Heller appointed dean of campus

Harold W. (Bill) Heller, dean of the college of education and allied professions at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC), was recently appointed dean and executive officer of the University of South Florida’s St. Petersburg campus. Heller will begin his new duties in early August.

“Bill Heller was clearly the best candidate for this job,” USF Provost Gerry G. Meisels said. “He has excellent credentials and communications skills, and has the overwhelming support of the campus community.”

Heller, whose early training and teaching focused exclusively on the special education of the mentally and physically handicapped, also will be a professor of special education at USF St. Petersburg.

Combatting illiteracy
ESP is a can’t-fail system of learning to read

Barbara Frye believes in ESP. Not in extrasensory perception, mind you. In local education circles, ESP stands for Early Success Program. Its goal is to combat illiteracy.

Frye, an assistant professor of education at USF St. Petersburg who recently received a $5,000 grant to support the program, facilitates ESP in Pinellas County elementary schools. She, along with USF associate professor Susan Homan, launched the pilot program that aids first-graders in getting their reading skills on track so they can become independent, confident readers.

The project is based in Pinellas County and receives federal as well as county funds. It is administered locally by Chapter 1, a school aid program. It began about two years ago, and is similar to Reading Recovery, a program that originated in New Zealand but was made popular in the United States through the efforts of Ohio University.

“If children get behind in first grade, they never have a chance to catch up,” Frye says. “The point is to intervene early enough so they can read at their appropriate grade level.”

By all accounts, ESP gets results.

“Even at the end of the first year of the program, approximately 75 percent of ESP children were reading as well as students who had no reading disadvantage,” Frye says.

Here’s how it works: Most children have not yet learned to read when they enter first grade, but many are “print
Interim Campus Dean Winston T. Bridges presents Louise Carson Bishop with the Dean’s Citation Award at the campus’s annual dinner in April.

Campus honors Louise C. Bishop

The ethics program thrives at USF thanks to Louise C. Bishop

Louise C. Bishop of St. Petersburg was honored at the fourth annual awards dinner held by the University of South Florida’s St. Petersburg campus April 21 at the St. Petersburg Hilton and Towers. Bishop was recognized for her service and support of the campus’s ethics program and the spring public lecture series “Critical Choices: Ethics in a Complex Society.”

Rep. Peter Rudy Wallace interim dean Winston T. Bridges Jr. presented Bishop with the Dean’s Citation Award, a crystal obelisk that in the past was given to Robert Haiman, former chairman of USF St. Petersburg’s Campus Advisory Board, and USF alumni William Eickhoff and Sharon Nolte, all of St. Petersburg. The Dean’s Citation Award also was given posthumously to Nelson Poynter in 1991.

The keynote speaker at the dinner was state Rep. Peter Rudy Wallace, who addressed a crowd of more than 300 community leaders, scholarship donors, students and campus faculty. WTSP 10 NEWS anchor John Wilson emceed the event and recognized 29 recipients of 32 scholarships, and other students who won special campus honors and awards.

They said it at USF St. Petersburg

"What do we do to improve the moral quality of our society? I suppose it’s obvious but it’s worth saying, we’ve got to be more moral ourselves. If we’re not willing to be more honest, more generous, more faithful, more respectful, more zealous ourselves, then we have no business imposing morality on others. As for imposing morality on the rest of society, I’d be wary of trying to impose moral solutions by political means in most circumstances. Because a thing is morally wrong, it doesn’t mean it necessarily should be legally wrong. This is not a theocracy."

Andrew Greeley, Catholic priest, sociologist and best-selling author, March 30, 1992

“(Christopher) Columbus — who was he?... This ‘visionary’, prior to approaching Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand’s court, was working for the court of the Portuguese as a slave trader up and down the coast of Africa — this ‘great man’. I want to know why the African-Americans in this country aren’t joining us Indian people (in) the issue of Christopher Columbus and the national holiday.”

Russell Means, American Indian rights activist, April 9, 1992

“We’re supposed to inform the public, not cater to its worst tastes, its appetite for gossip, its lowest common denominator. We should be the teachers and not the guards; the shapers of opinions based on facts, not spreaders of innuendo; the diggers of dirt for the sake of enlightenment, not the diggers of dirt for its own sake. We really have to be the sages and not the fools.”

Paula Lyons, consumer editor, Good Morning America, March 23, 1992
DONORS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Donations to USF come in lavish and modest packages. Here's a look at both and the people behind the gifts.

Gelin scholarship gives financial boost

Sometimes a stranger makes all the difference.

That stranger was Carl Gelin, who gave $100,000 to USF St. Petersburg for scholarships — making possible the single largest scholarship award presented by the campus. The money was part of a larger gift that totaled $300,000 with state matching funds that was divided equally among the College of Public Health, the USF honors program and the St. Petersburg campus.

Officials at the campus know little about Gelin, whom they never met and could never get to know, because it wasn’t until his death in 1989 that they learned of his generous contribution.

The Gelins weren’t wealthy, and they weren’t high society. But they were committed to education.

“The gift was a wonderful gesture on Mr. Gelin’s part, and it will help many students,” said Julie F. Gillespie, development director of USF St. Petersburg. “I only wish we could have met him to personally convey how significant this gesture would be to the campus.”

Gelin was a unassuming man who moved to Clearwater from Washington D.C. in 1963 with his wife, Gracil. He was a retired civil service engineer who had served in the Navy during World War II, while Gracil also was a civil service worker. After Gracil died in 1973, Gelin moved to New Port Richey, but later resided in a Clearwater retirement home.

The Gelins weren’t wealthy, and they weren’t high society. On the contrary, they lived modestly and quietly during their years in Florida. They had no children and no close relatives. When Gelin died, his belongings went to the Salvation Army.

But they were committed to education, says the couple’s attorney Dennis Correa. The Gelins decided together, long before Gracil’s death, that they wanted to help others get a good start in life.

“They believed that higher education was the key to good vocational training,” Correa said. “They wanted the scholarship money to be the financial boost that someone needed to get through college.”

That the scholarship one year went to a single mother studying to be an accountant, was “just perfect,” said Correa, who suggested to Gelin that a portion of his trust benefit students in Pinellas County, as well as in Hillsborough.

“That scholarship guaranteed my education,” said Donna Hall, a recent recipient of the Gelin Memorial Scholarship and mother of two whose husband was unemployed when she applied for the award. “I wish I would have had the opportunity to thank him myself.”

Alumnus ‘gives back’ to St. Pete students

As president of USF St. Petersburg’s Student Government, Frank Reinhart Jr. always took the best USF had to offer. Now he feels like it’s time to give something back.

With that intention in mind, Reinhart, a 1991 graduate, is sponsoring a $300 scholarship award for St. Petersburg campus Student Government members that begins this fall.

“The experiences I received during my terms in Student Government have helped me tremendously,” Reinhart said. “There is so much opportunity at USF — both academically and through club and Student Government involvement. If the opportunities weren’t there, I wouldn’t be where I am now.”

Reinhart, 28, is a district office supervisor of Florida Power Corp. After graduating from USF, he was immediately snapped up by the company’s management training program. He feels his appeal to Florida Power was, in part, because of his two terms as Student Government president and his participation in various student organizations and campus-wide committees. Through it all, he maintained a grade point average of 3.4 in the College of Business Administration, and was named Alumni Outstanding Graduate of the 1991 senior class.

Reinhart wanted to create a scholarship that would honor students for their leadership skills on campus and in the community. “It takes a special student to maintain high academic standards and serve the campus and community. Those who can do it should be recognized.”

Reinhart also wants the award, which he intends to offer annually, to send a message to other alumni. “You don’t have to be a corporation or a business to give a scholarship that recognizes students. You, as an individual, can make a difference.”

—Marty Tschiderer
FRYE from page 1

ready." That means they are familiar enough with books that they know text moves from left to right and can follow it along. Many can recognize words.

The children involved in ESP are not print-ready, often because their parents haven't read to them, she says. "If the child is glued to the tube, and doesn't have opportunities to read and write, then he definitely will be disadvantaged in reading."

Once admitted to the program, the child gets one-on-one instruction for 30 minutes a day, 15 to 22 weeks at a time. The teacher tutors the child, helping him develop ways to identify unknown words phonetically and by using context clues. The trick, says Frye, is to prompt the pupil just enough to let him figure it out on his own.

A major focus of the program is to work on self-esteem. "We try to prevent the children from ever experiencing failure," Frye says. "From the very first day, we treat them as readers and set it up so they are always successful." They do this by using very repetitive books that are easy to memorize, gradually increasing the level of difficulty.

In the second year of the program, 80 first-graders and 18 second-graders from Campbell Park, Norwood, Belleair, Seminole, Orange Grove, Largo Central, Tyrone and Fairmount Park elementary schools participated in ESP. Most of the children emerged from the program "able to read as well as average students in their class," a far cry from where they would have wound up had they not had the ESP tutoring, Frye says.

Previous programs that dealt with improving reading skills were dubbed remedial, and bore a negative connotation. ESP emphasizes the positive. Instead of remedial reading, ESP calls it "acceleration."

Without such a program, the children flounder and "by mid-year they know who they are," she says. Their self-esteem drops, they may well fail in first grade, and the cycle begins.

It's often too late to try to improve reading skills at the junior high or high school level, Frye says, because by that time their self-esteem has bottomed out from experiencing so much failure.

The initial six teachers participating in ESP were hand-picked veterans who underwent intensive training. Part of the instruction involves a type of sensitivity training. Without meaning to, teachers often slight students who are slow learners, Frye says, because a full classroom prohibits individualized attention. "We try to stress that teachers are responsible for everyone in their class, not just the cutest and the brightest ones."

But after going through training and seeing the results, the teachers felt empowered.

"I've never, never felt as successful in reaching children. I know I've changed children's lives who would have failed otherwise," says Joan Schottler, a seasoned educator who taught first grade for 11 years and who now trains other teachers the ESP system. "Without seeing them one-on-one every day, there's no way they could make the progress they did."

ESP was so successful that it doubled in size and is still growing. The goal is to have the program in every Pinellas County school within five years. The program costs about $300,000 a year to administer.

"Our intent is to put ourselves out of business so no one will need us anymore," says Judy Langford, director of Chapter 1. ESP has enriched the Pinellas school system and given USF high visibility, she says.

Already, ESP spin-offs are beginning in other counties.

Homan implemented a similar program, Primary Reading Intervention, in Pasco County which has been equally as successful as the Pinellas County ESP program. Interest has been so great from other counties throughout the state that a teacher certification program was developed involving master teachers taking a full year of course work and training at USF. Upon completion of this program, called Trainers of Accelerated Literacy Learning, or TALL, the certified trainers can train teachers in their respective counties. The early intervention programs will fall under the umbrella title of Accelerated Literacy Learning, or ALL, programs.

Pasco and Pinellas counties will expand their programs in the 1992-93 school year. Sarasota and Hillsborough counties will implement the program with the help of Frye, Homan, James King and Ruth Short. All four counties will send selected teachers to the TALL certification program at USF so teacher training can continue in their counties for years to come.

"This is by far the most exciting thing I've ever done professionally," Frye says. "Universities need to be involved in these types of projects. We need to work closely with schools systems and other agencies to provide help where it's needed."
'Bridge' project responds to pupils' needs

Project targets learning problems

K

im Stoddard is an educational explorer of sorts — she’s involved in a mission to discover what works and what doesn’t in the classroom.

Stoddard, an assistant professor in USF St. Petersburg’s College of Education, is piloting a program called the BRIDGE, or Being Responsive to Individual Differences in General Education.

She, along with James Paul, who chairs USF’s special education program, and Jack Lamb, an assistant superintendent in the Pinellas County school system, are attempting to re-invent the way the university trains teachers and works with schools through an increased partnership of the university and education system. They hope the end result will make teachers more aware of students’ individual needs, and equip teachers to address those needs.

“The kids we’re trying to reach just don’t like school,” says Stoddard. “They’re kids who just aren’t making it, aren’t happy, and generally aren’t successful in school.”

Locally, the program is overseen by Stoddard and implemented at Pinellas Park Elementary School. The school was selected because of the high number of children enrolled in special education classes and the high percentage of students with learning disabilities, as well as strong teacher enthusiasm for the project. The teachers formulated five basic strategies for the program, says Stoddard.

Those strategies include:

• Increasing the collaboration between general education and exceptional education teachers. Exceptional education teachers are trained to work with children who have a wide range of differences, such as emotional, physical and mental handicaps. These teachers can help general education teachers be more sensitive to their students’ handicaps to learning.

• Forming alternative education classrooms that meet the children’s needs. For instance, children in primary grades might receive satisfactory/unsatisfactory marks rather than A through F grades.

• Meagan Fulmer and Mada Caudle have a ball while playing catch. Abled and “differently-abled” preschoolers play and learn together in the same classrooms at Tyrone Elementary School.

'Reverse mainstreaming
An educational pilot program at Tyrone Elementary that integrates abled and disabled children goes against the flow

Educators call it reverse mainstreaming. It’s a program to integrate developmentally normal pre-kindergarten children with children in classrooms that were specifically designed for children with physical, mental, emotional, speech and language difficulties.

And according to Kim Stoddard, a USF St. Petersburg assistant professor of special education, it’s working.

Born of a brainstorming session between faculty and administration at Tyrone Elementary School in St. Petersburg, the pilot program integrates disabled and non-disabled pre-schoolers to help both groups develop cognitive, motor, language and social skills. Three such experimental classrooms operate at Tyrone and a fourth will start in the fall.

“I would hope as a society we can be accepting of a wide range of differences,” says Stoddard. “If we can do that successfully at the pre-kindergarten level, why should we ever have to segregate kids?”

As a representative of USF, Stoddard advises teachers, collects research data and participates in workshops that inform and help assuage parental worries about specific aspects of the program. For instance, parents of some “normal” children were concerned their children might not develop as rapidly because they were taught in the same classroom as children with disabilities. Not so, says Stoddard, because children at that age are taught using “developmentally appropriate curriculum” — meaning activities suited to each individual child. In addition, formal and informal tests are conducted at the beginning and throughout the year to ensure each child is progressing normally.

“Actually, the integration helps the non-disabled children, especially with their social skills,” says Stoddard. “It teaches them to accept a wide range of differences.”

Barbara Gardner, Susan Watson and Anne Pane, all teachers in the program, agree. They say the children seem to have forgotten the differences which were so obvious at the beginning of the year, and now are bonded into one family. The non-disabled children, they say, have developed a protective attitude, displaying almost a sixth sense for the needs of the disabled children.

“They’ve crossed that line,” says Watson. “It’s rewarding to confirm what we thought all along, that they would forget the differences. The non-handicapped kids have become more aware, more empathetic.”

Stoddard says even the parent comment surveys confirm that the program is a success. “People have an aversion to integrating kids, but when you do it at this level, it works.”

— M.J. Macdonald

These classrooms also might have curriculum tailored to individual students, rather than one geared to an entire class.

• Enhancing parent participation through the Family Liaison Program.

• Increasing USF involvement by placing more student-teacher interns in the schools. USF sent 18 interns to Pinellas Park Elementary this year.

• Measuring and evaluating the results of the above strategies. USF professors will conduct the research.

“Teachers need the data so they can make decisions and then change their methods to better meet the needs of the kids.”

— M.J. Macdonald
Help marine science by being a Superstar

The corporate competition is Oct. 17 at North Shore Park.

Albertville and Barcelona... and North Shore Park.

Just when you thought the grueling competition among the world's best athletes was over, there's Superstars '92. Superstars is a corporate challenge benefiting USF's Marine Science Enrichment Fund. The fifth annual event will be held Oct. 17 in North Shore Park.

The games begin at 8 a.m. and include 10 sports events such as tennis, running and volley ball. Teams are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis, with the field limited to 32 teams.

"Superstars is an outstanding opportunity to encourage teamwork and camaraderie within your organization," said Joan Kelly, an organizer of Superstars. To enroll your team or be an event sponsor, call Joan Kelly at 894-2676.

NEW DEAN from page 1

He replaces Winston T. Bridges, interim dean since July 1990. Bridges will continue to serve as coordinator of the college of education when Heller arrives.

"The committee found Dr. Heller to have excellent leadership skills, based on our interaction with him and conversations with people about him," said Nancy McIntosh, professor of business administration at USF St. Petersburg and chair of the search committee.

She said the committee was impressed with Heller in five specific areas.

"He has exemplary academic credentials, being both a prolific writer and the editor of two scholarly journals; he has significant administrative experience in large state university systems and in a large state hospital in Alabama; he has a vision for the role of USF St. Petersburg in Pinellas County; he is an excellent communicator with a consultative style; and he supports faculty research and has been very successful at obtaining grants."

Heller, dean at UNCC since 1979, will leave a college where he supervised 117 faculty and 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The college of education and allied affairs at UNCC was selected in 1990 from among 70 nominees to receive one of the 11 Christa McAuliffe "Showcase for Excellence" awards given by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. The college received the award for its program designed to prepare educators as teachers for all children.

Heller also served during the 1970s as dean and professor of graduate studies and research in the college of education and as chairman of special education at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. From 1975 to 1977, he took a leave of absence to be superintendent of Bryce Hospital, a state institution for the mentally ill in Tuscaloosa.

From 1966 to 1971, he worked for the U.S. Office of Education as a specialist and branch chief of programs for the mentally retarded and as a division director for the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. Before that, he taught at Indiana State University and at Dekalb, Ill., public schools as a special education instructor.

Heller earned his bachelor's degree in elementary education and special education from Southern Illinois University, his master's in guidance and counseling from Northern Illinois University and his doctorate in special education from the University of Northern Colorado.

A matter of degree

800 students graduate from campus

USF St. Petersburg conferred nearly 800 degrees, including 92 master's and eight doctorates at its annual commencement in May. Jacob Neusner, a USF graduate research professor of religious studies, gave the commencement address.

Neusner, one of the world's leading scholars of Judaic studies, told the graduates, "We at USF are here to celebrate you, because by completing this degree, each one here has realized a dream; you have done it for yourself and your family and all who love you... So today not only launches you on what your teachers hope and believe will be a path toward success: today is a celebration of success. Remember today; remember what it feels like to succeed. For you all, this is a defining moment."

Neusner also cautioned the graduates that as alumni, they show how good an education the university provides.

"We are known by our alumni. This university bears responsibility for providing our region with its teachers and school administrators, its artists, musicians, writers, journalists, physicians, nurses, actors, poets and novelists, not to mention all of the educated people able and willing to do all of the jobs that require wit and intelligence, literacy and clarity of thought.

"For a region of 5 million people, for this county of ours of nearly a million people, we lay the foundation, we build the building, we fill the offices and streets with educated, purposeful people. However excellent you are, that is how successful we are: you are our defining moment."

Lana Romani, outgoing campus student body president, received the USF Pinellas County Alumni Chapter's Outstanding Graduate Award. Romani was honored for her academic achievement, involvement in student organizations, and volunteer service on campus and in the community.
Alumni scholarships benefit community

The St. Petersburg chapter of USF's alumni association sponsors two major events each year: a golf tournament in the fall and a wine tasting in the spring. The events, while social and fun, have a deeper meaning: they raise needed scholarship money for students.

Often the scholarships make the difference between a student finishing or not finishing college. Because of federal and state cutbacks, students are finding it harder to qualify for financial aid. Motivated students can be rewarded for their hard work with scholarships, but only if a scholarship exists in the first place.

USF's Pinellas Alumni Chapter recognizes the importance of scholars to the university and the community. Although we're alumni, we're also part of the community. We feel our scholarship fund is a community expression of our commitment to quality education.

To be classified as scholars, students must learn about the arts, science, literature, history, mathematics and technology. True scholars also must have a knowledge of and concern about people in the world in which they live. They know that learning is a lifelong activity, not one that ceases upon the commendation of degrees. Alumni scholarships reward students who show academic strength and university/community service, and these students in turn graduate and contribute greatly to the community as a whole.

As chairperson of the USF St. Petersburg Alumni Scholarship Committee for several years, I've watched our scholarship fund grow from one $500 award to two $500 awards. Next year that scholarship will increase to $1,000.

Thanks to the mutually productive relationship between the community and university, we're able to increase the alumni scholarship fund. With your continued support of our events, through corporate sponsorships or individual donations, we can keep our fund growing. I urge you to let our commitment become your commitment.

Alumni chapter elects new officers

USF's Pinellas County Alumni Chapter elected new officers and board members at its annual reception and business meeting in June at Feather Sound Country Club.

Christine Peredo ('86) was elected to serve a second term as president; new board member Paige Fisher ('89) as vice president; new board member Liz Dale ('75) as secretary; and Nancy Johnson ('90) as treasurer. Other new board members are Marshall Koppel ('73, '75), Frank Reinhart ('91), and Merrilee Welling ('89).

Sharon Nolte ('81), former longtime chapter president, was awarded a lifetime honorary membership to the association.

Gordon McDougal, USF's new associate vice president of alumni affairs, was on hand to meet alumni, and plans for USF's alumni house were discussed. The Alumni Association provides graduates an opportunity to continue their interest in and support of USF.

Benefit golf scramble Sept. 26 at Bardmoor

The "Scholarship Classic" is a 4-person, "best-ball" format; all golfers welcome

A golf tournament to benefit scholarships at USF St. Petersburg will be held Saturday, Sept. 26 at Bardmoor's North Course. The format is a four-person, "best ball" scramble.

The "Scholarship Classic" costs $65 per person and includes greens fee and cart, prizes and a post-tournament luncheon. Corporate sponsorships of $300 include a foursome and a sign advertising the corporate logo on a tee box. USF's Pinellas County Alumni Chapter is sponsoring the third annual tourney. Call 893-9160 for more information.
A St. Petersburg Investment

Some communities experience a division between “town and gown,” that is, discord in community and university goals. Not so St. Petersburg! Since St. Petersburg Times publisher Nelson Poynter fulfilled his dream of expanding USF’s St. Petersburg campus, many institutions and individuals have worked together to expedite the campus’s growth.

Since 1978, the city of St. Petersburg has donated 35.3 acres to the campus. While some of this property is still being conveyed to the state, much of the land has been cleared, new buildings constructed, and more are in the offing.

St. Petersburg’s City Council has long supported the regional campus expansion at Bayboro Harbor. Not only is this a sound investment for the education and enrichment of our citizenry, but it is also a wonderful investment in downtown economic development.

Contributions by the academic and support staff are immeasurable. To see more than 500 students and citizens involved each week in the recent ethics lecture series was exciting. To watch many of our retired populace take part in classes at no cost, to witness the variety of the Wednesday noon lyceum offerings, and to attend and participate in the campus’s international symposia is very rewarding. This is a community investment which increases understanding and adds to the quality of life we treasure in St. Petersburg.

Not only has the city been a major player in the development of USF St. Petersburg, but St. Petersburg Progress and the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce also have facilitated its expansion. St. Petersburg Progress is a non-profit organization committed to downtown redevelopment, set up a fund for land acquisition and endowed a chair and two fellowships in marine science. Its contributions to the campus exceed $1.5 million. St. Petersburg Progress became the non-profit developer of the U.S. Geological Survey’s Center for Coastal Geology on the St. Petersburg campus. Chamber officers, university staff, St. Petersburg Progress and city officials spent countless hours ensuring the development of two new campus facilities: the new Marine Science/Department of Natural Resources building, which will break ground this summer, and the new Poynter Library that will begin construction next year. The cooperation of our elected legislators also is outstanding in these efforts.

An anticipated expansion of the USGS, the newly renovated Piano Man building for classrooms, and the Pier Aquarium are the result of town and gown coordination.

Individual donors and corporations raised an unprecedented $10 million in a recent capital campaign for the campus. While the fund drive exceeded expectations, state funding cuts now accelerate the need. An ongoing development drive is now in progress so that we may all experience “Class in St. Pete.”