

# The Clipper

For Friends & Supporters of Gulf Coast Community College



**SUMMER 2008**

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**Kid's College makes a BIG Splash**

**Gulf Coast collaborates with Bay County Emergency Services**

# Soaring with the Eagles



As the summer semester draws to a close, the faculty and staff met early August to begin planning for the new academic year. The theme for our professional development was appropriately named “Weathering the Storm.” Community colleges across the state are facing budget shortfalls, including Gulf Coast. However, we plan to succeed, improve and advance this institution to new heights, because I believe you can’t constrain ideas and innovation when budgets get tight.

I thought the storm analogy was a good one because it reminds us of the behavior of the strong, bold eagle. In a heavy storm, an eagle will go straight up, get above the storm and fly towards the blue skies. We will be like the eagle, soaring to new heights and leaving the storm behind. We acknowledge the budget cuts, but we will not let them control our future. Our students and our community deserve our best efforts, and we will continue our commitment to putting students first.

In the last issue of *The Clipper*, the new Strategic Plan was unveiled after many community forums, one-on-one interviews, web surveys, and other methods of gathering input and research. The plan is the voice of the College and provides the direction faculty, staff and administrators need to keep pushing us forward. This plan came from direct input from this community and we refuse to let it sit on a shelf because our funding may be more limited this year than in previous years.

In fact, we’ve already seen celebrations with certain elements of the plan, including the creation of the Connect! Program and with Kid’s College, both of which are showcased in this issue. We are communicating the College’s message to the community through every means possible, including our GC-TV channel. A new show called *College Talk* is a fresh effort to engage and inform the community through interviews with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community leaders. Like eagles, we elevate to the sun and see the many great happenings at our college and the impact we make with the community; we have great hope for the future, responding to our community and regional needs; our vision is to deliver life-changing learning opportunities and be in full partnership with our economic development of the region; we are positioned to clearly fly like eagles and are creating new pathways to success.

“He that lives in HOPE, dances without music.” ~ George Herbert

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Kelley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## ON CAMPUS

**Moving up the ranks** John Mercer takes on the position of Vice President of Administration & Finance. **4**

**GCCC Welcomes Dr. George Bishop** New Vice President is ready for challenges and opportunities. **5**

**Student Spotlight** Meet some of the students who make Gulf Coast special. **6**

**Alumni Association engages its graduates** Membership welcomes past and present students. **7**

**Emergency Operations Center ground breaking** Gulf Coast partners with Bay County for a safer future. **12**

**New partnership inspires the Connect! Program** GCCC and FSU PC team up to offer more opportunities. **15**

## FEATURE

**Kid's College makes a BIG splash!** Gulf Coast opens its doors to middle-schoolers across the service district for fun, hands-on career education. **8**

## DEPARTMENTS

**Highlights and Celebrations** **11**

**High Water Marks** **14**

**Last Look** **16**

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## ABOUT THE COVER

This middle-school “Engaging Environmentalist” participant in Kid’s College is all smiles as she examines a fish caught in the bay near Carl Gray Park.



*The Clipper* is published for friends and supporters of Gulf Coast Community College and the Gulf Coast Community College Foundation, Inc. Pictured above, Dr. Saundra Ciccarelli, faculty, Social Sciences, presents a check for \$25,000 to Dr. Jim Kerley, president (left), and Bill Cramer, chair, District Board of Trustees. This is a second contribution that completes the Charles R. Bond Scholarship and funds two more scholarships in honor of her father (the Lake W. Roaden Memorial Scholarship) and father-in-law (the Nicholas S. Ciccarelli Endowed Scholarship).

# Moving up the ranks

## John Mercer takes the reins of Vice President

John Mercer certainly is not *new* to the College, having given twelve years of service, but he is new to the position of Vice President of Administration & Finance.

Mercer's love of Gulf Coast began while he was a



**John Mercer**  
Vice President,  
Administration and Finance

student in the '70s. He jokingly credits the current attendance policy to the countless days he and his friends skipped class to enjoy the beach, only attending class to take exams.

His educational background did not stop with Gulf Coast. He continued on to earn his bachelor's degree in marketing from the University of West Florida. A few years later, he returned to UWF and later FSU to earn his master's degree in accounting. "At that time, Florida State University held classes at the old ship yard building. That was before they had the Panama City campus," he said.

After graduating with his master's, he began working for Sunshine Junior Stores as the Director of Accounting, where he worked for approximately twelve years. His career at Gulf Coast started in January of 1996 when he became the Coordinator of Accounting. Within a year of his hire, he advanced to Dean of Business Affairs where he has spent most of his career at GCCC.

As the Dean of Business Affairs and subsequent title change to Chief Financial Officer, Mercer has overseen the daily operations of the Business Office as well as the financial planning of the institution. With his advancement to vice president, he will continue to perform many of his previous functions, with the addition of overseeing and coordinating construction projects.

The transition to the new position has been a little bumpy for him and the staff of the Business Office, as they have taken over some of his former responsibilities. He has also been working closely with the former vice president of Administration & Finance, Dr. John Holdnak, on the finer details of construction projects.

"I'm excited! It's going to be fun and challenging. This is an important step for the College. And I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with so many others on campus and in the community," Mercer stated.

His home life consists of spending time with his wife, Pam, of 35 years – whom he met at Gulf Coast and married shortly after graduating – his son, daughter, son-in-law, and two granddaughters. "I don't have any hobbies," he joked. "I don't have time for them any more. I used to play golf every weekend." Mercer still plays golf from time to time, but usually only for charity events.

Education is an essential function of life for the Mercer family. "It's hard to think where we would be without education," he explained. Pam is a math teacher and the math division chair for Mosley High School and his daughter is a fourth grade teacher for Lynn Haven Elementary School.

Of course, education has played an important role in his life, too. "I think the best things about the College are the people and the mission. I've always liked working with the people here, they focus on a family type atmosphere," he said. "We are doing something that changes peoples lives. We really are giving back to the community."

# GCCC welcomes new Vice President, Dr. George Bishop

On July 14, Gulf Coast Community College welcomed Dr. George Bishop to his new position as Vice President of Academic Affairs & Learning Support. His many years of experience as a professor and administrator will serve the College well as he prepares for the new school year. Bishop succeeds Dr. Linda Adair, who retired this summer after 33 years with the College.

Bishop hails from Niagara County, NY, where he was the Executive Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs at Niagara County Community College. In that capacity, he served as the chief academic officer and was responsible for operations related to programs, resources, and planning for academics. Bishop's educational credentials were also top-notch: B.A. in philosophy, State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo, 1977; M.A. in English, SUNY at Buffalo, 1983; and Ph.D. in English, SUNY at Buffalo, 1985.

He chose GCCC because he felt the college was a good match with his experience in assessment and accreditation, curriculum development, and commitment to excellence in teaching. "Gulf Coast has a fine reputation and tradition as well as a proven record of quality teaching," he said. "The College has every right to be proud."

In his short time here, he has seen genuine excitement across the campus. "The increased level of options is welcoming. The sense I get is optimistic, open, and honest, and people are willing to make things work." Bishop joins Gulf Coast as the entire faculty and staff begin preparing for the next Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation visit. In his mind, "...the SACS review is first and foremost. That will drive everything we do. The goal of SACS is how to improve and make the college better," he explained.

Bishop is also interested in continuing and refining program review throughout the academic divisions. "I think it's important to keep up with the changing community needs," he said. "The College can also help bring in new industry though education and training as well as helping people achieve new workforce skills to

improve their lives."

Besides his knowledge of college administration, Bishop also has years of teaching experience at the collegiate level here as well as abroad. His two years as a Fulbright Professor in the Czech Republic gave him opportunities to expand his professional and personal horizons. "The real experience is living and becoming immersed in that culture, not just being a tourist or a visitor," Bishop said. As a Fulbright Scholar, he lived in the Czech Republic in 1992 and again in 1996, and met his wife, Andrea, during the first visit. They have been back to visit her family many times and their sons,



Thomas and David, were even given names that would be more easily pronounced in both languages.

During the 1996 appointment, he distinctly remembers teaching his class about American poet Walt Whitman. Bishop spoke to the students about Whitman's optimistic views and themes of grand visions and bright futures. By the end of the class, he ended up learning a great deal about how the Czech students' beliefs were completely different due to the decades of living under strict communist rule. "It was one those moments in teaching when the rug was pulled out from under me. Their comments made me stop and really listen to what they were saying," he said. "It was fascinating to see a culture create itself."

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



**Nate Pennington**

*Firefighting*

On August 7, twenty-three students graduated from the Firefighting Program. Among those twenty-three students stood a young man who had graduated from college twice before.

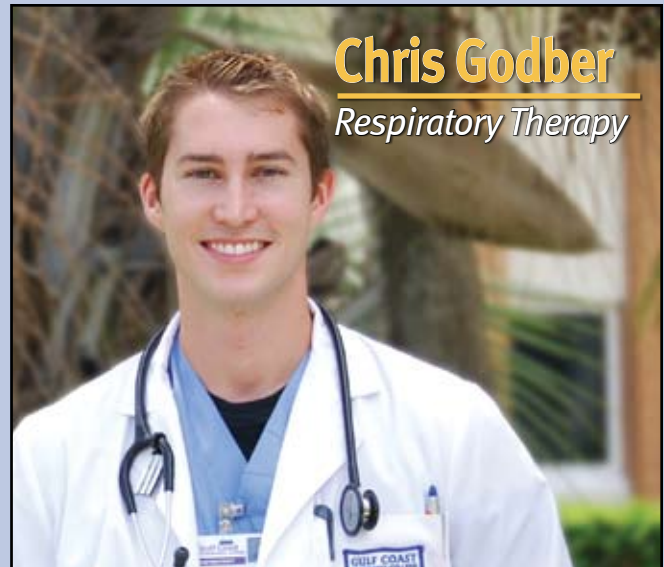
Nate Pennington's first graduation was from Gulf Coast Community College when he earned his Associate of Arts degree. The second graduation was when he received his bachelor's degree in Recreation Management from the University of West Florida.

Not long after his graduation from UWF, Nate decided that Recreation Management wasn't exactly for him. He then consulted a few close friends and enrolled in the Firefighting Program at GCCC.

Just like most new fathers, he had some difficulty juggling his family responsibilities and a full-time job. "The week after school started, my daughter was born," Nate explained. "I was able to take night classes and get through the whole program in seven months."

Basic Life Safety, First Responder Training, as well as the behavior and physics of fire are just a few of the essentials of becoming a firefighter. "The most exciting experience of the program was the live burn," he said. "You and a partner go into the burn building during a live burn. Your objective is to rescue a 180 pound dummy within three or four minutes."

Nate and the other twenty-two students now await the state test, which will certify them to become firefighters in the state of Florida.



**Chris Godber**

*Respiratory Therapy*

Don't tell Chris Godber that he can't do something, unless you intend for him to prove you wrong. "Tell me I can't do something, and I will prove that I can," Chris says with a smile.

It was that can-do attitude that led Chris to continue playing the saxophone, even after a doctor diagnosed him with asthma and said he would never play again.

Having respiratory problems as a child, he grew up with an understanding of the respiratory system and a respect for the treatments. However, it was not until his grandmother was hospitalized with pneumonia that he realized that respiratory therapy was a profession. By that time, Chris had already graduated from Gulf Coast Community College with an associate of arts degree with an emphasis on music, but that certainly did not stop him from applying to the Respiratory Therapy program.

He felt the desire to help others win the fight against respiratory problems, just as he had. His career choice also gives him the freedom to continue his work as a musician, performing shows on the weekends and working PRN during the week.

Chris' goals in life are simple. He wants to continue living his dream – being a Christian recording artist and helping others to live happy and productive lives through his work as a respiratory therapist.

# Alumni Association takes off

## Membership welcomes past and present students

**T**he Gulf Coast Community College Foundation is delighted to announce the creation of the new GCCC Alumni Association.

After many requests from GCCC alumni (and even some current students), the Foundation began laying the ground work for an Alumni Association. In July 2008, with the support and positive feedback from the community and the College, the Foundation moved forward in the initial stages of establishing this new organization.

Certain decisions had to be made first, such as its mission, the college's definition of alumni, and its operating structure. Even though the Alumni Association is guided by the Foundation, it will function independently to support the vision of the college. The overall mission of the Alumni Association is to ignite interest, build loyalty, and engage alumni, students, supporters, and friends of the College. Membership is offered to individuals who have completed 12 credit hours or more at Gulf Coast, with no distinction between degree course work or continuing education courses.

"I had just ended a 20 year marriage and was a single mom of six; I had not been in school for 20 years," explained Terry Ely, Elementary Teacher and GCCC Alumni Association Member. "My confidence was low. GCCC gave me a part-time job on campus and helped me enroll. The faculty and staff provided the encouragement and confidence I so desperately needed to make a change in my life. I am forever grateful to GCCC for inspiring me to go on and become the new person that I am today. I would love to encourage other students to experience what I did at GCCC. I owe so much to GCCC. I would love the opportunity to give back," she said.

Gulf Coast's five-year Strategic Plan highlights 'Collaborating with Our Community' as one of its major initiatives over the next five years. "The Alumni Association is a welcomed addition to the college. It will keep communication flowing and keep the community involved in the life of the institution," said President Dr. Jim Kerley. Having an active Alumni Association

will play a key role in educating the community about campus news and productivity as well as mentoring and encouraging students through workshops, career,

“The Alumni Association is a great way to stay connected, foster and strengthen the relationship between GCCC and its alumni and friends. We are honored to be a part of a new way to support our college.”

~ Dr. Stephen Myers, member, District Board of Trustees and Mary Jo Myers, member, Foundation Board of Directors.

and networking opportunities. Alumni will also find opportunities for volunteering in the community, re-connecting with classmates and friends, and recognizing their personal and professional accomplishments.

Having just launched the Alumni Association this summer, the initial membership growth has been steady and will continue to grow as more students and graduates hear of the news. To get the ball rolling, each graduate and student from the past ten years received a brochure in the mail with detailed information and a membership form. Many area businesses have chipped in to support this initiative by offering discounts and special benefits to alumni association members. The Visual & Performing Arts Division and the Athletics & Wellness Division have also chipped in to offer half-off discounts on event tickets.

Even though this initiative offers a lot of benefits to the Alumni and to the community, the comment heard the most from past and present students is much like the one from recent graduate, Lawrence E. Smith. Upon joining the Association he said, "I joined the Alumni Association to pay credit to the outstanding faculty and staff that made my experience the best that it could be. I truly learned from the knowledge and expertise that each professor brought to the table."

# WOOD'S COLLEGE



Ask anyone what they expect to see on a college campus and odds are no one will respond “middle schoolers.” Gulf Coast Community College defied the odds and brought together 62 middle school students as part of a newly summer program known as Kid’s College. Kid’s College is best explained in the words of one student: “Fun for your brain!”

The program began on July 21 and for many of the students, it was the first time they had stepped onto a college campus. It is hard to say whether it was the early hour of 8:00 a.m. or the fact that these students had no idea what to expect that brought about the silence on the first day, but whatever it was quickly faded. Friendships quickly formed as students set out in six different groups affectionately known as ‘flights’ to begin their adventures.

Flights were formed by combining students that had like interests. At the time of registration, students were asked to pick three career choices from a field of six which included Technology, Multimedia, Health Sciences, Public Safety, Natural Sciences, and Business and Service. From their choices, the flights were formed to give the students an overview of at least three different career choices with a primary concentration in their chosen field. In addition to career programming, each student was also introduced to specialized enrichment classes that could be useful in a wide range of careers.

Each morning at 8:00 a.m. the students invaded the Sarzin Lecture Hall to hear from various community leaders from organizations such as the Bay County Sheriff’s Office, Supervisor of Elections Office, and Shakespeare by the Bay. In addition to these great partners, students also had the opportunity to hear from local author and renowned motivational speaker, Rev. Willie D. Spears, Jr. about the uniqueness within each of them and all of the potential they possessed. On the final day of camp, special guests Bailey Reese and Tim Calvert shared their ideas that sparked into two not-for-profit organizations run entirely by children: Operation



Iraqi Friendship and Hero Hugs. Students not only had the opportunity to speak with 12-year-old Bailey and 16-year-old Tim about their organizations, but were also able to participate by making special cards for our troops in Iraq and overseas.

Following their morning sessions, the students and their 12 high school student assistants would divide into their appointed flights and begin their daily programs.



Thanks to the wonderfully talented instructors at Gulf Coast Community College, Florida State University Panama City and Bay District Schools, along with numerous community partners, students were able to participate in a wide range of activities. On any given day one would find future surgical techs dressed in scrubs practicing with specialized equipment on manikins, marine biologists in training collecting specimens from St. Andrew Bay, “pre” engineers in the robotics lab, future educators and psychiatrists exploring the complex and fascinating human brain, television’s next news anchor or meteorologist putting their best voices forward, or a group of future criminal justice majors retrieving evidence from underwater and carefully reviewing each piece in an effort to name a suspect.

Through their experiences with Kid’s College, students learned how areas of study can prepare them for a variety of careers. Most students were amazed to learn how broad the technology and multimedia fields were.

Kid’s College gave students an opportunity to explore a variety of careers in which they could receive training at GCCC and FSU PC. Many students entered Kid’s College thinking they knew what their future held and have since found new ideas and established new goals for

themselves.

The amazing adventure came to an end with an expo where students shared all they had learned with their families. They also participated in a touching graduation ceremony where each student received their own “official” GCCC Kid’s College diploma.

*1. Students from “Boom and Fizz” experiment with Mentos and Diet Coke. As seen in the photo, the results were “explosive.” 2. Officers from the Bay County Sheriff’s Office K-9 Unit demonstrate how dogs are used to apprehend suspects. 3. Middle-schoolers learn how to construct a bridge using wood and glue in “Build a Bridge.” 4. A current GCCC student explains the techniques of stapling in “Scrub in Surg Techs.” 5. A GCCC professor instructs a student on the functions of surveying equipment in “Savvy Surveying.” 6. This “Engaging Environmentalist” inspects a hammerhead shark lab specimen. 7. This student shows off the robot he built using Legos in “Rocking Robotics.” 8. Students used*

*computers to program their Lego robot to make precise maneuvers in “Rocking Robotics.”*





# Highlights & Celebrations

## 1 Veterans Business Outreach Center

Service-disabled veteran owned small businesses got a boost on Thursday, June 12 as Governor Charlie Crist signed House Bill 687 into law. The legislation aims to provide preferential treatment to service-disabled veteran small business owners who conduct business with State Government facilities.

“This new legislation will empower our local veteran businesses to be more competitive statewide,” says Tony Zacchio, professional development coordinator, Veterans Business Outreach Center.

## 4 GCCC makes the Honor Roll

Gulf Coast received the esteemed honor of being listed on the U.S. President’s 2007 Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. Each year the college participates in several community service projects and the campus wide volunteerism on the Habitat for Humanity project helped earn the position on the President’s Honor Roll.

## 2 GCCC now a Certified Prometric Testing Center

The new GCCC Certified Prometric Testing Center, located in the Technology Building, provides testing for IT industry standard exams such as Microsoft Certifications as well as CompTIA Certification training (A+, Network+, and Security+) that aligns with the Network Services and Computer Engineering Technology Programs.

Tyndall AFB, Naval Support Activity Panama City, and many local businesses now require their IT people to complete certification training. Testers continue to express their appreciation that they no longer have to travel long distances to sit for these exams.

Testing is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., but could expand to three or more days due to increasing demand. For additional information, go to [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or call Pat at 850.872.3875.

## 3 Gulf/Franklin offers a guarantee

On May 1, the Gulf/Franklin Center announced a new opportunity: the Cluster Program. This program is designed for students who work full-time and cannot attend traditionally scheduled classes. It allows them to take the required classes for the General Education Associate of Arts degree in three years. What is important to note is that the classes are guaranteed to make, no matter how many students register for them. The program is exclusive to the Gulf/Franklin Center and the residents of Gulf and Franklin counties.

## 5 GCCC honored by the United Way

The United Way honored GCCC with the following awards:

- ✓ Pacesetter Company 2007
- ✓ Top 15 Largest Employee Campaigns Special Recognition, 2007
- ✓ Top 15 Largest Dollar Campaigns Special Recognition, 2007
- ✓ 3rd Place, Highest Total Employee Gift Per Capita, 100-499 Employees, 2007

# Historic ground breaking for Emergency Operations Center

## Construction of the Emergency Operations Center is underway

“We are stretching the boundaries of possibilities,” remarked Dr. Jim Kerley, President. With those words, in an extraordinary act of partnership, Bay County and Gulf Coast Community College broke ground for the new Emergency Operations Center/Joint Use Facility at the North Bay Center on

April 17, 2008. History was made when the dirt flew from the ceremonial shovels as this project represents a completely new way of approaching EOC facility planning.

The partnership is unprecedented because both Bay County and Gulf Coast bring different elements to the \$15.5 million project. Bill Cramer, GCCC District Board of Trustees Chair, described most EOCs as “impressive, but empty shells, idly waiting for the next disaster.” Working with the county was a natural fit since the building will be in full use for public safety classes, law enforcement and first responder training, as well as regular county emergency operations. “We think this will become a national model for EOC facilities as well as a model of efficiency for the use of public funds,” Cramer said.

Law enforcement and first responders were well represented and made up a large portion of the several hundred attendees at the ground breaking ceremony. Construction on the 50,400 square foot facility began in April and is scheduled for completion October 1, 2009. The facility will have improved means of communication with a new 420 foot radio tower for WKGC FM/AM and county emergency communications. The tower will allow WKGC to serve the community by broadcasting throughout a hurricane or other



*Bill Cramer, chair, District Board of Trustees (left), and Dr. Jim Kerley, president, officially break ground for the Emergency Operations Center at the North Bay Center.*



disaster. The building will permanently house the 911 emergency call center as well as Emergency Services Department staff. Bay County Emergency Services Chief, Mark Bowen, commented, “This facility is about training professionals and having the ability to train somebody in the very facility and the exact environment that they’re going to be asked to do some of the most difficult work you could ever imagine.”

Although building is far from complete, the college is already looking ahead into the EOC’s future. The North Bay Center’s location in Southport puts it right in the middle of an area that is predicted to grow rapidly in the next decade. “This could be developed into the nation’s premier training center, concentrating on Homeland Security and emergency administration and management,” said Gloria Crawford, Public Safety Division Chair. “Security and protection programs will certainly be created for airport safety in conjunction with the new airport. We’ll be ready to take the opportunity to grow this into a National Center of Excellence.”

## IN SHORT

### The Specifics:

- \$15.5 million
- 50,400 square foot facility
- The site is 9.6 miles north of the current downtown EOC
- Will withstand 200 mile-per-hour winds
- GCCC provided the land at no charge to Bay County
- Offers training for GCCC students and Bay County emergency personnel
- Will be the permanent location of 911 Emergency Services
- 420 foot WKGK FM/AM tower
- Construction to be completed by October 1, 2009

## HIGH WATER MARKS

**DR. CARRIE BAKER**, director, Workforce Development, participated in the National Association for Workforce Development Personnel's national conference in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

**KATRINA BEILER**, assistant coordinator, and **BRAD KILLION**, coordinator, Respiratory Therapy, Health Sciences, provided leadership and direction in the development of a satellite campus for the Respiratory Program. The program features a distance education format with didactic material delivered through the Angel course management system, as well as lab and clinical phases offered on the Pensacola Junior College campus and at Pensacola hospitals.

**DR. SAUNDRA CICCARELLI**, faculty, Social Sciences, collaborated with Noland White on the second edition of *Psychology*, which is published by Prentice Hall. The textbook will be released in October 2008.

**DR. DAN FINLEY**, coordinator, EMS Program, Health Sciences, served as a site-visitor for the Committee on Accreditation of EMS Programs at Santa Rosa Junior College in Windsor, California. This committee provides national accreditation for paramedic programs in the United States.

**MAGGI LECLAIR**, associate director of resource development, Institutional Effectiveness, is one of 170 certified grant designers and managers to be conferred Grant Professional Certified. Maggi has also been elected the 2008-2009 President for the Florida Council for Resource Development.

**ANGELA SMITHERMAN**, coordinator, Human Resources, earned certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources. This certification is awarded by the Human Resource Certification Institute, the credentialing body for human resource professionals and signifies a mastery in the field.

**DR. JEFF STEVENSON**, chief economic development officer, is representing the southeastern region of the United States on the National Workforce Education Board of Directors. This organization is at the center of new ideas, programs, and business partnerships in the United States and will contribute to an innovative Advanced Technology Center being planned by the College.


**ALICE WALLS**, coordinator, Enrollment Services, earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of West Florida.

**The Shark's Tooth Golf Club Annual Benefit  
for Gulf Coast Community College**  
"Save the Date" ~ November 7 - 8, 2008


**Benefit Social:  
November 7, 2008**

**Golf:  
November 8, 2008**

For event, tournament and sponsorship opportunities, please contact the GCCC Foundation at (850) 873-3583 or e-mail [foundationstaff@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:foundationstaff@gulfcoast.edu)

 **Gulf Coast**  
Community College

**SHARK'S  
TOOTH**

 **STJOE**

# The Connect! Program delivers a truly unique partnership

This summer has been filled with promise, as Gulf Coast has established new partnerships and community collaborations. The College has taken steps to implement the Strategic Plan by building partnerships with area K-12 schools, Bay County Emergency Services, and Florida State University Panama City.

The collaboration with FSU PC began late last semester when Dr. Jim Kerley, president, and Dr. George DePuy, dean of FSU PC, gathered with a few key personnel from both institutions to discuss the opportunities and challenges of working together more closely. From this meeting, task forces were created to begin exploring the feasibility of the ideas generated during the brainstorming session. It soon became apparent that the joint recruiting and advising team and the joint marketing team found a winning combination of ideas and the Connect! Program was born.

In the past, both institutions have worked together with the statewide 2+2 articulation agreement. However, unlike the 2+2 program, each institution now will do more to ensure that students are effectively prepared with the necessary tools to complete their chosen degree. The Connect! Program is a brand new model of teamwork for GCCC and FSU PC, with everyone involved reaping the rewards. The premise of the new program is to encourage students to earn their degree right here in Bay County with fewer hurdles and bureaucracy.

The program is offered at no cost and was designed

for students of all walks of life who would like to attend Gulf Coast and FSU PC. The first step in beginning the program is to enroll at GCCC and the Connect! Program. In order to ensure optimal advising, the student will be “connected” with both a GCCC advisor and an FSU PC advisor from the start, thereby guaranteeing clear communication every step of the way. This process will help students complete their degrees quickly and effectively, since they will not be taking unnecessary courses.

Upon completion of the associate degree, the students information will automatically be transferred to the FSU PC admissions office. As an added perk, the student is not required to pay a GCCC graduation fee or an FSU PC application fee.

Both Admissions Offices have worked to make the transition from one institution to the other as smooth as possible. Because of this new process the student will not experience any breaks in their education. Another bonus of the program is that students will continue to receive student privileges at both institutions until they have completed their degree and left the program.

This unique model is completely focused on student success and will encourage degree completion in a more timely manner, which is a benefit to everyone. “Because of our unique relationship with FSU PC, the Connect! Program was designed to give students the feel of a university experience. Students will have the benefit of multiple advising workshops that highlight transfer information, GCCC/FSU PC advising, early registration, and a smooth transition process,” said Sharon Todd, director, Enrollment Services.



# LAST LOOK



Lana Outlaw, a pre-medical major, searches for some interesting 'required reading' in the Gulf Coast Library. The Library houses hundreds of books and journals and offers many new services to students, including advanced assisting. Library staff have become 'Mobile Research Assistants' and are now equipped with handheld PDAs, thanks to a Foundation Kaizen Grant. Using the PDAs, the campus' wireless Internet access, and a bit of research savvy, Gulf Coast librarians make the search for documents easier than ever.