

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the News



April 15 , 2013- May 14 , 2013

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- April 26, WTXL - TCC baseball's Coach McLead named Panhandle Conference's Coach of the Year

Education bills pass as part of budget process

BRANDON LARRABEE

TALLAHASSEE - A pair of sweeping education measures that would reshape high schools and higher education were overwhelmingly approved by the Senate as budget conforming bills today, setting the stage for a wide-ranging debate on the future of education.

Both bills passed on 33-7 votes.

The more sweeping of the measures (SB 1076), weighing in at 144 pages, would overhaul high school and higher education. It would create two "designations" for high school degrees, each with different requirements, with one aimed at encouraging students to work toward industry certification.

"What this bill does is it recognizes that the jobs and the job skills of Florida today are different than they were in the past, and that we need to prepare our students for those jobs," said Sen. John Legg, R-Lutz.

The bill would also set out standards for universities to be recognized as "preeminent universities," with one of those schools being tabbed to operate an online institute in an effort to encourage Internet-based education.

The other measure (SB 1720) would essentially do away with non-credit remedial classes offered by the Florida College System. Critics said that bill would harm older students and perhaps veterans by pushing them to adult education centers.

"And to say to that population, now you have to go to adult ed, I think, is a major problem," said Sen. Geraldine Thompson, D-Orlando. "And because we've not addressed the issue of the open door, I won't be supporting the bill at this time."

But the bill's sponsor said the remedial courses don't help students very well.

"The reality is in the state of Florida is that what may seem like an open door just ends up trapping people in the vestibule," said Sen. Bill Galvano, R-Bradenton.

Update: **TCC** police say no campus threat after man implied he was armed

Update:

Tallahassee Community College police chief David Hendry said there have been no lockdowns at the college and that they are still investigating the presence of a man with a gun on **TCC** campus.

"We continue to interview persons who may have seen anything, but no one has seen a handgun, just the threat of one," said Hendry.

TCC PD is sharing their suspect description with the Leon County Sheriff's Office and the Tallahassee Police Department.

Original Update:

Witnesses say they saw a man they believed had a gun outside of the Science Math building at **Tallahassee Community College** this morning.

TCC police said in an alert sent at 12:18 p.m. that a person "simulated an action that was believed to be a firearm" during an argument outside of the building at around 11:45 a.m.

The alert said no weapon was ever seen.

TCC PD is continuing the investigation as they attempt to locate additional witnesses, according to an alert sent out at 12:27 p.m.

No one is in custody and there is no threat, according to **TCC** PD.

The suspect is described as a black male, standing 6 foot 2 inches tall, with slender build, light skin, bluish green eyes, a shaved head and goatee. He was last seen wearing a beige shirt and carrying a backpack.

Anyone with information on should contact **TCC** PD at 201-6100.

TCC Purchases 158 Acres for its Wakulla Environmental Institute

Tallahassee Community College's Wakulla Environmental Institute has taken a huge step forward. On April 1, the College purchased 158 acres of land on Highway 319, just south of Crawfordville, as the future site for the new institute.

The Institute will be modeled on TCC's successful Florida Public Safety Institute in Gadsden County and will prepare the next generation of environmental professionals—with programs in environmental science technology, water quality, hospitality and tourism management, aquaculture management, parks and leisure technology, and agribusiness management.

In order to fulfill the Wakulla Environmental Institute's three-part mission of education, conservation and recreation, TCC's Executive Team determined that a large, beautiful tract of land would be required to accommodate a world-class facility. To fulfill those needs, TCC officially signed contracts to purchase four parcels of land from Kevin and Kerry Gaby for \$382,000.

"The property is gorgeous," said Bob Ballard, director of the Wakulla Environmental Institute. "It contains incredible features, including a sinkhole, wetlands, a natural bridge and possibly some legacy trees."

"This is a huge step forward for the College," said Dr. Jim Murdaugh, president of TCC. "It's truly unique, as well, because the land we are acquiring isn't just a place to build classrooms—the natural space of Wakulla is the classroom. That is what will make the Institute so special: the combination of TCC's strong academic tradition with the biodiversity and natural resources of Wakulla."

Beginning this spring semester, TCC implemented the Wakulla Environmental Institute's first phase by expanding the College's offerings to include a Water Quality Technician Certificate and an Environmental Science Technology A.S. Degree. For more information on the new offerings, visit TCCWEI.com or call (850) 201-849

Green business expo coming to Tallahassee

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- The City of Tallahassee and **Tallahassee Community College** are gearing up for an event that will showcase local and regional green businesses, their green products and services, and training opportunities for green jobs.

The event, called the Business of Green: Innovating for the Economy and the Environment, will be held on April 23 in celebration of Earth Day. The event is free and open to the public. There will be live entertainment and food available from local food trucks.

It will take place at **TCC's** Center for Workforce Development. The following events are planned for the event, which is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m.:

- Green Business Expo (1:00 - 6:00 p.m.) -- The Expo will showcase businesses, non-profits, governments, and educational institutions that offer green services and products and green job training.
- Creating Green Poster Competition (2:00 - 5:30 p.m.)-- This poster competition challenges young people to come up with creative business solutions that can address current environmental, economic, and social problems. The competition is opened to high school and college students, and cash prizes will be awarded to the winners.
- Green Businesses Best Practices Conversation (6:30 - 7:45 p.m.) - This keynote event will feature experts from leading businesses in the areas of: green restaurant and lodging, green grocery stores, green building and construction, energy conservation and efficiency, and waste reduction. Learn how going green makes "cents" as industry experts share how their companies' green practices, products, and services evolved into profitable success stories.

Visit Talgov.com/EPER to learn more about The Business of Green and the Green Business Best Practice Conversation that will take place after the Expo.

You can also stay up-to-date on the event and other local green happenings by liking Go Green Tallahassee on Facebook.

PeaceJam FSU aims for positive, sustainable change worldwide

Youth from the Southeast unite with mentors for weekend of ceremonies, speeches, service

Natalie Michelle Rankin

Florida State hosted the PeaceJam Southeast Conference from April 12 to 14, under the direction of Director Rody Thompson. Centered around the idea of positive, sustainable change in inspiring a new generation, the international program of PeaceJam, started in 1996, is guided by Nobel Laureates who work personally on skills and passion for peace around the world with participants.

PeaceJam Southeast, program of the Center for Leadership and Social Change, is a year-long process involving 80 Florida State mentors in local schools instructing hundreds of youth with the PeaceJam curriculum working to create Global Call to Action service projects on social justice oriented issues. The conference, involving youth from Florida, Georgia, North and South Carolina and Alabama, brought Nobel Laureate Oscar Arias to Florida State to lead the conference weekend on Sunday at which the youth presented their projects to Arias.

"With PeaceJam, the biggest influence is making a difference and inspiring youth to do things bigger than themselves to see it is not their small, sheltered school problems," said Florida State student and PeaceJam Mentor Catherine Weisz.

"Within PeaceJam and the conference itself, all of us feed off of each other's energy."

Saturday afternoon involved four large service projects throughout Tallahassee including an Anti-Bullying Rally at the Florida Old Capitol Building, a One Million Bones service project, a garden project at [Tallahassee Community College](#), and work at a food bank.

The Anti-Bullying Rally that took place at the Florida Old Capitol Building involved discussion on preventative measures for bullying.

"They broke out into small groups," said PeaceJam Mentor Jessica McGuire. "Each participant got a postcard and a pen to write ideas on bullying. We are compiling them to send to the governor. We asked if anyone wanted to share their story, which inspired others."

According to McGuire, one of the most moving elements of the event was at the very end with the youth's spontaneous formation of a line symbolizing hope for the end of bullying.

Simultaneously, the independent service project One Million Bones was dedicated to those individuals throughout the world who had suffered crimes of genocide. Youth was split up into small groups with their mentors to read stories of those victims of these atrocities in Burma, Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Somalia, and Mali. Arranging handmade bones, each of which represented a life lost, youth and mentors alike felt the theme in how it fit into PeaceJam.

"The theme of genocide fits into PeaceJam really well in stopping sexual violence and it is why there is that partnership," revealed Florida State student Angelie Vásquez.

"I feel like the entire thing was beautiful," said high school student Dina Kirkos. "It was great to do something that has such an impact."

Kicked off through upbeat music and dancing to keep energy going, Sunday involved a Ceremony of Inspiration, in which students and Nobel Laureate Oscar Arias shared whom or what in the world inspires them.

"What inspires me most is what I see right in front of me," said Nobel Laureate Oscar Arias in addressing PeaceJam participants. "Nothing gives me more hope than young people willing to stand up for peace."

In a tearful ceremony, strength through survival of cancer, enduring gun violence, or having spiritual connections was evident in inspirations of family, teachers and mentors.

"Florida State has brought such great viewing, steadfastness, and passion for the world," stated co-founder of PeaceJam Ivan Suvanjieff. "Florida State has done such an incredible job."

Report underscores needs of area nonprofits

Kelly Otte

President Jim Murdaugh and [Tallahassee Community College](#) released Wednesday the "Big Bend Nonprofit Capacity Building Initiative Report." It summarizes the result of a concentrated effort to understand the capacity building needs of the nonprofit sector in the Big Bend and what strategies and structures would be best suited to address those needs.

Organized by Margaret Lynn Duggar, MLD & Associates, and my determined column partner, Alyce Lee Stansbury, a group of people interested in this discussion have been meeting for more than three years to share their concerns about the stability and growth of the nonprofit sector and to identify possible solutions.

The group includes Ken Armstrong and Heather Mitchell, the former and current presidents of United Way of the Big Bend; Peggy Brady, Council on Culture and Arts; Ben Graybar, Tallahassee State Bank; myself; Ana Villar, United Partners for Human Services; Marjorie Turnbull, former [TCC](#) Foundation president, among many other things; Joy Watkins, Community Foundation of North Florida; and Janice Wise, Area Agency on Aging for North Florida.

Numerous other people have participated as well, and [TCC](#) has been supportive from the beginning. We are delighted Kim Moore, [TCC's](#) new vice president of workforce development, is now working with us.

In August 2012, [TCC](#) disseminated an online survey to 420 nonprofits in Leon, Gadsden and Jefferson counties, and 96 (22 percent) responded. They included arts and culture, health and human services, economic development, environmental, civic and more. The results were not surprising, but they do make things very clear about the needs of the sector. Here is a brief look at the findings and some of my reactions and comments.

- The majority of respondents indicated more than half of their staff would substantially benefit from professional development activities. Almost 70 percent rely on peer-to-peer training as their primary source of professional development and that's a shame, given the level of expertise in this college-dominated town.

- Executive directors identified their own need for training in fundraising, grant writing and strategic planning. I'd like to add we also need training on working with our boards and a good solid education on balancing public-private partnerships with the independence necessary for

the sector to be effective. In fact, many of us have talked about having an executive director's leadership institute. Who among you will sponsor that?

- 70 percent of respondents indicated more than half of their boards could benefit substantially from board training and development. The majority of the respondents indicated they are receiving board training from outside consultants and from Leadership Tallahassee's Building Better Boards. (FYI: Building Better Boards is April 29. Register at www.leadershiptallahassee.com before it sells out. Because it will.)

- 81 percent of board members, 54 percent of staff and 54 percent of executive directors require training in fundraising. This brings up all kinds of things we need to help with, including helping the organizations be better fundraisers and financial managers. In my experience it's not always about having more money, but sometimes about learning how to manage what we have efficiently.

- Respondents indicated 64 percent of their organizations, 72 percent of their staff and 60 percent of their board members would be interested in achieving certification. Years ago I carried around a copy of the certification program used in Palm Beach County. You can see it at <http://www.nonprofitsfirst.org/Certification>.

While there are many critics of certification and I can actually argue both sides of the issue, I think we need an objective assessment of the capacity of nonprofits to operate. Community panels and citizens are enormously important to the process, but are too limited and subjective to be the only measure of how we determine quality. • 88 percent of respondents would use the services of a Nonprofit Resource Center, if one existed. The top three services that were identified as needed were a prospective board bank, meeting space and group board or staff training.

I think the last finding is the answer to the first five.

You can download the full report at the Community Foundation of North Florida's website, www.cfnf.org.

Kelly Otte is executive director of PACE Center for Girls. She and column-writing partner Alyce Lee Stansbury, CFRE, president of Stansbury Consulting, invite your questions and comments about nonprofits. Email them at notesonnonprofits@gmail.com

Earth Day in Tallahassee – Events, Ideas, Children’s Activities & Books, & More!

VANESSA DEMETER

What Is Earth Day?

Earth Day is an annual day on which events are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. Earth Day is observed on April 22 each year. The April 22 date was designated as International Mother Earth Day by a consensus resolution adopted by the United Nations in 2009. Earth Day is now coordinated globally by the Earth Day Network, and is celebrated in more than 192 countries every year. The name and concept of Earth Day was pioneered by John McConnell in 1969 at a UNESCO Conference in San Francisco. He proposed March 21, 1970, the first day of spring in the northern hemisphere. This day of nature’s equipoise was later sanctioned in a Proclamation signed by Secretary General U. Thant at the United Nations. A month later a separate Earth Day was founded by United States Senator Gaylord Nelson as an environmental teach-in first held on April 22, 1970. While this April 22 Earth Day was focused on the United States, an organization launched by Denis Hayes, who was the original national coordinator in 1970, took it international in 1990 and organized events in 141 nations. Numerous communities celebrate Earth Week, an entire week of activities focused on environmental issues.

Local Earth Day Events

For this year’s Earth Day event, the City is partnering with [Tallahassee Community College \(TCC\)](#) to focus on the role that economics plays in protecting the area’s natural resources and improving our quality of life. The event, “The Business of Green: Innovating for the Economy and the Environment,” a green business expo, will take place on Tuesday, April 23 from 1 – 8:00 p.m. at [TCC’s Center for Workforce Development](#). Get the event line-up and complete details on our [Community Calendar](#).

Doing good, better: Nonprofit boards need help, training to be more effective

Board members of nonprofits, some in crisis, need help and training to be more effective

TaMaryn Waters

In Palm Beach County, nonprofit boards must prove their understanding of governance and their duties as stewards before funding partners dish out money.

Ninety agencies, on average, ranging from grassroots groups to multimillion-dollar endeavors, are certified annually. The certification means they've met roughly 330 standards crafted by Nonprofits First that started the program in 2005.

No one's yet proposing that for the more than 400 nonprofits in Leon County, but in the wake of high-profile nonprofit groups' recent struggles, efforts to educate and improve board leadership are gaining momentum.

Crises at three Tallahassee nonprofit groups this year have highlighted the challenges faced by the volunteer boards of directors that lead them.

- The Brogan Museum board finally decided to dissolve after years of financial struggles.
- The Shelter was rocked by charges of sexual harassment, mistreatment of clients and unhealthy conditions before its board and its 25-year executive director parted ways. The board has commissioned a study of its procedures, policies and operations.
- Bond Community Health Center board members are being sued by its former executive director and the revelation by current leadership of "significant financial irregularities" has drawn the attention of county, state and federal authorities.

Tallahassee Community College President Jim Murdaugh wants to launch a certification program offering a catalog of training courses for nonprofits of all sizes and scope, including fiduciary and leadership roles for board members.

He had the idea after he resigned from the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science board, its members then split on whether to dissolve.

Since the Brogan is closing and **TCC** holds the lease on the building, Murdaugh is pursuing ideas to transform the downtown site into a one-stop resource for, among other things, nonprofit leadership certification, as well as a place for training and resources for entrepreneurial,

government and private sectors.

Deciding what will go in the Brogan building will have to be a collaborative effort, requiring the building's owner, the Leon County School Board, to sign off. An initial \$2 million for construction of the building came from the state to the school district, and that grant requires an educational use.

Murdaugh and Leon County Schools Superintendent Jackie Pons said they've met and are working together to determine how the Brogan building will ultimately be used.

"Our agreement is to do something collaboratively between **TCC** and the school system," Pons said. "We've both agreed to involve the community in the decision-making process."

Murdaugh said if his idea for a nonprofit resource center does not end up being housed at the Brogan, it's a program the college will pursue regardless.

For the time being, Murdaugh's calling his idea The Link — a place where people connect and ideas incubate.

"I started believing toward the end of the Brogan era, the building needs to have a higher and better use. We really are an honest broker in this conversation," Murdaugh said, adding the college wouldn't be a competitor for funding coveted by nonprofits. "We have one goal, and that is to elevate the skills and abilities of people who run any nonprofit in this community."

Separately, some are revisiting three- and two-year-old recommendations in an independent review of the Community Human Services Partnership (CHSP) that could create better standards for board governance as a part of the community nonprofit funding selection process.

There are already resources for board training as well.

Leadership Tallahassee is hosting its annual sold-out training "Building Better Boards" Monday, where 150 business professionals, board members and executive staffers are slated to attend.

Doing good, better: Nonprofit boards need help, training to be more effective...

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A shift in thinking

Recent high-profile challenges faced by nonprofits indicate a need for guidance.

Financially troubled, the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science board spent two years climbing out thousands of dollars in debt to no avail. The board discussed the possibility of changing its mission. However, the weeks leading up to the January decision to dissolve revealed some members had a better grasp of the finances than others, which included a \$261,371 conditional gift some said was not fully vetted in meetings.

In February, The Shelter on West Tennessee Street was rocked by controversy following a citizen blog by Renee Miller that revealed a range of issues from sexual harassment to mistreatment by some employees. A police investigation concluded no criminal charges were merited. The board acted swiftly to implement new procedures, correct and follow its own policies and admit operational gaps existed.

The Bond Community Health Center was cut off earlier this month from receiving further funds for its \$1-million Low-Income Pool grant until it has corrected required state reporting that was then six months behind and provide a long list of materials to Leon County.

The County Commission, which contractually provides more than \$805,000 to Bond and serves as a conduit for federal and state money, wants reassurances public money has not been misused following the center's report of financial irregularities spotted in a 2012 audit.

"I'm not sure if everybody understands how important boards are," said Kelly Otte, a nonprofit consultant and executive director of the PACE Center for Girls.

Too often, nonprofit experts and officials say, board members are timid about asking tough questions. Or they push the brunt of policy-making duties on administrative staff. In other cases, nonprofits are not seeing themselves in their true form: a "social enterprise," said Christopher Noe, director of social investment at Nonprofits First in Boynton Beach.

"Most nonprofits are still in the charity mindset," Noe said.

But charity does not mean small dollars.

Two years ago in Tallahassee, more than 70 agencies — representing 120 programs — applying for CHSP grants made decisions on \$121 million in contracts, grants, fundraisers and donations, according to a 2011 report review of the CHSP process.

Noe advises board members to see themselves as shareholders in a business, where decisions matter and people, often poor seniors, families and the homeless, are depending on them.

"They have a fiduciary responsibility," Noe said. When problems surface, he added, "They can't say 'as board members, we didn't know.'"

Lessons learned

Murdaugh can't say for certain if the Brogan's board would have benefited from a certification program, but he said the museum's business model was flawed from the start.

When asked if the Brogan's fate was a result of a lack of understanding among Brogan board members or not having more finance-savvy members at the table, Murdaugh said it was a combination.

"We had board members who were not asking the right questions," he said, although he commended impassioned efforts by former executive director Chucha Barber and board members to keep the foundering children's museum afloat.

Kathy Adams, CEO of Nonprofits First, said her program was created by Children's Services of Palm Beach, the United Way of Palm Beach County and Palm Beach County. It's grown over time to include a \$1,000 online tool kit that can be accessed by nonprofits throughout the state and country.

Its scope touches on administration of nonprofits, good governance, risk management, fund-raising, human resources, financial vitality and stability and volunteering, among others

Doing good, better: Nonprofit boards need help, training to be more effective...

continued

Some of the program's direction could have made a difference in another Tallahassee nonprofit crisis.

Innovation Park, a research park in southwest Tallahassee built to promote scientific research and foster economic opportunities in partnership with Florida A&M and Florida State universities, was rocked by embezzlement in 2010. Former office manager Shanna Lewis was sentenced to serve eight and a half years in federal prison after forensic auditors discovered she stole more than \$647,000 and falsified the park's books from 2006 through 2010.

The embezzlement scandal became a glaring example of what can happen when basic internal controls are not set, despite red flags in years of audits going unchecked.

In the case of Innovation Park, neither its board nor director did a background check on office manager Lewis, who was previously convicted of stealing from a former employer. The mother of three started serving her six-month sentence beginning Aug. 30, 2001, three months after she was hired at Innovation Park.

Adams said Nonprofits First's certification of excellence stresses prompt background checks on volunteers and employees, noting the park's board may have headed off its troubles if it encouraged proper checks and balances of employees and its operations.

"We have seen different examples of this. The extreme may be Innovation Park," said the park's current board chair, Leon County Commissioner Kristin Dozier, regarding poor board governance. "But The Shelter or the Brogan or something like that may be examples of more checks and balances that were needed."

"I don't want to put them all in the same category, but I think the solution could be similar — better training and better understanding of the roles and responsibilities."

Innovation Park's board has since earned clean audits and created a solid system of checks and balances. While many nonprofits have fostered high-functioning boards, more community conversation is taking place in light of recent events.

City Commissioner Gil Ziffer said lessons can be learned from Innovation Park and others. Board members, he said, are becoming more acutely aware that their responsibilities go beyond simply attending meetings, approving minutes and budgets and briefly looking at operations.

Dozier agreed.

"You have to be bold," said Dozier, who serves on 16 varied boards. "You have to look at the materials and not worry about what anyone else at the table is thinking but ask questions if you've got them."

What's next

A plan for **TCC's** certification program is expected within the next two months.

A day-long brainstorming session with representatives from the nonprofit, government and business world will meet in a month to discuss what should be offered, Murdaugh said.

Come Monday, Leadership Tallahassee is hosting its annual training that's served nonprofits for 17 years. Workshops will dive into topics like dealing with budgets without cutting programs, managing the executive director and making the most of meetings.

"We don't think board members are born," said Barbara Boone, Leadership Tallahassee's executive director and vice president of community outreach for the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce. "They have to be trained and developed like with any other professional activity."

Former Bond Community Health Center board member Gloria Anderson agreed. She said she and other board members received government training on board governance because the south-side center on Gadsden Street gets federal money.

Still, Anderson said, "We didn't follow the rules like we should," when it came to term limits for nearly half a dozen board members and taking consistent minutes at all board meetings, including executive committee meetings.

Lawmakers seek opportunities for special-needs students

Studying ways to help students with disabilities with college

Travis Pillow

Sen. Andy Gardiner has set a key goal for his likely term as Senate President, nearly two years before it begins.

He wants the Legislature to expand the opportunities for students with special needs. He wants more of those students to receive a traditional college education.

"What I would like to see is, for a family, there is hope" for children who are diagnosed with disabilities, he said. "We're going to educate them, and they're going to be included, and if they work hard, they can go to college too. That's my goal."

Gardiner, R-Orlando, is the sponsor of a bill passed unanimously on the Senate floor Monday that would ensure parents have a say in planning decisions that could affect their child's education.

The legislation would require parents' involvement in decisions that could place their children on a special diploma track, or place them in a dedicated exceptional education center like Gretchen Everhart School in Tallahassee. It would also require school districts to create stronger "inclusion" policies that allow special-needs students to participate in classrooms with the rest of the students at their schools.

Gardiner sponsored the legislation with Sen. John Thrasher, R-St. Augustine. Thrasher's daughter, Julie Weinberg, was one of the parents who served on a state task force last year that grappled with how to include exceptional education students in the state's accountability system, and, Gardiner said, helped provide the impetus for the bill.

Weinberg and Gardiner's wife, Camille, joined the senators along with their children (Gardiner's son, Andrew, was born with Down Syndrome) for Tuesday's floor vote, where Gardiner said he intends to push further in coming years.

The state budget released on Monday includes \$500,000 to create a task force to study opportunities for exceptional students at state colleges and universities.

Gardiner said that programs like Early Intervention services provided by the Children's Home Society have made exceptional students better prepared for school. So why not let them continue their education?

Colleges and universities in Florida have recently started programs like the fledgling Eagle Connections program at [Tallahassee Community College](#), which allows students with special needs to participate in classes and internships. The program is designed to prepare them for jobs and for life on their own.

The task force would study ways to create a new form of high school diploma — possibly a middle ground between Florida's current special diploma and the traditional diploma — that would allow those students to continue on to a traditional college experience.

"Thirty years ago, a lot of these kids were just written off, sadly," Gardiner said. "These kids are now getting a diploma. They want to go to school. They want to be educated."

The bill would also allow school districts to create extraordinary exemptions for severely impaired children who are currently required to take state assessments. It is now teed up for a final vote on the House floor, where it is sponsored by Rep. Jason Brodeur, R-Sanford.

Brodeur said the exemptions would only apply in special cases, for students who are not able to take the state-mandated alternative to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test.

TCC's Nursing Program Receives National Accreditation

Tallahassee Community College's Nursing Program has taken another step towards maintaining its spot as one of the nation's elite.

The College, on April 17, announced that its Associate degree Nursing Program is now accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC).

According to Dr. Alice Nied, Dean of Healthcare Professions, becoming accredited by the NLNAC was strictly an internal initiative.

"It was a voluntary activity," explained Nied, "but it opens so many additional opportunities for our students."

With the NLNAC accreditation, TCC has access to a new pool of grants and has also expanded its reach with potential job opportunities for students.

"Some employers prefer to hire graduates of nationally-accredited programs," Nied added.

During the rigorous accreditation process, the NLNAC evaluated six standards including the program's mission and administrative capacity, the credentials of faculty and staff, facilities and other resources, and policies and services that support the students, curriculum, and learning outcomes.

Nied applauded the College's administration for supporting the program's desire to gain national accreditation.

"They want us to be the best and are willing to support us in whatever it takes to reach that goal," she added.

"Having the NLNAC accreditation adds to our well-earned reputation for an excellent program that graduates highly trained and knowledgeable nurses."

Graduates of TCC's Nursing Program traditionally achieve a state board passing rate that surpasses both the state and national rates. In 2012, 72 of 73 (98.6%) graduates passed the licensure exam on the first attempt – higher than state (87.3%) and national (90.9%) levels.



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