Campus Library Power Shift Possible

Katie Phillips
Nest Contributor

The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library and other USF libraries could face significant changes if the university implements the recommendations made in a recent report by the Library and Information Sciences Task Force.

The report, presented to Provost Thomas Tighe, recommends the appointment of a dean of libraries with overall budgetary and executive control, the centralization of many services and increases in staff salaries and resources for USF libraries.

The task force argues that the changes are necessary to ensure that USF can provide the advanced, integrated information services required by its new status as a Research 1 university. Centralization of services should allow for improvements of quality, efficiency and consistency, the report said. The appointment of a dean would also enable USF libraries to have a single, consistent, representative voice in discussions both internally in the university and with external bodies.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the report is the recommendation to appoint a dean of university libraries. The directors of the regional campus libraries in St. Petersburg and Sarasota would report directly to the new appointee rather than to the regional campus deans as they do now.

Dean Bill Heller of St. Petersburg sees possible difficulties in regional library directors reporting to a dean of libraries who is not on site and not part of the campus community. "The library system is working very well under the current arrangements," he said. "Many people don't see anything to improve. It could be seen as a case of trying to fix a situation where nothing is broken."

Similar concerns were expressed by Dr. Steven Ritch, director of student affairs in St. Petersburg. "This is a far more complex issue than appears on the surface," Ritch said. "It's possible to make serious mistakes if we see restructuring issues only in terms of quality or efficiency. There are other longer-term issues to consider such as human morale, creativity, and people's willingness and ability to respond to change."

Dean Heller emphasized that no decision would be taken until he and Dean Michael Bassis of Sarasota have had further discussions with Provost Tighe about the recommendations.

Library services to be centralized include the USF Virtual Library, automated library resources, cataloguing, acquisitions and grants. The dean of university libraries would have direct authority over all centralized services.

The development of specialty libraries within individual schools and colleges would be strongly encouraged in future. No such libraries exist on the St. Petersburg campus. However, where they do exist, specialty libraries would need to meet clearly specified conditions regarding staffing qualifications, cataloguing requirements, accountability and accessibility to be included in the USF library system. The only specialty libraries currently meeting the proposed new criteria would be the Health Sciences Center Library and the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute Library in Tampa.

Other changes recommended in the report include: standardizing the technology infrastructure and investment in hardware and software systems; transferring the ultimate responsibility for recruitment and evaluation of library staff from the library directors and deans of campus to the dean of libraries; reviewing salaries for USF library staff to bring them up to the level of salaries in other Research I institutions; developing a statewide librarian-ship reward program; and increasing spending to strengthen library resources in line with USF's growing program of graduate education and research so that USF libraries equate with other Research 1 libraries.

At present, the campus libraries have different systems for various services such as circulation and inter-library loans. They also have different hours of operation, different service forms and different reporting mechanisms for the various library directors. Despite this, library services generally run smoothly because the current library directors practice a policy of cooperation and coordination within the different units.

Lanny Greaves, director of the Nelson Poynter Library, believes that while there is still room for improvement, library services generally run well.

"We have good working relationships within the library system at USF," Greaves said. "At this point, the issue of reporting mechanisms for library directors is not a significant problem."

Greaves said his staff is cautious about the proposed changes at this stage, and it is an open question for many whether it is necessary to appoint a dean to effect the changes suggested.

Greaves emphasized that whatever decisions are eventually reached, there would be no adverse impact on the library's service to students. "We have a team of librarians in St. Petersburg who are dedicated to giving students a good service," Greaves said. "I can't see that changing."

"In order to tell the truth we must move on. See, not only have we come a long, long way, but truth impels us to admit that we have a long, long way to go."

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Address at Freedom Rally April 10, 1957
News Briefs: Excellence Awarded

Last month eight USF-St. Petersburg faculty members received awards for their commitment to teaching and professional excellence. Five faculty members were recognized with the Teaching Incentives Program (TIP) award which is based on productivity, teaching effectiveness, and creativity. The recipients are Bob Dardenne, associate professor of mass communications; Barbara Pye, associate professor of childhood education; Margaret Hewitt, assistant professor of childhood education; Daryl Paulson, professor of government and international Affairs; and Kim Stoddle, associate professor of special education.

Three faculty members were recognized with the Professorial Excellence Program (PEP) award which is based on sustained excellence and high merit in scholarship or creative achievement, teaching, and service. These recipients are Gerry Lander, professor of business administration; accounting; Mike Killenberg, professor of mass communications; and Gerry Notaro, librarian.

PEP and TIP awards are highly regarded and competitive honors that are part of a statewide program to reward recipients with a $3000 increase in base salary.

Features

Crown's Nest recalls humble origins

Krista Reiner
Editor

To say the Crown's Nest had modest beginnings is an understatement. Deep in the archives of the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library there are boxes filled with forerunners to what would eventually become our student run campus newspaper.

As Sudsy Tschiderer recalls, "It was an extremely humble publication. The first issue didn't hold more than a glorified flyer.

With virtually no budget and not much luck, our publication began as a hand-written newsletter reproduced on a mimeograph machine. "It was a nightmare, but a challenge, too.

"The Crown's Nest, Sudsy writes, began by just about everyone on the USF-St. Petersburg campus, a campus that is living in the Crow's Nest's infancy.

The paper was started in 1968 as a student and has remained involved in student affairs ever since, both in a graduate student and faculty employee of the university. She serves in the special events coordinator for the university advancement office.

Back then, the St. Petersburg campus was in its infancy, established in 1965 as the upper division Bayboro Campus of the University of South Florida.

It was reported that in the fall semester of 1969, "approximately 878 bodies" took day and evening classes here, and "120 full-time students [were] solely at St. Petersburg campus."

"It was a wonderful diversity place to learn and grow. It was really electrifying."

The Vietnam War was escalating, and Sudsy recalls that anti-war protesters would sit in with World War II and Korean War veterans and those newly returned from Vietnam. This fostered the coming together of different perspectives on neutral academic grounds.

We had students from all populations and the people really were visionary," she says, remembering the students and faculty. "When everyone doesn't think the same as you it's a challenge."

When Sudsy first arrived on campus, there was a period of adjustment. At SPIC she was socially, politically and academically active. Here, there were no established student activities and with such a diverse student population Sudsy and others saw a need to communicate with each other.

The student affairs committee formed and slowly, a fledging student government grew.

"Everyone pitched in to do their part to sense of the community," Sudsy said. "We had to help get information to people."

It was then that Sudsy and others stepped up to the task and the USF-SP Bulletin was born. "We had no typewriter, but we had need," she said with a laugh.

In 1970, the student activities committee had developed a number of programs including the sailing team, a film and luncheon series and a women's soccer team that sometimes competed against Dutch and British Navy teams in port. The activity board knew that for the clubs to grow and prosper, more students needed to know about them.

With a group that believed in their campus, the publication kept at their task hoping that someday it would grow to be a full-fledged student newspaper. "People had the heart and saw the bigger picture," she said.

The April 4, 1970, issue announced a contest to name the paper. "Help!" read the headline, "We are looking for a new image. Instead of going under the temporary name of ORACLE JR. [was] out of the question.

The contest ended in October when English professor Bill Garrett submitted the unanimous winner. The "Crown's Nest."

The name was perfect. On old sailing ships the crown's nest was a basket-like lookout high up on the mast. A sailor stood guard on the sea from the crow's nest and share information with the others on the ship. The harbor motif clearly captured the personal identity the campus needed and wanted, Sudsy said. The first issue of the Crown's Nest proudly declared itself to be "your lookout on our waterfront campus."

In order to reach the goal of more student involvement, the Crown's Nest recruited students to be editors and writers from as many corners of the campus as possible. "We were lucky to have people who took on responsibility willingly and cheerfully," Sudsy said. "It was a labor of love by everyone involved."

In the Dec. 4, 1969, issue of the USF-SP Bulletin, the editors made a prediction. It was reported that "presently, 75-100 issues are printed weekly" referring to the circulation of the Bulletin. "However, the editors project that circulation will reach the thousand mark by 2000 AD."

In the fall semester of 1998, two years short of the editors' prediction, the circulation of the Crown's Nest hit the one thousand mark.

Thanks to the dedication, determination and forethought of USF-St. Pete students 30 years ago, the Crown's Nest is still here to be "your lookout on our waterfront campus."

USF joins in City's MLK Celebration

Krista Reiner
Editor

In the week leading up to the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, St. Petersburg geared up for what has become the nation's largest celebration honoring the life of the late reverend. January 17 marked the 14th Annual Drum Major for Justice Festival of Bands followed by the Drum Major for Justice Parade through downtown St. Petersburg on Monday, January 18.

Dr. Juanita Fountain, instructor of childhood education, spent the week rallying USF student organizations and faculty to participate in the parade. Decked out in green and gold garb, the university showed its spirit toward the community and the people really were visionary," she says, remembering the students and faculty. "When everyone doesn't think the same as you it's a challenge."

According to Fountain, USF-St. Petersburg, is the first local high school education institution to participate in the parade. Fountain and others found that even with the close proximity to downtown, local people did not know of the USF campus. "A lot of the community didn't know we were here," Fountain said.

The visibility the campus has received from the parade has been good. Now, both SPIC and Eckerd College have representatives marching in the festivities. Fountain said that it's wonderful for the community to see the opportunities for education represented in this major community event.

The Festival of Bands and the Parade are sponsored by the combined efforts of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization started by Dr. King in New Orleans back in 1957, and the Florida Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Institute for Nonviolence, a board created by the Florida Legislature to promote the teaching of nonviolence which Dr. King tirelessly sought.

"Let us never indulge in hate campaigns, for we can't solve the problem like that."

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
Students deserve more than end zones

Lori Helfand  
Assistant Editor

USF St. Petersburg student Roger Clark headed a one-man drive to put students in 50-yard-line seats at home football games next season.

During the 1998 season most students were assigned end zone seating on the north side of Raymond James Stadium, while organizations may reserve "blocks" of 15 or more seats, which may extend partially into the northeast side.

Clark said the end zone seats are "the worst seats in the house," and he's campaigning for better accommodations. He started a petition drive last semester while working at the campus activity center, which handles ticket distribution for the St. Petersburg campus.

He set up a card table on both the Tampa and St. Petersburg campuses of USF and collected 400 signatures. Via e-mail he also contacted fraternities, sororities and various clubs and organizations for support.

Clark said, "My original reaction was not to form a huge petition drive, but rather, simply to write a letter of protest and submit it to the school paper. Once published, I received several e-mail responses, and I felt obligated to take the next step."

Clark graduated last month with a degree in information systems management. This semester he returned to campus to take a computer programming course and he hopes others will join him to push the campaign along.

Clark recently attended a USF St. Petersburg student government meeting wearing a "30-yard-line" T-shirt and convinced student government at USF St. Petersburg to include the issue on the election ballot Nov. 17-19.

On the ballot, students were asked to respond to two choices: "I prefer to sit on the 50-yard-line on the home side." "I am happy with the current end zone seating."

According to Ramon Jacobe of the election rules committee the majority of students who voted want a change in seating.

Jason Loughren, the coordinator of campus relations for the USF athletic department, is aware of Clark's efforts, and he said Clark has a right to petition and approach student government on this issue. Loughren said that he hopes, however, the students attend games before making a choice on the seating issue.

But no matter what students prefer, it appears they'll be seated in the end zone when the Bulls open their third season next fall.

Loughren said he doesn't foresee changes in the current USF student seating and said, "I can honestly tell you its not going to happen in the near future." Donors, who contribute from $50 to $10,000 to the USF Athletic Association, get priority seating. Loughren said, "The more money you give to the Athletic Association, the better your seat is," he said. The high line donors, he said, can basically sit wherever they want.

Although students don't pay for individual tickets, Clark said students do pay for their seats through student activity fees. He also said many major universities designate the sidelines for student seating and USF should follow suit.

According to Pam Miller from the University of Florida ticket office, USF students are seated on the entire east sideline and a portion of the end zone. Student tickets are $56 for single games and $39 for season tickets, including a processing fee.

According to Jeff Comer, University of Central Florida ticket representative, UCF students are seated in a section of the sideline from the 40-yard-line through the end zone.

Central Florida students, like USF students, pay for tickets through student activity fees.

But Patrick Martin, the Florida State University ticket manager, said that Florida State's student seating assignment is similar to USF's. FSU students are seated on the south end zone and from the 20-yard-line through the north end zone.

Florida State students also pay for tickets through student activity fees.

Loughren believes the end zone seats are fine. "It's not that big of a deal because they're close to the field," he said. "I think the majority of people who have sat in our student seats have had a good time." In the end zone, he said, students are near the band and the Pirates Cove, which bolster school spirit.

Clark said he sees only one advantage from the current end zone seating. "It does allow quick entry to and exit from the building," he said. "They prefer to do close to nothing, and then blame the students for not caring."

Lectures to put museums on display

Krista Reiner & S.A. Adams
Contributors

The Academic Frontiers lecture series, a program that makes culture more accessible to students and the public, will run Jan. 25- April 19 in the Campus Activities Center. Each year, a culturally relevant topic is chosen and lectures are presented by prominent scholars are flown in from around the country.

This year's topic, "Museums and the World of Ideas," was chosen based on the rising awareness of museums and their role in today's society. Each lecture will discuss the relationship between "museum culture" and art, history and natural history.

The series begins on January 25th at 6:30 p.m. Henry Adams, curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art and professor of art history at Case Western Reserve University, will be presenting his lecture "The Blockbuster Art Show: Culture in the Age of Superstars."

Lectures will be given each Monday through April 19, and promise to cover a broad range of interesting topics, including those drawn from local area museums. On Feb. 23, John Verno, a consultant to the Florida International Museum's "Empires of Mystery" exhibit, will present his lecture on the largest collection of Dalí's work. (He's the guy that created all those nailing clock images). A few blocks away, the waterfront on Beach Drive is home to the Museum of Fine Arts, which just concluded a major Georgia O'Keefe show. And there are more: the Florida International Museum which had major success with its Titanic artifacts exhibit, and the Tampa Bay Holocaust Museum, which is gearing up for two new exhibits.

"There's a lot of vision in our museums," said Sue Sydor, director of University Advancement.

All of the area museums are within walking distance of each other and all offer discounted or free admission for students.
SGA Officers
In Their Own Words

Erin M. Dunn
President

"I decided to run for president because I feel I can breathe new life back into Student Government. I am energetic, enthusiastic and accessible. I firmly believe in my campaign slogan: We Can Do It!"

Christian Poepsel
Vice President

"We must set achievable goals, and get them done one at a time. If we want to be the best, people must set goals on which you can build larger ones."

Jube Kruekly
Treasurer

"I joined Student Government because I want to be part of an organization that's involved in making decisions for students and the campus."

The Annual Student Leadership Conference
Saturday and Sunday, October 16 and 17, 1999.
Sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs
Laura Willis
Nest Contributor

USF librarian Jackie Jackson believes in RAD, the Rape Aggression Defense System. Jackson said she found the course gave her a greater sense of security by learning how to ward off an attacker and get to safety.

The RAD Class begins on February 4 and runs through March 4 on Thursdays from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Campus Activities Center. Class size is limited to 16 people and advanced registration is required, but the program is free.

RAD participants learn to defend themselves using “hands on” techniques, Jackson said. The RAD course begins with an informative session combined with stretching and physical fitness exercises. During the following sessions, RAD participants practice self-defense techniques on each other. In the last couple meetings, police officers allow RAD students to simulate harmful situations, Jackson said.

USF police officer Brian McHenry believes people should be prepared for the possibility of aggression against them. “There are no guarantees. People should be better educated on how to defend themselves,” McHenry said.

McHenry, former head of security at Stetson University who joined the USF police this summer, encourages women on campus to take the RAD course. Mike Garry, a USF police officer certified to teach RAD, said the course is for the average person. The RAD technique works, he said, because it is simple and designed to assist a victim in getting safely away from an assailant.

“If gives people the opportunity to practice being in real-life situations,” Garry said. “The biggest difference between RAD and other self-defense courses,” he said, “is that all instructors teach from the heart. The main thrust of the course is to stem violence against women in our society”.

At a RAD training facility in Tampa, where more than 5,000 people have participated over the past five years, a group of female students put their training to the test with RAD-certified police officers Mike Garry and Richard McKiver. With heavily padded suits, Garry and McKiver act as attackers. To successfully complete the simulation, students are required to get to a predetermined exit. The “victims” must break free from the attackers by using techniques they learn in the RAD course.

The heavy padding worn by the RAD instructors is necessary so that students may use a lot of force and strike wherever necessary to flee from the attacker.

Garry encourages women to join future RAD classes, recommending that roommates and mother-daughter teams participate. “We try to get them any way we can. It’s the best thing we have ever done as an ongoing project,” he said. “It is a proactive, crime prevention, community program.”

Students planning events & entertainment for the campus community!

Opportunities for involvement are available on a variety of levels and new members are always welcomed!

Committees with the organization include comedy, contemporary issues, films, music, publicity, and special events.

For more information, contact the Student Activities Office (553-1180) or stop by the Campus Activities Center.
**Commentary**

**Politically Incoherent**

*Are You a Lucky Demon?*

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**Hear the Lions Roar**

Bryan Marks
Production Manager

The time is approaching for a prominent local minister to have his day in court. As of January 15, the jury has been selected, and it's not quite what some would have expected.

While both sides on the case seem to be content with the jury, some people must be left pondering what the final outcome will be. While no one expected a miracle, we can only hope that justice will prevail.

I suppose holding the trial in Clearwater will be of some benefit, but what I really wonder, is what the response will be by the residents of St. Petersburg after this jury has handed down their decision.

While only a few members of the National Baptist Convention have spoken out against Rev. Henry Lyons, many local residents aren't speaking very loud either.

Now, I'm sure most people are waiting to see if he is proven guilty before passing judgement, but there is definitely a calm before the possible storm.

The storm that could fall down on St. Petersburg will either be one of vindication or one that shows, according to some Americans, the justice system has failed a minority leader once again.

I hope the people of my city will choose to use their minds over their brains to express opinions both for and against the verdict. While in no way am I trying to instigate anything, I've just lived in this city for more than 20 years and know its history.

It's also no secret that for now, the one-man, five-woman jury will be deciding the fate of Rev. Lyons, and possibly the reasons for ridicule of the judicial system and the jurors' own unbiased decisions.

*These jurors have been chosen to show that our trial system can work, and these people will honestly make their best judgments given the evidence placed before them. Yet the pressure placed on them can be viewed as more than just that of another case in an American courtroom. Only in America do we accept that it's O.K. for people in power and authority to make major mistakes and not really take any blame or accept any punishment. The fact that Lyons never distributed thousands of dollars to rebuild burned churches should be enough of a reason not to allow him to keep his position.

If Lyons and Bernice Edwards hadn't done anything wrong, there is a good chance all these charges would never have been filed. Now that an all-white jury will decide their fate, only time will tell how the citizens of Lyon's St. Petersburg will react to the decision.

It's appropriate that Monday is the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who preached about non-violence and how African-American people will one day become equal to their white counterparts. But I wonder. Has one race become equal to another, or has one race just made improvements while the others have stagnated?

It's hard to tell how far we have actually come and if everyone is truly "equal" both in a court of law, and at the corner grocery store.

I feel that there are no real divisions between people, only differences in beliefs and lifestyles.

We begin and end as equals and need to realize that. Now that a new year has started, maybe you and I should resolve to take a better look at one another; or is that too passe?*

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**Tales from the poop deck**

*An Office of Her Own*

Elias Equis
Nest Contributor

We might miss our genitalia, but we'd probably do better without them.

We'd be better off as neuters, gender-less beings that reproduce in less mundane fashion. It may not be fun, but it would be progress, a brave new world.

But let the modification not stop there. Take away our racial identities; improve us by making everyone diverse: make us gray, let our actions create our identities.

Without race and gender we might have a chance at having a representative democracy that actually represents the diversity of our society. We might.

Perhaps a less radical route would get us there. If we opened our minds, we could represent cultural diversity by electing persons traditionally ignored.

We might live well without arbitrary labels that deter the best qualified from working for the betterment of the society. We might have a minority president.

We might even have a president come from an under-represented majority. We might actually have a female president.

Since Elizabeth Dole has announced a roundabout intention to run for the presidency, there has been much speculation about whether or not a woman can win the highest office in the land.

Political pundits have lined up on both sides of the issue. In general, the opinion is that a woman can eventually win, but that it may be a little early for it to happen.

Dr. Darryl Paulson, who teaches political science at USF, said that finding a female candidate who fits the traditional mold for a presidential candidate will not be easy. He said that presidents generally fit into two categories: war heroes and prominent national politicians.

Women are precluded from becoming war heroes, so the only traditional route available to them is through the national political arena. And the list of women who meet those criteria is short.

"Women are becoming increasingly important in national politics, but they are still a very small percentage of what would be considered national politicians," Paulson said.

Indeed, only three states have female governors and women hold less than 10 percent of the seats in the Senate.

"Women are the most under-represented segment of the American population in terms of office holding; far more under-represented than Hispanics or African Americans," Paulson said.

If every woman who ran for an elected office won, women would still be under-represented in American government.

The Ms. Foundation, the group that started Take Our Daughters to Work Day, have decided to combat the perception that there are not enough qualified women to run for the presidency.

They have conducted a massive poll along with Parade magazine to gauge the readiness of the national electorate to accept a female president. The results will be announced on President's Day, February 15th.

The call their PR campaign "The White House Project," and they want a female president by 2008.

Paulson said that the most likely way a woman will become president is by first becoming the vice-president. In a following election, a former vice-president would be in a good position to make a bid at the presidency.

Gaining the political momentum necessary to become president is extremely arduous. Dole has great name recognition, but she is not the only potential female candidate.

The Ms. Foundation's poll included 20 prominent women. Among them are Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California, Sen. Kay Hutchison of Texas, Governor of New Jersey Christine Todd Whitman, and Hillary Rodham-Clinton.

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*Editor's Note:

The opinions expressed in The Crow's Nest do not necessarily reflect those of the students, faculty, staff or administration of USF. We invite your commentary on this topic or any other.

Please send letters c/o editor of The Crow's Nest to our mailbox in the Campus Activity Center.*
Jan. 20 Student Government Meeting. 4 p.m. CAC 133
Jan. 20 Film: Casting the First Stone: Portraits of Women and Men on Both Sides of the Abortion Issue War, by Julie Gustafson. Discussion to follow. 6 p.m. CAC. Sponsored by Campus Women’s Collective. 553-1129 for info.
Jan. 21 Student Affairs Meeting. 10 a.m. CAC 133
Jan. 21 Career Decision-making workshop, Part I. Career and Counseling Center. 4-6 p.m. DAV 112. 553-1129 for info.
Jan. 21 SPJC Publicity Forum 7 a.m.-4 p.m.
Jan. 29 Lakota Sioux Indian Dance Theater. Mahaffey Theater. 892-5767.
Jan. 25 Big Band Dance “A Salute to the Music of Glenn Miller.” The Coliseum. 4th Ave. N., St. Pete. Dance lessons ($1) at 6:30 p.m. Dance at 8 p.m. $11 in advance, $12 at door. BYOB. 892-5202.

ON CAMPUS

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Jan. 21 Career Decision-making workshop, Part II. Career and Counseling Center. DAV 112. 4-6 p.m. 553-1129 for info.
Jan. 22 Lecture by Dr. Pamela Muller, Dept. of Marine Science. “Women in Academia: What are Mentors and Role Models Worth?” 7:30 p.m. in CAC. 553-1129 for info.
Jan. 23 Big Band Dance “A Salute to the Music of Glenn Miller.” The Coliseum. 4th Ave. N., St. Pete. Dance lessons ($1) at 6:30 p.m. Dance at 8 p.m. $11 in advance, $12 at door. BYOB. 892-5202.

OFF CAMPUS

Jan. 15-Feb. 12 1999 Professional Association of Visual Artists (PAVA) Annual Members Show. Supporting visual arts in the local community. SOHO South Gallery, 2101 Central Avenue, St. Pete. Refreshments after 6:30 p.m. FREE. 367-4578 or 822-2280 for info.

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World Leader in Test Prep
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Akira Hibino
Nest Contributor

Growing up in Japan, Toshifumi Sakama dreamed of glory on the baseball diamond. While his father loved the sea and the sport of sailing, Toshifumi preferred to reach for a bat, ball and glove, not put a boat in the water and race around buoys.

Today, Sakama still thinks fondly about baseball, but his father won out, and Sakama doesn't have any regrets. He's a companionship-winning member of USF St. Petersburg's sailing team who began to compete with Japan's Olympic team in 2000.

"When he went through some seas, personally and professionally, as he changed course from his boyhood dream to his present quest, Sakama began sailing as a third grader in his hometown of Kasagawa Perfecture at the insistence of his father. "My father forced me to become a member of a junior yacht club," Sakama said. "He likes the sea. To sail a yacht was my father's dream. But he couldn't make it come true, so, I think, he wanted his children to sail on behalf of him."

At his father's request, he unwillingly went to the yacht school. There he learned to sail an eight feet long Optimist one-person boat.

Two years later, the time came to make a decision. "One day, my yacht school coach said, 'You should choose to play baseball or sail a boat because you are doing both by halves.'" Sakama remembered.

He consulted with his father about his decision. "My father said 'you can't play baseball by yourself and can't play when it's raining. But you can sail by yourself, and even when it's raining or snowing, you can play sailing. You can sail even when you get old,'" Sakama said.

Eventually, Sakama chose a boat, not a ball and bat. He accepted his father's suggestion even though he still liked to play baseball more.

And the Race Begins

His attitude toward sailing changed when, as a fifth grader, he participated in a yacht racing for the first time. "I couldn't get a good result in the race, but I enjoyed it because I could make friends from all over the nation," he said. The enjoyable memory motivated him.

Sakama soon distinguished himself. When he was in the sixth grade, he won the national championship in the elementary student division. "I began to devote myself to sailing," he said.

While in junior high school, he was always finished the top one or two places for his age group in Japan. This success opened him to more races outside of Japan. He competed in Korea, Spain and the Netherlands. In Spain and the Netherlands, he raced in the under-15 Optimist world championships.

Coming to America

Sakama's race experiences in foreign countries inspired him to study English. "I couldn't communicate well with people from other countries, so I thought if I learned to speak English I could enjoy sailing more," he said.

Sakama picked St. Petersburg as his place to study English. Sakama had made friends with St. Petersburg sailors, Mark Mendleblatt and Brett Davis, during the 1986 world championships. "I chose to live here because there were people I knew," he said.

In 1988, Sakama's life in America started as a student of Canterbury High School, living with a host family. He was 17. "At first I would cry because people didn't understand what I said," Sakama said.

To overcome his difficulty in communication, Sakama attended the English language school at Eckerd College during his second year in the United States, taking one year's leave of absence from high school. He wanted to speak English as much as possible, and tried to hand out with Americans. "If you always talk with Japanese people, you don't speak English," he said. "I think this attitude helped me improve my English."

Sakama's relationship with sailing continued after coming to the United States. He became a member of the St. Petersburg Yacht Club and participated in the youth championships during his senior year of high school. He took fourth place out of more than 40 competitors.

College and the Olympics

After graduating from high school, Sakama went to St. Petersburg Junior College.

While he was in college, America hosted the 1996 Olympic games in Atlanta. Sakama tried to become a member of Japan's sailing team. He was eager to participate in high level races against American sailors, but he was not selected for the team.

However, Sakama stayed involved with his country's team as a supporter. He received a call from the Japanese team asking him to accompany the team to Sydney, Australia for the pre-Olympics, Savanna, Ga. for their pre-Olympics, four-month long practice. He contributed to the team as an interpreter and coaching assistant, videotaping the practice to analyze the sailing.

When Japan's womens team won a silver medal, Sakama was awestruck. "I thought, someday I wanted to have one of those (medals)," he said.

In the fall term of 1997, Sakama came to USF to major in international business and joined the USF sailing team.

Sakama showed his sailing ability in the South Atlantic Intercollegiate Sailing Association Singlehanded Championship in Charleston, S.C. last Nov. 7 and 8.

The first day, he took the second place. In third place was Kamal Muslubas from Eckerd College. The top two sailors were to advance to the national championships the next week.

"Toshi was not interested in winning (the first place). He was interested in beat-