

HORIZONS

FALL 2015



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To the Friends and Family of NSU:

Nova Southeastern University's Core Values illustrate our commitment to education. And, these values—academic excellence, student centered, integrity, innovation, opportunity, scholarship/research, diversity, and community—are put into practice daily at NSU.

This issue of NSU's *Horizons* magazine—which marks its 10th anniversary—shows how our core values are part of the daily fabric at the university.

During this year, NSU undertook a realignment of the academic programs in its colleges. The new structuring, which aligns all degree levels within the same colleges, is reflective of our commitment to our students. Call it an educational collaboration among students, professionals, and faculty members.

The national, hot-button issue of athletes who experience concussions is an important part of the research at the university. A *Horizons* article outlines how NSU researchers have created a unique partnership with the Broward County Athletic Association to educate coaches, school administrators, athletic trainers, and others on the effects of concussions and how to properly monitor athletes before they return to the playing field.

Likewise, you can read about how NSU is involved in another national issue with researchers and educators from several of our colleges working to combat addiction through myriad initiatives.

NSU also values the arts, and this issue of the magazine looks at the university's performing arts program, also celebrating its 10th anniversary. First-rate theatrical productions are produced by students on the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus, while several alumni have gone on to work in professional, regional theaters.

A visit to our Miami Campus in Kendall shows how community involvement enhances the academic experience offered by NSU. This issue of *Horizons* also introduces some of our successful alumni and strong faculty members whose careers embody NSU's Core Values.

Again, I am proud to continue to lead Nova Southeastern University, where our core values are a reality.

George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Nova Southeastern University

HORIZONS

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Saving the Players

BY JOHN DOLEN

Student-athletes who play football and other contact sports often take hard hits. Diving tackles on opposing runners can result in head-on collisions with other players and sometimes being knocked out. And often, the after-affect is a concussion, which NSU's Stephen A. Russo, Ph.D., defined as an intense "rattling of the brain."

"If you suffered another concussion, soon after, you could have been in serious danger," said Russo, who treats athletes in NSU's Sports Medicine Clinic. Russo bridges two colleges as an associate professor in NSU's College of Psychology and as director of sport psychology in NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Head injuries and concussion protocols have made national headlines in recent years as the dangers in contact sports have been better understood. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) instituted guidelines. The National Football League (NFL) followed.



At right, Beau Gedrick, left, and Andrew Kusienski confer after observing NSU University School football players during practice.

Opposite page, top, Andrew Kusienski demonstrates an on-the-field check of NSU University School quarterback Henry Colombi.

Opposite page, bottom, Stephen Russo shows fourth-year psychology student Maggie Tobin how an athlete's balance is important in evaluating the student's response.



And, so did the state of Florida. Passed in 2012, the youth athletic concussion bill stipulates that high school coaches and athletic trainers cannot allow athletes to continue playing if they suspect a head injury. The athlete can return only after clearance from a medical doctor. The reason, as Russo puts it: Undiagnosed concussions can put someone at risk for brain damage and even disability.

Fortunately, the estimated 150 athletes who pass annually through NSU's Sports Medicine Clinic because of head injuries have generally responded to treatment and rehabilitation, according to Russo. The clinic is open to the public as well as the NSU community.

But treating head injuries after the fact is only one aspect of NSU's program. The university's aggressive approach begins even before the first kickoff or face-off. In partnership with Broward County Athletic Association, NSU has, for years, been building a database of baseline tests of cognitive functions, examining young athletes before they play. The tests are administered in Broward County Athletic Association (BCAA) high schools, at NSU University School, and also used for NSU collegiate athletics.

The online test is designed to measure an athlete's memory, visual-processing speed, and reaction time. In case of injury,

"baseline test results can be used as a comparison point," Russo said. In just a few years, NSU has gathered more than 40,000 baseline profiles.

One of those tested is NSU University School quarterback Henry Colombi, 16. The junior took the baseline test a few months ago. "This is a good thing, so there would be a way to tell without having to guess," he said. "It's good that people are aware of it." Was it difficult? "Some of it was hard, some of it easier," Colombi said. "It took about 30 to 45 minutes."

Joshua Ali, also 16 and a junior, is a wide receiver for the NSU University School Sharks. "I thought the test was going to be hard, but it wasn't bad," Ali said. A year ago, one of his teammates went down with a concussion, so he has seen it firsthand. "I was tested before I even put on pads and started hitting," he said.

Besides those in the NSU sports medicine community, one of the biggest believers in the program is Lee Frankhouser, president of the Floridian Community Bank, which has its headquarters just a half a mile from NSU's Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus. Once he found out about the baseline testing program, he put NSU on the bank's charitable calendar.

The bank has donated to the program in each of the past two years. The donation helps defray the costs of training



personnel in county high schools to administer the tests. “The timing may have been a little self-serving in a way,” he said. “My daughter suffered two concussions within six months playing soccer for high school and club teams.”

Frankhouser’s daughter, who has since recovered and now lives in Orlando, attended Dwyer High School in Palm Beach County, which has no pre-examination protocol. The banker said he was very impressed that Broward County and NSU had developed the testing and had opened a concussion clinic. “What a great program!” he said.

Because of his daughter’s injury, Frankhouser has become very familiar with concussion research. He learned the surprising fact that head injuries are more common in women’s soccer than in men’s football or soccer. For one thing, the

women have no helmets and head-to-head collisions are common. But, he said, “in the female physiology, the neck muscles supporting the head aren’t as strong as the males.”

The point about unexpected head injuries is echoed by Andrew Kusienski, D.O. “Some of the freakiest head injuries can come from sports

you don’t expect, like tennis, diving, sailing, even rowing,” said Kusienski, former department chair of Sports Medicine at NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, which runs the clinic. Kusienski’s position has been assumed by Beau Gedrick, D.O.

After one incident, Gedrick learned a new expression. In rowing, you don’t want to be “catching a crab.” It means to put one’s oar in the water at the wrong time. The oar can flip parallel to the boat, instead of the correct position, perpendicular. The rower then must pull the oar in and over his or her head, not easy to do in a moving boat. A pretty serious head whacking can be the result, as it did in a patient Gedrick treated.

Each head-injury patient who comes to the clinic is examined by both doctors. Russo, the sports psychologist, looks for variations in the baseline readings, such as examining reaction time and memory. Gedrick, the clinician, looks for physical injuries, such as to the eyes, neck, and spine.

A concussion, Russo points out, doesn’t have to come from direct force to the head. Any severe shaking—even a hit in the chest—can cause a brain-rattling that can result in a concussion.

Nor is all damage from the big hits. “There are studies that show football players being exposed to close to 1,000 hits to the head during a typical year of training. These can be small incidents, but the overall cumulative effect can be dramatic,” said Russo, who has received training within the Veterans Administration and has served as director of Sports Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center—Center for

Sports Medicine. He has received several grants and authored papers widely in his field.

He explained that there are many forms of brain injuries, and that while concussions are receiving “the lion’s share of publicity,” lesser traumatic injuries, or “sub-concussive hits,” also can cause damage over time.



Stephen Russo and fourth-year psychology student Elizabeth Machado review the online test designed to measure an athlete's memory, visual-processing speed, and reaction time.

If there is not a limit on the range of sports, neither is there an age range on people treated at NSU’s clinic. Both doctors say they are now seeing injuries on even younger players, from middle school and even younger. “We recently treated an 11-year-old soccer player,” said Gedrick.

Treatment for injury, of course, will vary. Athletes who are brought into the clinic are measured against the results of their online tests, as well as against normative standards of performance. Treatment can be adjusted accordingly.

At the minimum for a mild concussion, athletes are told to avoid any physical exertion for three or four days. That, of course, makes sense. But, in what may be a surprise to some parents, Russo said, “patients are also instructed to avoid reading or studying” because of the strain it could cause.

STANDING IN FLORIDA


“In the state of Florida, there is no doubt that Broward County and NSU are at the forefront of concussion management,” Russo said. “Others are doing good work, but nobody else is doing what we do. Our county initiative is more aggressive than state law.”

But if Broward and NSU are state leaders in clinical protocols and baseline testing, NSU is also moving on a third track: research related to concussion injury. Evan Smith, one of Russo’s fifth-year graduate students, is doing promising work studying the relationship of optometry to concussions. Could a visual tracking measurement in the future determine the extent and degree of a concussion?

Russo and Travis Craddock, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the NSU College of Psychology and associate director of the Clinical System Biology Group for the NSU Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, are collaborating on a research study measuring blood metrics at the front and back ends of concussion. Could blood tests someday detect the extent of brain injury?

Selected students provide direct clinical care as part of their doctoral training. “My students tend to be fourth-year doctoral trainees in the Clinical Psychology programs and Dr. Gedrick’s students tend to be third-year doctoral trainees in the Osteopathic Medicine program,” said Russo. In both cases, the students function as either clinical psychology or sports medicine practitioners under their supervision.

Since the Miami Dolphins Training Facility is on NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus, the question comes up, are there any synergies with them? Russo responds that the NFL and NCAA have independent concussion policies and procedures. “Typically, the NFL teams handle these injuries in-house through their own sports medicine professionals,” he said.

Gedrick pinpoints the emotional rewards that all those involved in the NSU concussion program receive. “It feels good to offer a service to the community that has been lacking over the years,” he said. “And it feels good to help ensure youth athlete safety.” 

AROUND NSU

THE LAFFERTY FAMILY FOUNDATION HONORED



This year, the legacy of innovation that Hill York and the Lafferty Family Foundation established with NSU more than 25 years ago reached a new level.

NSU's Central Energy Plant—the third largest in the United States—has renamed the chiller facility in honor of Robert S. Lafferty, Sr. Designed and built for the university and recognized as one of the largest energy storage systems in the United States, it is now named NSU's Robert S. Lafferty, Sr., Central Energy Plant. The modern, three-story structure is expected to save the university millions of dollars over the life of the plant. It provides cooling that is both energy efficient and, at the same time, environmentally friendly.

In addition, a generous gift from Hill York and the Lafferty Family Foundation has established the Charles W. Daniels Endowed Scholarship Fund to benefit NSU undergraduate

students. Charles W. Daniels was the father-in-law of Robert S. Lafferty, Jr., chairman of Hill York. The first scholarship recipient is Lauren Alfino, a freshman from Denver, Colorado, who is studying marine biology and spoke at the energy plant naming ceremony. (Story on Lauren Alfino on page 38.)

"Charles W. Daniels, whose nickname was Chip, taught me about relationships, and doing deals based on trust," said Chip Lafferty, chief executive officer of Hill York. "It's not a coincidence that this is how

we do business at NSU."

Hill York's relationship with NSU dates back to the early 1990s when Chip Lafferty, who had just passed his professional engineering exam, bid to install the cooling unit at the Shepard Broad College of Law. Within five years, Hill York placed the first thermal energy storage unit on the NSU campus.



From left: Robert W. Lafferty, Jr.; George L. Hanbury II, NSU president and CEO; Robert S. Lafferty, Jr., chairman, Hill York; Jacqueline A. Travisano, NSU executive vice president and COO; and Robert W. (Chip) Lafferty, Sr., chief executive officer, Hill York.

"Hill York has been part of NSU's design, development, and construction team as the campus has grown, and they continue to be at NSU every day to keep us cool," said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU's president and CEO.

A full-service, commercial air-conditioning company, Hill York was founded in 1936. The company is considered a pioneer in the air-conditioning industry as Hill York designed and installed the first air-conditioning systems in Miami Beach hotels after World War II, changing the course of Florida's comfort history. ■

New Leaders

NSU CONTINUES TO ATTRACT EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELDS.



H. THOMAS TEMPLE

H. Thomas Temple, M.D., is now the **senior vice president of translational research and economic development**, a new position created to support NSU's faculty members in developing their innovative ideas, discoveries, and technologies.

In this role, Temple is responsible for building the connections, resources, and entrepreneurial energy for the commercialization of NSU's research activities. Temple will be establishing partnerships with companies, investors, and entrepreneurs interested in using NSU's vast wet and dry lab space in the Center for Collaborative Research (CCR) to conduct research and develop technologies benefitting the global community. The 215,000-square-foot, \$80-million CCR is slated to open in the spring of 2016.

Additionally, he will be leveraging the resources of the CCR to further support the cutting-edge research conducted at NSU's Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. Temple's position represents a partnership with Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) East Florida hospitals, where he has been granted privileges and will maintain a surgical practice complementing his role with NSU.

"As we near completion of the CCR, we begin to take the necessary steps to add a teaching and research hospital on campus. It is essential that we focus on building strategic business and research partnerships leading to the creation of new patents, licenses, and business start-ups as well as the expansion of existing companies as we have envisioned,"

said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., president and CEO of Nova Southeastern University.

Toward that effort, the CCR will be a leading technology incubator that will house NSU's General Clinical Research Center, an outpatient facility providing a centralized clinical research infrastructure to benefit investigators in multiple disciplines. These include NSU's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine; Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research; Emil Buehler Research Center for Engineering, Science, and Mathematics; and the U.S. Geological Survey. It is estimated that these combined efforts will add \$500 million to NSU's current \$2.6-billion economic impact on the state of Florida.

Temple brings to NSU his long-established reputation as a successful surgeon, researcher, and leader spanning nearly three decades. He joined NSU from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, where he served as chief of the Orthopaedic Oncology Division, director of the University of Miami Tissue Bank, professor of orthopaedic and pathology, and vice-chairman of the Department of Orthopaedics. Temple's clinical interests include a novel treatment of benign and malignant bone and soft tissue tumors in children and adults, tissue transplantation, and complex limb reconstruction. His research interests are stem-cell applications in bone and cartilage regeneration, tissue banking, and developing targeted therapies for sarcomas.

Temple earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard University and his Doctor of Medicine from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. He completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and his musculoskeletal oncology fellowship at Harvard University/Massachusetts General Hospital/Boston Children's Hospital in Boston. He is board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery.



DEANNA (DEE) VOS

Deanna (Dee) Voss, M.S., has been named **dean of undergraduate admissions** at NSU.

Voss comes to NSU from the University of Miami (UM) where she was an enrollment professional for more than 20 years. She held executive level positions at UM, most recently serving as associate dean of enrollment management and executive

director of admissions. In this role, Voss led UM to three record years in a row of increasing undergraduate applications while raising the academic quality and profile of the incoming class each year. The increased academic profile contributed to significant improvements in first-year retention and overall four- and six-year graduation rates.

Voss will be reporting to Brad A. Williams, Ed.D., vice president for student affairs and dean of NSU College of Undergraduate Studies. "Ms. Voss brings a wealth of knowledge about admission and enrollment management and relationships with high school counselors throughout Florida, nationally, and internationally; we are thrilled to have her on our team," said Williams.

Voss has a bachelor's degree in international studies from Baldwin-Wallace College in Ohio and a master's degree in higher education leadership from the University of Miami.

She is active in the National Association for College Admission Counseling and the Southern Association of College Admissions Counselors, of which she is a past president.



KELLY GREGG

Kelly Gregg, B.S., has been appointed **vice president for clinical operations**, responsible for the oversight and centralization of NSU's division of clinical operations, which consists of 25 health care centers in Broward and Miami-Dade counties. The centers, which have more than 230,000 patient visits annually, offer dental, vision, medical, speech, psychological, behavioral health, physical therapy, and occupational therapy services, among others.

Gregg will oversee the full revenue cycle, from preregistration through collection, contracting, and credentialing, as well as marketing and communications. In addition, he will ensure that training needs of academic programs are met and that research opportunities are made readily available for all academic centers.

Gregg brings to NSU more than 35 years of business experience in the health care environment including in finance, revenue cycle management, and medical practice administration.

He comes to NSU from Diagnostic Clinic Medical Group in Tampa, where he served as chief financial officer and senior manager of a 110-provider multispecialty practice group with more than 400,000 annual patient encounters in primary care, surgical care, rehab services, and hospital-based services.

He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from San Diego State University in California. His professional memberships include the Medical Group Management Association, Healthcare Finance Management Association, and American College of Healthcare Executives.



LYNNE R. SCHRUM

Lynne R. Schrum, Ph.D., has been appointed **dean of the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education**.

Previously, Schrum served as dean and professor of the College of Education and Human Services at West Virginia University, where she was seen as a visionary regarding the use of technology in 21st-century learning environments as well as in the transformation of teacher education through online and distance learning.

Schrum also was professor and chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning at the University of Utah and professor and program coordinator

for Elementary and Secondary Education Programs at George Mason University. In addition, she has held faculty appointments at the University of Georgia's College of Education and SUNY Plattsburg's Center for Educational Studies and Services.

A noted scholar, researcher, and author, Schrum has published 45 peer-reviewed research articles, written or edited 15 books, contributed chapters to 13 edited books, and is a highly sought-after and frequent presenter at national and international conferences on topics related to electronic educational environments.

She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Southern Illinois University, Master of Arts degree in Elementary Education and her Ph.D. from the University of Oregon (Dissertation—Innovation and the Process of Change: A Case Study in Distance Education).

Road Led to White House Internship

BY JODI NODING

FOR PERPETUAL OPTIMIST RANDALL K. WILLIAMS, (M.P.A., 2014), the glass is not only half-full—people all around you will be able to fill up the other half. “They might not even know it yet. You just have to be open to it,” said Williams, who was awarded the Alumni of the Year 2015—Jacksonville Campus during the 2015 Student Life Achievement (STUEY) Awards.

Williams knows about being open to opportunity. Not only is he currently an auditor for the Department of Defense—“protecting the taxpayers’ money,” he said—Williams, 28, completed a stint as a White House intern in the Office of Presidential Correspondence, where he met Michelle Obama, introduced the First Lady during a private event, and worked on the Affordable Care Act.

The time Williams spent on the NSU Jacksonville Campus and the relationships he made there were pivotal, he said, and helped him see how to reach his personal and professional goals.

One of three children of a single mother, the Jacksonville native was the first in his family to attend college. After graduating from the University of Central Florida in accounting, Williams quickly started online M.B.A. courses. But, he discovered, something wasn’t quite right.

“I was going for a degree to get a good-paying job, but it wasn’t something I felt connected to, what I was passionate about,” he said. Then a friend discussed graduate online courses in public administration through NSU’s Jacksonville Campus.

For Williams, the possibilities of a public administration degree clicked. He had just moved home and would be able to take the online classes he needed while he worked a full-time job. He also became actively involved in campus life, something he realized was crucial to him.

“That was a big deal. I could pursue my degree and I could get involved on campus,” he said. “I realized I was heavily involved in undergrad activities. My heart and my passion are using my talents and skills to get people to where they



(Official White House Photo by Chuck Kennedy)

First Lady Michelle Obama greets intern Randall K. Williams before delivering remarks to the White House fall interns on December 5, 2014.

need to be. Taking money out of it, I thought, ‘what would I be doing?’ I would be pursuing community and public service.” It would also be a practical degree, and it would allow him to use his accounting skills.

Meeting with NSU Jacksonville student affairs adviser Cathy O’Brien, M.S., helped seal the deal. “Cathy O’Brien is a big ball of energy, and she is really welcoming. She pushes students to get involved and she helps create a family atmosphere,” Williams said. While his classes were online, Williams created a community of students in northeast Florida, setting up study sessions and meetings. “The human interaction was really important. I feel the amount of support was a big thing,” he said.

Elected to campus student government as a senator, Williams eventually became president. He also helped create programs to get older, returning students up to speed on classroom technology, which was sometimes a stumbling block. “We realized it was really intimidating,” he said. “Students were missing a day or two trying to figure out this whole system.” His time in student government strengthened his interest in

public service and helped lead to his decision to apply for the White House internship. O'Brien and Brad A. Williams, Ph.D., vice president for Student Affairs and dean of NSU College of Undergraduate Studies, wrote "incredible letters of recommendation," said Williams. "They said, 'You have the skill set to do it. We believe in you, we support you.'"

Williams turned in his application and said he thought, "if nothing else, I'll get a no." Instead, there was silence. After months passed, he'd given up hope of being accepted, and took an auditing job in Virginia—at the Department of Defense. Then, after only three days at work, he received a call that he was selected to be a White House intern working on presidential correspondence. He was able to arrange a leave of absence at his job, and went to work writing policy letters and general public letters for 3½ months.

When the interns were invited to write a speech for a speakers series to introduce Michelle Obama, Williams threw himself into the project—a bit too much, he recalled. "I was initially trying to write a grandiose speech. I was trying too hard; I got frustrated." Realizing he didn't want to introduce the First Lady for the "glitz and the glamour," he took a fresh approach. "I wrote what it meant to be the first black First Lady. How she operates as a person, thinking about her being raised on the south side of Chicago. I wrote about a lady everyone can look up to," Williams said.

His speech was selected. "It was this crazy thing. I got the chance to introduce her during the fall 2014 White House Internship Speaker Series with the First Lady," Williams said.

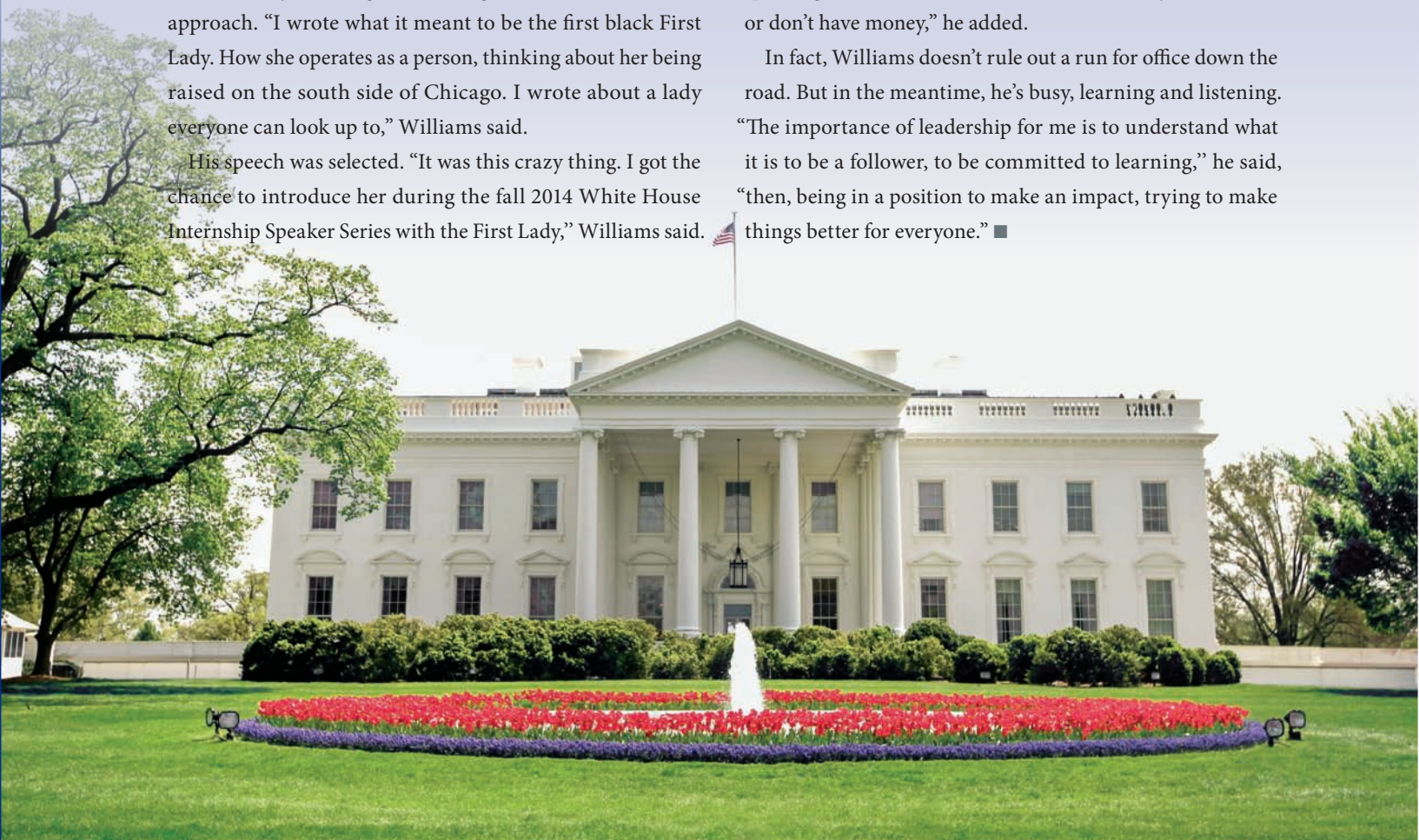
"We took photos together. She was super encouraging. She was so personable, extremely cool. Her humor is what got me. She said the speech was awesome and she loved it."

And, unlike the backstabbing, cynical White House featured in popular TV shows like *Veep* and *House of Cards*, the Obama White House appreciates its interns, Williams said. "Interns always felt valued," Williams pointed out. "When I got a chance to meet the First Lady, she kept telling me, 'thank you.' The President, as well, said, 'Thank you for all you do. What we do would not be possible without you.'"

After an information session for the interns on the Affordable Care Act, where Williams actively asked questions, he found himself invited to join a work group on the health care law. During the fall, the interns had a couple of chances to meet with the commander in chief. "One of the things the President said to us," Williams said, "that realigned my entire thought process was when he told us, 'Don't just chase a title, chase a purpose.'"

Williams said he came to realize from his time in the White House that public service was his calling. "My passion is speaking for those who are unheard because they are different or don't have money," he added.

In fact, Williams doesn't rule out a run for office down the road. But in the meantime, he's busy, learning and listening. "The importance of leadership for me is to understand what it is to be a follower, to be committed to learning," he said, "then, being in a position to make an impact, trying to make things better for everyone." ■



Alumnus Is Committed to Treating HIV-Positive Patients

BY MARY HLADKY

ONCE A SCOURGE THAT PANICKED THE nation, AIDS, and the virus that causes it, have receded from the headlines and as an urgent topic of conversation. But although effective treatments now exist, the virus is far from vanquished.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and about 50,000 new infections occur each year. Florida has overtaken California as the state with the most new HIV infections—5,377 in 2013. Nearly 14,000 people with an AIDS diagnosis died in 2012.

Noah Lee (D.O., 2002), one of a small number of Broward County physicians who specialize in treating HIV-positive patients, is committed to helping change those grim statistics. “I love what I do. I am never going to change it unless there is a cure,” said Lee, who practices at Midland Medical Center in Oakland Park—within walking distance of Wilton Manors, the heart of Broward County’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community.

The practice includes two other physicians who also are HIV specialists and a physician assistant who focuses on treating patients needing urgent care. They have about 7,000 patients—about 30 percent are HIV-positive—making theirs one of the largest HIV practices in the Southeast United States, Lee said.

HIV isn’t the practice’s sole focus. The clinic provides primary care as well. For those patients who are HIV-positive, the benefit is that one physician is monitoring their overall health and all of their medications. “We do cater to the LGBT community, which allows these patients to be completely free and open and honest about their lifestyles so they don’t have to hide things from their practitioners, and that allows for better care,” he said.

The medical center’s waiting room is welcoming. Patients can lounge on couches or sit at a dining room table to



chat or read. A bulletin board on the wall lists community services that are available; bins collect donations of food for people and pets.

Lee, 39, came to South Florida as a young boy. He graduated from University of Miami before obtaining his medical degree from NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine and completing his residency at Palmetto General Hospital in Hialeah. He is certified as a family practitioner as well as an HIV specialist. He also is a new father. Lee and his wife, Adrianna Ramirez-Lee, welcomed their son, Jasper, in May.

His decision to specialize in HIV treatment came during his fourth year as a medical student. Lee was doing a rotation at the Central Florida Reception Center prison in Orlando when a Yale School of Medicine infectious diseases specialist arrived to teach prison physicians how to treat HIV. “I decided that is what I wanted to do with my life,” Lee said.

The practice intrigued him because it is ever changing, requiring him to be knowledgeable about all areas of medicine to effectively treat HIV. He also relishes the challenge that offers a rewarding opportunity to help people reclaim their lives.

“His passion is HIV care and coming up with the best treatments for his patients,” said Patrick Kenney (D.O., 2008),



Noah Lee says his work is challenging because it is ever changing, requiring him to be knowledgeable about all areas of medicine.


“The younger population comes in HIV-positive. They say, ‘it’s not that bad because there are pills for that now,’ ” Lee said. “People who have had it for a long time would kiss the ground, or sell their souls, to be negative.”

Another factor is that many young people don’t think they are at risk and

have not taken the HIV test, he said. They are the ones largely responsible for new infections. According to the CDC, about 15 percent of the 1.2 million who have HIV in the United States don’t know they are infected. They may have no symptoms for 10 years or longer. Even those who get a diagnosis may not seek help. Only about half of those diagnosed are getting regular treatment.

Lee estimates that Broward County needs twice as many HIV specialists. In part, that’s because many medical students are unaware of the specialty. He welcomes NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine students to his medical center to increase awareness. First- and second-year medical students go to his and other primary care physician offices regularly to learn about patient care.

“I like that the students come to the office to learn more about treating HIV. This patient type and disease are ever growing in the U.S., and the number of providers who know how to care for them are shrinking, making HIV providers a scarce resource,” he said. Fourth-year students come to his office for elective rural rotations. His office qualifies as rural because HIV patients are an underserved population. The students get to do more hands-on patient care.

“My job is to get as many students as I can into the office to learn that No. 1, [HIV patients] are not lepers; No. 2, they can be taken care of; and No. 3, they need help, and it is a primary-care issue, not a specialty issue,” Lee said. 

who first met Lee when he was an NSU medical student. Board certified in infectious disease and internal medicine, Kenney joined the practice in 2013 at Lee’s invitation.

In 1987, AZT (azidothymidine) was the only drug available to treat HIV. Now, there are about 30 antiretroviral drugs. Typically, patients take three antiretrovirals from two different classes to prevent them from becoming drug resistant. The drugs reduce the amount of virus in the body, even to undetectable levels, but do not eliminate it.

With the new drugs, life expectancy for a person diagnosed with HIV at age 20 and getting treatment has increased to 71 years, just short of 79 years for those without HIV. “Now, they are alive, and they are getting older, which is great,” Lee said. “The average age of my patients is slowly going up. I am taking care of 30-, 40-, 50-year-olds where you can really make a change in their lives.”

Lee’s biggest challenge is getting HIV-positive patients to take their meds every day, he said. If they don’t, they risk becoming resistant to the drugs. If that happens, the treatment regimen can be changed, but since a limited number of drugs is available, becoming resistant a second time leaves few options.

Reducing the amount of virus in the body reduces the chance of spreading it and offers the hope of controlling it. But that hasn’t happened yet. One reason is that since effective treatment exists, many young people are no longer terrified of contracting the virus.

Finding

NSU researchers create
groundbreaking tools to help solve
substance abuse and addiction
issues worldwide.



Solutions

BY MICHELLE F. SOLOMON

IN 1996, MARK SOBELL, PH.D., ABPP, AND LINDA SOBELL, PH.D., ABPP, brought their Healthy Lifestyles Guided Self-Change Program to Nova Southeastern University. The groundbreaking program, established in Canada, was a game-changer for NSU in the field of substance abuse and addiction treatment in its approach to substance use disorders.

Their research suggested motivational interventions can help individuals change behaviors. The Sobells' internationally recognized research and program were the reason they were recruited by NSU.

NSU continues to break ground. Today, much of the research conducted at the university in various areas of substance abuse and addiction contributes valuable statistics and generates valuable tools that can be implemented for preventative or action measures.

From a study to help prevent alcohol-exposed pregnancies—which is being used worldwide by the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—to the development of a new technology that will make it difficult for drug abusers to tamper with prescription drugs, NSU researchers are making a substantial impact in helping to reduce the statistics of a far-reaching public health epidemic.

STUDIES AND STATISTICS

An 11-year project, funded by research grants from the CDC and conducted by researchers at NSU along with two other universities (the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Houston and Virginia Commonwealth University) to study and develop interventions aimed at preventing alcohol-exposed pregnancies is now a fully integrated federal program. Called Project CHOICES (Changing High-risk alCOhol use and Increasing Contraception Effectiveness Study), it is managed, marketed, and disseminated to clinics and professionals by the CDC and the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. The tools are used throughout the world as an intervention and prevention means to bring awareness to women. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder births are the No. 1 preventable birth defect in the world.

“Project CHOICES is one of the most highly recognized interventions in the world,” said Ken Johnson, D.O., associate professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the Department of Public Health at NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine. Johnson was a coinvestigator, along with primary investigators Mark and Linda Sobell of NSU’s College of Psychology. The Sobells were integral in working with the CDC as part of the Project CHOICES Intervention Development Team, which developed and wrote a client workbook, counselor manual, and facilitator guide. They are also coauthors on a book published this summer on preventing alcohol-exposed pregnancies.

Johnson’s involvement as a gynecologist in the Project CHOICES study became a model of interdisciplinary research at NSU and was instrumental in it making its way into medical settings.

“Some of the research was utilized by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to produce a tool box for physicians to better educate them about ways to reduce Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in their patients,” said Johnson. “The research overall requires minimal interventions where women are encouraged not to drink if they may become pregnant. And because it is minimal intervention, it’s reproducible anywhere.”

The online app, available for download on the CDC website, and which Johnson said is credited to the researchers, features a data tracking and monitoring system.

Additionally, a specialty publication aimed at Native Americans using the Project CHOICES information is being distributed, said Johnson who has been studying the Native American population because of access to South Florida’s population of Seminole and Miccosukee tribes. “This is research that came out of NSU that just keeps on giving,” said Johnson. “It continues to expand and be utilized globally, which gives NSU extreme credibility locally, nationally, and certainly, internationally.”

On another front, statistics emanating from NSU’s Center for Applied Research on Substance Abuse and Health Disparities (ARSH), part of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, are making a difference locally and nationally in helping substance-abuse prevention coalitions, health

professionals, and law enforcement track trends and institute treatment plans in the area of drug abuse. Data compiled by James N. Hall, senior epidemiologist with the center, create statistics from data collection that identify drug trends and prevalence of certain drugs. They also provide detailed statistics on drug abuse, hospitalizations, and deaths.

“Data are gathered from the medical examiner’s department, addiction treatment centers, crime labs, hospitalization reports, and various surveys, which track the prevalence of substance use in youth as well as the general population,” said Hall.

During his career, Hall has focused on converting research about emerging drug abuse problems into community-based solutions. “The role of surveillance epidemiology is to convert research to information for action. That is why it is important to have a wide variety of community partners to whom we can disseminate what we’ve learned about the nature and extent of the problem, particularly to identify the root causes.



David Mastropietro, left, is among NSU College of Pharmacy researchers creating a dosage formulation that will make some prescription medications resistant to crushing or liquefying.



Linda Sobell and Mark Sobell developed internationally recognized research on substance abuse.

Cadima, senior director of The United Way of Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG USE AND ABUSE

The epidemic of prescription drug abuse is alarming. The American Medical Association labeled the abuse of powerful narcotic painkillers—drugs such as Oxycontin and Vicodin—as a public health crisis in the United States, with 44 people dying daily from overdoses and many more becoming addicted. A report released in December 2014 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that fatal overdoses involving prescription narcotic painkillers tripled between 1999 and 2012.

At the NSU College of Pharmacy, Hossein Omidian, Ph.D., professor, and David Mastropietro, Ph.D., assistant professor, both in the department of pharmaceutical science, are creating a dosage formulation that will make some prescription medications resistant to crushing or liquefying. Some prescription painkillers are abused by those who intend to snort or inject the drugs.

“We are making a product that is hard to abuse or be ingested in a way that wasn’t intended. It’s basically our way of combating prescription drug abuse from a medication standpoint,” said Mastropietro.

With Mastropietro’s background in pharmacy and Omidian’s chemistry engineering background, the two have combined their knowledge to create proprietary technologies in the area of tamper-proof medications. “Some people mix the crushed pills with fluid and inject the liquid for a quicker high, or they will break apart a 12-hour dose so it gets dumped out all at once,” said Mastropietro.

Their abuse-deterrent formula can make certain pills crush resistant. They’ve also worked on a dosage formulation so that, if a pill is crushed then mixed with liquid, it would gel instantaneously, making it unable to be drawn into a syringe. Another formulation would leave the pill crushable, but would release a substance to bind the drug so it would not be able to be snorted or injected.

“This may not stop prescription drug abuse, but maybe it will make a dent,” said Mastropietro. “There’s also a health issue we’re hoping to help prevent. If a drug is difficult to

These can become the key points of focus for prevention efforts, as well as adapting special treatment needs and managing limited resources,” said Hall.

Hall’s work at NSU is made possible by a community partnership with The United Way of Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse, The Miami Coalition for a Safe and Drug-Free Community, Palm Beach County Substance Awareness Coalition, and the Florida Department of Children and Families. In 2012, Hall joined the center, led by Stephen P. Kurtz, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Justice and Human Services in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, because of its reputation as “one of the nation’s leading research groups studying substance-using populations, as well as health problems associated with substance abuse, whether that be infectious disease or other chronic conditions or consequences of abusing drugs,” Hall said.

The Miami Coalition and The United Way’s substance abuse coalitions use Hall’s data collection for databases accessible to health professionals, law enforcement, and the public at large. “[Hall’s] data enables us to turn information into action and also serves as an early warning system that allows us to provide comprehensive responses in the community. Ultimately, it helps us to save lives,” said Gonzalo

inject, then perhaps it will lessen the number of communicable diseases that spread when people share needles in the exchange of intravenous injected drugs.” The end goal of the team’s work would be to partner with a drug company to have their patent-pending formula incorporated into the manufacturing of products.

TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

Help for those with substance abuse and addiction issues, plus the training of behavioral health professionals, is another segment of NSU’s contributions in the field.

The Adolescent Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program (ADAPT), part of the Psychology Services Center at NSU’s College of Psychology, provides outpatient treatment to adolescents referred by police, schools, local agencies, and parents. Directed by Vincent B. Van Hasselt, Ph.D., professor of psychology and criminal justice and director of NSU’s Family Violence program, ADAPT is an early intervention program for adolescents that is customized to each individual’s specific needs.

Students enrolled in the College of Psychology also gain experience in clinical rotations at ADAPT, where they get hands-on training in working with adolescents and their families. Also on campus, the Henderson Student Counseling Services, a partnership between NSU and Henderson Behavioral Health, provides counseling for substance abuse issues and mental health and behavioral issues at no cost for up to 10 sessions for part-time and full-time NSU students.

“Should someone need a high level or a more enhanced level of help with an alcohol or substance abuse problem, we have the infrastructure of Henderson Behavioral Health that’s accessible to them, which is different from most student counseling centers across the board,” said Stephen Ronik, Ed.D., CEO, Henderson Behavioral Health. The Henderson Student Counseling Services is the first student counseling center worldwide to be accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. “We’ve helped develop the standards for other student counseling services centers,” said Ronik.

Students who are not on NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus also benefit from the student counseling services through a “telehealth” program. “Through a secure video

connection, students have access to a Henderson counselor in Fort Lauderdale,” said Ronik. Currently, the telehealth program is available at NSU campuses in Jacksonville, Tampa, and Orlando, with expansions planned for other campuses.

Henderson Student Counseling Services also provides training for NSU’s College of Psychology students studying to become professionals in the mental health field, preparing them for careers working with patients. “We train hundreds and hundreds of NSU mental health counseling students and Ph.D.-level psychology students. And, they work side by side with our staff of mental health professionals, which includes licensed psychologists and a psychiatrist,” said Ronik.



NSU’s College of Psychology students gain experience through clinical rotations and hands-on training.

MOVING FORWARD

NSU is an integral resource for those working in the research field of substance abuse and addiction. Hall believes it will help “break down the silo walls that have often isolated various departments, thus making it easier to form more comprehensive strategies.”

Hall added: “Substance abuse is an issue that crosses so many lines from public health to criminal justice to economic impact to social and international relations. Having this approach at the university is the best way in which to explore the problem and ultimately work toward solutions.” ■

#NSUsuccess

showcases achievements

NSU College of Optometry student Emily M. Korszen is proud that she tied for the highest score in the nation on the Part I Applied Basic Science (ABS) Examination in 2015.

As a result, the third-year student, who is on track to graduate in 2016, received the 2015 Dr. Norman E. Wallis Award for Excellence. She also has been named to the NSU Health Professions Division's Chancellor's List for six consecutive semesters for maintaining a GPA in the top 5 percent. Korszen's good news was featured by the university's social media networks by using the hashtag #NSUsuccess.



Likewise, Nicole Cocuy was featured in an #NSUsuccess video when she received the Mark of Excellence Award from the Florida chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. Cocuy, an undergraduate in communications studies in NSU's College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, won in the General Column Writing

category for an article she wrote on Fort Lauderdale's war on poverty.

"At NSU, I learned how to take an investigative approach when discussing an issue. On top of that, I learned about being an unbiased journalist," said Cocuy, the opinion editor of NSU's student newspaper *The Current*.

Students, alumni, faculty and staff members, donors, and friends of NSU not only get the word out about their own achievements by using #NSUsuccess, but also showcase the university's role in those accomplishments. Launched last summer, the hashtag has proved to be its own success story, allowing the NSU community to share good news with each other.

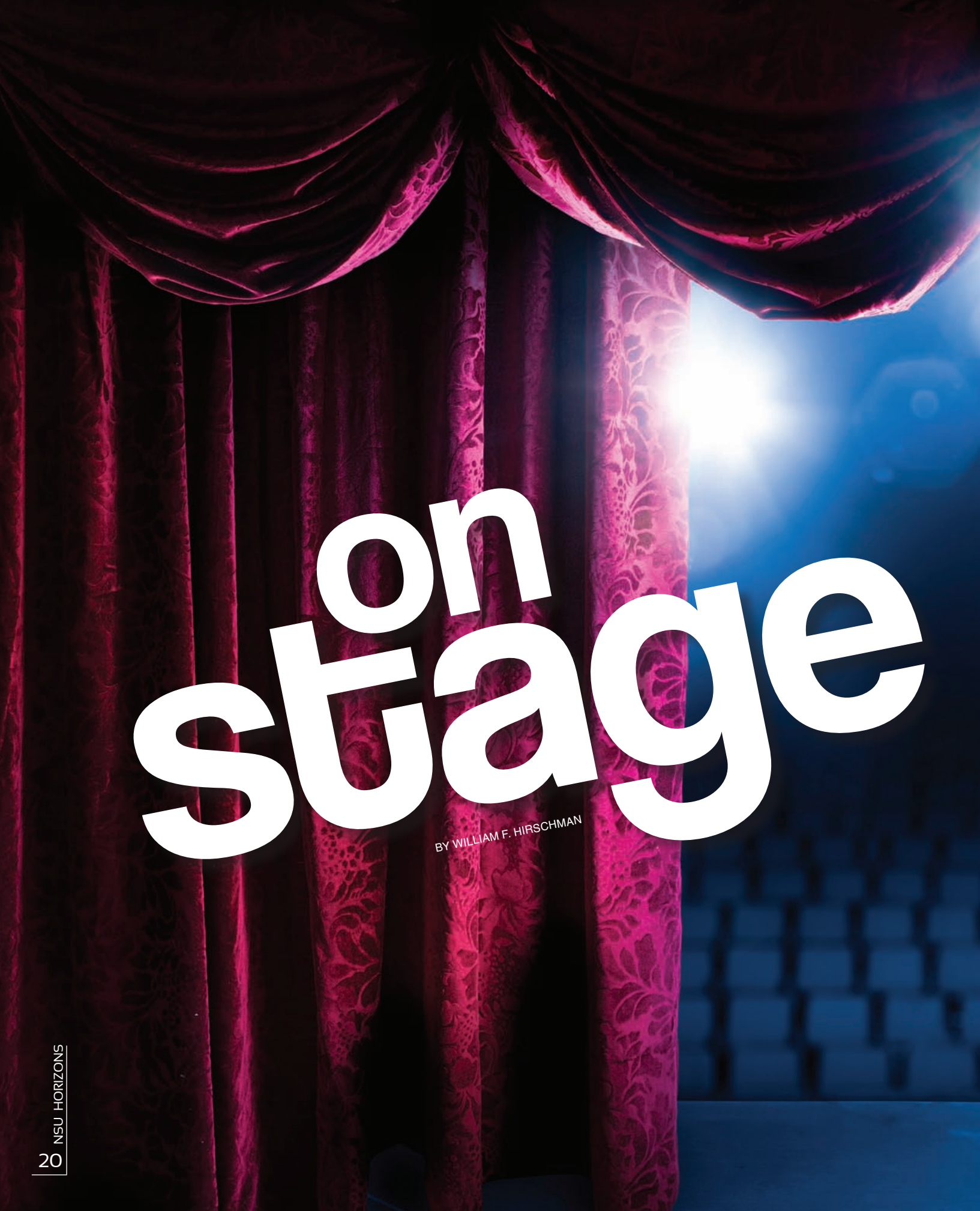
"We launched the #NSUsuccess campaign just before the 2015 Commencement Season on social media so students had a unified hashtag to share their Shark Pride while supporting our brand essence," said Kim Cohane, M.S., NSU's online marketing and social media manager. "We now have more than 800 pieces of new user-created content on social media. We encourage all Sharks to use it when they want to highlight any significant accomplishments



NSU College of Optometry student Emily M. Korszen used #NSUsuccess to let colleagues know about her recent award.

they've achieved because of their ties with NSU."

#NSUsuccess is for any NSU-related achievement. Exam results, an internship, a new job or promotion, graduation, and volunteer work in the community have all been touted using #NSUsuccess via Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. #NSUsuccess "unites the NSU community, illustrating the university's strong academic reputation and a campus culture that includes all students—whether attending any NSU campus or taking advantage of distance learning," said Cohane. "The hashtag also reinforces NSU's brand, promoting its international reputation as a premier, private, research university," she said. ■



on stage

BY WILLIAM F. HIRSCHMAN



NSU's theatre raises the curtain on its first decade

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY'S THEATRE PROGRAM WAS BARELY A few weeks old in October 2005 when the faculty had to decide whether "the show must go on." Hurricane Wilma had ravaged South Florida and the chaotic aftermath threatened to close the very first stage production, *The Burial at Thebes*.

"So the question was, 'Are we going to open the show with one technical rehearsal?'" recalled Mark Duncan, M.F.A., associate professor and interim chair of the Program of Performing and Visual Arts, NSU's College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. "And the answer was, 'Yes. We're not going to let that storm stop us.'" Challenges followed as NSU created a department from scratch during the next decade, but "after that, it's all been easy," said Duncan, with a smile.

As the program celebrates its 10th anniversary, faculty members, students, and alumni reflected about the hard-won growth of a program to change the lives of students in more ways than observers assume. Certainly, alumni have acquired the skills to succeed in the profession. But it also has benefited students seeking self-confidence and other abilities that enhance careers with no direct connection to the arts.

Lauren Butler, B.A., 2010, remembers the fledgling program in 2006 when she was still a psychology major in the College of Psychology—but pursuing her love of theater in which she eventually earned her degree.



NSU's theatre program gives students hands-on experience, from behind the scenes to on stage. At right, Marianne Martinez adjusts overhead lights. Above, Damien Matherson runs the light boards. Top, Amanda Kopale, left, and other students paint a piece of scenery. At right, center, associate professor Mark Duncan demonstrates the emotion he wants the student actors to explore in a scene while associate professor Bill J. Adams, seated at left, observes the rehearsal in the Performance Theatre at the Don Taft University Center. Far right, Elyse Rosen searches for a costume. At right, Mariah Busk learns how to build a set.





“Back in my day, there wasn’t even a space to practice. I remember rehearsing outside with the planes flying overhead,” said Butler. Still, students were encouraged by the bustle of work underway on the program’s eventual home in the Don Taft University Center, which now houses two theaters, classrooms, and other facilities.

The lessons that Butler learned grounded her eventual choice in a theatrical career, including two years teaching youngsters around the country through the Missoula Children’s Theatre. But the experience was just as profound for Kon-

stantine (Kosta) Lagos, a theatre minor who graduated in 2014 with a D.M.D. from NSU’s College of Dental Medicine.

“In general, I’m an introvert, but somehow [the theatre program] developed this extroverted personality in me when I’m in front of a crowd. It definitely gives you a confidence in being able to communicate,” Lagos said. Currently in a dentistry residency in New York City, Lagos finds “it’s very important to learn how to communicate with different kinds of patients, to keep a light tone.”

Lagos, who still hopes to act, recalled the life-changing chance to star in NSU’s production of *Dead Man Walking*. “My family flew in from all over the country to see me,” he said. “It was a huge deal for everyone. I remember being part of something bigger.”

It’s far more than learning how to act, said Mariah Busk, a senior majoring in theatre. “Communication skills, organizational skills, leadership skills, learning how to work with different types of people, and seeing what makes some people react a certain way, learning how to talk to people,” she said. Appearing in a play about female soldiers, *A Piece of My Heart*, “I learned more about the Vietnam War by being in a play than reading about it a textbook,” she said.



Students working in more than one discipline find a beneficial synergy. Butler found that psychology and theater matched. “Both disciplines are trying to make sense of the human condition,” said Butler. “Psychology works from the outside in as practitioners try to crack the code of what’s going on in someone’s head. Theater works from the inside out as we express these complex inner workings on the stage,” she added. “The only difference I see is that psychology tries to explain it all and theater just lets it be—allows it to exist on stage for the audience to judge. I think the catharsis you experience as a theater audience member is probably similar to the relief one may feel after a therapy session.”

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Butler’s observations echo the goals of the curriculum that provides a Bachelor of Arts degree for majors with emphases in stage and screen or musical theatre. But it also offers tracks for minors, and opportunities for students from across NSU’s colleges to select individual courses that will help them. For many, “it’s how do I make this part of my life rather than how do I get to Broadway and be a star,” said Bill J. Adams, D.M.A., associate professor, coordinator of performing arts in NSU’s College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

On recruiting trips around the region and state, “students and parents want to know what do you do with this degree, what does this prepare you for?” Duncan said. “First, I talk about the transfer of skills. You may be in theater next year or not, but the skills that you’re picking up are transferable to anything you do: project management, public speaking, writing, all of that ... on deadline,” added Duncan.

Additionally, theatre majors are discouraged from focusing unduly on one skill set, but instead are helped to evolve as a well-rounded artist. “When they get to work at a small company, they are going to have to know more than how to act,” Duncan noted. “More importantly, they might need to know how to write a grant, how to market their show.”

Butler, who acted, stage-managed, directed, and served as a dramaturge at NSU, said that after graduation, she has discovered the truth of that while auditioning and performing with local troupes. “You are so much more of a

valuable commodity,” Butler said, “they want people who can do a little of everything.”

The entrepreneurial spirit endemic to NSU permeates the theatre program’s philosophy as well. At other institutions in the past, students were taught craft in a stand-alone vacuum and graduated unprepared for the realities of building and sustaining a career. “You relied on somebody else to give you that break, which is not the way the film or music industry or theater industry is built anymore,” Duncan said.



Alexandra Hernandez finishes Tobias Barton's makeup for a role in Bat Boy: The Musical, which was the first production of the 2015–2016 year.

“Today, you make your own breaks—which requires a broader knowledge than how to parse iambic pentameter,” he added. “You and your friends might put together a budget on a shoe string for your own company, and you might try to rent a space, and you might stumble the first five or six times, but you’re learning how to be a theater practitioner.”

A prime example is Cristina Meléndez, who constructed a career as an award-winning actress and head of her own film and television production company in El Salvador. She had entered NSU planning to major in communication studies, but when Duncan met her in an art class, his description of theater struck a chord. She became one of the program’s earliest students.

“For the first time in all my student life, it just clicked for me, I belonged to a group where everyone was as passionate as I was for the same thing. I did not **have** to go to class anymore; I **wanted** to go to class,” she wrote in an email. She added theatre as a major and graduated in 2007 with a B.A. in both majors.



Staff member Margaret M. Ledford adjusts the costume of Mariah Busk, who will play the title role in the upcoming production of *Hamlet*.

The current program has about 30 students whose declared major is theatre, plus many more who are minoring in theatre or who are taking theatre classes for enrichment reasons. The program intentionally has a wide-open door for participation, especially in productions of its plays and musicals. “We encourage some people who want to be engaged because they just want to be involved in something that’s cool,” Adams said. Volunteers are eligible, as well, to perform on stage, paint scenery, operate lighting, or gather props.

The intimate, personal nature is one of the program’s best selling points, according to Lagos and Butler. Professors pay close attention to students’ needs, curriculum can be tailored, and students have opportunities they might not get in a mega-competitive program.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Professors also encourage latent talent. Michael Friedman, a theatre major on track to get a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2016, never considered himself a dancer. But, his professors helped to develop his dancing aptitude to the point that he was cast in a professional production of *A Chorus Line* in December 2014 at the Delray Center for the Arts in Delray Beach. Butler, who started as a psychology major, was among the first students to audition for, and receive, one of the annual Performing and Visual Arts grants from the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences available to current undergraduate students, incoming freshmen, and transfer students.

The program’s scope has grown, and it now mounts four or five productions a year including, this season, the Mount Everest of theater, *Hamlet*, which will feature a female *Hamlet* played by Busk. The program’s first production of

the year was the unconventional *Bat Boy: The Musical*. It brings in lecturers such as playwright Edward Albee, who has won the Pulitzer Prize three times. Master classes feature guests like local actor-director Paul Tei, who works on

both stage and screen. Staff members have even chaperoned theater trips abroad to London.

Faculty and staff members include experienced theater professionals such as Margaret M. Ledford, an acclaimed Carbonell Award-winning director, who also heads the program’s technical production facet.

NSU’s ongoing relationship with local professional troupes enables students to intern in every facet of the performing arts from acting in ensembles to lighting design. For several years, the primary partner was The Promethean Theatre, which operated on the campus. After it closed, bonds were established with such off-campus troupes as Fort Lauderdale’s Thinking Cap Theatre where Duncan is managing director/associate producer.

“Learning in the real world, you get a different realm of experience,” said Busk, who has worked at Thinking Cap and participated in a professional play reading at GableStage.

Some graduates are hired by professional companies, such as Broward Stage Door, GableStage, Slow Burn, Mad Cat Theatre Company, and The Playground Theatre, all of which are in South Florida, and Theatre of the Stars in Atlanta.

Going forward, a primary challenge is to raise the program’s profile among high schools, patrons in surrounding communities, donors for scholarships, and even on campus. Duncan admitted that “it has taken a while to get our name out there. It is going to be a challenge [to tout theater] at a university that has biology, medicine, and business as its primary majors, but we’re starting to make inroads.” Now that the program has the facilities and the capacity, the faculty is eagerly poised to make its mark, Duncan said. “It’s time to turn that corner.” 🎭🎭

Students benefit from academic realignment

BY MICHELLE F. SOLOMON

NSU'S REALIGNMENT OF ACADEMIC programs in its colleges was done to benefit students. The new structuring, which aligns all degree levels—bachelor's, master's, and doctoral/first-professional—within the same colleges, is reflective of NSU's commitment as a world-class university. It is an educational synergy that involves students (both undergraduates and graduates) professionals, and faculty members.

"The realignment is academically beneficial, especially to our expanding undergraduate programs. Undergraduates benefit from knowing what to expect from our graduate programs, and graduate students know what to expect from our doctoral programs," said Ralph V. Rogers, Ph.D., provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs at Nova Southeastern University. "There becomes a clearer understanding if the groups are together in the same colleges. From the standpoint of quality, the alignment provides opportunity for a richer, more intensive educational experience for students," he added. "Building these types of structures attracts students in research and defines mentorships in graduate programs."

The reorganization presents a unified focus in each college with all degree levels. For instance, undergraduate students pursuing a bachelor's degree in marine biology are aligned with master's and Ph.D. students in the Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. In the new College of Engineering and Computing, bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. programs in computer science will be under one roof, as will students studying every level of information technology. The

restructuring plan was guided by input from students, faculty and staff members, and through Town Hall meetings

"The experience of being around graduate students—and vice versa—will be beneficial to everyone," said David W. Kerstetter, Ph.D., assistant professor at the Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. "Through instruction on laboratory tasks specific to their adviser, graduate students will be able to gain some mentoring and teaching experiences, which are often vital for success in doctoral programs and postdoctoral research positions. Undergraduate students will benefit from seeing graduate students who've made the sacrifices and put in the hard work to follow their dream of being a professional scientist." Kerstetter said he will now include an additional consideration to students in his undergraduate course.

"Would they make a good research assistant in my, or another, laboratory. My experience with marine science research is that success can be as much about motivation and perseverance than any sort of scientific brilliance," he said.

"Having all levels of our degree programs together helps us to maximize our fine graduate and professional degree programs to attract the best and brightest undergraduates, while also encouraging highly motivated students to reserve a seat in our dual admission program," said



George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., president and CEO of Nova Southeastern University. The Dual Admission Program automatically reserves a seat in one of NSU's graduate or professional schools while the qualified students are earning their bachelor's degree.

Nova Southeastern University's Board of Trustees also created three new colleges with programs to address market needs. The programs add to the university's more than 150 degree offerings. The new colleges include the College of Allopathic Medicine (M.D. program) to complement



NSU's realignment benefits all students by attracting new talent at the undergraduate level and defining mentorship and research opportunities at the graduate levels. Below, center, is an artist's rendering of NSU's CCR, slated to open in 2016.



NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O. program), which is already a nationally recognized premier medical school. NSU's College of Allopathic Medicine will be South Florida's fourth traditional medical school and is slated to accept its first students in 2017.

The new College of Engineering and Computing combines the Ph.D. and master's degree programs—formerly housed in the Graduate School of Computer and Information Sciences—and bachelor's degree programs across computer science, engineering, and information sciences from the former Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences. The college is offering a new Bachelor of Science in General Engineering beginning fall 2016 (pending approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges).

The undergraduate Farquhar Honors College will spotlight students who meet high academic standards, including those who are also part of certain highly competitive scholarship programs. These students will receive special acknowledgement at commencement ceremonies, on their diplomas, and on their transcripts.

With the Center for Collaborative Research (CCR), a 215,000-square-foot, \$80-million facility slated to open in spring 2016, students at every level of their academic career will have the resources and access to pursue research experience. From its beginnings 51 years ago in a Fort Lauderdale storefront, NSU's founders envisioned a world-class, graduate teaching institution. Today, NSU has grown to more than 24,000 undergraduate, graduate, and first-professional students and is the largest private, not-for-profit institution of higher education in Florida. ■

NSU COLLEGES

- Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
- College of Allopathic Medicine
- College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
- College of Dental Medicine
- College of Engineering and Computing
- College of Health Care Sciences
- College of Medical Sciences
- College of Nursing
- College of Optometry
- College of Osteopathic Medicine
- College of Pharmacy
- College of Psychology
- Farquhar Honors College
- H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship
- Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography
- Shepard Broad College of Law

OTHER ACADEMIC UNITS

- Mailman Segal Center for Human Development
- NSU University School

AROUND NSU

EMERGENCY ROOM START OF BIGGER COMPLEX

A new emergency room on the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus of NSU will serve as the cornerstone of a future medical complex, which will include a teaching and research hospital.

Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) East Florida opened Westside Emergency Services, part of Westside Regional Medical Center (WRMC), in partnership with NSU. The facility is located in University Park Plaza at 3476 South University Drive.

Staffed by board-certified doctors, the facility has 16 private treatment rooms, a designated trauma room, a full-service laboratory, a pharmacy, advanced imaging equipment, and digital X-ray units. Emergency transportation is provided to patients requiring continued care at an in-patient hospital.

For NSU, the emergency services facility will become a residency site offering valuable hands-on training to the university's D.O. and M.D. program students and provide various clinical training opportunities for students in other health professions programs. ■



REVOLUTION OF THE EYE: MODERN ART AND THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN TELEVISION

This is the first exhibition to explore how avant-garde art influenced the look and content of early network TV from the late 1940s to the mid-1970s. On view October 25, 2015–January 10, 2016.

Admission is always **FREE** for NSU students and faculty and staff members. For a list of more exhibitions and events, visit www.nsuartmuseum.org.

NSU ART MUSEUM

FORT LAUDERDALE

One East Las Olas Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301-1807
(954) 525-5500

Presented at NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale by **AutoNation**.

This exhibition is organized by the Jewish Museum of New York and the Center of Art, Design, and Visual Culture at the University of Maryland in Baltimore County (UMBC), and it is made possible by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Skirball Fund for American Jewish Life Exhibitions, the Stern Family Philanthropic Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and other generous donors.

Exhibitions and programs at NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale are made possible in part by a challenge grant from the David and Francine Horvitz Family Foundation. Funding is also provided by Nova Southeastern University, the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau; the state of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs; and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.



Publicity photograph for the Electrohome Courier portable television, late 1950s

DISTANCE EDUCATION MUSEUM HONORS FISCHLER

NSU President Emeritus Abraham S. Fischler, Ed.D., has been honored with a museum commemorating his life in distance education—located in the lobby of the university's North Miami Beach Campus.

The Distance Education Museum and Café is a living display of distance education documents, memorabilia, and images of the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education.

The museum is a legacy project of the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education's Student Government Association. The museum traces the origin of modern distance education from its beginnings in 1972, when then-Nova University launched the first clusters of distance students earning their educational leadership and higher education doctorates. ■

NSU RECEIVES UP TO \$4.3 MILLION

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences of the National Institutes of Health awarded NSU's Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness an initial \$590,000 with a recommended total award of up to \$4.3 million over a five-year period to continue the Project SEAMIST (South East Area Marine Industry Safety Training) and enhance its offerings.

"Project SEAMIST provides training so that vessels and seaports can function safely and efficiently, supporting an important economic component of Florida and the Gulf Coast," said Stephen Grant, Ph.D., primary investigator of the grant and associate professor of public health at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine.

This new addition to Project SEAMIST will be spearheaded by a co-collaborator, Kristi Messer, M.S.W., M.P.H., assistant project manager, Institute for Disaster and Emergency Preparedness, and assistant professor, Master of Public Health Program and Disaster and Emergency Preparedness, NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine. ■

Research reported in this publication was supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number U45ES019350. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.



HORIZONS HITS DECADE MARK

The fall 2015 edition marks the 10th anniversary, and 20th issue, of *Horizons*, NSU's premier magazine.

Horizons' mission—to showcase NSU's growth as a private research university and to highlight its innovative curriculum, strong faculty, industrious students, and successful alumni—has been evident since its first issue was launched in the fall of 2005.

Under the direction of NSU's Office of University Relations, *Horizons* is designed and edited by NSU's Office of Publications. It is published twice annually and is distributed to more than 168,000 alumni, faculty and staff members, students, and friends of the university.

In the past decade, *Horizons* has become an award-winning publication. The two editions of 2010 won first place in the trade/special interest publication category during the 2011 Sunshine State Awards—the statewide journalism competition presented by the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), South Florida Pro Chapter. Those same *Horizons'* issues also won two 2011 Communicator Awards given by the International Academy of the Visual Arts. The 2010 issues also were honored as Pewter winners in the Gold Ink Awards, a prestigious print competition sponsored by *Printing Impressions* magazine.

Horizons was honored again by SPJ, this time with second place, in the trade/special interest publication category during the 2013 Sunshine State Awards. For a look at NSU's *Horizons* through the years, visit www.nsunews.nova.edu/horizons. ■

Professor Believes in Real-World Business Education

BY CHAUNCEY MABE



AS A CHILD, LESLIE TWOROGER, D.B.A., ALWAYS HAD a lemonade stand or another enterprise going. After earning her M.B.A., she started a meeting and convention planning business that was sold after 11 years. “Business has always fascinated me,” Tworoger said. “But it wasn’t until after I got my M.B.A. that I really became interested in how business works.”

Now a professor of management, Tworoger’s experience in both the business and academic realms qualified her to help develop The Real-World M.B.A. program at NSU’s H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship.

“The dean asked one person from each department to rethink and reinvigorate the M.B.A. to answer the needs of today’s students,” said Tworoger. “The more we had a dialogue with students the more we realized they are expected to hit the ground running the instant they graduate.”

Tworoger worked with colleagues Andrew Felo, Ph.D., associate professor of accounting; David Hines, Ph.D., associate professor of decision sciences; Ramdas Chandra, Ph.D., associate professor of international business; Pankaj Kumar Maskara, Ph.D., associate professor of finance; and Sara (Suri) Weisfeld-Spolter, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing and chair of the committee.

The committee discovered, said Tworoger, that companies are no longer willing to spend months training recent M.B.A.

graduates. “Companies want graduates to have the necessary skills coming right into a job,” Tworoger said. “That’s how we came up with the concept for the ‘The Real-World M.B.A.’ Many of our faculty members have real-world experience in numerous industries, and all our faculty members go beyond textbook theory to relate how it works in the real world. Now we’re going to push it further.”

For Tworoger, business education is a family affair. Her husband is Thomas Tworoger, D.B.A., director of the entrepreneurship concentration for both graduate and undergraduate students at NSU’s Huizenga College of Business. Both attended the University of Florida as political science majors, and both built successful businesses.

While Leslie Tworoger built Fort Lauderdale Showcase, her meeting and convention business, Thomas Tworoger was building his family’s heavy-truck dealership, Kenworth Truck of South Florida, into a \$130-million-a-year business with four locations. After selling the company to Daimler, he decided to earn his M.B.A. at NSU.

His wife had the same idea. “I said, ‘I want one, too,’” Leslie Tworoger said, with a laugh. As the Tworogers progressed through graduate school at NSU, the prospect of teaching became more intriguing. Both had taught as adjuncts, so they had classroom experience.

“We both realized we loved teaching and decided we’d like to teach for the second half of our working life,” said Thomas Tworoger. “We knew that in order to do that, we had to go beyond the M.B.A. and get our doctorates. It took five years. Then we got hired full time at the Huizenga College. We love our time working with our colleagues and at the school.”

Both Tworogers have been recognized for teaching excellence at NSU, with Leslie Tworoger winning the NSU Huizenga College of Business’ “Excellence in Teaching Award” in 2007. She was also selected as the college’s “Faculty of the Year” award winner for 2014 and was a finalist for “Professor of the Year” for NSU’s Student Life Achievement Awards in 2015.

“I was really delighted and surprised,” Tworoger said of her award, especially the Faculty of the Year. “It’s voted on by the faculty and staff, and it is really fantastic. The criteria include your teaching and your service, both at school and in the community.”

Setting an example for community service through her own charitable work, Tworoger has been recognized by the Philharmonic Society, the March of Dimes, and Leadership Broward for her work in the community. And, she has served many other organizations. Currently, her focus lies with the Fort Lauderdale Independence Training & Education (FLITE) Center, an organization that serves young people between the ages of 18 and 23 who have aged out of the foster care system.

“It is a tremendous need,” Tworoger said. “These young people have grown up in the foster care system, and then suddenly, they are no longer getting funding from the state. You think about the role of family, how closely so many of our adult kids are connected to us, and then realize these kids don’t have adults in their lives.”

IMPORTANT PREPARATION

Tworoger believes arts education is an important part of preparing students for the M.B.A. “I teach a class on innovation,” she said. “When you look at the tools needed to be innovative, a good understanding of literature, music, and art are right up there. All those things inspire creative thinking and good critical thinking skills. I, personally, believe the humanities are essential for creativity.”

The faculty committee developing The Real-World M.B.A. found that NSU’s Huizenga College of Business already was

known for its emphasis on real-world applications, Tworoger said. The Real-World M.B.A. will expand the program and bring in more students. “We’re looking forward to really exciting things,” she said.

The new M.B.A. program will benefit both full-time students pursuing a graduate degree now and those working on their



Leslie Tworoger discusses business practices with doctoral student Arlene Ramkissoon, seated at left; freshman Sanya Rashad, seated at right; freshman Mareena Kashif, standing; and sophomore Edward Valenz.

degree while also employed, Tworoger said. The new program is designed so students can work at their own pace, finishing quickly, in a year or two, or taking much longer if necessary. “Some students are working, so they are going to attend class at night, on weekends, and even online,” Tworoger said. “You can take one course at a time if you want. It just depends on individual needs.” ■

FACULTY PROFILE

Professor Makes NSU a Prime Resource for OCD Treatment

BY ELLEN WOLFSON VALLADARES

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD) often evokes images of excessive hand washing or the need to fanatically arrange items in a particular order.

While those behaviors can be part of the disorder, Jedidiah Siev, Ph.D., assistant professor at NSU's College of Psychology since 2011, wants people to know that OCD is a serious, complex disorder that includes a wide spectrum of behaviors and often severely impairs the lives of those who suffer from it. He also wants people to know that help is available and the word has been spreading since Siev brought his expertise to NSU three years ago and added the NSU OCD and Related Disorders (NORD) program to the already existing NSU Anxiety Treatment Center. He is currently the director of the Anxiety Treatment Center and NORD program.

"OCD is a disorder that interferes with people's lives. The good news is that our treatments work well. They are not always easy to do, but the efficacy rates are very high. It is incredibly rewarding to work with people whose lives are so impaired and who you can help make such a huge difference in their lives," he said.

Since it opened, the NORD program has treated more than 130 patients, not only with OCD, but also with other, perhaps less well known, disorders such as hair pulling, skin picking, and Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), a preoccupation with a perceived defect in one's physical appearance. Because of Siev and the NORD program, these patients are receiving the most current, best-researched treatments, which mostly rely on a form of cognitive-behavioral therapy called "exposure and response prevention."

Under Siev's supervision, doctoral students from NSU's College of Psychology provide a treatment plan that includes progressively exposing the client to his or her fears in order to reduce anxiety. "We are trying to help people learn that they can allow for anxiety. Studies show that, of the people who complete a full course of exposure and response prevention, 75 to 85 percent benefit tremendously from it," Siev said.



"We are asking people to face their biggest fears."

Siev learned much about these effective treatments during the more than eight years he spent working with some of the nation's leading experts in the field of OCD and related disorders. After graduating from Yale University with a bachelor's degree in psychology, Siev took a couple years off and then attended graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received a master's degree in psychology and his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. It just so happened that many of the leading researchers in OCD and related disorders were in the Philadelphia area, and Siev got the chance to work with many of them, igniting a lifelong passion for the subject.

In addition, Siev completed a one-year internship and a two-year, postdoctoral fellowship at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School in the OCD and Related Disorders Program, where he again trained with several renowned OCD researchers and clinicians.

Meanwhile, having Siev at NSU has also attracted students like Lori Merling, a fourth-year Clinical Psychology Ph.D. student who currently is one of the coordinators for the NORD program. "I came here specifically to work with Dr. Siev," said Merling, who discovered Siev's research while getting her bachelor's degree at McGill University in Montreal.

While she majored in humanistic studies, Merling said she always knew she wanted to work with OCD patients and was immediately drawn to Siev's research.

"I knew someone when I was growing up who suffered from OCD, and I saw firsthand how it affected that person and the person's family," Merling said. "Dr. Siev draws people in. I know so many people who got interested in OCD and the clinic because they took a class with him."

Keith Lit, a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the clinical psychology program, became inspired to delve deeper into OCD

that touching objects in the therapy room, such as the light switch, was extremely dangerous to him.

"When Dr. Siev came into the session, he empathized with all the client's fears and quickly shifted the conversation to talk about change and pursuing goals. It was a great lesson for me in understanding how to balance the roles of the warm, supportive listener and the challenging, demanding coach," said Lit.

According to Siev, NSU has been the ideal place to move forward with his work. Previous research was funded by a grant from a private donor and a grant from the International OCD Foundation. He continues his research with two NSU President's Faculty Research and Development Grants. And, he enjoys the fact that NSU allows him the opportunity to research, as well as teach and do the clinical supervision.

"I am getting to do so many different things—research, teaching, clinical supervision. I do a lot of all three," he said.

Aside from his work at NSU, Siev loves to spend time with his wife of 15 years, Brendy, who teaches English at NSU University School, and their four children, ranging in age from 6 to 14.

He hopes the Anxiety Treatment Center and NORD program will continue to be an exceptional training facility for students and become more widely known as a valuable South Florida resource. "I'm hoping that we can do a lot in terms of making this gold standard treatment available to everybody who needs it, whatever they can afford," Siev said.

Siev also wants to see NSU become the resource for Body Dysmorphic Disorder, which even fewer people know about. He believes the program can help alleviate a lot of suffering, as these disorders can be so debilitating that people often lose their jobs, marriages, or children.

"We can help people transform their lives in a way that they will say, 'I never thought my life could be like this,'" he said. "It's so rewarding to help people get their lives back." ■



Jedidiah Siev and Ivy Rouder, a graduate student in psychology, discuss how to treat a patient with anxiety about being outdoors.

and related disorders when he took a class with Siev about treating anxiety disorders. "During class, he would sometimes role play with students to demonstrate the technique or approach he was teaching. I remember marveling at how precisely he could implement the technique while still sounding genuine and conversational, which is so hard to do," Lit said.

For Lit, one of his best moments working at the NORD program was when Siev joined him for a session with a client, who had severe contamination OCD. The client was very reluctant to engage in exposures because he strongly believed

Community involvement par for the course at Miami Campus

BY OLIVE H. COGDILL

NSU STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES CONSIDER BEING AN active part of the community a vital aspect of Nova Southeastern University's Miami Campus in Kendall.

"NSU's Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus is in Broward, but by getting involved with the community, we show we are also a Miami-Dade university, a Florida university, and that we care about the area," said Ricardo Belmar, M.I.B.A., executive director of NSU's Miami Campus.

Community is one of NSU's Core Values, embraced by those on each of the university's campuses. "For anyone at NSU, the community core value is not a phrase but a reality," said Belmar. "Whenever my team and I are participating in community events, we always wear our Shark gear with pride, so others can connect with NSU and the Miami Campus."

NSU's Miami Campus immediately began to invest itself in the area when it opened in 1999. The campus belongs to approximately 20 area chambers of commerce and business and community-based organizations. Staff and faculty members actively participate in these organizations, serving on a variety of education, business, and nonprofit committees.

In addition, Miami Campus staffers serve on the Hispanic Scholarship Fund Advisory Board; as part of the leadership committee of the economic development agency Beacon Council; and enFAMILIA, Inc., which provides counseling services to migrant families living in South Dade.

Community projects have included toy, food, and clothing drives in conjunction with WeCare of South Dade, a nonprofit social service agency. NSU Miami Campus staff members, in collaboration with the College of Psychology, facilitated at seminars about suicide awareness and sexual

abuse in Kendall and Homestead. The Miami Campus also hosts the annual Principals Breakfast for high school leaders, working through the Chamber South.

Nursing students participate in area health expos, engage in clinical rotations at local homeless shelters, and regularly offer life skills education at Kristi House's Project Gold, which provides outreach and services to exploited or at-risk young women.

"Nurses need to be well rounded to relate to their patients. When nurses apply for jobs, they are not only asked about their education, but also how involved they have been with the community," said Donna Shaw, M.S.N., clinical coordinator and assistant professor of nursing at the Miami Campus. "Volunteer work exposes nursing students to the needs of the diverse population in their community," she added. "Part of being a nurse is being aware of the community you serve and giving back to the community."

The largest program at the Miami Campus, nursing has nearly 400 students. About 3,000 students, in general, receive their education through the Miami Campus.

All of the campus's involvement has been noticed. James Jackson III, Ed.D., assistant director at the NSU Miami Campus, was honored by Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida as one of 12 Good Men for outstanding community and civic service. During the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's Hispanic Leadership Awards, Belmar received the Chairman's Higher Education Award for his commitment to serving the Hispanic community.

"The more we work in the community, the more exposure we bring to NSU. And, we involve the entire campus in these projects," said Belmar. ■





Students who attend NSU's Miami Campus find that community service complements their academic studies.



AROUND NSU

NSU RESEARCHERS RECEIVE \$800,000 GRANT TO RESEARCH GULF WAR ILLNESS



Paula A. Faria Waziry, Ph.D., assistant professor at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine and researcher at the Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, and her research team recently were awarded an \$805,882 grant from the U.S. Department of Defense's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs to investigate the genomic and cellular mechanisms that cause Gulf War illness.

"Little is known about what causes the onset and progression of Gulf War illness," said Waziry, shown above left. "Our aim is to identify specific disease targets that will lead to an improved diagnosis and more effective therapeutic interventions for patients. It is our duty to help those who served their country in any way we can, and this is one way we can make a major difference."

In addition to Waziry, who will serve as primary investigator, the research team consists of faculty members from the College of Osteopathic Medicine's Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, including Lubov Nathanson, Ph.D., assistant professor and genomics expert; Nancy Klimas, M.D., professor of medicine and director of the institute; Mariana Morris, Ph.D., professor and director of Gulf War illness research; and Gordon Broderick, Ph.D., professor and director of computational biology. ■

This work was supported by the Department of Defense Gulf War Illness Research Program under Award No.W81XWH-15-1-0163.

CANCER RESEARCHER EARNS FULBRIGHT AWARD

NSU cancer researcher Appu Rathinavelu, Ph.D., has been selected for the prestigious J. William Fulbright award to conduct cancer research and training in India. Rathinavelu is associate dean for institutional planning and development at NSU's College of Pharmacy and executive director of NSU's Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research.

The Fulbright Program, the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange project, is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

The NSU cancer researcher will use the grant to develop and validate new genomics-based tests that could help during the treatment of breast and prostate cancers. During the two three-month endeavors, he also will help establish research collaborations and train graduate student researchers at VRR Institute of Biomedical Science in Chennai, India, which is affiliated with University of Madras, where Rathinavelu completed his graduate training. ■

SHEPARD BROAD COLLEGE OF LAW NAMED ONE OF THE BEST

The Princeton Review has named NSU's Shepard Broad College of Law as one of the nation's most outstanding law schools. The education services company features the college in the new 2015 edition of its annual book, *The Best 169 Law Schools*.

The Princeton Review's survey asked 19,500 students at the 169 law schools their opinions of their school's academics, student body, and campus life as well as about themselves and their career plans.

In the profile on NSU, the *Princeton Review* editors describe the college as: "having a strong emphasis on legal writing," and "a hands-on approach to legal education." It also said NSU students "learn how to be good legal practitioners." ■

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE RECEIVES \$3.39-MILLION GRANT



Dentists and other health care providers who treat patients with autism spectrum disorder require special training to understand the skills and techniques needed to care for this growing population.

Romer Ocanto, D.D.S., M.S., CAGS, chair of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at NSU's College of Dental Medicine, has secured a \$3.39-million grant from the Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide this training to pediatric dentistry residents and advanced education in general dentistry residents over a five-year period. This is the third grant Ocanto has received from HRSA. Previous funding totaled approximately \$3.5 million.

The program will include the development of a curriculum addressing the transition of children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder to adult dental care. It will also aim to increase access to dental care for children and adolescents with special health care needs, such as autism.

Currently, the college has pediatric special needs dental clinics at NSU's Mailman Segal Center for Human Development in Davie (shown above); NSU Dental Care at Kids In Distress in Fort Lauderdale; and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida; along with an adult special needs dental clinic in North Miami Beach. ■

This project is 100% financed by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number D88HP20126 and Postdoctoral Training in General, Pediatric and Public Health Dentistry and Dental Hygiene for \$3,398,452. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.

AN EVEN GREENER NSU

NSU is becoming greener with new initiatives.

The Green Sharks NSU Student Sustainability Club begins its first year as an official university group.

Affiliated with NSU's H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship, the Green Sharks aims to engage students and faculty and staff members across the university on sustainable efforts. The club, which debuted during the Spring 2015 Earth Day, helped to plan the recent student-interactive Sharkapalooza, with energy savings as its theme.

The Green Sharks also will organize several off-campus field trips, including visits to a South Florida Waste Management facility and a local organic farm. For more information, contact Cassi Lobaugh, Green Sharks president, at cl1221@nova.edu.

Faculty Members Collaborate

A collaboration of 37 faculty and staff members from a variety of Nova Southeastern University colleges has formed to continue the university's sustainability efforts. The group's goals include business retention, jobs creation, and curriculum and research projects. The faculty members represent NSU's H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship; College of Nursing; College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Shepard Broad College of Law; Mailman Segal Center for Human Development. The staff members are from the Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center. For more information on the group, contact Guenola Nonet, Ph.D., at gnonet@nova.edu or Karen McKenzie, Ph.D., at karenmck@nova.edu. ■



Student's Love of the Ocean Led to NSU

BY KEREN MOROS

ALTHOUGH LAUREN ALFINO GREW up in Colorado, she has loved the ocean since she was a child. "My grandparents took me to an aquarium when I was six years old and I got to touch dolphins," she said. "I just started falling in love with the ocean, and the older I got, the more amazed I was by it," said Alfino, a marine biology major in NSU's Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography.

It was that love of the ocean—and a life-changing event—that lead Alfino to choose NSU. Originally, she had planned to attend college in Colorado with the goal of becoming a veterinarian. This changed when she was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma during her junior year of high school. Having cancer helped her to focus on what she loved, she said, and, while recovering from chemotherapy during her senior year, she decided to start anew.

"Once I got diagnosed with cancer, I really wanted to follow something that I loved, and I had always loved the ocean, and I decided 'You only live once, and you might as well do what you love,' " Alfino said. Her plan to become a marine animal veterinarian led her to look at colleges in Florida and California. Although she was offered scholarships that would cover tuition at Florida Institute of Technology, she chose NSU because she believed it offered her more opportunities to study the oceans.

"I liked the people at NSU. I felt NSU would be my home. I fell in love with the shark mural in the Don Taft University Center. I fell in love with the programs offered," said Alfino, 19. "To me, NSU seemed like the most logical choice."

Now a sophomore, Alfino's dream is supported by the Charles W. Daniels Endowed Scholarship. Alfino is the first



Marine biology major Lauren Alfino, left, discusses ocean life with her professor, Emily Schmitt Lavin, interim biology department chair in the Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography.

recipient of this scholarship, funded by the Lafferty Family Foundation. She expressed her gratitude for the scholarship as the only student to speak during the naming ceremony for NSU's Robert S. Lafferty, Sr., Central Energy Plant. (See story on page 7.) But she said she doesn't think she can ever thank them enough. "They're absolutely amazing people," Alfino said, again expressing her appreciation.

Another part of Alfino's fresh start was trying a new sport. A swimmer since childhood, she tore her rotator cuff before starting college, making her rethink her desire to join NSU's swimming and diving team. Instead, she found another home with NSU's award-winning rowing team.

"You can't just purely muscle your way through it; you have to have technique, and you have to be relaxed, and you have to trust the other women on your team," Alfino said of rowing. Alfino now has a rowing scholarship and is looking forward to being a leader on the team this year. "I want to be more of

a role model—show that hard work can definitely pull you through and that you can do a lot of things when you just set your mind to it,” she said.

Being part of the team helped her adjust to college while being far away from her family. Another part of her adjustment was her professors, including her biology professor, Emily Schmitt Lavin, Ph.D., interim chair of the biology department at the Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. “If I had any questions, she would always be there to help answer them,” Alfino said. “She was very organized and helped me succeed.”

Schmitt Lavin said that Alfino has an intensity and desire to succeed that is genuinely refreshing. “During the semester, while studying Biology II/Lab, Lauren was always intensely engaged in the subject matter,” Schmitt Lavin said. “But when we started to discuss life in the oceans, that is when I truly saw the sparks of excitement light up her face!”

In the long term, Alfino plans to attend veterinarian school or graduate school for marine biology. For now, NSU is the

right place for her, and she believes she can learn much with faculty support. “NSU has a far reach with marine biology because of its commitment to protecting the coral reefs and the ocean,” said Alfino. “Being here was the right choice.” ■

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

The Charles W. Daniels Endowed Scholarship is among the numerous scholarship opportunities NSU can offer its students with high academic achievement and/or financial need. The Charles W. Daniels Endowed Scholarship was established by Robert S. Lafferty, Jr., of The Lafferty Family Foundation to recruit and retain outstanding undergraduate students. For more information on the availability of scholarships, email PHSS@nova.edu. If you would like to establish a Changing Lives Scholarship please email annualgiving@nova.edu or call (954) 262-2127. To establish a permanent source of scholarships through an endowed fund, please call (954) 262-2109. To read more inspiring stories, please go to www.nova.edu/giving.

AROUND NSU

NSU TO OVERSEE NATIONAL CORAL REEF PROGRAM

Protecting the world’s coral reefs has been at the forefront for researchers and students at NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography.

To that end, NSU has been selected to oversee the new National Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program. This program is a partnership between NSU, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Coral Reef Conservation Program, the Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs, and the U.S. All Islands Coral Reef Committee.

It will create seven two-year positions in each of the seven U.S. coral reef jurisdictions. Through these highly qualified fellows, this program will help address current management capacity gaps and build long-term capacity in the coral reef jurisdictions of the United States. The new vision for the program

is for a thriving collaborative fellowship that builds excellent next-generation leaders and capacity for effective local coral reef ecosystem management.

The seven jurisdictions where these new fellows will be placed are Florida, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Anticipated start date of the fellows is January 2016. Fellows can be expected to work on national goals for climate change, land-based sources of pollution, and fishing, as well as addressing local needs such as the development of management plans for marine-managed areas, increased community involvement in monitoring and response, climate change adaptation, and biological monitoring. ■

CHANGES MAKE THE GRADE

BY OLIVE H. COGDILL

NSU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL BEGAN THE 2015–2016 SCHOOL year with some changes in its administration and sporting a new look.

First, William Kopas, M.Ed., was promoted to be the Head of School, succeeding Jerome Chermak, Ed.D., who retired in June following 33 years with University School, including 16 years as headmaster. Kopas was selected following a national search overseen by a committee composed of NSU University School parents, faculty members, and administrators, and NSU representatives.

Kopas, who will receive his Doctor of Education from NSU in 2015, is well known on the NSU University School campus. As Upper School director during the past five years, he led the school in the development of innovative programs that earned national and state recognition in robotics, mathematics, writing, the arts, and science research. Under Kopas' leadership, NSU University School athletes won numerous district and regional titles, two team state championships, and five individual state championships. The school's speech and debate team won two state titles and is recognized in the top 1 percent nationally.

"Mr. Kopas is extremely well-qualified to take NSU

University School to the next level of recognition and achievement as one of the country's premier junior kindergarten through grade 12 independent schools. I would also like to recognize Jerome Chermak for his excellent leadership and service to NSU University School for the past 33 years," said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and CEO.

NEW DIRECTORS

Chip Clatto, M.S., was named the director of the Upper School. Clatto, who is pursuing his Ph.D. at Maryville University, most recently was the founding principal of The Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience Magnet High School in St. Louis, Missouri. He developed the school's framework, designed the curriculum structure, and supervised the school's instructional programs. Previously, he served as principal at Stevens Center for Academic Development Middle School (also in St. Louis) and as assistant principal for diversity at St. Louis University Jesuit High School.



William Kopas, M.Ed.



The expansion of the Noël P. Brown Sports Center is expected to be completed in 2016.

Robyn Kaiyal, M.S., Ph.D., was promoted to director of the Middle School. Most recently, Kaiyal was associate director of academic affairs in which she guided the overall management, planning, and daily operations of the upper school. She also taught at the school for five years. Previously, Kaiyal served as principal of the kindergarten through grade 8 Alazhar School and principal of the grade 6 through grade 8 Sinai Academy, both in Miami.

In addition to changes in its administration, the Noël P. Brown Sports Center is undergoing a 54,000-square-foot expansion. It will boast cutting-edge training and fitness rooms, two full-sized basketball courts, a volleyball court, and a variety of areas for physical fitness activities and aquatic sports. Offices for the athletic department staff and a permanent home for the Special Olympics Broward County chapter are part of the expansion. The projects are expected to be completed in 2016.

SHARK TIME

NSU University School has not only embraced the Sharks identity, it also now sports the blue and gray colors of Nova Southeastern University. Its students and athletic teams will be wearing blue and gray.

“This rebranding lets us capitalize on our uniqueness of being one of the only private schools locally that is situated on a college campus, affording our students a number of resources and opportunities,” said Stacey Gonzalez, M.S., associate director of marketing and communications at NSU University School.

And, USchool made the naming of its Sharks mascot a fun, school-wide venture. Student focus groups submitted names, which were narrowed to four choices. The entire student body then voted online to choose the name. “Fin” was the overwhelming choice as NSU University School welcomes its new branding and heads into bluer (and grayer) waters with its Fins Up! ■

NSU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL TEACHER RECEIVES PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Carlos Montero (right), a teacher at NSU University School, was among 108 mathematics and science teachers across the United States honored by President Barack Obama as a recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Montero teaches honors and AP chemistry in grades 9–12. He also serves as the chair of

the science department for grades 6–12. The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is awarded annually to outstanding K–12 science and mathematics teachers from across the country. The winners are selected by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators following an initial selection process done at the state level. ■



Seven Is the Magic Number for NSU Sharks

BY WALTER VILLA

THE CHEERING NEVER SEEMS TO STOP AT NSU, WHERE THE Sharks' athletic program has won an astonishing seven national titles—all during the past seven years. It's an unprecedented run for NSU, which became an NCAA Division II school in June of 2002.

All of the national championships—four in women's golf, two in men's golf, and one in women's rowing—have come under the leadership of Michael Mominey, M.S., director of Athletics. But despite all that winning, Mominey does not lose sight of the athletics department's top priority. "I want to win more than anybody," said Mominey, who was hired in January 2002. "But we are, first and foremost, educators, building leaders for tomorrow."

Athletics leaders are abundant on the NSU campus, many of them hired by Mominey to coach Sharks sports teams. That includes Ryan Jamison, M.B.A., who was recently named the Division II Men's Golf Coach of the Year after leading NSU to the 2015 national championship.

Other top NSU coaches include LeAnn Freeland, M.S., who has led the women's basketball team to the Elite Eight round of the NCAA Tournament three years in a row; Amanda Brown, B.S., 2005, M.A., 2010, who led the women's golf team to a fifth-place showing at the national tournament; Hollie Bonewit-Cron, M.S., who coached her swimmers to six individual national titles; and Greg Brown, M.B.A., who led the baseball team to a school-record 39 wins and a berth in the NCAA South Region playoffs. In addition, three NSU athletes were selected in the 2015 Major League Baseball Draft. Ryan Jamison received the most votes in a *Miami Herald* online poll ranking South Florida's best coaches. LeAnn Freeland ranked fourth and Amanda Brown also placed in the poll

"There's a great energy in our athletics office," said Greg Brown, the 2015 Sunshine State Coach of the Year. "All our coaches know the amount of blood and sweat it takes to develop a program," he said. "I've been here five years, and I've seen the 'Shark Community' grow. ... We are all learning together. We are supporting each other and taking great pride in wearing a Sharks uniform." ■



NSU champions include, from top, baseball, women's basketball, men's golf, and swimming teams.

Since becoming NSU's athletic director, Michael Mominey has helped make numerous changes in the Sharks' program.

- NSU joined the Sunshine State Conference in 2004.
- In 2005, NSU switched mascots from Knights to Sharks.
- NSU has added seven sports under Mominey: men's and women's track, men's and women's swimming, men's cross country, women's tennis, and women's rowing. The Sharks now have 7 men's sports and 10 women's sports. Mominey has explored the possibility of adding sports such as men's tennis, men's volleyball, and men's and women's lacrosse.
- The athletic program has grown from 150 student-athletes to 370. The list of full-time staffers has grown from 23 to 47, with 19 graduate assistants.
- NSU started its own hall of fame and a student-athlete alumni association.
- NSU created the Shark Booster Club and an athletic advisory council.
- NSU has added the Arena at the Don Taft University Center, the NSU Aquatics Center, the Shark Athletic Academic Center, a 5,300-square-foot weight room, and a new athletics department office. In addition, the baseball, soccer, and softball fields were renovated.

All those improvements have contributed to more wins and more championships. Out of 306 Division II programs in the nation, this year, NSU finished 14th as an overall rating for all sports (Learfield Directors Cup).

"Six or seven years ago, we were not even in the top 100," Mominey said. "Our aspiration is to be in the top 10 and then the top 5," he added. "What we've already done is remarkable. And the support we've had over the years from the board of trustees to the president's office and everyone on campus plays into the success we've had on and off the field." ■

Baseball Player Is the Heart of NSU Team

BY WALTER VILLA



Notre Dame football had Rudy, but NSU baseball has Teft Hill. Both men share similar stories—walk-on athletes who overcame obstacles to inspire teammates.

They made the movie *Rudy* about Rudy Ruettiger, who got a sack on the only play from scrimmage of his short college football career. While there is

no film yet planned for Hill, his accomplishments this year—which included two pinch-hit homers on the same day—may be even more remarkable.

When he was only four months old, the Colorado native was diagnosed with hepatoblastoma, an uncommon form of liver cancer that usually occurs in children younger than the age of three. Hill endured six months of intense chemotherapy to shrink the tumor and then an eight-hour surgery to remove it, followed by five days in the intensive care unit.

Hill never complains about the surgery that left him with a foot-long scar across his stomach. "After my surgeries, it could have gone either way," said Hill, 21. "I was fortunate to have overcome the battle. There are a lot of people who are less fortunate than me, and that's why I go out each day and give it my best," said the business administration major, who has a 3.75 grade point average and is expected to graduate in December 2015.

"Teft lives every day to the fullest," said NSU shortstop Dylan Woods, a sophomore majoring in business administration. It was that attitude that convinced Greg Brown, M.B.A., NSU's head baseball coach to give Hill a chance to walk on to the baseball team.

"He was relentless," Brown said, recalling how Hill, in essence, recruited NSU during a trip to the university with his father, Rick, instead of the other way around. "He wanted to be with us, and I believed in him from the start. It was the person, not his skills. He just had that 'it factor'—confidence, a presence. You just knew he was going to be successful."

Hill made the team as a redshirt freshman (a player on the team who practices for a year, but does not play in any official games) in 2014. This year, Hill was the catalyst for the greatest season in NSU baseball history, helping the Sharks to a 39-13 record, their first Sunshine State Conference title, and a berth in the NCAA Division II regional playoffs. The team's season-long mantra was "37 Hearts, 1 Beat," or, on Twitter, #37H1B.

Coincidentally, Hill wears No. 37, and he is known as the "pulse" of the team, according to Brown.

"It wasn't until halfway through the season that we realized that our motto and his jersey number both shared the number 37," Brown said. "It was organic and cosmic—and I was in awe of how that worked out." ■

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Purpose: Support undergraduate students

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Art of Peace Endowed Scholarship Fund

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College/Center: NSU College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Purpose: Support a doctoral student working on his or her dissertation addressing the interrelationship between art and conflict

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Purpose: Support doctoral students whose research focuses on a novel application of behavioral psychology principles and utilizes defined outcomes to evaluate efficacy

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College/Center: NSU College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Purpose: Support graduate students in the Department of Conflict Analysis and Resolution

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