on Aug. 27.

By press time, Chase had closed the regular season calendar and was heading into championships and bowl games. His tally:

- 57 games
- 96 teams
- 38 states
- 42,000+ miles
- 8 oil changes
- 1 blown transmission
- 1 black eye
- 1 night at a coach's house

Did he make it? Check out the Spring Florida Gator for the full scoop on Chase's recordbreaking — fingers crossed — college football journey.



Although it won't count for his final football game tally, Ben Chase managed to squeeze in a basketball game on one of his swings through Florida. He caught the UF vs. Florida Atlantic University game Nov. 14 and mugged with Albert and Alberta.



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FLORIDA GATOR LEAD



# Trailblazer

*Margaret Bachus leaves a legacy of love and creativity*

By **Cindy Spence**, BS '82, MA '17

As a personal injury attorney, **Kyle Bachus** (BA '89, JD '92) had a lot of experience with tragedies that befell his clients. But nothing could have prepared him for a phone call in spring of 2020.

"My mom was out on a COVID walk on April 28, 2020, when she was struck and killed in a crosswalk by a concrete mixer truck," Bachus says. "It was completely unexpected."

**Margaret Bachus** (MFA '75) was the center of the family, and within days Kyle, Kirk and Kara and their children gathered in Winter Park at her condo. As they dealt with the aftermath of Margaret's death, they found comfort in the memories discovered in boxes upon boxes of keepsakes, including one artifact that sparked an idea.

"We came across the original copy of her master's thesis, written on a typewriter and with the professor's notes on it, and it had been bound in the old-fashioned way things were done then," Bachus says. "We wondered if the university might want it."

Considering that Margaret was the first woman to receive a Master of Fine Arts in theater for acting and directing, the answer from the College of the Arts was a resounding yes.

70 | WINTER 2023

TIN CITY COLLECTIVE

Sage Bachus, a UF student, played some of his grandmother's favorite songs during the celebration for the unveiling of the display that traces Margaret's career from UF to a performance at her 55th high school reunion.

The thesis, however, was not the only gem among the keepsakes. As the family discovered photographs, playbills and pieces of sets from plays, they realized they were sitting on a treasure trove. They set up a meeting with the theater department, and actor **Malcolm Gets** (BFA '82), now emeritus professor of practice in acting, got wind of the gathering.

**Margaret Bachus was the first woman at UF to get a master of fine arts in theater for acting and directing. She was a key player in developing the UF and Gainesville theater scene in the 1970s.**



BACHUS FAMILY PHOTOS





TIN CITY COLLECTIVE

**The Bachus family was on hand as the first Margaret Trimm Bachus Endowed Scholarship was awarded to Alyssa Van Tine, an acting major, shown here with Kyle Bachus.**

Margaret became involved with the Hippodrome in its infancy and started a Theatre for Young Audiences program in 1979, tackling issues like environmental conservation and promoting diversity in theater, before it was common.

Gets, who went on to a television and Broadway career before returning to Gainesville to teach, was one of the young actors influenced by Margaret and performed under her direction as a teenager.

“Margaret always cast the shows with diversity in mind, even in 1981. She was a forward thinker in that way, and she was very selfless. She would stay behind the scenes, and she kept the emphasis on us and the children in the audience,” Gets says.

Margaret established Creative Stages, a children’s theater, with a partner in 1990. When she settled in the Orlando area, she worked for Walt Disney World and Universal Studios.

At the unveiling of the display, Bachus says, a piano was sitting in the corner. Gets took a seat and began playing tunes, including “The Way We Were,” one of Margaret’s favorites. Grandson Sage Bachus took a turn, too, as people sang and shared memories of Margaret with the family, with about 17 members in attendance, including Sage and Bailey, now students at UF themselves.

“So many kind words were said about my mom. She had been gone for two years, but with COVID, we’d never had a proper memorial,” Bachus says. “This allowed us to celebrate her life in a way we had not been able to do. It was a tremendous thing the University of Florida did for our family.”

“Malcolm showed up at the meeting and asked if he could sit in. He brought with him some old videos of him acting in shows my mom had written and singing her songs.”

They were thinking out loud about how to remember Margaret when a plan emerged: Gets’ class would take the lead on designing an exhibit using Margaret’s souvenirs to honor her career. And the family would create an endowment to honor her legacy.

“My mom was, honest to goodness, a trailblazing woman, raising three kids in the ‘70s and going back to college to pursue her dream in the theater, and we wanted to support other trailblazers, to show current students, you may not become famous, but you can have an impact.”

## The First Scholarship

In April, the first Margaret Trimm Bachus Scholarship was awarded in a ceremony at the Nadine McGuire Pavilion, which houses the exhibit Gets’ class designed telling the story of Margaret’s pioneering career.



Margaret was as comfortable on stage as she was directing, writing and designing sets. Above, she performs in a Florida Players production of “The Boyfriend” and at right, in a 1970s Hippodrome production of “Lord Alfred’s Lover.”



FLORIDA GATOR | 71





Margaret, known as Big Sissy to her family, turned Flag Day into a family holiday each June, above and at right. Margaret wrote plays and songs and handed out roles and costumes as she directed family theater productions.

of their own, Margaret used theater to get around the problem of sharing her brood with their in-laws on Thanksgiving and Christmas. As innovative as ever, she created her own Bachus family holiday: Flag Day.

Festivities were held each June at her home, with Margaret — Big Sissy to family members — orchestrating activities and even writing short plays for the children. She doled out the parts, created songs and organized the costumes.

It was all about creating family memories. And many of those memories were contained in the boxes the family found in the Winter Park condo.

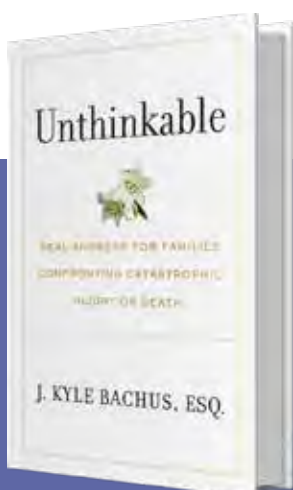
“She was our family historian, our family storyteller,” Bachus says. “Luckily for us, she’d probably been working on some Shutterfly books the day she went out for her walk. She had created all this material and made it so easy to access. She left us a legacy.”

## Family History

Bachus says he and his siblings tagged along on Margaret’s theater adventures.

“We spent many nights doing our homework or reading a book while the actors were rehearsing,” Bachus says. “I remember the Hippodrome when it was in a warehouse out by the highway patrol station. We probably saw the shows 10 or 15 times each. It was what we grew up with.”

Once her children had grown up and started families



As Kyle Bachus navigated the aftermath of his mother’s death, he realized his perspective might be valuable for other families. The result is “Unthinkable: Real Answers for Families Confronting Catastrophic Injury or Death,” published in 2022. Bachus writes with the compassion of someone who has been through a tragedy and with the calm voice of an attorney who understands the legal system. Bachus dedicated the book to Margaret: “Mom, more than thirty years ago, you enthusiastically encouraged my dreams of becoming a lawyer. What we didn’t know was that my most meaningful case would involve your wrongful death. We all miss you so much!”

To support the Margaret Trimm Bachus Endowed Scholarship Fund, visit: [ufgive.to/xxbae4](https://ufgive.to/xxbae4)



Springs Photo by John Moran | Swallowtail Farm Dinner Courtesy of MAVEN Photo & Video | Drink Gainesville Beer: Courtesy of Swamp Head Brewery

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