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February 20, 2015

HarborNotes Weekly

Five Things to Know About USF St. Petersburg
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Smoak to Travel to China on Fulbright

USFSP **Professor Donny Smoak** has been awarded a Fulbright Specialist grant in Environmental Science at China's Shenyang Agricultural University. Smoak will head to China for three weeks in June to lecture and participate in a series of seminars on climate change and coastal wetlands.

"I welcome the opportunity to return to China. There are great scientists there and interesting places to work," said Smoak. "In 2005, I did a Fulbright in Brazil and have since returned many times to work on projects with my colleagues there."

Smoak says he hopes this visit will foster additional exchanges with Shenyang University, and that the development of an academic focus in this area could lead to our students seeking advanced training in China.

"Fulbright assignments, one of the highest honors in higher education, underscore the excellence of the faculty at USFSP," said Han Reichgelt, regional vice chancellor of Academic Affairs. "Dr. Smoak's newest award reflects his dedication as a professor and researcher, and the significance of his contributions to the field."



Dr. Donny Smoak

ESP&G Student Wins Statewide Poster Competition

USFSP's Joseph Terrano took First Prize in the statewide poster competition at the annual meeting of the Florida Society of Geographers. An **Environmental Science, Policy & Geography** (ESP&G) senior, Terrano's project seeks to determine the vulnerability of local power plants to storm surge and the potential hazards to nearby populations. Terrano mapped storm surge data using GIS (Geographic Information System) and remote sensing techniques to edge out competitors from Florida State and Florida International, among others.

"Joseph's win demonstrates the strength of our program and the unique opportunities our undergraduates have to get involved in research," said Dona Stewart, ESP&G visiting assistant professor. "We're really proud of this work."



Senior Joseph Terrano, ESP&G Visiting Assistant Professor, Dona Stewart (center), and Department Chair Barnali Dixon

Dr. Stewart was recently elected to the Board of the Florida Geographical Society and serves with Dr. Barnali Dixon, Board treasurer, and ESP&G department chair and founder of the Geo-Spatial Analytics Lab at USFSP.

"Mr. Terrano's first place success at this statewide Geography conference is one further example of the high caliber of research and scholarly work being conducted by our faculty in ESP&G," said Frank Biafora, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Joey Vars Speaks on Mars (Really)

Space enthusiast and USFSP senior Joey Vars was a guest speaker at St. Petersburg's SciCafe this week, sponsored by the Dali Museum. Vars spoke on one of his favorite topics: "Location, Location, Location: Space Is the Place!" Specifically, Vars addressed the Mars One space mission and the possibility of colonizing the planet.

"We're still figuring out how human beings will fare on a planet with no magnetic field to protect them from the elements," said Vars, who is a regular at the Kennedy Space Center. "This would be like an eternal camping trip. And it's unclear how the atmosphere would affect us longterm, whether we'd be able to procreate and sustain a colony."

Vars, a History major, graduates this year and is considering several options for continuing his education of space, including Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and the Air Force. He recently completed a NASA internship.

Vars is an avid blogger: [For-all-mankind.tumblr.com](http://for-all-mankind.tumblr.com).



Joey Vars lives and breathes space exploration.

USFSP to Host 2nd Florida Food Conference



Keynote speaker Chef Don Pintabona

Chef Don Pintabona of St. Petersburg's new Market Locale will be the keynote speaker at the 2nd Annual USFSP Florida Food Conference: Community and Culture on Saturday, April 18. The Conference will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the University Student Center.

"Chef Don and his adventures in opening Locale Market and farm-to-table restaurant is the perfect way to start off this daylong celebration of Florida food and culture," said Deni Elliott, chair of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies, and a founder of the conference. "Don has created a celebration of local farmers and fishers in downtown St. Petersburg."

Pintabona, the former executive chef at Robert DeNiro's Tribeca Grill in New York, is a graduate of USF and the prestigious Culinary Institute of America. Since returning to the Sunshine State, he has spent much of his time connecting with farmers, fishermen and other food purveyors around the state to bring their products to Locale. Pintabona will share his rich experiences with audience members in a talk entitled, "Closing the Gap: Connecting with Florida's Farmers of Land and Sea."

The Florida Food Conference is part of USFSP's new offerings in food writing and photography. To learn more, or register for the conference, please visit www.usfsp.edu/fla/food.

Getting to Know You ... Suzi Mills



Meet Dr. Susan Mills, American Council on Education Fellow. Mills comes to USFSP from Appalachian State University and is working with Regional Chancellor Sophia Wisniewska and her team to identify diversity challenges and best practices in higher education. "It's truly an honor to participate in this leadership program," said Wisniewska, "so please help me welcome Suzi to campus."

What is your favorite book?

"Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela."

Where is your favorite destination in the world?

My sailboat in the Gulf of Mexico.

What is your favorite movie?

"Steel Magnolias."

What was your least favorite subject in college?

Just a course, really: Existentialism. I was a Philosophy major, so it was required.

What skill or talent would you like to have that you don't have?

Interior decorating or landscaping -- basically the skills and talent to make grounds and living spaces beautiful.

What do you do to relax?

Yoga, floating in a swimming pool, reading.

What is something people would be surprised to learn about you?

I get a big kick out of playing piano, bass and accordion for folk dancers!

What USFSP project or activity are you currently working on that excites you the most?

I'm collecting stories about individuals and groups at USFSP who embody the spirit of "inclusive differences."

Upcoming Events

Lecture Series: Thinking Through ... World War One

Wednesday, February 25

4:30 p.m.

Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

3rd Annual World Affairs Conference

February 26-28

University Student Center

Lecture Series: The Great Society in Florida at 50

March 16-23

The Debbie and Brent Sembler Florida Holocaust Museum Lecture: Evgeny Finkel

"Pre-War Politics and Jewish Resistance in the Ghettos"

Tuesday, March 24

2:00 - 3:15 p.m.

Davis 130

For more information about these and other USFSP events, please visit our **Public Events Calendar**.

HarborNotes publishes weekly during the fall and spring semesters. To suggest a story, contact the editor:

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