Bayboro Briefing : 1998 : Fall

University of South Florida St. Petersburg.
The YWCA/USF Family Village, located at the corner of Fourth Street and Sixth Avenue S. in St. Petersburg, opened in August. On hand to applaud its opening was St. Petersburg Mayor David Fischer, YWCA Executive Director Peggy Sanchez Mills, USF President Betty Castor, Pinellas County Commissioner Sallie Parks, USF student Patty Wilson, Liz Lazzara, Campus Dean Bill Heller, Anita Treiser, Hunter Lindenberg and Beth Hunter-Lindenberg.

Family Village brings day care to campus

When the YWCA/USF Family Village opened on campus this fall, it gave students at USF St. Petersburg a double opportunity.

Student parents benefit by having affordable and convenient day care available for their kids while they're in class. Students interning at Family Village gain by getting hands-on experience in their chosen field.

That's an unbeatable combination, said USF St. Petersburg Dean Bill Heller.

“Our partnership with the YWCA is a win-win situation,” Heller said. “Our students have long needed access to day care they can trust, and now they have it.”

And education students now have a place they can easily get to and apply what they learn in the classroom.

USF St. Petersburg students majoring in early childhood, which specializes in children ages 3 to third-graders, are placed at Family Village as interns. Steve Micklo, associate professor of early childhood education at USF St. Petersburg, says each student spends up to six hours a week interning at the center.

Previously, all students had to travel to private preschools and local Headstart programs for their internships. Now, many of the students will be able to obtain

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Growing the campus

We're in for an exciting few months, as USF St. Petersburg and St. Petersburg Junior College begin working together to provide additional classes at each other's campuses.

The arrangement, in effect, allows Pinellas students to take all the classes necessary for a four-year degree without having to travel outside the county. This is a first for students in Pinellas seeking higher education at a public institution.

It's also an opportunity for USF St. Petersburg to welcome new students to the campus, and to keep them here as they pursue their junior, senior — and hopefully — graduate work. Our student enrollment will blossom as a result. USF St. Petersburg will offer distance-learning classes at various SPJC sites as well.

Currently we are providing 28 courses for SPJC students at USF St. Petersburg, which began this fall. These classes mainly are scheduled between the hours of 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., and about 360 SPJC students are enrolled.

Along with the new SPJC classes is another new initiative called the Learning Community. This is a new, progressive model of undergraduate education that emphasizes inquiry, investigation and discovery. The Learning Community comprises a small group of students who share their first two years of college together with select faculty members. Learning Community participants take the same classes in the same sequence, so students can learn from each other and keep from feeling lost at a large university. This program also offers a challenging, integrated curriculum, close association with participating faculty, and special advising opportunities.

I feel strongly about this program as it fits us well as a campus and permits us to make a good fit with the Florida Humanities Council and its Florida Center for Teachers — which, as you know, is joining us at USF St. Petersburg in 2001.

Our Learning Community here has a humanities emphasis. We have 31 students for our initial program. Thanks to the St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership, these students each will receive a $1,000 scholarship for their first year of classes. I believe the Learning Community has great appeal to students as it is designed to fully maximize their academic success.

Legislative funding for our partnership with SPJC and for the Learning Community, of course, is also necessary to succeed. We are indeed fortunate to have a Legislative Delegation that is knowledgeable and interested in higher education, and one that has expressed willingness to provide the funds necessary to grow this campus.

St. Petersburg campus students gather to study and socialize in a scenic setting overlooking Bayboro Harbor. USF St. Petersburg is considered one of the loveliest waterfront campuses in the nation.

Downtown group gives scholarships

The new Learning Community program at USF St. Petersburg got a needed boost with a gift of $31,000 for student scholarships.

The gift, from St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership, was divided among the first 31 students admitted to the program. Each student will receive $1,000 for the academic year.

"The growth of the campus has always been an important priority for our organization," said Martin Normile, executive director of the Downtown Partnership. "We see USF St. Petersburg as a catalyst for more downtown development."

The advent of the Learning Community transforms the campus into a full, four-year institution. The campus initially taught freshmen classes, but since 1968 has offered only junior, senior and graduate-level programs. It was only last spring that the program was sanctioned for the campus, leaving administrators scrambling to recruit first-year students.

St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership made their pledge as an incentive to increase enrollment. The group was willing to offer up to $50,000 in scholarships to the first 50 students.

The nonprofit group of local business leaders has long supported the campus. Among other things, it helped implement the decision to locate the first branch campus of USF in St. Petersburg in 1965, and later raised money for significant campus expansion and for an endowed chair in marine science.

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$18,000, payable in installments. Financial aid in the forms of loans and grants is available.

The classes run from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. with an hour off for lunch.

The program is a natural extension of the university's current programs, USF officials said. The university undertook the project after surveying current and prospective students, and meeting with business leaders in the community.
Campus appoints fund-raising director

Carol Russell was appointed director of advancement at USF St. Petersburg by Campus Dean and Executive Officer Bill Heller in August.

Russell, a native of St. Petersburg, is responsible for major gift fund raising and facilitating the St. Petersburg campus portion of the university's $220-million Great Achievements/Great Expectations capital campaign. She also oversees a staff of five.

"I'm very pleased to have someone with Carol Russell's talents to direct our development efforts," said Heller. "Carol is a definite asset to the campus and already has begun to make a difference for us."

Russell served as acting advancement director since January.

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much of their experience while on campus. It's a major step forward, said Micklo.

"Our students get to observe and interact with young children, focusing on developmental learning and behavior," Micklo said. "Students plan and lead group activities, using the most effective teaching techniques."

The Village also gives students a slice of real life. Since a component of the Village is its housing for homeless families, homeless and other disadvantaged children also use the day-care facility. The diverse population — "a little United Nations" according to YWCA Executive Director Peggy Sanchez Mills — will mirror what the future teachers are apt to face in their careers.

"This gives our students the chance to learn how to deal with students from all backgrounds, especially backgrounds different from what they themselves experienced growing up," Micklo said. "It can be an eye-opener and helps them acquire some savvy."

Although the Family Village is new to the campus, its twin goals of providing day care and housing follow a long tradition of YWCA service. The first day care in the nation was operated by the YWCA beginning in 1864 in Philadelphia.

"With a record like that, and with the current leadership, you can't go wrong," Heller said. "We expect the Family Village to be another great tradition and partnership at USF St. Petersburg."

Capital Campaign committee

The campus's capital campaign executive committee was recently finalized. The group comprises seven civic leaders in the community, and reads like a who's who of influential people in St. Petersburg.

The committee includes:
- Andy Corts, Chair
- Richard "Buzz" David
- Hazel Hough
- Wayne Mock
- Teresa Mukayed, MD
- Robert Rehnke, MD
- David Wilbanks

is $18.6 million; the campus so far has raised $4.7 million.

Russell is co-owner of All American Mortgage Co. in St. Petersburg and has extensive experience in the areas of business development, community affairs, marketing and public relations.

Urban Initiative update

USF St. Petersburg's Urban Initiative received $50,000 in July from the City of St. Petersburg to continue its role in coordinating renewal efforts in the inner city.

USF created the Urban Initiative in 1997 to support economic and social development in St. Petersburg's poorest neighborhoods. Since its inception, the Urban Initiative has worked closely with the community and government agencies to help achieve the city's Challenge 2001 targets in education, public safety, community renewal and economic equity.

Doug Tuthill coordinates the program, and USF faculty also participate. Campus Dean and Executive Officer Bill Heller spearheaded the initiative.

The Urban Initiative's mission is to strengthen those institutions, such as public education and workforce development, in which most affect the ability of inner-city residents to be self-sufficient. Some of the initiative's specific responsibilities include:

- Facilitating the Challenge 2001 Coordinating Committee meetings and helping committee members assume an active leadership role in achieving the Challenge 2001 targets.
- Insuring that the necessary information and data systems are in place to support Challenge 2001.
- Providing facilitation and technical support to the Business Development Center and the Business Development Collaborative.
- Helping the Pinellas Workforce Development Board build an integrated workforce system that is customer-focused and results-driven.

The Urban Initiative also comprises the Oasis Program, a year-round, drop-out prevention program held at USF St. Petersburg.

"Through the Urban Initiative, USF St. Petersburg is making a long-term commitment to St. Petersburg's inner city residents," said Heller. "Our efforts will continue long after the cameras have left — doing the work that needs to be done."

Classy downtown

46 degree programs at USF St. Petersburg
A generous gift from an alumna and her husband gave USF St. Petersburg's nascent capital campaign a nice boost.

Niela M. and Dr. Richard T. Eliason of St. Petersburg have created a $150,000 endowed fund for the Bayboro campus.

Half of the fund will be used for student scholarships, preferably for female English majors. The other half will go toward faculty development, specifically for research, sabbaticals, course release and professional conference and travel fees.

"This gift will do much to help both students and faculty at USF St. Petersburg," said Campus Dean Bill Heller. "The gift is especially meaningful coming from an alumna of the campus."

Niela Eliason graduated with an English degree from USF St. Petersburg in 1980. She had previously been a surgical nurse. Her interest in writing helped her land a columnist's job at the St. Petersburg Times, where she has written for many years. She also is the author of Kitchen Tables, a collection of essays.

Dr. Richard Eliason is a retired urologist.

The couple's gift was created as a charitable trust. USF St. Petersburg's campaign goal is $18.6 million over a five-year period.

For information on how you can help USF's capital campaign, call Carol Russell at 553-1160.

25th Hour Bayboro Brunch

The campus celebrated its second annual 25th Hour Bayboro Brunch on Oct. 25 — "daylight savings" Sunday.

The brunch is the campus' signature event. Brunch chair Fay Baynard ('88) presided over the successful event, which attracted 300 people who spent their "extra hour" at USF St. Petersburg.

A silent auction held during the brunch featured such unique items as a handmade USF Bulls football-themed quilt. All proceeds from the event went to scholarships and USF's Oceanography Camp for Girls.

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