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Two actors, John Ryan Mitchell, left, and TJ Gill portray a firefighter and a researcher during the "Great Achievements — Great Expectations” dinner on Oct. 25. They performed a skit about how robots can assist in search-and-rescue efforts.

USF triples endowment in $255.9 million capital campaign

On Oct. 25, USF President Judy Genshaft and USF Foundation President Mandell “Hinks” Shimberg announced the university raised more than $255.9 million for "Great Achievements — Great Expectations: The Campaign for USF.”

Shimberg, who serves as campaign chairman, told at least 500 donors that evening that the Foundation secured more than $255.9 million in gifts and pledges — exceeding the campaign’s goal by well over $55 million. The campaign is the largest in Tampa Bay history and includes more than 100,000 gifts from every state in the nation and 28 countries around the world. Nearly 70 percent of the gifts are already in hand and working for USF.

“This campaign heralds USF’s arrival,” Shimberg said. "To see this level of investment in USF tells me there’s a high confidence in its achievements and great expectations for the future.”

In 1995, USF announced the campaign goal of $220 million. The six-year endeavor builds support for scholarships and fellowships, endowments for faculty recruitment and support, teaching enhancements, research, facilities and other initiatives that enhance USF’s campus life and culture.

In June 2000 — one year ahead of schedule — campaign leaders said they had reached their fundraising goal. In the final year of the campaign, university leaders aggressively pushed to address remaining high-priority goals, including support for graduate education and research.

By the campaign’s end, USF raised more than $101 million for academic programs, $48.9 million for scholarships and fellowships, $34.9 million for faculty recruitment and retention, $32.1 million for research and $30 million for facilities and equipment.

USF officials are particularly excited about the amount raised for student financial assistance, including 254 new scholarships and additions to the 1,314 existing scholarships and fellowships.

"Our donors recognize that today’s students are the region’s intellectual and business leadership of the future," said Michael Rerson, USF’s vice president of advancement and executive director of the USF Foundation.

"Every investment we make now in their education will pay off for the region in the long run.”

The campaign raised more than twice the amount the university raised in its only previous campaign, which raised $116.7 million during 1988-91. School officials say capital campaigns build upon previous giving to raise the university to even higher levels. According to Genshaft, this campaign positioned the university in research, scholarship and athletics for decades to come.

"We’re able to proclaim ourselves as a Research I university today because of this campaign and the campaign that preceded it,” she said.

Donors contributed $153.2 million in permanent endowments for scholarships, graduate fellowships and named professorships during the campaign. Their gifts, combined with market growth, gave the USF Foundation an endowment totaling $243.5 million — a dramatic rise from the endowment’s $79 million total in 1995.

The capital campaign’s success also demonstrates the importance of the state’s matching gift program, which accounts for 26 percent of the amount.

“Once again, the state matching gift program has proven to be a tremendous program to encourage donors to invest not only in the state’s universities, but in the state of Florida.” said Gus Stavros, a member of the USF Board of Trustees and co-chair of the campaign.

by Michael Reich
Top teacher learns more in St. Pete

Karen Voytecki, the 2003 national Teacher of the Year in special education, is a full-time student at USF St. Petersburg.

Her goals: to earn master’s and doctoral degrees in special education while validating her award-winning methods she taught reading at Richard Sanders Exceptional Education Center in Pinellas Park. “I want to collect data to back up my ideas and make an impact,” Voytecki said. “Great students face many challenges. All had severe emotional problems that sometimes made them aggressive and disruptive in class. Her classes of 15 students each spanned grades three through eight, and all were at least two grade levels behind where they should have been for their age in reading abilities. Voytecki began her series of sensory methods by seating her students on big, round, rubber therapy balls instead of chairs, to prevent students from wandering around the room. “The balls are fun to sit on and provide movement and repetition options so the students can still move around, but don’t leave their seats,” Voytecki, who also sat on a ball and plans to use one as her desk chair at USF St. Petersburg. She painted the institutional beige walls of her portable classroom with soothing blue and green hues, then cut the glaring fluorescent lighting by using table lamps and floor lamps. “Fluorescent lighting reflects off itself and interferes with the kids’ concentration,” she explained.

A few large rugs and plants later, the space was more like a cozy den than a classroom. She added medication type music and aromatherapy to the mix, paying for the accouterments with private donations and grants. “I was trying to distract their senses to enhance learning, and it seemed to work,” Voytecki said. “Grades and reading retention rates went up, while office referrals for misbehavior went down.” At USF Voytecki will take graduate courses in special education and work as a graduate research assistant to Campus Executive Officer Bill Heller, who also served as a special education teacher. “Karen will be a wonderful addition to our graduate student body — the Clarissa Hue Award is highly competitive and includes the very best classroom teachers of special-needs students throughout the country,” Heller said. “Our students now will benefit by interacting with America’s top classroom teacher in special education.”

by Deborah Kurell

Ten employees recognized for their quality

The USF Senate initiated its Quiet Quality Awards to recognize employee recognition. Recently, the Senate’s Quiet Quality Awards Committee selected the recipients for September and October. Those selected in September are: 
• Judith Bell — secretary in the Pathology and Laboratory Medicine department. Bell is described as always willing to work with others to “get the job done.”
• Tammi Hopp — office assistant in Family Medicine. Hopp is appreciated for considering the department’s needs before her own. Her nominator said she is always willing to help others find the right answers.
• Karlough — senior audio-visual specialist in the Media Center at USF Lakeland. He is so conscientious about his job that he won’t leave until the last detail has been completed, even after his shift has ended, according to his nomination form. 

Bridget Shields — office assistant in the Pharmacology and Therapeutics department. Department Shields is always eager to help others, pleasant, professional and extremely courtious, according to her nominating co-worker.
• Camil Sterling — senior custodial worker in the Building Services area of the Center for Urban Transportation Research. Sterling is characterized as a hard worker who takes her job seriously and great pride in her work. She always leaves CUTR extremely clean, according to her nomination form.

Those employees received awards in October:
• Leslie Fisher — program assistant in the English department. Fisher, says her nominator, “is an outstanding person. She is sensitive and caring and a committed team player.” She is also accurate and detail-oriented.

Linda Gerlich — program assistant in the Educational Outreach division. Gerlich works very hard to make sure that all her paperwork is accurate and timely, according to her nomination form.
• Catalina Lopez — program assistant in the Counseling Center for Human Development. Lopez is an outstanding employee who always gives 110 percent to the task at hand, according to her nominator. She always goes above and beyond the call of duty.
• Daeey Matos — program assistant in the Anthropology department. Matos’ work performance is described as high-quality, according to her nomination form. “She is always caring and willing to go out of her way to help.”
• Ty Wilson — executive secretary in the Counseling Center. Wilson is very organized, can easily multi-task and is time-oriented, says her nominator. “She is great at giving moral support and encouragement to other members of our team.”

HUMAN RESOURCES NOTES

Mark calendar for November holidays

The university will be officially closed during November for these paid holidays:
• Veterans Day — Monday, Nov. 12;
• Thanksgiving holidays — Thursday and Friday, Nov. 22-23.

All full-time employees (except OP’s) will get eight hours of paid leave for each holiday. Part-time employees will receive a prorated number of hours for each holiday, based on their full-time equivalents. To determine the prorated number of holiday hours, multiply the full-time equivalents by eight hours.

Faculty members, A&P and USPS employees required to work on a holiday are eligible for equivalent time off. Faculty and A&P receive another day off; USPS employees earn special compensatory leave.

Depts. and OP’s employees are reminded that hourly OP’s employees are not eligible for paid holidays, and are paid only for the actual number of hours worked. To bring hourly OP’s employee to their maximum hours for the week, supervisors may allow employees to work additional hours during the workweek, if the department requires it.

Graduate associates and associates in class code 9181—9185 and professional salaried OP’s may receive their regular biweekly pay, if they are so certified.

For more information, call JoAnn Myers at ext. 4-5717 or send an e-mail to jmayers@admin.usf.edu.

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