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**USFSP to Celebrate Students, Award Recipients at Commencement**

USFSP will celebrate the accomplishments of 493 new graduates during its Fall Commencement, representing 415 undergraduate and 78 graduate students from 36 academic homes. Four award recipients will be honored during the ceremony, which will be held at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 11, at the Mahaffey Theater.

Debbie Nye Sembler, one of the USF System's longest-serving trustees, will receive the institution's most prestigious honor: the annual Chancellor's Award for Civic Leadership. Sembler served on the USF Board of Trustees for 12 years and as chair of the USFSP Campus Board for 10 years. As chair, Trustee Sembler helped to facilitate the growth of the campus which serves some 6,700 students in more than 40 undergraduate and graduate programs.

"I am honored to present this award to a woman whose commitment to this university has helped transform St. Petersburg and the lives of our students, both past and present," said Regional Chancellor Sophia Wisniewska. "The vibrant university we know and love today is possible because of people like Debbie Nye Sembler, whose impact can be seen in multiple buildings and initiatives across campus."

The Chancellor's Award for Civic Leadership is bestowed in recognition of outstanding contributions to the community and underscores the institution's own commitment to civic engagement. It is given during the Fall Commencement ceremony. Recent, previous recipients include: former St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Baker, the Hough Family, Pinellas County school administrator Vyrle Davis, Tampa Bay accounting executive Mary Anne Reilly, and Paul Tash, CEO of the Tampa Bay Times.



From left: Megan Lee, Albert Moreno III, and Mollie Wilfert. The photo of Albert is courtesy of Beautiful You Images.



Debbie Nye Sembler

Several graduating USFSP students also will be recognized. Albert Moreno III has been named the Fall 2016 Outstanding Graduate. Moreno, a U.S. Army veteran, will graduate Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in English and a minor in Mass Communications from the College of Arts and Sciences. After being medically discharged from the military, he struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as the only surviving member of his squad. In 2012, he started classes at USFSP and quickly became engaged in the campus's student life and became a student leader in both the Student Government Senate and the Student Veterans Organization. After graduation, he will continue his studies at USFSP in the Master of Liberal Arts program.

Two King O'Neal Scholars will be recognized for their academic excellence and for maintaining a GPA of 4.0 or higher. Megan Lee will graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Education from the College of Education. Lee previously received a K-6 Elementary Education certificate, a K-12 Exceptional Student Education certification, and endorsements in reading and English for speakers of other languages. After graduation, she plans to teach elementary school students. Mollie Wilfert will graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the College of Arts and Sciences and a Bachelor of Science in Marketing from the Kate Tiedemann College of Business. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a career in marketing, in which she will apply anthropological theories and methods.

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