



# Connect Collaborate Innovate

A Newsletter From The Provost's Office



**Dr. Michele Yovanich**  
Vice Provost, Student Affairs

## Connect Through Shared Experiences

*"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."*

~ Lao Tzu

If you have ever been a Resident Assistant (RA) in your undergraduate years you will undoubtedly remember the infamous exercise called "Behind Closed Doors." It is an experiential training process that tests knowledge of policy, resources and peer helping.

The big day for "Behind Closed Doors" was a highly anticipated capstone experience of the two-week long training for new RA's. As the process begins, student RA's

would connect in groups of two or three, often link arms and slowly take steps down the hallway to choose a closed door. Only when standing squarely in front of the locked door, one would knock. With hearts beating fast and palms sweating, the door would fling open with a dramatic flair to find other student leaders enacting a real-life scenario that a staff member might encounter in the future.

What would be behind the closed door we would fret? An assault victim? A student who failed all his classes? Someone experiencing depression? With no time to

prepare any more than you already had, and no option to step back out of the room.

**YOU take a deep breath and respond.**

The global pandemic along with the worsening divide between the "haves" and "have nots" has brought a series of "Behind Closed Door" moments for each of us. Just when we think the training exercise *must* be over, yet *another* scenario is presented.

***What situation is behind the next closed door?!***

## Collaborate for Student Success

Student affairs professionals typically comprise the most consistent and strongest voice on campus that articulates concern and support for the growth and development of students. I have also seen this advocacy from our faculty and other staff at FSW. It was evident during our Welcome Week opening program that both student affairs, faculty and staff take pride in sharing the responsibility for the student experience.

**THANK YOU** to all our wonderful volunteers who gave a collective 150 hours during the first week of classes to create a sense of belongingness for our students on the campuses and in student housing.

We know that of the 168 hours in a week, students spend many hours outside the formal classroom setting, learning. Each of us contributes to

this holistic learning. For many of us who chose student affairs and teaching as our calling(s), we long for the days that students can again visit our spaces and “plop down” to seek input on how to make meaning of a joy or challenge they are experiencing.

Significant developmental tasks such as ethical and moral decision making, managing emotions, developing mature relationships, establishing identity, and developing purpose occur because of an inclusive college environment and strong outside-the- classroom offerings.

## Innovate for Impact

The collective momentum of the

College in its shift from in-person to a variety of modalities also included Student Affairs. We delivered high-impact student affairs work in a variety of new modalities we typically did not use before to deliver new student orientation, admissions counseling, diversity and leadership workshops, mental health counseling and care, training of peer coaches, customer service and academic

advising.

During my short time back at FSW after being away for 24 years, I have been privileged to see dozens of our professional team in Student Affairs, enrollment services and Athletics “work miracles” for our students despite managing their own personal challenges.

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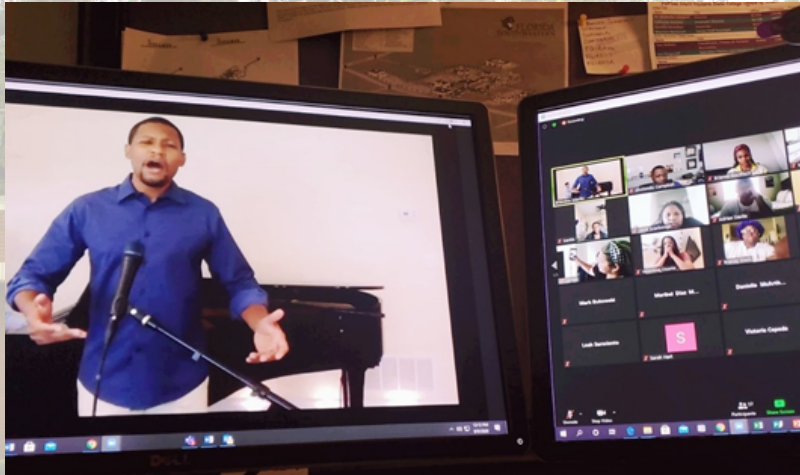
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# SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEK



*The new age of virtual student development programming.*

*Nearly 60 attended vocalist Brandon Martin's riveting performance, "A Voice of Justice."*



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- FSW Campus Recreation: .....**fswcampusrec**
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Great opportunities for extra credit and activities that enhance student retention:

**<https://www.fsw.edu/studentengagement>**



*Dr. Michele Yovanovich is a native Floridian whose parents and grandparents were all teachers across the disciplines of science, business, arts and languages. She has twin daughters and recently built a greenhouse to support her love of gardening.*

Reach out via email: **[Michele.Yovanovich@fsw.edu](mailto:Michele.Yovanovich@fsw.edu)**

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