Panel 24 and Panel 25: Campus Executive Officers

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Ceremony as dean, April 1985.

David Kenerson served as acting dean during the delicate negotiations between city and university officials for Phase I expansion. Kenerson resumed his teaching duties after John Hinz became dean in early 1979.

Hinz at his final commencement ceremony as dean, April 1985.

Les Tuttle went to high school in Tampa. After college, he became a professor of education at the University of Alabama. With family still living in Tampa, he jumped at the chance to join the faculty at the recently-opened University of South Florida in the early 1960s. When founding USF President John S. Allen decided to launch a permanent campus at the Bayboro Harbor facility in 1968, Allen selected Tuttle as its first administrator.

Tuttle’s youthful demeanor set the tone for the young campus. He moved into an office in the former officers' quarters for the Maritime Station and built academic programs by attracting energetic faculty who shared his commitment to excellence in teaching. Each day, before and after stopping at the Bay Campus he made visits to USF Tampa for meetings—leaving Herm Brames, his second-in-command, in charge during his absence. Soon, Tuttle received a promotion to the level of assistant dean of academic affairs.

Tuttle's role expanded after Cecil Mackey became USF's second president. During the early 1970s, USF added a campus in Fort Myers and acquired New College—formerly a private institution—that was converted into the State University System's honors college. A true “road scholar,” Tuttle recruited faculty and oversaw the establishment of the St. Petersburg, Sarasota, and Fort Myers branches of the USF family as dean of regional campus affairs. He later returned to the classroom.

Tuttle, circa 1986.

A professor of business management and former hospital administrator, David Kenerson served as acting dean during the delicate negotiations between city and university officials for Phase I expansion. Kenerson resumed his teaching duties after John Hinz became dean in early 1979.

Mr. David R. Kenerson
(Interim, September 1976-February 1979)

“Mr. Kenerson's role at the Bay Campus has fundamentally, most-of-all been as a teacher. I didn't profess to be a researcher, and I wasn’t asked or expected to do that. I was expected to do a good job and make the students loyal alumni.”
—David Kenerson in a November 2003 interview.

Mr. Samuel Y. Fustukjian
(Acting, July 1985-July 1986)

“Sam Fustukjian was and is a bright, articulate, and knowledgeable scholar; a man who could talk on any and all topics — from the Greek language to the war in Lebanon. He has a great deal of training and experience and is well-studied in all areas of his teaching and research areas.”

A native of Lebanon, Samuel Fustukjian came to the United States in 1969 after completing his undergraduate studies in Beirut. He arrived at USF St. Petersburg in 1980 as the library's director after head librarian Doris Cook retired. Fustukjian—known to most as “Sam”—held the post of acting dean after Hinz stepped down. In 1991, he transferred to USF Tampa to take over leadership duties for the USF libraries system. A beloved colleague and friend of the Poynter Library, Sam lapsed into a coma following complications from surgery in September 1998. He passed away on March 1, 1999.

Dr. John P. Hinz
(February 1979-July 1985)

A scholar of American literature, John Hinz earned degrees at the City College of New York and Columbia University. He served as USF St. Petersburg’s dean for six years, often battling with administrators in Tampa for greater autonomy over course selection, staffing, and funding matters. He fortified the bonds between campus and community, oversaw the opening of new classroom buildings and a library, and helped assure that Activity and Service fees generated on the St. Petersburg campus stayed there.

Hinz launched the Asparagus Club as a place for community members to learn about the research interests of the faculty. This early forum served as the predecessor to the Campus Advisory Board that developed in the late 1980s.

Hinz announced his resignation on September 21, 1984. He later returned to the classroom as a professor. Recalling his tenure, Hinz claimed that in the late 1970s, “We were on a back burner.” By the time of his retirement from USF in 1993, he added, “Now we are cooking up front where we belong.” Hinz passed away on January 23, 1996.

Mr. Lowell E. Davis
(August 1986-August 1989)

“A native of Jamaica, Lowell Davis came to the United States in the mid-1950s to pursue his dream of getting a college education. He earned his undergraduate degree at Howard University and completed his doctorate in biology at Case Western Reserve University.

Davis became USF's first African-American dean. He immediately set in motion plans to expand the physical size of the campus, as well as enhance its course offerings and resources. During his tenure, the endowment for the campus grew from $600,000 to $2.2 million. He moved ahead plans for the Campus Activities Center and expanded student scholarship opportunities.

A popular administrator, he cultivated a collegial atmosphere at USF St. Petersburg. Students, staff, and faculty became members of a large and extended family with a shared sense of academic purpose and zeal. Just as he planned to move forward with an aggressive agenda to increase autonomy and set a new tone for the campus, he suffered a debilitating stroke on August 23, 1989. Five weeks later, on September 30, he passed away. Those who knew Lowell realize that he made an “everlasting” impression on the campus.

Dr. Lowell E. Davis Memorial Hall (formerly Bayboro Hall), September 25, 1990.

“Lowell’s legacy is that he taught us to dream great things about the future of this campus. —Paul Getting, then executive vice president of the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce, at the September 1990 dedication of “Davis Memorial Hall.”

Mr. Samuel Y. Fustukjian (left) and Lowell Davis (right), circa 1986.

“[Lowell] had a good deal of the John F. Kennedy aura — you know, the ‘Ask not what your country can do for you...’ His energy and determination were contagious.”

Dedication of Lowell E. Davis Memorial Hall (formerly Bayboro Hall), September 25, 1990.