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Nova Southeastern University

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NSU helping to combat HUMAN TRAFFICKING
Create a Lasting Legacy
The Campaign for Nova Southeastern University

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To the Friends and Family of NSU:

Since its founding in 1964, Nova Southeastern University has continued to evolve, embracing lofty goals and aspirations in its ongoing pursuit of academic distinction.

In January, NSU entered the public phase of Realizing Potential—The Campaign for Nova Southeastern University. During the past several years, the university has successfully exceeded its fund-raising goals. Through that philanthropic support, its students, faculty, alumni, and communities have been able to realize their potential through NSU. Now it is time for us to realize the full promise of our potential as a doctoral research institution, a global online educator, and as a leader in higher education.

Through this philanthropic campaign we will raise $250 million by December 2020 to support excellence at NSU for our students, our faculty members and their research, and our 21st-century educational initiatives. Along with our goal of also raising $300 million in sponsored projects, the Realizing Potential campaign will help us achieve our Vision 2020 goal to raise more than half a billion dollars in external funding.

This issue of Horizons also illustrates the advances that NSU has made and its commitment to the future of the university and the community. NSU researchers are working to combat human trafficking, a scourge that affects many segments of our community. Professors and students are showing schoolchildren how exciting science can be, cultivating the next generation of scientists. NSU continues to lead the charge in coral reef preservation. We also are excited that the university will be pioneering cell-based biomedical research with the launch of the new NSU Cell Therapy Institute to be located in the Center for Collaborative Research.

I am proud to serve as NSU’s president and chief executive officer during this historic undertaking as we continue to realize the power of our potential.

George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Nova Southeastern University
As a biologist, Emily Schmitt Lavin, Ph.D., hoped her children also would experience the excitement that she felt with her first scientific discovery. For NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography professor Schmitt Lavin, concrete action followed that thought. She introduced herself to her four-year-old son’s preschool teacher and basically said, “I’m a college science teacher. Anything I can do?” So Schmitt Lavin began showing the children simple science experiments, bringing along an NSU student to help. Their first demonstration was the vinegar and baking soda volcano that mesmerized the 20 preschoolers at NSU’s Mailman Segal Center for Human Development. “Emily contributed so much that year with her handmade games and...
science experiments. She has been a role model for me to follow in teaching science,” remembered Lana Kriss, M.S., of the Mailman Segal Center.

That was in 2008. When her son began at Welleby Elementary School in Sunrise, Schmitt Lavin related her previous hands-on effort with the Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) teacher. (STEM education integrates concepts usually taught as separate subjects, with an emphasis on applying knowledge in real-life situations or projects.)

Schmitt Lavin and the Welleby Elementary school teachers came up with a Science Alive! night, including a spaghetti dinner. “I always think the dinner helps,” said Schmitt Lavin, chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at the Halmos College. They called it “Supersonic Spaghetti Dinner.” As the people began signing up, her astonishment grew. More than 600 parents and children attended the event at the school. “It was truly awesome,” she said.

Flash forward to 2016. From that one early volunteer effort at Mailman Segal and the spaghetti dinner at Welleby Elementary School, the Science Alive! program has expanded to 17 schools and educational groups including the Boys Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the Boys and Girls Club of Hollywood. An array of NSU professors, undergraduate and graduate students, and alumni from almost every NSU college have been tapped to assist. Science Alive! materials are used in some classes at NSU’s University School.

Schmitt Lavin and other professors have now placed more than 450 NSU students in the programs. From that first year of working only with K–5 grade levels, she has expanded work through high school—and served upward of 7,500 school children in Broward County, Miami-Dade County, and even a school in India. Her method of pairing NSU students and lively hands-on instruction also has brought STEM programs to the Alvin Sherman Library. (See story on page 7.) Science Alive! also has its own Facebook page at facebook.com/Novasciencealive.

While Schmitt Lavin would like to see Science Alive! grow even further,
she is delighted with how far it has come. “When I think of the connections we have made and the number of people who have enjoyed their time in school a little more due to this program, I feel happy that I had something to do with this,” she said. “When a student tells me that participating in Science Alive! was a highlight of their college experience, and even my own children think that science is fun, I feel proud.” It’s very rewarding, she added, “when NSU students tell me they talked about their experience with Science Alive! during graduate school interviews—and feel that the experience they gained helped them stand out among other applicants.”

Nova Blanche Elementary School, a public school near NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus, illustrates how well the program works. NSU sophomore Valentina Ramirez, a biology major, organizes the effort there, working with Schmitt Lavin and STEM teacher Michele Parsons. They’ve tailored a program, called SuperNovas, and it serves an average of 150 students each week.

At Nova Blanche, Ramirez enlists about 25 NSU student volunteers to present 24 demonstrations, working alongside Schmitt Lavin, Parsons, and other Nova Blanche staff members. The children are divided into eight groups, with eight different subject areas. “Each area has three experiments,” said Ramirez, with areas from solar and wind power to crime scene investigation (CSI).

The NSU volunteers are from a cross-section of the university’s science and math programs—including undergraduates, graduate students, and alumni—and Ramirez matches their specialty with the subject areas. The children also watch a presentation about NSU.

“Getting all this done each week can be a challenge,” said Ramirez, who began the program at Nova Blanche last October with fellow student LeiVaughn Lyn (B.S., 2014), who is preparing to attend pharmacy school.

But for Ramirez and the other NSU students, the rewards are huge. “It’s a rush of adrenaline every time we go, at least it is for me,” said Ramirez. “Just imagine 150 pairs of little eyes filled with anticipation as you walk into the cafeteria and they say ‘Yay, science buddies are here!’ ”

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

That’s the side of Science Alive! that is giving back to the community. The other, of equal value as Schmitt Lavin and other faculty members point out, is the tremendous boon to the NSU volunteers themselves. They develop incalculable skills in their own development, from public speaking to academic performance.

“You’ve no idea how daunting it is to explain a scientific principle to a small child. And they ask good questions. You must know your stuff,” said Aarti Raja, Ph.D., an assistant professor at NSU Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. Raja’s office often contains paper bags full of supplies for the afternoon session at Miami Lakes Elementary School. Five NSU students and Nicole Porther, Ph.D., M.P.H., a professor, recently helped her in an experiment that the children get really excited about: capturing their own DNA.

GONE GLOBAL

The most far-flung effort of Science Alive! takes place in India, and that is Raja’s brainchild. Each summer, she and her family return to her hometown of Bangalore where her mother, who is an English teacher there, asked if she would consider doing a version of the Science Alive! program. The Bangalore science teachers loved the idea.

So Raja, without any NSU students to assist, improvised, teaching the drill to a group of 9th and 10th grade students. They then teach the younger kids—and in the process—better understand the materials themselves.

Schmitt Lavin keeps meticulous records of the program’s progress and hopes to find grant money to grow it. She would love to provide some type of paid position for students at the graduate and
undergraduate levels to expand the program to more teachers and schools.

Alumni, students, and teachers praise all those who have been so dedicated to Science Alive!, including Halmos College professors Julie Torruellas Garcia, Ph.D.; Robert Smith, Ph.D.; and James Munoz, Ph.D., and NSU’s College of Psychology professors Leanne Boucher, Ph.D., and Mindy Ma, Ph.D.

In Schmitt Lavin’s office are scrapbooks overflowing with flyers, countless thank-you notes, drawings from the young participants, and letters from NSU alumni. There is no greater satisfaction, said Schmitt Lavin, “than when a college student is so turned on to science education, in part from their involvement with this program, that they become science teachers themselves.” This includes Megan Flora (M.S., 2012). “I love how Science Alive! allows my high school students to share what they know with younger students,” said Flora, who now teaches at Piper High School in Fort Lauderdale.

Even a STEM instructional coach for Broward County—Javeshnev (Aimee) Rivera-Azua (B.S., 2007)—said, “Science Alive! has allowed me to extend my professional career network, and to offer many hands-on activities that have exposed minority groups to the beauty of STEM concepts.”

Nergess Taheri (B.S., 2011) was a volunteer with Science Alive! at that first spaghetti dinner when she was working on her biology degree. Now a third-year student in NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, Taheri is participating again. “With Science Alive! children can really see that learning is fun and that science isn’t just a simple class in school, but a lifestyle that opens doors for the future,” she said.

Kaitlin Donovan (B.S., 2014), now a student at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, was involved with Science Alive! at NSU and published a journal article about her experience.

“Science Alive! greatly influenced my undergraduate career, as well as my future career as a dentist. Working with children, faculty members, fellow classmates, and the Broward County School District taught me how important it is for science professionals to be deeply involved in every school in the country,” she said. “Almost every child I met expressed an infectious fervor for education, which was a constant reminder that we are paving the way for future generations.”

Martha Puglisi, M.A., has used the Science Alive! “salt racers” experiment at Science Day at NSU’s University School. Schmitt attended “as an honored guest.” Not only were the children amused by marbles rising via the friction of salt, but Puglisi said she felt satisfaction that the two NSU institutions could share such synchronicity.
NSU students get ready to show the wonders of science to children attending Nova Blanche Elementary School. Front row, from left, Nicole Coelho, Erica Immerblum, Sheena Patel, Chitra Gotluru, Stephanie de la Guarda, Zara Khan, Sophia Nguyen, Cynthia Lavin (in chair), Emily Schmitt Lavin, Krunal Patel, Ahjay Bhatia, Kristi Njaravelil, Richard Merus, Ritchie Merus, and Amanda Ramnot. In the back row, from left, are Chelsey Thachettu, Irfan Khan, Guy Merus, and Valentina Ramirez.

SCIENCE ALIVE! MAKES BOOK AT ALVIN SHERMAN LIBRARY

BY JOHN DOLEN

For three years, Public Library Services at NSU’s Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center has been working with Emily Schmitt Lavin, Ph.D., and her NSU student volunteers to present Science Alive! and STEM-related material to Broward County children. During the school year, sessions are twice a month, but during the summer that cranks up to twice a week.

“We are a joint-use library in partnership with the Broward County Board of County Commissioners,” said Anne Leon, M.L.S., executive director of Public Library Services at the Alvin Sherman Library. “Because of this unique relationship with the community, non-NSU students are not only welcomed but encouraged to make use of the library facilities—including younger students.” The programs are advertised in library publications, and flyers are sent to local schools.

Kristina Knott, M.L.I.S., youth services librarian, works with Schmitt Lavin to recruit NSU faculty members and students for the Science Alive! sessions, and is hands-on arranging supplies and preparing library staff members. Faculty members bring their own student volunteers.

Summer is a busy time. “Twice-weekly programs can attract as many as 50 kids per session,” said Knott. “Usually eight to ten NSU students assist various science and math professors who volunteer to teach. While students are free to attend any particular session, many go for the whole summer.”

And the program is growing, said Knott. In 2013, 55 students attended the after-school STEM programming. “In 2014, with the addition of STEM to our summer programming roster . . . along with an increased level of collaboration with our NSU partners (like Science Alive!), we saw that number jump tremendously—to 580 participants,” said Knott. “It increased by another 40 percent in 2015.”

Popular topics include DNA extraction, sea turtle conservation, exploration of the human brain, the conduction of electricity, and pH testing. In addition to Schmitt Lavin, Knott cites sessions by NSU’s College of Psychology professor Leanne Boucher, Ph.D., who does the popular “I Lobe the Brain,” and Jason Gershman, Ph.D., chair and associate professor in the Department of Mathematics at NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. In addition, faculty members, undergraduate and graduate students, and alumni from a variety of NSU colleges have assisted with sessions.

“Here at NSU, faculty members and students are a phenomenal resource. That is what makes STEM programming at the Alvin Sherman Library unique,” said Knott. Knott, along with youth services librarian, Katharine Labuda, M.L.I.S., are at each session, and Leon often attends. “It’s so good to be there at that moment when the lightbulb goes on over their heads,” said Leon.

Added Knott, “It’s a beautiful thing when a child comes to the first summer session, probably pushed by a parent. Slowly, grudgingly the student becomes interested—and by the end is excited about science.” That’s when Knott will point at the kid and say, “Gotcha.”
A concerned nurse at Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, Florida, had a hunch about a case that appeared to be domestic abuse. A woman with a fractured front tooth, multiple cuts on her lip, and head contusions had arrived at the emergency room after flagging down a passing ambulance. The nurse became even more cautious after a man, dressed in blood-covered clothes, came looking for the woman.

“Had they just told the man to leave or had he just been arrested locally without law enforcement inquiring further about the relationship, he would have never been prosecuted federally for human trafficking,” said Barbara A. Martinez, chief, special prosecutions, human trafficking.
The three most common types of human trafficking are sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude.

According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), Florida ranks third in the nation, following California and New York, in the most cases of human trafficking reported. What constitutes human trafficking?

"Any action that forces, coerces, and holds people against their will into some type of labor," stated Gaillard-Kenney. The three most common types of human trafficking are sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude.

The seeds of CREATE were planted in 2010, when the two professors attended a symposium sponsored by NSU’s Institute for Child Health Policy, which specifically addressed sexual exploitation of children. “We work in the health care professions and realized that all of the people speaking on the panel were law enforcement.

CREATE was founded in January 2015 by two professors in NSU’s College of Health Care Sciences’ Department of Health Science—Brianna Black Kent, Ph.D., program director and interim chair, and Sandrine Gaillard-Kenney, Ed.D., assistant dean. Much of CREATE’s advocacy is to raise awareness and provide the community with knowledge about identifying victims of human trafficking.
There wasn’t one health care professional,” said Gaillard-Kenney.

“So we wanted to do something. We went back to our offices and we looked at all of the catalogues of NSU’s course descriptions for the Health Professions Division, and we took note that there was nothing about human trafficking,” Kent added. “There was something about domestic violence, but nothing that would help health care professionals identify victims.”

The professors knew they were on to something. “We’ve learned through our research that, because of the violence associated with human trafficking, victims will, at some point, come in contact with a health professional,” added Kent. “Whether it’s being seen in an emergency room, stopping at a pharmacy for over-the-counter medications or bandages, or trying to locate a dentist or an eye doctor, they are out there. And, without a professional knowing the signs and symptoms, they may just view it as interpersonal violence, but what they are really seeing is slavery right in front of their eyes.”

They began a program called projectHEAT (Health Educators Against Trafficking). CREATE was established as an expansion of that project. Partially funded by a private gift administered by the Community Foundation of Broward and two funded research grants, CREATE expands the educational reach with an aim to equip everyone from private citizens to educators to health care professionals with skills to help identify victims of human trafficking and to know which resources are available to help the victims.

**INVALUABLE MISSION**

Educating health professionals continues to be primary for CREATE and this mission is invaluable, according to Jumorrow Johnson, former victim advocate of the Plantation Police Department and current vice president of Education and Community Outreach of the Broward County Human Trafficking Coalition, which are community partners with CREATE. “It’s knowing what to ask without raising attention or making the trafficker suspicious,” she said. “Also, if professionals don’t know what they are looking for, they don’t know how to address it.”

According to an article, “The Health Consequences of Sex Trafficking,” published in the *Annals of Health Law*, some estimates suggest 87 percent of trafficking victims have had contact with a health care provider while being trafficked. The article stated: “by far the most frequently reported treatment site was an emergency room at 63.3 percent. Prior studies demonstrated that medical care providers are woefully unprepared to identify trafficking victims.”

Johnson cautions that there is no specific profile of a victim or of a perpetrator. “As far as victims, anyone can fall prey,” she said.

**BIG BUSINESS**

A report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime finds human trafficking is surpassing the illegal arms trade as the second largest criminal enterprise in the world. The report predicts it will soon eclipse the drug trade as the No. 1 criminal enterprise
LAW RAISES AWARENESS

A new Florida law went into effect January 1, 2016, that raises awareness of human trafficking by placing signs at adult entertainment establishments, rest areas, airports, massage services that aren’t owned by a regulated health-care profession, and emergency rooms. The law (HB 369) requires that the signs be “in a conspicuous location that is clearly visible.” Signs must be in English and Spanish and state: “If you or someone you know is being forced to engage in an activity and cannot leave—whether it is prostitution, housework, farm work, factory work, retail work, restaurant work, or any other activity, call 1-888-373-7888 (NHTRC hotline) or text INFO or HELP to 233-733.”

in the world. The $36-billion human trafficking industry is linked to organized crime and terrorist organizations, too. The investigators point out that human trafficking is a much simpler business model than selling drugs.

“We’re not just talking about sex trafficking, but labor trafficking, and indentured servitude,” said Carmen Pino, assistant special agent in charge, with the Department of Homeland Security Investigations in Miami, which also has partnered with CREATE. “It’s not just a 13-year-old runaway, but a foreign worker coming to America to help his family, or an au pair who thinks she’s going to be living the American dream and it then becomes a nightmare.”

“(Law enforcement) didn’t know about human trafficking for a long time, and it is very traumatic for the victims,” said Arthur Corrieri, M.S., L.M.H.C., victim assistance specialist, with the Department of Homeland Security Investigations, who also said that the change in thinking is now more of a “victim-centered approach.”

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

NSU’s Multicultural Association for Pre-Health Students (M.A.P.S.) has taken on human trafficking awareness as one of its most important projects. In support of Human Trafficking Awareness Week in January, the group set up an information table in the Don Taft University Center at NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus.

“Since we are future health professionals, we believe it’s a good idea that not only are we aware of this issue, but we are helping raise awareness of this topic,” said Kaisha Butz, an NSU senior majoring in biology, with aspirations of pursuing a medical degree in pediatrics. The issue is of special relevance to college students. “A lot of us are at the age where we could make choices and end up in one of the situations we are hearing about every day,” said Butz, 21, vice president of M.A.P.S.

Jenna Knafo, the president of M.A.P.S., said a speakers’ event during the awareness week had a broader reach than the previous year. “Last year, when I was secretary, it was our first event that focused on human trafficking. We partnered with the Criminal Justice Club,” she said. This year, the group wanted to draw more of the community to the event, so they advertised the speakers’ event in local newspapers and on websites to help get the word out.

“The more people who become aware of the problem, the more it will keep the industry from growing. For those of us who are pre-health, pre-dental, and pre-nursing, it’s extremely important we be able to recognize the signs so we know what the next steps are,” said Knafo, 21, a biology major and studio arts minor. The club’s devotion to the topic has also piqued her interest, and Knafo said she would like to do more on the issue of human trafficking when she becomes a medical professional.
A GLOBAL SOLUTION

Through their research, Gaillard-Kenney and Kent are focused on creating a model that can be replicated by other universities and communities. “We would be glad for anyone to take what we’re developing and make it their own and service victims across the country and throughout the world,” said Gaillard-Kenney. The interprofessional nature of their research, so readily available to them at Nova Southeastern University because of the many different professions, is what makes CREATE unique, the founders said. “We have not found any other university trying to pull together all of its resources to create this interprofessional approach,” said Kent.

CREATE is investigating providing victim services by utilizing NSU’s colleges of Dental Medicine and Optometry.

“We can really approach this in a very complete and accessible manner that can truly serve all the needs of a human trafficking victim. We’ll help these individuals rebuild their lives so they can become physically, emotionally, and economically sustainable. We’re looking at CREATE as an opportunity to help victims improve their lives,” said Kent.

At the CREATE headquarters on NSU’s Miramar Campus, donations are accepted of clothing and personal hygiene goods. Emergency backpacks were made to give to victim advocates for distribution.

Miami’s Kristi House has been dedicated to helping child victims of sexual abuse for 20 years now and also has become an advocacy center for children exploited through prostitution and pornography. Claudia Kitchens, executive director of Kristi House, said CREATE is, and will be, an invaluable resource for organizations such as Kristi House.

“There isn’t a large body of knowledge on how to treat young people who have been commercially sexually exploited,” said Kitchens. “As we develop a stronger relationship with Nova Southeastern University and CREATE, the evaluations and research contributed will make a global difference on how we best treat victims. Everyone is now trying to figure out best practices. CREATE has created this avenue—a collective for research and education.”

For more information, contact CREATE at create@nova.edu.
Diving In

NSU’s Coral Nursery Initiative Branches Out.

Graduate research assistant Mauricio Lopez monitors outplanted colonies of staghorn coral.
If the weather is good, chances are you will see graduate students from NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography plunging into the depths of the Atlantic Ocean, doing their part to restore an endangered coral species.

At the Halmos College’s own on-land coral nursery and at 14 outplant sites, from Lauderdale-by-the-Sea to south of Port Everglades, graduate students like Elizabeth Larson and Kate Correia’s fieldwork includes delicately maintaining—sometimes with household items like toothbrushes—the staghorn coral they’ve grown in their nursery. Then, when a coral colony is ready to be planted on ocean reefs, they transport the staghorns in giant garbage bins of saltwater to a designated outplant site.

“An outplant day is very exciting, because you get to really see the fruits of your effort,” said Correia, a third-year graduate student. On outplant days, Correia and her fellow students clean the substrate of any algae or sediment that may have accumulated on its surface, then mix together a two-part marine epoxy the size of a Hershey’s Kiss. They stick the coral in the epoxy, place a small nail in the substrate, and tie the corals to the nail. A month later, they return to the site to monitor the corals’ growth and continue regular visits as long as needed.

“We go out with data sheets and cameras, take photos, and monitor the health of those outplanted corals, looking at things like disease and bleaching and predation,” Correia said. “It’s a pretty tight ship. Everybody knows what to do before we go out and has done it before; so, they know how things run. It’s usually a full day; and after the outplanting day, it’s a slap on the back that we’ve really done something.”

Thanks to grants from The Nature Conservancy and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NSU students have been participating in outplant events since 2008, officially establishing the Coral Nursery Initiative (CNI) in 2009. The program is a response to the staghorn coral’s 2006 placement on the U.S. Endangered Species Act, because of disease and pollution stress dating back to the late 1970s.

“Once a species is listed under the act, there’s a heightened sense of responsibility to initiate efforts to restore the population,” said David Gilliam, M.S., Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Marine and Environmental Sciences at the Halmos College, who oversees the initiative. “Nurseries are one of those tools that have been embraced by stakeholders as a means to try and help the population recover, by growing in these managed environments and then outplanting products from the nurseries onto the natural reef,” added Gilliam. The assistant professor earned his master’s degree in 1992 and his Ph.D. in 1999, both were from NSU.

Coral reefs are the result of thousands of years of coral growth, and staghorn corals, in particular, are vital to the ocean ecosystem. Because of their complex branching structure, they not only create reefs, but they foster habitats for fishes and other vertebrates.

Studies by the NOAA have estimated that coral reefs contribute more than $2 million to Broward County’s economy, creating more than 36,000 jobs in fields such as tourism, the restaurant and hospitality industries, and recreational diving and fishing. “Tourists come down for our beaches and our offshore activities,” Gilliam said. “So without our reefs and without our beaches, Florida would be dramatically affected.”

Steve d’Oliveira, public information officer for the town of Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, is well aware of the reefs’ importance. “We have a coral reef within 150 yards off the beach, and we’re very popular with beach divers,” he said. “So we’re trying to do whatever we can to enhance our near-shore marine environment.”

D’Oliveira said the town also was aware of NSU’s excellent reputation for coral nursery work. That’s why, in 2014, the Lauderdale-by-the-Sea town commission bequeathed a five-year grant to the Coral Nursery Initiative that is, according to the principal beneficiaries,
unprecedented in the region. The project between the town and the Coral Reef Initiative will be highlighted this summer on *ScubaNation*, a television program on Fox Sports Sun channel.

Lauderdale-by-the-Sea is a small seaside community of 6,000 residents just north of Fort Lauderdale. “We’re very proud to be working with NSU and think our collaboration will be extremely beneficial,” Mayor Scot Sasser said. “We’re hoping that these replanted staghorn coral fragments, within the next few years, will grow into a significant reef that will help the environment.”

The initiative began humbly, with 30 “donor corals” growing offshore. NSU’s oceanographic researchers borrowed branches from corals, which they grew into fully formed corals in their nursery.

“We took these small clippings, about the size of your pinky,” said Larson, a Ph.D. candidate. “We started out with 270 of those for our nursery. Now you can estimate we have over 2,000 corals in our nursery that are more than the size of cantaloupes.”

“We only had to borrow from natural colonies that one time,” Gilliam added. “The population in the nursery has expanded simply by propagating branches from within the nursery itself. It’s completely self-supporting, and when we initially took branches from the donor colonies, we monitored those colonies, and they all recovered. It was only a gain—there was no loss, and that’s rather unique.”

So far, the Initiative has planted more than 4,000 corals, with the capacity to plant another 1,000 per year. Mortality rates fluctuate based on environmental factors, but according to the Coral Nursery Initiative’s latest monitoring report in December 2015, corals have enjoyed a 90-percent survival rate after eight months in the high-density Staghorn City colony site. The region with the lowest survival rate is at 57 percent.

“I like to say that unlike a lot of science, this particular effort is actually seeable,” Gilliam said. “When we give talks to the general public, we try to highlight the sense that you can meet with us this year, and I could show you some pictures. And within a year we can meet again, and you’ll be able to see a change. That’s very satisfying. You can count the difference that you’re making.”

That sense of importance is what drove Correia to the project, which she is using to write her thesis on the sexual reproduction of nursery-reared coral colonies. “It’s all about ocean optimism. It’s not all doom and gloom; there are positive stories happening in our ocean environment,” she said. “If you look at it on a global scale, it can be daunting, but if you look at it from a local scale, you can really make a difference. Being able to go out in the ocean and see a site that was devastated by a water tanker...
drag or a severe bleaching event, and the fact that we're able to repopulate the reef in that area, is so rewarding.”

In addition, the Halmos College students often discuss the Coral Nursery Initiative at community events, especially bringing awareness to schoolchildren such as at Ocean Week and Earth Day at South Florida area schools and museums.

The only obstacle standing in the initiative’s way is funding. “We can expand these nurseries even more if we had the support, so the ongoing goal is to maintain enough support to keep the nurseries functioning,” Gilliam said. “Fieldwork is not cheap, and underwater fieldwork is even more expensive.”

In addition to Lauderdale-by-the-Sea’s grant, additional funding has been provided by the Dive Bar, a volunteer group of seafaring lawyers; the Tortuga Music Festival, through its Rock the Ocean conservation platform; and a crowdfunding campaign Larson launched in 2014.

The Coral Reef Initiative is actively seeking additional funding to keep the project flourishing in the future. To contribute a tax-deductible donation to the project, contact Wendy Wood-Derrer, the Halmos College’s director of development, at wendyw@nova.edu or (954) 262-3617, or Robin R. Blackwell, J.D., director of development, leadership gifts at ra71@nova.edu or (954) 262-2019.
Nova Southeastern University is now at the forefront of conducting pioneering cell-based biomedical research with the launch of the new NSU Cell Therapy Institute, an international collaboration with prominent medical research scientists from Sweden’s world-renowned Karolinska Institutet (KI). KI is globally recognized for its Nobel Assembly, which awards the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine annually. The NSU Cell Therapy Institute will be located in the university’s 215,000-square-foot Center for Collaborative Research (CCR), shown above, one of the largest and most advanced research facilities in Florida with state-of-the-art laboratories.

The NSU Cell Therapy Institute is dedicated to the discovery and development of innovative translational biomedical research, focused on the potential of cell-based therapies to prevent, treat, and cure life-threatening and debilitating diseases. The institute is accelerating the advancement of next-generation approaches to precision medicine, such as targeted immunotherapy and regenerative medicine, with an initial focus on targeting cancers, heart disease, and disorders causing blindness.

Hans-Gustaf Ljunggren, M.D., Ph.D., Karolinska Institutet’s dean of research and a professor, cited the value of combining respective research synergies with scientists at NSU, “some leading members of our faculty will serve as visiting professors at NSU and establish labs in the CCR. By collaborating closely, we can make greater and faster progress in advancing new and better approaches to using cell-based therapies to eradicate disease. Over the course of our 205-year history, scientists at Karolinska Institutet have contributed many important medical breakthroughs. The NSU Cell Therapy Institute represents our continued commitment to share knowledge and co-develop new medicines through important international partnerships,” he said.

“NSU is proud to partner with one of the world’s leading medical universities and connect some of the most accomplished researchers to help achieve the lofty goal of developing effective treatments and therapies
that could positively impact so many people in our global community,” said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., president and CEO of NSU.

Karolinska Institutet is one of the largest and most prestigious medical universities in the world, consistently ranked among the top universities globally.

NSU recently hired a world-class team of researchers, including Richard Jove, Ph.D., who will lead the NSU Cell Therapy Institute. Jove is best known in Florida for his decade-long work as professor and director of the Molecular Oncology Program at the Moffitt Cancer Center Research Institute in Tampa and as associate director for basic research of Moffitt’s National Cancer Institute Comprehensive Cancer Center. He also served as chair of molecular medicine and director of the Beckman Research Institute at City of Hope in Los Angeles.

BioFlorida’s president and CEO, Nancy Bryan, applauded the historic collaboration: “I anticipate many new important collaborations to be formed as a result, accelerating our life science industry’s growth.”

The CCR will provide wet and dry labs for many of NSU’s innovative researchers. These include a General Clinical Research Center, an outpatient facility that will provide a centralized clinical research infrastructure to benefit investigators in multiple disciplines; a technology incubator offering partnerships with innovative companies; and the NSU Cell Therapy Institute. The CCR will also house NSU’s Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine; NSU’s Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research; the Emil Buehler Research Center for Engineering, Science, and Mathematics; and the U.S. Geological Survey, which partners with NSU on collaborative interdisciplinary research involving greater Everglades restoration efforts, hydrology, water resources, and more.

In addition to the CCR, Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) East Florida opened an emergency room on NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus in May 2015. The facility will serve as the cornerstone of the future relocation of Plantation General Hospital to the same site, by HCA East Florida. The 200-bed hospital will serve the surrounding community and eventually be a teaching and research facility integrated with NSU’s clinics, research centers, and clinical trials.

Nancy Klimas, M.D., has been presented with the Fifth Annual Provost’s Research and Scholarship Award. Klmas serves as director of NSU’s Institute for Neuro-Immune Medicine, professor of medicine, and chair of the Department of Clinical Immunology at NSU’s College of Osteopathic Medicine. She has achieved international recognition for her research and clinical efforts in multisymptom disorders, chronic fatigue syndrome and myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME), Gulf War illness (GWI), and fibromyalgia.

The purpose of the Provost’s Research and Scholarship Award is to recognize a faculty member who has demonstrated significant achievement in support of NSU’s mission to foster scholarship, intellectual inquiry, and academic excellence. Research and scholarship are among NSU’s eight core values, and excellence in these areas enhances education, patient care, and public service, and develops superior scholarship.
ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

WALGREENS NIVIA SANTIAGO AND GEORGIA LEHOCZKY ENDOWED COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donor: Walgreens
College/Center: College of Pharmacy
Purpose: Support graduate students with academic merit and financial need, with preference given to students attending the NSU Puerto Rico Regional Campus and students who seek employment postgraduation in a community pharmacy setting in Puerto Rico

WALGREENS GEORGIA LEHOCZKY ENDOWED COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donor: Walgreens
College/Center: College of Pharmacy
Purpose: Support graduate students with academic merit and financial need, with preference given to students who reside in Miami, and students who seek employment postgraduation in a community pharmacy setting

WALGREENS RICHARD ASHWORTH ENDOWED COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donor: Walgreens
College/Center: College of Pharmacy
Purpose: Support graduate students with academic merit and financial need, with preference given to students who seek postgraduation employment in a community setting

RAJ MANTENA, R.PH. ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donor: Raj Mantena, R.Ph.
College/Center: College of Pharmacy
Purpose: Support graduate pharmacy students with academic merit and financial need, with preference given to students attending the Palm Beach Campus

FERROLI FAMILY ENDOWED PUBLIC INTEREST LAW FELLOWSHIP
Donor: Linda Ferroli Stein
College/Center: Shepard Broad College of Law
Purpose: Support rising second-year or third-year law students who demonstrate involvement in public interest law and/or the Public Interest Law Society, with preference given to students who are in the top 10 percent of their class and who have demonstrated financial need

HERSEY/MCCARTNEY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donor: The Estate of Paul Hersey
College/Center: H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship
Purpose: Support Huizenga Business College graduate students with academic merit, with preference given to students pursuing a Master of Science in Leadership

NONENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

DR. AND MRS. HOWARD NEER SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Donor: Several donors in honor of the Neers
College/Center: College of Osteopathic Medicine
Purpose: Support incoming osteopathic medicine students demonstrating high academic qualifications
DR. FRANCIS AND JUSTINA BINEY CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Mensima A. Biney
College/Center: Greatest Need
Purpose: Support undergraduate students

BROWN FAMILY CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Shannon Brown
College/Center: College of Osteopathic Medicine
Purpose: Support graduate students

IRA FARBER CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Ira Farber
College/Center: Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography; College of Health Care Sciences
Purpose: Support students in the Dual Admission Physical Therapy program

GOUVEIA CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Jim Gouveia
College/Center: College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Purpose: Support Bachelor of Arts candidates

THE MARY AND MAX MARSHAK CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Lynne Schrum
College/Center: Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
Purpose: Support students with financial need in the final year of either the Doctor of Education program or the Doctor of Philosophy in Education program

THE SHARON AND CHUCK MORROW CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Dr. Terry A. Morrow
College/Center: College of Health Care Sciences
Purpose: Support graduate or undergraduate students

SUAREZ ODRONIEC DARE TO DREAM CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Michelle K. Suarez, Esq.
College/Center: Shepard Broad College of Law
Purpose: Support law students

GERALDINE AND CECIL STODGHILL CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Aarika Camp
College/Center: College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Purpose: Provide scholarships for undergraduate students

WHITEHEAD FAMILY CHANGING LIVES SCHOLARSHIP
Donor: Dr. Albert W. Whitehead
College/Center: Farquhar Honors College
Purpose: Encourage Honors College students enrolled in the Dual Admission Dental program

NEW ENDOWED PROGRAM AND FACULTY FUNDS

HERSEY/MCCARTNEY ENDOWED FACULTY SUPPORT FUND
Donor: The Estate of Paul Hersey
College/Center: H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship
Purpose: Provide enrichment support to Huizenga Business College faculty members and research in the areas of situational leadership or other topics deemed appropriate by the donor and NSU

NEW NONENDOWED PROGRAM AND FACULTY FUNDS

TAFT FOUNDATION DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT CLINIC FUND
Donor: The Taft Foundation
College/Center: Mailman Segal Center for Human Development
Purpose: Help ensure that families of young children with autism have access to the latest research-based interventions, so that they can give their children the best possible chance to lead independent, productive lives

continued on next page
New Funds of Note Through February 10, 2016

**DR. ROBERT AND MARLENE UCHIN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT FUND**
*Donor:* Dr. Robert and Mrs. Marlene Uchin
*College/Center:* College of Dental Medicine
*Purpose:* Enhance educational leadership experience for faculty members

**FOUNDATION FOR A CHILD’S TRUST (FACT) FUND**
*Donor:* Foundation for a Child’s Trust
*College/Center:* College of Psychology
*Purpose:* Support the Child and Adolescent Traumatic Stress Program

**MUSEUM ON THE MOVE FUND**
*Donor:* Several, including the Amaturo Family Foundation, Jerry Taylor & Nancy Bryant Foundation, Community Foundation of Broward, Charles F. and Esther M. Frye Foundation, and PNC Bank
*College/Center:* NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale
*Purpose:* Provide high-caliber tours of NSU Art Museum’s exhibitions and collections and hands-on art activities, based on the principles of STEAM and 21st-Century Learning Skills, to Broward County students

**GOODMAN RESEARCH AND STUDY CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN ART FUND**
*Donor:* Dr. and Mrs. Stanley and Pearl Goodman
*College/Center:* NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale
*Purpose:* Develop a written plan, and establish and implement the Pearl and Stanley Goodman Research and Study Center for Latin American Modern Art at the NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale.

**STANDARD PROCESS FUND**
*Donor:* Standard Process
*College/Center:* College of Pharmacy and College of Osteopathic Medicine
*Purpose:* Support Lynn Lafferty’s work on the Whole Food and Herbal Medicine Education, Research, and Course Integration Program

**RESEARCH INITIATIVES DISCRETIONARY FUND**
*Donor:* The Harry T. Mangurian, Jr. Foundation, Inc. and Centene Corporation
*College/Center:* College of Dental Medicine
*Purpose:* Provide preventative oral health care services to underserved children (The Mangurian Foundation is supporting the Smiles Across Broward program, and Centene Corporation made a generous gift for NSU’s participation in the Give Kids A Smile event.)

**CONSTELLATION ENERGY AWARD**
*Donor:* Constellation, an Exelon company
*College/Center:* Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography
*Purpose:* Provide hands-on training and a lecture series on clean energy technologies, including biofuels and organic solar cells

**RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER RESEARCH START UP FUND**
*Donor:* Mastroianni Family Trust
*College/Center:* Translational Research
*Purpose:* Support translational research initiatives under the direction of Thomas Temple

**COALITION FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION AGAINST TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION (CREATE) FUND**
*Donor:* Dr. Heidi Schaeffer, through the Community Foundation of Broward
*College/Center:* College of Health Care Sciences
*Purpose:* Enhance program of educating health care professionals and providing health and social services to victims and survivors of human trafficking

A donor can name a Changing Lives Scholarship with a gift of $1,000 each year for five years. For $5,000 paid each year for five years into NSU’s endowment, a donor can create a named scholarship, research, faculty support, or program fund in perpetuity. Students interested in scholarship opportunities can go to nova.edu/financialaid/scholarships.
NSU HONORS 14 GRADUATES

NSU's annual Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards recognizes alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their professions and communities and are committed to advancing the university's values and goals. The awards are the most prestigious honor that NSU presents to alumni. On the following pages are the 14 outstanding graduates who were honored.
ABRAHAM S. FISCHLER COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION
Susan Russell, M.S. (‘84), is the executive
director of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®
National Center, which helps states
address the education, compensation,
and retention of their early care and
education workforce. Her work has
included developing successful national
initiatives; building effective policies and
systems to improve access to quality early
childhood programs for all children; and
researching the workforce, the early care
and education system, and access issues
for children in low-income families. She
has served on numerous state and national
boards and committees, and has garnered
numerous awards and honors.

COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES
Sherika Hornes, M.S. (‘14), is pursuing a
career in civil service in the field of national
security. Hornes began her career while a
second-year graduate student at NSU. In
the spring of 2014, she was selected as a
Pathways Intern by the U.S. Department of
State Office of Foreign Missions in San
Francisco. In 2014 and 2015, she was a
semifinalist for the federal government’s
Presidential Management Fellows Program.

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE
Timothy Case, D.M.D. (‘01), is founder and
owner of Case Dental Care, PLLC, a private
dental practice in Tennessee, and Equilab,
LLC, which provides asset equity training
to health care professionals. Case served
in the U.S. Army Dental Corps at Fort
Campbell, Kentucky. On active duty, he
served as acting company commander
and as a member of the Dental Forensics
Team. Case entered the U.S. Public Health
Service, National Health Service Corps,
and initiated a dental program for a
federally qualified health center in Georgia.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
AND COMPUTING
Dawn M. Beyer, Ph.D. (‘14), is a Lock-
heed Martin Fellow in Colorado, where
she works in information systems and
global services. Beyer provides guidance,
direction, leadership, training, and
mentoring to engineers supporting multiple
efforts across the United States. Beyer
spent 12 years on active duty with the U.S.
Air Force, followed by various assignments
as an intelligence officer with the U.S. Air
Force Reserves. Recently, she served as
an intelligence officer for the 302nd
Operations Group/Intelligence at Peterson
Air Force Base in Colorado Springs.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH CARE SCIENCES
William Kohlhepp, D.H.Sc., PA-C (‘07), is
the dean of the School of Health Sciences
at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut,
where he also serves as a tenured
professor of physician assistant studies
and as a member of the Center for
Excellence Board and Deans Council.
Currently, he serves as secretary and
treasurer for the Physician Assistant
Education Association Board of Directors.
In 2005, he testified before the U.S. House
of Representatives Subcommittee on
Workforce Protections, regarding an act
designed to improve access to workers’
compensation for injured federal workers.

COLLEGE OF NURSING
Jorge Montequin, B.S.N. (‘12), is a
critical care registered nurse in the U.S.
Air Force. He is responsible for assessing
patients’ clinical conditions, maintaining
ventilators, and preparing patients for
surgery, among other duties. He serves as
a patient and family advocate by updating
patients and families about the plan of care,
caring for patients per their wishes, and
educating patients and families about daily
changes in their health and care. Montequin
also works in end-of-life care, supporting patients and families in the
transition to hospice facilities.

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY
Andrew S. Morgenstern, O.D. (‘99), is an
expert in optometry at Booz Allen Hamilton,
a management consulting firm headquar-
tered in Tysons Corner, Virginia. Working at
the Walter Reed National Military Medical
Center in Bethesda, Maryland, Morgen-
stern helps to fulfill the mission of the Joint
U.S. Department of Defense Veterans
Affairs Vision Center of Excellence, which
is to address vision care needs for veterans.
Morgenstern is president-elect of the
Maryland Optometric Association and
president-elect of the Optometric Council
on Refractive Technology.

COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
Mayrene Hernandez, D.O. (‘01), is the
market medical director at United
Healthcare in Florida. Hernandez’s
responsibilities include working with large
employer groups in reviewing population
health trends. Hernandez is president of
the Broward County Osteopathic Medical
Association. She is a trustee of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association, representing the state at the American Osteopathic Association national level. A clinical adjunct professor at NSU, she was nominated for recognition as one of the Influential Hispanic Women Leaders in South Florida.

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY
Christopher G. Lynch, Pharm.D. (’97), is a retired commander in the U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps. Among his many career assignments, Lynch was deployed aboard the hospital ship USNS Comfort in support of the Partnership for the Americas humanitarian and medical training mission to 12 countries in central and South America. Assigned to the U.S. Naval Hospital Joint Medical Group in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Lynch served as the director of clinical support services. His final tour of duty was as the associate director of pharmacy services at Naval Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida. Lynch received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation and Achievement medals and the Naval Reserve Meritorious Service Medal.

COLLEGE OF PSYCHOLOGY

HALMOS COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND OCEANOGRAPHY
Maria A. Behnam-Terneus, D.O. (B.S. ’05, D.O. ’09), is a pediatric hospitalist at Miami Children’s Health System, where she serves as the associate program director of the pediatric residency program and the pediatric hospitalist fellowship. She is also the attending physician for patients at Nicklaus Children’s Hospital in Miami. She supervises residents, fellows, and medical students and assists with the coordination, organization, evaluation, and mentorship of the residency program. Behnam-Terneus serves in numerous professional associations, teaches, and presents research in her field.

H. WAYNE HUIZENGA COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Lynne Wines, B.S. (’87), is preparing to enter Harvard University as an Advanced Leadership Initiative Fellow for 2016. Wines’ positions have included president and chief executive officer at First Southern Bank in Boca Raton, president and chief operating officer at CNL Bank in Orlando, president and chief executive officer of commercial banking for South Florida at Colonial Bank, and president and chief executive officer at Union Bank of Florida. Wines was named one of the Top 10 CEOs in Palm Beach County by the South Florida Business Journal and one of the 25 Most Powerful Women to Watch by U.S. Banker.

NSU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
Since Maya Ezratti graduated from NSU University School in 1994, she has become an entrepreneur, relationship coach, businesswoman, and executive. Ezratti is the chief dating officer of Rewarding Relationships, a business she started six years ago to help singles find and maintain better relationships. Ezratti is also director of community affairs at GL Homes of Florida, where she works with residents and city and county officials on behalf of one of South Florida’s largest home builders.

SHEPARD BROAD COLLEGE OF LAW
Michael A. Fischler, M.B.A., J.D. (’78), is an established South Florida attorney and president of Fischler & Friedman, P.A., in Fort Lauderdale. Fischler began his law career as an assistant state attorney at the Broward County State Attorney’s Office where he led the economic crime, consumer fraud, and civil division. He worked at a private firm, and later as a sole practitioner, before forming Fischler & Friedman, P.A., in 1992. He is also a member of NSU’s President’s Associates and an NSU adjunct professor. Some of his fondest memories at NSU include having his mother as a classmate. His father, Abraham S. Fischler, Ed.D., joined the then-fledgling Nova University in 1966 and served as president of the university from 1970 to 1992.
Alumni Notes

[1970s]
- Eldridge H. Harris, Ed.D., ’76, of Barnesville, Georgia, has retired as an assistant superintendent for the Lamar County Board of Education.
- Grace Brown, Ed.D., ’79, of Mayfield Heights, Ohio, is the president for Educational Consultants.

[1980s]
- Ann McGee, Ed.D., ’80, of Winter Park, Florida, received the Chief Executive Leadership Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.
- Dennis J. Dubsky, B.S., ’82, of Cooper City, Florida, retired from the U.S. Navy after 30 years of service.
- Donalda Ammons, Ed.D., ’88, of Parkland, Florida, is the professor emerita at Gallaudet University.

[1990s]
- Claudia Fenderson, Ed.D., ’93, of Highland, New York, has been hired as the director of the developing Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Marist College.
- Cleveland Ferguson III, B.S., ’94, of Jacksonville, Florida, was named the vice president of administration of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority.
- Donovan Jack, M.S., ’95, of Homestead, Florida, works as a psychotherapist at Smith Community Mental Health.
- Clay Beauregard, M.S., ’98, of Dallas, Texas, is the director of therapeutic development at the Baylor Institute for Immunology Research.
- Raymond Sands, M.S., ’99, of Miami, Florida, is a principal for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system.

[2000s]
- Thomas Brogan, J.D., ’06, of El Portal, Florida, is the director of International Tax Services for PricewaterhouseCoopers.
- Carolyn Tischenkel, Dr.O.T., ’07, is an occupational therapist in Boston, Massachusetts.
- Laura Hildebrandt, M.O.T., ’09, of Cleveland, Ohio, became a certified hand therapist in November 2015.
- Toureno Taylor, Ed.D., ’09, of Tempe, Arizona, is an assistant principal for the Roosevelt School District.

[2010s]
- Tamilla Curtis, D.B.A., ’10, of Daytona Beach, Florida, is an assistant professor of management for Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.
- Mariel Gierbolini-Flores, Ph.D., ’10, of Daytona Beach, Florida, is a pharmacist for the Department of Veteran Affairs.
- Trent Wang, M.P.H., ’10, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, is a Fellow in Hematology/Oncology for Fox Chase Cancer Center.
- Arlene Rivera, J.D., ’11, of Las Vegas, Nevada, is an executive director for the Immigrant Justice Initiative.
- Mark Harris, Ph.D., ’13, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is chief of the Cyber Operations Division for the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC).
- Nestor A. Rangel Torrealba, M.S., ’15, of Hialeah, Florida, is currently pursuing a doctorate in organizational leadership at Nova Southeastern University.

WANT TO BE FEATURED IN THE ALUMNI NOTES SECTION OF HORIZONS MAGAZINE?

Share your news with us.

The NSU Alumni Association wants to know what you’ve been up to! Share any achievements and milestones in your career, your family, and your personal life, as well as any community pursuits.

To send in your news, visit nova.edu/alumni and click on the Share link to share your news, update your alumni records, or submit an item to Alumni Notes. You can also email alumni@nova.edu. We can’t wait to hear from you.
The list of countries and geographic regions that have been the subject of national population genome projects is extensive.

Yet one vast region that occupies 1/10 of the earth’s landmass and 1/50 of its people has yet to participate in any such project—the Russian Federation. That is about to change, because of a consortium of genetics researchers from Russia with some advice and urging from Stephen J. O’Brien, Ph.D., a professor and research director at NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography.

“Mapping human genome diversity has enormous implications for medicine as well as natural human history, but we need to ensure that all areas of the world are part of the research. The ‘Genome Russia’ Project’s goal is to fill a large void in our understanding of human genetics,” said O’Brien.

O’Brien splits his time between Nova Southeastern University and the Theodosius Dobzhansky Center for Genome Bioinformatics in St. Petersburg, Russia, which he directs and founded in early 2012. He is coordinating a large consortium that will be undertaking this work. He is no stranger to genetics research, having had tremendous success working with the genome of the African cheetah, among other research. Working with the Dobzhansky Center; BGI-Shenzhen in China (a genome sequencing powerhouse); and the Cheetah Conservation Fund in Otjiwarongo, Namibia, O’Brien is part of a 35-author team that published a detailed analysis of the cheetah. The research was supported, in part, by Russian Ministry of Science Mega-grant @11.G34.31.0068.
Nova Southeastern University alumna Isabel Saint Malo de Alvarado (M.B.A., ‘95) is the first woman elected to the post of vice president in the Republic of Panama; she took office on July 1, 2014. Upon being elected as vice president, she also was named minister of foreign affairs by then president-elect Juan Carlos Varela.

Through the years, Saint Malo de Alvarado, 48, has served as an independent consultant for international organizations and in the public and private sectors. Saint Malo de Alvarado was alternate ambassador to the Panamanian Mission to the United Nations in New York and served as part of negotiations teams for different regional political processes from her position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Saint Malo de Alvarado is married with three children.

Saint Malo de Alvarado recently discussed her career with Horizons.
Q Vice President Saint Malo de Alvarado, you’ve now been in office as vice president nearly two years. Can you talk about the impact the job has had on your life as a leader?

A This has been a tremendous and very challenging experience. After a year and a half, we have undertaken important efforts to reduce the social gap. Our government has invested more than $4 billion U.S. dollars in housing, water, security, education, and infrastructure projects, which represent 40 percent of the national budget.

Since it was my primary vision, I am especially proud to say that this government has come a long way in strengthening transparency and democracy, and our efforts were recognized at the national and international levels. In gender equality, another relevant topic for me, we have a long way to go, but we are making great progress.

Regarding our foreign policy, Panama is having a more active role in the international arena, especially regarding topics in the social development agenda. We have consolidated our historic role as a country of dialogue, as well as our position as the “Capital of the Americas.”

The seventh Summit of the Americas, the appointment of a Panamanian woman as commissioner for the Inter American Human Rights Commission of the Organization of American States (OAS), our selection as a member of the Human Rights Council at the United Nations, and the Humanitarian Hub that will be based in Panama, among others, are examples of the leadership role we are promoting for Panama.

continued on next page
Q What are your top goals for your administration?
A Regarding the governmental agenda, we are focusing on projects and policies that help bridge our social gaps and ensure a better distribution of wealth, so we can reach prosperity with equity.

Among the programs are the urban renewal of Colón City, with the construction of 5,000 homes with drinking water, roads, street lighting, restoration of historic buildings, and wastewater treatment. We are implementing the 100/Zero Program, to supply drinking water to the entire country and the Roofs of Hope project, which aims to improve the quality of some 300,000 homes. We are also creating the necessary incentives to promote the construction of 125,000 homes in partnership with the private sector.

In my role as minister of foreign affairs, we are focusing on executing foreign policy to promote sustainable and inclusive development. We are revitalizing and reasserting our role as a country of dialogue, which promotes mutual understanding and bridges differences. We feel very proud of our leadership role on these topics.

We are also going through an interesting process of modernizing Panama’s diplomacy and developing our human talent. We have just completed a historic reform of the diplomatic and consular career, so we can strengthen it in quantity and diversity of disciplines to enhance our foreign policy execution.

Q Do you feel pressure to be a role model to the girls and women in your country?
A Undoubtedly, it is a great responsibility, but I hope that my work and values can demonstrate that women and girls can achieve great things and give a meaningful contribution in their multiple roles as workers, wives, and mothers.

Q As the first female vice president of Panama, what do you want the history books to say about you?
A You could say that my flagship projects are mainly related to strengthening our institutions and our democracy, and setting the example as a government based on transparency, and for this to last in the way public administration works within our country. Gender equality is also at the top of my agenda. We have made significant improvements but still have a lot to do to incorporate women into the political and economic sectors at the decision-making level, and in the effort to reduce violence against women.

Having majored in international relations, I also have to say that it is important for me to professionalize our foreign diplomacy. It is crucial that Panama plays a leading role in the international arena, as we have also started to do.

Q You were the prime orchestrator of the Summit of the Americas held in April 2015. What do you see as the top accomplishments of the summit?
A I am very satisfied and proud of Panama’s achievement in hosting the VII Summit of the Americas. We proved to the world that we are a country of friendly and hospitable people, which embraces diversity and political plurality.

Panama also received accolades for its logistical capabilities, successfully receiving thousands of visitors.

We were the center and facilitator of a frank and open dialogue that did not seek a unanimous consensus. Rather, we helped to lay bridges between diverse positions and focus on what unites the region rather than what divides it.

“I hope that my work and values can demonstrate that women and girls can achieve great things.”
Q  You flew to Havana to personally tell Cuban leader Raúl Castro that Cuba would be invited to the first summit meetings since they began in 1994. How did you feel when you relayed that invitation, knowing it was a historic moment?

A  I was very proud and honored to be the one to personally invite Cuba to participate for the first time at the Summit of the Americas; but mostly, proud and honored to be representing Panama, the real star of this historic moment.

Q  Last year was the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Panama Canal. What do you see as the impact of the expansion project on both sides of the country and for Panamanians? The expected overall cost is $5.3 billion. When will the canal expansion be completed?

A  The Panama Canal expansion has become a significant source of job opportunities and training for professionals in different job fields, creating more than 30,000 jobs since work began. The demand for new infrastructure and logistic projects increased, nationally and globally, to adapt to this new era. Since the new locks will double the capacity compared to the current ones, the income of the Panama Canal Authority will significantly increase. The expansion should be completed during 2016.
Distance education from Nova Southeastern University proved to be the perfect learning experience for Brenda Ellis (Ph.D., 2009).

As an adult student, I felt my learning experience was a collaborative one,” said Ellis, who graduated from NSU’s College of Engineering and Computing with an emphasis in information security. “The NSU professors not only delivered the required theory, but since they had professional work experience, they were able to incorporate their experiences into the learning environment and invited students to do the same,” she added.

Ellis was promoted to agency program manager for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) Information Technology Security Awareness and Training Center in Cleveland, Ohio, three years after earning her Ph.D. at NSU. “You are not listening to professors espouse theory the whole time [at NSU]. It’s much more participatory, with plenty of sharing of knowledge and experience,” she said.

And the sharing went both ways, with students bringing knowledge to the table. “I was impressed by the quality of students that NSU attracts,” Ellis said. “I studied with a number of CISOs (chief information and security officers) and cybersecurity professionals from both industry and government.” In addition to independent work, she and fellow students went to NSU’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus twice a semester for long weekend sessions involving lectures, testing, project recaps, and presentations. The friendships she made then continue today.

Word of mouth brought Ellis to NSU. A former adviser of Ellis’ had taken a class at NSU and “he just loved it,” she said. While the adviser ended up following a different academic path, he had explained the NSU learning format and encouraged her to try it. The format worked well for her.

Ellis considers NSU a wise decision for both traditional and nontraditional students. “Classes and professors stimulate intellectual rigors,” she said. “I learned so much from Dr. [James D.] Cannady’s lectures and my academic growth accelerated greatly working with Dr. Cohen as my dissertation adviser. The adviser is your lifeline. Without that person, you don’t graduate,” Ellis joked.

“Brenda was a conscientious student and took her work seriously,” recalled Maxine Cohen, Ph.D., a professor of human-computer interaction. “She took on the challenges of being in a technical field, but also being sensitive to the human side of things important to her research.” Ellis’ dissertation was titled, “The human element of intrusion detection: A cognitive task model for interface design and implications.”

“Her research continues to be important today since we live in the world of ‘big data,’ ” Cohen said. “Security analysts (and others) need to deal on a constant basis with
Ellis’ love of computer security blossomed when she was a teenager growing up in Norfolk, Virginia. She pursued that passion during her undergraduate years, earning a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Norfolk State University. After graduating, Ellis said she began “applying all over the place.” NASA answered the call and she began as a graduate research assistant at its Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia. She has been with NASA now for 26 years.

Eventually, she moved to the Cleveland area and began working at NASA’s John H. Glenn Research Center at Lewis Field, a complex of more than 150 buildings set on 300 acres near Hopkins International Airport. Along the way, Ellis earned a master’s degree in adult learning and development (with emphasis in computer security and how people learn) from Cleveland State University, a management certificate from the University of Notre Dame, and her Ph.D. in Computer Information Systems from NSU.

In addition to her promotion at NASA, Ellis also began teaching at the university level since her NSU graduation. She is an adjunct associate professor at the University of Maryland University College, where she teaches remotely, communicating with students on discussion boards and via email. Many of her students are military personnel or retired military.

In 1993, Ellis was the first African American woman at NASA’s John H. Glenn Research Center chosen to serve as an undergraduate consultant to her alma mater, Norfolk State University. She has tutored and mentored high school and college students. Ellis has been a member of the Association of Computing Machinery, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, NASA Glenn’s Business and Professional Women Organization, and the National Technical Association. She is a lifetime member of the Norfolk State University Alumni Association, where she received a Distinguished Alumni Award in 2008.

Ellis also has been awarded the National Technical Association’s Humanitarian Award, the BPW Young Careerist of the Year Award, the Cleveland Federal Executive Board Wings of Excellence Award, and, most recently, a NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal.

Throughout her career, Ellis has remained enthralled with the evolution of technology, particularly from the perspective of data security, computer security, and information security. To unwind from work, she enjoys playing viola and horseback riding near her Strongsville, Ohio, home—which she shares with her husband of 16 years, Lyle Hollowell, J.D. “I’ve been at this for a while,” she proclaimed. Still, she said, she has days where she wonders: “When did I become a geek?”
The Miniaci Family was honored with NSU’s President’s Award for Excellence in Community Service during the university’s annual Celebration of Excellence.

The Miniaci family matriarch, Rose, and her late husband, Alfred, inspired their family to lead by giving support to NSU and the South Florida community. The family’s generous contribution to NSU helped create the Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center. In addition, the Alfred and Rose Miniaci Foundation, Inc., provides assistance to children and adults in the fields of art and music, health care and hospitals, preservation of history, religious organizations, scientific research, sports organizations, and cultural organizations.

Started by Rose and Alfred’s older son, Albert J. Miniaci, and his wife, Beatriz, the Albert and Beatriz Miniaci Family Foundation offers educational scholarships and supports local organizations pertaining to children, families, and cancer research. The Miniaci family’s philanthropy includes an endowment fund for the Broward County Public Schools’ Student Enrichment through the arts program and the Rose Miniaci Family Fund at the Community Foundation of Broward.

Albert J. Miniaci serves as an NSU Trustee and an Ambassadors Board member. He and Beatriz Miniaci are both members of NSU’s Fellows Society and are frequent visitors to NSU’s Art Museum Fort Lauderdale. They created NSU’s Albert and Beatriz Miniaci Razor’s Edge Endowed Scholarship, and they donated a handcrafted Buddhist Prayer Wheel blessed by the 14th Dalai Lama to NSU in 2004.

Rose and Alfred’s younger son, Dominick F. Miniaci, is currently a member of the St. Thomas University Board of Trustees and is cochair of its Athletics Advisory Board. He is also a board member of the Jack and Jill Children’s Center, the Saint Anthony Foundation, the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Discovery and Science, the Broward Performing Arts Foundation, and serves in leadership roles for various other organizations. He has received numerous awards for his volunteerism, including being named Man of the Year by Saint Anthony Catholic School Foundation for Education in 2008 and Man of the Year by City of Hope in 1990. He was recognized for 35 years of service and dedication to the Fraternal Order of Police in 2011. His wife, Meike Miniaci, is a former Board of Trustees member of the Miami City Ballet, among other leadership and volunteer roles.

Established in 1997, the President’s Excellence in Community Service Award recognizes extraordinary professional engagement activities by members of the South Florida community who continue to give back to the community and make a difference in the lives of others. The award encourages the ongoing pursuit of service and exemplifies NSU’s core value of community.
Shark Circle Members Honored

Since 1964, NSU’s Shark Circle, composed of Fellows Society members who pledge lifetime gifts of $1 million or more, has supported the university’s mission with cumulative donations of more than $180 million.

As part of NSU’s annual Celebration of Excellence this year, the university recognized the eight newest Shark Circle members whose cumulative giving exceeds $11 million. Shark Circle members also were honored with a limited edition maquette of Kent Ullberg’s 30-foot mako shark monument that is the centerpiece of the shark fountain in front of NSU’s Don Taft University Center. In addition, the members are recognized on the Fellows Monument, located on Fellows Way between the Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center and the Carl DeSantis Building.

NSU Fellows’ philanthropic efforts provide scholarships for the university’s students, help build research labs, and fund scientific discoveries. This financial assistance further ensures NSU’s growth in teaching, research, service, and learning.

The Fellows Society was created to acknowledge individuals, corporations, and trusts who have made cumulative gifts of $50,000 or more or who have committed to making a minimum gift of $50,000.

For more information, visit https://realizingpotential.nova.edu/societies.html.

This year, shark statues were awarded to the following NSU donors.

- The Alters Family
- Bonnie Laitman Eletz/William & Mildred Lasdon Foundation
- Stanley and Pearl Goodman
- Suzanne and the late Paul Hersey
- Joel and Marcia Hochberg
- Mike and Alice Jackson
- Beatriz and Albert Miniaci
- the late Don Taft/Don Taft Foundation
- Kenny and Sandy Tate and Family

Pictured from left are Jennifer O’Flannery Anderson, NSU vice president for Advancement and Community Relations; Jeremy Alters, representing the Alters family; Preston Jones, dean, H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship, accepting on behalf of Suzanne Hersey and the late Paul Hersey; Marcia and Joel Hochberg; Albert J. (NSU Trustee) and Beatriz Miniaci; Stanley and Pearl Goodman; Alice and Mike (NSU Trustee) Jackson; Sandy, Jackie, and Kenny (NSU Trustee) Tate; and George L. Hanbury II, NSU president and CEO. Not pictured are Bonnie Laitman Eletz, representatives of the Don Taft Foundation, and representatives of the William & Mildred Lasdon Foundation.
Ask Kerry Valdez about her first day as a student at NSU’s Shepard Broad College of Law, and she’ll describe her first impression of Professor Michael Flynn, J.D.

“He told the class that his personality was a mix of Pat Riley and Bobby Knight, two highly successful basketball coaches known for their discipline and the high standards they set for their players,” said Valdez, now a third-year law student and editor in chief of the Law Review.

“Professor Flynn immediately captivated the room. He’s not afraid to be vulnerable in front of people, or admitting a limited knowledge base in an area of law. In turn, this allows his students to take risks during the learning process,” Valdez added.

Taking risks is intertwined with Flynn, who arrived at the Shepard Broad College of Law in 1987, after working in private practice and serving as an assistant attorney general in Washington state, where he developed a passion and an expertise in consumer law.

At NSU, he has spent much of his career sharing that expertise with students—teaching courses in consumer protection law, the Uniform Commercial Code, as well as personal injury law, including torts, medical malpractice, and product liability. He has served as director of NSU’s Personal Injury Litigation Clinic and Consumer Protection Clinic, where he oversaw students who conduct field work with consumer affairs investigators in Broward County.

“Before the Consumer Protection Clinic, I didn’t know what consumer protection was really about,” said second-year law student Nicolle Pons. “Professor Flynn really taught us the meat of consumer protection. Just about every student saw issues in a way they had never seen before. He asks questions that helped me grasp the material better because I was engaged in the thinking process.”

A native of Seattle, Washington, Flynn majored in political science and speech communication at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, where he graduated magna cum laude in 1973. He graduated from the university’s School of Law in 1977, joining the Washington attorney general’s office in Olympia the same year.

By 1981, he was serving as the section chief of the Antitrust and Consumer Protection Division in Spokane, overseeing a staff of 15 involved in the enforcement of state antitrust and consumer protection laws in eastern Washington.

“I’ve seen people’s lives ruined because of greed and scams,” said Flynn, who was named the 2016 Professor of the Year for NSU’s College of Law. “I don’t have any trouble with anybody making a profit, but you’ve got to do it fairly. If you don’t do it fairly, that hurts all of us. We’re all consumers.”

Consumer law was a magnet for Flynn because he could have an impact on people’s lives. “If you’re a lawyer representing consumers or businesses who have been ripped off, there is some nobility to that. People have
been injured. Many people have nowhere to go. I like the challenge of that because, as a consumer, the odds are against you," he said.

After leaving the attorney general’s office in 1985, Flynn worked in private practice and taught classes at the University of Washington School of Law. He enjoyed teaching so much that he began applying for full-time teaching positions at law schools. His interview at NSU was his first trip to Florida.

Flynn brings an “an unusual mix of practical skills and academic prowess,” said Michael J. Dale, J.D., NSU professor of law, whose office is two doors from Flynn’s. “He has been involved with individual consumer-related cases. He has been an expert witness, written academic articles, and lectured around the country.

“He knows the real world. And he brings that to the classroom. That’s crucial in teaching, particularly in the area of consumer affairs. You can’t just talk about consumer relations in the abstract. You have to be able to explain to the student what it looks like in city hall, in the community, and in business.”

CONSUMER PROTECTION BOARD

Flynn has served on the Broward County Consumer Protection Board since 1997. He helped draft the Broward County moving ordinance in 2003 that sought to eliminate unscrupulous practices by moving companies.

“The moving ordinance is certainly one where we made a difference,” Flynn said. “We had many consumer complaints. Movers would hold people’s goods for ransom. They would damage the goods and not repay their value. They would change the amount of money that was charged.”

Flynn has provided input to the Broward County Commission on numerous consumer issues, including its recent negotiations with Uber, the app-based ride service. He is often cited as a consumer law expert by local media, including consumer stories airing on WPLG-Channel 10.

“I love being a lawyer. I love being a teacher. For the kind of person I am, teaching law is the pinnacle of what I can do,” said Flynn. “I look at the practice of law and the legal institution as one of the few places where people—regardless of who they are—have a chance to voice a grievance. To me, the practice of law provides that kind of last resort to people who, for whatever reason, feel they’ve been wronged. I’ve always wanted to be on that side of the controversy.”

Outside of the classroom, Flynn follows college basketball and likes to play golf (he played golf and basketball in college). He’s still a Seattle Seahawks fan. He and his wife—RoseAnn Flynn who also is a lawyer and an alumna (1985) of NSU’s College of Law—are the parents of two adult daughters.

The longevity of his teaching career circles back to his students. “I want to make sure my students understand that this is a profession that requires real dedication and commitment,” he said. “You try to show them how being a lawyer can be interesting, rewarding, and fun. It can really be rewarding because it’s a people job. There’s nothing better than doing your best for someone.”
Caring for the Gulf Coast

A Central American migrant worker in Immokalee, Florida
The Fort Myers Campus Makes an Impact Through Community Service

At NSU’s Fort Myers Campus, students are stepping outside the classroom and creating a footprint of community service.

Consider Project SEED (Serving Everyone, Embracing Diversity), an outreach program serving Immokalee, an agricultural and tomato-growing community 35 miles southeast of Fort Myers. In Immokalee, almost 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and it is home to the region’s migrant farmworkers.

Founded by NSU Fort Myers’ physician assistant students, Project SEED partners with the campus nursing program, area businesses, and a local church to sponsor an annual health fair in Immokalee. Students provide blood pressure and blood sugar checks, visual acuity exams, and nutritional and eye safety education to an underserved migrant community. Such exams are imperative pre-screening tools for adult chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes.

“Through the years, many people have been found to have dangerously high glucose and blood pressure readings, and students and faculty have guided them to appropriate health centers,” said Kyrus Patch, D.H.Sc., assistant professor and program director of the physician assistant program at the Fort Myers campus. “This first-hand experience is invaluable for the students’ training while providing a service to the community.”

Five years after its inception in 2010, the fair has grown to more than 400 participants, according to Maria Tsambarlis and Christina Cellini, physician assistant students who coordinate Project SEED. Both students are set to graduate in August 2017.

“The goal of Project SEED is to impact the lives of the local farmworkers and their families by providing health care services and education where access to health care is limited,” Cellini said. “This program allows for a bond to be made between the migrant worker community and NSU. It is the hope and premise of Project SEED that this bond may encourage the community to be more trusting of the medical system and more apt to identify and seek medical attention.”

In 2015, Project SEED teamed with NSU Athletics to donate gently used athletic equipment to Immokalee youths. Eyeglasses, gloves, bicycles, clothing, and computers also were donated to the community. “We handed out 150 pairs of reading glasses, approximately 300 protective sunglasses and gloves, 32 bicycles, 10 laptops, an abundance of donated clothing, 20 soccer balls, footballs, and other sports equipment for the children,” Tsambarlis said, noting that they ran out of reading glasses during the first two hours.

“Community outreach opportunities allow the students to explore what it truly means to be a health care provider,” Patch said. “Until they personally experience providing care
to the medically underserved community, many students are not aware this population resides within a few miles of their comfortable homes and school. Promoting awareness and demonstrating compassion and kindness is as important as learning how to perform a patient history and physical examination. Valuing the importance and worth of every human being is something that can be best learned outside the classroom, and community outreach provides that opportunity.”

A 25-YEAR PRESENCE ON THE GULF COAST

Housed in a four-story, 60,000-square-foot building near Interstate 75, NSU’s Fort Myers Campus is located on Florida’s Gulf Coast, about a two-hour drive from the university’s Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus.

The Fort Myers Campus enrolls 472 students—online and in the classroom—in programs including physician assistant, nursing, education, and speech-language pathology. The campus has three computer labs, nine videoconferencing suites, and multimedia classrooms. Students have access to a fitness center, study rooms, and a student lounge.

Although the campus opened at this site in November 2008, “we’ve had a presence on the Gulf Coast for at least 25 years,” said Kevin Hunter, M.Ed., director of the Fort Myers Campus, citing previous locations in high school facilities and government buildings.

With outreach opportunities through Project SEED, Community Wellness Day, and other events, the campus health care and education programs attract the largest number of students.

“NSU regional campuses were set up to reflect the needs of the community. And we are focused on educational opportunities and degrees that will provide jobs to our students after graduation,” said Hunter, noting that about 90 percent of students completing the nursing and physician assistant programs find employment. The region’s biggest employers are the Lee County School District and the Lee Memorial Health System.

Students see a dual benefit in hands-on training and serving the community. “I believe that it is through the donation of time and services that you learn to possess the most important qualities of being a practitioner,” Tsambarlis said. “The fact that NSU faculty members expressed a passion to serve underserved communities was exciting and appealing to me. I know that I will always maintain a great involvement in the community, whatever chance I get.”
JACKSONS PLEDGE $1 MILLION TO HELP FIGHT CANCER

For Mike and Alice Jackson, cancer is personal; so much so that they are joining with Nova Southeastern University researchers in the fight against one of the nation’s deadliest diseases. The Jacksons have announced a $1-million personal pledge to support NSU’s cancer research efforts.

Mike Jackson, chairman, CEO, and president of AutoNation, Inc., the country’s largest auto retailer, and his wife, Alice (above)—a cancer survivor, accomplished businesswoman, and philanthropist—have made it their personal mission and that of his company’s philanthropic arm to help find better treatments and cures for breast and other types of cancer.

Alice Jackson has supported NSU’s Rumbaugh-Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research (RGI) for years through her involvement with the Royal Dames of Cancer Research, Inc., a not-for-profit organization with the sole purpose to raise funds for the study and research of cancer at RGI.

The Jacksons have been honored numerous times for their philanthropic gifts to Nova Southeastern University and the greater South Florida community. Mike Jackson was inducted in 2010 to NSU’s H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship’s Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. In 2011, he received NSU’s highest honor, then called the Chancellor’s Community Award, bestowed annually on individuals whose leadership and support provide the foundation for continued growth of the university and the community.

VIEWEG NAMED FOUNDING DEAN OF NSU COLLEGE OF ALLOPATHIC MEDICINE

Johannes W. Vieweg, M.D., FACS, has been named founding dean of NSU’s College of Allopathic Medicine, which is projected to welcome its first class of M.D. candidates in 2018, subject to achieving accreditation.

Vieweg joins NSU from the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville, where he served as the Wayne and Marti Huizenga Endowed Research Scholar’s Chair, director of the UF Prostate Disease Center, and chairman of the Florida Prostate Cancer Advisory Council.

NSU’s College of Allopathic Medicine will be the eighth college in NSU’s Health Professions Division, including the colleges of osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, nursing, health care sciences, medical sciences, pharmacy, and optometry.

Much of Vieweg’s career-long scientific activity has centered on the investigation and clinical testing of genetically engineered tumor vaccines, the discovery of universal tumor antigens, and the modulation of immunosuppressive T cells and myeloid cells. He was awarded a Jefferson Science Fellowship by the National Academy of Science in 2015 and, currently, serves as a senior science and technology adviser to the U.S. Department of State in the development of foreign policy.
Kayla Sullivan was in severe pain—her anguished screams verified that. Sullivan, a University of Tampa cross country runner, was competing at the Sunshine State Conference championship meet at Holloway Park in Lakeland, Florida. Three other women were running in Sullivan's group. Two of them kept running after Sullivan tripped on a tree root. Only Imke Oelerich, an NSU graduate student, stopped to assist.

Oelerich said the two women who kept running “should have heard (Sullivan) scream—it was so loud.” The decision to stop wasn’t a decision at all, Oelerich said. It was a reaction…but one with consequences.

Oelerich came to NSU in August from her native Germany, where she had earned a bachelor’s degree. At NSU, she’s working on her master’s degree in sports revenue generation, but this was her one and only shot to do well at the conference championships.

After she had battled the flu and soreness earlier in the season, Oelerich finally felt good. She was ready to make a splash—until Sullivan fell. “You cannot think at that time,” Oelerich said. “I asked her if she was OK, but she couldn’t respond. She was just screaming.”

Oelerich stayed with Sullivan for what she estimates was 15 seconds until she saw two young men who ran over to help. Sullivan said they were runners from Tampa’s men’s team. “They thought I had broken my leg because I was screaming so loud,” Sullivan said. “[Oelerich] tried to encourage me to get up and continue running, but I couldn’t.”

The injury—described as a deep bone bruise on her right knee—kept Sullivan out of action for a couple of months. Her leg was black and blue for weeks. Had Sullivan gone down on a different part of the six-kilometer course, somewhere populated with spectators, race volunteers, or medical personnel, Oelerich would’ve continued.

But since it was on a remote part of the course, about two kilometers from the finish, she felt she had no choice but to stop, even though she did so with a heavy heart, knowing it could affect her team. “I knew it was important to pass those women [who kept running],” Oelerich said. “It was important for the coaches to see me pass them.”

Oelerich knew the time she gave up was going to be impossible to make up, and she also had to restart her muscles. “It’s so hard to close such a gap when you stop and have to start running again,” Oelerich said.

Oelerich eventually passed one of those two women. But she’s sure she would have caught them...
both had she not stopped. “Mentally, it’s tough because I was right behind them, and then, all of a sudden, people saw me 100 yards behind and think I got tired,” Oelerich said.

Oelerich finished the race in 16th place with a time of 23:58.20. NSU Coach Bryan Hagopian, M.S., was initially disappointed with her time, not knowing the circumstances. As a team, NSU finished fourth. Had Oelerich not stopped, she likely would have accumulated enough points for NSU to finish third, just ahead of Florida Tech.

“I told Imke that if she had finished a little higher, we could’ve done better as a team,” Hagopian said. “That’s when she told me what happened. As much as I wanted to be mad at her, I wasn’t, because she did the right thing by stopping. I was actually excited that I have such a good group of women who think about more than racing.”

Sullivan said she is grateful to Oelerich. “It was really nice that she did that—it was super sportsmanlike,” Sullivan said. “She risked a few seconds, which is the most important thing in running. But I’m not surprised [she stopped]. The running community is large and supportive.”

Hagopian, who likes to prepare his runners for any eventuality, had never briefed them on this particular subject, although he said he will in the future. “This was one of the most interesting and coolest things I’ve seen in 20 years of coaching,” Hagopian said. “[In the future], I would encourage my athletes to help the opposing runner at least long enough to know that help is on the way. I know the mind-set is to always win. But I’d rather have someone safe than a win-at-any-cost attitude.”
LOOKING AHEAD
Valentina Ramirez was mesmerized and a little in shock watching her first-ever live surgery, a spinal operation at Cleveland Clinic Florida in Weston. Then, halfway through the operation, the doctor invited her to take a closer look. "Look inside. Amazing, isn’t it?” he said to Ramirez as he pried open the patient’s back and pointed out the vertebrae, nerves, and spinal cord. “I will never forget that surgery,” Ramirez said. “It was the first of many; and hopefully, one day I’ll be the one doing the surgery.”

While this sounds like the kind of experience one would expect for an NSU medical student, Ramirez, a biology major in NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography, had just finished her freshman year when she started the internship. And this coming summer, after her sophomore year, Ramirez will be traveling to Graz, Austria, to participate in a surgical transplant internship program coordinated by Mark Jaffe, M.S., NSU associate professor.

Ramirez witnessed more than 100 surgeries during her Cleveland Clinic Summer Scholar internship last year, shadowing three different doctors over six weeks. But her experience did not end there. “Not only was I able to see the life of a doctor I one day hope to become, but I have also formed connections with many of the nurses and doctors,” Ramirez said. She still visits the hospital regularly, and the orthopedic doctor she shadowed invited her to do research with him in the coming summer.

Ramirez’s experience reflects a growing trend among students and employers to put more emphasis on hands-on career training. At NSU, students are taking advantage of internship opportunities earlier than ever, starting in their freshmen and sophomore years. They are traveling to places like Austria, Harvard University Medical School in Massachusetts, and Washington State University, as well as finding positions with companies of all sizes and industries throughout South Florida.

It is a philosophy that George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and CEO, strongly supports. In a recent Opinion piece in the Sun Sentinel, Hanbury stated: “For a full and rich educational experience, students must blend high academic achievement with career preparation. To that end, leaders of higher education are obligated to ensure their students are well prepared to enter the global economy.”

NSU is doing its part to fulfill that obligation by offering career development services, one-on-one career counseling,
and aligning with alumni and corporate partners who can offer positions to students. To that end, Hanbury pointed out in the article, NSU students who take advantage of career development services “are guaranteed an internship during their senior year.”

Diane Klein, M.S., associate director of NSU’s Office of Career Development, agrees that there is something for everyone who wants it. “There are more opportunities than students. It has always been that way,” she said.

What has shifted in recent years, Klein said, is that more students seem to recognize the value of internships and are starting to fill their resumes with work experience long before they graduate. “They understand that today you need to be more than a 4.0 student and more than a leader on campus. You have to show work experience outside the classroom,” Klein added. “Competition is high in the job market, and you need to stand out as a candidate. That’s what we groom here. We give them a competitive edge.”

GETTING A JUMP START

Alex Lopez, a freshman majoring in marketing, with a concentration in management, at the H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship, set a goal to have an internship by the end of his freshman year. He had learned a valuable lesson from his cousin, who missed out on a good job opportunity after graduating because the company required three to four years of experience.

“I realized I can start now to get that experience so I can get a good paying job right out of college,” Lopez said. His freshman year had barely begun when Lopez happened upon a small career fair at the Don Taft University Center. A position was open for an on-campus assistant marketing director for Chartwells, a Fortune 500 company that provides the dining services at NSU and other colleges.

Lopez went to Emilio Lorenzo, M.S., assistant director of career advisement in the Office of Career Development, for help in applying for the internship. Lorenzo assisted Lopez in polishing his resume, writing a cover letter, and practicing for the interview.

“That’s what we do,” Lorenzo said. “Especially when the students are freshmen and sophomores, they don’t understand the importance of things such as email etiquette. We coach them, help them polish their presentation. We set up mock interviews. We go over everything. So they go in feeling confident, thinking ‘I can do this.’ ”

Lopez said Lorenzo’s help and support were invaluable. By October 2015, just three months into his freshman year, Lopez was hired for the internship and is hoping he will be able to grow in the position throughout his undergraduate years at NSU. He is enjoying the mentorship of Sean Armstrong, Chartwells marketing manager, and Jason Fitch, Chartwells resident district manager; coordinating monthly events at NSU; and participating in a variety of marketing activities.
According to Fitch, the internship is mutually beneficial. “Our experience with student interns has been extremely valuable in the success of what we have to offer the NSU community. Who better to be the face of Shark Dining than a student who knows and understands the very generation we work hard to cater to,” he said. “For our company, the time spent in mentoring interns more than pays for itself. Chartwells has the ability to offer job placement opportunities throughout many sectors of our business globally.”

For Lopez, it’s also an opportunity to explore the career of his choice. “The best part is that I’m gaining experience and really getting to see if what I’m choosing as a career is something I like,” he said.

**DISCOVERING WHAT YOU LIKE**

Determining what you like and don’t like is the paramount benefit of an internship, said Klein, who has seen it work both ways throughout her seven years with the Office of Career Development. She remembered a student she worked with for several years who had a clear goal of being a CPA and working in a Big Four firm one day. They set up a plan to achieve the goal and found the student internships in accounting.

“She came to me one day and said, ‘I don’t want to be an accountant.’ She had learned from the internships that she didn’t like sitting behind a desk and crunching numbers,” Klein said. “That’s the great thing about internships. For the employer, it’s testing before you buy. For the student, it’s testing before you commit. It’s a win-win situation.”

With Klein’s guidance, the student ended up trying sales and loving it. “She’s now working for a large organization and doing phenomenally well. To me, that’s the best thing we do, when we can help the students find what’s right for them,” Klein said.

**OUTSIDE THE BOX**

According to Lorenzo, he and the other Office of Career Development advisers are always thinking outside the box for career-related opportunities for students. He encourages students to be open to a variety of experiences. NSU hosts job and internship fairs and events, such as Industry Day, when companies come to the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus to talk to students about job opportunities.

For NSU’s other campuses, the Office of Career Development arranges for each event to be streamed live so students can attend digitally. The office also schedules targeted workshops, presentations, and discussions with students every semester at each campus. “All of our appointments can be done via telephone and email so students at each of our campuses always have options to engage,” said Lorenzo.

Lorenzo pointed out that students should also consider project work, taking unpaid internships, working for nonprofit groups, and considering small organizations. “Being a big fish in a small pond has its benefits. A smaller company may give you more responsibility so you’ll actually get the chance to learn and experience more facets of the business,” Lorenzo said. “It’s about the experience you can get out of an opportunity that will help you market yourself and get the next position.”

Ryan Prem, a junior majoring in business management, learned about being open-minded and flexible. When Prem
learned about a property management internship at Castle Group, he was not sure if he should pursue it. “It wasn’t exactly what I was looking for. I didn’t know anything about the industry and I was hesitant,” Prem said.

Lorenzo encouraged Prem to apply. Prem not only got the internship, but also received a job offer to stay on as a quality assurance coordinator. The company is flexible so Prem, who plans to get his M.B.A., can continue his studies at NSU. In addition, Castle Group provides tuition assistance to their employees who are undergraduate and graduate students at NSU.

“Without Emilio helping me and getting me to take a chance, I can’t imagine where I’d be,” Prem said. He also pointed out that the job has helped him learn to apply what he has learned in the classroom; and conversely, it has made some of his classes easier to understand because he has had the “real-life experience” of the concept.

But the most important benefit, Prem said, is his own personal growth. “This job and being in a corporate setting has taught me a lot about myself. I’ve learned time management, responsibility, and how to step up to a challenge when it presents itself,” he said.

An internship working on brand image at Kaplan Test Prep has given NSU student Desiree Jasmine Casanova a strong network of contacts. The internship has “enhanced my skills such as teamwork, communication, and leadership and definitely has helped guide me with my future plans and goals,” said Casanova, who will graduate in May 2017 with a bachelor’s degree in sociology from NSU’s College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

**NETWORKING 101**

For Amanda Leavitt, who graduated in December 2015, one of the most challenging pieces of advice she got from the advisers at the NSU Office of Career Development was that she should network and build relationships.

“It’s scary to put yourself out there,” said Leavitt, who earned a bachelor’s degree in marine biology from NSU’s Halmos College of Natural Sciences and Oceanography. “But the more I kept going to the Office of Career Development, the more I felt myself coming out of my shell. Emilio helped me learn the importance of being comfortable with myself and making connections with people.”

Leavitt was looking for an internship when she learned the value of networking. She was hosting a table for her student organization at an Earth Day event when she decided to talk to other people. She met an alumnus who used to be a member of the same student organization and now worked at the United States Geological Survey (USGS). Leavitt ended up getting hired at the USGS as a student contractor working on the Everglades Restoration Project. She began in summer 2015 and has been asked to stay on at least through the end of 2017.

“It was the perfect time and the perfect internship,” Leavitt said. “It shows you the importance of having your resume ready and making connections with people. You never know who you’re going to meet.”

According to Leavitt, she loves being part of the research project and feels like she is making a difference and learning a lot. She is processing samples of rocks and cuttings from an exploratory drill site in Virginia Key, doing data processing, and creating reports. “I feel it’s going to be a gateway to other projects and possibly lead to a full-time position,” she said.

Like others, she credits Lorenzo and the NSU Office of Career Development with getting her to this place. “They helped me so much and got my career moving forward for sure. I want to let other people know that it’s not so scary and that they can do it too,” Leavitt said. “Talk to everyone, even your professors, about your goals and where you want to go. You never know who can help you.”

For more information, visit nova.edu/career.
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Ethan Wall
Shepard Broad College of Law
J.D., 2007

Samantha DeBianchi
H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship
M.B.A., 2008

Mauricio Angee
College of Engineering and Computing
M.S., 2007

Lagaylia Brown
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
M.S., 2004

Samantha DeBianchi
H. Wayne Huizenga College of Business and Entrepreneurship
M.B.A., 2008

Mauricio Angee
College of Engineering and Computing
M.S., 2007

Lynn Larose
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
M.S., 2014

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