A Message from the Regional Vice President

A lot can change in a semester! As of our last newsletter, we covered the transition from FAU’s fifth President, (now State University System Chancellor) Frank T. Brogan, to our Interim President, Dr. John F. Pritchett.

I am now happy to report that after a smooth and completely transparent presidential search, conducted by Board of Trustees Chair Nancy Blosser, the board has appointed Dr. Mary Jane Saunders as our sixth president. As we pursue our own medical school and high-profile research partnerships, Dr. Saunders, with her academic credentials and track record of solid consensus-based leadership, is poised to lead FAU into a new era.

With these great expectations in mind we welcomed her to one of her first — and one of my favorite — events, the Seaside Shindig on April 10 at our SeaTech campus. The event was a perfect showcase of the wonderful alumni and community support we enjoy in Broward.

I hope you will take the opportunity to get to know Dr. Saunders when she arrives on campus within the next few months and join with me in supporting her vision for the future of FAU.

Sincerely,
Joyanne Stephens
Vice President and Associate Provost
Regional Campuses

Dr. Mary Jane Saunders Appointed FAU’s Sixth President

Florida Atlantic University appointed its sixth president on March 3, when Dr. Mary Jane Saunders was named to the position by the Board of Trustees. In selecting Dr. Saunders, board members took note of her strong academic background and solid administrative experience at Cleveland State University, the University of South Florida and the National Science Foundation. She is currently at Cleveland State, where she was founding dean of the College of Science before becoming provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. Throughout her seven years there, she has also been a professor in the department of biological, geological and environmental sciences. She holds a doctorate in botany from the University of Massachusetts.

Clearly, Dr. Saunders is well prepared to meet the challenge of taking FAU to the next level of achievement in fulfilling its multi-faceted mission. In her remarks at the conclusion of the presidential search process, Board Chair Nancy Blosser said, “She comes to our university when it’s poised to take another giant leap forward, and we’re sure that Dr. Saunders is exactly the right person to lead that charge.”
**Dr. Brenda Snipes ‘75**

A native of Talladega, Alabama, Dr. Brenda Calhoun Snipes has resided in Broward County since 1964 when she and her husband, Walter Snipes, moved here to begin their careers as educators. After attending high school and earning her bachelor’s degree in Talladega, she went on to earn her master’s degree at FAU, which she followed by a doctorate from Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. Snipes says, “I continue to benefit from my master’s degree in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis on adult education. This foundational degree, along with my doctorate in educational leadership, allowed me to serve as an adjunct professor at FAU for aspiring leaders in the area of school leadership.”

Dr. Snipes was recruited to come to Broward County by Mrs. Blanche G. Ely, the principal of Blanche Ely High School. She moved through the ranks, becoming a teacher of students from the elementary school level through adult and vocational education. She held the positions of program specialist, district level administrator, co-principal and principal. While serving at C. Robert Markham Elementary School, Dr. Snipes was credited with providing the leadership that moved the school from the lowest-performing in the district to one that achieved a grade of C from the state.

Dr. Snipes is a highly regarded consultant who has traveled to other counties and states to advise principals and district administrators on leadership issues.

Because of her extensive leadership and administrative skills, Dr. Snipes was asked by Governor Jeb Bush to serve out the term of the Supervisor of Elections in Broward County. She began this appointment in 2003 and was re-elected for four-year terms in 2004 and again in 2008. During her tenure, she has directed several successful elections and registered more than 30,000 high school and college students as voters.

Dr. Snipes is an active member of Mount Olive Baptist Church. As a community member, Dr. Snipes has served on various boards and committees, and she is a graduate of Leadership Broward (Class XI). She is actively involved in her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, which she has led as president three times. She has also been a corporate board member of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Broward County.

Dr. Snipes and her husband are the parents of two adult daughters: Derrice, a grants management director at Southwest Community College in Memphis, and Melanie, an attorney in private practice in Georgia. Dr. Snipes has two grandchildren, Ellyn and Kamille Ruth.

She says, “As new residents in Broward County in 1964, my friend and I heard about the groundbreaking ceremony of a new university in Boca Raton. Being first–year teachers, we decided to go to the ceremony, which took place in the middle of a sandy field — no trees, no buildings. Who could have imagined the impact this new university would have in providing educational opportunities to the masses of undergraduate and graduate students who have availed themselves of this local education resource!”

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**Fifth Annual Seaside Shindig Supports Broward Students**

The Seaside Burrow (Broward chapter) of Florida Atlantic University’s National Alumni Association hosted the fifth annual “Seaside Shindig” on April 10 at FAU’s SeaTech campus. The fundraiser celebrated a commitment to higher education while recognizing the “Wave Makers” who have shown exceptional dedication to the University and its Broward campuses.

This year’s honorees were Corporate Partner - Regent Bank, Community Partner - HANDY, Outstanding Alumni - John Haley ’95 and Elliott Starman ’79, Ginny Miller "Pearl of Broward" - Board of Trustees Chair Nancy Blosser.

A highlight of the evening was a surprise $20,000 Broward scholarship donation pledged by Marleen Forkas. “My late husband, Harold, and I have always felt that it is important to support students in their quest for educational opportunities,” said Forkas. “My wish is to memorialize Harold’s name and to enable a worthy Broward FAU student to reach his or her potential and make their mark on society.”

2010 event sponsors were James B. Pirtle Construction Company; AVI SPL; the Blosser Family; Broward College Foundation; Broward Health Foundation; M. Austin and Christine Forman; Ribotsky, Levine & Company, CPAs; Regent Bank; State Farm Insurance; TRANE South Florida and official Ginny Miller "Pearl of Broward" designer P.J. Rossi Jewelers.