

ALUMNUS' BIG DREAMS MEAN BIG ADVANCES FOR MANKIND

While some people describe Chris Malachowsky (BSEE '80) as "incredibly intellectually curious," "a genius" or a "true innovator," the humble Silicon Valley visionary prefers simpler terms, such as "tinkerer" and "builder."





All adjectives aside, those who know of Malachowsky's vast contributions to computer technology can agree the world is a better place to live because he decided to become an electrical engineer at UF, rather than fulfilling his father's expectation to become a doctor. After all, his computer advances led to the expansion of artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities that are helping solve the world's biggest challenges.

Now, Malachowsky and the company he co-founded, NVIDIA, have invested \$50 million at UF to integrate AI into every discipline by introducing all students to its potential, no matter their majors. Malachowsky gave an additional \$20 million to create a multidisciplinary data science and information technology facility intended to be the home for AI, Data Science and related technologies at UF. Ultimately through Malachowsky's investment, AI research, education and equitable access to these tools will ensure the very best AI-prepared workforce for Florida and beyond.

The Gator Nation is deeply grateful for his leadership, investments and big thinking that will drive innovations in every field.

Learn more about Malachowsky, NVIDIA and UF's plan to become our nation's premiere AI university starting on page 18.



FALL/WINTER 2020

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ON THE COVER



Take a peek inside UF's plan to make your students into artificial intelligence experts, no matter which field they choose.

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UF's CHAMPIONS



DISNEY, UF JOIN FORCES TO SLOW, STOP EXTINCTION EVENTS

Walt Disney said in 1950 that conservation "concerns all of us." All these years later, the entertainment empire he created is saving endangered wildlife through **The Disney Conservation Fund** and its continued collaboration with UF.

To date, the fund has contributed more than \$5 million to UF's conservation programs. Two animals high on the organization's priority list are sea turtles and butterflies. Enter UF's renowned Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research and UF's McGuire Center for Lepidoptera & Biodiversity. The Carr Center is reducing threats to sea turtles that are caused by commercial fishing, poaching, pollution, the loss of nesting beaches and warming seas. The McGuire Center is restoring habitats, and breeding and releasing captive butterflies to replenish their dwindling numbers.

In addition, UF is contributing its expertise in water conservation and multiple other tag-team projects in departments across campus.

UF celebrates Walt Disney and The Disney Conservation Fund, and offers a hearty thank you for the fund's longtime support and partnership.



THE KUHNSES HELP THE BAND PLAY ON



Gator Band alumni **Rolf** (BSPT '72) and **Anne Kuhns** (BMUS '70, MEd '75) of Winter Garden say their time playing the clarinet and trumpet, respectively, for UF prepared them for life.

"The experiences we had in the band were instrumental in shaping major moments in our lives. It taught us about teamwork, humility, work ethic and so much more, truly forming us into the people we are today," they said.

In recognition and gratitude of those lessons, the Kuhnses have made a major estate gift to the School of Music's Gator Marching Band, expanding their named scholarship to support more students and creating UF's first endowed marching band directorship.

"We wanted to give back to students and the program so that generations of musicians may have the transformational experience and opportunities afforded to them by the Gator Band," the Kuhnses said. After all, "the Gator Marching Band is like family."





Conversation with UF President Kent Fuchs

UF SHOWS RESILIENCE AFTER CHALLENGES

HISTORIANS WILL LOOK BACK AT 2020 AS ONE OF CHANGE AND CHALLENGES

began a historic academic year this fall amid the COVID pandemic, one comparable to only a handful of years in our past.

The first was 1906, when UF opened its doors in Gainesville. The second was 1918, when the historic influenza pandemic struck UF. Another historic academic year, and a historic leap forward, was when women joined men as UF students in 1947. Eleven years later George H. Starke Jr., the first Black student, enrolled at UF, another leap. In 1985 UF was admitted into the Association of American Universities (AAU) joining the nation's best universities. Only time will tell how this year compares to those historic years. However, our faculty, staff and students are already making history in many ways this year:

UF moved up to 6th among the nation's top public universities in the 2021 U.S. News & World Report Best College rankings released in September, our fourth year of climbing the Top 10 and only one step away from our goal of Top 5. (See page 6.)

We had the largest enrollment in our history this fall, with 57,662 students attending UF amid the pandemic. (This followed record applications nearing 50,000 for the fall term.)

Our faculty set a new record in research awards, rising from \$776 million in the 2019 fiscal year to a record \$901 million

in 2020 — despite many activities being paused during COVID.

For the second year in a row, you and your fellow Gators raised \$500 million for UF programs and people, again despite COVID. This makes over \$2.7 billion raised toward UF's \$3 billion campaign goal; and with your help, we will achieve our goal.

Finally, we began the academic year with our entire university community following COVID precautions; a mix of online and in-person classes; a conference-only football schedule and many other new developments — part of our efforts to live and learn with COVID as safely as possible. We continue to reckon with the very significant COVID challenge as I write this column in mid-September. I am thankful to UF Health and its world-class epidemiologist, clinicians and staff for guiding

I am grateful to our extraordinary faculty for providing exceptional education in the midst of COVID — and to our staff for continuing university operations amid such difficult circumstances. Equally, I am thankful to our many students who are faithfully following all the needed precautions to prevent the spread of the virus.

Based on all I have seen our university community achieve since I arrived as president nearly six years ago, I believe we will not only endure this year, or get through it, but we will make it a great year. There is no place I would rather be than at UF as we make history together.



UF FLORIDA

FLORIDA GATOR

The University of Florida's alumni magazine

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 2

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contact info ufalum@ufalumni.ufl.edu 352-392-1905 P.O. Box 14425 Gainesville, FL 32604-2425 www.ufalumni.ufl.edu

PAY IT FORWARD

Make UF and its programs better for future generations of Gators through your gifts at www. uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving or by contacting UF Advancement at 352-392-1691.

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F IS THE NATION'S 6TH BEST PUBLIC UNIVERSITY, so says U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges and Universities list. Many individual UF programs earned top ranks, as well.

This announcement on Sept. 14 continues UF's upward trajectory and places it on the cusp of reaching its Top 5 goal.

The announcement marks the fourth consecutive year UF rose on the public universities list, advancing from No. 14 in 2017 to No. 6 today. During the same period, UF leapt from No. 50 to No. 30 on the U.S. News & World Report National Universities list, which includes both public and private institutions.

The recognitions come on the heels of a banner year for UF, in which faculty broke records on research expenditures and awards and leaders launched a ground-breaking artificial intelligence (AI) initiative that will set the university apart nationally.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT'S TOP 10 LIST

Its top 10 public universities are:

- 1. University of California, Los Angeles
- 2. University of California, Berkeley
- **3.** University of Michigan Ann Arbor
- 4. University of Virginia
- 5. University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
- 6. UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA*
- 6. University of California Santa Barbara*
- 8. Georgia Institute of Technology*
- 8. University of California, Irvine*
- 8. University of California, San Diego*

*tie

people of our great state. ... We will not fail."

— **Mori Hosseini**, UF Board of Trustees Chairman

UF'S RISE

Key factors that led to UF's rise include:

- Reduced student/faculty ratio from 21:1 four years ago to 17:1 today
- Decreased class size to fewer than 20 students for more than 50% of the undergraduate classes, second only to the University of Michigan among leading public universities
- UF has the lowest tuition and fees of any leading public or private university in the Association of American Universities and the lowest cumulative debt of any class over the last six years (\$20,388).

OTHER WINS ACROSS CAMPUS

These degree programs also earned high nationwide rankings:

- Real estate 7th
- Biological/agricultural engineering - 7th
- Marketing 10th
- Accounting 11th
- Materials science engineering - 14th
- Industrial and systems engineering - 17th
- Environmental engineering - 21st

- Finance 25th
- Entrepreneurship 27th
- Management 27th
- Civil and coastal engineering - 26th
- Chemical engineering 28th
- Mechanical engineering - 33rd
- Computer science 48th (first time a U.S. News & World Report ranking has been published for this program; represents top 10% rank for UF)

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HOPE AFTER COVID

UF HEALTH SURGEONS PERFORM HISTORIC

DOUBLE-LUNG TRANSPLANT ON COVID-19 SURVIVOR

BY DOROTHY HAGMAJER (BSPR '15)

In July, a man who battled back from COVID-19 only to face a life-threatening crisis when his lungs began to fail has become the first person in the Southeast to receive a double-lung transplant after beating the coronavirus, thanks to the nationally ranked lung transplant team at UF Health Shands Hospital.

The patient, who is in his 50s and has asked to remain anonymous for privacy reasons, tested positive for COVID-19 in April. As the virus progressed, his lungs became severely damaged and unable to function properly. Once physicians deemed it safe, he was transported from Texas, his home state, to Florida to await a transplant.

But before the procedure could take place, the advanced lung disease multidisciplinary team at UF Health focused their efforts on physically rehabilitating him while determining whether a transplant was his best choice.

"When he came to us, he was 100% dependent on ECMO, a form of life support, for more than two months," said Dr. Tiago Machuca, chief of thoracic surgery and surgical director of the lung transplant program.

Due to the newness of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, it was

"This was someone who had survived a terrible virus but at a high cost to his body,"

- DR. ABBAS SHAHMOHAMMADI, UF ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE AND A LUNG TRANSPLANT **SPECIALIST ON THE TEAM**

critically ill and unable to stand on his own. His chances of other complications, such as infection or bleeding, were high.

"This treatment brings much-needed hope that other selected patients struggling with coronavirus or its aftereffects can have a second chance," Machuca said. "But this disease and its impact on the body certainly require further understanding."

The patient is recovering steadily and has been disconnected from ECMO, demonstrating the resilience the team said he's displayed from the beginning.

"Over the past several years, the advanced lung services at UF Health have increased in national prominence, as evidenced by both our U.S. News & World Report rankings and the amazing results for lung transplantation as measured by UNOS," said UF Health Shands CEO Ed Jimenez. "It's no surprise that UF Health





GETTY IMAGES

A NATURAL REPELLENT FOR MOSOUITOES & TICKS

UF/IFAS scientists have endorsed just one natural compound for people who want to repel mosquitoes and ticks without manmade chemicals: oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE). The scientists say their research shows it is the most effective natural compound, lasts up to six hours and should not be confused with "lemon eucalyptus essential oil" which is not as effective. In fact, the CDC does not recommend any essential oil. While past reports suggest citronella and catnip help deter mosquitoes for short periods, those compounds have not been subjected to the same rigorous environmental testing as OLE.



NUMBERS OF NOTE

Years UF Innovate's Sid Martin Biotech in Alachua has been incubating medical device, ag-bio, clean energy, therapeutic, diagnostics and biopharma start-up businesses, which grow jobs and economies in Florida and beyond. Sid Martin Biotech was also ranked the best global incubator for a third time this year. One of its latest success stories is Florida Biologix, headquartered in Alachua, which was acquired by a conglomerate last year for \$1.7 billion

132 & 400

Number of licenses and options (132) and invention disclosures (400) that were produced by **UF Innovate's Tech** Licensing in academic year 2019-20 — a significant increase from past years. Invention disclosures, in particular, typically total around 300. This proves how important UF researchers are in the development of advances and technologies that benefit people through a plethora of fields and industries.

uff.to/6np87x

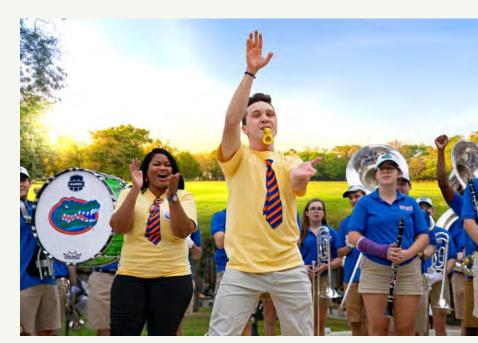
STAND UP AND HOLLER, AGAIN!

Look out for videos and other information coming your way in anticipation of the third annual Gator Nation Giving Day on Feb. 18. That day, your gift, even as small as \$1, can help



UF fund important programs and services, as well as increase UF's alumni participation rate, a

statistic U.S. News & World Report uses to measure university strength. Last year, Gators who participated in giving day increased UF's rate from 17% to 18%. In February, UF hopes to receive gifts from 17,500 Gators, which would raise it even more. Come on, Gators, get up and go!



1.003

Pythons examined this summer by UF/IFAS biologists, who are working to determine the extent of an invasive worm parasite outbreak (R. orientalis) that used to be contained to pythons, but now is infecting native snake species. The scientists also examined 523 native snakes, of which 13 have the parasite that was native to the core python region. uff.to/Ovdreg

\$523M

Amount Gator Nation raised in FY20 through UF's Go Greater campaign. Most gifts are earmarked for a specific purpose, from scholarships and professorships to college programs and equipment. This is the second consecutive year that annual fundraising has topped the \$500 million mark, placing Gator Nation among the most charitable groups of alumni and friends in public higher education.

FIRST

UF Innovate's ranking by the Bush Institute for large university innovation productivity. ## uff.to/wzahfk



Specialty health care units at UF Health that earned Top 50 national rankings in

U.S. News & World Report. They are urology (17th), ear, nose and throat (25th), cancer (33rd), geriatrics (tied for 33rd), nephrology (33rd), diabetes and endocrinology (34th), pulmonology and lung surgery (tied for 37th), orthopaedics (tied for 45th), and gastroenterology and GI surgery (45th). ## uff.to/vr98a3

Specialty units at UF Health Shands Children's Hospital that also made the nationally ranked list: pediatric cardiology and heart surgery (12th), diabetes and endocrinology (22nd) and pulmonology (27th). The combined 12 ranked specialties in the adult and children's hospitals are the most of any medical system in Florida.

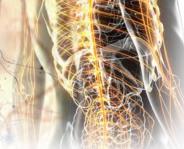
COOL TECH:

NEW DISCOVERIES, NEW HOPES

SPINAL CORD INJURIES

Thanks to UF scientists, people with spinal cord injuries have two more reasons to hope for regenerative therapies:

 UF researchers developed an injectable hydrogel made from decellularized nerve tissue that encourages nervous system regeneration. The decellularization process ensures the nerve scaffold can maintain the proteins and mechanical properties of the original nerve tissue around it while removing cellular components that could trigger immune system rejection. Learn more at ## uff.to/kgmwk1



GETTY IMAGES

• UF research has shown that a patient's own secretome (proteins and other molecular structures secreted into the space between cells) can be purified and concentrated for use as an injectable low-volume, low-risk therapy that can spark tissue regeneration. What's more, this method can be combined with other injectable therapies, such as the one above, to improve chances of regeneration success. Learn more at **#uff.to/pvvsq8**

BATTERIES THAT LAST 100 YEARS

Nuclear batteries have long been considered a good idea because of their potential for a longer lifespan. However, they never took off because their layered structure results in significant efficiency loss. But now, UF researchers have solved that problem with a new structure. Invented by UF engineering faculty James Baciak, Paul Johns and Juan Nino, these batteries are conformable, easy to manufacture and offer more efficient energy conversion, making them particularly attractive for biotechnology applications. For example, the lifespan of such a battery used in a pacemaker can exceed 100 years.

GOODBYE RED TIDE

When sewage, fertilizer runoff or certain household detergents make their way through stormwater runoff into streams, wetlands and aquifers. harmful algal blooms can form. "Pond scum" and "red tide" are two such blooms that are difficult to eradicate and can lead to massive fish kills and the extermination of other aquatic wildlife. In an effort to prevent such blooms, UF researchers developed a filter that quickly and safely eliminates undesirable phosphates from water sources.

The filters could be used in wastewater treatment facilities and in recirculating aquaculture systems, such as those used by fish farmers.

MAKING WORK SAFER

Simply going to work can be a dangerous proposition for people who monitor chemical processing, participate in industrial manufacturing or conduct security operations. After all, chemical vapors are invisible and some are even odorless. In an effort to protect these workers, **UF** researchers invented a sensitive and reliable sensor that changes color when exposed to different vapors. It can be worn or hung, making it perfect for guickly testing people or screening environments for harmful vapors.



CANCEL THAT HOTEL ROOM

Out of concern for a potential spike in COVID-19 cases, UF's Faculty Senate voted in September to cancel students' traditional March spring break. Members decided instead to fold that time into the winter holiday break, which will begin as planned on Wednesday, Dec. 9. The break will end on Monday, Jan. 11, rather than the original date of Jan. 5.

WHY DON'T WE KNOW?

Some colleges and universities have gag rules for its student athletes that threaten them with losing their scholarship if they were to speak publicly without prior approval. After investigating this unconstitutional practice, UF's Brechner Center for Freedom of Information produced a podcast episode called "More Than Just a Code of Silence," revealing some of the consequences, such as the concealment of racism, abusive conditions and other injustices. This episode is a part of the center's "Why Don't We Know?" podcast series that examines the types of information universities often hide from public view.

Learn more at uff.to/wdwk

HEARD IN GATORVILLE



Kraft

"Most people are unaware that John is the lovechild of Don Rickles and Mother Teresa. I have long viewed his heritage as a genetic win-win."

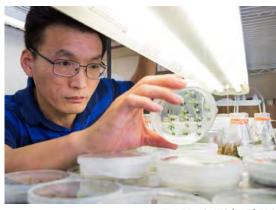
—JOE ALBA, the Warrington College of Business' James W. Walter Eminent Scholar Chair.

fondly describing John Kraft, who retired as dean

of the Warrington College of Business this summer. Alba was one of many faculty who publicly expressed how much the college will miss Kraft's leadership.

ORANGE YOU GLAD?

UF/IFAS scientist Nian Wang is officially among the nation's most accomplished plant pathologists. In August, Wang received the American Phytopathological Society's 2020 Ruth Allen award because his "groundbreaking work" in gene editing and in understanding the causal agents for citrus canker and HLB disease mean the future of the world's citrus industry is much brighter. The society says Wang's technique of CRISPR genome editing in disease susceptibility genes gives citrus trees immunities to many diseases, such as citrus canker.



TYLER JONES | UF/IFAS

UF/IFAS microbiology and cell science professor Nian Wang's gene-editing technique offers hope for citrus farmers worldwide.

TRYPTOPHAN TRIGGERS

A healthy gut and a change in diet may be keys to preventing Lupus in humans, say UF scientists. Their recent research study on mice shows that while abnormal tryptophan levels have long been believed to be a consequence of Lupus, an autoimmune disease that causes inflammation and pain in any part of the body, their findings show the body's inability to process this essential amino acid may actually be involved in triggering the disease. **Tryptophan** is found in many protein-based foods, such as poultry, chickpeas, almonds, yogurt, chocolate and peanuts. Scientists say a diet low in tryptophan-rich foods is expected to protect the body against Lupus.



UNIVERSITY AVENUE

"We paused a \$900 million research operation. It's been an extreme challenge, but one that we have been able to manage."

— **DAVID NORTON,** UF's vice president for research, describing the ways UF Health has pivoted its medical research projects during the quarantine. About half of its researchers were able to continue their work from home when their UF labs were shut down or converted to COVID-19 efforts.



JESSE JONES | UF HEALT

UF Health researchers work on experiments aimed at developing a COVID-19 vaccine.



FLORIDA GATORS YOUTUBE CHANNEL

3 EPISODES

of "Listen, Learn and Act," the UF Athletic Association's video series that addresses racism and social justice. In each episode, UF student-athletes, as well as coaches, who play in predominately white sports talk about their personal experiences, desires for societal change and what we all can do to eliminate racism. Learn more about this Florida Gators YouTube series on page 74.
uff.to/dwms26



\$900,000

Amount of losses the tomato industry experienced in 2007-08 because of a destructive disease called bacterial spot. UF/IFAS scientists have been studying causes and possible treatments of the epidemic. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has given them a \$455,000 grant to aid their work.



90

Age of **Ralph Lowenstein** when he died in August. The former **College of Journalism and Communications** dean served 1976



owenstein

to 1994 and is credited for propelling its programs into some of the best in the country. Lowenstein oversaw the construction of Weimer Hall, established the digital/interactive media lab, launched national

public radio station WUFT-FM, created the Brechner Center for Freedom of Information and conferred the college's first two doctoral degrees.

5 YEARS

Length of a new \$1.2 million Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grant given to a UF Health research team for a project that will develop a quicker, more accurate and cost-effective way to track Florida children with diabetes. The scientists will use the OneFlorida Data Trust electronic health records database to examine disparities in diabetes control, treatment, healthcare access and complications, and map geographic hotspots to help state agencies determine where more resources are needed. The framework of this project is expected to be useful for monitoring other diseases, such as COVID-19.



"Some people continue to be under the impression that technology is neutral — it's not."

— JASMINE MCNEALY

GETTY IMAGES

WHO DECIDES HOW COMPUTERS WILL COLLECT, USE YOUR DATA?

Jasmine McNealy, associate director of the Brechner First Amendment
Project in the College of Journalism and Communications, received a \$50,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to study internet governance and technology policy. Her research will focus on analyzing how legislation, case law and private company policies frame data usage and investigate the harms that come

with the constant mass data collection that has dominated the digital age. She said there are "long-term harms that have implications for how people live their lives." She aims to "make sure that at the point of data collection, there are mechanisms and frameworks and regulations in place that call into question whether or not this data should be collected or used in general."



UF/IFA

95% ACCURACY

Rate of a **UF/IFAS artificial intelligence system** that detects powdery mildew disease in squash crops. Growers us a drone-mounted video camera to capture images of their crops and the system analyzes spectral (light) data to determine which plants show visible symptoms of the disease. In 2019, Florida growers harvested 7,700 acres of squash valued at \$35.4 million.

FACULTY SUPERSTAR: JOSÉ FORTE

HERBERT WERTHEIM COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

KID FROM ANGOLA FINDS HIS PASSION

ENGINEERING PROFESSOR NAMED UF'S TOP TEACHER: WINS

UNIVERSITY'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS AND OLDEST FACULTY AWARD

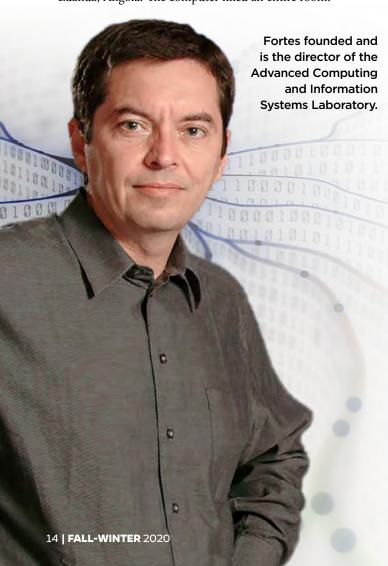
hortly after electrical and computer engineering professor José Fortes learned of his selection as UF's 2019-20 Teacher of the Year, he gamely agreed to answer the following questions, from serious to silly. The AT&T Eminent Scholar's research interests include cloud computing, biodiversity informatics and human-machine cooperative intelligence.

Q. Who or what motivated you to do well in school?

A. My mother. She was a homemaker who read extensively and sought perfection in everything she did. (His father was a technical draftsman "who could do anything related to engineering.")

Q. When did you see your first computer?

A. In 1972. I was 18 years old and in my freshman year in Luanda, Angola. The computer filled an entire room.



Q. What was your first professional job?

A. I was as an avionics engineer in charge of maintenance of airplane components used for communications, navigation and control. Most people do not give a second thought to an airplane having everything that a city has, including electrical power, water and sewage systems, entertainment, communication systems, air conditioning, food providers and more. ... This provided much of the motivation for me to come to the U.S. for an advanced degree.

Q. My favorite saying is ...

A. Aristotle's "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." Everything becomes easier if one makes it a habit. It applies to work, social interactions, exercise and more.

Q. If a movie is ever made about you, what would the title be and who would you want to star in it?

A. "Not a Big Deal," starring Tom Hanks

Q. What are some attributes of the best students you've taught?

A. Being self-driven, a rigorous thinker, persistent, collegial and a good communicator.

Q. What is the best part about working at UF?

A. The opportunity to pursue my own ideas working with great students, staff and colleagues.

Q. What is the greatest challenge facing college students today?

A. Remembering that education that is broad and covers fundamental knowledge will serve them better in the long run than only learning technologies which will become obsolete in a few years.

Q. If someone gave you \$1 million, what would you do with it?

A. I would investigate how to build intelligent computer systems capable of providing answers to specific questions and, when they do not have sufficient confidence in their answers, finding other computers or people who can provide better answers.

Q. What is the most significant development you see coming out of your research area in the coming years?

A. We will learn how to build smart devices and systems that are sensible, i.e. that are highly knowledgeable but also selfaware of their limitations in serving humans and are capable of engaging better devices or human beings who can overcome those limitations in order to provide services. I mean sophisticated systems which might, for example, be able to diagnose diseases because they know how to analyze symptoms and medical data, to hypothesize medical remedies and to consult with experts when the system knowledge is insufficient. These systems would not replace humans but would allow humans to focus on human interactions and knowledge discovery, while greatly reducing the cost of services.



INTERNET OF THINGS ENGINEERS CREATE WEARABLES TO STOP COVID'S SPREAD

Real-life smart devices emerged when students and professors at **UF's Warren B. Nelms Institute for the Connected World** turned their ingenuity in the Internet of Things to solutions for the pandemic.

The devices are in the prototype phase now and will get smaller, sturdier and more refined before they're available to the masses. But they work. Here's a look at them and how they could slow the spread of the disease.

ADAPT SMART MASK

This mask not only protects its wearer, but reduces the amount of virus in the air. When a sensor in the mask detects particles the size of coronavirus droplets, it releases water mist that not only blows virus-laden droplets away but clings to the airborne virus, causing the particles to fall to the ground.

Created by: Swarup Bhunia, director of the Nelms Institute at UF's Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering and the Semmoto Endowed Professor of IoT and a team of UF researchers

TRIDENT SMART BAND

This wristband uses machine learning to exclude factors that can confuse temperature checks. For instance, it senses the user's activity and area ambient temperature, while constantly monitoring their temperature via sensors on the radial artery, alerting the wearer (via an app) of potential infection so they can get tested and avoid spreading the disease.

Created by: Soumyajit Mandal

RISKBAND

Kids can struggle to maintain the recommended 6 feet of physical distance. A device that alerts them when they're too close to a classmate could help, but outfitting kids with smartphones and connected wearables comes with price and privacy concerns. This wristband offers a low-cost, privacy-preserving solution. Using a type of Bluetooth that draws very little power, the band measures Bluetooth signal strength and converts it to distance. If wearers get too near to each other, the bands signal them with light and vibration. It can also help with contact tracing.

Created by: Nelms Institute for the Connected World researchers

504

Number of new faculty posts created — and filled — since **Provost Joe Glover** started his **"Faculty 500" hiring initiative** in November 2017. This reduces UF's student-to-faculty ratio from 20:1 to 17:1. This data point is one component in the *U.S. News & World Report's* formula for ranking universities each year. The top three colleges with the most hires are: **Liberal Arts and Sciences** (136), **Engineering** (92), and **Agriculture and Life Sciences** (43).

9 PRINCIPLES



of landscaping with native plants that are presented in a children's book, **Growing Up Florida-Friendly**. Illustrated by **UF/IFAS** master gardeners, the book educates and encourages young people to keep

Florida's water clean and to protect natural resources by selecting the right type of plants to grow.

7 WORDS

UF/IFAS researchers say should be used to educate the public on **threats to Florida's unique ecosystems**. The researchers hope the words will help everyone protect their local natural spaces. The words to use are: native, nonnative, introduced, established, invasive, nuisance and range change. They also suggest six words to avoid because they create confusion through their misuse and misinterpretation: native invasive, invasive exotic, invasive weed, alien, foreign and nonindigenous.

23,500

Square footage in the **new \$24 million UF Health Surgical Center at the Oaks Mall**, which now occupies the former Sears department store space. The center, serving eye and ear-nose-throat patients, includes five operating rooms, 19 pre-op and post-anesthesia care units, a waiting room and a faculty consultation room. **## uff.to/f5r7sx**

3

College of Journalism and Communications students who won 2020 national Hearst Journalism Awards. They are Mackenzie Behm (BSJ '20), who placed second in the multimedia innovation storytelling and audience engagement competition and fourth in the multimedia 1 competition; Sofio Mingote (3Tel), who placed second in Radio Broadcast News; and Valerie

Lyons (BSTel '20) who placed fifth in Television Broadcast News.



Cost of one pound of vanilla, the second most expensive spice in the world that's more expensive than silver. **UF/IFAS scientists** have determined vanilla plants can thrive in the **Key West region**, which is good news for local farmers who need a high-return crop. Most of the world's vanilla (80%) is grown in Madagascar.

NO.8

National rank of **UF's agricultural and biological engineering graduate program**, according to U.S. News & World Report. The areas of studies in this department include climate change, food production and scarcity, water quality and quantity, biofuels, biosensors, modeling of biological, environmental and hydrologic systems, nanobiotechnology, packaging and postharvest engineering, sustainable food systems and supply chain management.

8

Number of **four-week, online greenhouse training courses UF/IFAS released to the public** on June 1. This year, the series features hydroponic vegetable production among its other offerings. Each course is completely web-based with videos, readings and assignments. For descriptions, pricing and registration details, visit **uff.to/2z94fq**

18 YEARS



Length of **Ann Marie Rogers'** tenure as a UF associate athletics director (1985-2003) overseeing women's sports. During that time, lady Gators earned 60 SEC titles, seven national titles and 1,145 All-America honors. UF announced in March that a former UF swimmer, **Veronica Meinhard** (BSESS '93), and her wife,

Kristina Johnson, donated \$1 million in honor of Rogers' service. The gift will rename the Stephen C. O'Connell Center's swimming pool.

25+ YEARS

Length of time **Kim** (BSJ '79) and **Danny Sams** of Clermont have supported UF with their gifts. Now, with their daughter, **Avery** (BSAg '11) and son-in-law, **Bernie LeFils** (BSAg '11) of Orange City, their latest gift will add a roof to the round pens at **UF's Horse Teaching Unit**. Avery and Bernie are equestrian sports fans, while Kim and Danny are passionate about scholarships and providing well-rounded learning experiences.





PHOTOS COURTESY OF UF HEALTH

AT TOP: The late Bryan Herrington with his son before Bryan's accident led to his donation of two organs. His widow, Terri Herrington (above) also donated a kidney.

Giving Gifts of Life

HUSBAND, WIDOW DONATE ORGANS 16 YEARS APART TO SAME MAN

BY DOROTHY HAGMAJER (BSPR '15)

In order for there to be a gift of life, there must be a giver.

Living donors are more common for some types of transplant procedures, especially kidneys, but patients needing a heart, lung or pancreas rely nearly solely on deceased donations. For these transplants, the life-giving outcome comes after a high cost — the life of another.

In **Jeff Granger**'s case, that life belonged to **Bryan Herrington**. When Bryan, a 35-year-old roofer, died in 2004 from head trauma after a fall off a slick roof, Jeff received his pancreas and a kidney in a combined transplant.

Thank you notes are customary for even the smallest of trinkets, and organs are no exception. Jeff and his wife, Pam, of Wacissa, near Tallahassee, sent Bryan's widow, Terri Herrington, and two children a thank you letter within a month of the procedure, along with the occasional holiday card. They kept in touch anonymously for the first year, as required by LifeQuest Organ Recovery Services.

"Just hearing from them, and how much their life had changed, was a healing process for me and my boys in and of itself," Terri Herrington said. One year after the transplant, she replied for the first time and included her phone number.



Jeff Granger calls Bryan and Terri Herrington "angels" since their organs have saved his life twice.

"I remember sitting down and thinking, 'Heck, I'll give her a call,'" Jeff said. "I didn't know a thing about her." Their conversation lasted 45 minutes.

That same year, Terri invited Jeff and Pam to her sister-in-law's football party at their Pensacola home three hours from Wacissa. Expecting a low-key event, the Grangers pulled into the driveway and couldn't find a parking space.

All of Bryan Herrington's family was there. One by one, Jeff shook hands with each of them. By the end of the night, he was playing football with Bryan's sons, Drake and Payton. The families kept in touch for the next 14 years between phone calls, visits and social media. If Terri and her boys were traveling, she'd make sure to go through Wacissa and stay for lunch, or the night.

IN TERRI'S EYES, THE ORGAN DONATION PROCESS IS SIMPLE. ... ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SAY 'YES.

During one such visit, Terri and Bryan's youngest son, Payton, put his hand on Jeff's stomach and said, "My dad's in there." Jeff replied: "Sure is. And I'll try to keep him alive as long as I can."

Although their relationship was stronger than that of most deceased non-related donations, it was about to grow even closer.

In January 2019, the donated kidney from Bryan began failing. Jeff did the first thing he could think of: He called Terri.

"I'm losing Bryan's kidney," he told her. "I'm so sorry."

"Well, I've got one," Terri said. Luckily, she was a match.

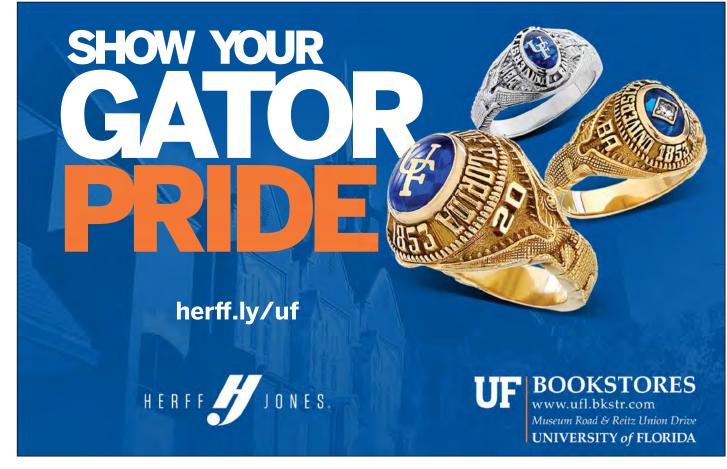
"This girl is an angel," Jeff said. "She's a single parent, and God's gift of a parent, too. I don't know how I could thank her, or repay her for such a wonderful life-giving gift."

In Terri's eyes, the organ donation process is simple. It's a yes-orno question. All you have to do is say 'yes.'

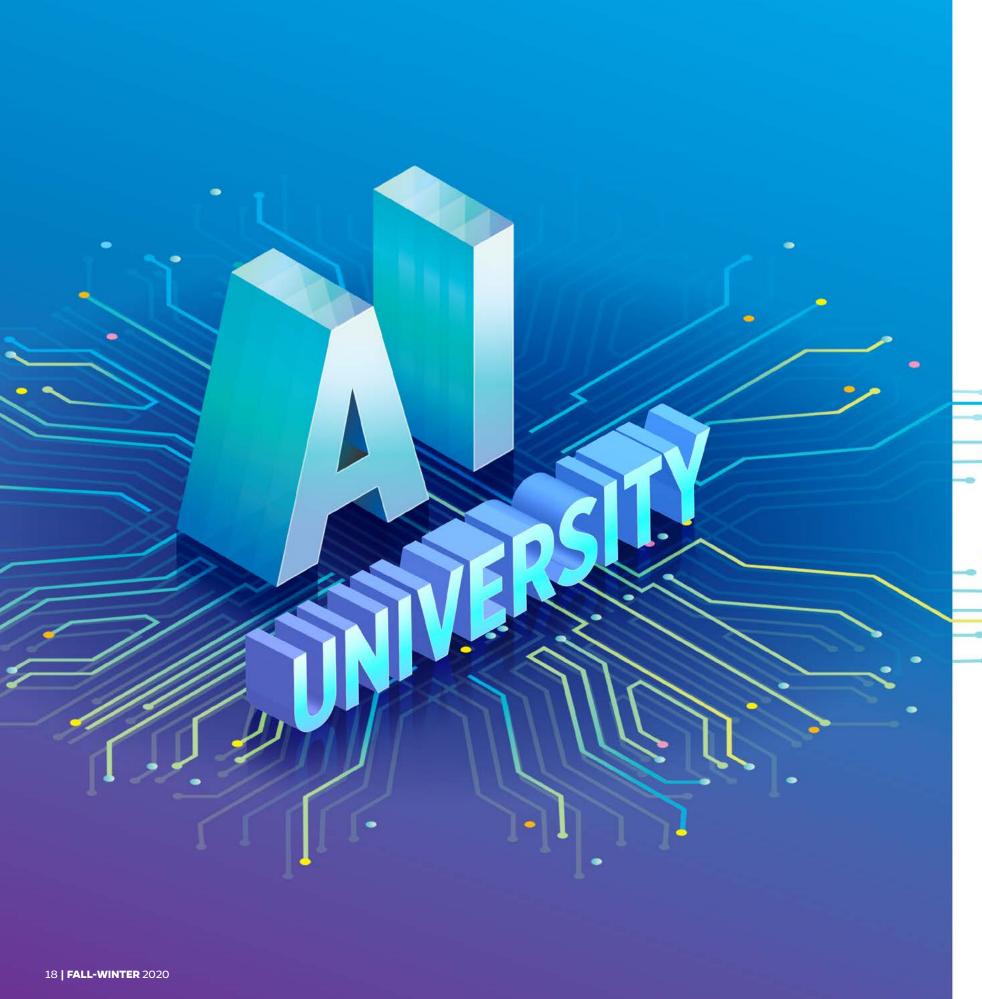
"As we got closer to the surgery date, I had a lot of people coming up to me and asking, "What if you need it?" Terri recalled. "And I said, 'Well, what if I don't?"

Terri is familiar with how unpredictable the future can be. Her husband's death was an accident. She reminds people that, for all she knows, she could get in a car and get hit tomorrow.

"If I lived off of what ifs, I wouldn't live," Terri said.



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"This incredible gift from Chris [Malachowsky] and NVIDIA will propel the state of Florida to new heights as it strives to be an economic powerhouse, an unrivaled leader in job creation and an international model of 21st century know-how. Over the coming years, tens of thousands of UF graduates with this unique AI-oriented background will create their futures and ours, transforming our workforce and virtually every field and every industry here in Florida and around the world."



- Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis

THE **NEXT** FRONTIER

UF sets a path to explore and tame the world of artificial intelligence

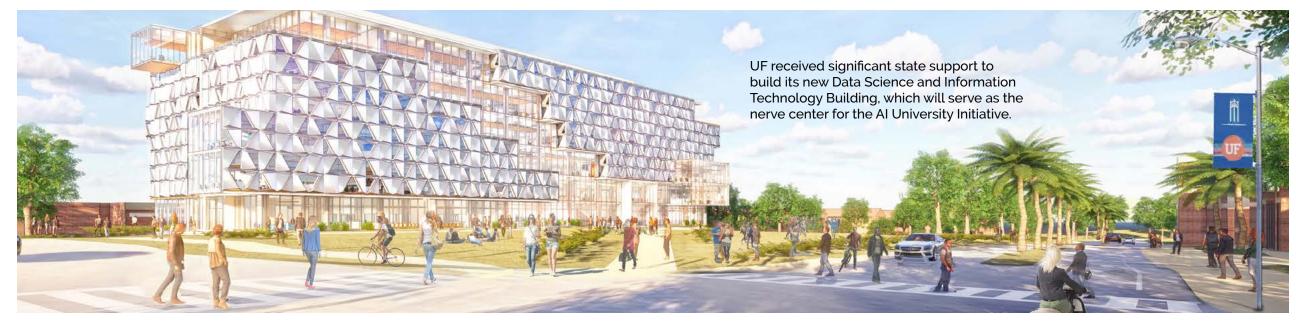
By David Finnerty

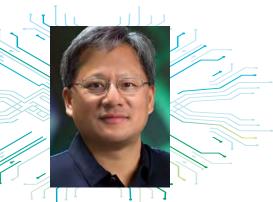
hen the COVID-19 pandemic forced overwhelmed doctors and unprepared policymakers to scramble for answers this spring, UF virus experts turned to artificial intelligence for clues.

Virologist Marco Salemi and epidemiologist Mattia Prosperi's high-tech approach forecasted the pandemic's spread, pinpointed new outbreaks and detected emerging coronavirus strains to give governors and hospitals time to prepare. Their work, arguably, saved hundreds — if not thousands — of lives.

It's also a glimpse at artificial intelligence's promise as UF moves to become America's undisputed "AI university."

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"AI is the most powerful force of our time. Imagine a computer that learns from data and experience to write software no humans can ... to help solve not only the region's but the nation's challenges."

- Jensen Huang, NVIDIA co-founder

The university took a giant step toward that crown this summer with a partnership and a \$70 million initiative that will introduce AI to all students regardless of their majors.

"Artificial intelligence," UF President Kent Fuchs insists, "is poised to transform the way we all work with information, helping us address challenges and make discoveries that once seemed unattainable. By immersing this powerful technology in the curriculum across UF we are positioning Florida as a global leader in a technological revolution that — similar to the smartphone — will transform the way we live, work and interact with the world around us."

As sci-fi as that might sound, UF's AI initiative is grounded in the here-and-now:

- Almost 600 professors and researchers from across campus collaborated last spring to plan AI's integration into academic curricula, explore opportunities for workforce partnerships and discuss how mastering the technology will raise UF's national profile.
- ▶ This summer, UF announced a partnership with California tech company NVIDIA to give the university the world's fastest AI supercomputer. NVIDIA and its cofounder, alumnus **Chris Malachowsky** (BSEE '80), each invested \$25 million and UF added another \$20 million.
- ▶ UF's investment comes in the form of manpower: It will hire an additional 100 faculty specifically for AI-related positions. Also, UF plans to offer an undergraduate degree in artificial intelligence and a graduate certificate. Once all that's in place, Fuchs says, UF will be better able to "address the major challenges facing people and the planet."

"The U.S. has been accused of falling behind other nations in AI," he says. "What we've done here in Florida addresses that. It provides a blueprint for how other states can work with their regions' resources to make similar investments that bring their residents the benefits of AI."

That's important to Malachowsky.

"The best is yet to come."

Artificial intelligence, of course, is nothing new. For years it's been changing how companies do business and people spend their time. Think self-driving cars, Siri and Alexa, robotics, computer games and autonomous drones.

And UF's innovators are no strangers to it. The engineering and business colleges, Florida Museum of Natural History, IFAS and numerous other campus units all use artificial intelligence to some extent. A pair of the university's recent AI breakthroughs are a process to improve crop irrigation and another, created by biomedical students, to rapidly share patients' health changes with their caregivers. The university even has experts in law and philosophy working on the legal policies and ethics concerning artificial intelligence.

But UF's ambition takes AI to an even higher level.

"The best is yet to come," UF Provost Joe Glover predicts. "Health care, law, journalism, the social sciences, education, agriculture, engineering, business, the arts — all of these disciplines will advance by leaps and bounds as we harness the amazing power of this new technology."

There's good reason for his optimism. The university is pulling in experts

from across academic disciplines to help pharmacists and doctors, election officials, bankers, farmers, scientists, educators, entertainers and others provide better care and services — which will also make the state a major player in the AI universe. That laser-like concentration on artificial intelligence will ensure a techsavvy workforce is prepared to help the state of Florida thrive.



"We're thrilled UF is demonstrating such national leadership and placing community engagement and training a 21st century workforce at the heart of its mission."

 Peter McPherson, president, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

"In my 38 years at UF I have never before seen an initiative with the power to fundamentally transform so many areas of scholarship and research at so large a scale," Glover says.

It's that cross-campus teamwork that makes the initiative special, says Cammy Abernathy, dean for the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering. She uses her college as an example:

► Agronomists and electrical engineers are using machine learning to



- determine how plants such as switchgrass might slow climate change;
- ► Biomedical engineers and physicians are using AI to combat diabetes;
- ➤ Biologists, ecologists and environmental engineers are using it to prevent coastal catastrophes such as red tide;
- ➤ Teachers and computer scientists are developing strategies to use AI to improve education for children.

 She described the collaborations as "a new horizon for AI research and education ... to bring cutting-edge AI tools to advance research in areas that matter to all of us."

We are ... "eager to seek UF and NVIDIA expertise on how to advance our own workforce training. The goals UF has set ... is an example all universities should aspire to follow."

 Cheryl Ingstad, director, U.S. Department of Energy's Artificial Intelligence and Technology Office

Even more, Malachowsky says, the university is including people of all ages and backgrounds in that effort.

"What really got NVIDIA and me excited was partnering with UF to make AI available to K-12 students, state and community colleges, and businesses," he says. "This will help address underrepresented communities and sectors across the region where technology will have a profound positive effect."

Welcome to the Future

The alliance with NVIDIA means UF is the first in higher education to receive the company's newest product (called DGX A100), and immediately gives the university one of the world's most advanced AI systems. UF will boost the capabilities of its existing supercomputer, HiPerGator, with the recently announced NVIDIA DGX SuperPOD™ architecture.

That technology — the brain that consolidates the performance and

capabilities of UF's entire data center — is an important building block in the university's AI infrastructure.

With it, data that might previously have taken years for researchers to compile and analyze can be processed in minutes. Since UF's reach touches almost every aspect of life — from health and business and arts to agriculture and tourism and engineering — artificial intelligence will have a big role as the university addresses things like rising seas, aging populations, data protection, climate change, personalized medicine, urban transportation and food insecurities.

"The University of Florida has a vision to be a national leader in artificial intelligence, and NVIDIA is an incredibly valuable partner in our quest to do so," Fuchs says. "Across disciplines, the new NVIDIA DGX A100 will position our researchers to solve some of our world's most pressing challenges and equip an entire generation of students with the skills that will revolutionize the future workforce."

It's UF's talent for solving problems — especially with artificial intelligence as a tool — that convinced his company to team up with the university, NVIDIA Vice President Charlie Boyle says.

"AI is transforming every industry, and the NVIDIA DGX A100 will help UF bring AI training, inference and data science into every field of study," he says. "[It] will position UF to teach tomorrow's leaders to harness the powers of AI as they take on our greatest challenges."

Long a trailblazer in innovation and discovery, UF's next natural step in its evolution is AI, Board of Trustees Chairman Mori Hosseini contends.

"We are witnessing a significant moment in the history of the state of Florida and UF," he says. "It is truly a transformational turning point."

— Brittany Wise contributed to this story



UF will change the future of education by infusing its entire curriculum with AI training and educational opportunities so that any student can graduate prepared to apply AI techniques in their chosen field of study.



NEXT STEPS

In order to launch this AI initiative, UF Provost Joe Glover is working with leaders campuswide to integrate the following components into UF's colleges and units:

1. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- Add opportunities to receive AI credentials, certificates, bachelor's and master's degrees in data science and AI
- ► Add basic common courses for all students; Al applications for specific majors; Frontiers of Al course to acquaint people with the field and latest developments (starts spring 2021); and bootcamps
- ► Create undergraduate research opportunities through each college and the Center for Undergraduate Research and Honors Program; internships and links with employers (through Career Connections Center)
- 2. RESEARCH: Hire 100 faculty in AI and applications; funded research; partnerships with other universities and industry; efforts to solve the world's grandest challenges
- 3. PARTNERSHIPS: Federal, industrial, NVIDIA and its NVIDIA Technology Center
- 4. OUTREACH: K-12 dual enrollment and bootcamps; Florida Museum of Natural History's Scientist in Every Florida Classroom program; continuing education and upskilling through Division of Continuing Education (non-credit courses) and college offerings

RESULT: TOTAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- ► Thousands of AI-enabled graduates per year
- ► Upskilling and continuing education of existing workers
- ► Addressing industry needs
- ► Equitable access to AI training



MEET TWO UF COMPUTING EXPERTS, A.K.A.

RISING ST. RS

BY BARBARA DRAKE (MFA '04)

Daisy Zhe Wang and Kevin Butler made headlines last year when they were appointed to Goldberg Rising Star professorships in Computer Science.

Funded by a \$1 million gift from PayPal senior vice president, chief product architect and senior technologist Arnold Goldberg (BSCEI '90) and his wife, Lisa, the five-year stipend supports cuttingedge investigations into computer and IT technologies for up-and-coming faculty researchers.

See for yourself why these rising stars shine so brightly in the CISE firmament.



Daisy Zhe Wang, PhD
Director, Data Science Research Lab

"Working on potentially impactful problems; that's what sparks me and gets my heart racing."

s the daughter of a computer engineer in Hangzhou, China — home to the country's largest e-commerce company, Alibaba — Daisy Zhe Wang naturally gravitated to math and computer science. But when she began focusing on machine learning as a graduate student, Wang knew she had found her métier: using algorithms on "hard," or existing, data to predict new outcomes ("soft data"). In other words: Teaching machines how to make better guesses about the unknown.

Wang's team has used their

modeling theory to analyze

motives behind several high-

profile murders in Ukraine, as

well as COVID-19 data.

Butler has already developed

a way to stop ransomware;

credit card skimming and cell

phone hackers at airports

As director of UF's Data Science Research (DSR) Lab, Wang and her team work their analytical magic on some of the trillions of megabytes of data (text, images, audio and video files, news reports and even social media conversations) generated daily around the globe. From these sources,

her researchers model the probabilities of future scenarios and unknown elements. For instance, they used their modeling approach on real-life data to analyze the murders of several high-profile politicians in the Ukraine.

"We asked ... 'What caused these deaths?" says Wang.
"Were they coincidental? Were they suicides? Or were these
murders orchestrated by an organization in Russia or the

Ukraine? Then we generated various hypotheses based on different media extractions."

While the Ukraine exercise was a purely theoretical, teaching machines to reason inductively has tremendous practical applications. Private industry, governmental agencies and nonprofits all fund the work being done at DSR and other national labs. Likewise, machine learning can aid in the quest to provide personalized healthcare.

DSR Lab is currently partnering with UF Health

scientists to help physicians make better decisions based on patients' individual phenotypes. Their analysis will help doctors tailor treatment options based on weight, blood type, behaviors and medical history.

"To implement this at bedside, in clinical settings, it's still novel," she says.

These efforts in particular were aided by the Goldberg professorship stipend that Wang used to purchase a state-of-the-art graphics processing unit (GPU). The time she saved with this GPU was alternatively spent researching other AI possibilities, such as how technology can make information more trustworthy.

"It is thanks to the Goldbergs that I can concentrate more on the bigger ideas," she said.



Kevin Butler, PhDAssociate Director, Florida Institute for Cybersecurity Research

"I tell my students [cybersecurity] is akin to Harry Potter's Defense Against the Dark Arts class: You have to learn to think like an adversary." rowing up in Toronto, Butler vowed to his Guyanese grandfather — an electrician who dropped out of school in fourth grade — that he would complete his education. The young computer wiz made good on his promise by earning multiple degrees in electrical engineering and a doctorate in computer science and engineering.

"My grandfather ... was very, very happy," Butler said. Today, Butler leads research in computer systems security at the Florida Institute for Cyber Security, an interdisciplinary effort between the departments of electrical engineering

and computer sciences that he helped kick-start six years ago. The premier cybersecurity institute in the nation, it supports research for industry and government projects that have already made our own smart devices safer — whether it's securing cloud systems,

internet and mobile security or creating foolproof biometrics, such as fingerprint mapping and retina scans.

To work in this specialized arena, you have to "think like an adversary," he says: "I tell my students it's akin to Harry Potter's Defense Against the Dark Arts class: 'How do you attack things? What are a system's weaknesses? How can you exploit flaws?' But our job is to use what we learn to make sure bad things don't happen." In just six years at the institute, Butler has already developed a way to stop ransomware; created a device to prevent credit card scanners

from "skimming" a user's data; and outsmarted hackers trying to take control of smartphones via airport USB ports. His own company, CryptoDrop, offers inexpensive software to detect real-world ransomware on home computers.

When COVID-19 hit and millions of U.S. workers transitioned to remote conferencing, Butler's UF team began examining security flaws in Zoom and other networking apps.

"These systems have been adopted at a huge scale very fast, but they weren't designed for that," he says. "Nor did they fully anticipate the security risks."

Currently, his graduate research team is experimenting with three or more safe defaults in remote networking systems so users are not susceptible to bombing-type attacks if they download a default image.

Pandemic or not, Butler says privacy and security concerns are here to stay, whether

the issue is working remotely, voting via internet or doing virus contact-tracing for individuals. "This new environment we find ourselves in has plenty of threats and issues to work out," he said.

Thanks to the Goldberg professorship, Butler now has ample support to pursue innovative research that puts the institute ahead of the curve. For instance, his team is "examining areas that are less explored," he says. "It gives us the freedom to expand our research horizons in ways that are incredibly meaningful, both to UF and to the world at large."

THE ACCIDENTAL NAT GEO STAR

A reservation doctor — and photography contest finalist — finds joy and healing in nature.

STORY BY BARBARA DRAKE (MFA '04)
PHOTOS BY NINA MAYER RITCHIE (BS '04, MD '08)

PRACTICING PHYSICIAN IN CHINLE, AZ, THE GEOGRAPHIC CENTER OF THE NAVAJO NATION, Gator Dr. **Nina**

Mayer Ritchie (BS '04, MD '08) considers herself an "extreme amateur" when it comes to photography.

"I've never taken a photography class," she said this fall.

"Everything has been self-taught, from reading my camera manuals to looking up stuff online."

So when National Geographic and Mazda kicked off an Instagram contest in October 2019 to search for Nat Geo's "Next Great Storyteller," Mayer Ritchie submitted five of her best nature photographs and forgot about it, figuring she had as much as a snowball's chance in the Arizona desert.

Then came the call in January 2020: Of the thousands of photographers who had submitted work, Mayer Ritchie had been chosen as one of the three winners. The judges were wowed by her dramatic photos of colorful canyons, a lightning storm and a bear catching salmon midstream.

"It was surreal," she laughed. "I've never won anything before."

Mayer Ritchie quickly snapped this photo last summer after running outside in her pajamas when she saw the sunset sky transforming through her kids' bedroom window.

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Dr. Nina Mayer Ritchie and her husband, Dr. Eric Ritchie, are both double Gators with a shared love of photography. "I got to share my creative passion with the love of my life," says Nina.



Signs in Black Rock, Arizona remind people to wear masks.

Her own mother refused to believe it at first, Mayer Ritchie said. "She was like, 'Are you sure this is Nat Geo? Maybe it's a scam. You didn't give them your social security number, did you?"

Things happened fast after that.

Bidding goodbye to her husband, fellow Gator **Dr. Eric Ritchie** (BS '04, MD '08), and their sons Henry, 5, and James, 3, she was flown a couple of weeks later to Los Angeles. There, she and the other two Instagram winners competed in three on-location photography challenges, or "Quests," as Nat Geo calls them, visually interpreting three themes: Master Craftsman (Takumi), Unique Reflections and Uplifted.

Their evolution as visual storytellers was documented by three separate film crews, with Nat Geo photography mentors guiding the gifted amateurs. The resulting 44-minute competition reality show, "Assignment: Inspiration," first aired on

the National Geographic Channel in September. While another contestant was crowned the winner, the heated contest pushed Mayer Ritchie to take her art to new heights.

"As someone who typically dabbles in landscape and wildlife photography ... these quests took me out of my comfort zone and truly challenged me to evolve as a photographer," she wrote on Instagram. "I'm so grateful they took a chance on me."

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Born and raised in Tarpon Springs, Mayer Ritchie grew up loving nature and idolizing primatologist Jane Goodall. After two years at a local community college, she transferred to UF and met Eric in a peer study group for Dr. Marta Wayne's genetics class. As aspiring physicians, Nina and Eric earned their bachelor's degrees in 2004 and went to UF medical school together, before heading to Boston for

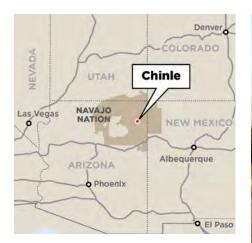


"When I wasn't [working] in the hospital, I was trying to reconnect to that little girl who loved nature and being outside."

— NINA MEYER RITCHIE

AT LEFT: Taken at Katmai National Park and Preserve, this image is one that caught Nat Geo contest judges' attention.

BELOW: "I didn't have a complete grasp on how moving and powerful this sacred place [Devils Tower in Black Hills, WY] would be until we were standing in front of it," she said.



their residency training in pediatrics and internal medicine.

They jointly took up photography as a creative outlet, she said.

"I think it was almost a reaction formation to how stressful and demanding the work and medicine are," explained Mayer Ritchie. "Residency for us was 80 hours a week, taking 'Call' every third to fourth night, working most weekends. When I wasn't in the hospital, I was trying to reconnect to that little girl who loved nature and being outside."

Photography soon grew into a "shared passion," said Mayer Ritchie. A June 2009 trip to the Grand Canyon with





AT LEFT: Once she was named a contest finalist, Nat Geo sent Meyer Ritchie on a "Quest" to document three themes, of which this is one.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

"I owe a lot of where I am now to having that partner in crime with me."

- NINA MEYER RITCHIE

Nina's father sparked the couple's love of the Southwest and eventually led to their decision to provide medical care to underserved populations through the Indian Health Service (IHS). In Chinle, Eric is the chief medical officer of the IHS hospital, and Nina works as a public health doctor with the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health.

The couple "splurged" on their first professional single lens reflex camera before moving to the Navajo Nation in 2012. Photographing on hikes was easy when the children were small and portable, but once they became active toddlers, Eric offered to stay home and watch them while Nina photographed on her own.

Her husband's unwavering support has been "incredible," she said, all the way back to the days when they would stand together on a mesa and talk about how to best position the tripod to capture a view.

"I owe a lot of where I am now to having that partner in crime with me, that I could bounce ideas off and learn with," said Mayer Ritchie. "I got to share my creative passion with the love of my life. That has augmented how important photography is to me now."

Despite being singled out by National Geographic, Mayer Ritchie admitted she still has a lot to learn about her chosen art form. She even can laugh at her mishaps.

"What's so funny is that during the competition, when that video of me came out on YouTube, I found out that apparently I am holding my camera wrong, not like a professional photographer," she said. "I'm supposed to have my left hand underneath my lens to support it and make it more stable. I hold it on the side. I googled it later.

"That was pointed out by someone in the [video] comments, and I didn't take offense," she says. "I mean, it's so funny!"







NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

- See Nina Mayer Ritchie compete in "Assignment: Inspiration." on the National Geographic Channel (streaming on Disney+)
- Visit Nat Geo's Assignment: Inspiration page to learn about the Instagram contest, see Mayer Ritchie's photos and view videos of her photographic process: www. nationalgeographic.com/
- Follow Mayer Ritchie: www.instagram.com/ ninamayerritchie/





CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT:

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is an annual family favorite event, epitomizing the joy the Ritchies have experienced living in the Southwest.

The Hope Arch "has always been a special place for us," she said.

She photographed this mother and kid near Logan Pass in Glacier National Park before Mother's Day.

Their children enjoy exploring Great Sand Dunes National Park.

"Nature is calling and we must go," says Mayer Ritchie, who took their son to 24 national parks by age 3.

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His Seattle eatery JuneBaby was named America's Best New Restaurant. Two times James Beard winner Edouardo Jordan got there by staying true to family and heritage.

By Barbara Drake (MFA '04)

roundbreaking." "Authentic." "Elegant." "Enticing." "Revolutionary."

These are among the accolades lavished on Chef Edouardo Jordan's award-winning cooking. But they apply equally to the UF alum and "40 Gators Under 40" honoree himself.

A native of St. Petersburg and chef/owner of three acclaimed Seattle restaurants, Jordan (BABA '03, BSESS '03) has dazzled the culinary world with his interpretations of American and Southern food — specifically, the dishes of his African American ancestors.

Salare, opened in 2015, drew raves for his delicious Southern fare tweaked with French and Italian influences, a nod to his impressive culinary training. But it was JuneBaby — his ode to Black Southern cooking — that put Jordan on the map.

In May 2018, Jordan won two James Beard Foundation awards — Best Chef Northwest (for Salare) and Best New Restaurant (for JuneBaby) — making him the first African American chef in the foundation's 34-year history to take home the latter prize. As he stood onstage with his JuneBaby staff, a proud Jordan acknowledged that his historic win also belonged to the many great Black chefs who had come before him but whose fare never got its due.

"They've been pounding their knives against the walls and their cutting boards, and we finally cracked through," he said.

Since then, Jordan, 40, has won a raft of culinary awards; opened a third restaurant, Lucinda's Grain Bar, in 2018; and launched his own retail line at Whole Foods in 2020, all while feeding displaced restaurant workers during the pandemic.

He even was a finalist in People magazine's 2018 Sexiest Chef Alive competition.

While he credits his culinary prowess to both his familial and professional training, he said his success as a restaurateur reflects vital lessons learned at UF, where he earned dual bachelor's degrees from the College of Health and Human Performance and the Warrington College of Business in 2003.

"I'm more than a chef, I'm a business person," he said in a recent interview. "I think like a business person. Every step I take, I need to make sure I'm following through and asking questions before I go forward: How will this impact my employees and me? Is it legal? Is it ethical?

"UF made me a well-rounded person and gave me the broader understanding to make good decisions," he said.



HOSPITALITY, HERITAGE & HARD WORK

Food was at the center of Jordan's life growing up in St. Pete, whether it was Sunday dinners at the home of his paternal grandmother, Maggie Jordan, or helping his mother, Velda Jordan, put supper on the table. Both women sparked his love of cooking, in different ways.

"My grandma was all about hospitality and heritage," he said. "We didn't necessarily talk a lot about our history, but we gathered a lot about us through our foods." The Georgia native's specialties included Southern staples like fried chicken, chitlins, black-eyed peas and corn pudding, as well as snapping turtle and possum.

His mother, on the other hand, put him to work chopping vegetables after school. Only after he finished his kitchen duties could he go outside and play with the other kids.

Being conscripted as Momma Jordan's sous-chef wasn't something he relished at first, Jordan admitted, but it taught him a key lesson.

On earning two UF degrees in just four and a half years: "Yeah, it was crazy of me, but that's just like my love and desire."

"I learned there's things I have to be responsible for before I can get to the fun in life," he said.

At age 9, Jordan proudly prepared his first meal all on his own — scrambled eggs, strawberry toast, bacon and OJ — for Momma Jordan on Mother's Day.

"It wasn't perfect," he laughed, "but it was a start."

By his middle school years, cooking had morphed from a chore to a pleasure. He doubled back to his grandmother's kitchen where he pestered her with questions and pieced together recipes, some of which (Grandma's Pound Cake, cornbread) are now on the JuneBaby menu.

Above all, his grandmother passed on the gift of balancing flavors. "Grandma, she just knew how to season her food — that was from the start," Jordan told Wine Spectator. "So maybe that's innate in me."

"CARVING" NEW GATOR TRACKS

An excellent student and talented athlete — he competed in track, football, cross country and wrestling in high school — Jordan received scholarships to University of Miami, Drake University and Tulane. However, touring the University of Florida campus in 1998 made a deep impression on him.

"I fell in love with the campus and the experience there," he said. Jordan also felt ready to take on the challenge of being a minority student on a mainly white campus. Once he was accepted to UF, he joined the Black Student Union and the PAACT (Pledging to Advance Academic Capacity Together) program, an initiative, through Black Affairs, for diverse first-year students.

Nearly 7% of UF's undergraduate student population was Black during Jordan's freshman year, according to federal IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey data.

Being one of 40 PAACT Peers and having the support of key figures at the Dean of Students Office gave him the confidence to grow and "carve a new way" for himself on campus, he explained.

"UF, for me, was a realization of what society is," he said.
"It was quite important that I experienced another side of the world that I wasn't part of before since I come from an African American community."

With the aim of becoming a sports agent, Jordan worked on two degrees: business administration and sports management. Just as he had applied himself to chopping onions and carrots in his mother's kitchen, Jordan pulled plenty of all-nighters to reach his



In his UF days, Jordan paused for this photo in Turlington Plaza with his friend Lydia Washington (BA '06), who became student body vice president.

goal in four and a half years.

"Yeah, it was crazy of me, but that's just like my love and desire," he said. "I had an affinity for nutrition and science and food. But I also wanted to study business because I wanted to run my own business one day."

In his free time, he ran an unassuming food blog, the now-defunct Tamburg.com.

He particularly remembers his first business law class. It was "hard as heck," he said, but it taught him to consider the ethical, legal and moral implications of any choice before making a decision. He still relies on that process.

"I was grateful for that," he said. "It's automatic in me now."

HONING HIS CULINARY CHOPS

After graduating from UF in 2003, Jordan accepted an internship with the Tampa Bay Rays, his hometown baseball team. It should have been a dream job for the budding Jerry McGuire, but something was missing.

"I wasn't having fun and had food in my heart and soul," he admitted to Food & Wine magazine.

Jordan enrolled in Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Orlando, graduating with honors in 2005. Back in Tampa, he got a job cooking New American cuisine at one of the city's finest restaurants. There, he dreamed of working at The French Laundry, in the Napa Valley, voted World's Best Restaurant in 2003 and 2004 and the incubator for many great chefs.



Toast with Heirloom tomatoes and purslane with Eduardo' signature pimento cheese.

Patient, yet determined, Jordan got his wish. During his apprenticeship at the

Laundry, he worked alongside butcher Mark Bodinet, a West Coast leader in the local-organic movement. Jordan next traveled to New York City, where he cooked at the Michelin-starred Per Se under Chef Jonathan Benno, whose leadership taught him how to manage a team under pressure.

Jordan's quest for knowledge even took him to Parma, Italy, where he lived and studied with a family of ninth-generation salumi- (cured meat) and pasta-makers. There he encountered the Italian verb salare, which means to use salt to season, preserve or cure meats.

Salare would become the name of his first restaurant, in Seattle. It references both his Italian training and the longstanding Southern tradition of pickling and curing food.

A STAR (CHEF) IS BORN

So how did this Floridian chef — trained in California, New York and Italy — end up in Washington State?

"Well, I was chasing love and making everybody happy!" said Jordan, referring to his love interest at the time (now his ex-wife). The woman who beguiled Jordan was a Seattle native, and so he pulled up roots yet again and settled in the Northwest, with an eye on starting both a business and a family. Their son, Akil, was born in 2014.



Rockfish ceviche with Trinidad peppers, red onions, grilled California Avocados, puffed rice and tiger water.

Seattle had a burgeoning restaurant scene and farm-to-table movement. And the moment was right for a daring, entrepreneurial chef like Jordan to venture out on his own.

Financed with help from a Kickstarter campaign and opened in June 2015, Salare opened diners' eyes to the diversity and

of Black cooks that are never seen on fine dining menus — stewed pigs' ears, oxtails, chitlins and boiled peanuts, for example — given more nuanced flavors and textures.

The mouthwatering results have

Jordan took JuneBaby one step further: showcasing humble dishes passed down by generations of Black cooks that are never seen on fine dining menus.

was a winner out of the box. Everything from cured meats to pickles is made from scratch, and diners went crazy over his homemade pastas, artisanal Nocino walnut liquor (made with a recipe bestowed by his Parma family) and monthly menus showcasing foods of the African diaspora. Food & Wine named him among the Best New Chefs of 2016.

Jordan's next venture, JuneBaby, debuted in spring 2017. Named for his father's childhood moniker, the restaurant is deeply personal, serving up recipes gleaned from Maggie and Velda Jordan, reflected through the lens of the Northwest and Jordan's wide-ranging culinary training.

Like many of the South's great restaurants, JuneBaby relies on superior ingredients to elevate traditional Southern dishes, such as pulled pork shoulder, fried chicken and seafood jambalaya, but the eatery goes one further: it also showcases humble dishes passed down by generations sustainability of Southern cooking and prompted the New York Times' food critic to award JuneBaby a rare 3-star (Excellent) rating in March 2018. Two months later came Jordan's unprecedented double James Beard win.

The rest, as they say, is history — which in JuneBaby's case is documented in the restaurant's online encyclopedia. The bespoke guide explains terms and concepts integral to Southern cooking — the good, the bad and the controversial — from Aunt Jemima to Po' Boy to Yams ("most common African staple that fed enslaved Africans onboard ships").

For Jordan, the joys of sharing his heritage on a plate have been a long time coming.

"When I opened Salare, I wanted to represent my journey as a professional chef," he explained this fall. "That gave me the opportunity to open up JuneBaby with no clouds over me, no pressure to prove myself — it's just me doing my



Follow Jordan, pictured here with his son, Akil. on Instagram (eduardojordan) to see posts about his latest culinary creations.



California Avocado Cesar with tomatoes, romaine lettuce, anchovies, Parmesan and bagel croutons

thing. It's natural to me, but I'm having fun doing it."

"DREAM BIG, MY LITTLE STAR"

Like most restaurant owners, Jordan was thrown for a loop when COVID-19 hit in March 2020. Ever resourceful, the Warrington graduate quickly pivoted JuneBaby to carry-out only. He also partnered with Seattle nonprofits to turn Salare into a community kitchen, serving hundreds of free to-go meals to laid-off restaurant workers each day. Since March, the kitchen has served more than 26,000 meals to those experiencing food insecurity.

Jordan admits profits are down, but he says staying afloat and helping others are

will roll out soon as the line expands throughout Washington and Oregon.

"The retail process is a whole new world," Jordan told Eater Seattle. "It's about scalability and quality."

Jordan is getting back to his roots with more than just pimento cheese. The affable chef recently helped the UF Alumni Association launch its online Gator Chef cooking video series, demonstrating a spicy watermelon salad with toasted feta from his Salare menu.

And, of course, there is Akil.

His six-year-old son just entered first grade, and Jordan is savoring the dayto-day challenges of being a working parent. That includes letting Akil be part of his philanthropy efforts and activities in the kitchen.

Heritage is meant to be passed on. Jordan said it best in his acceptance speech for Best New Restaurant at the 2018 James Beard Awards. After thanking his mother, he dedicated the prize to Akil.

"I want you to dream big, my little star," he said on stage. "We're making history tonight, and Daddy wants you to know that if you can dream it, you can achieve it.

"The future is yours, but don't forget the past."

JUST A FEW MORE BITES:

- · Cook along with Jordan in his exclusive video for Gator Nation: http://uff.to/gc-jordan
- · Follow Jordan on Instagram at EdouardJordan
- · Read the May 2020 College of Health and Human Performance story, "SPM Alum and Chef Edouardo Jordan Aids Restaurant Workers Impacted by Pandemic" at www.hhp.ufl.edu/articles/2020/profileedouardo-iordan.html
- Get some cool JuneBaby swag (Chitlins State of Mind hoodies, Soul of Seattle tote) and treats (Ancient Grain Pancake mix. Peach Basic Jam. Red Flint Cornbread Mix) at Jordan's online store: iunebabyseattle.com/shop
- Donate to the Restaurant Worlds Relief Program to help Salare and other businesses feed displaced restaurant workers: instagram.com/p/B9-UntDAr7S/

Since March, the kitchen has served more than 26,000 meals to those experiencing food insecurity.

the name of the game now.

"We're still providing good food to our neighborhood as best we can and trying to be smart about surviving right now," said Jordan. "The supportive community is definitely helping us get through this hard time."

There are some bright notes. One is his new retail food line, Food with Roots, which debuted in May in Seattle Whole Foods stores with Jordan's popular pimento cheese spread. Other items

Young Edouardo may have initially grumbled when Momma Jordan put a knife and a cutting board in his hand, but Akil appears to be an enthusiastic sous-chef. During the filming of the July 2020 Gator Chef episode, Akil cheerfully inspected the ingredients and sampled Dad's finished creation, ending the session with a big Gator Chomp.

"He named his group at school 'Golden Gators," said Jordan. "I think we have a future Gator here."

A Time of Tragedy and Togetherness











THE MURDERS OF
FIVE STUDENTS IN
1990 WERE UF'S
DARKEST HOURS.
BUT GATORS AND
THE GAINESVILLE
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THIS DAY

SONJA LARSON CHRISTINA POWELL CHRISTA HOYT TRACY PAULES MANUEL TABOADA

"You don't expect anything like that to happen when you're 20, 22. For most people, as you get older, you find out the world is a tough place. Well, we found out then."

MICHAEL BROWNE (BSBA '91, MBA '97), THEN-UF STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT.

BY BARBARA DRAKE (MFA '04)

ay their names. Sonja Larson. Christina Powell. Christa Hoyt. Tracy Paules. Manuel Taboada.

Many current UF students don't know who they were. But for tens of thousands of UF alumni, especially those who attended the university 30 years ago, those names are forever seared in their memory, conjuring one of the most tragic and terrifying times in UF history.

Over four days in late August 1990, a serial killer brutally murdered five college students, ages 17 to 23, in apartment complexes adjacent to UF along Archer Road. Four of the victims were UF undergraduates; the fifth, Hoyt, was a chemistry honors student at then-Santa Fe Community College.

News of the first two slayings broke Sunday, Aug. 26, the day before the start of the fall semester. Until then, UF's main preoccupation had been the arrival of its new president, John Lombardi, in March, and the December return of **Steve Spurrier** (BSPE '81) as UF's new head football coach.

On Monday, Aug. 27, and Tuesday, Aug. 28, three more students' bodies were found. Within days of being named the 13th best place to live in the United States, according to Money Magazine, the sleepy college town of Gainesville was branded as "perhaps the most dangerous place in America" by then-CBS News anchor Dan Rather.

That semester marked a loss of innocence for a generation of Gators, says **Michael Browne** (BSBA '91, MBA '97), then UF student body president.



SAM THOMAS | THE GAINESVILLE SUN

People walk by the mural on SW 34th Street honoring the five students who were murdered 30 years ago. While other panels are routinely repainted, this panel is considered sacred among locals and remains untouched, except for renewal.

REMEMBERING TERROR — AND UNITY

Voices from those on the frontlines

THE ALLIGATOR REPORTER

"Not to be melodramatic about it, but there was a monster in our midst. A monster."



DONYA CURRIE (BSJ '90)

Then: UF journalism senior, age 22 Now: Digital content deputy director, American Public Health Association On Aug. 26, Currie was sitting in a movie theater watching "Darkman" with two fellow Alligator stringers,

when she got a call to rush to a Gainesville Police Department (GPD) press conference at Williamsburg Apartments. Two young women had been murdered.

"I had not yet covered the cops beat ever," she says. "I was in my last semester, and I hadn't even yet made staff [of the Alligator]."

They arrived late, but GPD spokesperson Lt. Sadie Darnell graciously repeated her report. That story launched Currie as a crime reporter. Soon after, she was made Alligator staff. Currie juggled daily press

briefings with school. She was shy and sensitive, but says assert herself.

"Giant news trucks, every single newspaper in the state was there. And here I was, just this little

She was shy and she quickly learned to Sensitive then, but quickly learned to assert herself in the press pool.

student reporter, trying to shout out guestions," she

One morning, Currie asked the question on many minds: Had semen been found at the crime scene? "I can't even remember the answer now, but everybody was writing down the answer," she says.

That afternoon in class, a professor gave her the ultimate J school compliment: "Good question."

Covering the story was a double-edged sword, Currie says. Knowing more than most students gave her a feeling of control, but the yearlong effort was "physically and emotionally exhausting." And some details, such as the sight of body parts being carried out in a police bag, were impossible to forget. For that reason, she turned down the GPD's offer to inspect the crime scene photos. "I did not want to have those images burned in my brain," says Currie.

GPD made that offer again in 1994, when Curry, after stints at other newspapers, took a job at the Gainesville Sun. Her editor said she was the logical choice to cover the trial of the man who would later be convicted and put to death for the murders.

"I was there that day when he pled guilty," says Currie. "It was really hard to be physically near him. It was nauseating." However, it provided "a little bit of closure" to see him found guilty and later executed.

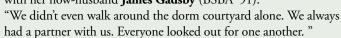
Terrified students slept in large groups in dorm rooms, guarding doors with baseball bats. Hundreds more withdrew from UF or transferred to other schools.

"You don't expect anything like that to happen when you're 20, 22," says Browne, now married and the Frisco, Texas, father of two 20-something daughters. "For most people, as you get older, you find out the world is a tough place. Well, we found out then."

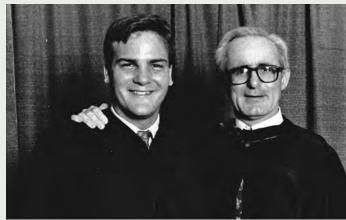
Terrified students slept in large groups in dorm rooms, guarding doors with baseball bats. Hundreds more withdrew from UF or transferred to other schools. Local sporting goods stores reported a run on guns and ammunition as the town braced for another attack by the "Gainesville Ripper," as the killer was dubbed by the national media that swarmed Gainesville and the UF campus for weeks.

But in the midst of the pain and chaos, alumni now in their 50s recall the Gator Nation coming together in powerful solidarity.

"I would never walk around campus alone at night," says Atlanta resident Elizabeth Gadsby (BSA '92), who as a junior lived through the crisis Gadsby with her now-husband James Gadsby (BSBA '91).



The lounge areas of UF residence halls were turned into bedrooms for students who lived off campus, and Student Affairs offered free long-distance calls so students could easily stay in touch with family members, a vital service in the days before cell phones became popular. Students enrolled in self-defense classes offered by the university (and many today say the traumatic event has left in them a heightened focus on personal safety).



PROVIDED PHOTOS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: UF Student Body President Michael Browne with UF President John Lombardi: students Swati and Rahul Patel; and Elizabeth Gadsby in 1990 all say their memories of that time remain vivid.



THE GAINESVILLE SUN ARCHIVES

ABOVE: UF students Michell Jones and Jacob Mellowheim plead with UF President John Lombardi to cancel classes on Aug. 28, 1990. BELOW: Linda Murphy, Maria Dunn and Shelia Sapp, leave Gatorwood apartments for Ocala after the bodies of Tracey Paules and Manuel Taboada were found there on Aug. 28.

Tuition fees were frozen, students were allowed to miss class without academic penalties through Sept. 7, and the university beefed up its Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP), which escorted students around campus. Santa Fe launched a program similar to SNAP.

At twice daily news briefings broadcast on Florida TV stations, Browne, President Lombardi and Vice President for Student Affairs Art Sandeen presented a united front, helping students and parents stay abreast of developments in real time, something not easily done in the days before email and the Internet.

"Lombardi and Sandeen made all of the new safety measures happen so fast," says Browne. "As leaders, they could have easily stood in front of the news cameras and talked about the institution and their reputation. There was none of that. It was all about keeping the students safe."

Browne also inspired courage. In a defining moment, the student body president stood in front of cameras and announced, "This is my university, and they're not going to take it away from me," urging fellow Gators to return to campus.



Rahul Patel (BA '94, JD '97), then an 18-year-old freshman, remembers the chaos of a campus filled with national media, and the fear of a killer roaming free. But the guidance of Brown and other student leaders inspired him to become active at UF, he says. He credits their example with his decision to become a Preview staffer, campus diplomat and Florida Cicerone. And while Patel, now a partner at King &

Spalding law firm in Atlanta, can't say anything good came of the crisis, he notes it did reveal the caring and solidarity at the heart of the Gator Nation.

"It demonstrated that by coming together," he says, "we could get through anything."



A Climate of Fear

When the bulk of students returned after Labor Day, classes resumed amidst an active police investigation. Hundreds of state and local officers converged in Gainesville, including experts in psychological profiling who had worked on the killings at Florida State University in 1978.

Uncertainty and panic fueled rumors about additional bodies being hid from the public and the killer being a fellow student. After a crisis hotline received thousands of calls from concerned locals, the Gainesville Police Department nabbed a mentally ill UF freshman with a violent past as a suspect. But the evidence linking the student to the murders was weak, and investigators doggedly continued their search for the real killer, with few details leaked to the public.

On Sept. 5, a drifter and career criminal named Daniel Rolling from Shreveport, LA, was arrested for robbing an Ocala supermarket and booked into the Marion County Jail. While

FLORIDA GATOR | 41 40 | FALL-WINTER 2020

THE POLICE OFFICER

"I knew what details not to release. but give enough to inform the public."



SADIE DARNELL (BA '74, MED '01)

Then: Gainesville Police Department Lieutenant, Public Information Officer Now: Retired Alachua County Sheriff On Aug. 26, Darnell was just getting ready to enjoy her usual Sunday family ritual — pizza and "America's

Funniest Videos" at the home of her twin sister, Norma — when she got an urgent call: the double homicide of two young women at the Williamsburg Apartments, on Archer Road.

When she arrived, the officer on duty gave her a briefing that included a walk-through of unit 113.

What Darnell saw there was so gruesome, photos of the crime scene would later be used in court to secure the death penalty for the killer. But as the GPD's spokesperson at the time, Darnell knew she had to carefully control the flow of information so the police could do their work.

"It was helpful for me to have a visual understanding of what occurred," explains Darnell about that initial walk-through. "Due to my training, I knew what details not to release, which might hinder the criminal investigation, but give enough to inform the public." By Tuesday, Aug. 28, a total of five student bodies

"We were doing radio interviews as was the first time early as 5 a.m. and ending with TV news at 11:30 p.m."

had been found, all stabbed to death. some mutilated. It Darnell had acted as PIO for a serial murder case, one that became the biggest crime story of 1990.

The vouthful wholesomeness of the victims and the ferocity of the killings fueled a national media frenzy.

To manage the media coverage — which included twice daily news briefings with hundreds of reporters and Phil Donahue broadcasting live from downtown Gainesville — Darnell teamed up with her counterpart in the Alachua County Sheriff's Office.

"At the peak, we were doing radio interviews as early as 5 a.m. and ending with television news coverage at 11:30 p.m.," says Darnell.

For the next seven months, before the killer was positively identified as an existing inmate in the Marion County Jail, Darnell guarded herself at home with three dogs and a gun under her pillow. When she ran at night, she packed a .22 caliber pistol, aware that the killer could easily be stalking her, the public face of the GPD.

"I would go running, thinking, 'I'll shoot him in the kneecaps first," she told an Independent Florida Alligator reporter.

"Other times I wished he would jump out, so I could end it all. Make him die slow."

Read more from Darnell at uff.to/gville90

investigating that crime, officers matched the 36-year-old's tools to marks left at the Gainesville crime scenes. A search of his abandoned campsite across from the Archer Road apartment complexes revealed audio diaries in which he hinted at the killings.

In January 1991, police linked a tooth extracted from the suspect with DNA evidence found at the Gainesville crime scenes. More than a year later, in June 1992, he was charged with the five murders. In February 1994, he pled guilty to all charges, and then-State Attorney Rod Smith successfully led the penalty phase of the prosecution, securing the death sentence.

"I've been running from first one thing and then another all my life, whether from problems at home or with the law or from myself," the killer told the court. "But there are some things that you just can't run from, and this being one of those."

After nearly 12 years on death row, Rolling was executed by lethal injection at Florida State Prison on Oct. 25, 2006, following a last-ditch appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

From Tragedy, Change

The 1990 student murders changed universities across the nation. In the wake of the killings, battle-scarred UF administrators developed an extensive crisis plan that was used as a blueprint by hundreds of colleges and universities. Today, virtually every U.S. institution of higher learning has such a crisis plan in place.

Outrage over the murders also helped compel Congress to pass the Clery Act in November 1990. This federal law requires universities to report all crimes that happen on or around campus; institutions that fail to do so suffer stiff penalties and loss of federal financial aid. In September 2019, Michigan State University was fined \$4.5 million for covering up decades of sexual assault on gymnasts by Dr. Larry Nassar, the largest penalty ever imposed under the Clery Act.

The Gainesville Police Department broke new ground by helping family members and honoring the victims. Former GPD spokesperson Sadie Darnell says those changes were part of a deliberate strategy she pursued in tandem with her colleague Laura Knudson, then crime victim advocate for the State Attorney's Office.

"I knew the tendency then was for the media focus to be on the offender to the point of glorifying them," says Darnell. To rob the Gainesville killer of the fame he sought, Darnell deliberately mispronounced the suspect's name when speaking to the media, saying "RAW-ling," instead of "ROLL-ing," as he preferred.

Rather than dwell on gory details, Darnell and Knudson guided reporters toward personalizing the victims. That entailed Darnell spending time with victims' family members and understanding how they wanted their loved one's story told not a typical police duty.

"The important thing was for me to get to know them and their son or daughter or brother or sister through their eyes, and that we be available for them and to tell them as much as they wanted to know," she says.

THE STUDENT **BODY PRESIDENT**

"Like everybody else, I was afraid."



MICHAEL BROWNE ('BSBA '91, MBA '97)

Then: UF business senior, 22 Now: Dallas Sales Vice President, Kellogg Many Gators who lived through that time remembers Browne's poise, whether fielding questions from reporters or comforting students one on one. But

Browne says he felt the same panic as everyone.

"Like everybody else, I was afraid," he says. "But I was so busy — just trying to take care of everybody and keep them safe. There was a single-mindedness. Nothing else that we were doing mattered. "

"You got to see a lot of folks taking care of each other."

The first bodies found were those of petite, dark-haired women, lulling many male students into a false sense of security, he says. "When we heard late Sunday night or Monday what had happened over the

weekend, the immediate thought was, 'Hey, take care of the women," he remembers.

The subsequent discovery of the body of Manny Taboada, a 6-foot-3-inch-tall, 200-pound former football player, made every student realize they could be next.

"That was really tough," says Browne. "There was a heightened sense of urgency among men on Tuesday that probably wasn't there on Monday for their own safety."

Browne remembers seeing "amazing leadership" from UF administrators and hundreds of acts of kindness by students.

"People would drive to help someone get groceries or pack their stuff to go back home," he remembers. "A lot of folks were having slumber parties. You'd have eight people on the floor of a room. You got to see a lot of folks taking care of each other. That's what sticks with me today."

THE UF PRESIDENT

"The news ... came as existential shocks, for we all saw the university with its students as charmed spaces."



JOHN LOMBARDI

Then: In his fifth month as UF president (1990-1999) Now: Retired, living in Amherst, Mass., where he is a former University of Massachusetts chancellor A lifelong academician, Lombardi never imagined

his first fall semester week would entail confronting the most serious crisis in UF history. He guickly took

command as comforter-in-chief, earning a reputation as a "student's president." Among his decisive actions was starting the Gator football season on schedule and resuming classes.

"That became a key turning point for our community to begin to return to a 'new normal.'" remembers then-Gainesville Police Lt. Sadie Darnell.

Lombardi says he'll never forget many details from those days.

"It is always a challenge to relive difficult and painful experiences, and for all of us at the university,

"No one who was there at the time can erase the sorrow of losing those students."

the memories, while perhaps less detailed now a generation later, remain vivid. The news of the first and then subsequent murders came to all of us as existential shocks, for we all saw the university with its students as charmed spaces, open to a wide range of positive experiences and exceptional people."

"On campus, we had the benefit of exceptional leadership from faculty, staff, students and community, all of whom set aside whatever other issues or concerns were on their agendas to come together to support the campus response in support of the students."

"In retrospect, the most enduring impression is, of course, the unbelievably painful loss of life. While these losses triggered much campus and community support, and mobilized statewide assistance, no one who was there at the time can erase the sorrow of losing those students, and while some of the details of the response may fade from memory, the pain of their deaths remains with us forever."

Read more from Lombardi at uff.to/gville90

"The Keepers Of The Wall"

Since the 1990 murders, supporters have honored the victims by holding memorial services, planting trees by Library East and along the Southwest 34th Street meridian, and establishing scholarships in the students' names.

The most visible tribute is a 25-foot-long mural on the 34th Street graffiti wall, with the victims' names painted in bold red, black and white.

Created by former student Adam Byrn Tritt, the mural has since been kept up by UF students and an anonymous group known as "the keepers of the wall." Through 2000, Darnell made it her personal mission to see that the mural was never painted over, always carrying cans of matching paint in her truck.

In 2002, UF's Interfraternity Council took over care of the memorial, with current members of UF's 27 fraternities tending it throughout the year.

For alumni from that era returning to Gainesville, the memorial is a touchstone, says Gadsby, the then-junior.

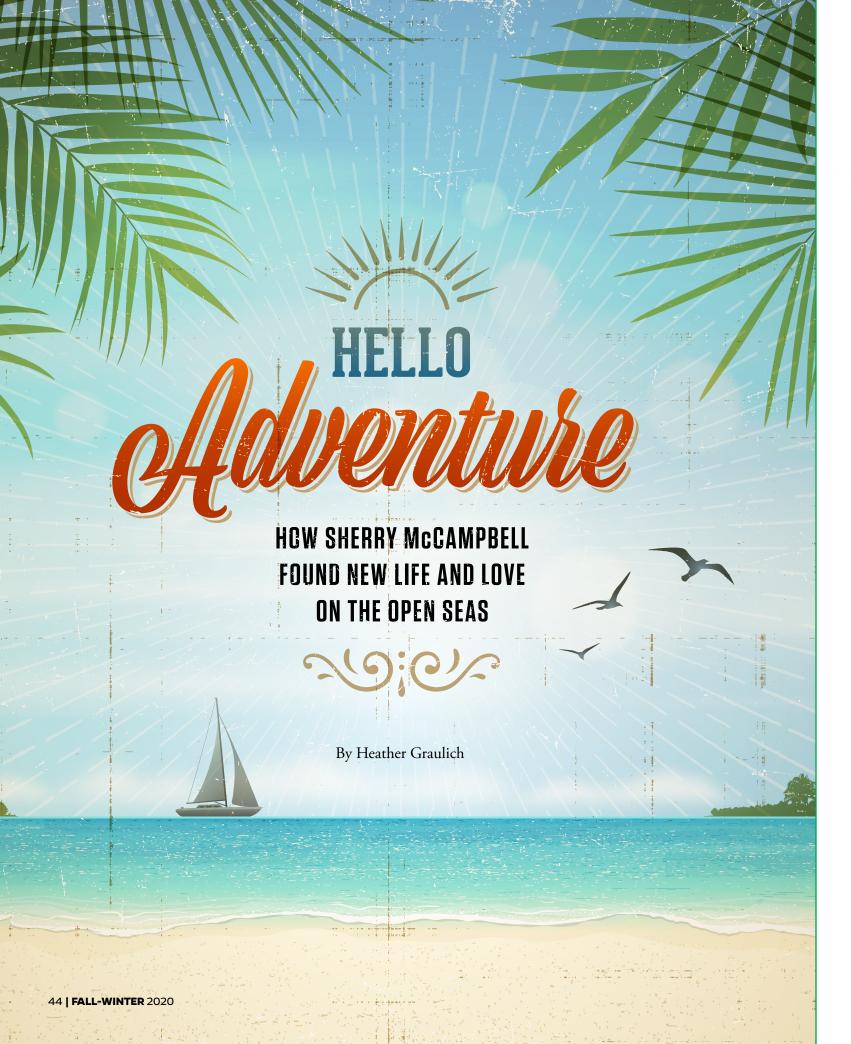
"When we drive by it now, it warms my heart that, year after year, students continue to respect and maintain it," she says.

Likewise, family members of the victims treasure the mural, explained Dianna Hoyt, mother of slain student Christa Hoyt, at a 25th anniversary memorial service.

"This is keeping the memory of our children alive, and that means so much for us," Hoyt told the audience gathered in the Baughman Center in August 2015. "Everyone can see the shrine, and something of our children lives on through the wall."

Previously, a brass plaque was added to paint-spattered sidewalk beneath the mural. It reads:

"In remembrance of those individuals who lost their lives in 1990: Sonja Larson, Christina Powell, Christa Hoyt, Tracy Paules, Manuel Taboada. You will never be forgotten."





While on shore in the Solomon Islands, Gator Sherry McCampbell shows local children some photos from her travels around the world.

hen Sherry McCampbell was a young girl, one of her father's Navy buddies taught her celestial navigation, showing her a way across the waves by linking herself to the skies above.

She has never stopped following seas or seeking stars.

"When you live around lights, you forget what the heavens really look like," McCampbell (BSIE '79) mused with wonder in her travel blog while off the coast of Belize in 2007, the year she and husband Dave began their around-theworld retirement sailing adventure.

Nearly 14 years later, McCampbell is almost 45,000 nautical miles into the journey of a lifetime, although at this writing, she and Dave were stranded in the Philippines aboard their 44-foot St Francis catamaran, the S/V Soggy Paws, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Not that being stuck in a tropical paradise is a hardship, exactly. But Sherry isn't the sitting still type. Neither is Dave. They're eager to get cruising again, while sharing a life together that seems to have been written in the stars, too.

Cheryl "Sherry" Gray McCampbell, 63, is a self-described "Navy brat" whose father settled the family in the Keys upon his retirement. The day after

she graduated salutatorian in a class of 62 kids from Marathon High School, the family set off on a year's sailing trip around the Caribbean.

"While we were sailing, a family friend who was a Gator grad applied to UF for me, and by the time we returned in June of 1975, I was heading off to college," she says, adding with a laugh, "I didn't really get a choice!"

She "absolutely loved" being a Gator, where she held season football tickets and enjoyed all the big social events. She sought out adventure, learning to fly airplanes and

"When you live around lights, you forget what the heavens really look like."

- SHERRY MCCAMPBELL

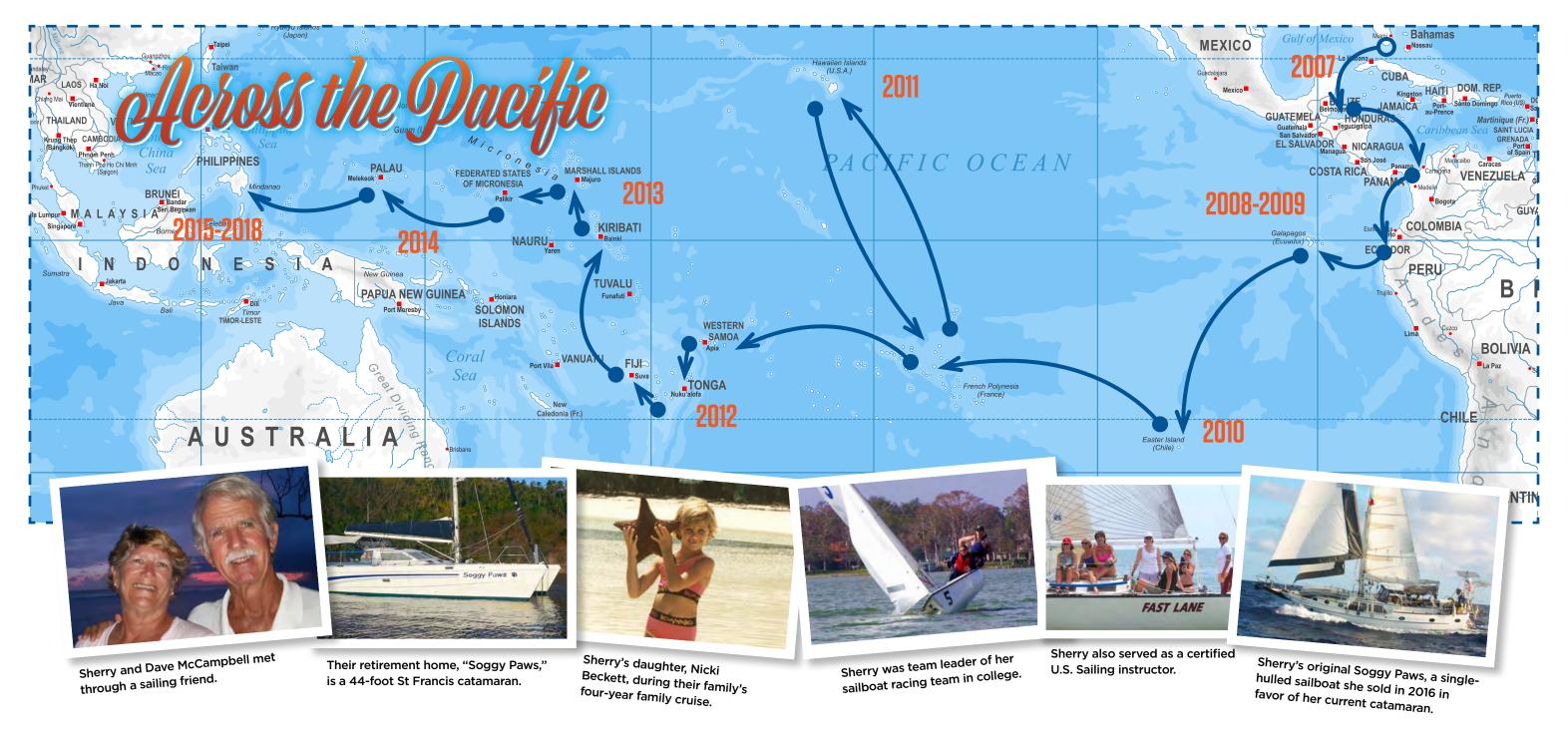
skydive while being academically inspired in the Honors Program by English professor and mentor Frank Sciadini — they became fast friends when she discovered he was building a boat in his living room. Sciadini (BA '58, MAT '60) died in 2004. "We had some lively conversations, and his good guidance helped me through 'big school' shock my first couple of years at UF," says McCampbell.

After graduating, she worked in industrial systems engineering and computer programming for 13 years before she and her first husband took a four-year sabbatical, sailing the Eastern Seaboard and Caribbean while homeschooling their then-five-year-old daughter.

Dave McCampbell, 74, went to Florida State before heading to the Naval Academy. He's the son of Capt. David McCampbell, the Navy's all-time leading flying ace who set an aerial combat record during World War II by shooting down nine enemy planes in a single mission during the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

It's no coincidence that the McCampbells ended up docked in the region of Dave's father's heroic feats. When they began charting their circumnavigation of the earth, they made sure to include stops in the South Pacific to dive war-era wrecks and connect with family history.

The McCampbells' joint adventure started when Sherry, a Coast Guard-licensed captain, certified U.S. Sailing instructor and former sailboat racing team leader, was



looking to date following her divorce. But she had requirements. Mainly, the guy had to have as much seawater in his veins as she did. Mechanical skills were a plus. Bonus points if he already owned a sailboat.

"A sailing friend gave me the names of three guys with boats looking for cruising partners, and Dave was actually at the bottom of that list," McCampbell says, laughing again. "Dave's not a party guy, and I'm kind of outgoing, but it works. He keeps me grounded. We respect each other's

abilities and make a really good couple."

They got married and set sail in the same week. Since then, they've visited dozens of exotic locales (with Fiji, the Solomon Islands and New Guinea being favorites so far) and return to the States about once a year (by plane) to see family and friends for the holidays, host seminars on long-distance cruising and try to catch a UF-FSU game. Email, social media and video chats keep them connected with loved ones while at sea.

They have a five-year timeline for completing their epic cruise — planned next stops include Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, followed by Sri Lanka, India and the Maldives. After that they'll cross the Indian Ocean and head up the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, where they want to cruise a bit before heading back to the States to sell the Soggy Paws.

"We learned that we are travelers rather than just sailors," McCampbell says. "This is why we're only halfway around after 13 years. There are so many great experiences, people and cultures along the way."

As they wait in port, this spirit serves them well. They share travel tales — "Remember hiking the active volcano in Guatemala? And that freak storm in French Polynesia that almost ran us into the reef?" — while sipping homemade wine with fellow cruisers also moored by the pandemic. McCampbell stays hopeful, looking toward new explorations after the cruise, when she and Dave plan a grand

tour of Europe by land. She knows she'll never sit still. And she won't stop sailing.

"It gives you the incredible feeling of being able to move without any motors— that quiet sound with a beautiful wing shape to the sails and you just go," McCampbell says, "And if you have enough patience and skill, you can go anywhere you want."

Out there on the seas where open sky meets horizon, the options seem limitless, like the stars themselves.

- Follow their adventures at svsoggypaws.com or on Sherry's blog svsoggypaws.blogspot.com
- Learn about long-distance cruising at the Seven Seas Cruising Association: ssca.org
- Read Sherry's favorite book on long-distance cruising: World Cruising Routes by Jimmy Cornell (cornellsailing.com)





Routine, Yet Extraordinary

UF students returned this fall to a wholly different university experience due to COVID-19

PHOTO ESSAY BY AARON DAYE

imple traditions, such as moving into UF residence halls, Greek recruitment and freshmen welcome events, looked quite different this fall when UF leaders added copious amounts of safety precautions to prevent a resurgence of the coronavirus pandemic on campus. On the following pages, see examples of these modified traditions for students who opted for brick-and-mortar learning in Gainesville, rather than remote, all-online course offerings.

ABOVE: Freshman John White, followed by his mother, Becky White, and family friend, Herman Durias, moved into Reid Hall this fall during a pre-determined time window, in order to create space between his family and those of other hall residents.

TOP RIGHT: Advertising senior Julie Thomas, left, and microbiology junior Tim Buchanan trek through Turlington Plaza in September. Prior to the pandemic, this space was often packed with students, organization booths and activities.



ABOVE: UF staff added signs throughout campus that guide physical distancing efforts and remind people to wear their masks and practice pandemic precautions.





FAR LEFT: Delta Gamma sorority sisters virtually welcome new members during Bid Day 2020.

LEFT: Plexiglass separates freshman biology major Maryanne Bowns (right) from Krishna Lunch server Madhu Miele (left) near Library West.



LEFT: The Great
Gator Welcome
Film Fest at
the Stephen
C. O'Connell
Center required
students to sit
with their own
"QuaranTeam"
and socially
distance from
other designated
groups.







FAR LEFT: Freshman Gian Franco Madonia, left, transfer student Trevor Wayne, right, and freshman Graham Corbitt introduce themselves to each other while waiting for their first class outside Constans Theatre by the Reitz Union.

LEFT: A UF Hispanic-Latinx Affairs staffer at La Casita uses Zoom to host ADELANTE, a three-day networking and transition-to-college program for incoming Latinx students. This event typically takes place in person at La Casita.

ABOVE: Freshman Yusra Ahmed practices physical distancing while playing Simon Says during the Sweet Event first-year student welcome reception on the J. Wayne Reitz Union north lawn.



GREAT GATORS WITH GREAT NEWS

WHEN HARTS DEPLOY, GATORS WIN



The Hart family from North Central Florida — who have an even dozen Gators in their ranks — say another UF national title is likely on its way. Their premonition is based on a parallel they say is too strong to be coincidence: Each time a family member is deployed overseas, the Gators win a title.

It started in 2003 when patriarch, now retired U.S. Army Lt. Col. **Robert "Bobby" Hart** (BSJ '76, MAMC '95), was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq. His sister, **Rebecca Hart Blaudow** (BSTel '91) of Neptune Beach, asked him to take along an Albert stuffed animal and send back letters to the then-third grade class of her son, **Jacob Blaudow** (BA '20). Bobby did, and during his tour the Gators defeated Ohio State to win the national football title on Jan. 8, 2007.

"Ours was the command unit, and we had a sub-unit from Columbus, Ohio," said Bobby, who added that he watched the title match with a handful of Gators and about 30 Buckeye fans. When Ohio State scored the first touchdown

of the game, a higher ranking officer from Ohio came toward Bobby and shouted "Welcome to big boy football!" Of course the Buckeyes scored only once more in the game, losing 41-14, and the officer had to admit defeat to Bobby the next morning in their mess hall.

During Bobby's next deployment to Bagdad and Iraq in 2006-07, he again took the Albert plushie and sent messages and photos back to the first grade students taught by his wife, **Cheryl Hart** (BAEd '76). The result: two Gator national titles were secured in football and basketball.

Bobby's son, Air Force Lt. Col. **Dustin Hart** (BSPR '02), was the next to deploy to Afghanistan in 2008-09. He also took the Albert stuffed animal and sent letters to his nephew Alex Blaudow's elementary class (Alex is now a UF aeronautical engineering freshman). The Gators came through again to win the BCS football title.

Considering the strength of their family's influence, this spring **Jonathan Hart** (BSAdv '05) asked when a family member could deploy again to spark another Gator title. Shortly after, they learned that Dustin was to report for duty in Qatar. He's there now, with Albert, writing letters to his own four kids, as well as his nieces and nephews. The Harts say this means another title is surely not far away.



"I saw the impact that teaching can make when you push students to think critically and to engage with difficult conversations. I love my research. I love working with communities. But every student that comes away ... thinking about the world in a different way or having found their own place ..., makes it all worth it."

— MARY RODRIGUEZ (MS '10, PHD '15), ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AT OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, WHO RECEIVED THE EDUCATOR AWARD FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGES OF TEACHERS OF AGRICULTURE. RODRIGUEZ TEACHES A VARIETY OF COURSES FOR UNDERGRADUATES AND GRADUATE STUDENTS. SHE LIVES IN COLUMBUS, OHIO.





1950s-era UF vs. Clemson football game in Gainesville, courtesy of UF Digital Collections Library

By Joe Cocke ('49), age 99, a WWII veteran who started his UF career in 1940 and finished his degree after he returned from the war

HIGHLIGHTS:

- My dad taking me and my older brother to at least one Florida game each year from 1926 until dad's death in 1937
- Each year stopping to get a hot dog and a soda before the game

UF MEMORIES:

"Most of my pre-WWII classmates are now deceased or have health problems, so I've had no contact with those men during the past several years. I don't run marathons or climb mountains but am currently trying to complete two books. One covers some of my WWII and Korean War experiences, and the other, life experiences."

"I will never forget the sign that hung in the old Florida Union, 'As you travel on through life, whatever be your goal. Keep your eye upon the donut and not upon the hole."

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ULTIMATE TAX COACH

Brad Gould (BSAC '98, MACC '98, JD '01) of Port Saint Lucie, a shareholder in the Dean Mead law firm, has been named chair of the American Bar Association Tax Section's S corporations Committee — a two-year term. In addition to focusing on the federal treatment of S Corp businesses, this committee also proposes and comments on pending federal legislation, regulations and revenue rulings.

FROM MARKET TO MARKET

Michael Monahan (BSPR '96) is president and CEO of Moxē, an integrated marketing agency in Orlando. His 25 years of corporate communications and public relations experience has taken him to Tech Image in Chicago, Timken in Canton, Ohio, Walter Energy in Tampa, Birmingham, AL, and Vancouver, and IMC Phosphates in Mulberry. Moxē is a subsidiary of Massey Services, the nation's fifth largest pest prevention company.



GARDEN OF GATORS

Ira Griffith (BSJ '74) of Johns Creek, GA, said after seeing so many interesting license plates in this magazine, he thought fellow alumni might get a kick out of his Gator garden.





GATOR FAMILY GAMES

Paul Goldman (BSEE '67) of Rye, NH, said his younger brother, Leonard Goldman (BFA '68, EDS '76, MEd '74) of Valparaiso painted this mural on the 20-by-20-foot game room wall in Ben Goldman's (BSEE '61), their older brother's, house in Weirsdale. Paul noted that his brother included a rocket in the background of the painting as a nod to Cape Canaveral. The brothers say that the entire game room is Gator-themed. Their sister, the late Jacquelin Goldman (BA '56), spent her entire 35-year career as a UF psychology professor and created graduate fellowships, scholarships, grants and travel stipends at UF to assist developmental psychology students. The Goldman family includes 14 Gators across four generations.



ON AIR IN 3, 2, 1

Ryan Rothstein (BABA '96) is the new president and general manager of the WPTZ and WNNE Hearst TV stations that cover the Burlington, VT, and Plattsburgh, NY, markets. This promotion comes after 23 years of service at WPBF in West Palm Beach, where he held the Health and Wellness Festival, featuring Dr. Oz, and developed a data-focused sales initiative that was adopted by many Hearst stations. Rothstein said he got his start in the industry by interning at WPBF during his junior year at UF. When he's not working, Rothstein is likely running or preparing for a marathon.



Retired Marine fighter pilot Lt. Col. **Richard Allain** (BSES '99), who recently co-founded a tech start-up, is says he's worn his UF Cicerone shirt with pride since graduation, "but after hundreds of tours and now 20 years, it's become a bit thread bare."

He said the shirt has led him to meet quite a few other Gators over the years, including his TOPGUN senior instructor. They both later commanded fighter squadrons, which Allain says is no coincidence.

"I've always thought it was a cool way to show my Gator pride, and it continues to generate interest," said Allain, who now lives in Cabin John, MD.

In honor of his service as a Cicerone and in the military, the UF Alumni Association recently sent Allain a new Cicerone staff shirt.



TRUE TECH-SPARKED EQUALITY

Meher Kasam (MS '12) is a senior software engineer for Square in San Francisco and likely one of the most famous Gators you've never heard of.

A champion of accessibility and inclusion, AI expert, author and speaker, Kasam's work at Microsoft Research yielded several projects that have empowered millions of people with accessibility needs worldwide, including those with visual, hearing, learning and motor impairments. His technologies include real-time interpreting, multi-voice text-to-speech and personalized audio and/or video shows.

The American Council of the Blind, Federal Communications Commission, annual Consumer Technology Association trade show and Fast Company magazine have all heralded his work for improving technology for people with disabilities. His groundbreaking work was also featured on the Netflix series "Bill Nye Saves the World."

As an author, Kasam advocates that tech companies and staff break down barriers to full inclusion and equality for disabled persons and other underrepresented communities, and for the power of AI to transform lives and for using technical talents for social good.

In his spare time, Meher mentors people from underrepresented groups who transition from non-STEM fields into the technology sector. In April, Meher was named to the UF Alumni Association's 40 Gators Under 40 list, which honors outstanding young alumni whose achievements positively influence others and who are going greater in their communities and professions.



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Good Reads

TEACHING GENERATIONS

Barbara Connolly (BSPT '70) published the fourth edition of her globally distributed textbook, "Therapeutic Exercise for Children with Developmental Disabilities." She was University of Tennessee's physical therapy department chair for 24 years and its College of Allied Health Professions dean at the time of her retirement in 2010. She now lives in Melbourne Beach and continues to teach professional development courses both nationally and internationally.

LIFE, LESSONS AND FORGIVENESS

Tina Egnoski (BA '83) published a historical fiction novel, "Burn Down This World," about UF students who faced the anti-Vietnam War movement and social unrest on campus, and how it changed the course of their lives long after the 1960s were over. Egnoski, who drew upon her own experiences at UF, works in the Rhode Island School of Design's Liberal Arts Division.

TRIBUTE TO A MAYAN SCHOLAR

Matthew Watson (MA '05, PhD '10) of South Hadley, MA, published Afterlives of Affect about the life and work of artist and Mayanist scholar Linda Schele (1942-1998). His book connects Schele with a discussion about anthropology, the nature of cultural inquiry and the social conditions of knowledge production.

LITTLE-KNOWN ICON IS REVEALED

Linda Hansen Caldwell (BSPE '76),

a member of UF's first volleyball team who went on to be a health educator and science teacher at John Gorrie Jr. High in Jacksonville, wrote a biography about Gorrie, a physician, inventor, scientist and public health educator. He vowed to cure malaria and yellow fever, and in pursuit of that goal discovered how temperature affected the likelihood of epidemics. Called "He Made Ice and Changed the World," the book explores the life of this underrated historical figure. Caldwell lives in Dunnellon, where she is retired and enjoys attending every UF volleyball match possible. Incidentally, UF's College of Medicine annually grants a John Gorrie

Award to the senior who shows the "best all-around promise for becoming a physician of the highest type."

FIRST NOVEL IS A WINNER

William Schreiber (BSJ'86) won the Rising Star Award from the Women's Fiction Writers Association for his debut novel, Someone to Watch Over, a multigenerational Southern family saga. Schreiber, a former editor of FLORIDA GATOR (then known as University of Florida TODAY), is the owner of Schreiber Media LLC in Seattle.

MULTILAYERED MYSTERY

Deborah Matthies-D'Aurelio (BSADV '89) spent 15 years working in advertising, starting her career at J. Walter Thompson in Los Angeles. She then freelanced while raising two children in Atlanta. Most recently, she published her first novel aimed at middle school ages called The Secret Notebook. The historical mystery combines fact with fiction and includes STEM tie-ins to encourage girls to be inventive and explore fields in engineering.

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GIMME SOME OF THAT



Desert Gator Club member **Edith** Metzger in Scottsdale, AZ, said she adopted this little girl, whom she named "Baby Gator," after the pup and her eight brothers and sisters were found under a porch on Thanksgiving and taken to an animal shelter. Metzger helped nurse Baby Gator back to good health. Now five years later, Baby Gator still loves wearing her UF jersey and cheers for the boys and girls in orange and blue by barking whenever Metzger says "Go Gators!"



O Derrick Kopeck (BSH '04) made sure his "future Gators" triplets. Wyatt. Kyra and Antonella Kopeck, have all the Gator gear they need. The Music City Gator Club members live in Nashville, TN, where Derrick is an auto insurance claims supervisor.



car parades in June to celebrate each of the local UF-bound high school seniors who won \$1,000 scholarships through the club's Emerson Scholarship program. Club President Sarah Stephens said members are proud of these local students, who started their college journeys at UF this fall. Those pictured are (from left) Jim Hannigan, Rodney Fisher, Abigail Berlin (scholarship winner), Renee Dabbs, Stephanie Barthel, Sarah Stephens and Rachel Franzek

Since group events worldwide are suspended due to coronavirus concerns, Florida Gator magazine asked Gator Club members how they're sharing their Gator pride in the meantime. The following are just a few of their replies. To find a Gator Club near you, visit UFalumni.ufl.edu/GatorClubs/Find





Atlanta Gator Club member Laura Coffee made this game day outfit for her pet guinea pig, Chauncey. Coffee says her boyfriend, Skyler Thornton ('03-'05), who was a UF running back, taught Chauncey all about football. "He loves to get dressed and watch the games with us! We all cheer together and have a great time." Coffee is a senior travel agent. She and Chauncey live in Lawrenceville, GA.





GATORS AROUND THE WORLD

Since most people are stuck sheltering at home, enjoy these recently submitted reader photos from past and present adventures.



Marines Capt. Brian Barnes (BA '12) showed his Gator spirit during a deployment "somewhere in the Mediterranean." His mother, Karen Green Barnes (BHS '80, MHS '82), proudly shared the photo with Gator Nation.



A gaggle of these UF engineering graduates enjoyed an Alaska fishing trip together. From left are Trase Travers (BSCE '91) of Tampa, Oscar Tazoe (MSCE '00) of West Palm Beach, Clayton Syfrett (BSCE '92) of Panama City and Jonathan Milton (BSCE '90) of Stuart.



John Jones (JD '75, LLM '76) of Gainesville took his Gator flag to the Antarctic Peninsula in February.





Angie Foister Hingson (BSTel '98) of Lake City said she loved representing the Gator Nation in Israel at the Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea and the Mount of Olives.



Herb McReynolds (BS '74, MD '78) of Tucson, AZ, and Ret Thomas (BA '75, EDS '78, MEd '78) of Gainesville took this flag and their families through Lower Antelope Canyon, AZ.



Get away with a day to play and rediscover Gainesville! Many museums have reopened with enhanced safety protocols, creating opportunities to explore more than 600 artifacts and paintings at the Harn Museum of Art, the Butterfly Rainforest at the Florida Museum of Natural History, and the Brain: The World Inside Your Head exhibit at the Cade Museum. Outdoor enthusiasts can view the rare giant Victoria lilies at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, or cool off in the area's fresh water springs and more. Your next unforgettable

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LEGENDARY GATOR

UF football wide receiver **Aubrey Hill** (BSESS '96, MSRS '99) of Hollywood died Aug. 16 of cancer while he was preparing for his fourth season as receivers coach at Florida International University.

During his UF career (1991-94), Hill caught 87 passes for 1,454 yards and 18 touchdowns during the program's first three SEC Championship-winning seasons. He is also one of only a handful of players for whom Coach Steve Spurrier named a play.

"Aubrey Hill was ... the first wide receiver that I ever used as a tight end," Spurrier said. "I still remember two of his greatest plays: a seam route to beat South Carolina in 1992 that helped us win the division and a pass he caught from Chris Doering that set up the game-winning touchdown versus Alabama in 1994. He will always be remembered as a truly wonderful teammate and Gator. He will be missed."

Hill is survived by his wife, Shanae, and young son. Hill was 48.



FABULOUS FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE

Meredith Cochie Ross (BSJ '06, MAMC '08) died on June 13 from injuries received in a hit-and-run accident. For the past 10 years, she was a course director and professor of New Media Journalism and Public Relations graduate programs at Full Sail University in Winter Park. While she was an undergraduate and graduate student at UF, she contributed stories and other efforts to produce this alumni magazine and encourgaged scores of high schoolers to pursue journalism by organizing and leading UF's Summer Journalism Institute, now called the Summer Media Institute. Ross is survived by her husband, Erikk Ross, and their young son. Ross was 36. thefabulouslifeofmeredithcochie.com.



MASTERFUL LEADER

Native Gainesvillian **Johnny Arnette** (BAEd '56, MEd '63, DEd '66) died Aug. 29 after a short illness. The former UF assistant dean of men was also a catcher on UF's 1956 SEC Championship-winning baseball team. During the late '60 when Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam War protests were prevalent, students often turned to him for guidance and bail. He was a P.K. Yonge lifer (attending K-12) who played on its 6-man football team and its first 11-man football team, as well as other sports. A PKY Sports Hall of Fame member and Distinguished Alumnus, he was a fixture at PKY and UF events during his retirement, encouraging students of all ages. He served in other educational leadership roles at UF, Albany Junior College and the University of North Florida. He was a licensed private-practice psychologist for more than 20 years and an ordained pastor, leading congregations from age 18 until the week before his death. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Betty Arnette. He was 86.



SHOOTING STAR

ESPN reporter **Edward Aschoff** (BSJ '08) died of undiagnosed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (which presented as pneumonia) on Dec. 24, his 34th birthday. He covered SEC sports before moving to Los Angeles in 2017 for a more expanded television reporting post. Over the past three seasons, he reported for ESPN.com, SportsCenter, SEC Network and ESPN Radio. Before that, he covered UF football. baseball and basketball for the Gainesville Sun newspaper. Among his numerous awards was a Football Writers Association of America first place story on racism and African American college football players. In his memory, the association created a rising star award for sports journalists under the age of 34. In addition, UF created the Edward Aschoff Memorial Fund to support students pursuing sports journalism, and the UF Alumni Association named him to its 40 Gators Under 40 list, which honors outstanding young alumni.



TRAILBLAZING RESEARCHER

Shere Hite (BA '63, MA '66) died Sept. 9. Her research in 1976 single-handedly debunked many aspects of Sigmund Freud's widely accepted theories about women and sexuality, and revealed that women didn't need men to have orgasms. The Hite Report offered data from 3,500 women, sparked scathing rebuttals and sold millions of copies worldwide. During a 2006 interview, she said one of her greatest achievement was revealing the physiology behind women's orgasms. In another interview, she said she felt proud to have "contributed significantly" to research methodology. "After all," she said, "Freud only interviewed three Viennese women." Hite's later books explored male sexuality, emotional abuse in purportedly "loving" relationships and common themes in the sex lives of British women. Throughout her career, Hite's reputation was often attacked and her feminist label demonized. She moved to Europe in 1989 and renounced her U.S. citizenship a few years later. She was 77.



BEFORE INDIANA JONES, THERE WAS ...

... Edwin "Ed" Brownell (BSEng '47) of Coral Gables, who died of natural causes on July 23 under a Gator blanket lovingly made by his daughter. In 1954, he founded E.R. Brownell & Associates surveying firm in Miami, which catered to clients in Florida, the Caribbean and beyond, and quickly gained an adventurous reputation. As such, the federal government tapped him to research and survey Andros Island caves as part of a secret Cold War program. The feds later had him map Antigua's coastline and the boundaries of Everglades National Park. These jobs were often treacherous, as he and his team encountered poisonous snakes, alligators, 6-plus-feet tall, 300-pound surly natives and even bank robbers who were hiding out in the swamp and briefly took their team hostage. Brownell was a longtime friend of Buffalo Tiger, leader of the Miccosukee Tribe in the Everglades. He also helped found the Florida and national associations for professional land surveyors, serving as the first national president in 1978. In fact, he was one of the last surveyors with a three-digit license number. Described by his staff as efficient and skillful, he continued working in the 28 years after his retirement. He was passionate about education, supporting UF/IFAS' work in geomatics and creating a \$2 million engineering chair. He was 95.



TRUE BLUE GATOR

Ben Hill Griffin III (BS '62), died of cancer on July 25. The thirdgeneration citrus grower and cattle rancher lived in Frostproof and grew up learning the family business from his father, Ben Hill Griffin Jr., the namesake of UF's football stadium. Griffin's business success led him to be inducted into both the Florida Agricultural and Florida Citrus halls of fame. A prolific philanthropist, just like his father, Griffin passionately funded numerous educational endeavors. For instance, his donation of 1,000 acres kicked off the construction of Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Meyers. He also endowed scholarships at UF, Florida Southern College, Webber International University, Bethune Cookman College, Stetson University and Warner University. The Gator Boosters lifetime member and legacy director had attended home Gator football games since the mid-50s and had a UF stadium seat that belonged to his father and dated back to 1949. He was 78.

WHO'S UNDER THAT GATOR MASK?





Cynthia Moreau (BSA '10, DPH '14), a pharmacist and Palm Beach Gator Club member



Bob Fontneau (BSJ '81), Rocky Mountain Gator Club member, online content provider and longtime Denver resident



Gotham Gator Club member and educator Lindsay Schneider (BSAdv '03) of Manhattan made this mask to show her Gator pride while running in Central Park.



Atlanta Gator Club members Anais Lopez Brown (BA '08), an attorney, and Carl Brown (BA '06), IT company director, from Sandy Springs, GA



Charlotte Gator Club member **Elizabeth Kovacs** (BSPR '96) with her 9-vear-old son, Clark

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FloridaGator@ ufalumni.ufl.edu

DO YOU HAVE A CREATIVE WAY OF SHOWING YOUR GATOR PRIDE ON THE ROAD?



1. John Banister of Mooresville, NC, is a senior technology manager at Wells Fargo and a Charlotte Gator Club member.



2. Darcy Grabenstein (BSJ '79) of Burlington, N.J. shows her Gator pride all the way up in the Garden State. She is a senior manager of content marketing strategy for TrialScope.



3. Daniel Perry (BA '76) of Jacksonville said he and his wife. Bonnie. love the Gators and the Beatles



4. B. Mark Berman (BA '84) sports these plates on his vehicles. He is the director of operations for Taylor Morrison Homes in Austin, TX.



5. Brian Natwick (BSBC '97) is president of **Crescent Communities** in Charlotte, NC, where he sports this plate.



6. Ralph Vernon Rodgers (BSA '67) is a retired salesman near Groveland, RVR is his registered cattle brand



7. Robert "Bing" Crosby (BSPE '72) of Clearwater shared these tags that he secured for his vehicles



8. Michael "Chris" McGlaughlin (BSESS '89) got this plate after UF's 2008 football national championship when he lived in Waynesville, OH, He and his wife moved back to Florida last year.



9. Ricky Merola (BSSPM '09) shows his Gator pride in Bardonia, NY. He works for the Performance Health Institute in Pearl River, NY.



10. Jennifer "Jeno" Miller (MS '13, PharmD '16) lives in Toquerville. UT. She is a consultant pharmacist for Omnicare in Utah and a clinical pharmacist for Valley Hospital Medical Center in Las Vegas.



11. Ed (MSEES '93) and Joanne Kertis (BSA '84) had this tag when they lived in Honolulu. They're back home in Key West now, where they own a charter sailing business, Aloha Sailing Key West.



12. Gary Collings (DEd '73) spends summers in Westfield, IN, and winters in The Villages. This tag has been on his car between his two homes and across the country during the past 25 years.



13. Eric Heinrich (BSCE '79) retired after 26 years in the Air Force and then again after building U.S. Embassies. Now he and his Purple Heart recipient wife, Karen, live in Bostwick on the St. John's river.



14. Sharon Berkebile Printy (BSESS '97) is a travel agency owner and agent in Lake Mary who sports this tag on



(BSBA '72) is a Warrington College of **Business Distinguished** Alumnus who is retired in Dade City. He ordered this personalized tag to show his Gator spirit.



16. Roger DeVore (BCE '60) of Columbus, IN, says, "It's fun to be approached by other Gators when traveling." He and his wife, Ann, are both UF Alumni Association charter life members



17. Elizabeth Bright's (BA '88, MEd '89, EDD '96) tag reflects her three UF degrees. She, her husband, Blaise (BA '88, MS '91), and their children, Sally (BS '18) and UF freshman Paul. are from Bradenton



18. Ted Bujak (PharmD '01) dons this tag in North Las Vegas, NV, where he retired after 45 years as a pharmacist.



19. Krystina Sarff (PhD '15), the University of Oklahoma's assistant rowing coach since 2018, used this tag when she helped coach the University of Michigan's Wolverine rowers (2014-2018).



20. Gini Geary (BSPR '87, MAE '90) of Wasilla, AK, is a librarian and former adjunct professor for the University of Alaska's Matanuska-Susitna College, about 40 miles north of Anchorage.



Jodi Mirman (BSESS '92) said she's thinking of all the Gators out there coping with the pandemic. Her husband. Andrew Mirman (BSBA'93) is a general contractor, and they live in Akron, Ohio.



21. High school teacher



22. Mike Kaliszeski (BAE '72, PhD '86) said people thought his tag was special ordered, but "it was just the next one in the stack." He lives in Melbourne where he is president emeritus of Eastern Florida State College's Melbourne campus.



23. Mark Farber (BSSE '69) is a retired research fisheries scientist and professor who lives in Coral Gables, where he sports this plate.



24. Robert Renner (BS '69. Mag '71) is a UF/ IFAS agricultural agent emeritus (launched UF's first sheep study) who lives in Cocoa. The word for a female sheep, "ewe" is prounounced "U" or "you."

MAKE YOUR MOVE TO HIGHER EDUCATION



I chose to study at UF because it is a top-ranked research institution with an impeccable reputation in business. The UF DBA program allowed me to spend time on campus and develop wonderful relationships that will serve me well in years to come. It has allowed me to significantly sharpen my thinking and evaluate academic research on the basis of evidence.

INGA MOFFITT (DBA '22), Higher Education Sales Consultant, Apple Inc. Vanderbilt MBA, North Carolina A&T engineering.

MORE INFORMATION

→ warrington.ufl.edu/DBA or contact Angie at: angie.woodham@warrington.ufl.edu



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A portion of the proceeds collected from the transportation costs will be paid to the UF Alumni Association.



Contact Tom Larkins (The Gator Relocator) 941-320-3113

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WELCOME, LIFE MEMBERS!

MEET FELLOW GATOR: **PHILLIP CHENG**

"BECOMING A GATOR DOESN'T ALWAYS START

when you receive your acceptance letter to UF. For me, it happened in the most unexpected of places — Connecticut.

My freshman year, UF's Multicultural and Diversity
Affairs sponsored students to attend the largest Asian
American student conference on the East Coast.
Arriving late to the opening keynote speech, 20 of us
Gators layered in orange and blue sweatshirts, jackets
and beanies marched into the auditorium to the surprise
of the other conference attendees. In that moment,
multiple parts of my identity — being a first-generation
college student, Asian American and a Florida Gator —
all coalesced into one space, and all I felt was pride for
who I was and the institution I represented.

Similarly, becoming a UF Alumni Association life member doesn't happen the moment you walk across

the stage at graduation. For me, it happened when year after year I would return to UF to visit friends, professors and junior classmates. It happened when I had no inhibitions of yelling "Go Gators" at the sight of another Gator in different parts of the world. It happened when I realized The Swamp will always be my home and that I will always bleed orange and blue.

I believe it's so important for Gators of all colors, shapes and sizes to be seen, to share their stories, and to be involved always for the greater good. The UF Alumni Association offers opportunities to do just that, so that's why I became a life member."

 Phillip Cheng (BSISE '11, BA '11) of Lakeland, now lives in San Francisco, where he works in the educational technology startup industry in Silicon Valley and is an Ethnic Studies lecturer at Laney College in Oakland. He is an active member and volunteer with UF's Asian Alumni Association.

24,517

OF YOUR **FELLOW GATORS** ARE **LIFE MEMBERS** OF THE UF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Membership dues support alumni programs, student scholarships and UF's ranking as a top public university. Your UF Alumni Association is proud to keep Gators connected to campus and to each other. **JOIN**TODAY by visiting ufalumni.ufl.edu or calling 352-392-1905.



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GATORS HIRING GATORS

Think your company has a lot of Gators in its ranks? Well, check out these industry leaders, whose recruiters go out of their way to hire UF graduates because of the training, internships and preparation received at UF.



APOPKA, FL | A PLANT TISSUE CULTURE PROPAGATOR

AND STARTER PLANT SUPPLIER

SMALL, BUT MIGHTY: A significant portion of management are Gators, leading a staff of 120. Those pictured here are: **Johnny Hoblick** (BSAg '16), **Robert Kizer** (BSBA '14), **Kevin Dewansingh** (BSAg '19), **Andre Farrell** (BSAg '16) and **David Lawson** (BS '11). Not pictured is **Libbie Clark** (BS '17).

WHY UF? President Ty Strode said he's had "great success" with UF graduates: "We have seen passionate, well-rounded people come out of UF's programs. I've always appreciated how well the professors at UF encourage students to get out and network with industry. This is a critical connection that is invaluable to both companies and students."



FISHER INVESTMENTS*

TAMPA, FL | A FEE-ONLY MONEY MANAGEMENT ADVISER

SERVING INSTITUTIONAL AND PRIVATE CLIENTS GLOBALLY



GATORS GALORE: Gators Galore: More than 50 Gators work across all Fisher Investment locations (Camas, WA; Plano, TX and Tampa, FL)

FISHER GATORS SAY: "From the start, FI felt like home," said **Kirsten Forrester** (BAPS '13, MS '14), U.S. private client group training and development team leader. "As a college grad seeking a way to better lives and pursue the unpursued, it was absolutely inspiring to find a place that encourages the same values I found at UF."

SHOW THAT SPIRIT: "We have flags that hang from our computers, we wear our orange and blue on Fridays before games, and we always, always, always say, "Go Gators!" to the Florida State grads," said Forrester.

WHY UF? "I really enjoy hiring Gators because UF produces high-performing individuals who can learn quickly on the fly, have great attitudes and a willingness to collaborate and innovate — all qualities that make them perfect fits," said David Mussat (BSTel '14), client service associate team leader. "Gators come in with a lot of fundamental skill sets already in place, which translates to a very high level of success."



MELBOURNE, FL | A GLOBAL AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE

TECHNOLOGY INNOVATOR ACROSS AIR, LAND, SEA, SPACE AND CYBEI

DOMAINS THAT STRIVES TO MAKE THE WORLD MORE SECURI

PARTNERS: L3Harris recruits 75% of its new college grads from its partner schools, of which UF is one.

L3HARRIS GATORS SAY: "The Gator Nation is very well represented here, especially in engineering," said Johnny Hardison (BSEE '15). "As an electrical engineer, I get to innovate and put things together as well as take things apart. And as campus brand manager, I get to genuinely encourage, connect with students and support others, while hiring as many Gators as possible. Go Gators!"

BEST OF THE BEST: "We assessed how UF grads do relative to other institutions and found that UF grads tend to be in the higher performance levels of the company," said **Bill Gattle** (MSME '87), president of Space Systems departments.

GREAT FIT: "We love hiring UF engineering interns and graduates because many of them come with excellent outside-of-coursework experience," said **Nathan Nipper** (MSEE 'O1), senior director of Electrical Engineering departments. "UF has a number of great research labs, teams and competitions — like the Machine Intelligence Lab, Gator Motorsports, Autonomous Vehicles, High-Performance Computing Lab — where students have gained valuable hands-on experiences … Because of this, UF students are able to … make important contributions right away."

ND CYBER TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE RESIDEN

WE LOVE HIRING UF ENGINEERING INTERNS AND GRADUATES BECAUSE MANY OF THEM COME WITH EXCELLENT OUTSIDE-OF-COURSEWORK EXPERIENCE.

— Nathan Nipper, L3HARRIS

Gartner

FORT MYERS, FL | **THE WORLD'S LEADING RESEARCH AND**

ADVISORY COMPANY, EQUIPPING LEADERS WITH INDISPENSABLE

INSIGHTS, ADVICE AND TOOLS TO ACHIEVE THEIR MISSION-CRITICAL

PRIORITIES AND BUILD SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONS

GARTNER GATORS SAY: "Being a part of the Gator Nation means everything to me, and finding a company that values that is just as important," said **Madison Tighe** (BSBA '20) of Naples, who started full-time in the Fort Myers office in October. "During my internship, I felt empowered by the number of Gators who supported me. Many of them took time out of their schedules just to chat with me about our UF connections, and some of the alums weren't even in the same office."

WHY UF? "UF consistently prepares students for real-world experience, producing some of the best and brightest. They have been some of the most successful associates at Gartner," said Lisa LoCascio, senior vice president and corporate controller, whose daughter is a UF student. "The standards to which Gators are held during their time at UF is unmatched, and it shows!"



IT SHOWS!

— Lisa LoCascio, Gartner

Lisa Locascio, Gartilei

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🍸 n 1987 as a 29-year-old UF graduate, Yolanda Cash Jackson (BSJ '80, JD '90) surprised her family and friends by enrolling at UF's Fredric Levin College of Law. She had graduated from UF eight years before, earning a public relations degree. Yet, she was struggling to find her path.

At work in Gainesville, she had just been passed over for a promotion, which was given to her male counterpart who had no college degree. But as Jackson — now a successful state lobbyist — recently told law graduates as she addressed them from the O'Connell Center's commencement podium, "Setbacks are setups."

She explained that her earlier event of being "undervalued and underestimated" gave her the motivation and direction to find the right path for her life. In fact, it "proved to be my greatest personal triumph," she said.

Today, Jackson is a successful and well-known lobbyist and a shareholder with the Becker & Poliakoff law firm. She's spent the past 30 years honing her craft, forging relationships with lawmakers and state government staff, and influencing the laws that govern every Florida citizen. In short, she's found great joy by being able to "make right the things that are wrong."

A vivacious and enthusiastic Gator, Jackson recently inspired a host of UF law alumni, including Paul Perkins (JD '91) and Greg Francis (BA '91, JD '94) of Orlando, to

create a new scholarship for law students who've earned undergraduate degrees from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Jackson, Francis and Perkins brought the fund to its endowment minimum level of \$100,000. Since then, other alumni have swelled the fund to more than \$1.2 million. Alumni said they would like the fund to support 10 students per year, which would require a principle of \$2 million. They hope to reach this goal by 2022 and could use your help.

What would you like to see this scholarship achieve?

A perpetual, long-term path for predominantly Black students to become lawyers at UF's law school. Black people have excelled because of lawyers, but we still have so few. On the U.S. Supreme Court, the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg was for women what the late Thurgood Marshall was for Blacks. We need to build some more Thurgood Marshalls.

NUMBERS TO KNOW:

- <5% of Florida lawyers are **Black**
- O Florida's Supreme Court justices are Black
- 4 Black justices have served on the Florida Supreme Court since it began in 1846
- 2 Black justices have served on the **U.S. Supreme Court** since it began in 1790

What makes this scholarship particularly unique?

It was created, established and initially funded by Black UF alumni. We're the first generation to do this. When we went to UF, we were breaking barriers. Now, it's time for us to help the next generation. My dad was one of nine kids and the only sibling to complete college. He applied to UF but couldn't attend because of the systemic racism at that time: UF wasn't admitting Black students. In fact, the state of Florida had a program in which it paid Black students to get their degrees at out-of-state colleges. Dad ended up getting his degrees from Florida A&M and Indiana University, but he set the path for me and my brother to attend college. I started at UF in 1976 and was assigned to a triple in my dorm. One of my roommates moved out because her parents would not allow her to room with

a Black student. She didn't feel that way, and she and I are still friends to this day.

Why focus the scholarship on HBCU graduates?

Studies have shown that students from HBCUs are traditionally more confident and mentally prepared. They've just finished a college experience where they've been valued and no one has questioned their ability because of what they look like Also, studies show HBCU grads perform better in graduate programs than those who come from predominantly white institutions. By law, scholarships cannot be based on race. Florida used to offer scholarships for minority students [through MPLE funds], but as part of an agreement [in 1999], the Legislature did away with MPLEs in exchange for re-establishing FAMU's law school in Orlando.

NUMBERS TO KNOW:

- 90% of students who attend HBCUs are Pell Grant eligible, meaning they come from households that earn \$50K or less, which speaks to their financial need
- 80% of HBCU students are first in their families to attend college
- 52% of FAMU law school's enrollment is **Black**
- 25% of Orlando's population is Black

Tell me about Paul Perkins and Greg Francis.

Paul was the first to give to the scholarship fund, and Greg gave a larger amount. They're both amazing attorneys, good people and true philanthropists who've done so many good things for Florida, for their communities (in Orlando) and for our Black community.

What do few people know about you?

I'm the widow of former UF football linebacker Fernando Jackson (BA '88), No. 49, who died unexpectedly in December 1994. He was 34. It happened just 12 days after my father, James Cash, died. Fernando was a teacher and coach at North Miami High School. He encouraged me to get my law degree and even took up another job driving a frozen food truck while I was in school.

What's the last thing you posted on social media?

That UF is No. 6! Hey, that's really something to be proud of. I plastered that everywhere. We Gators have so much to be proud of in our alma mater. I bleed orange and blue.

Why should others care about philanthropy?

The more I give, the more I receive. It will come back to you, too. I am reminded that with a clenched fist squeezed tight nothing can get out of it. However, it is also difficult to receive anything in a clenched fist. You can only receive blessings by opening up your heart and giving your best to others. Give until it becomes a sacrifice. This type of giving will help you appreciate what you have and grant you the humility to keep it.

Any other details about the scholarship?

Our committee hasn't decided on the selection criteria yet. We have also talked about having each of the 10 scholarships named for significant individuals. I would support one being named for Greg Francis, and another for Paul Perkins. Some people told me that I should put my name on one, but it's not in my nature to put my name on things. I've received my blessings. I have thought about perhaps naming one for my dad, James Cash. That way he will have gotten to be a part of UF after all.

FOLLOW YOLANDA CASH JACKSON ON ...









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WINNING THE GAME OF LIFE

UF STUDENT-ATHLETES AND COACHES GET REAL ABOUT RACISM AND ENCOURAGE GATOR NATION TO LISTEN. LEARN AND ACT.

BY DENVER PARLER (MSSM '14)



his summer, while our nation was embroiled in protests and demonstrations following the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, UF athletes, coaches and athletics staff were asking, "What can we do?"

Lynda Tealer, the UF Athletic Association (UAA) executive associate athletics director for administration, led discussions that resulted in three actionable points: listen, learn and act ...

LISTEN

We can *listen* to understand, even when it's uncomfortable.



We can *learn* about root causes of racism and racial injustice including history, policy and attitudes.

AC1

And we can put our learning into action.

Soon, Listen, Learn & Act became a Florida Gators initiative that gave a voice to student-athletes and coaches who have experienced racism firsthand. It also gave those who have never experienced racism a glimpse into ways Black and minority people in sports are regularly marginalized. And it empowered coaches and team leaders to put new policies in place that ensure every Gator feels valued.

Moderated by UAA Director of Communications **Denver Parler** (MSSM '14), the YouTube series can be found on the Florida Gators channel. The series and the initiative go well beyond the previous webinar series, "A Conversation That Matters," and is composed of more than 20 UAA employees, who are working on a number of different fronts:

- Voting education for student-athletes and staff (where, when, how)
- Evaluating organizational structures and working toward making them more representative
- Community activities and involvement
- Staff training and onboarding
- Staff education (panel discussions, discussion groups, email newsletters)

The first three episodes combined for more than 10,000 views on YouTube, and the UAA has received notes of appreciation both from faculty and community members. UAA welcomes comments posted below each video.

UFF.TO/DWMS26

"IT WAS SO GOOD, SO
AMAZING. I WAS SUPER
SURPRISED. IT ALMOST MADE
ME TEAR UP. IF NOT FOR THAT
PLATFORM, I MAY NOT BE
SPEAKING OUT AS MUCH AS I
AM RIGHT NOW ABOUT IT ALL.
IT OPENED DOORS FOR US TO
SAY WHAT WE BELIEVE."

- Darrielle King, redshirt senior, volleyball



"ARE THEY PRODUCTIVE? YES.

100%. ... WE'RE A LARGE PART OF
WHAT THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE
TRYING TO BUILD AROUND, SO
WHY WOULD YOU NOT GIVE US
A VOICE? WHY WOULD YOU NOT
APPLY OUR VOICE? THE MORE MY
GENERATION SPEAKS OUT AND
TRIES TO INSTILL UNITY INTO THE
MINDS OF COLLEGE ATHLETES
AND THE GENERATIONS AFTER
US, HOPEFULLY WE CAN REACH
PEOPLE WHO ARE OLDER THAN
US WHO MAYBE DON'T WANT TO
LISTEN, BUT SHOULD LISTEN."

Scottie Lewis, sophomore, men's basketball



"Being a member of UF as a student-athlete and coach for many years, it personally means a lot to me that [UF] provided the opportunity for individuals to express their own thoughts, feelings and experiences. It allows for truthful, thoughtful and meaningful conversations."

 Anthony Nesty (BA '94), UF men's swimming & diving head coach and member of the SEC Council and Racial Equity and Justice

"It was really good, just having the space where you could be your whole self and not have to mask your feelings. When you can ... say how it is, there can be progress. Everybody had good things to say. It wasn't just, 'listen to



Black people.' ...It's bigger than Black and white. I can learn from white just like a white person can learn from me. It's humanity. It's one race: Black, white, Hispanic, Asian, we're all one. It's bigger than skin color."

— Anthony Duruji, junior, men's basketball



"I really appreciate the effort our athletic department made. There is so much work that needs to be done to make positive change ... and I am glad we identified the first steps. These discussions on the racism and inequality that exist are not easy.

However, I am encouraged that our athletes are passionately using their voices and people of all colors are listening."

Bryan Shelton, UF men's tennis head coach and member of the SEC
 Council and Racial Equity and Justice

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