



Fall 2006

Horizons Fall 2006

Nova Southeastern University

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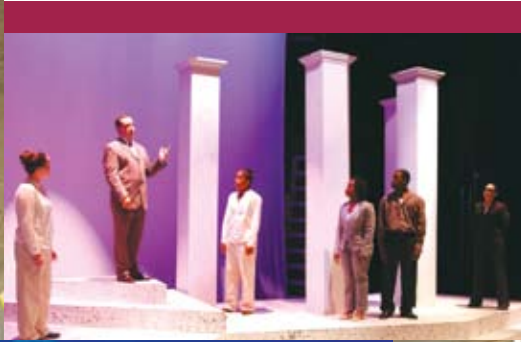
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NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

HORIZONS

FALL 2006



campus fusion

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To the Friends and Family of NSU:

According to Greek philosopher Thales of Miletus, happy individuals are those who are “healthy of body, resourceful in soul, and of a readily teachable nature.” The Academy, which Plato founded in Athens c.387 B.C.E., was a place for physical activity, cultural and religious observation, and spectator events, in addition to academic instruction—a combination

that allowed students to reach their greatest potentials. While the content and the delivery systems have changed through the centuries, today’s “academies” must continue to provide balanced learning experiences to be successful.

This issue of *Horizons* introduces you to NSU’s magnificent new University Center, a 366,000-square-foot “fusion” facility that provides for our students, faculty and staff members, and the community at-large, a modern space for the connection of mind, body, and spirit. The facility includes a 5,500 seat arena/convocation center, world-class wellness and fitness center, and a state-of-the-art sports medicine component. It is also home to NSU’s student union, and in the next few months, will house NSU’s visual and performing arts center. We hope the news of this exciting addition to the campus inspires you to join us at the University Center. I can guarantee there is no other place like it in South Florida.

As always, this issue also contains several feature stories on campus life, current events, and ongoing research. This includes an expository piece on the important work of doctors Michelle Gagnon Blodgett and Naushira Pandya, who strive to provide our students with one of the nation’s most comprehensive curriculums in geriatric medicine, a task that has become increasingly more important as demographic shifts indicate the “graying of America.” Additionally, in “The Achievement Factor,” we examine the advancements of education experts at the Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies, the Fischler School of Education and Human Services, and the Center for Psychological Studies, whose work is helping children from preschool to grade 12 overcome obstacles and succeed academically. Finally, honors student Stephanie Repaci writes about NSU students who give back to our community by participating in outreach programs, volunteering with social organizations, and raising funds to support important causes.

Each of these stories highlights the value of the partnerships between the disciplines and schools that make up NSU. Such collaborations provide us with the greatest opportunity to cultivate in each of our students the kind of person Thales of Miletus described as one who is “healthy of body, resourceful in soul, and of a readily teachable nature.”

Enjoy this issue of *Horizons*.

Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D.
President/CEO, Nova Southeastern University

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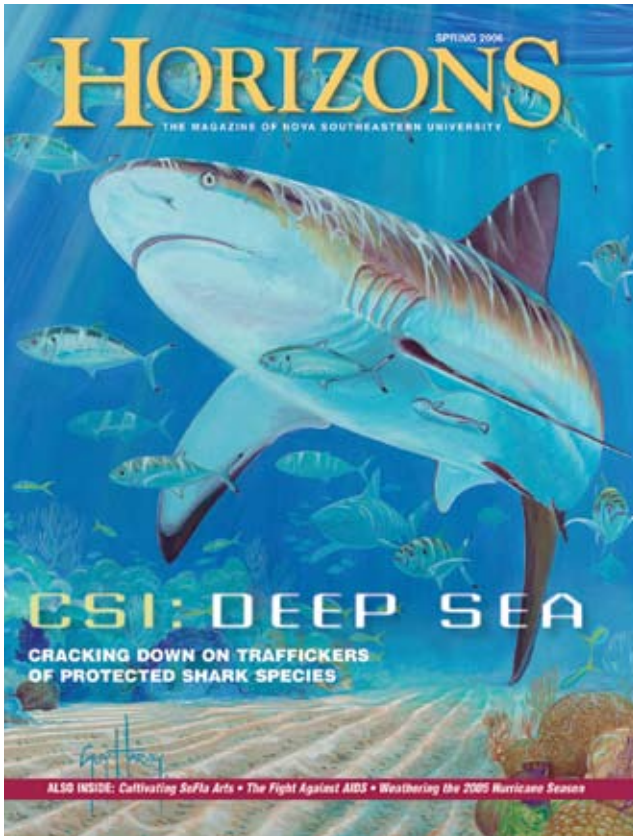
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opening remarks



Deep Sea DNA

“When you confirm it with DNA, it’s pretty much a slam dunk. That makes you confident in charging.”

Charles Juliard, an attorney with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, who uses a quick DNA test developed at NSU to prosecute illegal shark poachers (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, August 12)

“I used the information presented as the foundation for a research project for one of my courses at this university. Because of Dr. Shivji’s research, I learned valuable information about shark populations, and I got an A in Environmental Studies.” **Evie Herdean**, an NSU junior (“Letter to the Editor,” August 14)

September 11

“It forced us to recognize that we’re not exempt; we’re part of the larger world community.” NSU psychologist **Steve Gold**, director of the Trauma Resolution Integration Program, (after studying the effects of 9-11 on our collective psyche) on the fifth anniversary of this tragic event (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, September 10)

University Center

“This is the first year that we feel we can actually call it a team. We’ve never had the consistency that we’ve had this year.” **Karla Ortiz**, a member of the women’s volleyball team, the first team to use the University Center for a tournament (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, September 10)

“It’s the beginning of a real campus for students to reside in, as well as go to class.” **George Hanbury II**, NSU’s executive vice president/COO on the opening of the University Center. (*South Florida Business Journal*, August 18–24)

Nova Singers

“It doesn’t matter how bad the day was. It’s all about the music. This is like therapy.” **Marsha Burmeister**, president of Nova Singers, on the group’s 31st anniversary (*The Miami Herald*, September 3)

Campus Combustion

“The public and environmentally conscious companies can choose to ship green, shop green, drink green, and even communicate green.” **Edwin Black** (shown below), prior to the September 12 launch of his bestselling book, *Internal Combustion*, at NSU’s Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center (*The Miami Herald*, September 9)



academic notes

MAILMAN SEGAL INSTITUTE— TAMPA RECEIVES \$1.9 MILLION FEDERAL LITERACY GRANT

The Tampa Bay satellite of NSU's Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies received a \$1.9 million federal grant to train Head Start teachers and assistants to infuse literacy into every part of the preschool experience.

More than 240 children from low-income families in Hillsborough County are expected to benefit from the grant, which will support the Prescription for Reading Excellence Program, a partnership between MSI-Tampa Bay and the Hillsborough County Board of Commissioners' Head Start program.

MSI-Tampa Bay received the only Early Reading First Grant awarded to a Florida agency by the U.S. Department of Education in the 2006 cycle. The institute has received three previous federal awards—totaling \$4.1 million—for programs offered in Hillsborough and Broward counties.



The Early Reading First Program was authorized by No Child Left Behind, Title I, Part B, Subpart 2 to provide support for early childhood education programs serving preschool-age children. The program is an effort to create centers of educational excellence dedicated to improving the school readiness of the nation's young children, especially those from low-income families.

The Prescription for Reading Excellence program will provide literacy-based college-level coursework and mentoring to 24 Head Start teachers and assistants serving 240 children from low-income families. ■

MEDICAL SCHOOL DEAN NAMED PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR



Anthony J. Silvagni, D.O., Pharm.D., FACOFP, dean of NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine, was named Physician of the Year by the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (FSACOFP).

The award, which was presented during the FSACOFP's annual convention, recognized Silvagni for his "longstanding commitment to the highest quality of patient care and dedicated leadership in this pursuit."

Silvagni is the first NSU-COM dean to receive this prestigious award. He currently serves as chairman of the Council of Florida Medical School Deans and as treasurer of the Florida Patient Safety Corporation. ■

CPS PROFESSOR LINDA C. SOBELL RECEIVES HONOR FOR WORK IN SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION AND RECOVERY

The Association for Medical Education and Research in Substance Abuse granted its annual Betty Ford Award to Linda Carter Sobell, Ph.D., ABPP, a professor and the associate director of clinical training at NSU's Center for Psychological Studies.



Association president Richard Saitz said Sobell was selected because she has made a significant impact on the field of alcohol and drug abuse education and recovery. She is known nationally and internationally for her work on the assessment and treatment of addictions, particularly brief motivational interventions, the process of self-change, and assessment instruments.

The Betty Ford Award is named in honor of the former First Lady, who was candid about her successful battle against dependency on drugs and alcohol. She helped establish the Betty Ford Center at the Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage to provide treatment to others with related addictions. ■

SHAKESPEARE AND THE LARAMIE PROJECT ANCHOR NSU THEATRE'S SECOND SEASON

The arts are coming of age at NSU.

The second season of NSU Theatre includes one of Shakespeare's enduring comedies, a dynamic dance production, and a compelling docudrama examining identity in a small town following a fatal hate-crime against a college student.

The season begins with the much-anticipated production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—a timeless tale of mistaken identities, scorned lovers, rebellion, fairies, and magic—in the Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center, November 2–5.

The program then moves to the more intimate Mailman-Hollywood auditorium, December 2–3, for *Groove: A Movement and Identity Journey*—eight vibrant pieces that incorporate African and modern dance, contact improvisation, hip-hop, and step moves to explore various aspects of human identity.

The Laramie Project is a thought-provoking docudrama based on testimony compiled in Laramie, Wyoming, following the widely publicized murder of Matthew Shepard, a young gay man. The production will be showcased February 22–25.

The season closes in April with the Director's Festival of One-Acts, an entertaining series of student-directed works. ■



NSU AND OTHER LOCAL ENTITIES RECEIVE NATIONAL AWARD FOR INNOVATIONS IN URBAN EDUCATION

NSU, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS), and three other South Florida institutions received national recognition for addressing the acute teacher shortage and improving the quality of education for all local students.

The Urban Academies Program—a six-year-old collaboration between NSU, BCPS, Broward Community College, Florida Atlantic University, and Barry University—was awarded the 2006 Innovations in American Government Award, granted by the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. NSU President Ray Ferrero, Jr., accompanied other local education leaders to Washington, D.C., to accept the prestigious award, which included a price of \$100,000 to support the program.

Based on a "Grow Your Own Teachers" premise, the program takes a multipronged approach to identifying potential teachers and assisting them with their education. The Urban Academies has already placed 360 teachers in hard-to-staff schools; 91 percent of whom have remained in their positions for more than three years. ■



Back row (l-r): Sara Rogers, director of Urban Academies; Larry Calderon, former president of BCC; Frank T. Brogan, president of FAU; Robert Parks, member of the School Board of Broward County; Frank Till, former superintendent of Broward County Public Schools; and Ray Ferrero, Jr., president of Nova Southeastern University. **Front row:** Alexandra Ishmael and Bonnie Stacy, students in the Urban Academies program for Stranahan High School

around campus

LITERARY LION SALMAN RUSHDIE DELIVERS UNDERGRADUATE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

In a rare South Florida appearance, internationally acclaimed author Salman Rushdie delivered NSU's undergraduate commencement ceremony address on May 7 at the BankAtlantic Center.

Rushdie urged the graduates of the H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship, Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences, and Fischler School of Education and Human Services to challenge conventional thinking and conformity of thought and to use their intellects to probe the assumptions of perceived wisdom.

"Flaubert was fascinated by—how to say this delicately?—the general stupidity of most human beings, by their ability to absorb and parrot clichés and other nuggets of fools' gold. Life in 1881 was not so very different at all," he said. "The real world, to which you are about to return after these years in Florida, is full of wonders and brilliance, I am happy to report. But you will also find yourself beset from every quarter by dreariness and folly."

Rushdie is widely regarded as a leading novelist of the 20th century and a strong advocate of free expression in writing. He gained widespread international attention in 1988. After publication of his novel *The Satanic Verses*, he was forced into hiding by an Iranian government death sentence issued against him in response to the book.

The announcement that he would deliver the commencement address was met with some controversy, placing NSU at the center of a national discussion on freedom of

expression and academic freedom. Some students asked the university to reconsider the choice.

Don Rosenblum, Ph.D., dean of the Farquhar College, said Rushdie's bravery in the face of widespread criticism and death threats from Iran's Islamic community made him a perfect choice to inspire the class of 2006. "Rushdie embodies what we look for in a commencement speaker: a person of stature

and significance who will offer thought-provoking, salient, inspiring, and challenging ideas on relevant issues."

Rushdie's address served as the culmination of the Farquhar College's year-long study of the theme "Good and Evil," which was explored throughout the 2005–2006 academic year in classroom activities, lectures, and public events. His literary exploration of the themes of identity and racism served as an introduction to the college's current academic theme, "identity."

"The struggle to know how to act for the best is a struggle that never ceases," Rushdie said. "Don't follow leaders: look out, instead, for the oddballs who insist on marching out of step." ■



NSU TRUSTEE SYLVIA URLICH HONORED

NSU Trustee Sylvia Ulrich, president and chairman of the board of Westchester General Hospital in Miami, received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the annual public policy conference of the Federation of American Hospitals.

Ulrich was recognized for devoting more than 38 years of service to the nation's health care delivery system and to investor-owned hospitals, as well as for her leadership in developing and advocating positive legislative reforms designed to make quality health care accessible to all Americans.

She was also honored for her outstanding commitment and management skills, which led to numerous collaborative and creative mechanisms between hospitals and the communities they serve. ■



CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RESIDENCE HALL UNDERWAY

This summer, crews began the work of constructing NSU's first new residence hall in 14 years.

The facility is being constructed slightly northwest of the Leo Goodwin Residence Hall, which was built in 1992. The five-story, 179,000-square-foot building will include 501 student beds, 21 staff rooms, 16 community living areas, classroom and meeting space, and plenty of

indoor and outdoor common space.

The residence hall incorporates a new trend in campus residences by integrating "communities within a community." The living rooms will create unique spaces for students and groups to conduct study sessions, group meetings, or to congregate socially. ■

SIEMENS AWARDS \$1 MILLION SCHOLARSHIP TO NSU

A \$1 million scholarship fund supported by Siemens, USA, the global technology and infrastructure firm,



NSU President Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D., is presented with a \$1 million scholarship fund by Siemens representative Sharon Lewis.

will support a decade of graduate-student research at NSU. The award was announced at a July 10 luncheon on NSU's main campus.

"The Siemens scholarships will increase opportunities for NSU's graduate students to participate in important applied research in several fields of study," said Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D., NSU president.

Earlier this year, Siemens announced it would use NSU as a demonstration site for its products and services. Under the agreement, the company will provide NSU with integrated communications solutions, as well as medical, security, transportation, and energy technologies.

"Establishing a scholarship with Nova Southeastern University allows Siemens to continue its mission to support outstanding students today and to nurture tomorrow's scientists, researchers, and engineers," said Ken Cornelius, president and CEO of Siemens One. ■

spotlight

MEET NSU'S INDIANA JONES

PROFESSOR VINCENT VAN HASSELT BRINGS REAL-LIFE POLICE WORK TO ACADEMICS.

BY AMANDA PATTERSON



Vincent Van Hasselt, Ph.D. (left), is a professor of psychology and director of the Family Violence Program at NSU's Center for Psychological Studies (CPS). He is also a faculty member at NSU's Criminal Justice Institute and a certified police officer working part-time with the City

of Plantation Police Department.

Throughout the years, Van Hasselt has served as a consultant, lecturer, and instructor to a number of law enforcement agencies. In particular, he has worked with the FBI's Behavioral Science and Crisis (Hostage) Negotiation units, Law Enforcement Communication Unit, and its Employee Assistance Program. He is also one of the few mental health experts nationwide asked to serve as a member of the FBI's Crisis Prevention and Intervention Program, which responds to critical incidents involving law enforcement personnel nationwide.

Van Hasselt lectures at the Broward County Police Academy and is an instructor for the Broward County Crisis Intervention Team, which provides specialized mental health training to police officers, enabling them to deal more effectively and safely with the mentally ill.

He has published over 200 journal articles, books, and book chapters, and is coeditor-in-chief of *Aggression*, and *Violent Behavior: A Review Journal* and coeditor of the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Substance Abuse*.

HORIZONS: You are a police officer and a professor of psychology. How do you find the time to handle both responsibilities?

It has never been that difficult because the work I do in law enforcement directly impacts my work with students, as well as my research. I really enjoy just about everything I do. And because my work is so varied, I can honestly say, I never get bored. One day I'm teaching courses or supervising stu-

dents. The next, I may have students involved in training police hostage negotiators. I consult with the FBI, working on police psychology and related research, or respond to "call-outs" to deal with a critical incident in our community. Serving as a journal editor requires me to keep abreast of the top clinical issues, as well as the research literature in my areas of interest.

One of my FBI colleagues once jokingly said to me, "You're like the Indiana Jones of your profession. You do the academic part, but get to work in the field where the action is, as well."

HORIZONS: How did you make the move from psychologist to police officer?

I never actually made a move. It is more like I "added on." I've been a psychologist for nearly 25 years. I graduated from the police academy about 11 years ago, specifically to make me a more effective police psychologist. However, I learned great respect for law enforcement at an early age. Growing up in New York City, I was able to see, firsthand, the challenges of the job. Also, as a member of the Police Athletic League as a teen, I was able to get to know police officers who were mentors and role models for many of us.

After joining the CPS faculty in '92, I met Detective Sergeant Joe Matthews (now retired from Miami Beach P.D.) and Chief Dan Giustino (Pembroke Pines P.D.) with whom I consulted on a number of police issues and became close colleagues. Both encouraged me to consider the possibility of going to the police academy to get certified. While I had already been consulting with police agencies for some time, I would repeatedly hear, "You can't really understand this job unless you do it." With the further encouragement and support of my dean, I took the plunge. Since then, I have worked with Plantation P.D. part-time as a road patrol officer and I now assist them as training coordinator for the Crisis Response Team (CRT).

HORIZONS: What is the Crisis Response Team?

The CRT is composed of police officers with advanced training in crisis intervention and hostage negotiation strategies and techniques. The primary goal of the CRT is to resolve



high-risk situations (e.g., involving violent, barricaded, or suicidal people) in a peaceful, nonviolent manner when possible. CRTs also work in tandem with SWAT teams and assist in “tactical” resolutions when necessary. We train monthly, and include CPS students as role players. Specifically, they reenact the parts—including those of hostage-takers, hostages, witnesses, and neighbors—in realistic training scenarios. These particular students have a strong interest in police and forensic psychology, and learn much about police work and the crisis negotiation process through their participation.

HORIZONS: Is it anything like what is shown on television?

No. In fact, we often use, for training purposes, clips from movies like *Hostage* or *The Negotiator* to demonstrate what not to do. Also, most people think that to be a good crisis

negotiator, you have to be a good talker. On the contrary, it’s crucial to be a good listener. As is the case with psychological interviewing and counseling, negotiators need to develop a rapport with the person on the other end of the phone (and do it relatively quickly).

HORIZONS: Why psychology and police work?

First of all, there are many areas of law enforcement, such as crisis negotiations and police interviews/interrogations to which psychology has much to offer. The use of effective active listening skills is one example. Also, police psychologists are very involved in the screening of potential police recruits and routinely perform fitness for duty evaluations when needed. These are extremely important functions.

Further, police officers, as well as firefighters and EMS personnel, are the first responders to all types of unusual, violent, and often traumatic events. Not surprisingly, prevalence rates of mental health issues (e.g., depression, anxiety, alcoholism, and post-traumatic stress disorder) are estimated to be two or three times higher in first responders, compared to the general population. However, psychology has made great strides in the assessment and treatment of these disorders in recent years. Bridging the gap between psychology and law enforcement, and developing services specifically tailored for the latter, is of great potential value in decreasing levels of mental health problems in police officers. This is a significant part of the work that my students and I have been doing over the years and will continue to do at NSU. ■

AMANDA PATTERSON (B.S., CLASS OF 2004) IS PURSUING HER M.S. IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AT THE CENTER FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES.

spotlight

BUILDING A FOUNDATION A WORLD AWAY FROM HOME

BY GARIOT LOUIMA

Graduate student Shruti Salghur has been a bit of a nomad her entire life. Her family's homestead is in Bangalore, South India. Salghur, however, was often on the move as her father traveled to remote locations while on assignment for CARE International, a relief organization.

As a girl, she spent time in Somalia, Mozambique, and Angola. After her family and other foreigners were expelled from Somalia in 1989, Salghur's parents enrolled her in Kodaikanal International School, India's oldest and most esteemed American-based, world-renowned coeducational boarding school.

A diploma from Kodaikanal got Salghur into an environmental studies program at the University of Vermont. After earning her bachelor's degree, Salghur was not ready to return home. She made her way to South Florida with the hope of establishing a foundation for herself, one that would either sustain her if she chose to remain in the United States, or help her advance if she were to return to India.

She found NSU's H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship and enrolled in the Master of International Business Administration program. In the two years she's been here, Salghur has established a network of close friends, made important business contacts, learned the ins and outs of international business, and been named NSU's 2005–2006 Student of the Year.

HORIZONS: You traveled a lot growing up. Did this help you adjust to life in South Florida?

Yes, definitely. At first it was overwhelming. If I hadn't had the experience at the University of Vermont, I would not have been able to make the adjustment as quickly as I did. I was lucky, too, to get a job as a resident adviser in Vettel Residence Hall, which immersed me into the NSU culture and helped me become confident in the new setting.

HORIZONS: What was that experience like?

It was the best experience. It really gave me a taste of everything the university had to offer. Everyone should experience it at one point or another. You really learn to be a supervisor, to meet deadlines, and have tons of opportunities to be active on campus. One of the difficult things was to draw the line between friendships and your job. You have to learn to say, "Hey, I'm your friend, but you messed up and I have to write you up." But there's also that other side of the job: You are responsible for helping to build a sense of community for the students.



HORIZONS: I can imagine that building community would be especially important to someone with family on the other side of the world.

Definitely. I did some research on the need for a support system for international students with Julio Thompson (M.S./HRM, 2005), whom I knew from Alpha Kappa Psi, our co-ed business fraternity. We wrote a proposal, recommending that a graduate assistantship be created that dedicated significant time to

looking at the issues that international students face daily. The proposal was accepted, and after interviewing, I was given that position. The job was not to simply answer questions, but to help build that infrastructure for international students so they have every opportunity for success.

HORIZONS: What advice can you give to other international students considering an NSU education?

At the end of the day, it's a choice we make to be here, and it's a choice on how we use our time here. I would say, get involved, be proud of your accomplishments, and continue to reach new heights. ■

GARIOT P. LOUIMA IS THE MANAGING EDITOR OF HORIZONS MAGAZINE.

CHAMPIONING THE CAUSE OF AFRICAN WOMEN

BY MARA L. KIFFIN

During the summer months, when many were traveling with their families to exotic locations for adventure and leisure, Shepard Broad Law Center professor Florence Bih Shu-Acquaye, J.D., LL.M., was visiting her homeland, the Republic of Cameroon, to work with women afflicted with HIV and AIDS.

Having observed the increasing epidemic for more than 10 years, Shu-Acquaye is passionately driven in her quest to help afflicted African women. Over the past decade, she has conducted research and examined how African customary and statutory laws, such as polygamy, widow inheritance, and other practices, have contributed to the entrenchment of HIV/AIDS on the continent. She firmly believes that changing and amending many of the existing family laws may help to curtail the spread of the disease.

Shu-Acquaye, who teaches business entities, sales, contracts, negotiable instruments, and comparative corporate governance, is so involved and committed to her humanitarian cause that she decided to take a sabbatical for the 2006 fall semester. At the time of this interview, she was packing up her NSU office and ready to return to Africa to volun-

teer her legal expertise to the Society for Women and AIDS in Africa (SWAA), an organization dedicated to addressing the challenges faced by women living with HIV/AIDS.

According to the professor, there are currently few policies and laws governing women with HIV/AIDS in the country, which results in the women suffering abysmal existences brought on by societal, cultural, political, and financial realities.

"The SWAA plays a pivotal role in bringing about social, economic, and even political change in the country, and is often consulted on medical policy issues," Shu-Acquaye explained. "But the legal component has been more challenging. To date, there has been little or no review of policies

and laws that govern women and HIV/AIDS. There has been no systemic assessment of the needs in this area and no clear strategy in place to address these issues."

Shu-Acquaye said she intends to assist SWAA principally in the area of reviewing existing policies and drafting policies and laws that would regulate women with HIV/AIDS in critical areas that have previously been only marginally addressed. These areas include inheritance law, marriage, adoption, and basic human rights laws relating to the rights of women living with HIV/AIDS.

She hopes to use her knowledge of the social and cultural customs of the communities to propose acceptable laws that will benefit African women.

"Marriage is a paramount issue of concern. Under customary law, a woman is generally considered the property of the man because he bought her with his money, goats, chickens, cows, or whatever the tradition or custom of that ethnic tribe may have asked for as the bride price," she said. "The woman comes into the marriage knowing she is second to her husband and expected to be subservient to him because he has 'paid for' her. The statutory laws also tend to foster this

trend with blatant discriminatory laws in favor of men. In Cameroon, for example, it can be said a man has committed adultery only if it was carried out in the matrimonial home. Whereas, for a woman, it can be anywhere. What are the chances a wife will catch her husband in their home?"

As a graduate of two of the most well-known law schools in the United States, Stanford (J.S.D.) and Harvard (LL.M.), Shu-Acquaye uses an Afrocentric foundation combined with an American education to inform Western society about the marginal existence of her African sisters.

One of the major obstacles Shu-Acquaye wants to address is the issue of inheritance law, which customarily allows—upon the death of a married man—the transfer of possession



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A Servant's Heart

BY STEPHANIE REPACI

BREATHING
LIFE
INTO THE
COLLEGE
EXPERIENCE
THROUGH
VOLUNTEERISM

Gandhi once said, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” His statement underscores the potential for both personal growth and change in the world at large that comes from reaching out a helping hand to those in need. Each year, college students spend countless hours doing just that—serving others.

At NSU, students have numerous opportunities to connect with the community in a constructive way. The Office of Volunteerism and Community Service works collaboratively with academic centers and community partners to provide a broad range of programs for student volunteers.

From protecting animals and the environment, to addressing education and public health issues, students are engaged in a wide variety of activities that enrich their college experiences. Volunteering, these students say, helps to develop their leadership potential and instills a sense of belonging and civic responsibility.

“Personally, volunteering adds to my whole college experience,” said Christopher Byrd, a second-year law student. “It makes it a more dynamic experience, allowing me to branch out and meet other people in the community who are interested in the same kinds of things I am interested in. This also helps with professional growth. By taking part in volunteer activities, you get to meet a lot of cool people and build a great network.”

Byrd is president of the Environmental and Public Interest law societies in the Shepard Broad Law Center. This year, he and 50 other law students participated in the Public Interest Law Society's annual clean-up of John U. Lloyd Beach State Park in Dania Beach. Volunteers removed debris from the beach and planted sea oats, sea grapes, and sable palms to help curb beach erosion.

"I always look forward to getting out into the community and experiencing new natural spaces," said Byrd, who plans to practice public interest law—preferably specializing in the environment—after graduation. "I was definitely happy to go out there with a group of young people who were willing to help. It's gratifying at the end of the day to see the impact of all that you did. It just feels good."

Recognizing the importance of community service, the Division of Student Affairs announced last year that Project Student Enrichment Reinforced through Volunteer Experiences (Project SERVE) now requires all 61 undergraduate student organizations to complete 20 hours of community service each academic year to maintain charter status.

The annual "Beach Clean Up" at John U. Lloyd Beach State Park, for example, is part of the Shepard Broad Law Center's Orientation Program. Participation automatically enrolls students in NSU Law's Pro Bono Honor Program. The event concurrently educates students about the role of public service attorneys and makes them aware of critically unmet needs in their communities.

Jennifer Bowman, M.A., graduate assistant for the Office of Volunteerism, passionately promotes the project to student groups and their campus advisers. Bowman helps student groups meet their required hours by keeping students throughout the university informed of upcoming events and by assisting them with logistical issues as they arise. Her office also sponsors a variety of events.

A popular event is "Into the Streets," which serves as the office's volunteerism kick-off. It is designed to connect incoming NSU students to their new community by introducing them to peers with like-minded interests. In previous years, students volunteered at the Cooperative Feeding Program, Meadowbrook Academy, and John U. Lloyd State Park as a way to dive into community service at the start of the school year.

During Alternative Spring Break, students dedicate an entire week to volunteering at several nonprofit events, including the Special Olympics, Cooperative Feeding Program, Harbor Beach Nursing Home, or Habitat for Humanity.

In December, the Office of Volunteerism participates with residents from the Harbor Beach Nursing Home and Sunrise Health Nursing Home in what is known as the Senior Prom. Volunteers dress-up in formal attire and pick-up their "senior dates," who have been complementarily pampered by a local cosmetology school, for an evening of fun, food, and dancing at the Renaissance Fort Lauderdale Hotel.

An Annual Volunteer Fair attracts about 30 organiza-

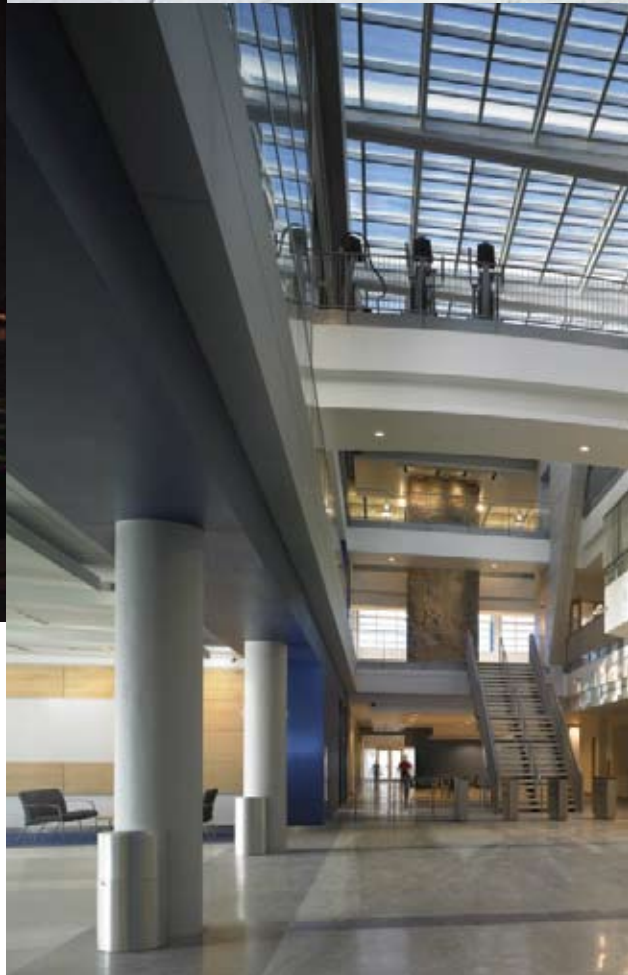
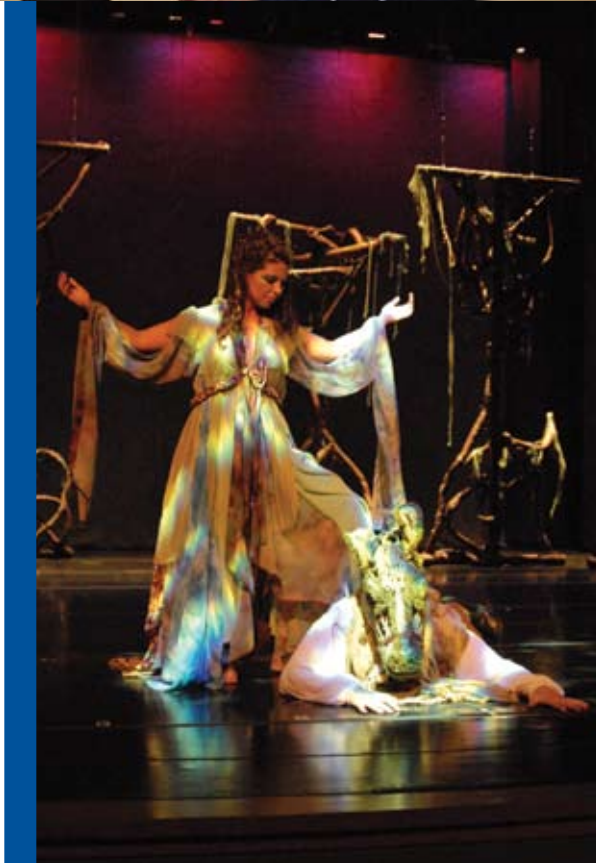
tions, including Women in Distress, the American Cancer Society, and the American Diabetes Association, all offering students an opportunity to sign-up for upcoming community service events.

Heather Clark, B.S., class of 2006, said, "The Volunteer Fair allowed me to see the vast opportunities that the university had to offer students who were looking to become involved in the community. Because of it, I was able to immerse myself into volunteer efforts through school."

For those who give of themselves, the rewards are endless. Community service continues to give NSU student-volunteers a chance to gain incomparable social and cultural experiences, discover new life skills, and develop meaningful relationships. Volunteers strengthen our community by positively impacting the lives and landscapes that too often go ignored and further motivate others to do the same.

STEPHANIE REPACI IS CONCURRENTLY COMPLETING A B.A. IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES AND B.S. IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION.





campus fusion

NSU's new facility serves as a hub for recreation, athletics, student life, and performing arts—all under one roof.



BY BOB ROSS

Promising to redefine its relationship with students, employees, and the community at large, Nova Southeastern University is celebrating the opening of its 366,000-square-foot convocation center, sports arena, and student union.

The three-story University Center, located at the center of NSU's 300-acre main campus, has quickly become a hub of student activity and community participation.

THE HEART OF THE CAMPUS

Nearly 2,000 students, faculty and staff members, and the media gathered at the complex on August 16 for tours of the facility. A week later, hundreds of students and members of the community attended the center's inaugural event, a performance by stand-up comedian and actor Jamie Kennedy. The center's first athletic event was the inaugural NSU Sharks Classic Volley Ball Tournament, which showcased nine NCAA Division II teams competing on the arena's three courts.

"It's definitely cool to know that new things like this are happening on your own campus," said Heather Sternau, a junior from Freeburg, Illinois, majoring in education.

"It's really raised school pride," said senior athletic training major Michael Wangness of Huron, South Dakota. "The fact that I can say, 'I go to NSU, and we just added an \$80 million on-campus facility,' is awesome."

TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

80+ MILLION
..... CONSTRUCTION COST, IN DOLLARS

366,000
..... SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE UNIVERSITY CENTER

10,800
..... SQUARE FOOTAGE OF GUY HARVEY SHARK MURAL

10,000
..... POUNDS OF WEIGHTS IN THE RECPLEX

5,500
..... NUMBER OF SEATS IN ENTIRE ARENA

1,200
..... NUMBER OF SEATS IN THE "LOWER BOWL" OF THE ARENA

324
..... HEIGHT OF INDOOR ROCK CLIMBING WALL, IN INCHES

98
..... PIECES OF STARTRAC CARDIOVASCULAR EQUIPMENT

84
..... PIECES OF STARTRAC STRENGTH EQUIPMENT

25
..... SPINNING BIKES IN THE RECPLEX

20
..... ROWING MACHINES IN THE RECPLEX

11
..... TELEVISION MONITORS THROUGHOUT THE FACILITY

4
..... NUMBER OF SAUNAS

3
..... NUMBER OF LEVELS IN FITNESS AND RECREATION CENTER

3
..... MULTIPURPOSE STUDIOS FOR GROUP EXERCISE

3
..... INDOOR RACQUETBALL COURTS

3
..... BOX OFFICE WINDOWS

2
..... POOL TABLES IN THE FLIGHT DECK

2
..... COURTS IN MULTIPURPOSE GYM FOR INTRAMURALS



Continued from page 15

Because of its strategic location and versatility, the University Center adds an element to the college experience that was previously missing at NSU. Students now have a bright and comfortable environment in which to relax with friends, grab a burger or a drink, find entertainment, exercise, play organized sports or casually shoot hoops, and even attend some classes. They also have a place to see and be seen—the perfect addition to a relatively young university that is helping to build a vibrant sense of community and pride.

The NSU campus and the general public will have access to a stream of diverse events ranging from exciting NCAA athletic contests and rock shows to thought-provoking guest speakers, receptions, dinners, and theatrical performances.

“If the soul of the University is our state-of-the-art library next door,” said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, “then its heart is the University Center.”

The arena allows the men’s and women’s basketball teams and women’s volleyball team to play on-campus for the first time ever. At the same time, all 13 of NSU’s NCAA Division II sports teams will benefit from the immediate availability of a comprehensive athletic training and sports medicine program and cardiovascular and strength-training facilities.

“The arena will be one of the best, if not the best, venues at the Sunshine State Conference, a great complement to the first class outdoor facilities we already have,” said Michael Momminey, NSU director of athletics.

“We now have access to fitness facilities, locker rooms for every sport, a team lounge and study hall, training rooms, a press room, and a state-of-the-art equipment room. This is as good as it gets,” Momminey added. “Undoubtedly, this will create a competitive recruiting advantage.”

With the men’s basketball team coming off its best season ever, he hopes to motivate the on-campus students to attend games. His plan for encouraging student-attendance includes great basketball coupled with an aggressive schedule of special events and promotions. The first event, Midnight Madness, was attended by hundreds of NSU Shark Finatics.

The University Center is also the home of NSU’s sports medicine program. Its goal is to become a center of excellence where local athletes, as well as college and professional athletes here in South Florida during the off-season, can get medical care, according to Eric Shamus, Ph.D., assistant professor of osteopathic principles and practice.

Athletes served by the program will come to the University Center for digital radiology, stress tests, endurance tests, pre-employment and team physicals, and computerized strength testing. A multidisciplinary approach involves physical therapy, psychology, and sports nutrition.

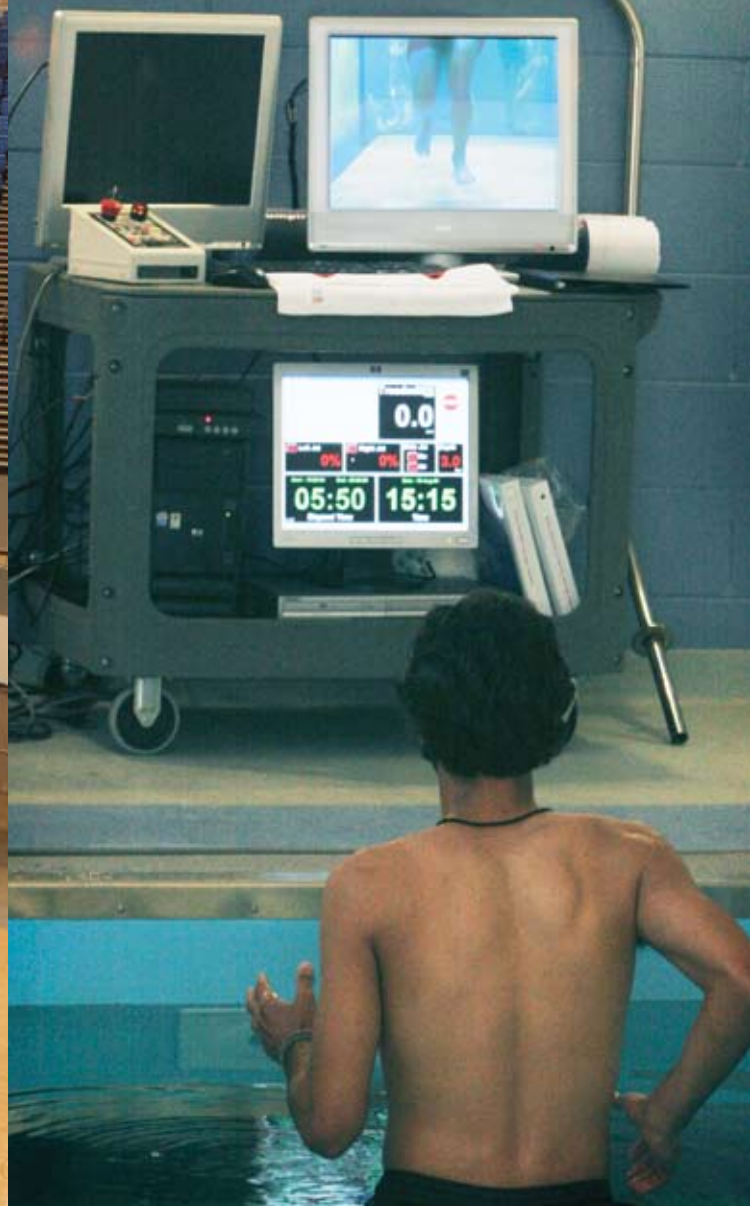
A FUSION FACILITY

University Center’s architect, Roland Lempke of Cannon Associates of Washington, D.C., calls this a “fusion” building because it bundles recreation, athletics, student life, and the

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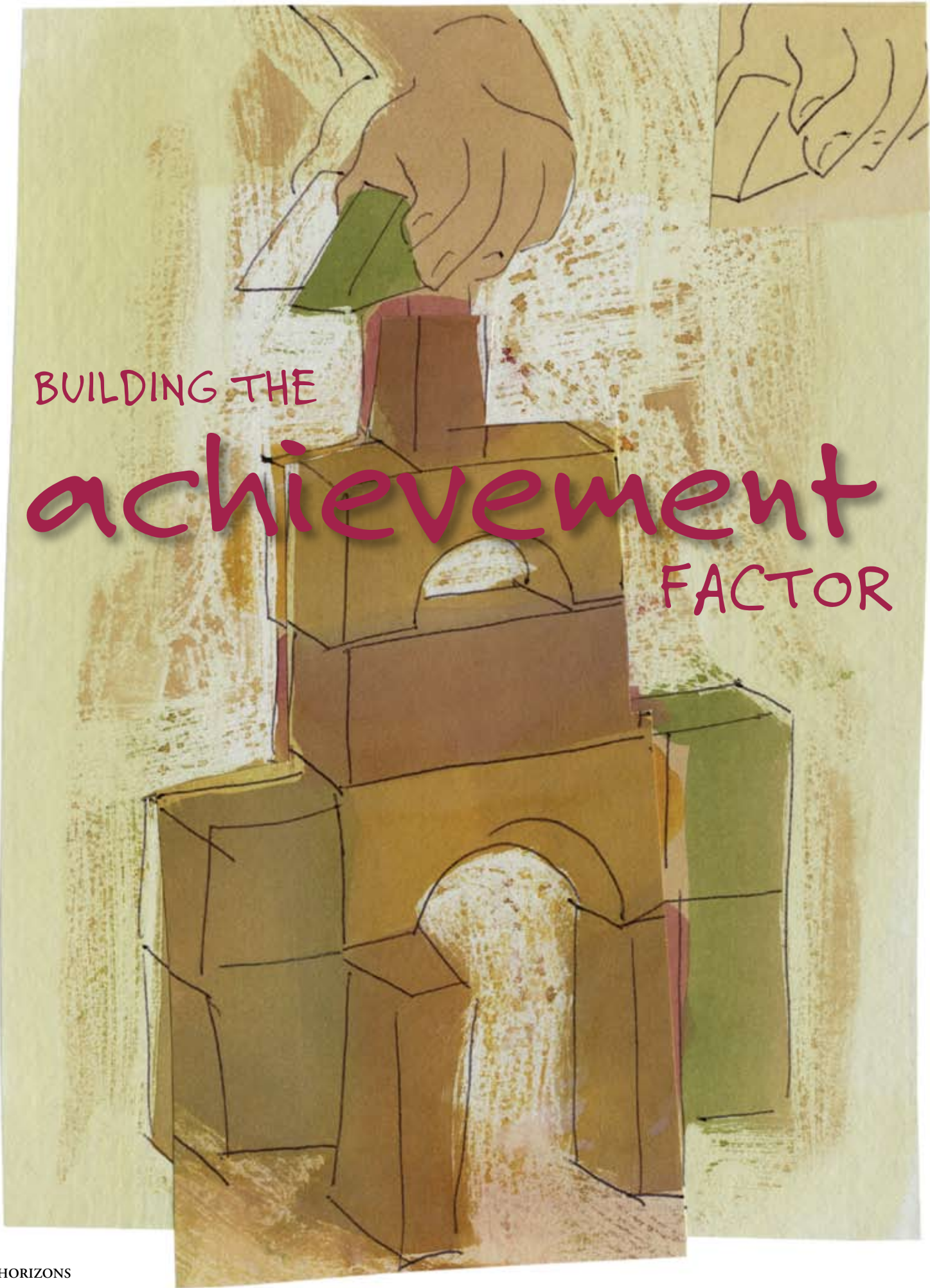






UP AND RUNNING

NSU's University Center sets a new stage for campus life. Shown clockwise, from top left, are some key scenes to experience. The magnitude of the building's spacious design offers internal visibility and expansive indoor-outdoor views starting with the atrium. The arena, dubbed the "Shark Tank," is a versatile convocation center/sports venue. The University Center features some of the latest high-tech gear, such as the only HydroWorx 2000 Aquatic Therapy and Fitness Pool in South Florida. Visitors can kick back, grab a bite, play pool, and more. Opening soon is the performing arts wing, currently under construction.



NSU educators are seeking to determine the best approaches to helping children succeed academically, a critical task in a state with one of the nation's highest high school drop-out rates.

BY GARIOT P. LOUIMA

For every child, the obstacles are different, but our goal of providing a quality education is the same. Whether they are growing up in broken homes, confronted with a new language, struggling to overcome developmental disabilities, or burdened with taking care of their own physiological needs, all children must come to understand basic academic concepts if they are to become productive adults.

Ralph E. “Gene” Cash, Ph.D., and his colleague at the Center for Psychological Studies, Sarah Valley-Gray, Psy.D., are studying the youngest learners on NSU’s main campus. Working with the experts at the Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies, Cash and Valley-Gray—both professors in the Center for Psychological Studies—are hoping to establish a clear connection between the widely-used Ladders to Literacy preschool curriculum and the skills a child needs to become fully literate.

Their study, “Metalinguistic Awareness Skills in Preschoolers: Implications for Emergent Literacy,” will add to a body of research examining how children learn and determining whether current methods adequately meet their needs.

For many children with reading disabilities, assessment comes only after considerable failure and frustration. Furthermore, children who can’t read by third grade are unlikely to catch up to their peers.

“It could help us identify much earlier the kids at risk for reading problems,” Cash said of the study. “The next phase of our research would be an attempt to intervene—find out whether adding specific training of early literacy skills to the prekindergarten curriculum can better predict academic success later on.”

The literacy project, funded through the President’s Research and Development Grant Program, entered its third year with the start of the 2006–2007 academic calendar. It is also one in a series of ongoing studies at NSU that seeks to determine the best approaches to helping children succeed academically, a critically important task in a state that exceeds all others with its high school drop-out rates.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

Over the course of a decade, the challenges school teachers face daily in reaching their pupils have increasingly been examined through the legislative and public microscope. In 1996, the Florida Board of Education adopted a new curriculum framework that became the basis for authorization of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment

Test (FCAT). In the second year of the accountability program, 71 critically low schools were identified as not meeting the student achievement criteria, according to state records.

Those rules were revised in 1999 to include the A+ Plan for Education—increased standards of accountability for students, schools, and educators. That year (the first year schools were graded on overall performance), 78 schools were identified as F schools for failing to meet requirements.

President George W. Bush’s 2001 No Child Left Behind measure established a second layer of accountability, creating a ladder of penalties for schools that fail to meet standards, including dramatic restructuring.

School districts throughout the country have spent considerable resources examining methods for teaching children from kindergarten through grade 12. Florida Governor Jeb Bush signed into law a measure initiating voluntary prekindergarten: state subsidized preschool for all children ages three to five years old.

There have been some measurable improvements. Earlier this year, published reports indicated that reading proficiency among third-graders in Florida, for example, had moved from 67 percent to 75 percent. Math scores also improved among third graders, with proficiency rates moving from 68 to 72 percent. Additionally, more than a third of the state’s school districts received an A this year; not a single district received a D or F.

But challenges remain. Most notably, Florida’s public high school graduation rate remains one of the nation’s lowest—47th among 50 states—according to reports. To reverse this trend, educators throughout the state are seeking innovative approaches to teaching.

“Most of our teaching so far has been focused on procedural learning,” said Hui Fang Huang “Angie” Su, Ed.D., a preeminent mathematics scholar and teacher. “The focus now is being placed on conceptual learning, so that students understand the concepts and know how to apply them.”

PROJECT A+

Su is a Professor of Mathematics Education in the Fischler School of Education and Human Services and formerly the K–12 Mathematics Specialist in the division of Academic Programs for the Palm Beach County School District.

Nearly two decades ago, Su developed Project M.I.N.D. (Math Is Not Difficult) to help academically at-risk elementary students improve their ability to solve math problems.

The program emphasizes the use of games and story telling to make learning math fun and exciting. In Project M.I.N.D., students interact with one another, create their own math games and brain teasers, apply mathematics to real-world problems, and learn a variety of simple strategies to solve complex problems.

Over the years, Su has adjusted the program to assist various groups, including homeless women.



“We had field-tested Project M.I.N.D. with many different groups over the years, but had never worked with children with autism,” she said. Working with the early childhood experts at the Mailman Segal Institute, Su developed Project A+ (Autism + Mathematics = Communication), which was awarded the President’s Research and Development Grant.

The study sought to identify the benefits of systematic mathematics instruction for children with autism spectrum disorders.

Wendy Masi, Ph.D., dean of the Mailman Segal Institute, said she was intrigued with the question Su’s research proposed. Masi was eager to bring it to the Jim & Jan Moran Family Center Village, which houses the Mailman Segal Institute’s programs, including the Baudhin Preschool, an internationally recognized model program for children with autism spectrum disorders.

“Our curriculum focuses on enhancing communication and socialization, as well as helping children master kindergarten readiness skills,” Masi said. “We viewed this study as an opportunity to explore, in depth, a critical

curriculum area and see what impact it would have on our children’s learning.”

Baudhin Preschool Director Michele Kaplan, M.S., said the majority of the children at the school struggle with verbal skills. “Since many of our children perform better on visual spatial tasks, we felt that targeting math skills would be an opportunity to enhance their problem solving abilities.”

Melissa Hale, Ph.D., program coordinator for the Autism Consortium, said 34 children of varying abilities participated in the study. “Our focus was on fundamental math skills, such as grouping, one-to-one correspondence, and simple addition,” she said. “This core set of skills is the critical foundation for mastering more advanced math skills.”

Most of the instruction was couched in play, as play is the basis for all early childhood learning, Masi explained. In one exercise, children were told to pair with their “number buddies,” that is, form certain two digit numbers by identifying the classmates who wore the correct numerical digit.

“Until they understand that, they won’t really understand math skills. So you start with the basics with our children. ‘Can you give one plate to each person? Please give each of your friends two cookies.’ These are the kinds of connections that you have to make. The curriculum is broken down into its

simplest elements.”

Sue Kabot, Ed.D., director of clinical and therapeutic services at the Mailman Segal Institute, said the study yielded promising results. “We learned that, for our children, we must provide targeted instruction,” she said. “The more systematic and specific, the more skills they retain. While our children mastered many new skills, they continued to struggle with generalization and learning the language of math. We are continuing to explore this subject through new and more in-depth studies.”

NEW NEURO-PASSAGEWAYS

Soni Krasky’s classroom in the Lower School of University School is carved into small learning stations: computers, listening, Leap Track, and others. Unlike the other classes in the school in which students work in groups at tables, the children in Krasky’s charge are each assigned a desk. For these 12 students, “It’s important for them to have control of their own work area,” she said.

Krasky, M.Ed., is an instructor in the Learning and Research Academy (LRA), an innovative program at

University School for children from kindergarten through fourth grade who are of average to above average intelligence and who have learning difficulties.

“The program is designed to help these children think outside of the box,” Krasky said. “We’re constantly reviewing, teaching things over and over again, until they understand. For a child without learning difficulties, minor repetition might be enough. But these kids need constant refreshers until they have it solid. We have to involve all the senses—be creative—in order to create new neuro-passageways.”

Taking a unique approach to academic intervention, the LRA allows special education instructors and grade-level teachers an opportunity for flexible mainstreaming, explained Nadine Barnes, Ed.D., director of University School’s Lower School, where the LRA is housed. “If a child is showing promise and is excelling in a subject area in the LRA, we’re able to test him or her right into a mainstream class for part of or the whole of that subject area,” Barnes said. “Last year, we had a child who was completely immersed in the LRA classroom, but this year he’s having math with his regular second grade class.”

The LRA’s reading curriculum is grounded in the Wilson Reading System, which was developed for students with issues in phonological awareness and orthographic (writing) processing. Substantiated by more than a decade of research and implemented in school districts throughout the country, the Wilson Reading System involves a daily regimen of reading and writing. The program demystifies the written word for children who previously had no handle on it. “The more children read, the more comfortable they become with reading,” Krasky said.

The gains come, albeit gradually, she said.

Last year, a seven-year-old boy who had absolutely no interest in reading enrolled in the LRA. He hated reading so much, he refused to even let his mother read to him.

“We had to make him comfortable with the idea,” Krasky said of the boy, who was assigned to her colleague and LRA special education teacher Lisa Chancey. “He was nervous. He knew letter sounds but he didn’t know what to do with them.”

So Chancey established a middle ground by first reading out loud to him. In time, he joined her reading. In October, the boy’s mother sent an email to his teachers. It said simply, “My son reads.”

THE BABY MAMA CLIQUE

For some children, intervention comes later in life.

When Fischler School of Education professors Linda Howard, Ed.D., and Shanika Taylor, Ed.D., first visited a program for teen mothers at a Broward County school, they were surprised by what they saw.

“The students were coloring illustrations of Winnie the Pooh and Tigger,” Taylor said. “The teacher would set out a

bucket of crayons and they’d literally color. The instructor said they were making mobiles for their babies.”

Added Howard, “We were troubled by what we saw. It was the equivalent of a sheltered workshop for the developmentally disabled. These were students who needed to be academically challenged, and there wasn’t enough academic challenge.”

Outside of the classroom, the students were known as the “Baby Mama Clique” to their classmates. The title stuck, Taylor said, and when asked, most of the girls saw their futures limited to “the mistake that led them to early parenthood.”

“The message being sent to these students was, ‘You are teen parents and your life should center on parenting,’” Taylor said.

With money from the President’s Research and Development Grant program, Howard and Taylor set out to change the lives of the two dozen students in that parenting class by improving their perceptions of their own efficacy, helping them realize they could improve their lives despite the obstacles before them.

In order to improve perceptions of self efficacy, the professors adopted a mentoring program designed to build a social and support group for the teen mothers, foster a sense of community, and teach them about the opportunities available to them.

The mentoring was a complete departure from what the students had formerly been exposed to. Over the course of the year, Taylor and Howard held group discussions and invited guest speakers who had become successful women despite their early pregnancies.

“We wanted to show them other possibilities,” said Howard. “We wanted to show them people who had been teen moms, but who were also nurses, business owners, and mortgage brokers, women who had overcome their difficulties and gone on to lead very successful lives.”

Howard recalls “Lisa” (not her real name), a teen mother who had no plans to attend college after graduation. On a field trip to Florida Memorial University, Lisa, who had a passion for singing, visited FMU’s choral music department. The chairman asked Lisa if she would be willing to sing a song for the group.

As the department chairman accompanied on piano, Lisa closed her eyes, and in a soaring alto, sang “His Eye Is on the Sparrow.”

“When she was finished, there was not a dry eye in the room,” Howard said. “The department chairman asked Lisa if she’d made any college plans. She was astonished. For the rest of the trip, all she talked about was how this talent of hers was going to get her into a university.

“Now she has something to focus on,” Howard added. “Now she has something to reach for.” ■

GARIOT P. LOUIMA IS THE MANAGING EDITOR OF *HORIZONS* MAGAZINE.

THE

GRAYING

OF AMERICA

U.S. Census statistics indicate that more Americans will reach retirement age in the coming years than in any other time in history. NSU is preparing physicians, attorneys, and educators to meet the changing needs of this aging population.





BY LISA BOLIVAR

America is getting older. Are we ready?

Never before in the history of the United States has such a high percentage of citizens reached retirement age at the same time.

According to the Population Resource Center, Baby Boomer and Generation X babies, those born between 1946 and 1964 during a period of economic prosperity following World War II, have produced the largest increase in population in U.S. history. As more than 74 million people were born during that time, those 65 and over will account for 19 percent of all Americans by the year 2025.

This graying of America presents unique challenges involving health care, legal issues, and social services needs.

Nova Southeastern University is ahead of the curve with innovative multidisciplinary programs designed to prepare professionals in myriad disciplines for the onslaught of challenges we now face regarding the care and well-being of our growing mature population.

NSU's Division of Clinical Operations operates several health care centers that cater to the physical and psychological needs of older patients. The Shepard Broad Law Center is preparing students for practices in Elder Law, a new, specialized area recognized by The Florida Bar. Additionally, the Fischler School of Education and Human Services is offering innovative coursework in the field of elder education.



generations,” Gagnon Blodgett said. “We are probably a little more savvy and knowledgeable of what we can get out of the health care system.”

But that may not be so of the elders who are now in their 70s, 80s, and 90s.

“Health care can be more passive for them, meaning that they may go to the doctor, and the doctor’s word is law,” Gagnon Blodgett added. “They may not question the doctor, and they may be looking to the doctor for help without even thinking about what they can do to help themselves.”

Geriatricians must, in essence, act as counselors, psychologists, diagnosticians, family mediators, and patient mind-readers.

Not all medical schools are preparing their graduates to deal with this approach to geriatric medicine. NSU offers one of just a handful of programs nationwide that require all third-year medical students to complete a six-month geriatric lecture series and a one-month rotation at a geriatric treatment facility, explained Naushira Pandya, M.D., C.M.D., chair of the Department of Geriatrics in the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

“This is very unusual. In other schools, they get exposure to geriatrics, but it’s rolled into other things, looking only at the geriatric patient,” she said, and added that NSU also offers a fellowship program leading to a board certification in geriatrics. Only 227 of 24,000 physicians entering the work force in 2000 were board certified geriatricians. “We’re behind the national mean ... there is a huge shortfall of doctors specializing in geriatrics.”

Doctors wishing to become certified geriatricians enter one-year fellowship programs after their residency periods, during which they work under the guidance of a board certified geriatrician before they sit for a national exam.

Pandya said the need for geriatric specialists has become increasingly apparent. She operates clinics for geriatric patients in the Sanford L. Ziff Health Care Center on NSU’s main campus and at the clinic at the Southwest Focal Point Senior Center in Pembroke Pines.

“Our college has really subscribed to developing geriatric education and clinical services for older adults in our community. We feel that every student, every physician, and every specialist still needs to have a knowledge of basic geriatrics because they will encounter older adults in their practice,” she said.

“They will need to be able to make referrals and to detect [various medical] conditions ... and we also feel they need to be aware of their [patients’] psycho-social needs.”

THE UNIQUE LEGAL ISSUES OF AGING

Legal issues must also be considered. According to The Florida Bar, only 70 attorneys in Florida have been certified

HEALTHCARE QUALITY FOR ELDERS

Two years ago, NSU launched the Senior Services Team to provide seamless service to the rapidly growing community of older adults living in Broward and Miami-Dade counties, said Michelle Gagnon Blodgett, Psy.D., coordinator of geriatric clinic services in NSU’s Health Professions Division.

Blodgett points out that, according to 2000 Census data, 12.4 percent of the country’s population is 65 years old or older. Florida leads the nation with 17 percent of its population being of retirement age.

“The projection right now is that by the year 2030, 20 percent will be 65 and older,” she said.

As people age, their needs change, especially in regards to medical care. Health care providers must also be cognizant of cultural differences, including ethnic differences and how people view their caregivers, Gagnon Blodgett said.

“I think that people in our age bracket consume services differently and have different expectations than yesterday’s



MICHELLE GAGNON BLODGETT,
PSY.D., COORDINATOR,
GERIATRIC CLINICAL SERVICES

in Elder Law since the specialty was recognized in 1998. Experts say that is not enough to meet the growing demand.

Caring for the needs of older Americans requires a cross-disciplinary collaboration, said Fran L. Tetunic, J.D., an associate professor in the Shepard Broad Law Center. Tetunic is working with Gagnon Blodgett and professors from the Fischler School of Education and the

College of Osteopathic Medicine to develop a comprehensive program in elder law.

"No one discipline has all the information and all the answers," Tetunic said. "That is part of the beauty of working in a large academic community where we have so much knowledge to come together to educate others."

Elder law is "a huge field," Tetunic said, "because it encompasses a great many areas that are also covered in other fields." Elder law attorneys may face issues of abuse, age discrimination, or medical care.

CARING FOR THE SENIOR SPIRIT

Jacquelyn Dwoskin, Ph.D., of the Fischler School, is using an innovative gerontology minor for doctoral students to train education professionals to address the intellectual needs of active seniors.

"I created a gerontology minor because demographically the Baby Boomers started turning 60 this past January," Dwoskin said. "That particular group will be the healthiest and most diverse group of older adults in history."

Dwoskin, a licensed clinical social worker who operates a private practice in Palm Beach County and teaches several days a week at NSU, underscores the growing need for professionals trained to deal with the older population.

"Clearly the Baby Boomers, in particular, are unpredictable in terms of what they want to be," she said. "'Old' now has a different meaning. Mick Jagger is over 60! Older adults aren't just consumers of products or of health care, but are concerned with questions such as 'What is our potential as we get older? And what can we give back to our communities?' It's a huge untapped resource of knowledge. We need to discover what we might harvest from that."

Dwoskin is searching to create better pathways to connect older adults to their communities. Those who complete the gerontology minor may be administrators at community centers, education centers, or other similar facilities catering to older patrons. The program trains students to think about their own aging as well as that of the people they will work with.

"Each course is designed [by looking] through the lens of 'How do we create meaning as we grow older?'" Dwoskin said. "One of the classes focuses on the humanities in aging; another is concepts and controversies (conflict over Medicare and health care delivery); another is the psychology of aging, sociology of aging, biology of aging, or the ethnicity or cultural differences," and so on.

Dwoskin's approach to educate the educators, like the law and medical tracks, reached beyond the NSU campus. Two of her projects, "La Riqueza de la Madurez/The Richness Found in Maturity: A Qualitative Study Utilizing Narrative Gerontology Techniques to Assess and Improve the Well-Being of Hispanic Elders in Broward County" and "Leaving a Legacy: Redefining Volunteerism for Older Adults in Broward County," have received Broward County Quality of Life Grants.

"I've also completed a grant that provides partnerships between our academic institution and Broward County community agencies," she said, adding she also recently received a grant to address concerns of older Spanish-speaking residents.

All this, she said, should make aging in Florida a bit easier.

"It is a good time to grow old," Dwoskin said. ■

LISA BOLIVAR IS A WRITER IN TAMARAC, FLORIDA.



A DAUGHTER'S LONG FAREWELL

BY MARA L. KIFFIN

I have been grieving for my mother for two years. No physician called the time of death. No agency issued a death certificate. But for all intents and purposes, the essence of Rose N. Cooper died in December 2004. My mother has advanced Alzheimer's disease.

I learned about Alzheimer's impact on the family in 1995, when I was working on a feature story for a local newspaper. Debora, a 43-year-old married mother of three, was the caregiver of her 75-year-old mother, who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's five years earlier. Debora told me she had watched her mother deteriorate from a vibrant, fun-loving woman to a paranoid, combative screamer to a noncommunicative, dazed-looking shell who had to be fed, bathed, and diapered.

I listened to her stories intently, feeling immense sympathy for this woman who was sandwiched between her own children and her ailing mom. Neither of us could get through the interview without constantly reaching for the box of tissues. I said a silent prayer of thanksgiving for my own mother who was older than Debora's mom, but thriving and showing no signs of slowing down.

My parents live in New York, and my mother and I were always very close. I had a rose tattooed on my ankle in her honor. We spoke on the phone every other day. On Saturday mornings, while still lying in bed, I'd call her and we'd chat for two hours or more. I couldn't make any major decisions without getting her advice and guidance, nor could I fully enjoy an amusing incident without sharing it with her. We gossiped, shared secrets, laughed, cried, prayed. She was my best friend, my confidant.

In 2001, barely six years after I interviewed Debora, Mother was diagnosed with the early signs of Alzheimer's. It all began so innocently. I noticed a subtle change in her personality and behavior as early as 1999 during a visit to New York. It was her uncharacteristic outburst of anger and a moment of disorientation that prompted me to tell my sisters that Mother should see a doctor. I'm not sure if it's because I'm the baby of the family and only saw her twice a year, but everyone in the family dismissed my concerns. It



wasn't until 2000 when my mom, a card-carrying Democrat, showed no interest in the presidential election and refused to vote, that the family knew something was seriously wrong.

I admit when I first heard the words, "Alzheimer's disease," I wasn't as upset as everyone else. After all, my mother was already 86 years old; surely in the years she had left the disease could not progress to the extent of total debilitation, especially with medications that can slow down the progression. Maybe she will just be a little more forgetful, I thought. I was wrong.

During the past six years, I have watched Mother get lost in her own home, forget the names of her grandchildren, set the kitchen on fire in the middle of the night, physically fight with my sister and father—and forget me.

There's no recognition when she looks at me now and no smile in her voice when she mumbles, "hello." This person who looks like my mother, who used to laugh so easily, now doesn't even smile. I have to study old photos to see the light in her eyes that's been replaced by a distant, confused gaze.

When I visit her, there's no easy banter, no jokes, and no reminiscing. My sisters feed her, comb her hair, wash her face, and do whatever needs to be done. I feel uncomfortable

and sit awkwardly in a chair, staring at her—the indignity of this horrific disease staggers me. Mother was always so fastidious about her appearance, and I know if she were in her right mind, she would be mortified to see what she’s become.

I guess that’s the real blessing with Alzheimer’s: As Mother deteriorates, she is unaware of what is happening, and therefore remains unfazed and completely oblivious.

Sometimes I get angry and want to shake her and shout, “Mother! It’s me! Don’t you know who I am?” But what good will it do? She’s isolated in her own mind, lost to us forever.

I struggle with guilt. I feel guilty about not being able to see or speak to her every day. I feel guilty about not sending her a Mother’s Day card this year (I broke down in the card store and had to leave without making a purchase). I feel guilty that my sister is the only sibling left in New York to help care for our parents. I feel guilty that I didn’t force everyone to take “baby sister” seriously when I told them that Mother was ill. And I feel guilty saying, “My mother is dead,” when she is still breathing.

I have become very philosophical and matter-of-fact about Alzheimer’s and the toll it’s taking on our family:

“During the past six years, I have watched Mother get lost in her own home, forget the names of her grandchildren, set the kitchen on fire in the middle of the night, physically fight with my sister and father—and forget me.”

Daddy is in semi-denial and talks about Mother “getting better,” while my sisters preach about how much worse it could be, and my brothers rejoice in the fact that she’s not in any pain.

While it’s true that Mother is not suffering physically (and thank God for that), the rest of us are in tremendous pain—waiting and watching, hoping against hope for “a good day” when she is lucid enough to speak somewhat coherently.

“Bye, Mother,” I said while helping her to her feet during a recent visit.

“I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Thank you, Dear,” she replied, looking at me intently. “I love you.”

I stopped dead in my tracks; the tender tone of her voice stunned me. As our eyes met, I saw momentary recognition in her gaze—for just an instant—then it was gone. But it didn’t matter how fleeting it was. In those few seconds, Rose Cooper was back, and we connected.

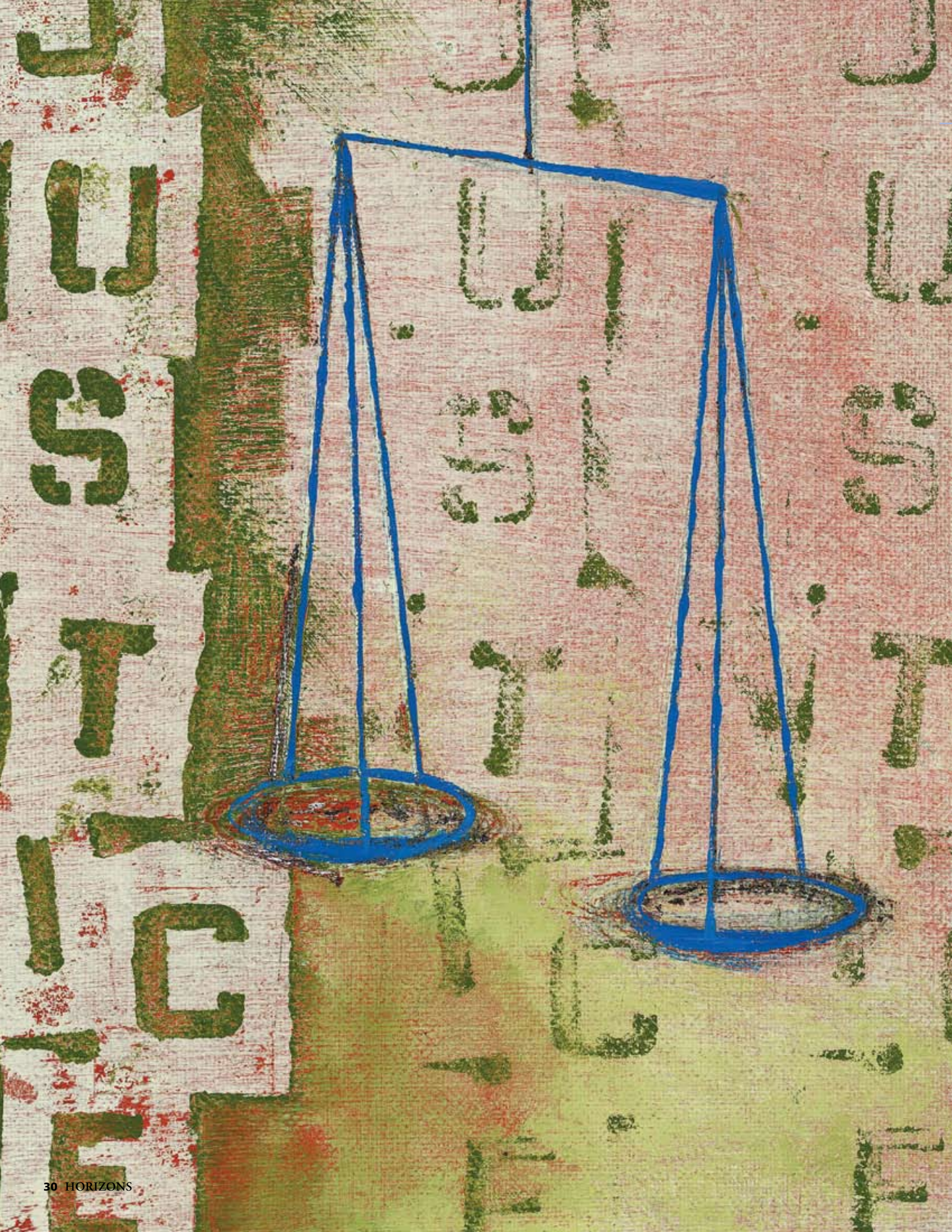
It’s hard to accept that the mother I knew is gone. What’s even harder is the realization that this belief segregates me from the rest of the family, who would never say such a horrible thing.

But in order for me to cope with the loss of “my Rose,” I silently say farewell, and continue to grieve alone during this long goodbye.

MARA L. KIFFIN IS THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.



“Verbatim” is a regular feature of *Horizons* magazine that presents the unique personal stories of the students, alumni, and faculty and staff members of Nova Southeastern University. Send your story ideas to nsumag@nova.edu.



alumni journal

COMPASSION AND INTEGRITY FROM THE BENCH: REEMBERTO DIAZ, J.D., CLASS OF 1979

BY LISA BOLIVAR

When Reemberto Diaz gave his closing arguments to the jury in his December 2003 defense of two desperate Cuban hijackers, he cried.

Diaz, J.D., class of 1979, had always been known for his passion for the law; but when he defended the hijackers, his research took him to a homeland he had not seen since early childhood. Viewing the suffering there first-hand hit him in the depths of his soul.

“Who told you I cried?” Diaz asked during an interview, before confirming that he indeed was emotionally overcome by the case of *United States v. Yanier Olivares-Samon*. The case spoke to the human side of him, not to the professionally objective, extremely meticulous side he had shown for decades as a Miami-Dade criminal defense attorney.

Diaz still spends most of his time in court, but now he is able to keep middle ground. Florida Governor Jeb Bush appointed the graduate of NSU’s Shepard Broad Law Center to be an 11th Judicial Circuit Court Judge on June 16.

Colleague and long-time friend Mario Cano was with Diaz when he got the news of his appointment. They were driving to the Florida Keys for a legal seminar.

“A call came in from a guy identifying himself as the governor. Instead of thinking it was one of our friends pulling a prank, Reemberto listened to the whole thing. You could see the glee come over his face,” Cano said. “He’s normally a very controlled person, from years of trials, but he looked at me and told me what was obvious—that was the governor, and he had gotten the appointment.”

Circuit Court Judge Julio E. Jimenez said Diaz is a good choice for the bench.

“He is one of the best criminal defense lawyers I have ever seen. He has an excellent reputation here in the justice building with all the attorneys and judges, and he’s handled many first-degree murder cases, among them several death penalty cases,” Jimenez said. “He probably has argued about 200 trials; that’s a lot. He’s going to be an excellent judge because he has that experience.”

Cano describes Diaz as a dedicated family man. Diaz speaks affectionately of his two daughters (Michelle, 26, and Melissa, 22) and of his wife (Claudine), though he admits he is somewhat of a workaholic.

“As an attorney, I worked all the time: weekends, Sunday nights, evenings. I had an office at home, and I’d take home work every weekend,” Diaz said. “Now I read the law and study. I still take stuff home to keep myself informed in



changes in the law and to keep current.”

Diaz said the transition from attorney to judge has been a smooth one.

“To me it’s been easier than I thought it would be,” he said. “It feels great; it is clearly more rewarding than being a defense lawyer because you’re not running around from courtroom to courtroom. My cell phone doesn’t ring all the time.”

Diaz said he has always been one to contemplate, which is what he can now do as a judge. “Now I can concern myself with the rights of the defendant and the rights of the victim. I can sit in the middle and see how decisions truly affect people, without getting caught up in defending a point.

“I can look for answers instead of looking for arguments,” he said. “Besides, it’s fun to still be able to sit in a courtroom, even though you aren’t trying a case, and watch others do what you’re trained to do.”

But there is woe to pay if you deceive him. “Dishonesty really ticks me off both as a lawyer and a judge. Tell me the truth. Tell me what the issues are. Don’t lie to me,” he said.

And it is those ethics, said criminal defense attorney Stuart Adelstein, that will make Diaz a good judge. Adelstein shared office space with Diaz for about 10 years.

“He’s got the perfect temperament to become a judge; he’s even-keeled, willing to listen, and not short,” Adelstein said. “He understands that both sides have an obligation in their duty to the prospective parties, and he does not get flustered at all.”

And with that resolve, Adelstein said, comes the ability to handle difficult cases.

Continued on page 35

alumni journal

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST KHAWLA ABU-BAKER, PH.D., CLASS OF 1997

BY RANDY ABRAHAM

For Khawla Abu-Baker, Ph.D., a Palestinian Israeli and alumna of NSU's Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, one person can make a difference.

As both a woman reared in a traditional patriarchal society and a Palestinian living in Israel, Abu-Baker is intimately familiar with the issues, risks, and hazards Arab women face each day. Her professional work has been an impassioned response to the social problems she witnessed growing up, she said.

After receiving her doctoral degree in family therapy in 1997, Abu-Baker returned to Israel to found the first private family therapy clinic in the Palestinian-Arab community. The following year, she joined Emek Yezreel College, and is currently a senior lecturer and researcher in the Department of Behavioral Science. In the coming year, she will direct a new certificate program of culturally sensitive family therapy at the college.

Shortly after her return to Israel, Abu-Baker directed a mental health project in the West Bank to help mourning Palestinian families who lost relatives during the Second Palestinian Intifada, a wave of violence that began in September 2000 between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis. Later, she directed a clinical project at a boarding institute for sexually abused Arab girls.

Abu-Baker spoke recently with *Horizons* by cellular phone. Her university office, located in northern Israel, was closed amid a continued military conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, which operates just north of the Israeli border, in Lebanon.

"My experience in the U.S. was both wonderful and exhausting," she said. "On the academic level, I studied a specialty that does not exist at the Ph.D. level in Israel. On the cultural level, I had an extraordinary experience. I gained new friends with whom I continue to have enduring relationships."

She has published 11 books and 28 articles and chapters, as well as given 54 workshops and lectures at international conferences in East Asia, Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and North America. She also authored texts on Palestinian-Arabs in Israel and studies of cross-generational sexual abuse within the extended family. Abu-Baker has participated in 42 local academic conferences and symposia; serves on the board of several journals and regularly publishes and lectures in Arabic, Hebrew, and English.

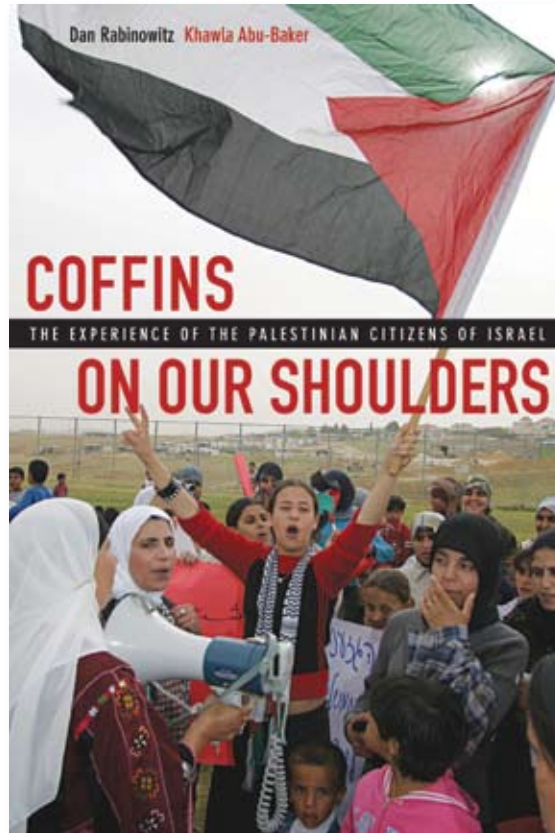
Most recently, Abu-Baker lectured extensively in the U.S. in support of her book, *Coffins on Our Shoulders: the Experience of the Palestinian Citizens of Israel* (University of California Press, 2005), which she co-authored with Dan Rabinowitz, a senior lecturer at Tel-Aviv University.

Abu-Baker said many in her community were not familiar with the practice of family therapy, so she promoted the profession as a frequent guest host on an Israeli radio station broadcast in Hebrew and Arabic. She also wrote a

column in a national Israeli newspaper in an effort to raise awareness of her profession and her services.

In a related effort to serve and advance her community, profession, and gender, Abu-Baker established the Mar'ha ("Woman") Institute to research issues of importance to Arab women in the Middle East. Currently, she is involved with a project aimed at developing tools for treating incest trauma among Arab female victims.

She has found that Arab women do live diverse lives—from the very traditional to the fully modern—but that the status of Arab women is sometimes subject to political realities. "Some regimes are supportive of women's rights; some are more repressive. During wars, women suffer, and traditionally, the struggle of women has been made secondary to



Continued on page 35

REMEMBERING A CHAMPION OF FREEDOM, HERO IN EDUCATION HOWARD F. BAKER, ED.D., CLASS OF 1976

BY GORDON N. BAKER

My father, Howard F. Baker, Ed.D., was a member of Nova University's first cluster in the state of Georgia. Despite both its track record for producing education leaders and its popularity, the university's program was not recognized by state regulators at the time of his enrollment. By the time of his graduation in 1976, Dad and his classmates had successfully fought to get the program accepted by the certification department of the Georgia Department of Education. Dad passed away on July 31, 2006.

My father was born in Savannah, Georgia. He attended public schools in Waynesboro and Valdosta, graduating from Valdosta High School. In 1940, he entered Emory Junior College in Valdosta. The following year, he began working with the U.S. Engineering Department at Moody Field, Georgia.

In 1943, the year he married my mother, Mary, Dad entered the service and served with the 490th Bomb Group of the Eighth Air Force as a ball turret gunner on B-24 and B-17 aircraft. Dad spent 34 months in the U.S. Army Air Corps, 13 of which were spent with the Eighth Air Force in England. He flew 28 missions as a ball turret gunner and was awarded the Air Medal with three clusters, ETO Ribbon with six battle stars, and a Presidential Citation.

Following his discharge from the service in 1945, Dad continued his education at Emory University in Atlanta. While at Emory, he was a member of Kappa Phi Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha, and Alpha Phi Omega fraternities. He earned a number of degrees, including a bachelor of arts and a master of education from Emory University. He continued his academic career by earning an educational specialist from Georgia State University and a doctor of education in educational leadership from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Dad spent the majority of his educational career with Georgia's Henry County School System. He began his professional career as a teaching principal at Locust Grove School in 1949 and was later transferred to Stockbridge Junior High School as principal. In 1957, he was named principal of Henry County High School, where he served until 1965. He worked with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Educational Program Counselor for the Atlanta Employment Evaluation and Service Center from 1966 to 1968.



In 1968, my father was elected to the first of three four-year terms as superintendent of the Henry County School System, from which he retired in 1980. When first elected, he defeated a three-term incumbent, only to discover that the system was deeply in debt by thousands of dollars. Through austerity measures, he guided the system back into the black and built up a financial reserve, which he left his successor in 1981.

He also successfully guided the Henry County School System through desegregation during his term of office. While surrounding school systems experienced violence, Dad brought about peaceful desegregation in Henry County, creating a partnership among all the stakeholders.

A consummate educator, my father wanted the best for students, teachers, and the community. He always gave 200 percent. I remember that once he became superintendent, he was in his office each morning before the first school bus left the transportation building and remained at the office until each bus returned in the afternoon.

His work ethic paid off. During his tenure as superintendent, he overcame deficit financing, successfully changed from a dual to a unitary school system, improved teacher morale, re-established a rapport with the Georgia Department of Education, supported improvements in the Henry County Library System, and helped establish the Nova Southeastern University doctoral program in Georgia.

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scoreboard

HOME SWEET HOME

UNIVERSITY CENTER GIVES SHARKS BASKETBALL THE HOME COURT ADVANTAGE

BY GUY HARRISON



In *The Wizard of Oz*, our heroine clicks her heels three times and proclaims, “There’s no place like home...”

With the completion of the \$80+ million University Center, NSU’s men’s and women’s basketball teams find themselves recalling those famous words.

Previously, home games for the NSU Sharks were held at Broward Community College’s George Meyer Gymnasium.

Practices were staged on courts belonging to NSU’s college preparatory school, University School.

Now, for the first time in the history of the university’s basketball programs, the Sharks practice and play on their own court.

“University School was gracious enough to let us use their facilities,” said Gary Tuell, entering his third season as head coach of the men’s team. “But it’s a good feeling to get out of their hair and not have to live out of the trunk of a car.”

Marilyn Rule, head coach of the women’s team since 1998, added, “Our facility will bring recognition to the team and the university. It will allow us to attract quality recruits at a level we’ve never had before.”

The student-athletes are equally excited. Their home court comes complete with team locker rooms, a club room, an equipment room, a state-of-the-art athletic training/sports medicine suite, and an arena with retractable seats to accommodate thousands of spectators.

“I’ve waited three years for this,” said Mechelle Jones, a senior. “It felt awkward using someone else’s gym. Now I feel like I’m at home.”

Big crowds are something that the Sharks aren’t used to. The hope is that the University Center’s appeal and location will draw more fans.

“For me, it was definitely a reason to come to NSU,” says LaShawonna Edwards, a freshman who graduated from North Miami Beach High School. “When they showed me what it would look like, I said, ‘This is where I want to be.’”

While the Sharks are excited about the current state of NSU athletics, the teams are exponentially more excited about what the future will bring. “It’s going to be a great experience,” Edwards said. “The intensity will be greater and we should expect to win more games because of it.”

For many years, the men and women in NSU’s basketball programs have been tapping their toes, waiting patiently for a home of their own. Now that they have one, the student-athletes said they are ready to show their full potential.

As the coaches begin to see the results and the teams improve, the timeless words of Dorothy will take on new meaning in the minds of the Sharks and their fans everywhere: “There’s no place like home, there’s no place like home.”

On the day of the University Center opening, junior Kevin Chester and a few of his teammates tested their new home court while hundreds of NSU employees toured the facility around them.

When a reporter asked him what he thought of the place, the junior center, standing an intimidating 6’9”, said: “We have a home for our team.” ■



GUY HARRISON IS THE SPORTS INFORMATION ASSISTANT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS.

FLORENCE BIH SHU-ACQUAYE

Continued from page 11

of his widow and children, along with the couple's property, to his brother or closest male relative.

"There are all sorts of customary traditions, including genital mutilation and polygamy, that make it difficult for women to have quality lives," Shu-Acquaye said. "As a result, the whole issue of HIV/AIDS becomes a major concern. In the African tradition, the man is head of the household, and the more wives and children he has, the more successful he is viewed. So if he 'inherits' his brother's wife who is infected, this marriage will likely result in the transmission of the AIDS virus to the brother, and possibly more people, given that the brother may have other wives."

This effect, she explained, is multiplied if either party has an extramarital relationship. "There has to be a change in mindset. However, we have to understand the culture and educate people in light of that understanding," she added.

She has written articles about the crisis, and is currently finishing a book, *Women, the Law and HIV/AIDS: A Conundrum for the Legislature in Africa?* She realizes she is tremendously blessed, having grown up with parents who were both in the teaching profession and who taught the family the value of education and its role in escaping poverty and despair.

Shu-Acquaye sums up her involvement as a call to arms: "I feel a tremendous obligation to positively affect the lives of women and their families, and help in some little way to ease the burden of those living with this deadly disease." ■

MARA L. KIFFIN IS THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

REEMBERTO DIAZ

Continued from page 31

"Personally, I think he has the guts to do the correct thing," he said. "He can call balls and strikes right down the line, which is what we'd want any judge to do, to closely follow the law. Diaz," he said, "does not submit to peer pressure."

At times, those tough pressures may involve a death sentence. Diaz, a conservative republican, said he would impose the ultimate penalty if need be.

"I am not afraid of it," he said. "I guess I am saying there are circumstances when a human being should forfeit his right to life; however, it's a very serious punishment and one that you should seriously consider before ever imposing it."

"Something like that would weigh heavily on my mind, and you don't want judges who say 'oh, I have no problem sentencing someone to death' because the penalty involved is final." ■

LISA BOLIVAR IS A WRITER IN TAMARAC, FLORIDA.

KHAWLA ABU-BAKER

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the national struggle."

Although she does not get involved in politics, Abu-Baker briefly joined the group Mental Health Workers for Peace. "As a therapist working with Jewish and Arab groups for 20 years, I tried to be involved. I worked as an education counselor for 13 years, and I went into family therapy to solve problems with individuals and families."

Abu-Baker arrived at NSU in 1994 under the auspices of the Israeli-Arab Scholarship Program. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, the program was established by the U.S. Congress in 1991 to provide educational opportunities in the United States for Israeli Arabs. It is administered by the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc., a private, nonprofit organization.

She enrolled at NSU because it offered one of a handful of doctoral programs in family therapy that focused on cultural sensitivity. "For me, it's very important for a therapist to understand other cultures, especially since Israel is a country of about 90 cultures," said Abu-Baker, who completed her doctoral studies and dissertation in three years.

"My experience at Nova Southeastern University allowed me to extend my academic, clinical, and research abilities," she added. "I was exposed to systemic thinking and research, which I embrace as basic tools in my work. I treasure both the academic and the human experiences I was honored to have at the school. It was a great experience, and the faculty was very supportive." ■

HOWARD F. BAKER

Continued from page 33

Dad served as superintendent of the Henry County School System from January 1969 until his retirement on December 31, 1980. He was appointed headmaster of Meadow Creek Academy in 1981 and served until 1984.

Growing up, I was always called either "Mr. Baker's son" or "Dr. Baker's son." When I began my career in education in Henry County in 1989, I thought I would be known as simply "Gordon Baker." But as fate would have it, the first month or so, I was introduced as "Dr. Baker's son."

My dad always got a kick out of this, but said one day that would change. Prior to my retirement from Henry County in 2004, my parents attended a state-wide event of which I was chairman. During the course of the event, several people approached my dad, asking him, "Are you Dr. Baker's father?" He really got a kick out of that! ■

performing arts in a single facility.

The building's central feature is a 400-foot-long broad atrium, flooded with the natural light of a soaring, 55 foot-high skylight. The three-level building boasts the architecture of a modern, open mall, with its activity areas branching off from the spine. The atrium's most eye-catching feature will be a one-of-a-kind 240' by 45' Guy Harvey mural in his signature style, colorfully depicting sharks of the world.

A series of grand stairs and elevators provides access to the second and third floors. The fitness center anchors the south end of the building, while the performing arts spaces do the same on the north end. In between, on the west side of the building, is the arena. The food court, to open next year, is also off the spine on the high-traffic first floor.

The building's spacious and airy design offers terrific internal visibility and expansive indoor-outdoor views.

The interior layout purposefully heightens the user experience by creating a flow between activity areas. One moves through spaces of different dimensions designated for different activities—all part of the designers' plan to avoid visual repetition, creating a functional and energetic facility that maximizes social interaction.

"The most fun thing about the building is the integration of functions and views that creates surprises," Lempke said.

BROADENING THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Multipurpose buildings have become more than a trend on college campuses across the United States over the past decade. But NSU's is distinct because of the variety of its components, and most notably, its incorporation of academic programs, including the performing arts, athletic training, and sports medicine.

"No one has ever seen anything that combines this many different elements. That's the 'wow' factor of this building," said Brad Williams, Ed.D., dean of student affairs.

The University Center will radically enrich the quality of student life, particularly for students choosing to live on-campus.

The rising tempo of campus activity is expected to enhance NSU's appeal among prospective students seeking a more traditional campus experience. With 710 dorm rooms built, 522 more to be completed by fall of next year, and plans for 1,800 to 2,000 more over the next five years, administrators envision the University Center as the catalyst for an exciting new phase of growth and development.

"NSU's opportunity for greatest growth lies in serving the traditional student population," Williams added. "Just as we were ahead of the curve in distance learning, we are

ahead of the curve now in what we offer traditional students. After all, our students in state-of-the-art dorms are gaining access to what are arguably the largest library and the largest fitness facility for the size of the student body of any campus in the region."

The performing arts wing, which is being constructed in multiple phases, will contribute to the growing diversity of new activities available to students because it will include instructional space for theater, music, dance, and visual and graphic arts.

"Most important, the new wing provides a clearly identifiable 'home' for new and emerging arts programs," said Don Rosenblum, Ph.D., dean of the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences. There will be special flooring; mirrored walls for dance; and essential spaces for stage and scenery design, costume preparation, and dressing rooms.

Rosenblum adds that the wing and the interactions it produces will add an important dimension to the undergraduate student experience "particularly as students enroll from high schools where arts budgets frequently have been cut."

CONNECTING NSU TO THE COMMUNITY

The University Center drastically reshapes how NSU relates to the broader community.

Overnight, it has become the second-largest indoor gathering place in Broward County, after the BankAtlantic Center. SMG Management, which manages bookings for the BankAtlantic Center, has been hired to book 90 to 100 public events each year at the NSU arena, potentially drawing as many as five million people to our campus annually. Some of these events would have otherwise not appeared in Broward County for lack of a suitable venue.

In addition to sports, music, and other public events, the University Center will annually host commencement ceremonies for 10 Broward County high schools. Two years from now, NSU will host the Sunshine State Conference basketball championship. High school and college sports tournaments will also be welcomed, said George Hanbury, NSU's executive vice president.

"This will present NSU from a new perspective to millions of people who never have been on our campus before," Hanbury said.

The new University Center is indeed the heart of campus, and its insistent beat will show prospective students, everyone on campus, and the broader community that this university has successfully fused the NSU experience: mind, body, and spirit. ■

BOB ROSS IS A WRITER IN MIAMI, FLORIDA.

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