Shephard Building Makeover

If you have been in the Shephard building in the last few weeks you may have witnessed a chaotic scene of continuously shifting mountains of furniture, stacks of boxes, workers moving these piles of furnishings and those repairing the sponge-floored storage closet.

Things are almost back to tranquility now (at least with respect to the interior design) after three weekends of re-carpeting. The Shephard lab is finally rid of those real-rabbit-sized dust bunnies under the desks and necro-colonies of carpenter ants (fingers crossed). It looks fantastic. If you haven’t been in, drop by and take a look. In addition to the new carpet, the lab is in the process of being rearranged to better accommodate students’ study needs. Fewer, but newer, computers will be in service as well as a group study area.

Mrs. Blenis’ office and the conference room are the last area to be renovated. Thank you for your continued patience.

Mrs. Blenis Goes to Washington; Read Her Tale Here

Washington, D.C. is beautiful this time of year – although a bit chilly! I made two presentations at the 2009 Professional Conference of the National Consortium of Specialized Secondary Schools of Math, Science and Technology (NCSSSMST) on March 12. The presentations were titled: “Florida Governor’s School Pilot Summer Academy for Gifted Students: What We Learned” and “Tapping the Brain’s Funny Bone: Classroom Applications.” This presentation introduced some strategies and reasons for classroom teachers to use humor.

On Friday the 13th, I had the opportunity to explore the Smithsonian’s Air & Space and the American History Museum with other conference participants. One of my favorite exhibits was “Written in Bone, Forensic Files of the 17th-Century Chesapeake” which examines history through bone biographies, including those of colonists at Jamestown, VA, and those living in the wealthy and well-established settlement of St. Mary’s City, MD. It was fascinating! Another favorite was “Dig It! The Secrets of Soil.” This exhibit explores the amazing world of soil. I even discovered some amazing connections between soils and everyday life. I also enjoyed the special exhibit on the life of Abraham Lincoln. I really wish I could have shared the experience with my students because they would have loved it… but that’s the teacher in me.

FTCE Update:
Upcoming FTCE Exam on April 18, 2009

Computer-Based Testing is Now an Option:
http://www.fl.nesinc.com

The next FTCE date is: July 25th, 2009
Register by 6/05 Late Reg. by 6/25
Passing scores on the General Knowledge test are required before registration of the Junior Sequence of Education Courses (EDS 3033, 4051 & 3095), and seniors must pass the FTCE Professional Education and Subject Area Test before graduation.
With graduation finally in sight, our 2008-2009 student teachers offered a few words about their experiences. Don’t forget to RSVP to Mrs. Blenis if you plan on attending the student teacher brunch to honor their hard work and supportive supervising teachers.

Jennifer Rodriguez, Science Education

I absolutely loved my student teaching experience! I had a fantastic time working with West Shore’s best 7th grade science students. It was great knowing that I not only taught them something cool about science, but they taught me how to be an effective teacher.

Kyan Robinson, Mathematics Education

My student teaching experiences at Southwest and Central Middle School were remarkable. I honestly enjoyed my students and I know they enjoy having me as their student intern. I learned a whole lot from my supervising teachers, whose assistance was vital in order for me to grow as an upcoming teacher. Many of the educational practices and theories introduced to me as a student were strongly reiterated while I was present in the classroom. At both schools, I also learned new practices and teaching tips, and continue to learn with each passing day. Overall my student teaching experience provided me with a true taste of the education world. I now have much more confidence in my teaching ability and feel confident that I chose a career I will love. I am very excited to have my own classroom, and I now have a better feel for the challenges that will come my way. Each day is a new day, and no two days in the classroom will be identical – I learn from each day and each experience. I can conclude and say “there’s NEVER a dull moment in teaching Middle School!!!!!!!!!!”

Jessica McKeever, Chemistry Education

I love student teaching; it was worth all of those long hours of classes to finally get here! I learned that there are a lot of good ideas out there, and you should find them and use them in your classroom and then come up with a few ideas of your own. Borrowing and adapting is a lot easier than always coming up with your own lesson every time.
Upcoming Events; Karma Points for Your Finals

We have several events planned around Earth Day, and there are countless opportunities to volunteer around the community. Roll up your sleeves and collect some extra Karma points just in time for final exams.

Beach Cleanups
April 19th Sunrise / April 18th anytime
A handful of graduate students have committed to a sunrise beach cleanup the Sunday before Earth Day. Email Joy Winet (jwinet@fit.edu) if you would like to carpool or meet up with us. Perhaps not the best of planning, this will be the day after the big “Keep Brevard Beautiful Cleanup.” Hope you can make one of them; here’s the link for the Brevard cleanup: http://www.keepbrevardbeautiful.com/events_trashbash.html.

Plant Mangroves with Students
Earth Day, April 22nd, All Day
Lisa Johnson, an FIT graduate student working with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, will be planting mangroves in the Flinn Tract Conservation Area with students from St. Sebastian River High who have been growing and caring for the young trees themselves at school. Volunteers can help educate the students about mangroves and conservation areas. Contact Lisa if interested: lisa.k.johnson@dep.state.fl.us.

Native Seedling Give Away
Earth Day, April 22nd, Morning
Maple Street Natives is kindly donating a dozen or so palm and pine seedlings native to this area. Come help hand these out on campus for a few minutes in the morning to celebrate Earth Day. Help from anyone knowledgeable about local flora and exotic plant dangers (or anyone else) would be much appreciated. If you are interested email Joy, or stop by the lab to coordinate efforts on this.

Good Luck Bridge
Monday, April 27th, 10am
Once again, we will be passing out treats on the bridge. It’s a nice gesture to wish everyone luck on their finals and say farewell to graduates and those leaving for the summer. Help will be needed setting up, breaking down, and of course distributing the goods. Whatever time you have will be welcomed.

Eat Pasta, Help People; Heifer Project Benefit
Sunday April 5th, 5:00pm, Angela’s house. A note from Angela follows:
Greetings, Everyone!

I’m a volunteer for Heifer International, which is a non-profit organization that is known for helping impoverished families all over the world, even in the United States. April is “Pass on the Gift” month, which celebrates the nearly 200 ceremonies in which families pass on dairy goats, alpacas, and other animals to help more families acquire knowledge, skills, and products to lift themselves up out of poverty.

I will be hosting a benefit spaghetti dinner on Sunday, April 5th at 5pm. You are all welcome to attend and if you can contribute a few dollars, what ever you would normly spend on bringing a drink or dessert, it would be much appreciated. You can check out this link to learn more about Heifer International: www.heifer.org/gifts. Please call or email me for directions if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Angela Delp
Adelp2007@fit.edu; (321) 728-2615

Save the Date

You are invited to participate in these upcoming events . . . .

get involved!

FFMT Conference in Miami April 4-5
Pasta Diner, Heifer Project Benefit April 5
Sunrise Beach Cleanup April 19
Earth Day; Native Seedling Give Away April 22
Good Luck Bridge April 27
Student Teacher Banquet May 9
**Phi Delta Kappa Update**

As you may well know, Phi Delta Kappa International (PDK) is a professional education organization. The mission statement is to “promote high quality education, in particular publicly-supported education, as essential to the development and maintenance of a democratic way of life.”

The local Cape Kennedy Chapter of PDK was recently in danger of dissolution but Dr. Marcincowski has spearheaded a revival effort. He is serving as the interim president of the chapter and has already held the south region chapter kick-off. The meeting took place on Friday, March 27 from 5:00-7:00pm at Florida Tech. It was an opportunity for professors, students and local teachers to voice their ideas for the direction of the chapter, exchange professional stories, and of course eat. A plethora of delicious finger food was on hand.

You can learn more about PDK at: [www.pdkint.org/aboutpdk/mission.htm](http://www.pdkint.org/aboutpdk/mission.htm). You can also contact Dr. Marcincowski for news about the local chapter: marcinko@fit.edu.

Be sure to plan on attending the next meeting. It is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19th, from 5:00-6:30PM at the Cocoa Library.

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**DEPARTMENT CALENDAR**

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- **April 2009**
  - Good Luck Bridge 10am
  - Earth Day: Native Seedling Give Away
  - Last Day of Classes
  - May 1 Finals Start
  - Easter
  - Sunrise Beach Clean Up

- **May 2009**
  - Tax Return Due
  - FTCE Exam
  - Petition to graduate for fall w/o fee
  - Easter
  - FTCE Exam
  - Easter

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**Sticking around this summer?**

- EDS 5067, Measurement and Evaluation, will be offered this summer but NOT Summer 2010. Take it now if you need the course for your degree program.

- **Celebrate Earth Day**
- Good luck on your finals
- Congratulations and best of luck to our graduates