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Black Emphasis Month: community unites

Special groups for black students, workers raise USF awareness

Although the Black Student Union has been at the University of South Florida since 1969, it recently has grown to become the largest student group on campus.

With nearly 300 members, the BSU provides its members with a family while away from home.

“We offer students a kinship,” Black Student Union President Tyvä Small said. “BSU truly acts as a family and lets students know that they have a place to turn to if they have problems or questions.”

Small has been a member of BSU since he arrived at USF four years ago and has seen a tremendous growth in the organization.

Since his arrival, Small said that the number of members at each meeting has gone from about 20 to 150.

One of the reasons for the growth of members is that BSU provides a forum for students to interact on a variety of levels.

“We provide social and cultural heritage along with education,” Small said. “We keep students interested by offering variety at our meetings.”

One upcoming event for the BSU is the Miss Uhuru pageant. This pageant is a beauty contest but in a non-traditional sense.

The emphasis in this contest is internal beauty. The event takes place at 7 p.m. Feb. 19 in the Special Events Center.

BSU meets every Thursday at 5 p.m. in the University Lecture Hall. There is no cost to attend.

“Our weekly meetings discuss the concerns and interests of the students and we often have guest speakers,” Small said. “We keep students interested by offering variety.”

BSU welcomes students of all backgrounds to its meetings.

“We have members of all races, creeds and backgrounds,” Small said. “BSU is not just a black organization. We have white and Latino members who are active too.”

One group that teams up with and assists the BSU is the Black Faculty and Staff Association.

This informal organization of about 60 members was established at USF in the 1970s.

“We work closely with the BSU,” Black Faculty and Staff Association President Paulette Walker said. “We are in the process of establishing a mentor program that operates on a financial and emotional level.”

BSFA also will host “A Family Affair” on noon Feb. 16 in the Phyllis Marshall Center, room 270, to introduce students to the university community.

This informal gathering will use brown-bag lunch to allow people to get acquainted.

In addition to catering to the needs of students, BSFA also focuses on faculty and staff concerns.

“The main purpose of our organization is to foster an environment of mutual support and respect for black employees working at USF,” Walker said.

“Another goal is to help the university to be more representative of the greater community.”

All black employees are encouraged to attend the meetings that take place the third Thursday of every month in ADM 296.

The cost to join BSFA per academic year is $20 for faculty and A&F and $10 for USFS.

“There is a total representation of employees in our organization,” Walker said. “We have faculty, A&F and USFS members at our meetings.”

The meetings focus on student scholarship, recognizing awards, discussing issues, sharing ideas and networking with black faculty nationally.

“At our meetings, an environment is created that is conducive to describing relevant issues to the black community,” Walker said. “BSFA has allowed me the opportunity to meet other faculty on campus who have similar experiences to share.”

For questions regarding the BSFA, contact Paulette Walker at ext. 4-4874 by Gregory Bresnahan

Grant to promote higher education for Latino students

USF was awarded a planning grant of $100,000 to continue its work to improve higher education opportunities for Hispanic youth, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation announced.

The grants represent phase one of the Foundation’s six-year, $28.7 million ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities for Education) initiative.

USF’s partners in the project are Hillsborough Community College, the Hillsborough County School System and the Hispanic Services Council. According to USF Associate Provost Catherine Bache, the goal of the partnership is to place special emphasis on increasing the number of Hispanic and bilingual individuals who enter teaching professions.

“While students in Hillsborough County enjoy the benefits of strong education programs at all levels, Hispanic participation decreases at critical points in the educational process,” Bache explained. “We decided to focus our efforts on improving services at these key transition points.”

Another focus of the coalition will be to work with undergraduate Hispanic students to encourage their participation in graduate and professional programs.

“ENLACE will strengthen the educational pipeline, so that more Hispanic youth will enter and complete college,” said Betty Overton-Adkins, the Kellogg Foundation’s director of higher education programming. “And it can improve the performance of students who are already attending Hispanic-serving institutions.”

Through ENLACE, 18 participating colleges and universities will form partnerships with communities, K-12 public and private school districts and businesses.

During phase two, set to begin in 2001, the Foundation will support eight to 10 coalitions with grants of up to $2 million each.

The Intercultural Development Research Association, an independent nonprofit organization based in San Antonio, is serving as the managing partner for the initiative. The National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, based in Washington, D.C., is the cluster evaluator for ENLACE.

Phyllis P. Marshall Center Director Guy Conway, Student Affairs Associate Vice President Wilma Henry, Student Affairs Executive Assistant Luz Arcilla and and Administrative Affairs Vice President Bert Hartley gather for the 13th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration on Jan. 20, in the MLK Plaza. USF celebrates diversity throughout the year with different events, and through university organizations.

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In conjunction with Black History Month, the College of Fine Arts is celebrating the 10th anniversary and expansion of the Stuart S. Golding Emirates Endowed Chair of African Art, with presenters by Adrian Castro, Charo Oquet and Roslyn A. Walker on Feb. 10-11.

The coining chair, valued at more than $2 million, was established in the early 1990s by Roberta Golding of Tampa, in memory of her late husband Stuart S. Golding.

This year, Golding contributed additional funds towards the expansion of the African Art program.

The artists' presentation on Feb. 10 will feature a reading by Cuban-American poet Adrian Castro and a presentation by Dominican photographer and painter Charo Oquet.

Castro has performed at the


"Castro has long been layering Spanish sound and drum rhythms, and Cuban, African and the Santeria religion. He seems well on the way to inventing a brand new Miami patois," said Jordan Levin, of The Miami Herald.

Castro has exhibited his work all over the world, including the Metro-Dade Cultural Resource Center, Centro de Arte Nouveau of Santo Domingo, Ginko Gallery of Christchurch, New Zealand and Galeria Altos de Chavon in the Dominican Republic.

Oquet was a 1999 recipient of the New Forms Florida Grant for her project, "Sacred Sites."

"Charo Oquet, drawing on the insights of her Dominican ancestors, in collaboration with the contemporary mediums of the Lucumí and paleros of Miami, is creating art under the aegis of a fundamental prayer and premise of the lore of Yoruba, in the land of Yemaya," said Robert Farris Thompson, of the Atlantic International.

The presentation on Feb. 10 begins at 7 p.m. in the Fine Arts building, room 206 in.

The Feb. 11 celebration at the Lifsey House features Roslyn A. Walker, director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. She organized several exhibitions at the National Museum of African Art, and contributed articles, reviews, essays or chapters to many publications.

The Feb. 11 event is by invitation only. For more information, contact Stephanie Heyman at ext. 4-6553 or Sandy Tabor at ext. 4-7156.

by Stephanie Heyman

Mass Communications school chooses Clendenin professor

As of Jan. 24, Van Cavett, a retired newspaper editorial page editor, is teaching "Critical Writing: Editing, Reviews and Columns" at USF.

Cavett, the former editorial page editor of the Louisville Times and Courier-Journal and the Allentown (Pa.) Morning Call, serves 2000 James A. Clendenin Professor in Editorial and Critical Writing.

The Clendenin professor is chosen each year by USF's Mass Communications department and The Tampa Tribune: the guest faculty position honors James Clendenin, who served for half a century as a Tribune editor and chairman of the editorial board.

He won a dozen first-place awards for editorial writing from the Florida Society of Newspaper Editors, and was named president of the National Conference of Editorial Writers in 1966.

He died in 1981. Clendenin's friends, family and employer endowed a professorship in his name.

Cavett was also a NCEW president in 1985. The organization represents more than 600 editors at newspapers and television stations all over the world.

The professor hopes to help the students better understand the newspaper's function as a vehicle for formulating public opinion, with the editorial at its center.

"I want to help them polish their writers' skills, which they will need regardless of what and where the communications fields they enter," Cavett said. "I hope that as a result of this class, some of them will think about making editing a writing career."

He lives in Chattanooga, Tenn., where he retired three years ago from the Morning Call at age 65.

Cavett spent 27 years as an editorial writer and editor, beginning his career in 1957 at the Charlotte- oga Times.

He moved to The Louisville Times in 1970. In Louisville, he served as assistant city editor. In 1974, he was named opinion page editor.

He supervised a staff of six editorial writers, a staff cartoonist and a letters editor. The paper merged with the Courier-Journal in 1986.

The papers were sold to the Gannett Corp. later that year, and The Times ceased publication in 1987. Cavett stayed with the Courier-Journal as an editorial writer until he took early retirement in 1989.

The professor was lured out of retirement for the guest faculty position honors of Newspaper Editors, and was named president of the National Conference of Editorial Writers in 1966.

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Five remain as candidates for presidency

They journeyed from Athens, Ohio, Albany, New York and Washington, D.C. — and even right here in Tampa — to contend for the USF presidency before campus groups Jan. 12-24.

Five candidates remain for the USF presidency. Two previous candidates, Carol Hartner, president of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and Steffen Roeske, president of Northern Illinois University, have since dropped out.

Of those who interviewed by Jan. 25, one has worked at historically black universities, and the two women have served at large state universities in rural and urban areas. USF Provost Thomas Tighe and University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Chancellor Thomas F. George, will be profiled in a later issue of Inside USF.

Garibaldi supports minority education

Antoine Garibaldi, the provost at Howard University in D.C., was well aware of Gov. Jeb Bush’s proposed One Florida Initiative to replace affirmative action.

“Forty-five percent of American Americans, Hispanics and other minorities are in two-year colleges (and don’t go on to get a four-year degree),” Garibaldi said during his Jan. 12 interview. “We need to change that.”

He suggested focusing on performance rather than race. “That means you’ve got to provide more resources to under-performing schools — including better teachers — so that students can be on a level playing field. Forty percent of white students go right from high school to college, (but) 33 percent of minorities do.”

Encouraging college students to graduate is one of his strengths at Howard, Garibaldi said. He has helped retention rates increase by 2 to 5 percent each year, and “retention of student athletes is important,” he added.

The problem is that students in Howard is very competitive nationally, since graduate enrollment is down. Howard has provided fellowships for outstanding graduate students in certain fields, targeting five or six programs, Garibaldi said. The university also landed a National Science Foundation grant for a minority education program in mathematics and engineering. “We’ve been available to provide some support to faculty members to travel to cities to talk to prospective graduate students.”

As provost at a Carnegie Foundation Research University and by tapping into skills acquired at the federal Department of Education, “I know what it takes to become a Research 1 university and to create a very competitive research proposal,” Garibaldi said. “I’ve been involved in many research grants that don’t appear on my resume.”

Brehm examines retention, room to grow

“I learned how to raise graduate stipends” at Ohio University, said OU Provost Sharon Brehm, who came to campus Jan. 19. USF’s good location and reputation help in recruiting faculty, Brehm said.

“You say Tampa and people smile. What makes USF different is its flexibility, creativity, innovation. It’s not following the same old, same old. That’s the advantage of being a young university.”

Brehm praised the university’s undergraduate Honors program and its efforts in health care and technology research.

“The great universities are built on very broad-based research and scholarship activity,” she said. “I’ve had to focus more on research. University of Ohio earns about $35 million in contracts and grants, and about $20 million of that is federal, she said. Ohio has a College of Osteopathic Medicine, but it doesn’t have a history of doing much research.

Brehm’s university sets aside 82 percent of its research dollars to grow research programs. Ohio University enjoys an 84-percent student retention rate, while keeping students in school is a much bigger challenge at an urban university, especially with part-time students, Brehm said.

“Your retention rate, compared to your competitors, is good, but if I were president here, I’d want to look at that retention rate. You could do better,” she said.

When former Gov. Bob Martinez left behind — especially, the parents. Grief that we only do rape cases,” said Reid, “but we do a lot of different kinds of things.

Of the 248 people the Victims’ Advocacy program assisted in 1999, 51 were employees. The rest were students, student employees and others connected to the USF community.

Harassment, domestic abuse, stalking, hate crimes and fraud — you name it — are just a few of the many issues with which Victims’ Advocacy program can assist. The program serves confidentially for its clients and will even work with people anonymously over the phone.

The program is also a member of the Hillsborough County Community Link Partnership, which allows access to a huge database of social service organizations throughout the area. This service enables the Victims’ Advocacy program to give extensive referrals for situations that can be handled by other organizations.

For more information about the services provided by the Victims’ Advocacy program, call ext. 4-7564 or visit Web site at http://usfbio.usf.edu/advocacy.

by Heather Breuer

Advocacy program reaches out to all

When three USF students were killed by a drunk driver on Nov. 29, the university community experienced a tragedy more horrific and unfathomable than any in school history. Grief struck students, faculty and staff. Most severely, it hurt the parents of the three victims.

USF’s Victims’ Advocacy program provides help to victims of violence and abuse. When news of the accident hit the office of program coordinator Mary Samuel Reid, members of her staff quickly responded to the needs of those left behind — especially, the parents.

Advocate practitioners were at the hospital, found motel rooms for the victims’ parents coming from other cities and even picked them up from the airport as they arrived in Tampa, Reid said.

“We wanted to soften the terrible circumstances for the parents in any way possible,” she said. “We’re still involved with the parents.”

What many people at USF do not know, according to Reid, is that the Victims’ Advocacy program provides services for all of the university community — not just students.

Most victims who enter the office, located in the Administration building, are students.

Reid believes that faculty and staff may not use the free service because of a lack of knowledge of its existence or misconceptions about what services are provided.

“Many people have the perception that we only do rape cases,” said Reid. “But we do a lot of different kinds of things.”

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Photograph by Greg Fulton

Three-week tour on ship features theater

USF will offer a unique three-week course in performance theater aboard a 90-foot tall ship. The course will be conducted by the Caravan Stage Company, a troupe that lives and performs on the Amara Zee, which is docked at USF St. Petersburg’s waterfront on Bayboro Harbor.

The course, “Introduction to Environmental Theater,” is led by Caravan artistic director Paul Kirby. The workshop includes nine sessions from Feb. 16 to March 4. Participants who complete the workshop will receive three hours of credit from USF’s College of Fine Arts. To register, call ext. 3-1162.