Faculty, students notified of sex offenders at UCF

ANDREA MILAM
STAFF WRITER

Joel Hall must deal with the fact that students, faculty and staff at UCF now have access to his picture, address and the sexual crime he was charged with since he was convicted of being a sex offender.

As a result of the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act, Hall's information was sent out to all UCF students, faculty and staff via e-mail. He is one of five registered sex offenders at UCF.

States had until Oct. 27 to comply with the Wetterling Act, which set national standards for sex offender registration and community notification programs. Some states are fighting this act in the Supreme Court, arguing that it is not constitutional. States that do not comply with the requirements could lose 10 percent of their federal funding.

It was left up to university officials to decide how to inform students of sex offenders enrolled at their respective universities. Some campuses simply posted the information on their web sites, while others, such as UCF, took it a step further by sending out thousands of e-mails with the sex offender's information to students and faculty e-mail addresses on Nov. 18.

"That's a gray area [in the act]," said Sgt. Troy Williamson, crisis intervention coordinator for the UCF Police Department. "We chose to make an extra effort."

While some states argue that the act is not constitutional, many people disagree with its provisions, including one of the local sex offenders.

"UCF has a right to distribute information they feel is necessary to protect their students and staff," said Dane Tiffany, a registered sex offender, whose name appears on UCF's list, despite the fact that he is not currently attending classes because of academic probation.

While Tiffany may not be comfortable with the fact that so many people now know him as a sex offender, he sees the justification in making the information public.

"Do I think it was necessary to inform 38,000 people?" he asked. "Not really, but that is their right and the information is public domain."

I don't like it, but I have to live with this fact, and I'm not going to crawl into a hole every time someone discloses some information," he said.

Hall understands why UCF took the extra step to inform students of sex offenders at its school.

"I realize that's public information, and that's the way it's going to be," he said.

Hall says that sometimes he thinks people at UCF look at him differently since the e-mail was sent out, but he tries not to be paranoid about it.

Tiffany says that he is not on campus enough to notice if people act different around him. Moreover, he is sure his relationships with his friends have remained unchanged since UCF students and faculty were informed that he is a sex offender.

Four-year degree at community college

Seminole Community College becomes newest area campus to offer UCF bachelor's degrees

SARAH DOWNES
STAFF WRITER

UCF is spreading like butter, converting Daytona Beach to Kissimmee and Leesburg to Cocoa with area campuses. Seminole Community College in Sanford/Lake Mary is the newest member of the UCF family offering bachelor's degree programs.

For the fall 2002 semester, SCC, in conjunction with UCF provided students bachelor's degree programs in elementary education and criminal justice for the first time. Additional bachelor's degree programs will be offered in legal studies, liberal studies and psychology in spring 2003.

The number of SCC students looking for advising has quadrupled since last year, said David Monier, regional director for the west region.
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National Briefs

President scales back U.S. raise

WASHINGTON — Federal employees will receive a 3.1 percent raise in basic pay next year, President Bush said Friday. But Bush, citing a national emergency, said he would allow no increase in their locality adjustments.

Bush said the raise will give federal workers a 4.1 percent raise — about what the military is to get next year.

Under federal pay law, civil service employees receive an across-the-board raise and a "locally paid" adjustment. The across-the-board raise is based on a survey of nationwide employment costs conducted by the Labor Department. The locality adjustment reflects private-sector pay changes in the metropolitan areas where civil service employees work.

The average salary for the approximately 200,000 federal employees in the Washington region is about $72,700.

The 1990 law was designed to close a "pay gap" between federal and private-sector pay. Recent studies conducted by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office and the Bush administration have shown that salaries for professional and administrative jobs in the government lag behind private-sector pay by more than 20 percent.

Claritin to be sold over the counter

Allergy sufferers can soon get the nation’s most prescribed antihistamine without a prescription, the Food and Drug Administration said.

The move has profound ramifications for competitors who soon will appear to drive the prescription status, it is also going off patients might steeply rise.

but generic companies will be able to make the drug, which means that generic competitors will soon appear to drive the price down.

WorldCom accepts oversight in settlement with SEC

WASHINGTON — WorldCom acknowledged an initial settlement with the Securities and Exchange Commission that requires the company to submit to continued federal oversight of its accounting practices and leaves open the question of whether it will be fined after reporting more than $3 billion in accounting irregularities.

WorldCom also agreed to block the entire paid-for-advertising revenue from the company’s voice mail service. It also plans to seek $7 billion in financing from investors, according to the settlement.

The deal is a major step in WorldCom’s efforts to emerge from bankruptcy after a bookkeeping scandal threatened to send the nation’s second-largest long-distance telephone company into Chapter 11.

The settlement with the SEC was negotiated with the consent of the U.S. Justice Department and Arthur Andersen LLP. It was reached less than two weeks after WorldCom hired former Compaq Computer Corp. chief executive Michael Capellas as its chairman, chief executive and president.

Senator Domenic D. Esposito, deputy chief litigation counsel for the SEC, said fines would

Possible National on 9

Area camps provides provide accessible education

Students get flu shots to avoid sick season

BEECA KULCHAK

Whether students choose to take care of their own health this holiday season by taking the extra vitamins and drinking juice or by getting preventative shots, it will be easier to avoid the inevitable — flu season has arrived.

Junior Michelle Daschke, 21, has become a regular victim of the flu.

"I never get sick, but thanks to my friends I have the flu now," Daschke said. "I've been sick right before finals and it's hard to study and concentrate."

However, Daschke only has herself to blame for not getting a flu shot to help prevent getting sick.

"I'm afraid of getting a vaccine,, Daschke said. "I've heard if you get the shot, you run the risk of getting sick all over again."

The flu shot changes from year to year in relation to the specific viruses that are likely to circulate within the U.S.

This year’s vaccine is equipped to fight the Pananas, New Caledonia and Hong Kong viruses, said Bob Faust, director of Student Health Services.

Students who are first-time flu shot receivers may experience a slight fever and general aches and pains that may last one or two days, but the minor symptoms are worth preventing a full-blown case of the flu, Faust said.

The Health Center offers flu vaccinations free to all UCF students and has tried to make it more convenient to get shots by offering more times and locations to get them this year, Faust said.

We’ve given over 1,200 shots this year, that’s 30 percent more than last year.

Junior Megan Ross, 21, said the main reason she decided to get the flu shot is because she did not want her
Students double degrees for dual competitive edge

DENISE BLOOM
STAFF WRITER

While many students will find themselves confronted by the mob scene at the mall this holiday season, others will be trying to tackle a mountain of textbooks that a double major offers.

Although many students are satisfied with the course load and the demand that one major offers, some such as freshman T.J. Echols, a 18-year-old finance and international business major, still crave more.

"With a double major, I run scared in two fields," Echols said. "Hopefully when it comes time for me to get a job, the double major will give me the edge over my competitors."

Students in colleges and universities across the nation are taking on the added responsibility of two or three majors in hopes of making themselves more appealing to the job market and graduate schools.

At Georgetown University, 23 percent of the 2007 graduates had double majors. The same is true at Washington University where 42 percent of the 2002 arts and sciences graduates had double majors or degrees. At the University of Wisconsin, not only did a quarter of the 2002 graduating class have double majors, but 160 also graduated with a triple-major status. Many UCF students are moving towards the same kind of education.

"I think it's the next step for students who are already excelling in their current major," Echols said. "High school teachers preach that all (advanced placement) classes are the next level to getting ahead, and double majors are the next step in college."

Students like senior Senior Senia Gonzalez, a 25-year-old creative writing and theater major, enjoy the security a double major offers.

"I have one major to back me up because I know realistically I may not be some actor on Broadway," she said. "So my theater major may not take me anywhere, but my creative writing major will."

Sometimes students like Gonzales find it difficult to choose between two majors and find double majoring is the ideal solution when they can't make up their minds.

"It was better to take both of them because I really love theater," she said. "I wouldn't be able to just do creative writing. I have to have theater. It was either both or theater."

Junior Megan Holstrom, a 20-year-old speech pathology said physical therapy major, hopes the double major will give her an edge when it comes time to apply for professional schools after graduation.

"I find speech pathology very interesting, and I know it will help me in the future," she said. "I also hope that when it comes time for me to apply to physical therapy school, this major will help aid in my acceptance."

Some students pursue a minor in lieu of the double major. Junior Lauren Malone, a 20-year-old advertising and public relations major is completing a marketing minor to complement her degree.

"I didn't feel a double major was necessary but I did like the idea of learning about two fields," she said. "I chose to complete a marketing minor to give me a taste of the field. I hope that this minor will help me in my future with advertising."

Vaccinations help healthy students in fight against flu

From Page 3

Thanksgiving trip with her family to New York to be ruined by illness.

"In addition to bringing extra coasts, I thought it would be a good idea to get the flu shot," she said. "It was my extra insurance."

However, senior Geoffrey Sonie, 24, believes it is not the flu shot that keeps students healthy, but the confidence in the student's mind that they will not get sick.

"I think it's having a positive outlook that keeps me from getting sick, not necessarily the shot," Sonie said. "I think my extra insurance."

Senior Christopher Lesry, 21, has his own beliefs on how to prevent getting the flu this season.

"The best way to keep from getting sick is not by getting a vaccine, but rather having proper knowledge of how to take care of yourself," he said. "Having a good lifestyle means paying attention to your diet, exercising and getting enough sleep — that is what helps your immune system."
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Doctorate programs draw students to UCF

Other universities suffering from a doctoral drought

CRYSTAL ESPINOSA
December 2, 2002

Across the country, the number of doctorates awarded in recent years has fallen, but at UCF doctoral students and degrees are on the rise, with 1,073 doctorates awarded so far this year, 43 of whom are new faculty members.

"Certainly when research dollars and faculty members that are nationally and internationally known are hired, there is an increase in demand for students wanting to join the new programs and work with those faculty members," said Ronald G. Ehrenberg, director of Cornell University's Higher Education Research Institute, said he believes that the combination of declining doctorates, an increase in student population, and growing number of faculty reaching retirement, may lead to inadequate faculty resources, according to a report in The Chronicle of Higher Education.

UCF student Jill Painter, who is currently seeking her educational doctorate, hasn't experienced any problems yet, and admits she may down the road.

"One problem that I see for the future is that I have two advisors for this program," she said. "They are both retiring in three years and I graduate in about five. So that's going to be confusing when I'm trying to finish up my requirements."

But there are other incentives that are drawing students into doctoral programs at UCF. Full-time doctoral students are provided full tuition support, something not done in the past. Full-time students on graduate assistantships, either teaching or research, also receive full tuition support. This year a need-based tuition scholarship for part-time doctoral students has also been created.

"If they are a full-time student on a teaching assistantship, they get a stipend for teaching or research," Bolyard said. "But because that isn't a very large salary, we are able to provide tuition support for them."

Being a teacher's or research assistant is not required for the graduate degree program. However, students pursuing a doctoral degree who intend to teach or do research receive experience through the assistantships, and doctoral students tend to support themselves through these assistantships.

"One of the big motivators for getting my doctorate is that work pays for it. Otherwise I'd be on the 10-year plan and wouldn't have the money to take the classes," Bolyard said. "This is where I'm happy and the fact that they pay for it, that's what enticed me to stay here and get a degree."
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A New Year's Toast, from us to you.

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Large raises reward, retain good presidents

From Page 1

Tom Ingram thinks so. Ingram, president of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, thinks universities should compensate presidents who do a good job in order to retain their services.

"What's important to understand is that universities are simply following a trend that the corporate world embraced years ago," Ingram said.

"For most of its history, higher education has been immune to the vicissitudes of the marketplace," Ingram said.

However, when presidents make more money, it shows that universities appreciate their contributions, and that's a good thing, he said.

"Students should want well-paid presidents and chancellors because it is a sign that our boards of trustees and regents respect that [leadership]," Ingram said.

UCP is not the only Florida university that has considered a raise for its president. The board of regents at Florida Gulf Coast University began a performance evaluation process of its president, Bill Merwin, in April, said FGCU spokesperson Susan Evans.

Evans said that in Florida, the boards of trustees have never evaluated their presidents before. "The boards of trustees only came into being a year ago," Evans said. "This would be the first time for all of them."

FGCU's Board of Trustees meets Monday when they will vote on the pay raise for Merwin. Evans said that Hitt's pay raise will not influence the trustees' vote. "They will consider our president separately from Hitt," Evans said.

"We have found that open performance evaluations of other universities in the state will push salaries even higher than Hitt's," Evans said.

"With five university presidents open right now, I would not be too surprised if all [five universities] will offer salaries over $300,000," Grey said. "In fairness to him, they should pay him a salary commensurate to his quality and peer group."

She added, "It's very unusual to have a president stay at a university 10 years."

Ingram praised the decision to give Hitt a $380,000 raise, especially considering how long he has served as president.

"These days, that's a remarkable and happy fact. The fact that your president got such a significant raise ... [the trustees] realize that they have found someone who is deeply committed to the institution and its people," Ingram said.

Ingram said the average presidency at public universities lasts six years.

"Gray and Ingram said that higher boards evaluate presidents annually. Boards of trustees use a number of criteria to evaluate a president's performance, including "evidence that people who care about the university are pleased with the university, evidence that the faculty holds the president in good regard [and] evidence that he can attract quality faculty," Ingram said.

Boards also look for evidence that the university has made progress under the president and evidence that the university has met its goals, Ingram said.

UCF Director of Sponsored Research Tom O'Neal said UCF has met at least one of those goals, establishing itself as a research university.

In The Chronicle of Higher Education states that universities with established research programs have given the most significant raises to their presidents.

"We've increased our federal money, which is a good indication that the quality of research has improved rapidly," O'Neal said.

O'Neal said that, under Hitt's leadership, much more money has come into UCF. He said UCF did more than 1,100 research contracts last year. "We did $75 million in research, in external research," O'Neal said. "We've more than doubled the research in the past three years.

O'Neal credited Hitt for UCF's growth as a research university. "He's been behind many of the changes," O'Neal said. "He's been instrumental in developing the high-tech corridor."

"Once he got behind making research a high priority, it became a high priority," O'Neal added.

Hitt's leadership has helped UCF grow. Ingram said that although most students do not think their presidents deserve raises, they should not complain. "We should not take shots at this from the sidelines," Ingram said.

"Ingram explained that presidents have to deal with many external pressures, and that they should be compensated. "It is no easy job being president of anything, especially president of a public university," he said.

"In the end, our taxpayers and our more-enlightened students will recognize that leadership comes at a cost," Ingram said. "Their compensation represents the value to which they are held."
CHRISTMAS WISH LIST

I

Students sitting at the Citrus Bowl Saturday for the Golden Knights football game against Ohio hold up a sign with their Christmas wish list on it, asking for, among other things, the return of former quarterback Oaunte Culpepper.

National Briefs

FROM PAGE 3

depend on WorldCom's continued cooperation with federal investigators and the outcome of other investigations of the company.

WorldCom admitted no wrongdoing and the settlement does not stop criminal investigations involving the company.

American Muslims debate donation by Saudi prince

One of the nation's most prominent Islamic organizations has accepted a $500,000 donation from a Saudi prince, sparking a blunt debate among American Muslims over whether foreign contributions are compromising their independence and the integrity of their organizations.

Omar Ahmed, board chairman of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, which received the gift, said the donation would be used to support a $2.5-million project aimed at placing Islamic educational material into the nation's 16,000 public libraries.

The gift to the council from Saudi Prince Abdull Eng Talal, a nephew of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd and one of the kingdom's richest men, comes at a time when the Saudi royal family's spending on Muslims in the United States has been the subject of new questions.

Late last month, it was disclosed that Saudi Princess Haifa al Faisal, the wife of the Saudi ambassador to the United States, apparently gave thousands of dollars to two Saudi nationals in San Diego, who then provided funds to two of the Sept. 11 hijackers.

FBI investigators have said that they do not believe the royal family deliberately aided the terrorists, but the issue has fanned concerns on Capitol Hill over Saudi financial support of Muslims here.

Saudi Arabia is the largest single contributor to Islamic causes — ranging from mosques to religious literature to refugee aid — around the world. Experts say, however, that its support of American Muslims has significantly dropped in the last decade.

Critics of the gift have begun publicly questioning it, calling it everything from immoral to a "strategic benefaction" that would fuel criticism of American Muslims as Saudi mouthpieces.

Supporters of the donation, by contrast, argue that the criticisms are unwittingly aiding what many U.S. Muslims see as a campaign by fundamentalist Christian and conservative Jewish groups to demonize the Saudis.

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Our Stance:

With criminals, there can never be too much information

The UCF Police Department's decision to inform students via e-mail of five sex offenders who attend UCF is a good move. UCF students and professors alike want to know what kinds of people attend their university.

UCF Police continue to do a good job of keeping UCF safe, and this measure will, at the very least, raise awareness of sex crimes. Sex crimes are very serious in nature, and people who commit them should bear responsibility for their crimes.

Hopefully, the shame of having their names posted on the Internet will discourage people from committing sex crimes in the future.

Society attempts to discourage crime by exposing criminals and shaming them. Notifying the public of sex offenders encourages sex offenders to act right, and keeps the public alert to the presence of criminals.

However, UCF Police should not stop with sex criminals. It should inform the UCF community of all criminals. Students and professors should know whether thieves or shoplifters attend UCF. If a UCF student has broken someone, the rest of UCF should know. Minor criminals pose a threat to the community as well.

Now that UCF students and professors know that five sex offenders attend the university, they should treat these individuals respectfully. These five men are sex offenders, not sex predators. They committed sex crime once, not repeatedly. Do not roll out a red carpet for them, but do not shun them either. They have paid their dues to society, and continue to pay them. They deserve an opportunity to improve their lives with an education and hopefully avoid a life of crime.

Notifying the UCF community by e-mail is an appropriate way of letting students, professors and staff know who attends UCF. Students and professors rely on the Internet for information, so e-mail is a proper method of getting information out to the public.

By making students aware of the sex offenders, UCF Police have created an atmosphere in which people will know more about sex crimes.

Our Stance:

Thanksgiving spree
no excuse for excess

Thanksgiving Friday came and went, and once again, American consumers participated in the annual ritual of spending too much on holiday gifts. The day after Thanksgiving is generally the biggest shopping day of the year. Seemingly everyone rushes to the mall of the mall to consume, consume, consume.

People buy items they do not need. They buy stuff that people do not want. They buy whatever is popular. They spend recklessly, with no excuse for excess spending, because they "need" to buy this or that, and they "need" to buy it now.

As much good as Thanksgiving Friday brings for the economy, the ritual that the day after Thanksgiving has become demonstrates how mindless the American people can be.

Similar to the binge-eating that accompanies Thanksgiving, or binge-drinking that goes along with New Year's Eve, Americans' binge-shopping on Thanksgiving Friday leaves them with a hangover, only it is not the after-effect of a stomachache or a headache. Rather, they realize the hangover of credit-card debt months later.

Every year, the same routine plays out, yet people never learn. They get swept up in the tradition, and do not think to ask themselves why. Yes, the holiday season is about giving, but does that mean that people have to consume as much as possible. People should relax, and let their food digest from Thanksgiving dinner. The all-important stuff that they need to buy will still be there.

"No man is ever old enough to know better."

—Helen Keller

Letters to the Editor

From expressed here are not necessarily those of the student body.

Time to recognize low-profile sports

First of all, I'd like to thank you for such a great newspaper. I enjoy being torn into all of the up-to-date projects at UCF, the athletics and information on the student life. But I have a request. By with Rugby Fall at the University of Central Florida has recently won the prestigious national game, Rugby Cup. They beat the University of Miami 34-1, and scored 196 points in three games on a victorious road tournament to Mobile, Alabama's Barracuda Rugby Tournament, where they beat FAU, Florida and SMU.

Despite all of their success, the school has shown no appreciation to them or any other successful school. They beat the recurring articles covering the Rugby Club, now in 1976 or any other club in an organization that has been a part of UCF for 20 or more years and are giving out a university superior name such as crew, water polo, etc. I think this would be great for the students.

—Thomas Hardin

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Aiming to tap into young minds

by Jane Eisner \nNational Business

I may not be the best arbiter of cool, but this sure seems cool to me. A blind, laughing young woman wearing a pair of low-slung jeans and what looks like a high school football team in Mumbai under­audience: 28 percent). Absolut Vodka hawked itself in last month’s Vibe (41 percent). And Heineken even appropriated a Nintendo game controller to promote its prod­uct. This attempt to entice younger drinkers comes despite the huge social cost of drinking. Alcohol plays a substan­tial role in the four leading causes of death for young people—car wrecks, suicides, homicides, and accidents. And research shows that kids who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcoholics by the time they’re 21.

Dr. Charles Bailey, with CNS Healthcare is offering screenings in Orlando for participation in a research study of an investigational medication for those experiencing symptoms of bipolar depression. Eligible participants between 18 and 65 years of age will receive a comprehensive psychiatric examination and study medication at no cost. Health insurance is not necessary. Enrollment is limited.

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**Knights send Bobcats packing in record fashion**

Kristy Shomka

The Golden Knights finished out their record-setting season Saturday in record-setting fashion with a 43-25 win over Ohio at the Citation Bowl. The Knights finished 7-5 for their third consecutive winning season.

UCF quarterback Ryan Schneider and wide receiver Doug Gabriel broke school records in the game that capped UCF's first season in the Mid-American Conference. The Knights finished second in the MAC East Division with a 5-2 record. Their losses came against Marshall and Toledo, who will face off in the MAC Championship game Saturday.

Schneider and Gabriel connected four times for touchdowns, with three of those coming in the second quarter. With 16 seconds left in the first half, Schneider hit Gabriel for a 34-yard touchdown that increased UCF's lead to 29-23. The Knights came out of halftime, but Abellard hit a three-pointer with just over four minutes remaining to give UCF a nine-point lead, 64-55. Maine, would score again.

Marius Boyd led the team with nine rebounds. Lindbeck finished with 13 points, but Abellard hit two free throws to tie the game up, and UCF went into the locker room ahead 29-23. The Golden Knights started the second half with the help of 15 Golden Knights points, including seven from Abellard and five from Speraw. The Golden Knights ended Maine's season and moved on to face off against Nicholls State in the quarterfinals with a 43-25 win.

**Women's Basketball Notebook**

Golden Knights go 1-2 on road trip

Chris Bernhardt

The UCF women's basketball team spent the Thanksgiving break in Louisiana and Mississippi picking up a win over Nicholls State, but falling to Southern Miss and New Orleans.

The Golden Knights ended a two-game skid Saturday with a 76-50 over Nicholls State. Sophomore Ali Roberts led UCF with a career-best 20 points. She hit nine of 11 shots from the floor. Nicholls State jumped out to an early 8-3 lead before freshman Shanyia Smith put UCF up 15-8 with 11:11 left in the first half. The Knights finished the half on an 18-6 run to go into the locker room with a 20-25 lead.

The Colonels closed the gap to four points twice, the second time being at the 12:24 mark. Junior Shalae Snell hit a three-pointer 11 seconds later, sparking a 10-3 UCF run to end the game.

The Golden Knights took one on the chin Wednesday though, losing 76-65 to Southern Miss. UCF managed to dig out of an early 9-2 hole to tie the game at 12, but the Eagles took a 31-25 lead into halftime and never looked back. They continued to build their lead in the second half with the help of 15 Golden Knight personal fouls and went on a 21-7 run to close the game. Southern Miss' Lana Lewis scored a game-high 15 points. Audra Allen was the only UCF player in double figures, scoring 13.

The road trip began last weekend at Nicholls State. The Golden Knights lost a heartbreaker in overtime, 64-61. UCF went cold for a long stretch covering the end of the first half and beginning of the second, allowing the Privateers to come back from an early 15-2 deficit.

The two teams battled down the stretch until Lora Bullock gave New Orleans a three-point lead with eight seconds remaining. Freshman Claudia Johnson answered for UCF with a three-pointer to send the game to overtime.

But the Golden Knights couldn't pull it out, getting outscored 6-0 in the extra frame. Montague/Taylor hit a basket with 45 seconds remaining to seal UCF's first loss of the year.

Taylor powered New Orleans with 29 points. Marvelous Washington went 14-for-22 from the free-throw line for UCF en route to a game-high 23 points. Allen chipped in 19 points and Adrienne Billings grabbed a game-high 10 rebounds.

Allen on a role

As a freshman last season, Allen got off to a very slow start. The center had trouble adjusting to the college game and spent most of her time on the bench while fellow freshman Al Roberts started in the middle. But as the season wound down Allen began to come on

**Men's Basketball Notebook**

Knights on a roll

Tom Alexander

Seniors Ray Abellard and Ed Dotson scored 16 of UCF's 72 points as the Golden Knights remained unbeaten in the University Hoops Classic Saturday afternoon with a 72-55 win over Maine. The Knights played Indiana State on Sunday for the tournament title. The Knights were the only unbeaten team in the tournament after their first two games.

Dotson dropped a career-high 20 points on the Black Bears, 12 of which came in the second half. He also led the team with seven rebounds. The Knights blew a three-point halftime lead with 15 and a half minutes to go as Maine tied the game at 38. Dotson then slammed a two-handed dunk after a pass from Roberto Morentin and Abellard converted a three-point play to put UCF back on top for good. Maine kept fighting and eventually decreased the Knights' lead to two points late in the game, but Abellard hit a three-pointer with just over four minutes remaining to give UCF a nine-point lead, 64-55. Maine, would score again.

Abellard led UCF with 28 points, and the Golden Knights shot 49 percent from the field and 41 percent from three-point range. UCF was a perfect 9-for-9 from the foul line, and Abellard hit five 3-pointers. UCF improved to 9-4 on the season and moved on to play Indiana State for the first time in school history for the six-team tournament championship.

Golden Knights beat Green Wave

Abellard hit seven of his nine free throws in the last two and a half minutes as UCF beat Tulane 66-61 Friday. The Green Wave played host to the UCF Golden Knights at Tulane University.

UCF got an early lead on Tulane, 16-9, mostly because of the shooting of freshman Troy Lindbeck, who made his first start in a Golden Knight uniform. Lindbeck finished with 11 points, a career high, and hit three 3-pointers. UCF went on to hold Tulane to just eight points in the second half as the Golden Knights ran away with a 19-7 margin to win 55-41. The Knights remained unbeaten for the season and moved on to face Maine.

The Golden Knights played a shell game and put together a 17-6 run in the first half, driving UCF to the locker room ahead 29-23. The Knights came out of halftime and moved on to play Indiana State for the first time in school history for the six-team tournament championship.

Golden Knights sign transfer

UCF head coach Kris Kracht announced Wednesday that Northwest Missouri transfer Takira Allen was the only Golden Knight sign transfer.

Allen played his freshman year at Northwest Missouri and had 15 points, 13 rebounds and four assists in 36 minutes against the University of Illinois on Tuesday. Allen transferred to UCF last month after averaging 16.8 points over his freshman season at Northwest Missouri.

Allen had 10 rebounds in only her second career start Sunday against Northern Illinois. She finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds, adding three assists and four steals.

Takira Allen was the only UCF player in double figures, scoring 18.

The Golden Knights continued their roll on the road trip with a 19-7 margin in the second half as the Golden Knights ran away with a 19-7 margin to win 55-41. The Knights remained unbeaten for the season and moved on to face Maine.

The Golden Knights played a shell game and put together a 17-6 run in the first half, driving UCF to the locker room ahead 29-23. The Knights came out of halftime and moved on to play Indiana State for the first time in school history for the six-team tournament championship.
The senior wide receiver made the most of his final game as a Golden Knight, making seven catches for 179 yards and a career-high four touchdowns. He set a UCF record with his 1,237 receiving yards this season.

Inside the Numbers

3,770
Quarterback Ryan Schneider's passing yards on the season, a UCF record.

1,237
Wide receiver Doug Gabriel's receiving yards on the season, a UCF record.

1,104
Tailback Alex Haynes' rushing yards, the first time since 1995 UCF has had a running back break 1,000 yards.

4
The number of receiving touchdowns by Gabriel in the game, ties a UCF record.

210
The number of passing yards by Ohio quarterback Fred Ray, the Buckeyes only average 76.3 yards in the air.

Schneider breaks Culpepper’s records

CHRIS BERNHARDT STAFF WRITER

He's Ryan Schneider; the shadow of Daunte Culpepper will never fully go away. That's the price he pays for playing the same position as UCF's greatest player. But quietly, Schneider has grown about making some of Culpepper's records disappear.

Against Ohio, Schneider set single-season school records for yardage (1,237) and touchdowns (14), both records previously held by Culpepper. The junior also closed in within one of Culpepper's record for consecutive games with a touchdown pass (22).

"It's nice," Schneider said. "I respect what he did and what he did. He's a great quarterback, just to be mentioned in the same breath with him is a great thing for me. But at the same time I'm trying to go out there and do my own thing."

Schneider also moved into second place in career completions with 649 and third in career touchdown passes with 73.

Inside the Numbers continued

190
The number of rushing yards by the Bobcats, below their average of 244.4.

50.7
Punter Ryan Flinn's average on Saturday.

111
The number of rushing yards by Haynes in the fourth quarter alone.

Around the Locker Room

"Way to go out with a bang."
—MID BOJHSE RnGABRIEL
ON HE4 EIGHTH TouchDOWu DAY

"I think tonight we're probably the best team in the MAC conference."
—OIFFSIVE COORDINATOR ROBERT McFAHAN

"Coach Kruczek, I got to tip my hat to him. He brought the team together."
— QUARTERBACK RYAN SCHNEIDER

"I'll probably miss everything."
— WIDE RECEIVER DOUG GABRIEL
ON WHAT HE'LL MISS ABOUT UCF FOOTBALL

"Schneider, how could you ever forget a quarterback like that?"
— DAVE REEDER, JIMMY FROEL ON WHAT HE'LL REMEMBER MOST ABOUT UCF

"We're excited to do it, it's quite an accomplishment. It's one of the highlights of the 2002."
— COACH MIKE KRUCEK ON BEATING TOLEDO

"My first year was a learning process, second year was just show them what you know."
— GABRIEL

"Considering where we were at the end of September, it's a tremendous gratification."
— COACH MIKE KRUCEK ON THE KNIGHTS STRONG FINISH

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**Volleyball Notebook**

**Kristy Shonka**

**Staff Writer**

The UCF volleyball team came in third in its Thanksgiving Tournament this weekend after splitting games against Southeastern Conference opponents. The reigning Atlantic Sun Conference Champions beat Kentucky 3-1 Friday night, but fell to Arkansas 3-0 Saturday in their final regular season game. Arkansas won the tournament.

All-tournament team selection Jenny Frank led UCF in Saturday’s loss to Arkansas with 32 assists, five kills and five digs.

“She has absolutely been our rock in terms of emotion and console and direction,” UCF Coach Meg Colado said.

Tourmament MVP Libby Windell led both teams with 14 kills and she registered four blocks. Razorbacks Sam Kinard and Michelle Oomen joined Windell on the all-tournament team. Kinard had 13 kills and seven blocks, while Oomen had 15 kills and five blocks.

“It wasn’t our best game tonight, but last night we proved to ourselves and everybody else that we deserve to go to the NCAA Tournament,” Frank said.

The night before, the Golden Knights dominated Kentcky, winning 3-1. Freshman Emma Watts led UCF with her second triple-double (registering 15 kills, 10 assists and 15 digs).

The Wildcats won the final game 29-26, but the Knights cruised five in the third and game, blowing out Kentucky 30-15. UCF hit .482 in the game. The next two games were close, but the Knights pulled

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**Bandits go back, back, back to win baseball title**

**Julie Reeves**

**Contributing Writer**

As Yogi Berra once said, “It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future.” After watching Bandits starting pitcher James Jimenez struggle early, Miss Cleo couldn’t have predicted how he responded. Jimenez shook off a rust start on the mound and hit three mammoth home runs to lead the Bandits over FCA, 10-4.

FCA led off the top of the first with a barrage of hits, with Ty Hanson, Greg Good and Nicholas Turnbell reaching base. Hanson scored the first run of the night on a Matt Ebel grounder, as FCA took a 3-0 lead.

FCA starter Hanson made quick work of the Bandits in the bottom half of the first inning, and Jimenez got rocked by a two-run homer by Wayne Summers in the second.

Jimenez held the Bandits into the bottom of the second, with a solo home run to center field. FCA got the run back in the top of the inning, as Good went yard making it 4-1.

The game would change in the bottom of the third, as FCA pitcher Ilyan Gafsman got into some trouble on the hill. Gainsford walked Jeff Arribas and Sergio Figueroa and yielded an RBI single to Doug Marcella. After retiring the next two batters and walking Wayne Jacobsen, James Jimenez blasted a hanging slider over the right field fence for a three-run homerun. The Bandits scored five runs in the inning, taking a 6-4 lead.

FCA wouldn’t see the lead again, as the brother tandem of Doug and Matt Marcella combined in relief to give up only five hits over four innings. Jimenez put the game out of reach again, this time with a two-run homer in the fifth inning, scoring himself and David Saneck.

**Tall with Small wins Speraw challenge**

Coach Speraw and crew look out. The Tall with Small defeated Triple Threat in the Kirk Speraw on 3 as Basketball Challenge to earn a chance to play the UCF coaching staff. UCF men’s basketball coach Kirk Speraw has faced off with student teams in each of the last two years, winning easily both times. Players Brandon Killman, Bryce Merials, Francis Lizarido and Kevin Mortelof combined to run through the pool play and elimination tournament, and will face the coaches early in the spring semester.

**Thanksgiving in the Big Easy**

Following the Southern Miss game, the Golden Knights returned to New Orleans for Thanksgiving dinner with their male counterparts, who participated in a tournament in nearby Tunica.

Also while in New Orleans the team got a taste of Mardi Gras, getting a tour of some dens which house old Mardi Gras floats and props. They got to wear masks and try on some costumes after the tournament.
Both records are held by — guess who — Culpepper, who had 880 completions and 84 touchdowns in his UCF career.

That's the first time in school history it gave UCF a 3,000-yard passer (Schneider), a 1,000-yard receiver (Gabriel) and a 1,000-yard rusher (Frye) to go along with a 1,000-yard receiver.

Even more impressive, for the first time in school history it gave UCF a 3,000-yard passer (Schneider), a 1,000-yard receiver (Gabriel) and a 1,000-yard rusher (Frye) to go along with a 1,000-yard receiver.

Fumble record
One of the few offensive blemishes for UCF in the game came when Schneider got hit hard inside the Golden Knight 10-yard line and fumbled the ball. Ohio recovered in the end zone, the second time an opponent had done so this season. Liberty did it to UCF in September.

That's the first time in school history UCF had it happen to it twice in one season. A fumble was returned for a score against them only twice prior to this season, once in 1980 and again in 1984.

Small holiday gathering
Though expected for a holiday weekend, UCF played in front of a small crowd on the first day of the fourth consecutive game. At least this time attendance was above 10,000, at 12,927 last season. The previous three games, one at the Citrus Bowl and two on the road, didn't come close to that mark.

Haynes hits 1,000

Going into the fourth quarter, it seemed that running back Alex Haynes would fail in his bid to become just the fifth Golden Knight to rush for 1,000 yards in a season. He had 40 yards going into the final period, needing 63 more to place the mark.

Then he broke a 24-yard run on UCF's first drive of the fourth quarter, snowballing from there. He pounded out 111 yards on the ground in that quarter alone; finishing the game with 155 on a season-high 27 carries.

"The offensive line was determined; they were going to get it for him," said Robert McFarland, offensive coordinator and offensive line coach. "The offensive line said they were not coming out until he got 1,000."

The sophomore finished with 1,038 yards despite missing the better part of two games at midseason with a high ankle sprain. No Golden Knight again has passed that barrier since Markuppet Smith in 1985.

This game was also Haynes' third straight 100-yard game and could have been his third straight 100-yard game had he not stopped at 149 against Kent State three weeks ago.

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Gabriel saves best for last
Playing the last game in his two years as a Golden Knight, wide receiver Doug Gabriel left a lasting impression. He caught four touchdowns, tying a single-game school record, Bernard Ford set the record in October 1987 and David Rhodes matched it in November 1988.

"I had to show the underclassmen what to do just to show them that we have to give everything," Gabriel said.

Gabriel also broke Ford's single-season record of 1,150 receiving yards. For the game he had seven catches for 179 yards and 1,257 on the season.

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Cornerback Rovell Hamilton recovered a fumble in the first quarter, the first of his career. Senior offensive lineman Garrett McCray, whose season and career ended abruptly in October when he blew out his knee, made an appearance in the backfield for the last play of the game.

UCF's first drive of the fourth quarter, the first of his career. Senior offensive lineman Garrett McCray, whose season and career ended abruptly in October when he blew out his knee, made an appearance in the backfield for the last play of the game.

Injured McCray gets in for a down
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Watts comes on strong

Tournament provides final tune-up

UCF’s Thanksgiving Tournament provided a final test for the Golden Knights before beginning the NCAA Championships this weekend. Frank and Colado agreed that playing last weekend was a better idea than taking the weekend off. “Especially since we faced a high-level team and those are the types of teams that are going to be in the tournament,” Frank said.

Watts continues to shine

The freshman Watts recorded her second triple-double of the season Friday night and has come on strong at the end of the season. Watts credits the team with her success. “I think we got more comfortable with each other as a team and [Frank] sets me awesome balls,” Watts said. “I mean it’s a total team effort all the way around.”

Frank said she enjoys setting Watts. “I love it, I absolutely love it,” Frank said. “She’s very diverse with what she does, so she’s able to move all around.”

Colado credits Watts’ athleticism. “She’s just a great freshman,” Colado said. “She’s just a really high-level player and we’re going to continue to go to her.”

UCF signs JC player

Mississippi Junior College player Marcus Avant has pre-qualified and signed to play for the Knights in the 2003-2004 season. Avant is a 6-foot-7 forward from Valdosta, Georgia, and currently leads the Rangers in scoring after seven games this season. He is averaging 17.7 points per game and 7.1 rebounds a game (2nd on the team).

Colado said, “She’s just a really high-level player and we’re going to continue to go to her.”

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On the runway to rich rewards

DANIELLE DEPARI

At 16 years old, Miss UCF Isabel Rougeau, now 22, won her first title as Miss Claudirella Orlando. Yet the $10,000 in prize money she has accumulated thus far is not used for materialistic things. Instead, she uses it to pay for school.

"I would encourage every young woman to try to win some of the scholarship money and have fun while doing it."

— ISABEL ROUGEAU

in pageants. The Miss UCF pageant awards a variety of scholarships, with the winner receiving $1,500 and free books for a semester, said CAR Spectacular Nights Director Scott Florence.

Many women build up their confidence by first winning smaller pageants and then moving on to bigger ones like the Miss America pageant, which is the largest scholarship pageant in the world, Rougeau said.

"It was not until this year, when I won Miss UCF that I had the chance to fulfill my childhood dream of competing in the Miss Florida pageant," Rougeau said.

Juggling motherhood and studies

KRISTIN DAVIS

After years of changing diapers, cleaning crayon marks off of her son's interior and dealing with temper tantrums at 2 a.m., fresh-miss Althia Evans, 19, would like nothing more than a power nap.

While many of her friends go to keg parties, clubs and bars, Evans is either spending quality time with her daughter Destiny, working at Target or in class.

When Evans was 15, she gave birth to her daughter Destiny, who will turn four this June. Although Evans relies on financial aid and child support to take care of her and her daughter, she still struggles not only financially, but with school as well.

"It's not easy being a single mother and a college student. I work hard to make the grades that I do," she said.

Her day usually begins at 5 a.m., when she gets up to dress Destiny for school and make breakfast. Since Evans currently lives with her aunt in Kissimmee, she ends up driving two hours to and from work and school everyday.

At night, she is in charge of bathing her daughter and two young cousins, as well as getting the children to bed on time.

By midnight Evans is usually attempting to wrap up schoolwork, before finally getting some much-needed rest.

"Many people are surprised that I have made it to college after having a child at such a young age," Evans said. "My daughter is my motivation to succeed, so it makes me work that much harder. What I do now not only affects my life, but hers as well."

But it is spending time with her daughter Destiny that makes being a student parent all worthwhile to Evans.

"If I didn't have Destiny, I would be bored."

Senice Nestrick, 35, can relate. After having her first child, Nestrick said most of her time is spent rushing around frantically trying to take care of a thousand things at once.

Now Nestrick has her hands full with three children, two girls, ages 2 and 3, and a 9-year-old boy.

For Nestrick, a typical day starts at 5 a.m., when she wakes up to get her children ready for school or daycare. By nighttime, she has to make dinner for the children, bathe them and get them ready for bed.

"I try to get as much sleep as I can, eat healthy and work out. The gym is always a good stress reliever," Nestrick said.

For sophomore Jessica Paulson, 19, her most stressful class this semester is theater survey.

Finals arrive, students stress

RACHEL ZALL

As finals draw closer, Kristal Walters, 23, a fifth-year, second-degree student, starts to feel the pressure of cramming for tests and rushing to complete any last-minute assignments.

"For some reason, professors all decide that your last two weeks of the semester should be like hell," Walters said. "I've got two exams, a major project and a mini-paper all due within the next two weeks."

For most students, the stress of finals carries with it many side effects. These side effects are usually caused by students having so much to complete in such a short amount of time.

"This is my second degree and I've managed to keep myself mostly stress-free this semester, but I've had ulcers, allergies and migraines caused by stress," Walters said.

Sometimes Walters is so overwhelmed with work, that she doesn't know where to begin. "I can't decide between writing or studying, and it's even worse if you have more than one test or paper or a combination of both on the same day," she said.

But there are ways Walters tries to avoid any more health-related problems as a result of stress.

"I cope with stress by listening to music and meditating. Lighting candles also works pretty well," Walters said.

Sophomore Christine Hargrove, 20, can relate.

"I only take classes on Monday and Wednesday, and I feel like my finals are all on the same day, one after the other," Hargrove said. "I tend to get stressed when I have too many things to do at once."

But it is not just finals that stress Hargrove out.

"I work part time and attend UCF full time, which keeps me constantly occupied," she said. "When finals come around, trying to balance everything out gets stressful."

Although Hargrove finds herself getting less sleep and tends to take out her problems on others when she is stressed, she has figured out ways to relieve some of this stress.

"I try to get as much sleep as I can, I eat healthy and work out. The gym is always a good stress reliever," Hargrove said.

For sophomore Jessica Paulson, 19, her most stressful class this semester is theater survey.
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Mr. UCF Scholarship Competition
Speakers
Thursday Knight Jive
Tuesday Knight Live Comedians
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Look Forward To The Following Events Next Semester:

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Late Knights
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3U Student Health Service

Q: Could you please review some of the common STDs that occur in the college age population?

A: At sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) have one thing in common. They are spread during sex vaginally, orally or anally through body fluids such as semen, vaginal fluids and blood. Herpes, genital warts and molluscum contagiosum are spread by direct contact with the skin.

Some of the more common STDs:

Chlamydia/gonorrhea
Most patients with chlamydia have no symptoms and the diagnosis in women usually is made when the woman has her annual gynecological examination and the diagnosis is considered because of an abnormal appearing cervix or by routine screening in sexually active females. Also women can pull the pelvic area, pain with urination or intercourse, menstrual irregularities or a heavy vaginal discharge. Men either complain of a drip or discharge from their penis that is thin and the testicles (epididymitis). Men may also have no symptoms, especially if infected, with chlamydia. Antibiotics cure these two bacteria.

Herpes simplex (HSV)
Although transmission can occur in the absence of lesions, most patients will complain of a single or multiple vesicles (fluid-filled blisters) which may appear anywhere on the genital skin. When they rupture they leave extremely painful ulcers, which will heal on their own in about 10-14 days and probably sooner when antiviral medication is prescribed.

Genital warts (HPV)
Usually there are no symptoms, but external lesions may itch. Usually a diagnosis of HPV is considered when, during the routine annual gynecological examination, the cervix looks abnormal or the Pap smear reports cervical cell changes. Using acetic acid applied to the cervix and visualized under magnification using a special microscope, a physician can see lesions on the cervix (condylopathy). Other lesions on the genital area can either be raised up "bumps" (papillary) or flat. There are many different kinds of local topical treatment for this virus.

Molluscum contagiosum
This virus presents small, round, raised "pimples" with a shiny surface and white material inside located on the lower abdomen, genital areas and also on the thighs. These lesions may itch and scratch, and trying to open them can lead to a localized bacterial infection. These lesions are usually painless and may be treated with local topical agents.

AIDS/HIV
Initially an infected individual could manifest a flu-like illness approximately two weeks after exposure that will resolve itself. Infected individuals may then have no symptoms from anywhere from months to years. Then early symptoms of fevers and increased susceptibility to common illnesses like herpes and yeast infections may occur. This is followed by a complete insult of the body's immune system. Although there are antiviral drugs that are used to treat HIV, there is no cure and no vaccine that is commercially available.

Syphilis
The initial skin manifestation is a painless ulcer (chancre) usually occurring in the genital area, though it is not universally present. If syphilis goes undiagnosed and untreated, it may lead to a latent stage that can affect the vascular and nervous systems. Antibiotics are used to treat this STD.

There are other STDs that are not mentioned above. If you are sexually active and have not been tested recently, I strongly recommend that you make an appointment with a provider of your choice to discuss what would be appropriate screening for you. This service is offered confidentially in our Women's Clinic as well as by our other UCF Student Health Center providers.

FROM PAGE 19
"It is supposed to be an easy class, but my teacher was very unorganized and she made everything seem more difficult than it was," Paulson said. "Besides, it was also the most boring class I've ever taken."

Although Paulson said she doesn't get stressed over finals because she feels it's just another round of tests, she still needs enough time to study and feel confident about the material she just learned.

"When I put things off to the last minute, I usually study harder, but it still stresses me out sometimes because there is a lot of work to learn over a short period of time."

Yet, Paulson refuses to let finals overtake her life.

"I sometimes see students studying day and night for finals, but I can't do that. After studying for so long, it's like I am just reading the words in the books but not comprehending them. I've realized I just need to concentrate and try my hardest and hopefully the outcome will be good."

Freshman Whitney Loring, 19, tries to better prepare herself for finals ahead of time by beginning to study as early as possible.

"The idea of having to take finals in general stresses me out," she said. "But studying ahead of time really helps me learn and review more of the material so that I'm better prepared for the exam itself."

However, it is not just the written finals that stress Loring out.

"My most stressful class is speech because it is a class in front of people, and we had to give four speeches throughout the course," Loring said. "Even just thinking about having to give a speech stresses me out."

Like many students, Loring's health usually suffers around finals time.

"I tend to get sick around finals time due to my lack of sleep and stress level," she said.

For junior Chris Sub, 20, his most stressful class this semester is systems software.

"It is definitely my hardest and the most time-consuming class," Sub said. "The program I had to write was around 15 pages long and were hard to understand."

Although Sub said stress is a daily thing for him, he can't help but concern himself with his grades more at the end of the semester.

"I can assure an 'A' in the four other classes I am taking," Sub said. "But for my system software I am borderline. If I can get a 'C', I will earn my 4.0 for the semester."

Nevertheless, Sub has his own method of relaxing when he gets too stressed out.

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computer or study," she said.

In addition to the child support Nestrick receives from the children's father, she works in the little spare time she has, as a substitute teacher for Orange County Public Schools to help take care of her family.

Although the children's father spends quality time with the children every other weekend, Nestrick still finds herself taking care of her children by herself for the most part, with the occasional assistance of her mother or babysitter.

"I used to live with my mother and she would help me out often, but now I'm on my own and have to take care of things most of the time," Nestrick said.

However, Nestrick still does whatever it takes to do well in her classes.

"I have to hire a babysitter every time I want to do anything, even if it's just to work on a project for school," Nestrick said.

She takes off work and school if one of her children is sick so she can take care of them, she added.

Although senior Ed Maldonado, 16, has four boys, three of whom are in their 20s, he still supports his youngest son, who is 16 years old.

Maldonado helps support his family with the retirement checks he receives from when he served in the military. His wife is currently employed as a real-estate agent and also helps provide financial assistance for their family.

But unlike Nestrick, Maldonado's son doesn't need his father to do his laundry or clean up around the house after him.

"It's much easier for me to study now than it would have been if I had gone to college sooner," Maldonado said. "I don't have to check up on my son every second because he's old enough to take care of himself for the most part."

Nevertheless, Maldonado still tries to set a good example for his son so that he will focus more on his main priorities, such as the one thing his son tries to avoid — homework.

"I try to show him that if I can do well in school, so can he."
UCF women compete in beauty pageants for scholarships

These pageants also helped Rougeau become involved with her community as well. Rougeau started to take an interest in helping young people get involved in politics and the voting process when she became the president of her youth advisory board in high school. Rougeau said this worked in conjunction with her pageant platform.

"From being this involved in the community, I was recognized and won many awards, as well as scholarship money," she said.

Kristy Burgess, a 21-year-old senior, has earned more than $5,000 participating in pageants over the past eight years. In the past two years alone she has participated in six Miss Florida preliminary pageants.

"I would recommend doing scholarship programs like Miss Florida for people who want to earn money for school, but also have a platform that they feel passionate about bringing to the community," Burgess said.

However, pageants are not just about earning money; she said. "A titleholder is a role model, advocate for their platform and a public speaker. Just wanting financial aid will not win someone a title."

Junior Christine Cooper, a 19-year-old recent recipient of the Miss Silver Springs title, agreed. Earning scholarship money serves as a bonus to other pageant incentives, such as speaking about a platform, making friends and performing a talent, Cooper said.

"I wouldn’t recommend joining a pageant just for the scholarships. It’s a big commitment of time and there’s no guarantee you’ll ever win a scholarship."

Cooper has participated in pageants in high school, as well as other pageants such as Miss UCF and Miss Orlando. She also plans to participate in the Miss Florida competition this year.

"The money from pageants certainly helps because I am saving for graduate school," Cooper said. "I’ve received most of my scholarships for academic achievements, but the money I’ve received from pageants has also been a big help, which I’m quite grateful for."
**Classifieds**

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