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AND

# Shakers

...inside  
**DONORS**  
AND *Shakers*



**3** Local bar association and SFSC Foundation are building an endowment in memory of Jani Branham.



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## *Campaign Connects Foundation's* **Board Members** *With Community*

◆ SFSC FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN A **BOARD AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.**

**I**n May 2016, members of the SFSC Foundation Board of Directors set out with a new objective for the coming fiscal year: to reconnect with others in a way that transforms the relationships we have with our staff and our community. So, we began our Board Awareness Campaign.

Each month, we reach out in a variety of ways, connecting with many friends. From barbecue lunches with our staff, to delivering cookies to new friends, or calling old friends on the phone just to say thank you, our board members became engaged. Why? Because they believe in South Florida State College.

As the fundraising arm of the college,

the SFSC Foundation works closely with local leaders, business owners, and friends to help meet the needs of our growing college. Board members, acting as liaisons, work to bridge the gap with others and support endeavors so we can continue to support future students with scholarships and state-of-the-art teaching facilities that our district has come to expect from us.

The SFSC Foundation board wants our college to be the best, desirable, most sought out college around. They are a group of energetic leaders who want to make a difference in the community in which we live by providing means for students of all ages to get a chance at higher education. We are constantly searching for ways to connect with our community, our team, and our students to help enhance the learning experience.

Our vision has the power to move us from what we are to what we aspire to become. Each student has a vision, and so do we. It's an exciting time at SFSC.

# SFSC is Committed to Lifelong Learning

◆ WHEN WE ENHANCE THE ABILITIES OF OUR STUDENTS, THEY REWARD US BY **GROWING OUR ECONOMY AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITY.**

South Florida State College plays a critical role in our community. Its very existence makes it possible for people of all ages, abilities, and walks of life to earn a college degree, complete occupational training, obtain a high school diploma, learn to speak English, and develop new skills that increase their value in the workplace. We train the next generation of nurses, teachers, business professionals, law enforcement officers, dental assistants, automotive technicians, cosmetologists, and much more. Our students graduate with hopes and dreams of starting a career and making an impact. By enhancing their own abilities, they grow our economy and our community.

Our spring Commencement is right around the corner. It's exciting to see the hope and aspirations in our graduates' eyes and to know that they were fueled with self-confidence and determination that came alive at SFSC.

Visit one of our campuses, attend a ball game, or stop in for lunch at the Hotel Jacaranda. Take the time to talk with our students, and ask them what they hope to accomplish with their education. You will see an instant smile come across their faces and hear the excitement in their voices.

Recently, I had the privilege of interviewing one of our students and asked about his experiences at SFSC. He told me, "I have felt such a sense of community and commitment from the SFSC staff. Indeed, at SFSC, students are engaged in a curriculum in which students take responsibility for their



education and acquire the skills we need to become lifelong learners."

I believe in SFSC. I believe that our faculty and staff are making a difference in the world, one student at a time. SFSC is the community's choice for career-oriented education. We value access to education and are committed to the success of our students and the communities we serve.

We are South Florida State College.

**Jamie Bateman**  
Executive Director,  
Institutional Advancement



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## DONORS AND Shakers

is produced semiannually by the South Florida State College Foundation, Inc., to inspire charitable contributions in support of South Florida State College. The SFSC Foundation raises awareness of the value of an SFSC education and promotes student success through scholarships, facilities development, and program support. By supporting SFSC, the SFSC Foundation endeavors to enhance the ability of residents in our district to obtain a college education.

# Attorney Remembered with Scholarship

◆ THE HIGHLANDS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE SFSC FOUNDATION ARE BUILDING A \$100,000 ENDOWMENT IN MEMORY OF **JANI SEAMANS BRANHAM**.

Everyone who knew Avon Park attorney Janette Seamans Branham tells the same story: Branham loved children.

After her death in 2005, Branham's friends, fellow attorneys, and the Highlands County Bar Association launched an annual scholarship bearing her name. In 2006, the first Jani Seamans Branham Memorial Scholarship was awarded to a Lake Placid High School graduate. In the years since, the scholarship has doubled, making it possible for two recipients to attend South Florida State College tuition-free for two years.

"Jani was a fierce advocate for children, often taking a case without a fee out of her love for kids," said Andres N. Oliveros, a local attorney and president of the Highlands County Bar Association. "Before her death, she spoke of her desire to start a scholarship for high school students. The Branham Memorial Scholarship is a testament to how she touched the lives of not only kids but her friends and colleagues."

After the annual scholarship was established, the bar association partnered with the SFSC Foundation to create a \$100,000 endowment that would guarantee its funding. In 2011, the SFSC Foundation secured \$50,000 in matching funds to complement the \$21,000 that the bar association had raised.

"After meeting with Andres last year, our efforts to ramp up the endowment went into overdrive," said Jamie Bateman, SFSC's executive



In November, the Highlands County Bar Association held its first gala to raise money for the Jani Seamans Branham scholarship endowment. From left are SFSC president Dr. Tom Leitzel, foundation board member John Shoop, foundation board member Judge Peter Estrada, Andres Oliveros, foundation board member Judge Angela Cowden, and Jamie Bateman.

director for institutional advancement. "Andres made a commitment to throw his support and enthusiasm behind a bar association campaign to grow the endowment covering the Branham Memorial Scholarship."

That commitment led to the inaugural Highlands County Bar Association Gala last November, which earmarked its proceeds for the Branham endowment. What's more, Oliveros and Sebring attorney Mark Sessums each agreed to contribute \$2,500 for the next seven years if bar association members signed pledge cards to raise an equal amount.

"Andres brings a hearty spirit and drive to our collaboration because he has seen how SFSC students benefit from this scholarship," Bateman said. "Andres's efforts also showcase his own commitment to the young people of Highlands County."

Last year, the Highlands County Bar Association selected Oliveros for its annual Judge Clifton M. Kelly Award for his work with students at his alma

ter, Sebring High School.

It was a Sebring High School alumnus, Brandon Rosenbaum, who received the Branham Memorial Scholarship in 2015.

"Receiving this scholarship means trading the time I would have spent working to pay tuition, for time I now spend being a proactive member of my family, school, and community," Rosenbaum said. "I am forever grateful to the Highlands County Bar Association for this opportunity and hope to see this scholarship continue for others in the future."

The aim of Oliveros, Sessums, and the Highlands County Bar Association, in partnership with the SFSC Foundation, is to ensure Rosenbaum's hope is realized: that the Branham Memorial Scholarship is available for other students.

"After seeing the success of last year's bar association gala, I feel that the growth of the Branham Memorial Scholarship is off to a good start," Bateman said.

# SFSC Alum **Asena Mott** Now Heads DeSoto Campus

◆ DESOTO CAMPUS DIRECTOR **ASENA MOTT** ATTENDED SFSC WHEN CLASSES WERE HELD IN ARCADIA'S FOUNTAIN PLAZA.

**A**sena Mott, who became director of South Florida State College's DeSoto Campus in November, is not only from Nocatee in DeSoto County, but she's an SFSC graduate.

Mott became an SFSC student in 1990, even before graduating from DeSoto High School as a Top 10 Percent Scholarship recipient.

"Dual enrollment didn't exist at that time," Mott said. "But as a senior in high school, I took classes at night with special permission from the school district and from the college."

Mott attended all of her classes at the Fountain Plaza storefront facility in Arcadia, long before the current DeSoto Campus was built. But taking classes with people as much as 20 years older than herself was both intimidating and a positive challenge.

"I found that I experienced a change in maturity level between high school and college," she said. "I was worried that I would let instructors down, so I tried to live up to their expectations and made sure that I pulled my weight."

"I'm thrilled to be back at SFSC," said Mott, who left her job as a school principal to head the DeSoto Campus.

Mott is well steeped in the history of DeSoto County, its institutions, and people. She has lived in DeSoto County her whole life and said she can trace her family roots in the county as far back as the Civil War.

For the past five years, Mott served as the principal of Meadow Park Elementary School in Port Charlotte. Before that, she was an assistant principal.

After graduating from SFSC, Mott completed her bachelor's degree in history at Florida Gulf Coast University. "When I started there, it was still the Fort Myers campus of the University of South Florida," she said. "It became FGCU the academic term that I graduated."



Mott then went on to a 20-year span teaching and supervising in private and public schools. Along the way, she earned a master's degree in educational leadership from USF.

Married for 24 years to husband Royce, the couple have three children.

"I definitely want to see our dual enrollment numbers at DeSoto go up," Mott said. She would also like to see the campus offer instruction in diesel mechanics and commercial driving. Apart from specific plans, though, Mott also has her sights set on the bigger picture.

"There's one thing I really want to see in the next couple of years," Mott said. "I want to ensure the DeSoto community knows everything about SFSC and what it has to offer to people who live here."

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## Support the Foundation's Work Through **Planned Giving**

**Y**ou can give to South Florida State College while ensuring that you and your loved ones benefit. These giving options are called "planned gifts," because with thoughtful planning, you create win-win solutions for you and the college.

Many appealing ways of giving are available to you. For example:

**Name SFSC in Your Will.** Make us part of your family. A gift through your will or estate is the easiest gift you can

make.

**Put Your IRA to Work for SFSC.** Avoid the potential double taxation on your retirement savings that could result if you leave your IRA to your heirs.

**Support SFSC in Creative Ways.** You can include a gift to SFSC in your trust. Your bequest can be unrestricted or directed toward a specific purpose. You can indicate a specific amount or a percentage of the balance remaining in your estate or trust.

# Maria Gloria Receives \$40,000 Leaders 4 Life Fellowship

◆ THE LAKE PLACID TAKE STOCK IN CHILDREN SCHOLAR WAS ONE OF NEARLY 100 APPLICANTS FOR THE PRESTIGIOUS STATE AWARD.

For Maria Gloria, 2017 will be remembered as the year she was unstoppable. Not only did the 17-year-old earn a coveted \$40,000 Leaders 4 Life fellowship from the Asofsky Foundation, but she also received acceptance letters from both the University of Florida and Florida State University.

Active in clubs, sports, and service throughout high school, Gloria was elected senior class president of Lake Placid High School's class of 2017, is vice-president of the school's student government association, and competes with the cross country and track and field teams while maintaining a weighted grade point average of 4.36.

"Maria is graduating as one of the top 10 percent in her class," said Irene Castanon, South Florida State College's Take Stock in Children program coordinator. "Her academic achievement and leadership on campus were key to her success in earning this scholarship." Take Stock matches at-risk students with mentors who guide them in earning their high school diplomas and being college or career ready.

Selected as a Take Stock scholar in middle school, Gloria admits she was "mediocre and doing just enough to get by. Along came Take Stock, and my life was never the same." Her mentor and college success coach urged her to be the best in school and the community.

"They motivated me to get straight A's and encouraged me to strive for more."

In exchange for remaining alcohol and drug-free and not engaging in criminal activity, scholars like



Maria Gloria (center) celebrates receiving a \$40,000 Leaders 4 Life fellowship from the Asofsky Foundation along with (from left) Take Stock success coach Linda Roman, program coordinator Irene Castanon, success coach Danielle Ochoa, and Jamie Bateman.

Gloria are awarded two-year college scholarships upon graduation. Take Stock scholars are eligible to apply for a Leaders 4 Life fellowship, which awards \$10,000 per year for four years to cover the cost of non-tuition based expenses, such as books, transportation, meal plans, or housing. The Leaders 4 Life fellowship is sponsored by the Asofsky Foundation, which supports programs aimed at helping Florida's youth. The SFSC Foundation is the lead agency for Take Stock in SFSC's service district of DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties.

Gloria credits her mentor Pamela Karlson, who practices law in Lake Placid and serves as the attorney for SFSC's District Board of Trustees, with inspiring her to earn a law degree after she completes an undergraduate degree in computer science. Karlson has been Gloria's mentor since she was in the seventh grade, and they have formed "a friendship which will last a lifetime," Gloria said.

Along with Gloria, one of the six statewide finalists for the fellowship was Diana Rivera, a senior at DeSoto County High School.

## Be a Mentor!

No doubt you have been mentored by someone during your lifetime. Now it's time to pay it forward. Take Stock in Children needs volunteers to mentor its middle and high school scholars.

The main qualification is a desire to shape a life. College students can be excellent role models and give good advice for navigating college. Middle-aged people and retirees can share a wealth of wisdom from their life experiences.

If you would like to mentor a Take Stock scholar, contact Irene Castanon, program coordinator, at 863-784-7343. Join the more than 9,674 mentors throughout Florida who, since 1995, have helped deserving, low-income students on their pathway to success.

# Taking a Bite Out of Cybercrime

◆ PROGRAMS CREATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF **COMPUTER NETWORK SECURITY SPECIALISTS.**

With the World Wide Web now positioned as the next business frontier, criminals are finding lucrative opportunities to steal vital personal information, perpetuate fraud and extortion, commit cyberterrorism, harm commerce by taking down websites, and deal in age-old vices such as pornography and illegal drugs. A recent report by networking giant Cisco Systems Inc. estimates that a lack of qualified workers is leaving hundreds of thousands of jobs unfilled.

South Florida State College is meeting the demand with three computer technology programs that prepare students for careers in cybersecurity, cyber-investigations, and computer networking. The work requires special expertise, but skilled technicians who excel at the cat-and-mouse game of outsmarting cybercriminals can command better-than-average pay. According to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, computer network support specialists in SFSC's service district earn an entry level wage of about \$18 per hour.

Launched this spring, SFSC's Applied Cybersecurity program teaches students how to analyze a computer network for security weaknesses that hackers can exploit, implement Web-based security measures, and maintain hardware and software. Students earn an occupational certificate by completing 750 contact hours of training over four terms.

SFSC's Digital Forensics program prepares students for careers in this emerging branch forensic sciences. Digital investigators examine computers, tablets, cell phones, and other devices for evidence of



**Instructor Brian Bohlman guides students in investigating electronic devices in his class on digital forensics. In this exercise, the students are learning to use specialized technology for locating trace materials in cell phones and tablets.**

cybercrime. The program teaches students about the laws that govern digital forensics, the methods, hardware, and software involved in digital investigations, and the proper procedures for documenting and preserving evidence.

In the Network Security program, students learn how to troubleshoot and repair PC hardware and software with an emphasis on cybersecurity and networking.

Graduates of the Digital Forensics and Network Security programs earn college credit certificates that they can apply to SFSC's two-year Associate in Science (AS) degree in Network Systems Technology. They also become Katana Forensics Lantern Certified Operators, which verifies their ability to analyze Apple and Android mobile devices, and earn CompTIA Security+ industry certification, a recognized measure of expertise for network security professionals around the world.

Instructor Brian Bohlman is especially proud that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's National Initiative for Cybersecurity Careers and Studies (NICCS) placed SFSC's cyber and network security

programs in its Educational and Training Catalog. This online catalog is a national source for students seeking computer training.

SFSC's cyber and network security programs are also members of the Orlando chapter of InfraGard, the cybersecurity initiative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. "InfraGard is a partnership among the FBI, businesses, academic institutions, state and local law enforcement agencies, dedicated to sharing information and intelligence to prevent hostile acts against the United States," Bohlman said.

A recent report from analytics firm Juniper Research predicts that, by 2019, the demand to digitize personal information will cause \$2.1 trillion worth of data breaches worldwide, increasing the demand for cybersecurity professionals.

"This is bad news for companies that rely on computer networks but good news for students like ours, who are training to become network security professionals," Bohlman said. "At SFSC, we aim to ensure that our students get the training they need to find jobs helping companies beat back cyber criminals."



THE  
**PARTNERSHIP  
PROJECT**  
AN SFSC FOUNDATION CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

**Transforming the lives  
of the people and  
communities we serve**

The Partnership Project is providing SFSC with the financial resources we need to shape the future of the college, our students, and our communities. You can be part of this bold academic endeavor.

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SILENT AUCTION 6:00 PM • DINNER 7:00 PM  
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ROTARY SCHOLARSHIP HONORS FETTINGER



The Rotary Club of Highlands County recently renamed its scholarship in honor of Scott Fettinger, who was instrumental in starting it. Because so many students benefited from the scholarship over the years, the Rotary club decided to honor Fettinger by naming it after him. Jamie Bateman (left) presents a certificate to Fettinger. Cody Owens, president of the Rotary Club of Highlands County, is on the right.

# On the Calendar

- APRIL 20** : *SFSC Student Art Awards Ceremony, 5-7 p.m.*  
Celebrate the achievements of the SFSC art students during their awards ceremony. Reception sponsored by the SFSC Alumni Association.
- APRIL 29** : *Annual Spring Gala and Auction, 6 p.m.*  
Island View Restaurant, Sebring
- MAY 04** : *Spring Commencement, 4:45 p.m. and 7:45 p.m.*  
Wildstein Center for the Performing Arts, SFSC Highlands Campus
- NOV 27** : *Jacaranda Jubilee, 6:30 p.m.*  
Hotel Jacaranda Veranda
- DEC 7** : *Christmas Luncheon, Noon*  
Hotel Jacaranda

## Board of Directors Meetings

- March 28, 2017, Noon, SFSC Board Room
- May 9, 2017, 5:30 p.m., Hotel Jacaranda

## Executive Board Meetings

- April 11, 2017, Noon, Hotel Jacaranda

## Shop Amazon and donate to the SFSC Foundation

You can help the SFSC Foundation by shopping online at Amazon. Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and enter the SFSC Foundation as your sponsored charity. Amazon will donate a portion of the proceeds from your purchases to the SFSC Foundation.



### New Fund-Raising Event!

**JAN. 18-20, 2018**

Sun 'N Lake Golf Course, Sebring



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