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May 10, 2013

HarborNotes Weekly

Your source for USF St. Petersburg news

Outstanding graduate committed to educating children, giving back



College of Education student Aaron Kawaja was honored during Spring Commencement Sunday, May 5, with the Outstanding Graduate Award. Given each commencement by the USF Alumni Association, the award recognizes the graduating senior who embodies leadership, school spirit, community service, character and scholarship. Aaron graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Science in Education with certification in Elementary Education and Exceptional Student Education. She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi, the education honor society, and was always on the Dean's list. She accomplished that despite completing four internships and volunteering at Metropolitan Ministries in Tampa and the Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association. Her commitment to education was formed during a missionary trip from Nairobi to Mombasa. She looked down from a train car in Tanzania and spotted a barefoot boy

covered in dirt and wearing just a torn shirt. He gestured to her in prayer and then squiggled in the dirt: He wanted a pencil. She immediately threw the contents of her art supply bag out the window and dedicated herself to educating children. Aaron plans to teach elementary school and then pursue a Master's in Social Work.

Spring Commencement 2013 sees hundreds graduate: "It's your turn"



The Mahaffey Theater was filled with students, family and friends for Spring 2013 Commencement. Many students expressed their thoughts about the big day by decorating their mortar boards (photos above). Some thanked their parents, others honored their dreams and one remembered his grandfather's service in World War II. About 350 students participated in the ceremonies, part of the 454-member graduating class that included 397 undergraduate degrees and 57 graduate degrees. Eleven students graduated Summa Cum Laude, 37 Magna Cum Laude and 35 Cum Laude. "I know I speak for all of us at USF St. Petersburg when I tell you how proud we are of each of you," Interim Regional Chancellor Bill Hogarth told the graduates. "Now it's your turn: Your turn to challenge and inspire us. To become the leaders of your generation. To set new goals and new ideals. To create a world better than the one you joined." [Tampa Bay Times: Caps and gowns galore as USF St. Petersburg graduates](#)

Students call experimental course on field research a big success



By all indications, an experimental environmental science course taught for the first time during the spring semester was a big success. The undergraduate selected topics course, "Field Experiential Methods," combined time in the classroom with hands-on field research in Tampa Bay. It was designed by David Fries, director of the Ecosystems Technology Group at the College of Marine Science. "This is a terrific example of recent collaborations and expanding opportunities that exist between USF St. Petersburg and the USF **College of Marine Science**," said Frank Biafora, Ph.D., dean of the USFSP **College of Arts and Sciences**. Students used an underwater sensing device to gather data about water in parts of Tampa Bay. The device, created by Fries originally to gather data about red tide, is "like having a human in a can," Fries said. The data gathered by the students can be fed into computer models used to predict tides and storm surge, said Fries, who hopes the student work will be published in a research journal.

Interim Regional Chancellor Bill Hogarth says thanks and farewell



As the academic year drew to a close, Interim Regional Chancellor Bill Hogarth, Ph.D., said thanks and farewell in a message to the USFSP community. "As you know my time at USF St. Petersburg is winding down and I wanted to take a moment to reflect and to thank everyone who contributed to this productive and successful academic year," Hogarth wrote. "It has been an honor to serve as your Interim Regional Chancellor this past year and I leave ever more impressed with the high quality of students, faculty and staff with whom I have been privileged to associate myself...Be assured I will be watching from afar with high hopes and fondness for all of you." | [Sophia Wisniewska becomes USFSP Regional Chancellor July 1.](#)

Student government president to serve on USF Board of Trustees



Entrepreneurship major Mark Lombardi-Nelson (above) is the first USF St. Petersburg student named to the **USF Board of Trustees**. Lombardi-Nelson is president of the USFSP Student Government Association and joined the Board of Trustees as a representative of the USF System Student Advisory Council, of which he was recently elected president. He is a rising senior and was a member of the USFSP Entrepreneurship Club team that **recently won** the national Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) Startup Simulation Challenge for the second year in a row. His Board of Trustees assignment includes the Academic and Campus Environment work group. The 13-member board is responsible for cost-effective policy decisions and the implementation and maintenance of high quality education programs within the laws and rules of the state. The Board of Trustees will meet at the USFSP **University Student Center** Ballroom on June 6, 8:30 a.m. to noon.

HarborNotes takes a break for the summer

We hope you have enjoyed keeping up with all the news and events at USF St. Petersburg this year. This is the final HarborNotes Weekly of the 2012-13 academic year. Check your inbox next month for a special year-in-review edition we are calling HarborNotes PLUS.

Look for the return of HarborNotes Weekly - Five Things To Know About USF St. Petersburg - in the fall. Until then, have a great summer!

Upcoming Events

[Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership and Civic Engagement](#)

May 14-16

8:30 - 4:30 p.m.

[Open Space Training](#)

[Florida Studies](#)

May 17

7 p.m - 9 p.m.

[Florida Poetry Reading](#)

[College of Business](#)

May 18

10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

[MBA Open House](#)

[Undergraduate Admissions](#)

6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

May 28

[Transfer Information Session](#)

[USF System Board of Trustees](#)

9:30 a.m. - noon

Board of Trustees Meeting at USC Ballroom