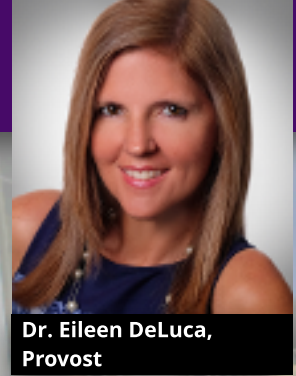




Connect Collaborate Innovate

A Newsletter From The Provost's Office



Dr. Eileen DeLuca,
Provost

What I Like About You...

This Sunday, many of us will celebrate Valentine's Day (also known as the Feast Day of Saint Valentine) with our loved ones. As I think about how to make the day special for my family, I am running up against the "oh we can't do that because of the Pandemic" barriers. In some ways, I fear Valentine's Day will be just another one of those "new reality" holidays that comes and goes without an opportunity to celebrate it in the way "we used to." So, instead, we sigh, we make the best of it, and we file it away in the "holiday with an asterisk" memory drawer.

To get my spirits up, I decided to search the internet for ways Valentine's Day (or its analogue) is celebrated throughout the world. I was most definitely inspired to see that across the globe, the manifestation of the "celebration of love" takes many forms. Some of my favorites include...

1. A Week of "Sweetness" (*A whole week! Count me in!*)
2. "Spring Festival" (*A whole season of amorous gatherings!*)
3. And (*Oh, please let this travel site be accurate!*) "National Chocolate Day."

In some Latin American Countries, the analogous celebration is known as the *Día del Amor y la Amistad* (Day of Love and Friendship) which by title, seems to extend the celebration beyond simply focusing on romantic love and/or a singular person. The idea of celebrating love and friendship seems to invite us to reflect upon the idea of "affection" and appreciation for people who are special to us in many different ways. In that spirit, I hope to share a few examples in this newsletter that highlight my appreciation and gratitude for the work of my colleagues.

SACSCOC Compliance Certification

I sit here, at this very moment, writing these words from our Compliance Certification "War Room," where my colleagues and I are writing, and re-writing narrative, gathering documents, editing each other's work, and cheering each other on. While not everyone involved in this process is sharing this physical space, Zoom and Microsoft Teams has provided us the ability to work on several documents collaboratively. For these last couple of weeks as we approach the deadline for submission, many of us have gone through every emotion; we have seen the best of us and the worst of us. Despite the stress of the deadline, the process of preparing this document has reminded me at every turn what an amazing institution we are all a part of. The work of every department of this college is incredible. As I write and review the narratives, I feel more than pride; I feel honest affection for all of my colleagues and the way we have all collaborated to achieve our mission over so many years.

Myra Hale Walters Faculty Excellence Awards and NISOD Staff Excellence Award

Upon nearly 37 years as a professor, faculty leader, and advocate of professional development and engagement, Myra Hale Walters' name was bestowed upon three unique awards. Professor Walters' commitment to teaching excellence, her tireless service to the college and community, and her lifelong scholarship and willingness to help develop the knowledge and skills of her colleagues is the inspiration for these awards and demonstrate the highest level of achievement in all categories.

The purpose of the FSW Myra Hale Walters Faculty Excellence Awards is to recognize the contributions of outstanding full-time faculty members in the areas of teaching and instruction, college and community service, and professional development and scholarship. Faculty excellence award recipients will receive a custom crystal award, a certificate denoting excellence, and an honorarium of \$1000 from the

FSW Endowment.

I am excited to announce 2020-2021 recipients:

Dr. Brandon Jett, Professor, History - Professional Development and Scholarship Excellence Award

As noted by his colleagues, Dr. Jett has an incredible record of scholarship, most recently with the publication of his book "Race, Crime, and Policing in the



Dr. Brandon Jett, Professor, History - Professional Development and Scholarship Excellence Award

Jim Crow South: African Americans and Law Enforcement in Birmingham, Memphis, and New Orleans, 1900-1945." His scholarship is made public to FSW and the Southwest Florida region through organizing conferences and activities on social justice issues, leading oral history projects with students, along with creating a digital history project focused on LaBelle.



Dr. Sarah Lublink, Professor, Philosophy College, Profession, or Community Service Excellence Award

Dr. Sarah Lublink, Professor, Philosophy - College, Profession, or Community Service Excellence Award

As noted by her colleagues, Dr. Lublink is a well-respected and valued professor and provides excellent faculty leadership in many areas to including chairing the Professional Development Committee, and formerly serving as the Learning Assessment Committee Coordinator for the Department of Humanities and Fine Arts. Especially notable is her service as Interim Director of the TLC, providing leadership and innovation to provide quality professional development before and during the Pandemic to help us face the exciting challenge of teaching and learning with current and newly implemented modalities.

Professor Ihasha Horn, English - Teaching and Instruction Excellence Award

Professor Horn received too many nominations from students to share in this space, but here is an excerpt of one that embodies the spirit of why he is such a deserving recipient.

I am choosing to nominate Professor Horn because he is very knowledgeable and passionate about his subject. He always made sure that his students had the tools to succeed in his class; he included hyperlinks to sites such as OWL Purdue to help us format our papers properly, took us to the research lab and made sure all of his students understood how to properly use databases, included a detailed calendar so that we never missed out on any important information and among other things he always let us know we could reach out to him through Canvas if we have any questions. His coursework was as



Professor Ihasha Horn, English - Teaching and Instruction Excellence Award

challenging as it was interesting and I believe I am leaving his ENC 1102 class as a better academic writer. I have full faith in my capabilities, and if I ever doubt myself I know where to find the tools to help me thanks to Professor Horn showing us where to turn if we hit a roadblock.

The National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Excellence Awards were established in 1991 to provide NISOD-member colleges with an opportunity to recognize individuals doing extraordinary work on their campuses. Since then, more than 30,000 recipients have been honored with the Award by their colleges.

I am excited to announce the 2020-2021 staff recipient:

Evelyn Roman, Administrative Assistant - NISOD Staff Excellence Award

Evelyn was nominated by several of her colleagues. Here is what one of them had to share:

Words cannot really describe Evelyn's value to FSW and our students. I have worked with her in both the Office of Admissions and The

Dean of Students Office, and rarely have I experienced someone with the passion and compassion to assist students. While we are fortunate to have her with us in our office, her knowledge of cross-college policies and procedures makes her an even more valuable asset. Having been an FSW student herself, Evelyn knows what it is like to walk in the shoes of our students and that by itself makes her an even greater influence on our students and FSW. Evelyn has worked in the Office of the Registrar, Office of Admissions, as well as the Dean of Students



Evelyn Roman, Administrative Assistant - NISOD Staff Excellence Award

Office. Here in the Dean's Office she is our front line in greeting and assisting students who may be in emotional distress, moments of anxiousness, and possibly even in crises. Evelyn provides a warm and caring greeting to these students every time and ensures they are connected with the proper resource. She also does not think twice if needed to help out in another area. I cannot think of a more deserving staff member for the NISOD award.

Both faculty and staff honorees of all of these excellence awards are also recognized by NISOD for national recognition, and will be eligible to attend NISOD's International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence or another conference of their choice.

Please join me in congratulating these faculty and staff for their outstanding work here at FSW!

Fun in 2021!

In the Spring "Provost's Welcome" meeting and more recently in a *10 at 10* Weekly Webinar, I referred to SACSCOC Compliance Certification as "Fun in 2021!" My goal was to remind us all that

Compliance Certification should not be viewed as a threat, but as an opportunity to "render visible" all of the great work we do at FSW. It also was the opening line to reviewing the key dates of SACSCOC Reaffirmation activities that span the year of 2021 in its entirety. At the "Provost's Welcome" meeting, I asked faculty, staff

and administrators to share their creativity to drop a "rhyme" to sum up 2020 as a way to close the book and move on to "Fun in 2021." In the spirit of shared governance, Dr. Peggy Romeo, FSWFF President and Dr. Martin Tawil, Faculty Senate President joined me in reviewing the submissions, coming up with names

for the "awards," and choosing recipients for Follett gift cards they can use in FSW Bucs Store. I must share here that reading the submissions together and was almost too much fun... it was difficult to get back to other agenda items that day. I am excited to announce the winners of the "Fun in 2021" challenge!

Fun in 2021 Challenge Winners

"Hippest Rhyme" Award

Caroline Seefchak: Twenty Twenty, Collaboration Plenty!

Brandon Jett: Averting disaster in the Fall semester #2020

Christine Smith: We have dealt with plenty in 2020; let's go forward with fun in 2021 :)

"Tell it Like it is" Award

Hope Goodwin: 2020: Evacuation Vacation 2021: Vaccination Rejuvenation

Sindee Karpel: 2020 hide and survive, 2021 flourish and thrive

David Evans: 2020 wasn't funny but we got it done, 2021 should be fun as changes continue to come.

Jeremy Pilarski: 2020 was plenty. 2021, we'll get it done.

"Way to Connect it to our QEP" Award

Sandra Seifert: Barriers broke aplenty back in 2020

"Made us Laugh out Loud" Award

Tina Ottman: 2020 hit the fan, we responded "Yes we can", Science lights the path we're on, to rebuild in 2021!

"Inspired Poet" Award

Sheila Seelau:

2020 was not funny -

Amazon Prime took all our money!

We have new stuff but miss our friends; Not sad when the old year reached its end.

Can't get vaccine til who knows when; Won't leave home much even then...

But working from home in my office room is brightened by colleagues over Zoom!

So no complaints, smile on my face 'cuz FSW is one rocking place.

Fun in 2021 Challenge Winners

"Keepin' it Positive" Award

Jane Charles: Home Run in 2021

June Davis: We grew plenty in 2020!

Vera Verga: Less stress and even more success in 2021!

Katharine O'Connor: In 2020 we did more than survive, in 2021 we will thrive!

Camille Drake-Brassfield: 2020 a year to remember plenty; 2021... more victories to be won...but we overcome!

Tina Churchill: Accomplishments abound we are not empty, we were dedicated and successful in 2020!

Cara Minardi-Power: We accomplished plenty in 2020!

The continued global challenges we face can make us all feel isolated and weary. As we approach Valentine's Day, I hope you will take time out to tell a colleague how much you appreciate what they do. The awardees included in this message are just a few of FSW's shining stars. I know that each of us could name many more deserving recipients. Across departments we continue to triumph over much uncertainty and adversity. In our struggle to keep our College moving forward, we can sometimes forget to give that much needed signal to one another that "You matter. The work you do matters." So today, I challenge us all to send at least one email to someone we want to recognize entitled, "What I Like About You!"

Happy Valentine's Day, FSW!



Eileen DeLuca holds Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Florida, a Master's of Arts degree in Applied Anthropology from the University of South Florida, a Master's of Science degree in Multicultural/Bilingual Education from the College of New Rochelle, and a Bachelor's of Science degree in English Education from the University of South Florida. She has a long and complicated history with the institution we call Florida SouthWestern State College and now sits in an office in the building where she once took classes and sat in the cafeteria as a student at Edison Community College.

Reach out via email: Provost@fsw.edu

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