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Nonprofit leadership class engages students off campus

By Tyler Killette
Staff Reporter

A university is like an island. It’s budding with resources, but the resources are immobile; land-locked. It’s Dr. Amy Kedron’s goal to get her students off the island.

Through her course, Community Leadership and Nonprofit Organizations, Kedron connects USF St. Petersburg students with local businesses and organizations, giving them opportunities to lead and promote development in the nonprofit sector.

“There’s a lot of untapped potential here and a lot of untapped resources,” Kedron said. She explained the importance of mobilizing the resources of richer sectors of the community, such as USFSP, and using them to stimulate growth in other, less developed areas. By partnering with local nonprofit organizations, and in some cases, starting their own, this is exactly what Kedron’s students accomplish.

A Buffalo native, Kedron has a solid background in nonprofit work. In 2006, she founded Buffalo Blossfeld, a finance student and veteran of the Buffalo Grind. Across from her sits Kevin Blossfeld, a finance student and vetern of the Buffalo Grind. Across from her sits Kevin Blossfeld, a finance student and veteran of the Buffalo Grind. Across from her sits Kevin Blossfeld, a finance student and veteran of the Buffalo Grind. Across from her sits Kevin Blossfeld, a finance student and veteran of the Buffalo Grind. Across from her sits Kevin Blossfeld, a finance student and veteran of the Buffalo Grind.

Math classes pose big problems

Lacking an official math department, students and faculty are working to make mathematics courses more effective and increase passing rates

By Amanda Starling
Staff Reporter

It took Caitlin Greene, a senior majoring in marketing, five attempts to pass two USF St. Petersburg math courses -- three at college algebra and two at business calculus. The struggle set her back a year in school and delayed her entry into the College of Business.

“I am the first person to tell someone struggling with classes that no matter how terrible the professor is, sometimes you just have to teach yourself,” Greene said. She spent up to three days a week in the academic success center, searched for sample problems and videos online and completed her MyMathLab online coursework.

A student studying up to 12 credit hours per semester is recommended to study an additional 24 to 36 hours per week, granting two to three hours minimum per class. According to Kathleen Gibson, Quality Enhancement Plan co-director for math education, the transition to college courses is difficult for freshmen.

“We see a lot of students coming in and even though they may have had precalculus or something similar in high school, what they learned was how to do problems by rote (repetition). The teachers showed them how to do a problem and then they would go and do it again,” Gibson said. “When you come to college, you’re coming into learn higher levels of thinking.”

The Quality Enhancement Plan, a five-year program developed by USFSP’s mathematics professors, addresses the concerns of students and faculty for general education passing rates. Tests revealed students’ struggle to adapt to university teaching techniques. In a year, the study revealed I would just use the example given and plug in my own numbers so I wouldn’t have to do the work myself,” Owens said.

Diagnostic tests, recommended by many general education mathematics professors, help place students into courses they may be better prepared for. Math 1033, an intermediate algebra course for elective credit, was added to course options to provide an opportunity to sharpen mathematics skills and prepare students to rely on becoming “an adult thinker,” Gibson explained.

“Once you get your degree and you’re out in the work world, you’re going to be expected to be up [higher],” Gibson said. Mathematics professors focus on a three-step system to guarantee student success with a “jamb” session of practice problems on whiteboards, a “quest” of 10 questions as neither a quiz or test and a “request” to allow students to test their skills once more.

Since implementing changes with Quality Enhancement Plan, up to 74 percent of students enrolled in general education mathematics courses pass their courses.

Mark Lombardi-Nelson, a senior studying entrepreneurship and USFSP’s student body president, credits his passage of precalculus to additional study time with professor Erikas Asano.

“I don’t think I’ve used a teacher’s office hours more than I did for that class,” Lombardi-Nelson said. “If she would not have been so willing to sit with me and walk me through certain things, I would have probably had to take it again.”

Dear Algebra,

Dear Algebra, please stop asking us to find your X, she’s not coming back and don’t ask Y

Dear Math

Dear Math,

USC lounge now more functional

“The Cove” was renovated with gamers and commuter students in mind

By Jennifer Nessler

Staff Reporter

There were never enough seats in the University Student Center lounge for the Bad Movie Thursday Club, a group of students who exchange commentary over movies they deem “horrible.”

“They were only five chairs for a room that was meant to contain 64 people in it,” said William Tif, a member of the club.

Dustin Pankow, the media manager for the USC, noticed poor planning went into the original construction of the lounge, situated in the west corner of the building, near the stairs.

Pankow asked Dwayne Isaacs, the USC’s assistant director, to come with a budget for the lounge’s renovation. After six months of planning, the lounge reopened this semester as “The Cove.”

Pankow wanted to create a room students would like to be in, and seats were a priority for him. He designed the room with two groups in mind: the gaming students who used the room in the past and commuter students.

Tif thinks the new game room uses the space more appropriately, organizing the chairs around the television, making it ideal for movies and video game tournaments.

The USC is also collaborating with the graphic design program to receive pieces of student art for the walls.

Xbox 1 and PS4 gaming consoles will be installed in the room whenever the USC can secure the equipment. Pankow said the USC already owns the Xbox 1 but is waiting for the cage it will be stored in, to prevent theft and damage.

Students will be able to check out controllers and games if they are not already preloaded in the consoles. They will also be able to check out markers and erasers to write on the whiteboard walls in the room.

Additional changes to the room include dimmable LED lights, which will save energy, and power outlets in all the seats. As a commuter during his undergraduate career, Pankow understands the need for a “chill spot” on campus to do homework. He also plans to add spin-around desks that make it easier for students hoping to get work done in The Cove.

Clubs and organizations won’t be able to check out the lounge for club meetings because the USC wants to the room to be open to students at all times. The Bad Movie Thursday Club, which will now be The Bad Movie Friday Club, meets unofficially in the room.

The USC staff and the Digital Media team voted on a name for the lounge, and “The Cove” was the favorite option. Pankow knows the choice is contested and is curious to see if it will stay.

Tif voluntarily rated the lounge, awarding it nine out of 10 points.

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Biology dept. exceeds expectations

More than 600 students are expected to declare bio majors by the end of spring

By Matt Thomas

Staff Reporter

When USF St. Petersburg established its biology department in fall 2012, only 30 students were expected to declare a major in biology. However, expectations were shattered when more than 400 students declared themselves biology majors during the 2012-2013 school year.

As of fall 2013, 594 students have declared their majors in biology at USFSP. The number is expected to surpass 600 over the course of the spring semester.

Student demand was important in the development of the program. In June 2011, the USC Board of Trustees approved the program. The school was originally losing students to USFSP after the biology degree offered at USFSP after Environmental Science and Policy, and Health Science.

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Biological Sciences.

With four concentrations — biomedical sciences, ecology and evolution, marine biology and general biology — students are trained for careers in medicine, dentistry, pharmacology and other biomedical fields.

The biology program is looking to cover as many sections as possible to give students a maximum amount of opportunities.

“You can do anything with a biology degree,” said Sydney Meloche, a junior in the biology program. “I would tell anyone who wants to go into biology they need to be pretty serious because it’s hard, but I also think it’s one of the most rewarding (majors).”

Another benefit the major provides is that it helps “reduce the ‘bleeding’ of students to USF Tampa,” biology professor Debby Cassill said. “The quality of students is outstanding — they are the reason I look forward to coming to work every day.”

“I love the fact that I’m not forced to go to the Tampa campus. I’m at the St. Pete campus because I want to be here,” said Megan Sugg, a junior.

“I think students like the personal attention that they receive from our biology faculty. All of our faculty are actively involved in research, and all really enjoy teaching and working with students. I think they realize that this provides them with many academic, professional and personal benefits that might not be available at larger schools or in larger programs,” Riedinger-Whitmore said.

Biology is the third science degree offered at USFSP after Environmental Science and Policy, and Health Science.

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Kedron helps students find their passions

Continued from front page

In the introductory course taught last semester, Kedron guided students through partnerships with local nonprofits in which they aimed to strengthen the organization as tangible assets rather than simply offering volunteer hours.

Along with a few other students, Blossfeld developed U-Impact.org, a website that displays what Kedron's students have accomplished and how their efforts have impacted the community.

The website explains that Kedron's students learn by doing. They study nonprofit management theory by partnering with nearby nonprofit organizations, attending board meetings, daily programs and events, all while observing the inner workings of the charitable sector.

Blossfeld reveres Kedron as one of the top professors he's studied under. "This university is better for having her," he said.

He explained that while Kedron's class has a sound academic structure, its community aspect gives it a potential that other classes lack — unpredictability. "You never know what's going to happen," he said.

Students who took Kedron's introductory course last semester requested an advanced version of it be added. They secured approval just in time for spring. While the original course equipped students with basic skills for nonprofit work, the advanced course takes students to the next level, giving them a chance to lead, Kedron explained. The 14 students enrolled will still partner with local organizations in the community, but in the classroom, they'll function together as a board of directors, developing and approving project proposals to strengthen the groups they work with.

While most students stick to the path of partnering with pre-existing organizations, some have the opportunity to start something new. Environmental Science and Policy major Daniel McGarigal is one such student. McGarigal began his fall semester partnering with an organization that worked with the local homeless population. Though he enjoyed the field, he found the organization lacking and decided he could do more to help with his own social enterprise concept.

Seeing potential in McGarigal's idea, Kedron allowed him to switch gears and focus his coursework on his own organization. Though McGarigal's schedule did not allow him to take the advanced level of the nonprofit course this semester, Kedron agreed to advise him on her own time.

"It's really important that we find what we're passionate about and tie that in with what we do with our lives," Kedron said. Though one may end up doing more work for something they're passionate about, like McGarigal has, it doesn't end up feeling like work, she explained.

Through his nonprofit, McGarigal intends to help integrate those who are homeless or chronically in need back into the workforce and show them they are worthy of the job.

The multi-faceted organization will rely on the collection, refurbishment and sale of used furniture. Along with providing work for those in need, McGarigal says it will also rid the community of discarded furniture, decrease energy use and landfill waste and offer high quality goods at low prices. Those employed through the organization will come out with useful skills and references to help them attain future jobs. (Check up with the Crow's Nest later in the semester for an update on McGarigal's project.)

Engage yourself. Just because you aren't taking Kedron's class, doesn't mean you can't get involved with St. Petersburg's charitable sector. Local nonprofit organizations will gather on Harborside from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 15, during the Civic Engagement Fair. Each organization will provide information on what they do and how students can volunteer.

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Rocky wins 1st in mascot challenge

By Mike Hopey
Staff Reporter

The South Florida football season ended with a 2-10 record and a first-ever loss to rival Central Florida. Last year wasn’t the best for USF, but 2014 started off with some good news thanks to mascot Rocky the Bull.

On New Year’s Day during the Capital One Bowl in Orlando, it was announced Rocky had won the Capital One Mascot Challenge.

First held in 2002, the contest awards the best in college mascots. This was the first time USF took part in the contest. For winning, USF received $20,000 from Capital One to put toward its mascot program. The money will be used to pay travel costs to events and suit upkeep. Repairing the Rocky the Bull suit can cost up to $3,000.

Rocky beat out famous mascots like Mike the Tiger from Louisiana State University and Sparty from Michigan State University en route to the championship. The final round of the mascot challenge featured Rocky against Raider Red from Texas Tech University, the champion in 2012.

Each week the mascots would go head to head in online voting. Rocky the Bull became the first mascot in the history of the contest to go undefeated on the way to the championship.

According to Athletic Director Doug Woollard, USF garnered as many votes as possible by urging fans at football and basketball games to go online to vote for Rocky.

"Last year, this contest only got four or five million votes total, but this year the votes went over 100 million," Woollard said.

The results of the contest were not without scrutiny. Some users on Facebook accused the results of being tainted. Capital One does not release the final tally of votes for each mascot.

The company says it does not allow computer programs that vote automatically. Users are also not limited to the number of times they can vote.

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To get Rocky into the mascot challenge, USF had to show how active he is at sporting events and how involved he is in the community. In a given year, Rocky appears at more than 350 events on and off campus.

It’s a wonderful way to start the year," said USF President Judy Genshaft. "It’s a big win for Rocky, but also for the students, alumni, business leaders and the whole Tampa Bay area that supported Rocky all the way to victory."

USF held a celebration on Jan. 1 featuring Genshaft and Woollard. Rocky also made an appearance high-fiving fans and dancing around to the theme song from "Rocky."

Notably absent from the proceedings was the person, or persons, who don the Rocky suit. USF is very secretive about who performs the role of mascot. So it’s unlikely USF will be appearing on the Hulu television show, “Behind the Mask,” that documents the lives of mascot performers.
Your guide to must-have apps

The app store can be overwhelming, so let us narrow down the list

That smartphone in your pocket is good for a lot more than texting your mom in class, and there’s more to a tablet than its paperweight potential. There is a growing list of apps out there that can save users a lot of time and trouble with just about any task or recreation, and we’ve assembled a group of a few that you need to know about. Most of these are available on a wide range of devices, and there are similar alternatives for those that aren’t.

-Music/Entertainment

Bandsintown

This little app is a must have for music and concert enthusiasts. It allows you to follow/stalk your favorite bands and then alerts you when they will be in town soon. It also recommends other artists you might also be interested in seeing.

Shazam

This one is old, but still really dang cool. Hold your phone up to a source of music and watch as it identifies the song and artist info in seconds. Then hide your embarrassed rassment when you realize that song you really like is by Dave Matthews Band.

Movies by Flixster

Keep tabs on movie releases in and out of the theater.

-Food

Foodspotting

Don't give up on being healthy this year quite yet! This app will help keep you in line at the grocery store. You can scan barcodes or search brands by name and find out just how healthy they actually are, with an A through F grading system based on caloric value and quality of ingredients. There is also a list of the top 10 alternative products. Get ready to cry when you walk down the snack aisle.

Fooducate

Some people might find this app more adventurous — a user driven app that lets you search by dish as oppose to place.

-Smart Pants Stuff

Kindle

The Kindle app has the best reviews out there when it comes to e-reader apps, both for offering the widest selection of books and the best reading experience. E-books are often much less expensive than hardcopies when it comes time to buy books for class, so don’t forget to check.

-Food

Seafood Watch

Fans of seafood should try Seafood Watch, which tells you which seafood products are sustainable at what time of year, depending on where you live. Nothing says yum like sustainable squid.

Wild Edibles

Vegans, veg-heads and anybody who enjoys expanding their palette might also try Wild Edibles, which makes it easy to identify edible flora - as well as the plants that you definitely want to avoid ingesting, like azalea, iris and (who would have thought!) giant hogweed.

-Food

What's On My Food?

This app will tip you off to foods that have possibly harmful pesticides in or on them. Also try the

Non-GMO product shopping guide.

Who is your food? Many more adventurous - a user driven app that lets you search by dish as oppose to place.

-Smart Pants Stuff

Goodreads

Into reading? Into literary criticism and debate? Or maybe just into assigning things a star value? This app can foster all of those desires.

Pocket

This app lets you save any page in your digital “pocket” for later. Just don’t let that digital lint get out of hand.

-Pinterest

This little app is a must have. You can pin your favorite websites, products or anything you’d like to keep your digital “pocket” for later. Just don’t let that digital lint get out of hand.

-Ronderlist

A to-do list app that is extremely easy to use.

-Health and Exercise

Runkeeper

Track your walking, jogging and cycling routes and challenge yourself to improve. The app also details calories burned, pace and how many drops of sweat you shed (just kidding on that last one).

-Travel and Adventure

Around Me

Especially convenient when you’re in an unfamiliar place, this app will lay out the closest banks, bars, coffee shops, hotels, hospitals, gas stations, or anything else a traveler could desire.

Just plain fun

StumbleUpon

StumbleUpon is a discovery engine that finds and recommends web content to its users. Its features allow users to discover and rate Web pages, photos, and videos that are personalized to their tastes.

Red Laser

Red Laser knows what’s nearby. Easily access current deals at local stores or scan to discover if a better price is close by.

Unified Inbox

This is just what it sounds like — one inbox to rule them all. Review all of your email and social media updates in one place. This app is still in beta testing, so you can only get it by asking for an invite at unifiedinbox.com.

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Chill Out
A Playlist

Now that it’s actually starting to feel like fall in Florida, we can start to enjoy winter. In spirit, anyway. Pile on the sweaters! Bring out the boot brigade! Or, put on the A/C and cool down with this ice cold playlist.

BY ERIN MURPHY
STAFF REPORTER

“Violet Hill” by Coldplay
This song sounds the way soft snowflakes floating down from the sky looks. Oh wait, we wouldn’t know. #humidity

“November was White, December was G.” by Say Hi
And January was depressingly overwhelmingly warm.

“Winter is Coming” by Radical Face
Singer Ben Cooper has the innate ability to create songs that incorporate both otherworldly vocals and everyday sounds such as chimneys blowing in the wind, or overhead speech. “Winter is Coming” finds him singing eerily about personified winter. It also may or may not make use of a very creepy sounding accordion.

“Sweater Weather” by The Neighbourhood
Sweater adventurers! High-waisted shorts? This is the stuff hipster winterers are made of.

“Snow Queen” by She & Him
If you’re looking for some retro-sounding tunes that quirky “New Girl” Zooey Deschanel would undoubtedly approve of, this track about an icy girl is super cool. (Bummer, surfer dudu.

“Winter Song” by Head and the Heart
This harmonic tune will have you feeling snuggly and warm all the way to school. Warning: It prompts singing in harmony. GET THAT TENOR READY.

“White Winter Hymnal” by Fleet Foxes
Folk act Fleet Foxes employ echoing vocals and their signature woodwind whisnny to this winter ditty. If you’re into it, check out the version by 17-year-old British songstress Birdy.

Spring concert preview
Start saving up for tickets. The calendar is full of must-see shows this semester.

Jan. 16
Polyenso Live Recording
Local indie band Polyenso will play their entrancing debut album “One Big Particular Loop” in its entirety in front of a live audience at Jannus Live. polyenso.bandcamp.com

Jan. 24
Against Me! This Gainesville punk band has experienced a transformation or two since starting in 1997, but their classic, gritty punk rock style has endured. (The Attic, St. Petersburg) Suggested donation of $4.

Jan. 31
Yonder Mountain String Band
Hailing from Colorado, YMSB’s progressive bluegrass is perfect for campfire sing-alongs – and Janus Live’s breezy outdoor courtyard – with speedy banjo riffs and square danceable tunes. Bonus points if you show up in plaid chewing a straw of hay. (Jannus Live, St. Petersburg) Tickets: $23.50 at Daddy Kool.

Feb. 15-16
Whigfest
St. Petersburg record label Attic Records’ yearly music festival, held every President’s Day weekend, boasts a diverse lineup of local and national acts. San Diego indie rock band Pinback (known for their hit, “Good to Sea”) headlines along with Florida’s own dreamy alt-rock four-piece, Surfer Blood. The show also features local giants, Polyenso, Applebutter Express, Red Feather, SWIMM and dozens more. Check out with the Crow’s Nest for further coverage of this festival. (Jannus Live, St. Petersburg) Tickets: $25-60, whigfest.com

Feb. 26
Iron & Wine
Samuel Beam hits the road alone for this one, allowing audiences to soak up the whimsical ray of sunshine that is his voice in all its unvarnished glory. Though his latest release, Ghost on Ghost, is jaunty as heck, we hope Beam will include some of his less processed pieces in his set. Though his guitar should bounce nicely off the Straz Center walls, we recommend taking a day trip to Orlando to see Beam play the more intimate Social on Feb. 27. The tickets are also slightly cheaper there. (The Straz Center, Tampa) Tickets: $34.50-44.50 at the Straz Center.

March 5
Comeback Kid
For the fans of “heavier stuff,” Comeback Kid puts on a show that is equally mosh-able as it is headbob-able. It’s hardcore music with metal undertones. If you don’t know any of the words, just thrust your fist in the air when the crowd screams in unison and you’ll fit right in. (Epic Problem, Tampa) Tickets: $13 at ticketfly.com

April 16
Local Natives
This Los Angeles indie-rock five-piece has mastered the art of harmonizing. And they’re on the brink of making it big, so go see them now before they become “too mainstream.” … “Um, yeah, I knew about that band wayyyyy before they were on the radars.” (The State Theater, St. Petersburg) Tickets: $23.50 at Daddy Kool.

April 30
Mogwai
Veterans of the post-rock scene, this Scottish band will play eerie eloping melodies that hum and drone for up to 11 minutes and you’ll remain entertained. Though you might get a little sleepy, too. They’ll likely play lots from their 2013 release, Les Revenants. (The Ritz Ybor, Tampa) Tickets: $23.50 at Daddy Kool.
Editorial

Life after college: not a reality show

For this editorial, we borrow an idea from the wise woman quoted on Page 1. In an interview last week, Amy Kedron told The Crow’s Nest, “If you treat a university like an island, you have to spend all your energy getting off the island … and it’s hard to get off the freakin’ island.”

Though this quote did not make it to print, verbatim, the concept is explored in the story on Kedron’s course on nonprofit leadership. Here, however, we offer our own interpretation of the analogy and apply it to other aspects of USF St. Petersburg.

Raise your hand if you know what you’re doing after graduation. If you look around, you’ll notice most of your fellow students are not raising their hands. While this may be because they’re not reading this editorial at the same time you are, it’s equally likely they also have no idea what life after USFSP has in store.

Most of you probably have no idea what you want to do with your degree, even those who are graduating in May. If you do know, put this paper down and go enjoy your degree, even those who are graduating in May. If you do know, put this paper down and go enjoy your degree.

We look forward to seeing you on the mainland. However, if you’re in the same boat as many of your peers, and a grizzly Tom Hanks, take this life vest.

If you don’t know what you want to do after graduation, it’s probably because you’ve never explored your field of study outside a classroom setting. If you’re a poli-sci major, you should be working on political campaigns or in a law office. If you’re an English major with a focus in tech-writing, find an internship or freelance work. No one will hire you unless you have work samples. And most importantly, if you’re only one or two semesters into your major and you’ve already decided it’s not what you want to do with your life, get out! Don’t strand yourself on Island of Education when you already know you don’t want anything to do with teaching. Even jumping from major to major until you find something that sticks will be enormously preferable to A) a job you hate or B) no job at all.

Unless your next step is getting into a good grad school, in which case good grades are vital, what you do in the classroom will pale in comparison to what you do outside of it, in terms of importance. So, get yourself off the island before it’s too late.

Some degree tracks are already doing a good job of setting their students up for success. Students in the College of Education are required to work internship hours through which they work with elementary school children. What better way to figure out you hate kids than helping them with their homework? And for those who find the opposite, working at an elementary school gives them a taste of the real world; of what life will be like when they have their own class of sticky yet adorable seven-year-olds who accidentally call them Mom.

It’s motivation to work hard, graduate and get the heck out of here.

The College of Business does a decent job of building connections for their students as well, as demonstrated by Kedron’s class. Business students are encouraged to take part-time jobs and internships as well as participate in start-up weekend competitions where they present their own entrepreneurial ideas. If nothing else, the extracurriculars help students build connections. And when they apply for a job at Franklin Templeton or Raymond James, their names may already be in the database as a former intern, or at least as a strong internship candidate. That’s a connection worth building.

After working your butt off for four years on a college degree, you’re going to want a real job. Sure, there is nothing wrong with working as a Starbucks barista while your finance degree hangs in your studio apartment with a piece of Scotch tape. Creating the perfect swirl of whipped cream to top a frappuccino is a valuable skill that most of us will never learn. But is that really all you want?

College isn’t “Survivor.” When Jeff Probst reads the ballots from the clay urn, you want your name to be on all of them. Kids, the tribe has spoken, and you need to get yourself off the freakin’ island.

Thanks to Amy Kedron for the whole “college is an island” idea and for being a valuable asset to this university and its students.

editor@crowsneststpete.com

One Hump or Two!

By Kati Lacker

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MY EYES ARE OVER HERE, PAL.

Throwback

Jan. 16, 1919 – The 18th Amendment was ratified to prohibit “manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes.”

In the early 19th century, many Americans were concerned about the effects of drinking and these concerned groups eventually became a powerful political force. Nine months after the ratification of the amendment, the Volstead Act was passed, allowing for the enforcement of the prohibition. However, both the 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act failed to prevent the large-scale distribution of alcoholic beverages and organized crime increased dramatically.

In 1933, the 21st Amendment was passed to repeal prohibition.
Ask the Health Educator

The Health Educator offers advice on being a better you without the gym

Do you have a question about sex, alcohol, nutrition, stress or anything else health and wellness related? USF St. Petersburg Health Educator Victoria M. Beltran has the answers!

Every month, Student Health 101 will feature the new column, "Ask the Health Educator." To submit questions, send an email to usfspwellness@gmail.com and include "Ask the Health Educator" in the subject line. Your info will remain anonymous and your question may appear in the next issue of Student Health 101 or the Crow's Nest.

Q

It's the new year and I definitely want a new me! The gym is packed beyond belief with students who made their resolution to lose weight, so it's a nightmare to try to fit in a workout. How can I get fit and become a better version of myself without the gym?

A

Dear Not a Resolution This Year,

There are tons of things you can do to get fit for the future! And a lot of those things don't require a gym membership!

Since USFSP is on the beautiful waterfront, take a walk and enjoy your campus! You can easily walk to downtown from any building on campus and enjoy the sights. There are parks close to the school, like Vinoy Park, Peyont Park and the Recreation Field by the bookstore. You can take some friends and play soccer, football, Frisbee, anything that gets you moving.

St. Pete is also a great biking and skateboarding town, with bike lanes on a lot of major roads. Make sure you wear your helmet at all times, just to be safe!

A lot of people think getting a healthier body is just about exercise though. They could not be more wrong. Ninety percent of the battle is diet, so make sure you're eating healthy, balanced meals. NEVER STARVE YOURSELF. Even skipping one meal can set you off your course and set you up to binge later.

If you need help with your diet or just have general nutrition questions, you can make an appointment to see our nurse practitioner at the Wellness Center, schedule a Wellness Consultation with me, or meet with Brad Lankford, the dietary technician registered with Sodexo. They also have a great nutritional website (http://tomorrowsstarts2day.com/dietitian.html) where you can find answers to most any nutritional question you have.

--Victoria M. Beltran, MPH, CHES, Wellness Center Health Educator

The little campus that could

By Erin Murphy
Staff Columnist

USF St. Petersburg is the only college I applied to during high school, because it was the only college I wanted to attend.

USF first came onto my college radar because of all, things journalism. My newspaper class made a pilgrimage to the Tampa campus to attend the Florida Scholastic Press Association one year, and I was immediately intrigued.

I liked USF. It had a friendly, academic vibe that appealed to me, not to mention the chicken-filled goodness of its on-campus Chick-fil-A.

But the prospect of navigating Tampa's huge, sprawling campus with 41,000 other Bulls frightened me. I wasn't ready to step out of senior year and straight into the microcosm of a massive university.

USF St. Petersburg seemed like the perfect fit -- it was still a branch of the larger university, but it was in a downtown market, only heartbeats away from the Dali Museum and Central Avenue shops. The school itself was located right on the water, in a city known for its culture, creative community and journalism. USFSP felt like the younger, cooler cousin of the Tampa campus, with more artistic flair and tattoos.

I applied, got accepted, and the rest is history. Flash forward four semesters, and I am now a sophomore here at ol' SP. I'm still not too keen on the idea of taking classes at a crowded, cramped campus; nor do I ever intend to transfer to USF Tampa.

The appeal of living locally, staying in St. Pete, is familiarity. While I realize this can also be a crutch, the comfortable, kindhearted nature of our campus is what continues to impress me about this tiny school.

For me, USFSP provides not only a practical learning environment but also an on-campus family of sorts. Even students who liken themselves to social caterpillars (or those that are still swathed in social cocoons) can make -- and keep -- friends here easily.

Those who transfer from the Tampa campus, or the students who spend but a semester here, are sure to notice the intimacy of daily interactions. In this way, the St. Pete campus functions as a high school hallway without any of the animosity -- it is an off day when you aren't greeted by a familiar, friendly face.

During the first week of classes alone, I was met by a myriad of friends -- someone I knew from a class in a previous semester; the kind professor who helped me survive math class; even a pal from elementary school.

There truly is something refreshing about this particular school. Although the anonymity of the Tampa campus affords it the potential to be attractive, so is seeing someone you know.

Erin Murphy is a sophomore majoring in mass communications and assistant arts and life editor. She can be reached at erinnmurphy@mail.usf.edu or on Twitter @sassyrbear.

Profanity is lazy, detracts from detail

By Jennifer Nesslar
Staff Columnist

"Did you see that s-- awesome car?" I overheard one student tell another while walking from the USF St. Petersburg parking garage. "It's amazing as f--." As the students continued their conversation, I realized I still didn't know what the car looked like based on their description.

That afternoon, I considered the limits of profanity. The student’s use of profanity weakened his description of the car.

Freedom of expression is a crucial part of democracy. I would never suggest that legislation should eliminate profanity. Instead, I question the individual choice to use profanity rather than other descriptive words.

It is true that profanity has powerful psychological effects on its users. In a study published in the NeuroReport journal, college students placed their hands in cold water. Students who chanted profanity kept their hands in the water for about 40 seconds longer than students who repeated words other than profanity. Richard Stephens, a psychologist at Keele University, even encourages people who hurt themselves to swear, because of profanity’s suggested positive effects on emotion.

But Stephens also says overuse of profanity lessens the power of the word. This is the problem: we use the same few “offensive” words as adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs, as if there are no other words in the English language to prove our point.

There are more than 1,013,913 words in the English language, according to a Global Language Monitor estimation in January 2012. It seems impossible that out of all these words, a profane choice is the most descriptive.

The American workplace acknowledges the limits of profanity. Fifty-four percent of U.S. employers said swearing at work makes an employee seem less intelligent, according to a nationwide CareerBuilder study conducted in May and June 2012. If American citizens believe this within the workplace, they must also believe it outside the workplace. Yet people considered "smart" still choose profanity.

As a student journalist aspiring to become a novelist, language is important to me. I’ve been advised to use profanity in Creative Writing pieces to make my characters sound forceful. To me, profanity feels lazy.

I want to use descriptive, powerful language, but profanity seems to restrict what I want to say.

I want to see the fire red Mustang, sparkling from a fresh wax job. Don’t just say the car looks like “awesome f--.” Be more descriptive by avoiding profanity.

Jennifer Nesslar is a junior majoring in mass communications and assistant news editor. She can be reached at jnesslar@mail.usf.edu or on Twitter @jnesslar.
**Not one of the boys**

**By Amanda Starling  
Staff Reporter**

Valerie Nyitray, a senior in interdisciplinary social sciences at USF St. Petersburg, bounces a tennis ball off cement walls at Jack Puryear Park in St. Petersburg. She runs agility and blocking drills for 45 minutes.

“I do it to test my reflexes, the quick reactions I need as a lineman,” Nyitray said, bouncing the green ball over her head with a racket.

That’s just Sunday. Nyitray visits the gym up to four days a week.

Nyitray is a defensive lineman and aspiring safety for the upcoming Women’s Indoor Football League team, the Tampa Bay Tornadoes.

“It’s too aggressive for lingerie. It’s too rough to go without pads or insurance. The WIFI goes against every cliché set up by the Legends Football League,” Nyitray said, revealing cut-off jerseys and promises to be the “Women of Gridiron.”

Nyitray leads the Tampa Bay team into a new realm for Bay area female athletics.

The inaugural season is just months away.

Ray Blanchette, commissioner for the Women’s Indoor Football League among pages for female athletes for as long as he can remember. Watching friends and girlfriends growing up, Blanchette found they had fewer athletic outlets than men.

“When there’s one girl who plays football, there’s 10 more girls that play football,” Blanchette said. “Only a few are willing to try it because they’re afraid they’re not going to make it or be looked down on.”

Since starting the league, Blanchette has sought to strengthen the community of women’s athletics. He scouted the Legends Football League in Florida to observe the extent of the complaints about the league. It was “just ridiculous.”

“That’s when I found out it wasn’t really a sport,” Blanchette said. “The outcome of the games were predetermined and there were a lot of things wrong with it.”

His success project is the WIFI, fueling the development of eight active teams nationwide. He runs the league out of Lakeland and focuses on growing teams. Divisions sputtered to life over the past year, from Tampa Bay to Washington, D.C.

Blanchette saw the athletes among the pageantry in the LFL. He did not approach a single player.

“The marquee players that have signed with us already have all come to us,” Blanchette said. “We don’t do any type of recruiting. Our fans do our recruiting.”

Tia Knipper, 28, dove into football in the seventh grade. She intended to play with another girl-friend, but when her friend quit, she jumped in with the boys. Her high school in Garrettsville, Ohio, cheered her on with the boys each Friday night.

“In high school, everybody was just so supportive,” Knipper said. “Having that background and those guys supporting me, it really boosted my confidence.”

When her pee wee days ended, she found an opportunity in Cleveland with the Crush, a LFL affiliate team. Knipper enjoyed the rush of the game but found disappointment in the lack of athleticism in women’s “professional” football.

“In our league, the girls knew how to play football, but a lot of them were there for their looks,” Knipper said. “You know how to play and they want you. I eventually found out things I didn’t like about the league, and we were treated horribly as players.”

Fans sent Knipper’s stats to the WIFI, a fledging football league at the time. The league extended her an invitation to play quarterback for the Washington Wildcats. For the first season, she will get paid and be insured.

“The positions to play are paid, the athletes for the WIFI maintain full-time jobs outside of their field time and remain dedicated to their previous professions. Knipper works at a veterinary office until spring training. Mixing careers is not a challenge to Knipper.”

“I work with animals, so that’s kind of a workout in itself,” she said. “When I can, I find someone to play catch with.”

Knipper is not shy when it comes to new teammates and her new town.

“Everybody from the previous league, all of my fans are huge supporters of me, and they’re following me through my transition,” Knipper said. “I’ve met a few of my teammates online and coach Rick Reeder. I’m excited to meet these guys in person and can’t wait.”

Legends Football League, like multiple female football leagues, is subject to scrutiny in the media.

“Inside Edition” featured seven players for the Legends Football League, who described their experiences as a “bad boyfriend.”

The Huffington Post featured five players for the Legends Football League who described their experiences as a “bad boyfriend.”

“Their inaugural season for the Women’s Indoor Football League is set to kickoff early summer 2014.”

Nyitray placed high in the tryout ranks. Her early experience of flag football in high school prepared her for a potential career as a professional football player.

“Only a few are willing to try it because they’re afraid they’re not going to make it or be looked down on,” Blanchette said. “We don’t do any type of recruiting. Our fans do our recruiting.”

By Amanda Starling  
Staff Reporter

*Not one of the boys*