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IGOR, THE CREATOR

Tyler, The Creator returned to Tampa for the first time in five years, showcasing a revamped sound, style and wardrobe with his No. 1 album ‘IGOR,’ featuring the singles, ‘EARFQUAKE’ and ‘ARE WE STILL FRIENDS.’ See Story, page 4

Council candidates bring their platforms to campus

Story and Photos by Carrie Pinkard clarice2@mail.usf.edu

On Sept. 25, seven St. Petersburg city council candidates gathered in the University Student Center ballrooms hoping to win the student vote. The first four rows of seats were reserved for students, who submitted questions for the candidates on notecards. “We’re not going to be dukaing it up out here,” moderator and USF St. Petersburg professor Judith McLauchlan told the crowd, reminding everyone that this is a non-partisan race.

City council elections in St. Petersburg come along every four years, which means this is many students’ first chance to vote.

The election will take place on Nov. 5, and there are four districts with open seats.

District 1 has Robert Blackmon versus John Hornbeck.

District 3 has incumbent Ed Montaneri versus Orlando Acosta. Montaneri was not at the candidate forum on campus and reportedly did not respond to invitations to attend.

District 5 has Trenia Cox versus Deborah Figgs-Sanders. Finally, District 7 has incumbent Lisa Wheeler-Bowman versus Erika Cainion.

Many of the candidates agreed that affordable housing was one of their top priorities.

“Housing in St. Pete is really becoming restricted if you make less than 27 dollars an hour,” Figgs-Sanders said. “That group includes our police officers, our teachers, our CNAs, and those that work in retail.”

Figgs-Sanders said she supports programs like the Pinellas Ex-offender Reentry Coalition’s tiny homes that bring housing to the homeless and struggling veterans.

District 7 candidate Cainion echoed the need for more affordable housing.

“There is an affordable housing plan that the city put out that consists of $60 million over a 10-year period to develop 2,400 units of affordable housing,” she said.

“We don’t have 10 years. This is something that has to happen tomorrow. People are sleeping on park benches today. People in this room are going to be wondering where they’re going to live when they graduate college.”

Cainion suggested converting Tropicana Field into affordable housing and a place for economic development.

The future of the 85-acre baseball stadium was another major topic among the candidates.

Hornbeck said he supports keeping the Tampa Bay Rays in St. Petersburg but recommends moving them to a much smaller, 20,000-seat stadium. He said Tropicana Field should be converted into a place for housing and a “world-class convention center.”

District 5 candidate Cox said she would want to use the Tropicana Field development to connect downtown to St. Petersburg neighborhoods.

“Tropicana Field is right in the Innovation District. Johns Hopkins is right there. The University of South Florida could grow its graduate programs there. It can be an incubator for new businesses,” she said.

TOO MANY MICROPLASTICS

NEWS, page 3

A recent study conducted by researchers from USF St. Petersburg and Eckerd College revealed billions of microplastic particles in Tampa Bay. But what can be done about it?

FREAKY IN FISHNETS

FEATURES, page 5

News Editor James Bennett III experienced his first ever Rocky Horror Picture Show at St. Petersburg College. Read about what it was like for him to “lose his virginity.”

ONE ALE OF A Soda

OPINIONS, page 6

Contributor Bryce Lawson argues that ginger ale is underrated and underappreciated. Why isn’t this “elixir of the gods” in the same category as Coke or root beer?
Free tampons coming soon?

By James Bennett III  jamesbennett@mail.usf.edu

The Student Government Senate presented the first reading of a joint resolution titled “Free the Tampon” on Sept. 23.

The bill proposes “the creation and implementation of setting up a trial run for free feminine products” on the USF St. Petersburg campus.

In arguments for the bill, the document states that student health is important, women do not always have accessibility to feminine products and the university already provides contraception in the form of free condoms and prescribed oral birth control.

Although the author of the bill, Lynneey Tranthum, was unavailable for comment, senate president Katherine Fishman, the main sponsor of the bill, explained the joint resolution still has a way to go before it comes to fruition.

Fishman said the logistical specifics are yet to be worked out. For starters, SG hasn’t chosen a vendor for the pads and tampons. And, although the Wellness Center is being considered, they are still looking for the most convenient place for students to pick up the feminine hygiene products.

Once more details are worked out, the joint resolution will go to the Senate for a vote. After that, the resolution will go to the policy committee for a vote. If approved through the legislative and executive branches, the final step would be signatures from the senate president, the provost and the SG president.

Fishman said a new plan will be released within a month.

Now, it also appears that the bill, by Lynneey Tranthum, was made it “abundantly clear” that the arts and science faculty are right to keep thinking about how we can contribute to the consolidated university while remaining true to our selves.

“We need to keep advocating for ourselves as a campus. We need to keep talking about the intrinsic worth we have as a campus,” he said. “We need to keep thinking about how we can contribute to the consolidated university while remaining true to ourselves.”

“Let’s get some more departments (on the St. Pete campus) now.”

ABOUND, continued from P1

By James Bennett III  jamesbennett@mail.usf.edu

In reply, Currall stressed that revisions were in the works, and Wilcox said a new plan will be released within a month.

It has been apparent for months that the Kate Tiedemann College of Business in St. Petersburg will become a school of business and finance.

There also has been discussion about “reaffirming some distinct identity” at the College of Education here, perhaps in “STEM education,” Wilcox said.

In the interview with The Crow’s Nest, Wilcox indicated that other important programs are also headed to St. Petersburg.

Those would be in “marine science and allied fields associated with environmental science, conservation biology, environmental chemistry (and) sustainability programs,” he said.

Those are academic programs, not distinct departments per se, that will likely cluster with one another to take the form of an interdisciplinary center of academic and research excellence,” he said.

The cluster would be based in St. Petersburg “but serving the needs of students and faculty and maybe also drawing upon the expertise of faculty” in Tampa and Sarasota-Manatee.

Now, it also appears that the campus will keep its journalism department.

Curt Currall “heard loud and clear” that it is important to preserve the Department of Journalism and Digital Communication, Wilcox said.

The St. Petersburg department and its chairman, associate professor Casey Frechette, had lobbied vigorously to remain separate from the larger Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communications in Tampa.

In a Sept. 23 letter to Pinellas legislators, the journalism faculty said Currall’s preliminary plan would jeopardize the department’s stature as one of only four professionally accredited journalism programs in Florida.

The plan would also threaten “our award-winning independent student newspaper, The Crow’s Nest, which has operated for 50 years,” the letter said, and would undermine the department’s Neighborhood News Bureau, which gives students “practical learning experiences” in the city’s Midtown neighborhood.

Frechette welcomed word that his department apparently will be preserved. Like Wilcox, he stressed that the St. Petersburg journalism faculty must be prepared to serve students in Sarasota-Manatee and Tampa as well.

Wilcox’s meeting with several dozen members of St. Petersburg’s arts and sciences department.

Consolidation planners are committed to programs that will elevate all three campuses, said Provost Ralph Wilcox (right), shown with Regional Chancellor Martin Tadlock (left) after last week’s private meeting with faculty.

Wilcox said that SG would likely work out those specifics during budgeting season.

Fishman said she doesn’t foresee any pushback on the project, and she hopes it can be enacted by next semester.

She also pointed out the injustice that condoms are already given out to students for free, while they’re left to buy their own basic hygiene products, which can often be expensive.

“Women deserve to be healthy and clean as much as possible. So, it just doesn’t make sense to me why they wouldn’t have that,” Fishman said.

Temore, the SG vice president and the SG president. All four of those members have already shown support for the bill.

The plan would likely be funded through Activities and Services fees, but the amount of funding and the channel of allocation still need to be fleshed out.

Frechette welcomed word that the arts and science faculty was one of several recent meetings he has had with faculty and staff at the USF system’s two smaller campuses.

Some who attended the meeting called it beneficial. But several others groused privately that it seemed flat and uncomfortable.

Wilcox called it “a fruitful exercise” for him, as the university system’s chief academic officer, and said St. Petersburg faculty are right to have questions “about the level of support that they will be provided” after consolidation takes effect.

Tadlock said that Wilcox assured faculty at the meeting that the “overriding concern is that we do no harm” under consolidation.

“A question was asked at the meeting about tenure and promotions,” said Tadlock. “He (Wilcox) answered that if a faculty member came in under the tenure expectations. St. Petersburg they will be held to those expectations.”

Wilcox told The Crow’s Nest that the arts and science faculty made it “abundantly clear” that the “window is closing” and clarity is needed for preparing summer 2020 class schedules, completing faculty assignments and making decisions that impact the academic progression of students.

Frechette said after the faculty meeting with Wilcox that the most important takeaway was to keep speaking out.

“We need to keep advocating for ourselves as a campus. We need to keep talking about the intrinsic worth we have as a campus,” he said. “We need to keep thinking about how can we contribute to the consolidated university while remaining true to ourselves.”

“Let’s get some more departments (on the St. Pete campus) now.”
Researchers discover billions of microplastic particles in Tampa Bay

By Dylan Hart
dhart4@mail.usf.edu

A bout four billion microplastics coat the waters of Tampa Bay, according to a new study.

And it seems the pollution is here to stay.

A team of researchers from USF St. Petersburg and Eckerd College conducted the study, including professors David Hastings and Henry Alegria, as well as graduate student Kinsley McEachern.

Microplastics, which are small particles of plastic less than an eighth of an inch, are usually only visible under a microscope. But in such abundance, they can have a serious effect on marine ecosystems. They enter the food chain through “filter feeders,” — animals like clams, sponges or krill — which suck up water and strain it for food particles, like plankton.

Two different methods, the team found that for every gallon of Tampa Bay water, there were about four particles of microplastic. From there, they estimated that there could be anywhere from 1 billion to 8 billion pieces of microplastic in the bay.

McEachern, a recent graduate of USF St. Petersburg’s Environmental Science and Policy master’s program and the first author of the study, said she took an interest in the topic years ago, but finally found a hook when she saw Hastings report his preliminary findings at a conference.

She asked Hastings to be her mentor and devised the study as her master’s thesis. From there, McEachern found the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough, which was able to bring her along on water monitoring trips in the bay.

The health effects could go further up the chain, but Hastings said the impact on marine life in Tampa Bay isn’t yet known, and he hopes that further research can discover the effects. McEachern said that she expects future studies to link microplastics and human health as well.

“The real concern is that it turns out that a lot of toxins stick to these plastics in a way that they don’t stick to natural surfaces,” Hastings said. “If this filter feeder is ingesting the plankton, then it’s possible that the toxin could be removed once it’s in the stomach and the organism could be harmed.”

This is the first study of microplastics in Tampa Bay. Because of different sampling methods, it’s hard to compare the bay to other regions.

But McEachern said that it’s definitely more polluted than the open ocean.

Cleanup is almost impossible, Hastings said, because of the volume and the minuscule size of plastics in the water. Microplastics would even slip through the tiny gaps in nets they used to collect plankton.

So, instead, the focus is on prevention.

“When I think of what we saw, I think of Tampa Bay having a smog of microplastic particles,” Hastings said. “If it were in the atmosphere, we wouldn’t tolerate a smog, but when there’s a smog of microplastic particles in Tampa Bay, that’s a huge concern.”

Both Hastings and McEachern said that a big way individuals can make an impact is by cutting down on single-use plastics.

“Our relationship with plastic as consumers is a primary reason for there being so much plastic in the ocean,” Hastings said. “We need to examine carefully our consumption of plastic and how we dispose of it. That’s why there’s so much interest in bags, straws and styrofoam.”

He also said that a lot of the plastic particles are fibers from synthetic clothing, which are pushed into Tampa Bay when that clothing is washed. Although there is a filtration system in wastewater treatment, the sheer volume means that there’s some margin of error.

Other sources of microplastic pollution include plastic teabags and glitter.

But the biggest changes have to come from policy, so McEachern stressed voting for the environment.

“You really can’t have a healthy economy without a healthy environment,” she said.

“Eventually, the impacts catch up with us — why don’t we make changes today to make sure we have a sustainable economy and environment?”

The deadline to register to vote for the upcoming city council election is Oct. 7.

Cainion said her platform stands out from everyone else’s on the panel, as it focuses on reparations for the black community.

“I think one of the biggest issues — and the elephant in the room — is the oppression of the black community,” she said. “That is the center of my platform. When you drive two minutes away from here, you can see the giant divide that’s in this city. Every problem that we face can be dealt with … when we face the oppression and exploitation of the black community.

“If fighting for the black community makes me radical, then call me radical. The idea that a thriving black community won’t benefit everyone in the city is a false notion.”

One of the final questions was how the candidates would get students to vote and engage in local politics.

“First of all, I want to say I’m only 30,” Blackmon said. “So it’s not that many years off that you could be running yourselves. City council is supposed to be your conduit to government.

You can literally message with your representative to get things done.”

“Voting is very very important,” Cox said. “Civic engagement can shape the world. Whatever your passion is, use your vote to get that policy in place.”

While the primary election limited residents to voting only for their own district, the November election opens up the vote citywide.

The deadline to register to vote for the upcoming city council election is Oct. 7.
A spotlight from a balcony overhead cast a circular glare onto the stage that illuminated a figure clad in a bright powder blue suit showing a bare chest, a blonde bob wig, orange sunglasses and sparkling white loafers.

Situated in the center was IGOR, one of Tyler, The Creator’s alternate personas. IGOR, Tyler’s newest character in which he plays the title role, follows the conflict of a love triangle between the fictional IGOR, the man he’s dating, and the man’s ex-girlfriend, whom he’s still involved with.

The tension of this triangle permeates throughout the album, seeing an eventual resolution in the album’s second half.

He stood steadfast, staring out into a sea of fans that packed the Yuengling Center, not moving a muscle until the beat of his opening track dropped.

With the release of his fifth studio album, “IGOR,” in May, Tyler, The Creator received critical acclaim, debuting at No. 1 on the U.S. Billboard 200 chart.

Marking his first No. 1 album in the U.S., Tyler quickly announced the “IGOR TOOR” that would soon follow, featuring Jaden Smith and Goldlink.

Stopping in Tampa for the first time in five years, the former leader of the Odd Future collective shared his latest album to the sold-out arena, overseeing the moshing youth in the standing pit and orchestrating the surrounding attendees as only a decade-long performer can do.

As the beat finally dropped on the show’s opening track, “IGOR’S THEME,” the intro from his latest album, Tyler sprang to life, furling his body across the stage like a ragdoll being blown in the wind.

As he reaches the middle of his North American tour, Tyler will round out the remaining stops donning his blonde IGOR wig and keeping the dark, aromantic theme that drives his number one album.
It feels like the first time...warp

Story and photos by James Bennett III

I've always found myself most comfortable among the freaks and geeks. So, naturally, I've had to sit through my fair share of ravings about The Rocky Horror Picture Show. I had seen the T-shirts with red lips, watched friends break out into the Time Warp and read about the experience from various movies and television portrayals of the experience from Rocky Horror Picture Show. I wasn't really nervous, but something about the event felt like a coming of age — like I was about to join my first cult. After all, some theaters have held weekly midnight screenings since 1975, making The Rocky Horror Picture Show the longest-running theatrical release in film history. I got to Iberian around 10:30 p.m. and found my spot at the back of a line that stretched from the stairs toward the back of the first floor. Looking around, the crowd was fairly diverse and a handful of people were dressed up. There were a few maids with fishnet stockings, a doctor wearing a pearl necklace and mint-green smock and a vaguely Igor-looking fellow with long blonde hair.

When I finally made my way downstairs, about half an hour later, the basement exploded with chatter as everyone scrambled to find seats or order a drink at the bar. "Hell on Heels" was projected on the screen that hung right in front of the movie screen, audience members screamed obscenities, and almost every twist and turn of the plot — which I could barely follow — was chock full of sexual liberation. I'm still not entirely sure what the movie is about, since the live actors and audience members demanded much more attention than the projector. But I plan on rewatching the film from the relative sanctity of my room. The real treat of the evening was finding myself completely immersed in a community that didn't really seem to give a damn about anything other than acceptance and debauchery. Absolutely nothing was sacred. Race, gender, religion and sexuality were torn to shreds for the sake of jokes. The traditional movie theatre experience was flipped on its head and beaten to a pulp.

Drinks were tossed around, performers ran about the audience and sat in some movie-goers' laps and I — someone who dances with about as much grace as an arthritic stickbug — finally learned how to dance the Time Warp.

Walking out of the theatre, it had become clear why Rocky Horror withstood the test of time. For those two hours, nearly everyone huddled together in the basement of Iberian Rooster had shed their societal norms and raced, gender, religion and sexuality were torn to shreds for the sake of jokes. The traditional movie theatre experience was flipped on its head and beaten to a pulp. I have been listening to the soundtrack on repeat for days now in anticipation of doing the Time Warp again.

But for the longest time, I had no clue what the movie was even about, other than hints that it had something to do with an androgynous Transylvanian. I wanted to join in on the fun, but everyone — even my parents — told me that the only way to watch the Rocky Horror Picture Show was to experience it with a live cast and audience.

So, for nearly a decade, I held off until I could find a screening to watch with a group of other people. There were many dead ends. But, last week, I finally caught my break. I heard from a friend that SubCentral at the Iberian Rooster would host a screening on Sept. 27.

Losing my virginity

I had also heard first-timers were given "special treatment." Nobody would tell me what exactly the special treatment entailed — they didn't want to spoil the fun — but brief portrayals of the experience from various movies and television Horror Picture Show the longest-running theatrical release in film history. Nobody would tell me what exactly the special treatment entailed — they didn't want to spoil the fun — but brief portrayals of the experience from various movies and television...
Sports and the power of trying new things

By Dylan Hart
Junior journalism and digital communication major
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I was shockingly unathletic as a kid. My crowning achievement was winning a dodgeball game in the first grade, and admittedly it was probably because all of the hyperactive kids knocked each other out.

I wasn’t just unathletic, though; I was average to anything with a ball. Part of it was the people around me — none of my friends were interested in watching sports, and my mom told me that people would just do it as a social activity, to hang out and eat wings. I didn’t question it too much. I stayed in my lane and enjoyed video games, movies, writing and music.

In the long, scorching summer between high school and college, I can’t remember exactly how it happened or who was playing, but I ended up watching a full game of baseball for the first time. It was the playoffs, the year that the Cleveland Cavaliers miraculously upset the Golden State Warriors.

Somehow, it enraptured me. I started watching teams, looking at crazy offseason roster moves and learning that there was a lot more depth to the game than just aiming and throwing. There’s still so much for me to learn about it. People do it for a career, and some still can’t learn all of the more advanced aspects of the game.

But the real reason why it caught my interest was the potential for storytelling. It’s the same reason why I like history and film. Stories are a way to connect with situations you wouldn’t have experienced otherwise. They’re a way to get a better understanding of the world.

The best part is that you don’t have to rely on the stories told by the broadcast or outside journalists, although those are typically a great way to find new perspectives. You can find a story anywhere in sports.

Look to your favorite player. Read their statistics — find out what they’re good at, what they’re bad at, why do things the way they do — and there are a million stories you can uncover. Look at why a team made certain decisions that got them to a championship. You could even look at the people on the sidelines, and why they thought sitting there was the best way to spend their afternoon.

It’s an avenue for infinite stories about the human experience. It’s about people wanting to achieve for a variety of reasons.

Do they do it to honor lost family members? Is it to provide for the people around them? Is it just for fun and glory? Is it not in every profession that you see people so blatantly giving all their all, and there’s something admirable about that.

So in the course of a year, I jumped into something I knew nothing about and found a new favorite hobby. I’ve since looked into other sports and found a lot of the same interest rekindled.

If there’s anything I learned, it’s the value of trying something new. College is the perfect place to do that. Join clubs. Talk to people you wouldn’t otherwise. Try a restaurant you would walk past on any other day.

I don’t know a single thing about sports, but I’ve now had the opportunity to gain a new perspective on the game. From the outside looking in, it seems like an exercise in excess and forcing nonsense to make sense for the sake of money. But on the inside, I’d be willing to bet there’s a lot of depth there.

Never let someone tell you that knowledge isn’t worthwhile. Frying your brain by doing nothing but keeping up with the Kardashians might be an exercise in futility, but learning will only make you a fuller person.

It might be why journalism appeals to me — my knowledge may be shallow, but I want to make sure it has the width of an ocean. And even if that “something new” turns out to be awful and repulsive, at least I’ll be a damn good trivia player.

The ginger elixir of the gods

By Bryce Lawson
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From a young age, my mom used to tell me, “Drink some ginger ale; you will feel better.”

In many establishments across the nation, ginger ale is used predominantly as a mixer for alcoholic drinks, yet it’s often not even included with Coke and root beer as a soft drink option on a restaurant’s drink menu. This got me thinking: Why isn’t this magical elixir of the gods more popular?

Alongside root beer, sarsaparilla and the underrated Moxie, ginger ale is one of the first sodas created. I can picture an old tonic salesman selling the drink as a cure-all back in the day.

There are two main types of ginger soft drink: a golden style, created by the Irish doctor Thomas Joseph Cantrell, and the more well-known dry style that features a much lighter ginger flavor created in Canada by John McLaughlin.

A standard brand that features the golden ale, Vernors, is also my personal favorite. It brings hints of cream soda that puts it above the precedent dry flavor. Another company I’m very fond of is Boylan Bottling Company, which is based out of Atlanta. It makes a ginger ale that has bite and hits your palate with a spicy ginger taste — a favorite companion to whiskey ginger.

In some areas, a minto ginger ale is sold with an artificial color green added. In order to switch up the flavors, brands like Canada Dry have been experimenting with mixing ginger ale to lemonade and iced tea, adding to the already lemon- and-lime-inspired ginger drink.

Ginger ale has been used as a home remedy to fight indigestion and other stomach issues since its creation. The ginger found in the drink works great at soothing the stomach, especially if you’re not a fan of the spicy taste that pure ginger has.

Ginger ale is also paired with mixed drinks and punches to give it a little bit of that bubbly, refreshing taste. Many Jamaicans mix the drink with Red Stripe beer to create Shandy Gaffs. I’ve even had ginger ale mixed with root beer for ginger ale, but the differences are pretty upfront. Ginger beer has a more murky look, due to the fermentation in the brewing process that originated in England back in the 1800s. Ginger beer also contains a spicier ginger taste that differs from the general dry ginger ale.

With Coke Freestyle machines adding various flavor options with their Seagram’s and exotic pops becoming all the rage, ginger ale is slowly making a comeback into the mainstream. Regardless of its status as a soft drink, moms across the nation will always recommend it for an upset tummy.
Challenges of Health Care Reform: A Coastal Community

The second annual State of Science event was hosted by the St. Petersburg Innovation District at Johns Hopkins All Children’s Hospital on Sept. 24. The event highlighted the technological advances in the community.

Hannah Hine, the executive director of The Dalí Museum as well as the co-director of the Dalí’s Innovation Lab, leads the museum’s initiatives in exhibitions, education, and overall experience.

In his presentation, Hine introduced the relatively new augmented reality technology that was first implemented in June, which brought Salvador Dalí — and his art — to life.

“Just like guest speakers. Six minutes each.

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In his presentation, Hine introduced the relatively new augmented reality technology that was first implemented in June, which brought Salvador Dalí — and his art — to life.
Do you know about the robots in the library?

Story and photo by
Katlynn Mullins
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The first floor of the library, nestled in the right-hand corner, is the Student Technology Center. There are usually people on laptops at the high-top table, and the occasional student asking for help. Behind the table, you can find an office, some workspaces and a room filled with electronics — it’s known as the MakerSpace.

The STC’s MakerSpace allows students to check out virtual reality headsets, programmable circuit boards and robots, and even use the 3D printer.

A second room is the STC training room. There, students can register for classes that teach them about programs like Adobe Photoshop, Excel, PowerPoint and Canvas.

“We try to do the ones that we find students need help with or are interested in,” said STC manager Summer Natali.

Some workshops have levels depending on a student’s experience, like the training needed to use the 3D printer. There are two course levels that students can register for.

The first is the beginner course that teaches them about the online software, Tinkercad. Here, they can create what they’d like to print — whether for educational or entertainment purposes — and it can be printed with Natali present.

The intermediate course takes students through specifics needed to run the printer, like filling the filament and how to make it work.

“They can see their stuff come to life,” Natali said.

Among the student creations are an octopus, a dragon and a slug that morphs into a snail once its shell is attached. The snail’s shell has a door revealing the Party Otter — a normal otter, but with a red glittery top hat.

One student is working on a self-watering planter, according to Natali.

She said it’s brought more people into the STC over the semester, and the students are most interested in the VR headsets for both work and play.

Teachers have assigned their classes to check out the VR headsets to learn from, but students also come in when they have free time to play games.

STC has partnered with St. Petersburg College in past semesters to host VR events, and Natali recalled a student painting a mandala while wearing a VR headset.

The VR headsets are connected to a TV at the events, and everyone gathers around to watch. It can be recorded, revisited and walked through.

Natali did that with the mandala. It “just went on forever,” Natali said.

The STC also has robots. They’re “open-sourced” and can be programmed, then coded. They range from simple circuit boards with LED lights to fully-moving and talking.

Meccanoid the Rebel Robot was programmed to have a mind of its own.

“He’ll get sassy with you sometimes,” Natali said.

But Meccanoid was in high spirits as he sprang to life. His green eyes flashed as he said, “At your service.”

Natali asked the robot to dance and tell a joke.

“Have you heard the one about the vacuum cleaner? Not surprising, it sucked,” said Meccanoid, only to be met with the sound of crickets – literally.

He is designed like the other robots and can be programmed by students to follow commands of their own.

“Ideally, students could take him apart and put him back together in a few hours,” Natali said.

It took her five hours to build Meccanoid.

The STC is open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Students can also use the MyStudio Booth to create video content for online classes and other work, according to the STC’s website. It’s available for “3-hour blocks of time at the library front help desk.”

Students can register for any of the workshops online. They can also email Summer Natali for a 1-on-1 session about the 3D printer at snatali@mail.usf.edu

The 3D printer prints student creations. Connectors allow the parts to bend, and it all prints in one piece.