



From the President

Your University: The University of South Florida:

The pages ahead tell exciting stories, about people who make us proud. Wherever I travel, I love to speak about USF's ever-growing achievements in quality teaching and innovative research. But nothing makes me prouder than my knowledge that the University of South Florida is above all a relevant university, one that speaks to the needs of people first.

In these pages, you'll meet faculty, staff, and students for whom community engagement is a way of life. Engagement is about genuine partnerships – how faculty develop their research questions in tandem with community collaborators, and how resources and results are shared. It's about USF students moving between the classroom and the community, applying their academic learning to real world situations, and enriching the classroom with the knowledge they bring back. It's about being a life-long resource for our region – fueling the economy, enriching our many cultures, and helping solve pressing social problems.

You'll read about work that's funded by million-dollar grants, transforming practice in hospitals and clinics. And also about individual faculty using seed grants or no funding at all to develop innovative projects that turn people's lives around. And you'll read about programs that take USF teaching expertise into the community, or that bring people, young and old, on to our campuses to learn.

Take a moment to look at the photographs that accompany these stories. You'll see USF people out in the community – working with children, listening to the disadvantaged, treating the sick, or tending the environment.

Every tale is unique, telling of relationships that have been carefully nurtured, and dreams that are a little closer to reality. But they weave together into one story, which describes a university's pledge. We pledge to make a difference in the lives of our traditional students, preparing them for the realities of a complex world. To make a difference for people who are drawn into USF through outreach and community projects. And to make a difference to those we serve with our scholarship and creativity.



Maybe you're a student, a parent, a community activist, a "snowbird," an entrepreneur, a neighbor. Whoever you are, we welcome you. **USF is your university.**

Judy Henshaft

The most important motive for work in school and in life is pleasure in work, pleasure in its result, and the knowledge of the value of the result to the community. — *Albert Einstein*

USF and the Community: Celebrate Our Engagement!

At USF, we're riding a wave that's sweeping through campuses nationwide. It's called "engagement," and we're celebrating it in these pages. It began as a ripple, speaking to a growing sense that maybe the people's universities were losing touch with the people.



Great public universities, especially the Land Grant universities created in the nineteenth century, were given a mission to educate more citizens than ever before, and to do research that served the needs of the community and the nation. They did so, with extraordinary success.

Yet as the twentieth century drew to a close, many people began to rethink. The old model, in keeping with its time, was a top-down approach. We in academe had the answers, which we would offer to the people. "Engagement" is an alternative, democratic model, in which the university and the community are equal partners.

What does engagement really mean?

First, it can change the way we do research. As USF's Center for Engaged Scholarship explains, "Engagement doesn't simply mean using citizens as subjects and organizations as laboratories." It means listening to citizens, having them help set the agenda. What are the problems that need solving? Who are the people to ask? How can we advance academic knowledge, while making a difference outside the academy?

Second, it can transform learning. There's still a place for "chalk and talk" - the classic lecture format - and no one's abandoning libraries and the contemplative solitude that's crucial to intellectual growth. But more than ever, students want to connect with the world outside the university. College students have long been community volunteers, but these days volunteerism can be integral to their coursework, building bridges between the community and the classroom.

The engaged teacher doesn't just send her students out to log volunteer hours - she challenges them to observe, study, and write about their service environments, connecting theory with practice. The engaged teacher doesn't just find out that an agency needs volunteers - he consults with community partners about the questions students might help answer, or invites them to campus to work with students.

And USF pledges to be an educational resource for everyone, from the traditional student to the young child and mature adult. Faculty, students, and staff have developed creative programs across all our campuses, enticing children for whom a college is a place of mystery. At USF, children can learn science or swimming, computing or calligraphy, mathematics or music — sparking a love of learning that can last a life-time.

Real commitment isn't easy - how do you teach science to a child who went to bed hungry, or whose parent has no transportation? For some, the answer is simple. You not only teach, but you feed the child, or drive him to camp. You raise funds and you spend your vacation leading enrichment camps.

"It's hugely important for our students to see that art isn't the province of a tiny group of academics, but that it lives and has an impact in the community,"
Bruce Marsh, USF art professor.

"Usually they come with their questions already set up - it was really unusual for people from a university to ask us how things should be done."
Sheridan Murphy, American Indian Movement.

Leadership for engagement

The engaged university doesn't just happen - it needs nurturing, commitment, and leadership. The leadership of people like **S. David Stamps**, who as



Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, recognized the need for engagement. "We're at the heart of a community, a state, and a region that



Provost S. David Stamps tours the community with anthropology doctoral students Jonathan Gayles and Bridgett Rahim-Williams.

all face pressing problems – whether the urban issues of Tampa and St. Petersburg, or the different rural challenges of Polk or Pasco. We have to be a resource for everyone.”

Stamps set up the Center for Engaged Scholarship and spearheaded the USF Community and Urban Initiative. He is joined by innovators like **David Shern**, Dean of USF’s Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute.

Shern exemplifies how university expertise can engage with the community to inform the development of public policy. As a leader in mental health issues, he chaired the state-appointed Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse, charged with reviewing the state’s entire service system, by bringing together experts, clients, and service providers in democratic consultations. And in 1996, a grass roots faculty initiative at FMHI

spurred the creation of the USF Collaborative on Children and Families, which awards grants and sponsors community/university programs.

“These guys come to realize that USF isn’t just a place other people go when they’re 18 - it’s a place where people come out into the community, saying ‘tell us about the problems you’re facing, because we’d like to help.’”
Joel Pietsch, Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Department.

Today, USF’s commitment to engagement is a way of life, whether at Tampa, St. Petersburg, Lakeland, or Sarasota/Manatee. In 2001, we hosted the University as Citizen conference, bringing together scholars from around the world to discuss university-community connections. Our strategic plan highlights engagement as a top priority, as we build our growing reputation as a national research university.

The work of faculty from across the disciplines makes such commitment possible; the very nature of engagement dissolves the barriers between disciplines, applying multiple perspectives to solve real problems.

USF: University as citizen

This publication showcases USF’s community partnerships. It’s by no means comprehensive – we’d need many more pages to highlight everything we do! But it creates a snapshot of a university that is committed to caring. We care that our students learn in the best ways possible. We care about bringing educational opportunities to people who may have missed them, or to children who get lost in the economic shuffle. We care about creating jobs, and making our environment safe and sustainable. We care about finding solutions for problems of crime, substance abuse, mental illness, and social inequality.

We’re proud of that commitment, and we want people know about it. And if partnership is about giving, it is also about receiving. At USF, we offer our resources and expertise, but we receive as much as we give. Community members support our students as they learn, supplementing academic training with real-world experience. They give generously to support our programs, and they work with our researchers to improve our theories.

USF is a citizen of our community, and we work side-by-side with other citizens to make better lives for us all. The Community and the University: Come celebrate our engagement!



Abuse, illiteracy, violence – Florida’s children face all these and more. Hands-on practice and research expertise come together in dynamic partnerships that bring USF and the community together to create a brighter future.

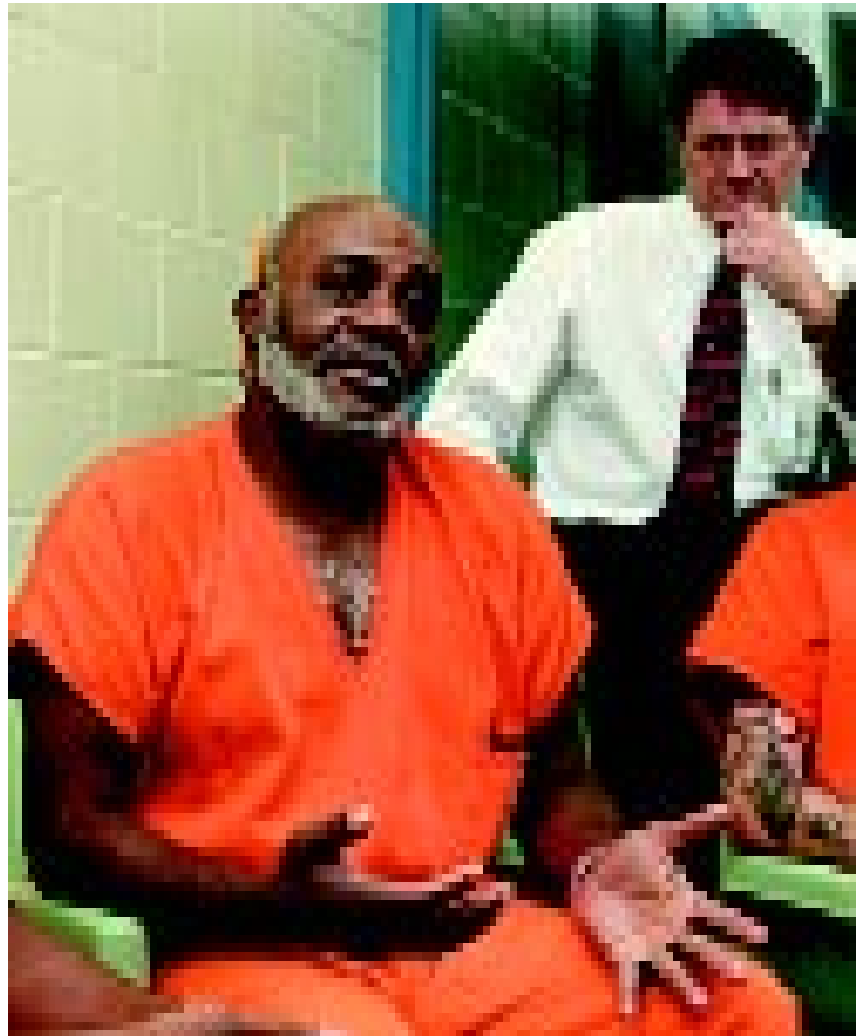
Children and Families

Incarcerated Fathers Learn to be Parents

“Margaret Mead said that the supreme test of a society is whether it can teach its men to be good fathers.” **Michael Rank** took the famed anthropologist’s words to heart, founding a program that offers parenting skills to jailed men, partnering with the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Department and the Child Abuse Council. Rank, Assistant Professor of Social Work and a former probation and parole officer, points out that 1.5 million American children have a parent in prison, usually the father, and that the absence of a father is the single most important predictor of criminal behavior in young men.

Funded by the USF Community Initiative, Rank developed parenting classes for men incarcerated in the Orient Road Jail, all with a history of substance abuse. The five-week curriculum focuses on building communication skills, managing anger, and learning humane discipline. According to Joel Pietsch, a USF Master of Social Work graduate and Sheriff’s department employee, “these folks weren’t taught much about how to be a decent parent, but many vow they’re not going to treat their children the way they were treated.”

The classes are facilitated by Justin LaRosa, another USF social work graduate, now with the Child Abuse Council. LaRosa sees real change in the men’s attitudes; he recalls a man who contributed little, but adamantly supported harsh physical discipline. After the class, he wrote: “I was raised the old-fashioned way, and I learned that maybe there are other, better ways than just mine.” All three collaborators are delighted with the partnership. Pietsch points out that social service programs aren’t funded through regular channels, and the USF project enabled



Michael Rank listens to a father attending a parenting class in the Orient Road jail.

the sheriff’s department to leverage a \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, that will expand the program. The initiative goes beyond the immediate moment: “These guys come to realize that USF isn’t just a place other people go when they’re 18 – it’s a place where people come out into the community, saying ‘tell us about the problems you’re facing, because we’d like to help.’”

Reducing Accidents: A Win-Win Partnership

Focusing on prevention, USF partners with Tampa General Hospital and local schools to reduce injuries among Florida’s children. **Karen Liller**, Associate Professor in Community and Family Health, evaluates the educational programs of MORE HEALTH, a TGH program that sends educators into schools with interactive lessons on health and safety, such as nutrition, dental hygiene, and injury prevention.

Liller's research on bicycle helmet safety led to her collaboration. She evaluated MORE HEALTH's lessons on bicycle safety, showing that helmet use increased significantly after the training: "Our biggest challenge now is to get the message across to middle-schoolers, who think helmets aren't cool!"

Liller later became Director of Education with the College of Public Health's Deep South Agricultural Health and Safety Center, a program that works to prevent illness and injury among farm workers and their families. MORE HEALTH partners will be field-testing a new curriculum that focuses on fundamentals – hygiene, pesticide exposure, and safe interaction with horses and machinery. Liller explains the challenges: "Migrant farm workers often don't speak English, and they distrust institutions like universities, so it's great that we can gain entry through trusted people like these educators."

Liller enthuses about the fruitful partnerships: "MORE HEALTH develops the programs, and we bring expertise in evaluation, which helps them fix problems, and increase their credibility." She has published widely, bringing national attention to the programs. "It's a win-win situation, and it's our responsibility. We are a university for our community, and we owe them."

Using Literature to Cope with Trauma

When staff at Sarasota Middle School needed help dealing with under-achieving teenagers, they turned to **Joan Kaywell**, Associate Professor in Secondary Education. Kaywell says that 25 percent of children come to school with emotional baggage that leaves them unteachable, especially in an era of high-stakes testing. But literature can

be a key to unlock their damaged psyches.

Funded by a grant from the Sarasota School District, Kaywell has been working with a school guidance counselor and troubled teenagers, using an approach she developed in a residential center for abused girls. The girls were angry and violent – Kaywell recalls one attacking another when she accidentally spilled a drink.



Working with therapists and a USF graduate assistant, Kaywell found that the girls responded to books about abuse, such as Chris Crutcher's *Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes*, a novel about a young girl trying to escape a psychotic father. In two months, the girls were reading, writing, and behaving civilly. The books "gave them the words they didn't have before."

Kaywell has edited a series of books, "Using Literature to Help Troubled Teenagers Cope," covering topics like alcoholism, AIDS, abuse, and suicide. She believes it's vital to work with the community to develop research that makes a real difference: "Kids who kill themselves are those who have lost all hope of anything changing. If you can keep hope in their lives in some way, they'll still be on this planet."

Narrowing the Digital Divide?

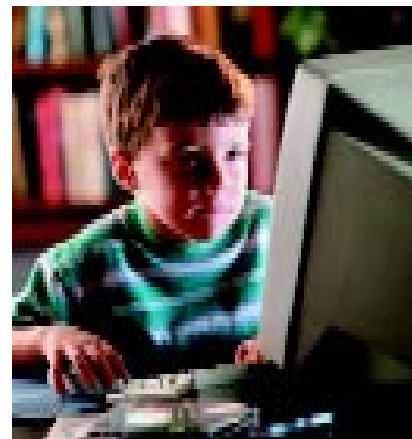
In a school partnership in Pasco County, two USF researchers are working with staff at Northwest Elementary to assess an innovative program that aims to narrow the "digital divide." Federal funds, earmarked for schools with many low-income

students, were used to buy computers for use in selected students' homes. Children then access programs in reading and mathematics through a school Internet server.

Jane Jorgenson, Assistant Professor of Communication, teamed up with **Elizabeth Bird**, Professor of Anthropology, to study the program, called "Homereach." They're interested in the immediate impact of the program – does it help raise grades? – and also in the broader impacts of computer technology in families.

Funded by a grant from the USF Collaborative on Children and Families, the pair are interviewing families in their homes. They suggest that technology isn't an immediate "fix," since families who don't know how to ask the right questions are still disadvantaged. "Some families have used the program to become really computer-literate, while others have focused on the lesson plans, and haven't really explored the potential," comments Bird.

Says their community partner, parent involvement coordinator Roberta Everling, "I'm excited about the opportunity to work with USF researchers. We simply don't have the resources to evaluate our program – we have ideas, but they'll help us confirm if we're on the right track."



Creating a Future for At-Risk Kids

Kathleen Armstrong's goal is to give at-risk children the best possible future, and she works with USF colleagues, students, and community partners to create it. Armstrong, Assistant Professor in Child and Family Studies, believes that experience with real world issues is crucial: "There's nothing quite like working with a family – you can learn a lot from books, but until you sit down with people and get to feel their situation, you can't understand what it's like to have a baby with special needs."

So she teaches a doctoral class in cooperation with **Jim Scott**, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, in which medical students and trainee school psychologists work with very young children in the Early Intervention Program at Tampa General Hospital. The interdisciplinary connection enriches both — pediatricians need to understand social and psychological context, while psychologists learn to appreciate the medical dimension.

Books in the Information Age?

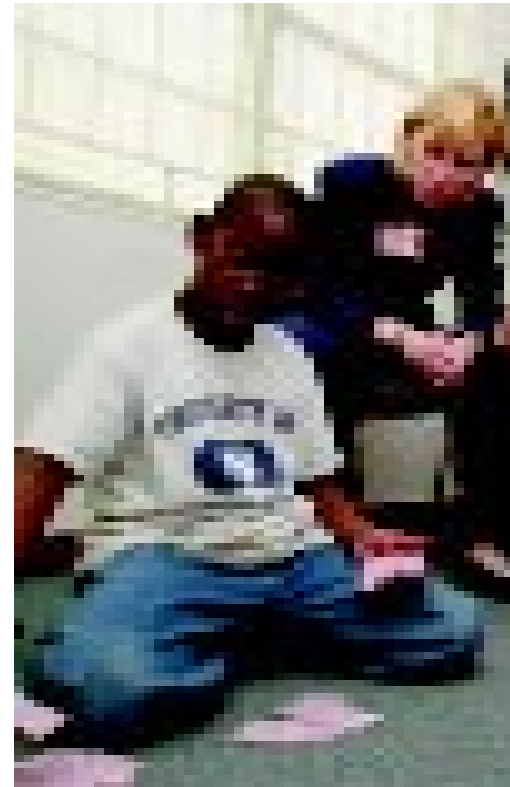
In today's "wired world," librarians have a hard time convincing kids to read, according to **Kay Bishop**, Associate Professor of Library and Information Science. She responded to a request from the Young Adult Library Services Association, which funded her, along with Visiting Professor **Pat Bauer**, to study what was wrong with libraries, from a teenager's point of view. Not surprisingly, they found that young people who go into libraries

congregate around computers and user-friendly areas, like couches. "Often the young adult books are in the children's room, and teenagers won't go in there," comments Bishop. The pair worked with librarians to show how to attract teens to books by simple changes in book placement and strategic relocation of technology.

Bishop also works with two Florida school districts to study how school media centers are using new technologies, from computers to video. She points to the importance of engaging community partners from the outset: "We met and I asked what *they* needed to have researched – they wanted to know about technology's impact, and how it compares across schools." In one school district, spending had been largely directed toward personnel, so schools were rich in trained media specialists, while in the other, the focus was on the technology itself. Bishop's evaluation is helping them make the best of the technology: "You have to have balance – you need the hardware, but if you have no-one trained to use it, it can often stand idle."

Play Therapy: Children Deal with Trauma

Social service agencies in Hillsborough County appreciate the chance to work with **Jennifer Baggerly**, Assistant Professor in the College of Education. Children made suddenly homeless often have unresolved feelings of anger, anxiety and depression; Baggerly uses "play therapy" in regular sessions at Metropolitan Ministries Academy in Tampa. She describes play therapy as equivalent to counseling for adults, as



Jennifer Baggerly uses play therapy with 5- and 7-

children use their natural medium of communication to explore their experiences.

For instance, Baggerly describes a child playing with a doll house: "He used the Army figures to storm into the house and throw out all the people, and then the people enlisted the help of the animals, and stomped on the Army people." The child was expressing his frustration in violent terms, but in the end he was able to resolve his feelings. The people did not return to the house, and the Army ended up in control, but the little boy had come to terms with his new reality. Baggerly, although she receives no funding for her work, believes it's important to bring her training and experience into the community. "It works, I make a difference, and that's worth a great deal to me."

“It’s a great partnership. USF people have a wonderful learning experience, the kids learn from them, and everyone takes back those lessons into their everyday lives.”
— Roy Kaplan, Tampa Bay Director, National Conference for Community and Justice.



year-old brothers.

Empowering Youth through Literacy

Kathleen de la Pena McCook was an active volunteer before she decided to apply her expertise more directly in Wimauma, a small community in southern Hillsborough County. McCook, Professor in Library and Information Science, responded to the Rural Social Services Partnership and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association’s need for expert help in providing summer programs for disadvantaged youth. Using a grant from the USF Community Initiative, McCook developed the Asset Mapping for Youth Development Project. In Asset Mapping, people inventory the resources of their community, using surveys and local data analysis, aiming to use those resources to create change.

McCook, aided by several USF graduate students, soon realized the children were simply not equipped in basic skills, and weren’t able to do the kind of data analysis she had hoped: “Some of them couldn’t read; I brought them stamps and they thought they were stickers. They’d never written a letter.”

So McCook used her specialty in information science to teach tasks like using a telephone book, reading and making maps, applying for and using a library card. Her own students learned research techniques, and how to apply them in the real, often messy world. And the teenagers gradually acquired skills, working together to learn the history of their community. They eventually decided to run a fun fair for smaller children, which they planned, publicized, and actually held, wrapping up the project with thank you letters to donors and speakers.

According to McCook, “It certainly wasn’t a sitcom, with everyone holding hands and singing ‘we are the world.’ But it showed what can happen when you bring together the knowledge of the university with the experience of the community, and the will to do something positive.”

Teaching for Social Justice

Richard Weinberg, Clinical Associate Professor with the Florida Mental Health Institute, sees youth camps as a great opportunity to engage with the community, educate students, and develop a relevant research agenda. Weinberg participates in Camp Anytown, an initiative coordinated by the National Conference for Community and Justice. High school youths attend, divided equally among white, African-American, and other ethnicities. Among them are high achievers, active in school leadership, along with “middle-

of-the-road kids,” and many who are already facing troubles like substance abuse or criminal behavior. The camp focuses on understanding differences, and on questions of individual and collective power.

Weinberg describes the camp as “a week spent enlightening kids about the societal factors that help create inequities, but more important, it’s about what they can do about it.” He describes a workshop on “privilege,” in which students begin standing together in the middle of the room, and then take steps forward or backwards in response to a battery of questions – do they have intact families, free school lunches, private medical treatment? Then the students imagine that life is a race, beginning at this point, with some having an enormous head start. “It opens up a huge discussion about how some of us are born into families with power and privilege,” and it then suggests what they can do about it, by connecting students with agencies that sponsor volunteerism.

Weinberg and his graduate students work in the camps, but also collect data. They want to track the teenagers for a year to assess the impact of the camp’s lessons. For instance, are at-risk kids who become involved in community service less likely to end up in the criminal justice system?

He believes this engaged partnership benefits everyone – USF students learn evaluation and interview techniques in a real world environment, and the USF connection helps camp planners develop their goals within a broader theoretical framework. Roy Kaplan, Tampa Bay director of NCCJ, points out that dozens of USF students and faculty have staffed the camps: “It’s a great partnership. USF people have a wonderful learning experience, the kids learn from them, and everyone takes back those lessons into their everyday lives.”

At USF, physicians and other medical professionals are leaders and partners – working with our community to share expertise and promote health in body and mind.

Health and Wellness

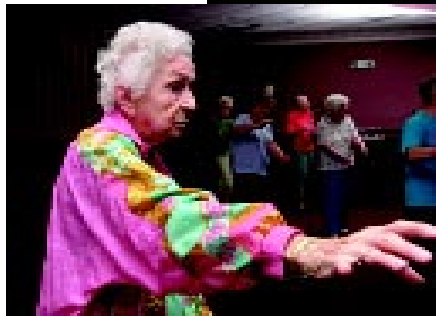
T'ai Chi: Meditation in Motion

Using the ancient art of T'ai Chi Chuan, Anatomy Professor **Li T. Chen** enriches the lives of senior citizens while scientifically studying the benefits of the technique.

T'ai Chi is a traditional Chinese martial and healing art, in which participants move slowly into prescribed poses: "You have to use your mind to pay attention to your body parts, while you relax your muscles and joints. We call it meditation in motion," explains Chen.

Chen sees T'ai Chi as an ideal way to combine academic research and community engagement, as he teaches the art to senior citizens in University Village housing. He believes it can improve balance and flexibility, increase participants' perceived quality of life, and maybe more – his earlier research shows it may slow the loss of bone mass in women after menopause.

Before starting, participants take physical tests for balance and flexibility, and psychological tests measuring their perception of life quality. After six months they will be re-tested, and Chen is optimistic: "T'ai Chi is ideal for seniors because it's slow-moving, yet builds strength and flexibility. And it's social too — people get together to exercise, then meet again at the classes."



Li T. Chen teaches seniors the art of T'ai Chi.

So far, he is delighted: "We have 60-60 people, ranging from age 60 to the mid-90s.

Most haven't been active, and they're excited about how well it's making them feel."

Chen works with colleagues in the USF Center for Positive Health, a unit of the College of Public Health that supports research into practices that may promote a healthy lifestyle. He hopes that by demonstrating the value of T'ai Chi, he may attract funding that could apply lessons learned at USF in senior communities state-wide.



More Sleep for Better Health

Most of us have occasionally been too sleepy to concentrate, but may have dismissed it as a minor problem. But **W. McDowell Anderson** argues that sleep deprivation is a health problem with real consequences.

According to the Professor of Internal Medicine, “the media are attuned to the role of drug abuse and alcohol in

accidents, but often what actually kills people is sleepiness. “ Car accidents and plane crashes increase at night, as people nod off at the controls.

Anderson spearheads collaborative research and education efforts, setting up ways to coordinate programs at several area hospitals: “USF, by providing a common platform, can smooth over turf wars, and help us focus on the goal.” The partners stage an annual sleep disorders conference, and are creating an informational web page.

Anderson’s own research focuses on Obstructive Sleep Apnea, in which breathing is briefly but frequently interrupted during sleep. People often see the condition as minor, but apnea can be associated with significant health problems, and sufferers are chronically sleep-deprived. As many as 25 percent of the elderly have sleep apnea – “It’s a condition with real and often drastic effects, and we need to get the word out.”

So it’s vital that USF and the community come together to address problems like apnea, insomnia, and institutional structures that conflict with natural sleep patterns. For instance, research shows teenagers need nine hours of sleep, and naturally fall asleep later than young children, yet bus schedules often dictate that high school starts at 7:30 a.m. “If there was some way to get high schoolers to school later it would be a great step toward better health all round, “ says Anderson.

Compassionate Caring: Life Lessons with the Dying

A creative partnership between USF and LifePath Hospice brings medical students into the homes of terminally-ill

patients, and teaches them the value of compassionate caring.

According to **Ronald Schonwetter**, director of USF’s Division of Geriatric Medicine, USF and LifePath have been partners for 15 years, with USF overseeing the medical care of its patients. Six years ago, Schonwetter developed a collaborative training module for USF medical students, which exposes 96 students a year to the hospice model. Hospice is a national movement that steps in when doctor and patient accept that a cure is not possible – treatment focuses on pain management and emotional/spiritual support, usually in the patient’s home.

The course begins with a training session on hospice principles, followed by an afternoon in a patient’s home, accompanied by a nurse, and another with a social worker. Finally, students present their patient cases in simulated team meetings, attended by physician, nurse and social worker.

As Schonwetter explains, “it teaches students never to say there’s nothing we can do. They’re often fearful at first – they anticipate seeing someone crying in agony, or taking their last breath. ” Instead, they find something different. As one student wrote “For the first time, I learned a form of medicine that cannot be read in a book. The family was being blessed with the opportunity to say good-bye.”

And LifePath gains from USF research on hospice care: “It’s a relatively new field, and we’re evaluating patient outcomes, which will lead to improvements in hospice care. It really is a winning partnership,” concludes Schonwetter.

A New Model for Community Health

"We are a *community* medical school, founded on that premise in 1971, and leading the way ever since." **John T. Sinnott**, director of the College of Medicine's Division on Infectious Diseases, is passionate about USF's role in medical education, research, and patient care that brings the university and its constituents together.

He sees USF as unique: "Other Florida medical schools are old and established; it's as if everything is already done. But we have a chance to do a lot of new stuff, and we're doing it."

"New stuff" includes the creation of an innovative model for county health departments. Traditionally, these performed routine tasks like vaccinations, health archival work, and some education, but had little contact with the cutting-edge treatments offered in university medical settings. In 1996, Sinnott proposed to the state that USF take on the running of Hillsborough County health department, providing active research and clinical programs for those most in need.

The state agreed to set up Hillsborough as a demonstration project, with **Jeffery Nadler**, Professor in Infectious Diseases, leading a vital HIV/AIDS initiative. Says Nadler: "Now USF and the department work together to address problems that plague our community. At the same time, our students and researchers gain real, hand-on experience."

Nadler established USF's Infectious Disease Research Unit, conducting research in the health department, and with colleagues at Tampa General Hospital – work that made state and national headlines as a model of collaborative health care.



USF extended the model to Polk County, where Assistant Professor **Daniel Haight** leads a staff of 400, based in Bartow but managing 17 county centers. For Haight, it was an unexpected career development: "I'm a specialist in infectious diseases, but now I deal with everything – water contamination, HIV, TB, septic tank permits, chemical spills, radon gas leaks."

Haight believes this USF commitment is crucial: "My role as a university professor gave me the credibility to speak out about issues like teen pregnancies and smoking." And for him, the job is "beyond rewarding," as he makes a real impact in people's lives. "If I do a front page article on flu vaccines, how many people might get the shot, and avoid getting sick? In public health we treat hundreds of patients at once though education."

Sinnott's division transcends the academic medical model, and has attracted major grants, many for education and outreach. The National Centers for Disease Control recently named USF as the Southeastern STD/HIV Prevention Training Center, under the direction of **John Toney**, with a grant of \$1.5 million. Says Sinnott, "We're really creating a new model for truly engaged medicine, perfect for a

major urban university. What else would our goal be than to work with the community for our mutual benefit?"

The USF AIDS Center: Prevention and Education

By 2001, Florida ranked second in the nation in AIDS infection, with 80,000 cases. Since the early days of the epidemic, **Michael Knox**, Distinguished University Professor in Community and Mental Health, has developed prevention and training initiatives, housed in the federally-funded USF Center for HIV Education and Research.

According to Knox, quality training for health care professionals is crucial: "Infected people treated by well-trained providers will experience fewer symptoms and live longer."

More affluent Floridians have access to such providers, so the Center's primary goal is to train providers in underserved communities. "We often take training to rural communities and migrant health centers," says Knox.

“We’re really creating a new model for truly engaged medicine, perfect for a major urban university.” — Dr. John T. Sinnott, USF College of Medicine

And AIDS is not only a medical problem, but one that concerns psychologists, social workers, and counselors. The Center offers them intensive training in two-day HIV Clinical Tutorials, where professionals share information on topics like counseling, testing, mental health impacts, legal problems, and even preparation for death.

The Center reaches into the community at many levels. Senior Training Specialist **Valerie Martin** is proud of the free testing and counseling services, and she also coordinates a peer mentorship program, in which teens counsel their peers on HIV and other sexually-transmitted diseases, as well as on drop-out prevention, substance abuse, and pregnancy. “We know they’ll listen to other teens before they pay attention to authority figures,” says Martin.

And Martin targets another crucial institution – the church. “Many of our clients go to their church for support, and don’t receive it, because church people have looked down on those afflicted.” In an attempt to change that mind-set, Martin visits churches to talk about offering support programs. “It’s slow, but pastors talk and network, and we’re now getting lots of calls for me to speak.”

Most recently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded the Center a \$3 million grant establishing it as a National AIDS Education and Training Center. Martin explains: “Community people are coming to know that the university isn’t its own world where the super smart go to

classes. It’s a resource for them and their families, wherever they live.”

Engaging with AIDS

Psychology Professor **Marcia Finkelstein** also bridges the gap between theory and practice in a class that applies principles of social psychology to the realities of AIDS treatment. Undergraduates in “Social Psychology of HIV/AIDS,” volunteer at the Tampa AIDS Network, going beyond basic service. “Their task is to frame the problems they observe in the



context of theory they learn in the classroom, and then to use it to develop possible solutions.” Working in every area from testing to food services, the students keep a diary, eventually writing papers that will be shared with their community partners. One volunteered with HIV counselors: “She felt that in trying to be non-judgmental, the counselors weren’t always doing enough to encourage change in behavior. It was as if some clients used testing as safe sex – they would keep taking risks, then come every month to get tested.” The student’s paper offered suggestions about how counselors might apply persuasion theory, and Finkelstein hopes to set up a dialog: “As professionals, they bring vast experience and intuition, and we bring knowledge of social psychology research. It’s a two-way street.”

As the director of USF’s Center for Engaged Scholarship, Finkelstein is

committed to research and teaching that makes a difference for both students and community.

“My guiding question is always: Can we take a theory and apply it to a very real problem, while also training students in essential skills like writing and critical analysis?”

Seniors and AIDS: Shattering the Myths

Collette Vallee’s central task is to shatter the myth “that older people don’t have sex, and that they don’t want to talk about sex.”

Vallee is the project coordinator of the Senior HIV/AIDS Prevention and Education Project, which uses funds from the Florida Department of Health to educate seniors and health care professionals about HIV’s impact on people over 50.

SHAPE, located in USF’s Department of Aging and Mental Health, offers vital information to the growing number of HIV-positive seniors. Vallee visits assisted living facilities and senior housing, and advises nurses’ assistants and other professionals: “People think older adults don’t inject drugs, and they’re often embarrassed to talk about sex. Even health professionals — they’ll prescribe Viagra, but they don’t ask who patients are using it with!”

Of course seniors have sex, and it may be risky – encounters with sex workers or casual acquaintances. “I write articles in a local senior newspaper about sex and seniors, and I get at least two calls a day,” says Vallee.

Vallee believes USF’s initiative is effective because “we have the credibility of a major research institution. And we go beyond basic medical issues, connecting them with people’s everyday lives.”

Whether theatre, sculpture, dance, or music, people often think of the arts as remote and inaccessible.

USF faculty and students work to bring the arts "home," making them relevant and exciting for our communities.

Arts and the Community



Ed WindDancer, a Nanticoke Cherokee, rehearses with Aboriginal dancer Banula Marika.

Living the Dreamtime Today

Dance, theatre, art, and history came together in **Gretchen Ward Warren's** vision of a future that values indigenous culture.

"Dreamtime, Our Time: The Eternal Circle" was an ambitious program created by Warren, a Professor in Dance, that brought together USF faculty, students, members of the local Native American and Arts communities,

and Australian Aboriginal performers, aiming to establish awareness of indigenous culture and history.

The project's seed was planted in 1997 when Warren was a Fulbright fellow in Australia. She marveled at how Aboriginal people, like Native Americans, made extraordinary efforts to preserve their cultures, even in the face of oppression.

Warren's two-week-long event celebrated culture, while drawing attention

to historical and current injustices. The center-piece was Warren's dance-theatre production, "Dancing With the Wheel of Ever Returning," which wove together contemporary dance, art, and music with aboriginal expression and social commentary. "I wanted to provide a forum to raise sensitivity on racism and stereotyping."

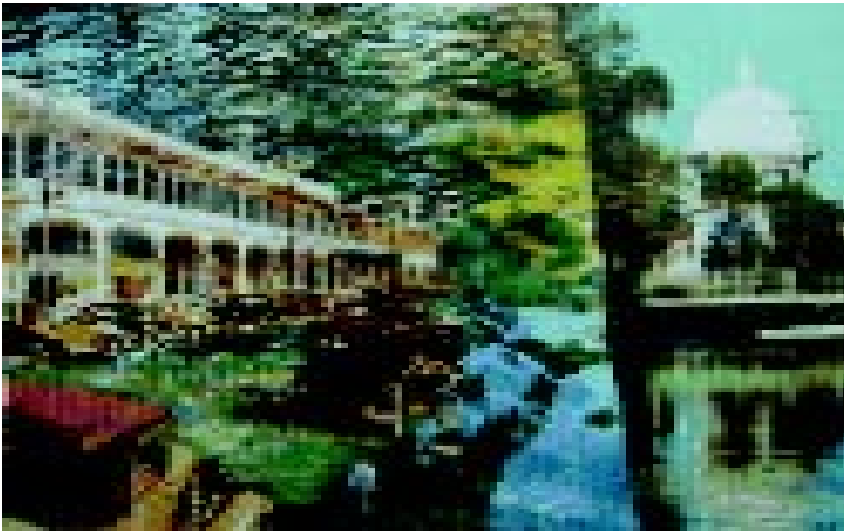
Warren spent months building trust with Native people, who helped plan the event. Irwin SharpFish, a Sicangu Lakota now living in Florida, became the event's Indian consultant. "I sensed it was powerful enough that it should be done, and I wanted to help make sure it was done right," he said.

SharpFish found Floridians unaware of Indian cultures. "People think Indian dancing is all whooping and hollering and war dancing, and that it's all the same. But my culture is famous for sweat lodges and the Sun Dance, and southern Indians have completely different traditions."

The event also featured Native art exhibits, lectures, film series, and workshops, involving USF and community talent. **Brent Weisman**, Associate Professor of Anthropology, curated the exhibit and was an important link between USF and the Seminole tribe of Florida, with whom he has worked for years.

"Native people are so often perceived as locked in the past. In this small way I was able to help question that, and show how Indian people live in the modern world and can be anything they choose," said Weisman.

Warren worked for two years to raise money from grant funders and local businesses. "It was a fabulous, humbling education. It brought together people from all over the region and abroad, and enticed people into USF who'd never set foot here before."



USF Professor Bruce Marsh's mural in Sulphur Springs, Tampa.

Art for the People

If you think of art as “high culture” hidden behind the doors of glitzy galleries, it’s time to rethink, and **Bruce Marsh** will show you how. Marsh, Professor of Painting and Drawing, describes “public art” as a relatively new concept. “The goal is to put very visible works of art into public spaces. It gives voice to community values, or touches on its traditions or history.”

Marsh is both a teacher and practitioner of public art, and recently unveiled a dramatic mural that adorns a wall at the newly-renovated recreation complex in Sulphur Springs, a long-established Tampa community. “It was very rewarding. I met with the neighborhood association and discussed their interests and memories, and I tried to respond.” Marsh took historic images, such as 1920s photos of the swimming pool, computerized them, and trans-

lated them onto 68,000 glass tiles, creating a mosaic 30 feet long and nine feet high. Up close, the image seems abstract, but from a distance, it looks like a photograph.



Marsh helps children trace designs in his mural.

The community loved it. “I spent a great deal of time there during the creation of the piece. People recognized the old architecture, and are just really pleased.” Marsh

enjoyed melding ancient and modern in the mural: “It’s totally designed digitally, but it’s realized in glass tiles, one of the very oldest image-making media.”

Marsh promotes and teaches public art whenever he can. “It’s hugely important for our students to see that art isn’t the province of a tiny group of academics, but that it lives and has an impact in the community.”

Revealing Emotion with Neutral Masks

Robin Gordon brings theatrical training into the everyday world, working with “neutral masks” to help children express themselves. The white, expressionless masks are used in theatre training; students are mute, and learn to use their entire bodies to create a character. According to Gordon, Assistant Professor in Performance, the mask develops “freedom of movement and clarity of gesture, because it takes away facial expressions and voice.”

She believes the masks have benefits beyond formal acting training: “It’s a paradox that when we put on a mask, we feel unmasked, and people actually learn about themselves.” She sees benefit for people such as prisoners or children with emotional issues, and she is developing a research agenda around it. “It can open doors, offering elation and emotional release, even with no talking involved.”

Gordon used the masks with sixth graders at Tampa’s Webb Middle School. “Sixth graders are often self-conscious, but they took off. You give them characters — you’re rubber band man, you’re chicken woman, you’re walking on the moon. Taking away their faces takes away the performance pressure, and it’s more like exploring your body.”

Gordon plans to offer the exercises during USF’s Summerplay camps. “Universities can become isolated enclaves, when they should be the arts center of the community,” she says.

Gordon has supervised projects ranging from performances for care-givers of Alzheimer’s patients to creating workshops for area youngsters. “All actively involve our own students, who are learning not only their craft, but also about the power of the arts in our community.”

Small businesses, non-profits, museums, and industry —
USF faculty and students create partnerships that nourish
learning and success in the local economy.

Business and Technology

Taking Care of Business: Students Learn through Action

With the help of USF students, the volunteer pilots of Angel Flight Southeast are flying more needy patients for urgent or distant medical treatment. Two years ago, their rapid expansion had almost overwhelmed their ability to plan, until pilot Richard Wachstein called USF.

Angel Flight's pilots, using their own planes, fly patients to distant locations for cardiac care, transplants, specialized pediatric treatment, and other medical needs. According to Wachstein, demand had grown from about 250 missions to over 1,200, and they were "up against a database wall," as the logistics grew more complex.

Wachstein, who owns a printing business in Temple Terrace, called USF Marketing Professor **Paul Solomon**, and a fruitful partnership began. Within months, Angel Flight had a sophisticated, user-friendly new database, allowing the organization to track flights, patients, pilots, and donations, all created by USF Business students.

Angel Flight is just one success story to emerge from a two-semester capstone MBA class, "Integrated Business Applications," taught by Solomon and **Steven Bolten**, Professor of Finance. Students apply lessons learned in coursework to real-world clients, usually small businesses or non-profit groups. In Solomon's first semester, students form small groups, and set up a marketing plan for their client. During Bolten's second semester, they create financial budgets and forecasts, and suggest business strategies, finally packaging their work in a professional report.



MOSI Director Wit Ostrenko demonstrates an exhibit for USF students and visitors.

According to Wachstein, "The quantity and quality of their work was incredible. They put in lots more hours than they had to, because I think they embraced the human importance of our mission." In return, the USF students gained valuable experience. As Bolten puts it, "It's real life, real time, and there's no substitute for that."

Until a few years ago, the class projects were hypothetical, but "then word got around, and now people come to us. They need us — a consulting firm

would charge from \$50,000 to a quarter million dollars for what we do."

And requests come in from near and far. One group helped preserve the livelihood of a small bakery in Trinidad; the owner had died, leaving his family to run the business. "They were great bakers, but they had no managerial skills, and they were losing money hand over fist." Somehow, the family connected with an MBA group, who



Making it Real: Science and Learning at USF and MOSI

The Museum of Science and Industry, one of USF Tampa's closest neighbors, wants to "make science real" for the people of Tampa Bay. **Fred Steier**, Associate Professor of Communication, wants to "make research real" for his students, and a partnership between USF and MOSI was the perfect way to do it.

Steier teaches an "Action Research" class, which meets at MOSI, and works on ways to help the Museum put its goals into action. Students observe museum visitors and talk with staff, all with the goal of understanding just how people use the interactive exhibits, and what they expect from the museum. The students' work will then be used to help MOSI staff design effective and user-friendly exhibits.

As a class student puts it, "this class is different because it's giving me an opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives." Partnerships can be a challenge, as Steier explains: "We have to keep reminding ourselves that we shouldn't impose our agenda, but should allow equal time for MOSI's vision to come through. So we want to respect their goals, while also giving them the opportunity to question some of their basic assumptions."

Even after the class ends, Steier and his students will continue to work with

MOSI, presenting their findings at interactive workshops with the staff, which they hope will be "a springboard for future conversations." Meanwhile, all the students have become volunteers at MOSI, so the conversations will continue at many levels.

Alongside the class, Steier is collaborating with MOSI director Wit Ostrenko, developing more interactive ways to present science to the public. According to Ostrenko, "in the next five years we'll be replacing almost all our exhibits, so we're looking for ways to improve. We don't see ourselves as the dispenser of all knowledge, but as the provider of exciting experiences, where people learn science by doing, and then talking about their experiences for a lifetime."

Ostrenko and Steier will continue working together on the design project, and they also have the long-term goal of developing a more creative organizational structure for MOSI, encouraging staff to reflect on their goals and objectives. Ostrenko hopes this is just one example of what will become an ongoing collaboration between USF and MOSI. "We're neighbors, and we're both in the business of learning, and engaging

people's hearts and minds. I

happily admit to being a dreamer,

who envisions

great things in

MOSI's future

– and I'd like

USF to be a

big part of

that vision."

created a plan for them. "In one semester, we turned them from losing money to making a profit, and all from a distance," says Bolten with pride.

Angel Flight's Wachstein sums up the value of USF's engagement: "USF helped us, so that we can go on helping people who need us. It was a great partnership, and one we can all feel proud about."



A USF engineering student shares his project with industry judges.

Engineering a Classroom/Industry Connection

The “real world” of industry comes together with academic training in the capstone experience of USF’s electrical engineering students. Associate Professor **Lawrence Dunleavy** explains that an annual design competition, judged by practicing engineers, allows individual students to demonstrate that connection.

Electrical engineers design products – perhaps an electrical distribution system for a new sub-division, or a battery for an electrical vehicle. In their capstone design project, each undergraduate student has to do exactly that – create a product design, and carry

out tests, measurements, and evaluations of their design elements. Working one-on-one with faculty, the students also consult with industry engineers throughout the semester, culminating in the creation of a poster that outlines their work, and which they interpret for judges.

The poster display represents the projects from a department-wide competition, and uses funds provided by Mini-Circuits, of Brooklyn, New York. Organized by Distinguished Professor **Rudolf Henning**, it is quite a festive occasion, bringing together students, faculty, and industry engineers. Dunleavy welcomes the

partnerships:” It’s so much more meaningful for them to have to explain their work to a professional. And it helps them come to grips with



important ideals that go beyond the practicality of the design itself – like what are the global and societal impacts of what they’re doing? For instance, if their circuit is emanating electromagnetic radiation, they need to document that.”

According to Dunleavy, USF’s engagement of university and industry fits with a new paradigm for engineering education, known as ABET 2000: “ABET – the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology — has set new standards for accreditation. You have to poll your constituents, who are students, graduates and employers, to show the relevance of what you’re doing.” He hopes the poster contest is just the beginning, describing recent discussions with engineers at Trak Microwave, a Tampa company, some of whom serve as judges. Now they’d like to become more directly involved: “It’s exciting to think that next year, I may be team-teaching Wireless and Microwave senior design with someone from industry. He’ll provide the specialized knowledge and field experience that will mesh perfectly with what I do in the classroom.”

USF and Business: Collaborative Learning for Success

Local businesses are learning to look to USF for help in training employees in Information Technology. The Office of Resources for Business and Industry Training offers classes in databases and office applications, from the convenience of USF’s Downtown Center .

Founded by Information Systems Professor **Mary Prescott**, ORBIT actively seeks input from the business community about its needs. About 60 academics and business people meet regularly as the Job Skills Project,

“USF helped us, so that we can go on helping people who need us. It was a great partnership, and one we can all feel proud about.” — Richard Wachstein, Angel Flight Southeast



discussing the region’s needs for IT training, and advising state government bodies like the Governor’s Internet Task Force.

Prescott travels the state setting up partnerships. “I was just talking with the University of Central Florida about ways to ‘clone’ ORBIT there. They even want to use our name - that’s a real measure of our success!”

Prescott’s neighbor in the Downtown Center is the Small Business Development Center, which has become a state-wide resource for expert small-business advice. The center offers free or low-cost workshops and seminars on business development, but according to director **Irene Hurst**, “we spend most of our time one-on-one with people who seek us out. We advise them on financial planning, marketing, and global issues, with USF MBA students providing much of the expertise.” SBDC’s success can be measured in the 5,000 entrepreneurs it advises annually, as well as the new businesses it has helped create.

For both ORBIT and the SBDC, the key to success is collaboration. “We’re creating jobs and increasing the tax base in the community, while giving USF students real-life experience,” says Hurst. As Prescott explains: “I think community engagement is the only way the university can remain relevant in today’s world - I’m pretty passionate about that.”

Training Journalists for a Convergent Media World

In the new media world of “convergence,” newspaper reporters may suddenly have to think about how to smile for the camera, and USF faculty in Mass Communications have ways to help them.

Convergence refers to the growing (and sometimes controversial) practice of combining print, broadcast, and web-based journalism under the same ownership umbrella, with journalists

moving among media. According to **Jay Friedlander**, Professor of Mass Communications, “West Central Florida is the primary laboratory for media convergence activities in the country,” represented in Tampa by the melding of the *Tampa Tribune*, WFLA TV, and Tampa Bay Online, all owned by Media General, and housed in a new, \$40-million building.

The organization asked the USF faculty to train its print reporters in “talk back” techniques – how to answer questions about their stories on television.

Adjunct faculty member **Neil Vicino** gave the journalists a four-hour training session on how to conduct an on-camera discussion with the studio anchor, covering topics like preparation and how to address the camera and anchor. It was followed by a 90-day “warranty,” during which reporters could ask questions by phone or email. The department trained over 100 *Tribune* reporters during 2000, and the training continues as new staff join the organization.

The reporters also receive a booklet with more tips on television techniques, supported by a USF web site, which covers everything from overcoming nerves (drink hot tea and avoid soda) to choosing the right make-up and clothes for the camera.

USF’s partnership with Media General has extended into plans to teach a convergence class for USF students at the *Tribune* and WFLA, teaming a USF instructor with three from Media General. Friedlander is pleased with the arrangement: “We were delighted to be part of this experiment as a contribution both to the Bay area and to our profession.”

At USF, many disciplines come together with a common goal – creating new ways to learn, and ensuring access to opportunities for all.

Educational Innovation and Schools



Robin Thompson, a teacher and USF doctoral student, works with a child at De Soto Elementary.

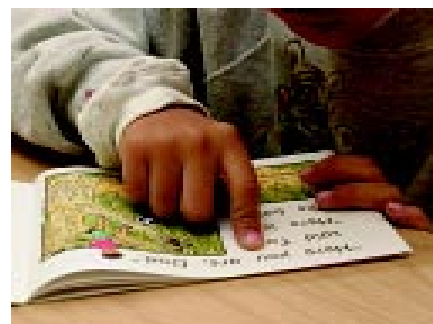
Rescuing At-Risk Readers

James King and **Susan Homan** advocate “rescuing” at-risk readers before they are labeled as learning disabled, and their Accelerated Literacy Learning (ALL) program has done just that for many Florida children.

King and Homan, Professors in the College of Education, along with colleagues **Barbara Frye** and **Ruth Short**, began the program 10 years ago, and it’s now used in 11 Florida school districts. The key is to catch kids early: “About 20 percent of first graders will almost certainly fail to read, and usually cannot be helped even by the best of teachers,” says King. The ALL program takes kids out of the class-

room to work one-on-one with a trained teacher, using special strategies to develop independent problem solving.

Daily lessons are carefully structured. For 10 minutes, the child re-reads familiar books with the teacher. “Usually, at-risk readers are constantly struggling — they never get time to get comfortable with what they know,” says King. A 10-minute “writing segment” follows, when a child dictates a one-sentence story.



“That’s how we teach phonics - they hear a sound in their heads, then connect it with the representation in print. Most reading methods teach sounds in isolation, and then blend them together to make words.” For the last 10 minutes, the teacher introduces a new book, and watches the child problem-solve - checking a word against a picture, re-reading, checking to see if a sentence made sense, and so on. The new book becomes part of the next day’s first segment, in a continuous cycle of reinforcement.

Homan and King have had striking success. “We’ve found that 80 percent of these kids reach average levels within about 60 lessons, and nine out of 10 of those maintain that level at least through sixth grade.” The two professors are in first grade classrooms every week, while also training teachers, who can take a two-semester program at USF to certify them in the method. They’ve been experimenting with groups of three children, with effective results.

In Broward and Hillsborough counties, Homan and King are trying a new version, in which trained teachers use the method with their lowest reading group in a regular classroom. “It’s looking very promising. It’s hard for teachers at first - so many demands are made on them. But we win them over - they see real change, and they love the process,” King comments.

According to Homan and King, this is a true partnership that requires commitment from teachers, school districts, and USF. “It can seem expensive, because it costs about \$2,000 a year per child. But if that child

has to repeat a grade, it will cost \$3,600 a year. And in the long term, they don't need remediation."

ALL has been recognized nationally as an exemplary program, and has trained over 500 teachers. The Hillsborough initiative was funded with a \$400,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation. According to John Blanchard, president of Verizon's Southeast region, "Perhaps the best thing about USF's program is that it delivers immediate and lifelong benefits to students." King agrees: "USF must be involved in changing people's lives, right in the schools. It's vital for teachers to see that we know how hard their job is. When we're able to see real change, that makes it all worth while."

Creating a Culture of Opportunity for Latinos: ENLACE

Why do so many Latino students drop out of high school? And of those who continue, why do so few go on to graduate or professional training? USF Vice-Provost **Catherine Batsche** is working to find the answers, and change the pattern in the future.

The Latino population of Hillsborough County has tripled since 1980, and is now at 18 percent. And while elementary school populations reflect that percentage, Latino enrollment steadily drops from high school onwards, reaching very low percentages in graduate school.

The pattern is repeated around the nation, spurring the Kellogg Foundation to launch the ENLACE initiative – ENGaging LATino Communities for Education. Batsche explains, "Enlace is a Spanish word meaning to weave together to create a new entity that's stronger than its parts, and we won funding to tackle this in Hillsborough County."

"Of course there's no such thing as a single Latino community," Batsche points out. "Some are migrant, or poor, or in the country illegally. They often don't speak English, and they are wary of institutions like universities. Others are highly-educated and motivated recent arrivals, but their English is poor. Still others are well-established and influential, and perfectly comfortable in educational settings."

To understand that complexity, the team went into communities, conducting focus groups and open meetings in schools, churches, and other public places.

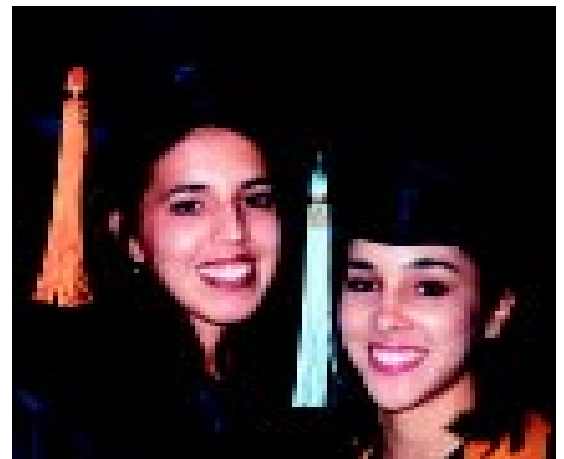
"We found that Latino communities have incredible strengths. There's a strong sense of family – many parents want a better life for their children, and children want to give back to parents who have done so much for them." At the same time, there are barriers to success. "Language is often a problem for parents, who can't help their children plan their careers, and can't deal with the bureaucracy of financial aid, scholarships and so on."

The USF team includes **Donna Parrino**, Director of Latin Community Advancement, **Mario Hernandez** and **Angela Gomez** of the Florida Mental Health Institute, **Diane Williams**, of USF's Center for Teaching Enhancement, and **Cynthia Visot** from Academic Affairs. They found that there are crucial transition points at which students risk dropping out. When they turn 16, there may be pressure to find a paying job, and college or graduate school can seem impossible for a student who may be the first in the family to complete high school.

Now the group, in partnership with the Hispanic Services Council, the Hillsborough County School District, and

Hillsborough Community College, is putting the findings into action.

One strategy is community and family outreach. Local Spanish language TV and radio stations will run informational features, and Batsche looks forward to the ENLACE Express – a



computer-equipped resource bus on loan from Hillsborough County that will visit community events and schools, carrying recruiters, financial aid advisors and guidance counselors. Local organizations will participate in a "Latino STARZ" initiative – the Museum of Science and Industry will feature an International Latino Scientist event, and the Tampa Bay Mutiny soccer team will sponsor a Latino picnic.

Batsche is optimistic: "We want to create a culture of opportunity for Latino students, enabling them to reach their full potential. We've involved the community from the very beginning, and that's why we think it will have a permanent impact."



Creating Real-World Education

Imagine a class where one day you examine invertebrate fossils on ancient shells, and the next you interview a Mexican migrant worker. Between classes, you may be mentoring a disadvantaged high school student.

That would be Learning Community 15, one class in an innovative USF program that brings disciplines together and bridges the gap between university and community. Learning Communities offer a new approach to general education at USF; instead of taking a series of discipline-bound courses with many different classmates, freshmen remain with the same peers for two years, and take interdisciplinary classes with teams of professors.

Bruce Cochrane, Professor of Biology and Director of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, explains the premise of LC 15: “We’re focusing on Ruskin, in southern Hillsborough County. It’s a fascinating area – you can drive from a quaint old Florida village, through Sun City Center retirement community, to a migrant farm settlement, all in a few minutes.”

The faculty team is anchored by Cochrane and anthropologist **Ella Schmidt**, with **David McCally** (History), **Martha Lakis** (English), **Mark Dibble** (Information Literacy), **Kate Miller** (Fine Arts), and advisor **Sylvia King**, each bringing their own perspective. “We’re working with Camp Bayou, a nature center that also houses a reconstructed pre-Columbian village and a paleontology museum, created by Frank Garcia, who discovered a treasure trove of prehistoric remains in a shell pit,” said Cochrane. Eventually, the students will develop interpretive programs about the natural environ-

ment and history of the camp and the community, creating materials to share with the public.

The beauty of learning communities is that the students stay together for two years, and can build extensive projects and learning experiences. Schmidt will teach about Mexico and its culture, and the students will learn about Mexican migrant workers in the area. Some may partner with local groups like Redlands Christian Migrant Association to mentor at-risk children. Others may focus on paleontology or plant species, while classmates may study the rich history of Ruskin, which was founded as a utopian community in the nineteenth century. But all will have a rich, multidisciplinary grounding that enables them to see connections.

Other learning communities at both the Tampa and St. Petersburg campuses, are partnering with middle schools, bringing together arts, sciences, and communication skills while working closely with children. **Janna Jones**, Assistant Professor and Director of Learning Communities, values the community engagement. “I see the students bringing experiences back into the classroom, understanding their relevance. We’re bridging what is often a real divide – between academics and the people.”

Computers Fire Interest in Languages

A key to foreign language fluency is beginning early, yet languages are a low priority in elementary schools. **Joyce Nutta’s** research shows how computer-assisted instruction helps young children get started, and may fire their interest in further study.

“I see the students bringing experiences back into the classroom, understanding their relevance. We’re bridging what is often a real divide – between academics and the people.” — Janna Jones, Director of USF Learning Communities

Nutta, Assistant Professor in Secondary Education, used a USF Presidential Young Faculty Award to develop and offer a Spanish program at Frontier Elementary in Largo. The free, after-school program was staffed by USF graduate students, using the school’s technology, while Nutta studied the impact of the multimedia instruction on students’ learning.

About 30 second-through-fifth graders signed up for the year-long program; half were taught using a traditional book-based approach. The others used multi-media, with the teacher presenting the material on a big-screen television, and the children working in pairs at a computer screen. The result? “We found kids using the computers learned more words, and when we followed up after six months, they had remembered the vocabulary longer,” says Nutta.

The study also showed that the computer-assisted students developed better pronunciation and constructed longer and more complete sentences. “The computer was easy to rewind and re-listen, and they could record their own voices. The other kids could too, using audiotape, but they just didn’t use it as much.”

For some children, the class opened new doors. “We had a fourth grade African-American boy, labeled as emotionally handicapped and with severe learning disabilities. But it turned out he had a real gift in language.” The boy flourished in the program, and his new self-esteem spilled into his regular classroom behavior. “It was a wonderful success story!”

Although there was no funding to continue the program, Nutta’s research was welcomed by parents, many of whom sought out language magnet

schools for their children. Nutta continues her language studies in area schools: “If we as educators of future teachers are not out in the schools, researching the new methods ourselves, we can’t be effective in teaching them to others. We must be there in the community.”

Designing Native American Studies with the Community

When USF-St. Petersburg faculty **Jay Sokolovsky** and **Rebecca Johns** decided to explore the feasibility of a USF Native American Studies program, they went straight to the Indian community for input.

According to Sokolovsky, Professor of Anthropology, and Johns, Assistant Professor of Geography, there are up to 60,000 Native Americans in Florida, yet only about 100 enrol at USF. “Native Americans don’t see themselves represented at Florida universities, and their unique contributions are often ignored,” says Johns.

Johns and Sokolovsky are using a grant from the University Community Initiative to involve the Indian community from the

start, in everything from survey design to program development. According to Dave Narcomey, a Florida Seminole and Indian activist, “A program like this would give Indian people pride, and help break many of the stereotypes, educating the non-Indian community about our unique cultures.” He cites local indifference to the demeaning effect of Indian sports mascots in Florida: “I’m offended every time I see such things, yet people don’t understand why.”

Another community partner, Sheridan Murphy, a Lakota and member of the American Indian Movement, was surprised when the researchers contacted him. “Usually they come with their questions already set up – it was really unusual for people from a university to ask us how things should be done.”

Sokolovsky and Johns are developing a data base of Native American resources for higher education, and hope eventually to present a proposal for Florida’s first Native American Studies program.



USF's largely urban communities have their share of tough social issues, from homelessness to crime and over-crowding. USF scholars tackle problems through collaborative research and innovative service learning.

Social and Community Issues

The Human Impact of Housing Reform

While most people agree that dilapidated urban housing must go, two USF researchers believe the social effects may not always match the good intentions.

Cheryl Rodriguez, Associate Professor of Africana Studies, and **Susan Greenbaum**, Associate Professor of Anthropology, are studying the impact of a federal redevelopment project on displaced residents. Using federal Hope VI funding, the Tampa Housing Authority is tearing down two public housing projects in Tampa — Ponce de Leon and College Hill — replacing them with mixed-income housing. The 1,100 displaced families, are given advice on finding new housing, often using federal Section 8 vouchers to pay rent in the private market.

Rodriguez admires the intention. "Nobody would argue for maintaining those projects as they were – they were horrible, and the residents were plagued with crime, vandalism and the sheer ugliness of their surroundings."

Nevertheless, the two raise questions: "We're finding a lot of people are cut adrift. I talked to a woman who found housing in Ybor City, but her sister ended up in the University district. They were each other's support system, they don't have transportation, and so they can't really see each other. "They are interviewing displaced residents, local housing officials, and activists, and using Geographic Information Systems analysis to analyze data on the residents' relocation patterns.

Rodriguez and Greenbaum hope their research, funded by the USF Collaborative on Children and Families, will help authorities understand the consequences of the initiative, helping future planning efforts. Residents were given

warning, and people were hired to assist them, but many had lived in the projects for years, and were not well-prepared for the private market. "Many are elderly, disabled, or single parents, and they don't have the resources that middle-class people take for granted — transportation, knowledge, money to plan ahead." And with the influx of several hundred displaced people, low-cost housing becomes hard to find.

Rodriguez talked with a woman who had lived in College Hill for 30 years. "She was working – not on welfare. She lived alone in a desolate and dangerous area, and I asked her if she was afraid. She said she was more afraid of going somewhere unfamiliar, and she didn't know where to turn."

Greenbaum and Rodriguez stress their support for redevelopment efforts. Some displaced residents are living in better circumstances, although others are not. But they believe such transitions must be carefully monitored, supporting people's move toward greater independence. They hope their research will help groups like the Housing Authority and the Urban League, with whom they're cooperating. And Rodriguez points to the impact of such engaged research on their team of anthropology graduate students: "It's exciting. They're learning how to be researchers and how to work as a team, and also about the politics and history of this community."

Above all, they believe "it's important to tell the story from the perspective of the people living it." As Rodriguez sees it, faculty who research difficult social issues are role models, "showing what universities can and should be doing in the community."



USF professors Susan Greenbaum (left) and Cheryl Rodriguez in the neighborhood of College Hill, Tampa.

Defusing Lethal Force

A person in emotional crisis and an armed police officer can be an explosive combination, leading to tragic newspaper headlines and community distrust. **Larry Thompson**, Psychologist in the Community Mental Health Department, works to train officers in how to defuse such confrontations.

In cooperation with the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, Thompson and his colleagues at USF's Florida Mental Health Institute have created a 40-hour training program, which begins with education on how to identify a problem: "What are the symptoms you might see if someone has a bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia? What about drug abuse, alcoholism, or retardation?"

In a crucial second step, officers interact with people experiencing mental illness. In Hillsborough County, that might mean lunch with residents of



Rodriguez visit a house in the abandoned

a half-way house: “They learn what it’s like to hear voices, they hear about clients’ experience with police, and they learn how they would like to be treated.” The effect is profound. “It’s amazing – officers tell us that before this they were afraid. Now they see patients as human beings with problems.”

Officers then learn how to remain calm during a potentially dangerous incident, and how to assess what’s happening. There may be medical issues, such as an epileptic seizure, or bystanders who need to be reassured. Finally, officers learn procedures to take people into protective custody or simply get them to a service that can help.

Usually, Thompson works with police trainers, who then train officers. “It’s

often received better from one of their own.” And he is pleased with the impact. “We trained all the officers in the St. Pete Police Department. At first, the attitude on the street was, ‘when do I have to do this?’ By half way through, we were hearing it differently – ‘when do I get to do it?’ “

Thompson’s program has also trained officers in the Tampa Police Department, and the Hillsborough and Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office, most recently assisting the FBI with a special program. Police academy training has traditionally overlooked the problem, so Thompson was delighted when the Florida Department of Law Enforcement requested advice on revising its academy curriculum, with recommendations currently being adopted.

“It’s so rewarding when our expertise has real practical use. In fact, it’s what this university is all about,” concludes Thompson.

Alternatives for the Mentally Ill

Once mentally-ill people are arrested, they often end up in prison, rather than in treatment where they belong. **John Petrila** is evaluating a creative Florida alternative to help break the cycle of incarceration.

Petrila, Professor in the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy, is assessing the work of the nation’s first Mental Health Court, in Broward County, Florida. “Mentally-ill people are often arrested for minor things like trespass, yet end up staying two or three times longer than other offenders.”

Mental health courts aim to create a solution, rather than punish. Cases are heard before a single judge, with representation from the state attorney and public defender. There are no sworn witnesses and cross examinations: “The idea is to get all the relevant people into one place, with the judge as a convener – I’ve seen her call an agency from the bench to set up treatment.”

Petrila’s research already suggests success. “It’s definitely getting people out of jail quicker – hearings are often held within 12-24 hours of arrest, and that’s a dramatic change.” The research team is interviewing about 100 people who have been through the court; almost all were enthusiastic about the respect they received. “We know if you give someone a voice in their own fate, they’ll do better in treatment.” The team will follow people for 16 months, assessing longer term impacts. The court is a model whose time has come – recently a federal law granted funding for 125 courts nation-wide.

The research team – Petrila and colleagues **Norman Poythress, Roger Boothroyd, Annette McGaha, and Rhonda Ort** – is spreading its findings widely. Their report will be featured in the journal *Court Review*, which goes to about 3,500 judges nation-wide, and will also be sent to all the state mental

health commissioners, as well as the state legislature, which partially funded the study.

Petrila believes it’s crucial that USF researchers involve themselves in important social issues. “We’re outside the arena of legislative debate, but we might help inform that debate – it’s exactly the sort of work we should be doing.”





Taking Aim at the Traffic Crunch

If you've ever used the "bike-lids," outside University Mall, or noticed the new sidewalk near Tampa's Mort Elementary, you've seen the work of USF's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Clearinghouse.

TDM, under the direction of **Phil Winters**, receives annual funding from the Florida Department of Transportation, and provides advice on transportation problems. As Winters explains, Florida's ever-growing population of people and vehicles produces congestion and real economic and social

problems, resulting in lost time, lost money, safety threats, and poor air quality.

A project of USF's Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), TDM employs 40 full-time researchers, who tackle a range of issues. For instance, Hillsborough County's attempts to get people off welfare and into work are often frustrated by transportation problems. "Often people don't live where the jobs are, and even if there are buses, they may run at the wrong times," says Winters. TDM's researchers did surveys and generated maps, coming up with different strategies. "With luck, we'll end up with some broader thinking than just buses, which can be very expensive."

The mall bike-lids came out of TDM's work with the University North Transportation Initiative, a community task force looking at traffic problems in the heavily-traveled area around USF, Busch Gardens, the University Mall, and the many hospitals. The bike lids, which enable shoppers and mall employees to leave their bicycles safely outside, were funded through TDM grants, but will become self-supporting by carrying advertising. "They have been so successful that the mall management is considering duplicating the program in its properties nationally," says Winters.

Other initiatives simply involve bringing people together. "We connected the local community safety team with the principal of Mort Elementary, and we ended up with a sidewalk near Mort, which has really helped the safety of the kids." Winters acknowledges that sometimes people find it strange that USF's College of Engineering houses CUTR, since engineers are known for the "technical fix." But he thinks the fit is perfect. "I'm an engineer, although most of my staff are not, and we're all equally committed to making our city livable. It's not easy, and sometimes it feels like a kind of guerilla warfare – but it's the right thing to do."

Classes that Bring Social Issues Alive

Reality cop shows and fast-paced entertainment can make criminology an attractive choice for students, but **Kim Lersch** wants to make sure students understand the realities of working in the criminal justice system.

Lersch, Assistant Professor of Criminology at USF-St. Petersburg, incorporates service learning in all classes. She believes true service learning is more than collecting volunteer hours – students apply their knowledge, while giving back to the community.

Says Lersch, "I'm an educator of future policy makers and criminal justice administrators, and it's essential to provide students with tools to critically analyze media reports and political positions about crime." She points to media depictions that create distorted notions of "typical" crimes and criminals, and glamorize the system. To counteract this, her students work in juvenile intervention programs, adult supervision centers, and police agencies. "Nothing is more rewarding than coming to class and hearing the

“Every theory I’d studied about delinquency applied — bad homes, running round with bad kids, you name it. It was awesome, incredible!” — Joe Althof, USF Criminology student

students excitedly talking about their community placements.”

Students agree. Criminology major Joe Althof, who plans a career in law enforcement with the Fish and Wildlife Commission, put in 25 hours at the Pinellas County Juvenile Assessment Center, observing and helping with young offenders as they were pro-



USF student Joe Althof observes a juvenile assessment.

cessed into the system. “I saw these kids — how they’d started out at 8 or 9 stealing cars. Some were crying and remorseful, and others just sat there, defiant like, saying, what else you gonna do to me? Every theory I’d studied about delinquency applied — bad homes, running round with bad kids, you name it. It was awesome, incredible!”

Gerontology students also know how the synergy between students and the community can produce a special learning experience and a new appreciation of the aging process.

In **Mary Kaplan’s** Gerontological Counseling class, students were matched with senior volunteers in programs like the Foster Grandparent Program, the Senior Companion Program or Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. According to Kaplan, Assistant Professor in Gerontology, “we wanted the students to learn about elders’ lives by having them work with

a diverse group – from healthy senior volunteers to frail, needy clients.” In the classroom, students learn about counseling, empathy, and assessment skills, and the experience allows them to put theory into practice.

Kaplan partnered with **Kathryn Hyer**, Director of the Training Academy on Aging at the Florida Policy Exchange Center on Aging, who helped evaluate the program. They observed the development of students’ skills, measuring changes in attitudes and knowledge about elders, and presenting their findings at professional meetings. They found the hands-on experience made students more empathetic and allowed them to make more informed choices about a career in gerontology.

Students valued the opportunity. One wrote about how much she had enjoyed working with a Grandparents raising Grandchildren group: “I learned an awful lot and am thankful for the experience. I have been invited to come back, and I may just do that.”

African-Americans and AIDS

Nancy Romero-Daza, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, notes that in spite of rising HIV infection rates, African-Americans are not using medical services at the same rate. She’s been finding out why. Some barriers are practical; people can’t get to clinics because they don’t have cars, or cannot afford child care. But more important, says Romero-Daza, are cultural barriers. “There’s a lot of stigma in the community about homosexuality and drug use, and AIDS is associated with those.” And memories of past injustices linger: “People remember outrages like the infamous Tuskegee project, in which Black men with syphilis were left untreated for years, as a medical

experiment. They simply distrust the medical establishment.”

Funded by Hillsborough County, through the Ryan White Care Council, Romero-Daza is working with service providers and clients to establish better communication, and find ways to encourage African-Americans to come in for testing, treatment, and counseling. She and her team of graduate students are developing cultural sensitivity discussion forums, in which providers and clients share information on issues like homophobia, and the fact that the African-American “community” actually consists of many culturally-different groups. “We’re not saying we have all the answers. We’re saying we have some useful information, and if we share our concerns, maybe the barriers will start coming down.”

And for the graduate students employed on the project, it is a crucial learning experience, says Romero-Daza. “You can learn all about the history and theory of AIDS, but when you look into the face of someone who’s living with it, that’s really powerful.”



Florida's unique combination of explosive growth and a fragile environment creates challenges from water management to marine conservation. USF teams with the community to tackle these issues and improve the region's quality of life.

Natural and Built Environment



Shawn Landry, left, and Kyle Campbell, right, survey a lake for the Hillsborough County Lake Atlas, assisted by marine biologist Tim Foret.

Water Everywhere, and not a Drop Unmapped

Have you ever wondered about the depth of that lake behind your house? Or whether it's polluted or infested with exotic vegetation? If you live in Hillsborough County you can find out, courtesy of **Kyle Campbell** and **Shawn Landry**.

Campbell, Assistant Director for Research, and Landry, a Senior Research Scientist, both in the School of Architecture's Florida Center for Community Design, have collaborated

on the Hillsborough County Lake Atlas, available on-line through the center's web site.

Interested scientists or community people can click on a lake name, or even locate a body of water by tracking it from the nearest street. They'll find a photo with information about depth, water quality, plant and animal life, and more. The project maps everything from streams to estuaries, and brings together information that's otherwise scattered around about 20 governmental agencies. "Now all the data are in one place, and it's saving the county enormous amounts of time and money in staff resources," says Campbell.

Lakes also have cultural significance, and the project funds an anthropology graduate student to create photo essays, using oral history interviews with long-time residents.

The research is funded by the South West Water Management District (Swiftmud) and Hillsborough County, and the team is now funded to map Seminole, Polk, Citrus, Hernando, and Pinellas counties. "Eventually we'd like to develop the software and make it available nationwide," says Campbell.

Now Hillsborough County has funded the Center to tackle water pollution by mapping the complex network of pipes

and outlets that drains storm-water into Tampa Bay.

“About 50 percent of the pollution going into the Bay comes in storm-water, yet the county had no clear idea where all the pipes and other features are,” says Campbell. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency required Hillsborough County to map its storm-water system and the Center took on the job.

USF graduate students, equipped with portable Global Positioning System (GPS) units, can pinpoint structures, such as pipes, manhole covers, inlets, headwalls, and retention ponds, many of which aren’t visible. **Steven Reader**, Assistant Professor of Geography, led the development of a protocol used to process the information into a Geographic Information System. A GIS can produce much more than a conventional map - it’s a computer system capable of assembling, manipulating, and displaying spatial information in many different ways, highlighting relationships between different elements.

County managers will finally know where all the features of the storm-water network are, how old they are, and when they need replacing. And “if someone has a complaint about flooding, or water quality, or someone dumps something illegally, they can quickly locate exactly where the problem is,” Campbell comments.

And Environmental Justice for All

In a state constantly seeking to develop, “brownfields” – abandoned or under-used industrial facilities – may become tempting targets. But are we opening the possibility of health hazards from contaminated land? And does redevelopment benefit the often

disadvantaged people in the area? **Renu Khator** has helped the City of Clearwater create development plans that are both environmentally responsible and socially just.

Khator, Professor of Environmental Science and Policy, was funded by the City to develop an Environmental Justice Action Plan that has become a national model. Clearwater has over 200 brownfields, the former sites of junk yards, dry cleaning stores, gas stations, or other businesses.

“Developers won’t come in, because if they find contamination, they are liable for cleaning,” said Khator. Often these sites are in poor and minority neighborhoods; if the area is redeveloped, people cannot afford to stay. “We wanted to break that cycle, by bringing city officials and community together to find what kind of development they want, and how it can be done to keep the community there.”

Khator met with city officials and community activists, holding public meetings, going into homes, and eventually bringing everyone’s opinions together. “People wanted a health center, so the city cleaned up a brownfield site, and got a grant to build one, which now provides free health services.” And people wanted to be part of high tech redevelopment plans, so the USF grant created programs to train locals as environmental technicians. “Eleven have graduated and have well-paying jobs.”

The initiative has involved USF students in collecting data, while faculty like **John Swinton**, Assistant Professor of Economics, have contributed expertise. Says Khator, “Often there is goodwill on all sides, but a history of distrust makes communication difficult. The university can be a neutral partner.”

Protecting Bay Area Water

As Florida’s population grows, demands on water become more urgent, with USF faculty taking the lead in finding solutions.

According to **Virginia Harrell**, director of USF’s Florida Institute of Government, “There are so many complex decisions around water use. Key

decision makers are experts in their fields, but don’t always have a thorough background in water issues.” Along with **Bill Heller**, Acting Vice President of USF-St. Petersburg, Harrell created the Community Water

Leadership Program, which brings together academics and community leaders to discuss and learn. Key Florida concerns include water costs, preservation of wetlands and aquifers, pollution, and growth management policies – can the demand for water keep pace with development?

With a grant from the Pinellas-Anclote Basin Board, part of Swiftmud, the program has led forums and field trips on issues like preservation and water shed management, in which participants viewed wellfields, cypress domes, streams, lakes and dams. “Then there’s hydro-politics, where we look at the





USF Professors Graham Tobin, left, and Robert Brinkmann study the impact of street sweeping on water pollution.

people who put law into process, and we've had sessions on the global, national and state perspectives," says Harrell.

The group is guided by an advisory board of USF experts, water management professionals, activists, and community leaders, all enthusiastic supporters. According to Advisory Board Chair Mike Zagorac, senior vice-president at public relations firm Hill and Knowlton, "USF provides a respected, neutral community resource for people to discuss important, and sometimes controversial issues." Program participants include developers, county commissioners, city council members, and many more.

Harrell aims to secure funding to expand the program regionally, and she is convinced of the value of such initiatives to USF: "When we do these

things well, it brings goodwill from the community, and people will turn to us for other needs, creating life-long friends."

Board member Dick Eckenrod, director of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, agrees: "This is an effective way for USF to help develop well-informed leaders. It's essentially an educational function, and what institution in the region is better equipped for that than the University?"

Can Street Sweeping Ease Pollution?

Could more frequent street sweeping prevent pollution from flowing into Tampa Bay during storms? That's the question the Florida Department for Transportation asked **Robert Brinkmann** and **Graham Tobin**.

According to Tobin, Professor of Geography, "State rules require new developments to show a reduction in storm-water pollution, and street sweeping may be a way to achieve that." Tobin and Brinkmann, Associate Professor of Geography, aided by Associate Professor of Geology **Jeff Ryan**, were funded by the FDOT, first to find out the best type of sweeper, and then to test different schedules of sweeping, measuring their effects on pollution.

"A brush-and-vacuum type works best in Florida, because we have so much coarse sediment, while in other parts of the country, vacuum-only types work best," said Brinkmann. The researchers, aided by a team of graduate students, swept selected street corners, either once a week, twice a week, once every two weeks, or not at all. During storms, the team collected water samples from each site, to measure the sediment and pollutants.

They concluded that although twice-weekly sweeping would be most effective, a weekly schedule could have significant impact, especially in areas producing heavy sediment, or where pollutants run off over-fertilized landscapes. Currently, most residential areas are swept only once a month.

The lessons of the project will have wider impact, as Brinkmann and Tobin complete a contracted book on the science of street sweeping. Tobin found the project valuable for many reasons. "Our team included graduate students from Geography, Environmental Science, Geology, and Engineering, and it was a great practical learning experience for them. And we have an obligation to our local community, to help them solve pressing environmental problems."

“We are an internationally-known research program, and it’s important to bring that wealth of knowledge back to the community, building a new generation of scientists.” — Peter Betzer, College of Marine Science

The Excitement of Marine Discovery

A cultural perception that “scientists” are men may lead girls to rule out a career in science. Ten years ago, USF’s College of Marine Science set out to change that, and today its **Oceanography Camp for Girls** has a national reputation.

Peter Betzer, Acting Dean of the college, explains that the college decided to target girls just finishing middle school. Every summer, 30 girls attend the three-week camp, where they immerse themselves in the excitement of Marine Sciences, both in laboratories and in the field. “They do beach profiles, go to mangrove systems, and do a trip on an oceanographic research vessel,” says Betzer. Mentored by USF graduate students, mostly women, they form small teams to focus on special areas, such as remote sensing, molecular techniques, geology, or chemistry, and each group completes and reports on a project. “It’s all hands-on. Maybe they’ll study the gut contents of fish – what do fishes eat, and what does that depend on? Is the shape of the jaw important? They’re beginning the discovery process that is the essence of science,” Betzer explains.

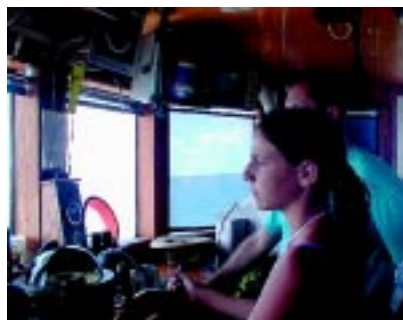
Initially funded by the National Science Foundation, the camp now runs with an endowment built through fundraising. The campers, who pay no fees, are selected from several hundred applicants, ensuring a mixture of at-risk, minority, and high achieving girls. The staff, led by **Teresa Greely**, tracks the alumnae, and knows many are in college studying sciences, often citing the camp as inspiration. “We even have a young woman from our first camp just starting a Ph.D. in our own program,” Betzer adds.

Campers find the experience life-changing. Says one, “It had a strong effect on how I will start to treat the Earth,” while for another, “it opened all kinds of doors for my future.”

And for a larger audience, the College has **Project Oceanography**, a weekly live broadcast that brings marine scientists into middle school class-



Counselor and campers prepare to collect surface water samples.



Camper in the captain's seat of the R/V Suncoaster.



Campers assemble the skeleton of a dolphin.

rooms, covering everything from Antarctic Ecology, to Red Tides and Squids. A scientist hosts the program, through two-way audio and video technology, and the lessons include filmed segments from virtually anywhere in the world.

According to **Paula Coble**, Assistant Professor of Chemical Oceanography and director of the program, it is now seen in 40 states and eight foreign countries, reaching two million middle schoolers. John Chittendon, eighth grade science teacher at Clearwater’s Kennedy Middle School, was excited about the program. “Boy, what a great show! My kids have never been so attentive, and they’ll be talking about this all weekend.”

Making Waves, yet another Marine Science project, aims “to unlock the mysteries of the ocean.” The multimedia program allows middle school children to learn how El Niño really works, or the effect global warming has on sea levels and beach erosion. They reinforce their knowledge by playing Natural Disaster Jeopardy or making a model of a Florida coral.

The program pools the resources of middle school teachers and USF’s marine scientists. They create lively articles that are published in *InterActive Teacher* magazine, and in *Science Scope*, the magazine of the National Science Teachers Association, and all reference the Making Waves web site, which offers a curriculum guide and suggested activities.

Betzer acknowledges that the work involved in the college’s outreach partnerships is “daunting,” but is worthwhile. “We are an internationally-known research program, and it’s important to bring that wealth of knowledge back to the community, building a new generation of scientists.”

An engaged university is a resource for life, reaching out to learners from childhood to old age, and USF offers innovative programs bringing learning to the community.

Learning for Life



Seniors enjoy an environmental scavenger hunt during “Wisdom in the Woods.”

Seniors Teach Seniors

As **Lee Leavengood** says, “once you’re a senior, your mother’s not making you come to college!” In fact nothing motivates USF’s 500 Learning in Retirement members but the sheer love of learning. USF offers classes and study groups in everything from history to computer literacy, all taught by seniors to seniors.

“USF is in the right spot at the right time. Seniors are more educated than ever, and they want to continue learning,” says Leavengood, Director of LIR. Every semester, about a dozen LIR study groups form, covering topics like Ancient Egypt, the Harlem Renaissance, Financial Planning, and Writing a Life Story. Meanwhile, the Senionet program teaches computer skills on all four USF campuses. “Some just want to get started on computers. Then they go further, and we have advanced classes in everything from genealogy to digital photo manipulation.”

Seniors also take regular USF classes free, using the state university tuition waiver program, and enriching their own and other students’ experiences. “I think we set a good example for the younger students, showing them learning is lifelong,” says Leavengood.

The LIR program is volunteer powered – members are peer advisors and staff the committees that keep the program humming. The program offers special events, and an annual retreat, “Wisdom in the Woods,” at Chinsegut, USF’s rural retreat center in Hernando County.

Learning in Retirement is important to seniors like Minnesota “snow-birds” Robert and Jocelyn Findorff, who spend half the year in Tampa. “USF was a major reason we chose Tampa,” says Mrs. Findorff, who serves on the LIR committees. Her husband, the group’s treasurer, agrees: “it’s not just the learning, but the friendships that develop. It keeps everyone’s minds active.”

Clemente: Education for Democracy

An idea conceived in a New York prison ignited a movement that extends across the country, to USF.

Writer Earl Shorris developed the Clemente Course in the Humanities after speaking with a prisoner, who said the way out of poverty was not job training, but education that would admit the poor into the cultural life of the powerful. Shorris created an interdisciplinary program where disadvantaged adults could engage with everything from Shakespeare and Plato to Aboriginal cave art.

The free, two-semester class is now in its second year at USF, under the guidance of **Robin Jones**, Director of the College of Arts and Sciences Community Initiative. Jones won funding from the Florida Humanities Council to provide books and transportation and pay USF instructors, and secured space in Tampa’s Northside Mental Health Center.

Jones explains: “These are not your usual students. They’re in their late 20s to early 50s, and have faced harsh circumstances, like poverty, homelessness, and abuse.” The curriculum, taught by USF faculty, is structured on Shorris’s model, with five units in philosophy, literature, art history, American history, and writing, woven together in students’ essays and class work. Students completing both semesters earn 6 college credits from Bard College in New York, where Shorris originally placed the program.

The initiative has spread to St. Petersburg, where a class meets at Academy Prep School, a tuition-free school for disadvantaged children, from whose parents Jones recruited some Clemente students. She is in awe of the students’ commitment: “They face incredible problems and they can’t always

complete no matter how hard they try. Last year a woman dropped out because her abusive husband got out of jail and threatened her, and she had to pick up her kids and leave town.”

For students, the course can be a revelation. “I can’t begin to tell you how my life has changed,” says Paulette Clark Wood, who earned her six credits. Now she is not only enrolled at USF, but employed as Jones’s assistant. “Clemente gave me the confidence to continue my education. The instructors went beyond the call of duty, and offered a shoulder to cry on. Now I’ve just completed my first semester at USF, with an A in gerontology.”

Arts as a Tool for Living: INTERACT

Area children learn to love the arts, thanks to USF’s array of classes, such as **Summerplay**, where kids learn everything from theatre and music to painting and television production. **Jean Calandra**, Faculty Administrator in Educational Outreach, is especially proud of **INTERACT: Youth Arts Coalition**, a free program to help disadvantaged kids cope with their lives by expressing themselves in art.

“These kids don’t have easy lives. There are issues of illiteracy, abuse – you name it.” Calandra uses creative funding, such as obtaining grant money through “Artful Truth,” a Wolfsonian Museum program that teaches teenagers how to become “media literate.” It’s especially aimed at tobacco advertising, and Calandra adapted it to create “Generations up in Smoke,” where kids made videos and mixed media pieces with an anti-smoking message.

As part of that project, the kids collected the life histories of senior citizens in University Village assisted

living facilities. “Many elders fear going outside, because of kids exactly like these. And the children have little time for elders. But this was magical – many of those barriers came down, and their projects blended artistic expression with real social issues.”

Making a Difference for Children

From public health to computer literacy, all USF campuses use the expertise of faculty and students to help area children succeed.

In Sarasota-Manatee, the **Keys to the Future** program gets at-risk middle schoolers onto the information highway, with USF students mentoring Boys & Girls Club members in computer literacy.

According to Director of Special Projects **Suzanne Janney**, “the idea came from talks between community donors and Dean **Michael Bassis**, about how to give back to the community.” Janney and Director of Student Affairs **Mark Blaweiss** secured funding from private donors to equip a computer lab on the New College Campus, and hire **Konnie Kruczek** as Educational Coordinator. Kruczek’s goal was to use technology to equalize class differences. Students from USF-New College and USF-Sarasota/Manatee teach computer skills, such as word processing, spreadsheets, and desktop publishing, and the kids create newsletters, advertisements, and acrostic poems, developing a new confidence from their technical mastery.

And the technical skills are not all the students take with them. “We gave them hot meals in college, and they learned about the university – they ended the semester with higher aspirations for their future,” said Janney. And the college students?

“They learn about the challenges faced by less-fortunate kids, and they realize how important it is to give something back.”

And in Tampa, **Public Health Possibilities** programs offer high school students the chance to learn about the many careers in the field, through both summer and year-round learning experiences. USF’s College of Public Health partners with community organizations, such as the Shriners Hospital and the Museum of Science and Industry, which provide field trips and learning activities for the students, in everything from culturing bacteria to dealing with disasters.

The summer programs are funded by Florida’s Department of Education,



High school students culture bacteria with Public Health Project Manager Jaime Sanchez (center).

while Associate Dean **Elizabeth Gulitz** secured funding from Gulfcoast North Area Health Education Center for the year-round programs. Said **Ellen Kent**, grants support coordinator, “Community partnerships work and it feels great to make a real difference.”

“Community people are coming to know that the university isn’t some place in its own world where the super smart go to classes. It’s a resource for them and their families, wherever they live.” — Valerie Martin, USF AIDS Center



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