

April 2025

FSCJ 2025

C O M M E N C E M E N T

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025 AT 4 P.M. • VYSTAR VETERANS MEMORIAL ARENA

Commencement is May 7

We are gearing up for the 2025 Commencement Ceremony, which will be held at VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena on Wednesday, May 7 at 4 p.m. We still need volunteers to help with the various important tasks throughout the day, such as setting up the arena, checking in graduates, assisting guests to their seats, helping graduates prepare for the ceremony, and cleaning up after the ceremony.

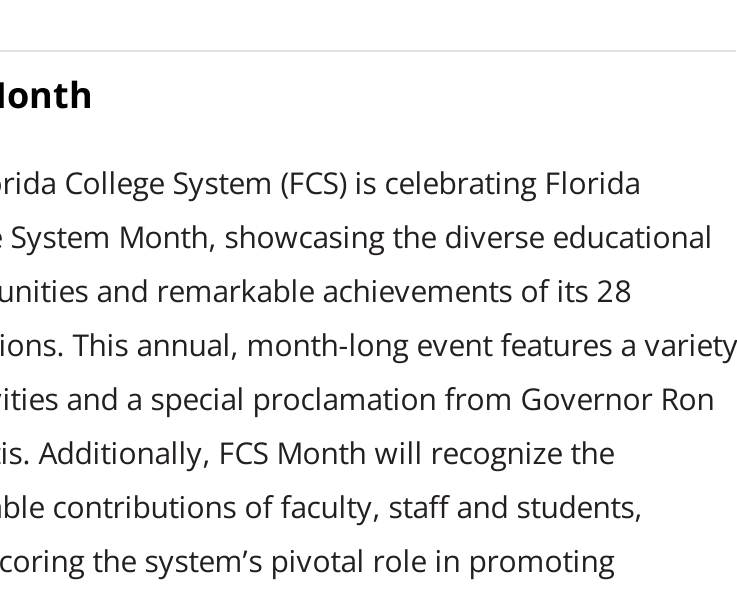
Before the in-person ceremony, we will host a single Grad Bash event at South Campus on Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Grad Bash is a special way for us to connect with our graduates personally before they cross the stage at Commencement. There will be activities for graduates and their guests, entertainment and giveaways, and an opportunity for group photos with family and friends.

There is still time to volunteer for either or both of these opportunities. Please speak with your supervisor and contact commencement@fscj.edu.

News and Updates

FSCJ Hosts Scheidel Leadership in Action Award Luncheon

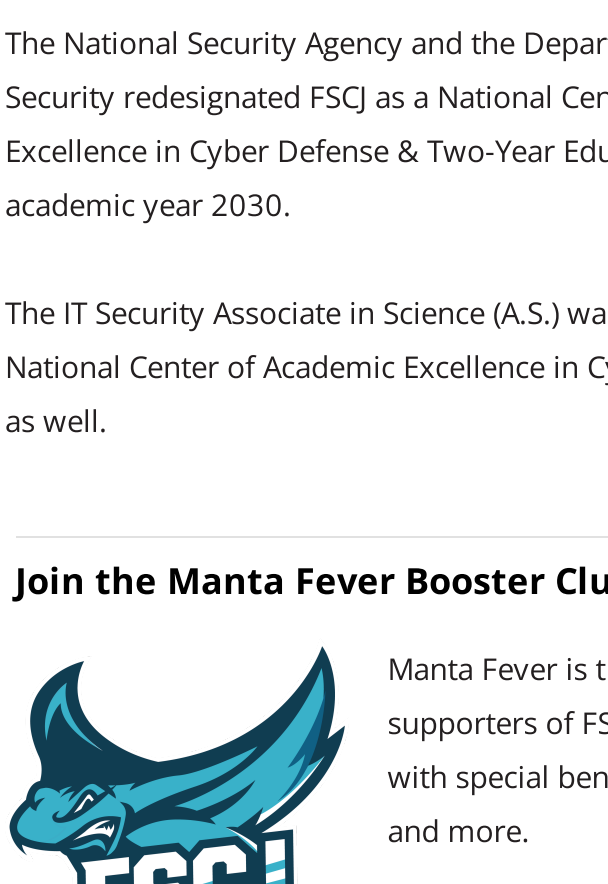
The Herbert W. Scheidel Leadership in Action Award Luncheon was held on March 26, with members from the Scheidel Foundation and family. This annual event honors and celebrates our students who volunteer and support different worthy causes throughout the community and across the world.



Congratulations to the 2025 Scheidel Foundation Leadership in Action Award winner, Thomas (Tommy) Cassaro, and finalists Emma Angeletti and Beely Oscar! Many thanks to our wonderful partners, the Scheidel Foundation, for their commitment to service and helping our students achieve their goals.

[View Photos](#)

FSCJ Celebrates Florida College System Month



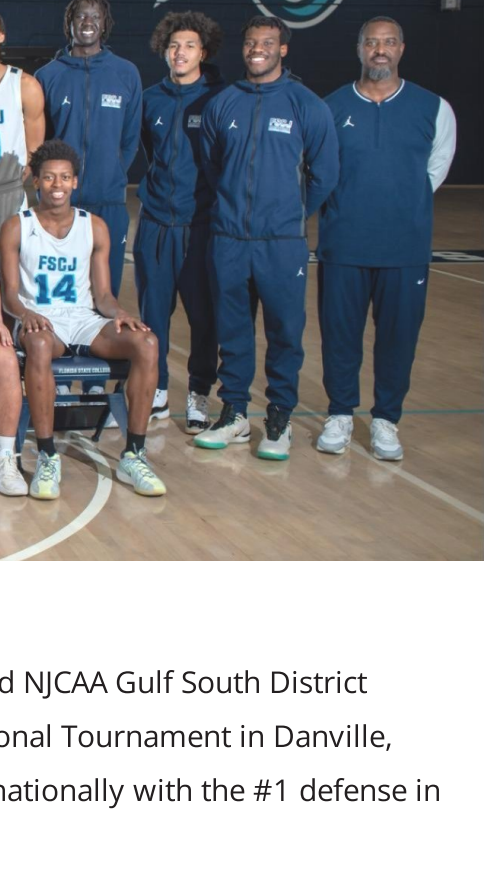
The Florida College System (FCS) is celebrating Florida College System Month, showcasing the diverse educational opportunities and remarkable achievements of its 28 institutions. This annual, month-long event features a variety of activities and a special proclamation from Governor Ron DeSantis. Additionally, FCS Month will recognize the invaluable contributions of faculty, staff and students, underscoring the system's pivotal role in promoting academic excellence and workforce development throughout the state.

FSCJ is proud to be part of the FCS and we're honored to be included in the celebration that aims to highlight the accessibility, affordability and high-quality education provided by "The Great 28" to the more than 672,000 students enrolled.

[Learn More](#)

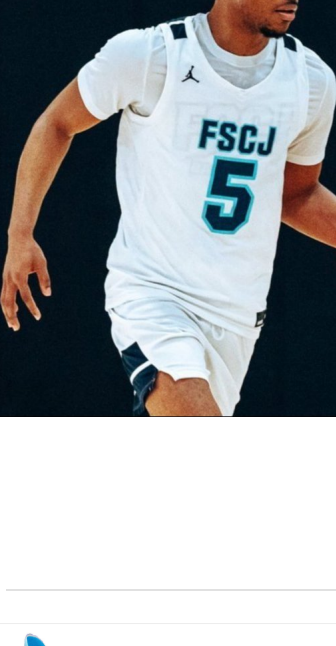
FSCJ Cybersecurity Receives National Designation

The National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security redesignated FSCJ as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense & Two-Year Education (CAE2Y) through academic year 2030.



The IT Security Associate in Science (A.S.) was recognized with the National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense designation as well.

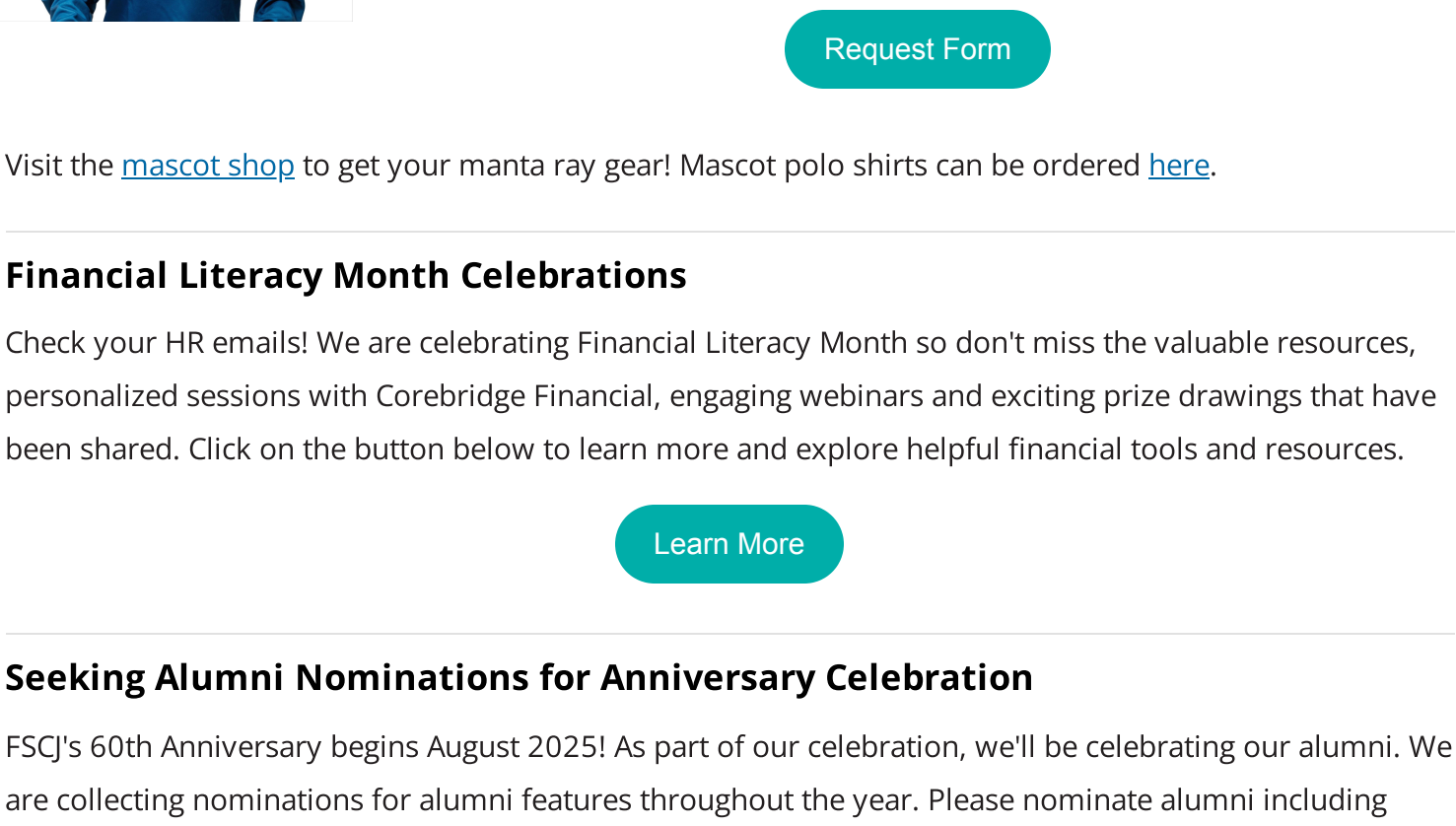
Join the Manta Fever Booster Club



Manta Fever is the annual giving program designed to engage our loyal fans as supporters of FSCJ Athletics. There are multiple giving levels to choose from with special benefits including season tickets, front-row seating, a booster gift and more.

Join us as we work to grow our fanbase and support the development of our students into champions in athletics, academics and life.

[Learn More](#)

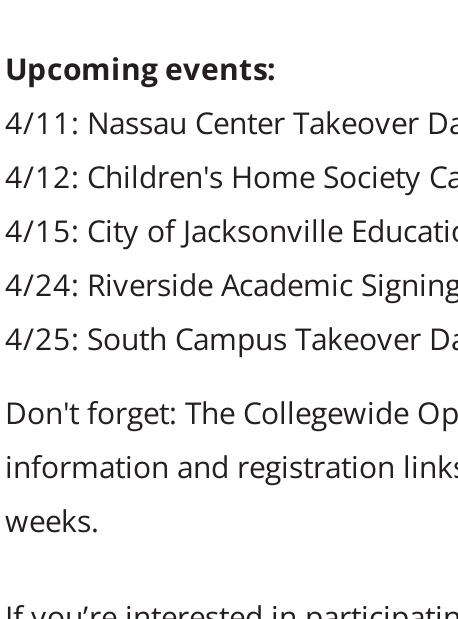


Men's Basketball Finishes Another Historic Season

After becoming back-to-back regular season Conference Champions and NJCAA Gulf South District Champions, our Men's Basketball team competed in the NJCAA DII National Tournament in Danville, Illinois. The team finished the season with a 31-6 record, is ranked #7 nationally with the #1 defense in the country, and is the best team in FSCJ history!

Congratulations to Head Coach John Putyrski and his monumental Manta Rays on another incredible season!

[Read More](#)



Congratulations to Alex McCray from Men's Basketball for being named to the inaugural Allstate NACDA Good Works Winter Team! This initiative recognizes student-athletes for volunteerism and civic engagement that goes above and beyond success and achievements in the classroom and competition. Alex mentors underprivileged students through the Goodwill/Take Stock in Children initiative and leads holiday donation efforts with the Salvation Army.

Only 20 members from institutions across the country were selected. Alexia Talferro from Women's Basketball also received a nomination to the team.

[Learn More](#)



Invite Rayzor Ray to Your Event

Bring some extra excitement to your events with Rayzor Ray! Our beloved mascot is ready to make appearances that will energize the crowd and create unforgettable memories. Don't miss out—bookmark the Rayzor Ray Request Form today and secure a visit!

[Request Form](#)

Visit the [mascot shop](#) to get your manta ray gear! Mascot polo shirts can be ordered [here](#).

Financial Literacy Month Celebrations

Check your HR emails! We are celebrating Financial Literacy Month so don't miss the valuable resources, personalized sessions with Corebridge Financial, engaging webinars and exciting prize drawings that have been shared. Click on the button below to learn more and explore helpful financial tools and resources.

[Learn More](#)

Seeking Alumni Nominations for Anniversary Celebration

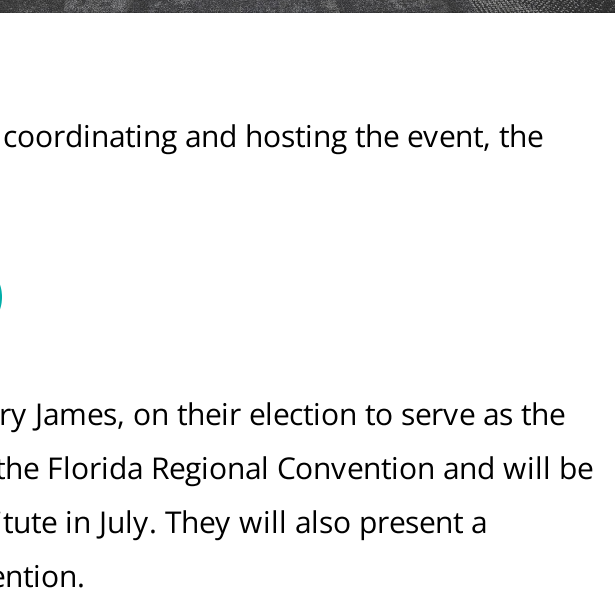
FSCJ's 60th Anniversary begins August 2025! As part of our celebration, we'll be celebrating our alumni. We are collecting nominations for alumni features throughout the year. Please nominate alumni including fellow employees, yourself, retirees and anyone you can think of from the past six decades. Submit a nomination [here](#).

Faculty and staff are also invited to share their ideas and input to help develop a fitting celebration. If you are interested in participating in a committee or have an idea to share, email communications@fscj.edu.

Recruitment Update

Takeover Day season is here! This event allows incoming high school graduates to spend a day at the College, learning, exploring and doing more of what we offer. Activities include a scavenger hunt, mock classes and Student Life and Leadership fun, all supported by the Student Recruitment Office, College faculty and staff.

The first one is scheduled for Friday, April 11 at the Nassau Center. Additional Takeover Days will take place Friday, April 25 at South Campus and Friday, May 2 at North Campus.



The Nassau Community Partner Event was held on Friday, March 28. Attendees represented state and county agencies, non-profit entities, college readiness initiatives and private school education.

Upcoming events:

- 4/11: Nassau Center Takeover Day
- 4/12: Children's Home Society Career Fair
- 4/15: City of Jacksonville Education Fair
- 4/24: Riverside Academic Signing Day
- 4/25: South Campus Takeover Day

Don't forget: The Collegewide Open House is scheduled for Saturday, June 21, at South Campus. Additional information and registration links for program participants and volunteers will be provided in the coming weeks.

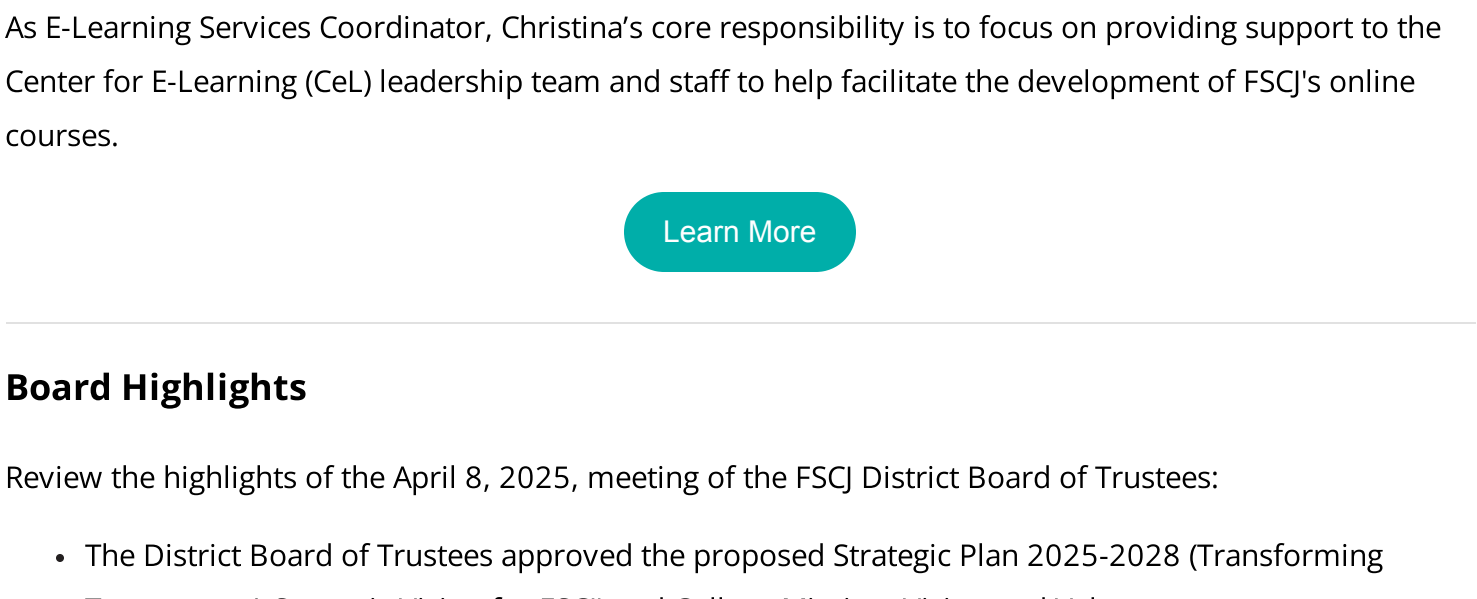
If you're interested in participating in recruitment events, please contact us at fscjrecruitment@fscj.edu with the subject line Dive into Manta Ray Nation.

[Read More](#)

FSCJ In Action

Several members of the FSCJ Police Department, Sgt. Russell Rhoden, Sgt. John Revis, Officer Kathleen Howze, Officer Richard Dube, Officer John Lamb and Officer Timothy Haire, were commended for their work in helping a colleague recover equipment that was taken from a common area at one of our locations.

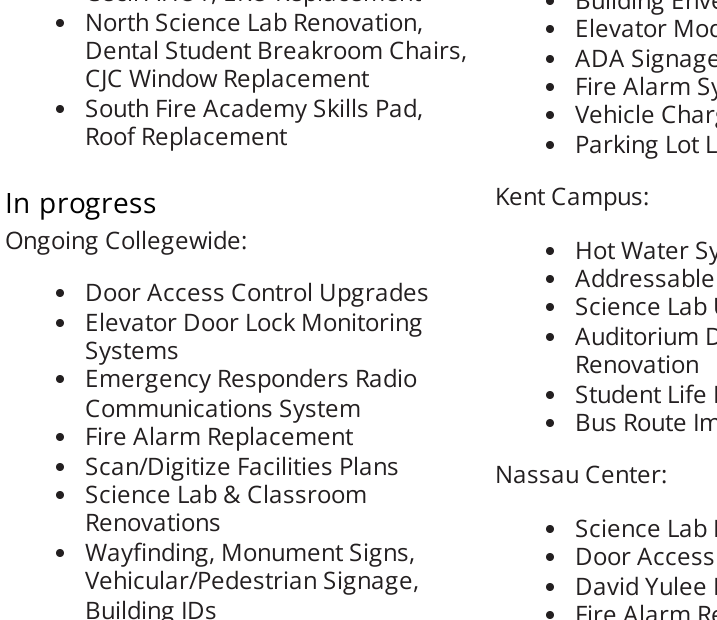
In a message to Dr. Avendano, the colleague wrote, "I am so thankful that I am blessed to work for an institution that cares enough for the students and employees to provide us with a safe and secure environment. And... When things go wrong and action needs to be taken, everything is handled with exceptional professionalism and care. I genuinely felt this was the most positive experience during a stressful situation that I have had in a long time."



Congratulations to our FSCJ Respiratory Care students who competed in the Sputum Bowl during the Florida Society for Respiratory Care (FSRC) Sunshine State Seminar! Both FSCJ teams did very well in the competition, with Team 1 finishing in third place. Daytona State College, Valencia College, Polk State College and Hillsborough Community College also had teams in the competition.

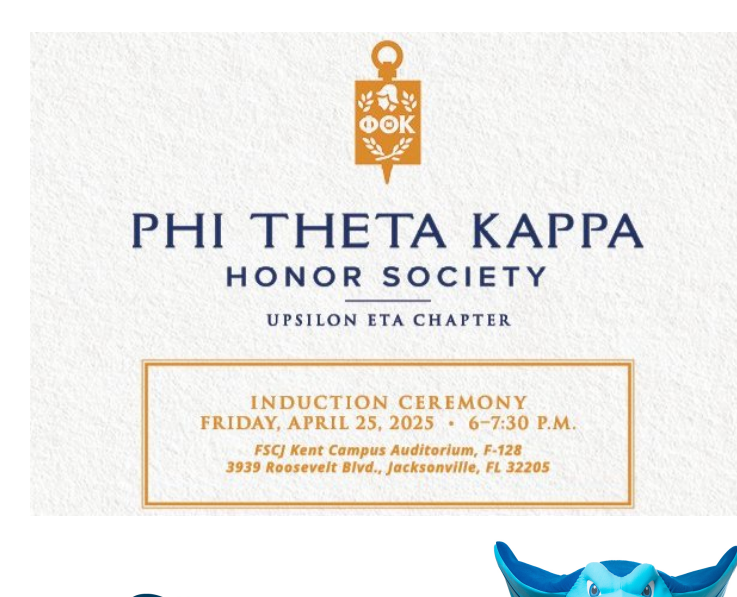
Pictured at left: Nhi Le, Dhakirah Shariyf, Jeffry Morange and Janelle Smith. Pictured at right: Patrick Lara, Andrew Portell, George Martinson and Mariah Moore

FSCJ Baseball Head Coach Brad Frick was recognized by one of his players for how he has supported his team throughout a difficult season. In an email, the player writes, "It has been a rollercoaster of a year. Starting really hot; things were looking up, and emotions were high and positive, and then the team hit rock bottom. We were on one of the worst losing streaks I have been a part of, and emotions have been down, but we needed a rock. Someone stable and keeps us positive, someone who truly believes in us. That person is Coach Frick. I came to FSCJ not knowing what I would get myself into and turning down D1 programs because of Coach Frick and the belief I had in him from the moment I stepped on campus. I can truly say I have never met someone like Frick, and he is one of the best coaches I have ever had because no matter what, he believed in me."



Congratulations to the FSCJ Math Olympics team! They competed in the Florida Two Year College Mathematics Association (FTYCMA) Math Olympics. FSCJ took first and second place in the individual category and our Team A, consisting of Phu Loc Pham, Jayden Johnson and Huy Hoang, took first place in the team competition. Phu Loc Pham and Jayden Johnson placed first and second, respectively, in the individual category. Special thanks to Professor Jodie Broussard, Professor Reggie Casiple and Professor Amanda Sartor for their work with the team.

The 2025 Employee Wellness Fair was a huge success! More than 40 vendors participated in and sponsored this event, which aimed to enhance our employees' physical, nutritional, financial, emotional/social and spiritual well-being. Attendees received various health screenings, resources and education, contributing to an overall positive wellness experience. They also enjoyed massages, food, drinks, games and had the opportunity to connect with colleagues from different locations.



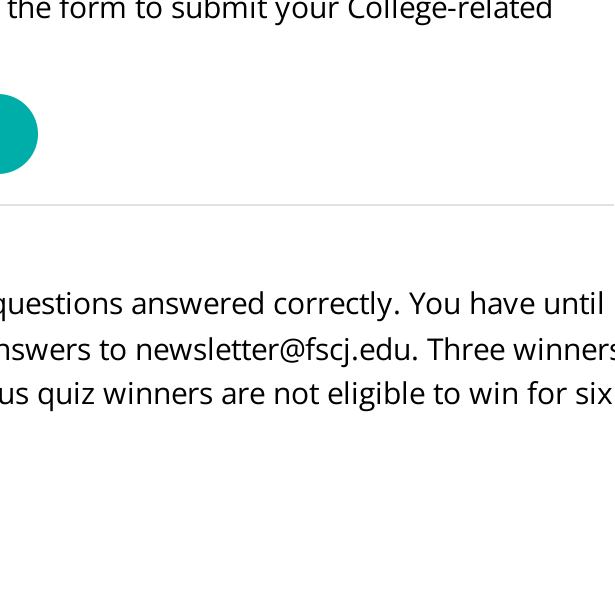
Many thanks to the FSCJ Wellness Committee for their work in coordinating and hosting the event, the vendors who participated and all who attended.

[View Photos](#)

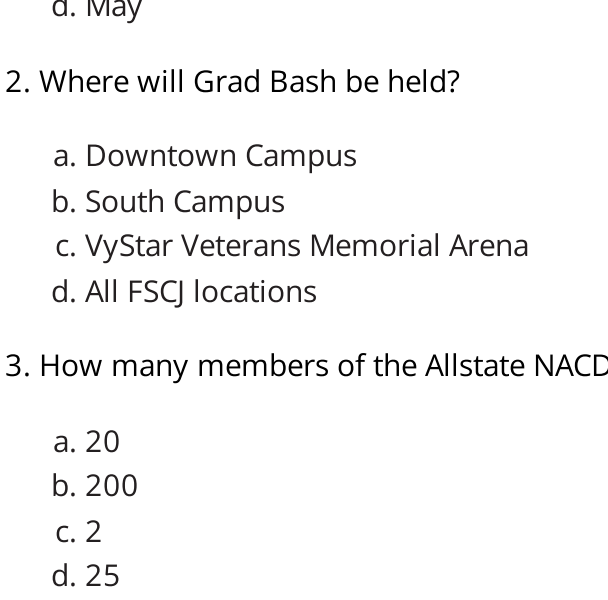
Congratulations to our Phi Theta Kappa Chapter, led by Dr. Mary James, on their election to serve as the Florida Regional Scholarship Chapter. They were chosen during the Florida Regional Convention and will be responsible for assisting with the Florida Regional Honors Institute in July. They will also present a workshop on scholarship at next year's Florida Regional Convention.

From this group, we also had five who were chosen as All-Florida Academic Team members: Danielle Fletcher, Derek Gilbert, Genevieve Price, Nicole Gibson and Megan St. Lawrence.

Dean of Health Sciences and Northeast Florida Dental Hygienists' Association (NEFDHA) President Monica Franklin and FSCJ Dental Hygiene Student Christina Brown recently joined dental hygienists and dental hygiene students from across the state to engage with legislators. They advocated for increased access to care and highlighted the importance of dental therapy by supporting House Bill 21 and Senate Bill 82.



Get to Know Your APC Colleagues: Patrice Williams



April's Administrative & Professional Collaborative (APC) spotlight shines on Continuing Workforce Education (CWE) Program Manager Patrice Williams.

Patrice's journey in education began with a permanent part-time position in Continuing Education before transitioning to a full-time role in Distance Learning in 1998, when FCJ offered telecourses on TV. In 2000, she left to pursue a career at CSX, later returning in 2004, joining the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) department, where she dedicated 17 years to serving students. During that time, she wore many hats—from advisor to project coordinator—overseeing a refugee grant program that supported more than 300 students.

In her current role, one of Patrice's key responsibilities is managing the English Language Institute (ELI) for non-credit international students who seek to learn English before transitioning to a degree program.

[Learn More](#)

Get to Know Your CEC Colleagues: Christina Perrin



April's Career Employees' Council (CEC) spotlight features E-Learning Services Coordinator Christina Perrin. She's been with FSCJ for over five years, beginning her time with us as a student assistant. Prior to her current role, she served as Test Proctor, Administrative Assistant II with the Contact Center, Enrollment Coach in Admissions and a Project Coordinator with CWE.

A proud graduate of FSCJ, Christina earned a Bachelor of Science in Converged Communications and is currently deciding on a program for her master's.

As E-Learning Services Coordinator, Christina's core responsibility is to focus on providing support to the Center for E-Learning (CeL) leadership team and staff to help facilitate the development of FSCJ's online courses.

[Learn More](#)

Board Highlights

Review the highlights of the April 8, 2025, meeting of the FSCJ District Board of Trustees:

- The District Board of Trustees approved the proposed Strategic Plan 2025-2028 (Transforming Tomorrow: A Strategic Vision for FSCJ) and College Mission, Vision and Values.
- The District Board of Trustees approved continuing contract status for the following full-time faculty members, effective with the 2025-26 faculty contract year.
 - Dr. David Buchman, Professor of Culinary and Hospitality Management
 - Mathew Keyes, Professor of Finance
 - Dr. Stacey Legler, Professor of Business
 - Julie Pactor, Librarian
 - Christy Bisson, Professor of Physical Therapy
 - Kalla Toro-Sepulveda, Professor of Humanities
- The District Board of Trustees approved a faculty sabbatical for Tina Dajci, Professor of Economics effective with the 2025-26 faculty contract year.
- The District Board of Trustees approved the fee changes to specific courses to be effective Summer Term and Fall Term 2025, pursuant to Board Rule 6Hx7-4.19.
- The District Board of Trustees approved the FSCJ ACCESS Program for Summer Term 2025, pursuant to Board Rule 6Hx7-4.19.
- The District Board of Trustees approved the inactivation of the Medical Assisting Advanced (65 credit hours) Associate in Science program, effective at the end of Fall Term 2024.
- The District Board of Trustees approved the inactivation of the Medical Assisting Specialist (44 credit hours) Technical Certificate program, effective at the end of Fall Term 2024.
- The District Board of Trustees approved the inactivation of the Adult High School (1,300 clock hours (maximum)) Adult Education program, effective at the end of Summer Term 2026.

Facilities Updates

The Facilities Team has been hard at work, updating and upgrading spaces across the College. Check out some highlights below:

Recently completed	Downtown Campus:	South Campus:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cecil AHJLI, ERU ReplacementNorth Science Lab RenovationDental Student Breakroom Chairs, CIE Window ReplacementSouth Fire Academy Skills Plaz, Roof Replacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Multipurpose Room RenovationBuilding EnvelopeElevator ModernizationADA SignageFire Alarm System ReplacementVehicle Charging StationsParking Lot Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Door Access Control UpgradesElevator ModernizationLighting Controls UpgradesFire Alarm System ReplacementChildren's Center RenovationMen's Locker Room RenovationParking Lot LightingRestroom RenovationLegacy Walk BenchesGymnasium Bleachers
In progress	Kent Campus:	In planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ongoing Collegewide:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Door Access Control UpgradesElevator Door Lock Monitoring SystemsEmergency Responders RadioCommunications SystemFire Alarm ReplacementScavengerize Facilities PlansScience Labs & Classroom RenovationsWayfinding, Monuments Signs, Vehicular/Pedestrian Signage, Building IDsMemorial Benches/SignageEnergy Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Water System ReplacementAddressable Device UpgradesScience Lab UpgradesAuditorium Dressing Room RenovationStudent Life RenovationBus Route Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stairs, Curtain Wall, Main Entry and Balcony RepairsParking Lot Repair
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cecil Center:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Door Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nassau Center:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Science Lab RemodelDoor Access Control UpgradeDavid Yulee Room FurnitureFire Alarm Replacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Downtown Campus:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Warehouse BuildingVERC Renovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deerwood Center:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Classrooms to Computer LabsDeerwood Conference Center Renovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">North Campus:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Door Access Control UpgradesStudent Services RenovationAllied Health Program RenovationElevator ModernizationBDA Monitoring SystemIndividual Addressable Noise MonitoringSignageCIE PavilionLocks RenovationBoiler ReplacementAthletics Renovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">North Campus:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Paint Tower StairwellSouth Campus:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wilson Center Architect AssessmentHonors Program ExpansionSecurity Renovation

Upcoming Events

CCAMPIS Early Learning Community Fair

Join us for a day full of family fun!
Saturday, April 12, 2025 | 10 a.m.-noon
FSCJ Downtown Campus
800 A Courtyard & Lobby

Looking for Childcare Options?

Stop by the Children's Action Network Family School (CAANS) booth!

FSCJ OnPoint

Next Call:
May 14, 2 p.m.

Call notes available at myFSCJ OnPoint Quick Link

PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY

INDUCTION CEREMONY
FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025 | 4-5:30 P.M.
800 West Orange Avenue, 4th Fl.
3800 Research Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32209

Stay a Manta Ray!

Summer classes start May 5

REGISTER NOW

Available on:
iOS
Android
and any other platform

Check out the events calendar to view more events and access the form to submit your College-related events: [fscj.edu/events](#).

[View More Events](#)

Quiz

Quiz winners will be selected at random from entries with all questions answered correctly. You have until 6 p.m. on the day the newsletter is distributed to email your answers to newsletter@fscj.edu. Three winners will receive a Manta Messenger prize pack! Please note: Previous quiz winners are not eligible to win for six months.

- When is Florida College System Month?
 - March 28
 - April 18
 - April
 - May
- Where will Grad Bash be held?
 - Downtown Campus
 - South Campus
 - VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena
 - All FSCJ locations
- How many members of the Allstate NACDA Good Works Winter Team were selected?
 - 20
 - 200
 - 2
 - 25
- Where did FSCJ's Math Team A place in the Florida Two Year College Mathematics Association (FTYCMA) Math Olympics team competition?
 - 1st place
 - 2nd place
 - 1st and 2nd place
 - 3rd place
- When is the Collegewide Open House scheduled?
 - April 11
 - April 25
 - May 3
 - June 21