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University of South Florida: The First Fifty Years, 1956-2006

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*UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA:
The First Fifty Years, 1956-2006*

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Acknowledgements

This project began more than three and a half years ago during a meeting with USF President Judy Genshaft. I came prepared for our discussion with several issues for her consideration. She had a topic she wanted to discuss with me. As it turned out, we both wanted to talk about celebrating the university's fiftieth anniversary with a commemorative book. As our conversation unfolded, she commissioned me to write a celebratory coffee table-style history. She has remained a great champion of the book since its inception, and I am grateful for all she has done to help see it to completion.

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included students, faculty, and staff from the charter class to the present; university presidents, provosts, deans, and department chairs; politicians and community leaders; donors and volunteers. USF exists today because of the many thousands of individuals who created it. The small sample of people involved in this project spoke eloquently of their own experiences and represented larger stories as well. To conduct these many valuable interviews, I benefited from the expertise and energy of interviewers Yael V. Greenberg, Andy Huse, Lucy Jones, and Danielle Riley. The oral histories recorded by Nancy Hewitt and Milly St. Julien for USF's twenty-fifth anniversary also informed the narrative. Not every account appears in these pages, but all the interviews are preserved for posterity in the Florida Studies Center's Oral History Program.

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Mark I. Greenberg
Tampa, January 2006

Chapter 1: From the Ground Up

In December 1954, Hillsborough County legislators Sam Gibbons and James Moody sat for coffee in Maas Brothers' Neptune Room in downtown Tampa. As the men pored over materials for the upcoming legislative session, their attention turned to higher education in the state. At the time, just three state universities -- the University of Florida in Gainesville and Florida State University and Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University in Tallahassee -- served the needs of a combined 36,000 students from Pensacola to Key West. The Florida Board of Control, which oversaw higher education in the state, had recently charged the Council for the Study of Higher Education in Florida to begin a planning study to determine future needs. Released two years later, *Higher Education and Florida's Future* (known as the Brumbaugh Report) projected a 350 percent increase in enrollment over the next twenty years. It called for an expanded statewide system of community colleges and for new universities near population centers. In January 1955, Representatives Gibbons and Moody saw the initial report and supported the creation of urban universities. They wanted one in the Tampa Bay area.¹

A rising population and growing demand for post-secondary education created both a need and opportunity for more schools. The state's population had nearly doubled every two decades beginning in 1900, largely through in-migration. At 2.7 million people in 1950, experts predicted the population would exceed 6.1 million by 1970. Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties contained just under 410,000 residents in 1950 and nearly 750,000 ten years later -- an astounding 89 percent increase.²

¹ *Initial Report of the Council for the Study of Higher Education in Florida*, January 20, 1955; *Accent on Learning, 1959*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Tampa: University of South Florida, 1959), 17.

² Gary Mormino, "Tampa at Midcentury: 1950," *Sunland Tribune* 26 (August 2000): 65.

World War II had transformed Florida and the Tampa Bay region with it. America's war effort to defeat the Axis Powers was concentrated in the state. Even before Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the U.S. Army received 6,400 acres of land on a largely unsettled peninsula known as Catfish Point. Congress appropriated more than \$3 million to build an airbase there and named it after aviator Leslie MacDill. In 1940, the U.S. government leased Drew Field Municipal Airport (located on the site of Tampa International Airport) and converted it into an Army Air Corps Base. On a desolate patch of land bordered by Fowler Avenue, Temple Terrace Highway (present-day Busch Boulevard.) and 30th and 46th streets, Henderson Field served as an auxiliary airbase and practice bombing range from 1942 to 1946. Bombardiers dropped sand-filled metal casings on targets north of the landing strip. A small charge in the tail left a visible puff of smoke for determining accuracy. Today, only one building from the base remains, housing Mel's Hot Dogs on Busch Boulevard.

Over 20,000 men and women from Hillsborough County left for the armed services during the war. More than 150,000 military personnel came through Tampa during their training. Some estimates placed new workers in the city's industries at just under 32,000, nearly doubling Tampa's total working population. Energy shifted from Ybor City's cigar manufacturing to Ybor Channel's shipyards, which received a total of \$330 million in wartime contracts. The Tampa Shipbuilding Company alone employed 16,000 people in 1944 and became the region's largest civilian employer. It produced over seventy navy vessels and repaired almost 500 others.

With the end of the Second World War, returning soldiers flooded Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. They started families, completed their education with the help of the G.I. Bill, and set about earning a living. D-Day paratrooper Sam Gibbons was no different. A young

father, recent law school graduate, and state legislator, he understood the state's growing educational needs. As chairman of the House Education and Higher Education Appropriations Committees, he digested the January 1955 report on higher education in Florida. The report called for three new institutions located in major urban centers – one in the Tampa Bay area, another on the east coast, and a third near Orlando. Legislators Gibbons and Moody initially suggested that the University of Tampa become a state institution, but the idea foundered as UT wished to maintain its independence.³

While sitting at his kitchen table one evening in early 1955, Sam Gibbons drafted a simple, eighty-word bill to create a state university in Hillsborough County. John F. Germany, then an aide to Governor LeRoy Collins, remembered it as one of Tallahassee's shortest pieces of legislation. "Gibbons very effectively handled the bill in the Florida House and Jim Moody, as chairman of the powerful House appropriations committee, worked closely with the Senate in lining up support."⁴ The bill read: "The State Board of Education is hereby authorized to establish a State University or a branch of an existing State University in Hillsborough County. Said Board is hereby directed to have a study made as to the feasibility of such action. The Board of Control and the State Board of Education are hereby authorized to enter into all contracts necessary to carry out the provisions of this act." With little discussion, the legislature passed House Bill 1007, and Governor Collins signed it into law on June 18, 1955.

For the remainder of 1955 and most of 1956 furious jockeying occurred not on *if* there should be a fourth university but *where*. In an effort to sway the State Boards of Control and Education, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce put together an attractive publication that

³ *Tampa Daily Times*, April 7, 1955; *Tampa Morning Tribune*, May 4, 1955; *The Tampa Times University of South Florida Campus Edition*, August 17, 1960.

⁴ *The Oracle* November 19, 1975.

highlighted Tampa as a logical site for a state university.⁵ Vegetable magnate Paul Dickman offered 475 acres near Ruskin. Land developers suggested 1,000 acres on Old Tampa Bay (land north of today's Courtney Campbell Causeway). Stanton Sanson, a Miami representative with New York's N.K. Winston & Company, proposed 1,800 acres of sand and scrub on Fowler Avenue west of the Hillsborough River near Temple Terrace. Once Henderson Field's practice bombing range, the land passed from the federal government to the county following WWII. Despite the legislation's clear intent for a site in Hillsborough County, Pinellas, Sarasota, Manatee, and Broward also competed for consideration.

On September 27, 1955, five delegations presented their proposals before a Board of Control meeting in Orlando. The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, a strong advocate for the proposed school, sent nearly 100 prominent businessmen to the session and almost filled the room. The Tampa group highlighted Hillsborough County's population boom and the growing state highway and Interstate networks in the area. In an effort to sell a St. Petersburg location, *St. Petersburg Times* publisher Nelson Poynter spoke of his county's gifts – its junior college and Bayboro Maritime Base. He also mentioned the city's excellent water supply. Gibbons, recently made chair of the House education and higher education appropriations committees, caused a roar of laughter from the board and audience when he pointed out that Hillsborough County provided St. Petersburg's water!

Securing approval for a site remained elusive. Plans for a new Schlitz brewery at the old Henderson Air Field just south of the proposed Fowler Avenue location angered some citizens, who complained its presence would corrupt future university students. In Tallahassee, Representatives Gibbons and Moody led the political fight with the help of Tampa's Chamber of

⁵ Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, "Florida Needs Another 4-Year State University – Tampa is the Logical Site," Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

Commerce. The Chamber developed a booklet on the need for a university in Hillsborough County. Purposefully too big to fit in a filing cabinet and too eye catching to ignore, the public relations piece graced many legislators' desks. Tampa/Hillsborough County boosters attended every Board of Control meeting in an effort to keep the St. Petersburg/Pinellas County delegation from gaining an upper hand. "The BOC finally got to treating me as an ex-officio member of their meetings," Gibbons recalled.⁶

The battle raged in the local press as well, with the *St. Petersburg Times* and *The Tampa Tribune* singing the praises of their respective sites and questioning the merits of the other. St Petersburg supporters complained that the Democratically controlled House and Senate looked to penalize their county for having the only two Republicans in the state. A local ministers' association claimed that Tampa contained seedy slums and breweries and should thus be barred from further consideration. This remark prompted six Tampa ministers to attend Board of Control meetings in order to act as "character references" for the city.

According to Representative Gibbons, "luck and the Almighty were with us on a few occasions during the search for a site." When Board of Control officials arrived in St. Petersburg in October 1956 to survey two sites under consideration, they encountered floods of seawater from a recent squall. "Take us to the high ground," officials implored. "The Temple Terrace site looked real good to these men on that day," Gibbons remembered.⁷ It looked even better when St. Petersburg officials estimated an additional \$800,000 in site preparation costs to prevent future flooding.

⁶ Sam Gibbons, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, August 23, 2002, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library. All oral histories cited below are located in the Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Campus Library unless otherwise noted.

⁷ *The Tampa Times University of South Florida Campus Edition*, August 17, 1960.

On October 12, 1956, the Board of Control put all the speculation to rest when it chose Hillsborough County for the new university. Upon hearing the news, one citizen called it “the greatest thing to happen to Tampa since MacDill Field.” Others looked forward to “big time football games” and a fine research library. Mayor Nick Nuccio promised a \$200,000 investment in sewer and water facilities, and a private campaign began to raise \$50,000 in planning money.

Two sites within Hillsborough County fought for final consideration – Fowler Avenue near the City of Temple Terrace and Old Tampa Bay. Opponents claimed the latter location required expensive site preparation to fill in marshland, and the press portrayed the property’s owner in an unflattering light. On the Fowler Avenue site, a local builder suggested constructing the university with some buildings partially underground and connecting them with subterranean tunnels. He also recommended keeping the recently deactivated Henderson Field and turning it into a government-sponsored flight school.

In a September 1956 report prepared on behalf the Board of County Commissioners in Hillsborough County and Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, a Miami research firm sought to sway decision makers in Tallahassee toward the Fowler Avenue site. The forcefully argued document noted its location just 8.5 miles from downtown Tampa and its 1,800 “high, dry, sandy” acres of land well above sea level. In addition, the report referenced its accessibility to a network of federal, state, and county highways that “provide quick and easy access to a population of 692,168 persons within one hour’s driving time,” proximity to a large college-age population, and comparatively low construction and maintenance costs.⁸ Despite the report, the

⁸ Julian Langner Research, Inc., “Summary Report: Proposed Site for New State University, Temple Terrace, Hillsborough County, Florida,” September 1956.

Board of Control remained deeply split and thus undecided, with two of seven members firmly committed to the Old Tampa Bay location.

Amidst growing impatience over the struggling selection process, Governor Collins weighed in. He confirmed his support for Hillsborough County but reiterated that he wanted the university on waterfront property. He also cautioned that while the Board of Control could make suggestions, he and the state Board of Education would make the final decision. Complicating matters further, the governor raised doubts that existing tax revenues could support a new university. “I don’t think we are prepared at this time to make a final decision on the basic question of creating the university,” Collins remarked in early December 1956.⁹ Sam Gibbons and other legislators in the Hillsborough County delegation vowed to keep fighting. Stanton Sanson owned land on the Hillsborough River, and Hillsborough County Commission Chairman Ellsworth Simmons helped secure the riverfront acreage in consideration for county officials extending 30th Street (now Bruce B. Downs) to his property. Tampa civic and business leaders lobbied the governor personally in Tallahassee to approve the Fowler Avenue site. Though not exactly on the water, “at least they [students] could get their feet wet,” joked Gibbons.¹⁰

On December 6th the Board of Control recommended Fowler Avenue near Temple Terrace as the new university’s location, but the Board of Education seemed reluctant to act. Sensing some urgency to bring the matter to conclusion, Gibbons went to Tallahassee and began lobbying Board of Education members to approve the Fowler Avenue location. They proved sympathetic to his request and promised to override the governor if necessary. In mid-December Gibbons and a board staff member convened in his kitchen to write a resolution for Board of Education consideration. The resolution to create a state university on the Fowler Avenue

⁹ *The Tampa Tribune*, December 10, 1956.

¹⁰ Sam Gibbons, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, August 23, 2002.

property passed unanimously on December 17, 1956. The Florida cabinet approved the measure the following day. It was “the brightest spot in a year of shining progress for Tampa,” *The Tampa Tribune* gushed on December 30. At an October 1988 Founder’s Day luncheon, Gibbons remembered the moment well. “It was a joyous day for everyone but the *St. Pete Times*. The *Times* just knew this site would collapse into a sinkhole, and that students would be perpetually drunk from beer from the two breweries just off campus.”¹¹

Hillsborough County had its university, but the institution still had no name. Several ministers dubbed the school “Bottlecap U” because of the breweries nearby. Over 100 suggestions surfaced, included University of the Western Hemisphere, Florida Peninsular State, Citrus State University, Florida DeSoto University, Osceola State University, Ponce de Leon University, Flamerica University, Henry B. Plant University, Collins Temple University, and College of the Sunshine State, to name but a few. University of Southern Florida received some initial attention but raised confusion with Florida Southern College in nearby Lakeland. The debate raged on into the fall of 1957, with the cabinet down to just two choices -- Florida Gulf Coast University and the University of Southwestern Florida. The former was discarded after people pointed out the existence of Gulf Coast College in Panama City, and others thought southwestern conjured up images of Texas.

Governor Collins upset some local boosters when he offered up University of Florida at Temple Terrace or Florida Temple Terrace University. He thought the names “would add beauty and charm and would be unique throughout the nation.” *The Tampa Tribune* strongly opposed the governor’s suggestion: “It would make about as much sense, if the university were situated in the Palma Ceia residential suburb, to name it Palma Ceia University,” it wrote on October 16.

¹¹ *The Tampa Tribune*, October 13, 1988.

The next day, a *Tribune* editorial made a new suggestion – University of South Florida. The newspaper’s ownership believed the name would identify the university as a state institution, designate its service area, and offer the dignity and prestige benefiting an establishment that might have 10,000 students one day. In a 2003 interview, Gibbons recalled how he rallied around *The Tribune* suggestion. “I wanted a name that had a lot of geographic significance to it because I had to get the money from the legislature. I just decided that everything south of Gainesville was South Florida!”¹²

The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce concurred with *The Tribune* and wired its feelings on the matter to the Boards of Control and Education: “Tampans basically more concerned over ultimate successful opening and operation of a new State University here than in nomenclature debate, nevertheless recognizing vital need that name selected adequately identify university with entire area to be served and so symbolize it. We respectfully urge that name University of South Florida meets all criteria, best serves all purposes and stands consistent with dignity of state of Florida.”¹³

The Ledger in Lakeland disagreed, declaring, “The University of South Florida would be just dandy – if Tampa was in south Florida instead of central Florida.”¹⁴ Echoing dissent among the local press, the Board of Education opposed the name University of South Florida, while the Board of Control voted unanimously to approve it.

On October 22, *The Tribune* wrote an open letter to the cabinet: “We believe we speak for the great majority of the citizens of this area in urging you to christen our educational infant the University of South Florida and end a long family dispute which threatens to becloud the

¹² Sam Gibbons, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, August 23, 2002.

¹³ *The Tampa Morning Tribune*, October 17, 1957.

¹⁴ *The Tampa Daily Times*, October 18, 1957.

child's future.” Later that day, the Florida cabinet announced its final decision. *The Tampa Times* carried the news: “Temple Terrace School named University of South Florida” blazed across the front page. Although the cabinet voted unanimously, several members only reluctantly accepted the decision. Attorney General Richard Ervin did not consider the name logical for a school in Hillsborough County. Governor Collins felt it lacked spirit and vision and thought it unfortunate that the name debate had sparked such heated state sectionalism. “I don’t see why the Board of Control couldn’t have come up with a better name,” he stated.¹⁵ A frustrated Thomas D. Bailey, state school superintendent, lamented that he would have voted for any name “up to Integrated U” just to settle the issue.¹⁶ *The Tampa Times* editorialized that “more than half of the new university’s students will have to travel north to reach the University of South Florida. Another quarter will have to travel west.”¹⁷

Even before the university had a name, it had a president. On July 16, 1957, the Board of Control appointed Indiana native John S. Allen to the post. Allen received his doctorate in astronomy from New York University in 1936 and began teaching at the University of Minnesota. Following a short stint at Colgate University, he directed the New York State Board of Regents’ division of higher education. His move to Florida came in 1948. He served first as vice president of the University of Florida and then in 1957 as its acting president.

Sam Gibbons knew Allen well. A year earlier, he had spent several intensive days in Gainesville with the University of Florida administrator learning more about the State University

¹⁵ *The Tampa Morning Tribune*, October 23, 1957.

¹⁶ *The Tampa Daily Times*, October 22, 1957.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, October 23, 1957.

System. “I knew he was so competent, such a fine educator and gentleman, that he would add dignity as well as experience [and] technical knowledge.”¹⁸

Following the university’s creation in December 1956, the legislature appropriated \$8,602,000 for construction and equipment and \$140,000 for salaries and staff planning. On August 4, 1957, President Allen and his secretary, E. Ann Strickland, moved into their first offices – a small space in the Hillsborough County Courthouse. According to *The Tampa Tribune*, he carried with him one note pad, a box of pencils, one ashtray (for visitors), and “great hope.” As yet unnamed, the university’s first phone line was listed as “New State University.” From his downtown location, Allen made frequent trips north to the Fowler Avenue site. “It was a mass of weeds, scrub oak, and swamp that was attractive to alligators,” he remembered.¹⁹

President Allen had his work cut out for him. “Long range plans must be made to include successive states of enlargement for a university which may be here for a century – or two or three,” he said.²⁰ Among his many responsibilities, the president set about gathering building designs and contracts, forming an educational program, and acquiring library books. The county zoned the new university with residential properties planned to the north, east, and west. A landscaped strip to the south would act as a “buffer” from the industrial park and its breweries further south. The first campus master plan, approved by the Board of Control, called for four buildings: a maintenance facility, administrative-classroom building, library-classroom, and union-classroom-cafeteria. Allen considered the library to be the heart of any university and thought it would be the first building constructed (it turned out to be the fourth). To that end, he

¹⁸ Sam Gibbons, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, August 23, 2002.

¹⁹ John S. Allen, “University of South Florida Comes Into Being,” *American School and University* 32 (1960-61): 72.

²⁰ *St. Petersburg Times*, August 14, 1957.

appointed a librarian as his first professional employee. Elliott Hardaway described himself as a “fanatic believer in the printed word.”²¹

As President Allen set about planning the new university, events overseas underscored the need for more and better higher education in America. In October 1957 the Soviet Union greatly alarmed the United States by launching Sputnik into orbit. Allen talked publicly of Sputnik’s implications: “It is clear that we need more scientists and engineers. But we do not need scientists and engineers who are politically naïve or economically illiterate.”²² Several weeks later he spoke again about America’s educational needs: “It injures our pride and it is a matter of national concern to learn that two years ago Russia graduated 60,000 scientists on the master’s degree level, whereas we graduated only 22,000 on the bachelor’s degree level. [T]here is one principal difference. Their scientists were selected for training on the basis of political reliability, while ours are free to think for themselves and serve humanity in many ways. In this connection, let us remember that atomic power cannot teach a Sunday school class, write a poem or compose a song. Scientists must be citizens in the fullest sense if their country is to perform its responsibilities to the world at large.”²³

In addition to his many responsibilities to build a new state university in Florida, John Allen and wife, Grace, introduced themselves to the Tampa community. The Chamber of Commerce honored him at a Tampa Yacht Club reception just after his appointment to the presidency. At a welcome luncheon at the Tampa Terrace Hotel, he stated, “I think we should all pay tribute to the many leaders of this community who have worked long, hard, and effectively in helping the Board of Control make its studies and decision, and in seeing this project through

²¹ *The Tampa Morning Tribune*, October 6, 1957.

²² *St. Petersburg Times*, October 17, 1957.

²³ *The Tampa Daily Times*, November 3, 1957.

the Legislature.” He compared the new institution to a baby that needed “loving care” for growth, “brick by brick, book by book, student by student.”²⁴

The Allens entertained frequently at their home in Carrollwood. With no children of their own, they enjoyed other people’s youngsters. Mrs. Allen gave “mitten parties” for neighborhood girls. Each guest chose a pair of her homemade mittens and sent them to Quakers around the country for distribution to the needy. She also embroidered luncheon cloths for the buffet parties she gave. The couple had acquired a silver punch bowl upon President Allen’s resignation from the University of Florida some months earlier. She joked, “It will get the university off to a good start, because you can’t run a university without a punch bowl.”²⁵

It did not take long before President Allen outgrew his small office in the county courthouse. On May 13, 1958, he moved to 349 Plant Avenue in Hyde Park. The building had previously served as a doctor’s office and provided much needed temporary space. From here library director Elliott Hardaway and his assistant Mary Lou Barker (later Harkness) began collecting and cataloging books and journals. Some were donated, some purchased, and others came from unneeded duplicate copies within the State University System. Grace Allen remembered the house’s termite problem and the havoc it played on the growing library. “You could tell how long a book had been sitting in the house by the size of the bug holes.” The staff looked for damage and sprayed insecticide as needed. Barker recalled, “We had to act fast. . . . They ate completely through some books. You could look right through the hole – like a small drill had been used.” The books would have to be fumigated before transferring them to the new library building.²⁶

²⁴ *Ibid.*, August 12, 1957.

²⁵ *St. Petersburg Times*, August 14, 1957.

²⁶ *The Tampa Tribune*, September 24, 1958.

As Hardaway and Barker filled the Plant Avenue house with more than 7,000 books, President Allen set about assembling his team of administrators and faculty. He selected Dr. Sidney French of Rollins College to serve as dean of the College of Basic Studies and director of institutional research. Allen asked Robert Lee Dennard of the University of Florida to join USF as business manager. He added a campus engineer, superintendent of grounds and small staff, and several more secretaries. On August 1, 1959, biologist James Davis Ray, Jr., became the first teaching and research faculty member hired. His first assignment was to develop a herbarium. He went on to lead the College of Natural Sciences and retired in 1983.

In Tallahassee, there was talk of delaying USF's construction. Legislators worried over a tight state budget, due in part to lower than expected tax revenues. USF building costs cut into the legislature's total construction budget for that year. While Tampa officials lobbied to maintain the planned schedule, the Board of Control met to discuss the funding matter. The Board argued that cuts in other budgets should come before USF and promised to award contracts in July and begin construction the following month. Construction did begin on time, but USF experienced its first of many budget cuts to come. Due to a \$24 million budget shortfall, legislators trimmed an \$8.6 million allocation to \$7.6 million.

As USF struggled to build at its site near Temple Terrace in 1958, fifty-five miles northwest of campus the university easily acquired the lease to its first permanent building. Chinsegut, an 1849 manor house situated on 5,000 acres of land in Hernando County, was well known to President Allen from his years at the University of Florida. An Inuit word for "where lost things are found," Chinsegut got its start before Florida became a state. South Carolinian Colonel Byrd Pearson settled the area in 1842 with the hopes of establishing a sugar plantation. In 1904 Chicago residents Raymond and Margaret Robins purchased the property to serve as a

retreat from the couple's tireless activism on behalf of workers, women, and the poor. Guests entertained at Chinsegut included Thomas Edison, Senator and Mrs. Claude Pepper, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, J.C. Penney, and Helen Keller. During the Great Depression, the Robinses suffered severe losses and donated Chinsegut to the federal government, collaborating with the Department of Agriculture on an experimental station to benefit Florida farmers. The University of Florida used the property from 1954-1958 as a retreat, branch library, and conference center but relinquished it after just four years due to dwindling interest on campus. Allen knew first-hand of Chinsegut's beauty and its potential as a USF property, and he happily accepted a twenty-year lease from the U.S.D.A. An herbarium to preserve dried plant specimens from Florida's past opened there in 1958, and the next year the USF Foundation hosted a tea party for distinguished guests. Numerous faculty and student meetings have occurred on "the Hill" over the years.²⁷ In 1980, the university purchased the manor house and 114.5 acres outright for just \$1,372. USF has served as the home's longest owner and recently placed it on the National Register of Historic Places.

On the Tampa campus, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce made plans for a groundbreaking ceremony, although construction on the administration building had already begun. On the morning of September 5, 1958, Governor Collins raised a golden shovel and turned the first soil for the five planned buildings. "This event will not be measured solely within state limits. It is a prominent landmark in America's educational history," he stated. Representing USF's charter class, forty-two high school juniors also dug in shovels. A crowd of

²⁷ Chinsegut guest book, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

500 watched from a temporary grandstand and from under several small oaks that provided an escape from the rising morning heat.²⁸

In the crowd that day stood some twenty presidents of other state colleges. The Chamberlain High School band played while dancing majorettes performed. Temple Terrace elementary school student Joyce Nader and future USF alumnus attended the ceremony with her parents and two brothers. She recalled her father capturing the day's events on his 8 mm camera. Cranes stood behind the present-day administration building as bulldozer engines revved in the background. Nader came back with her camera on the first day of classes two years later and marveled at the changes.²⁹

Mayor Nick Nuccio, also in attendance, spoke about the event's significance. "We have waited a long time for this day. You know, there is often many a slip between the cup and the lip, but now this makes it official – the university is in Tampa."³⁰ The mayor, himself the son of immigrants, spoke to the aspirations of a growing city and its ethnically diverse residents. His nephew, and future Stavros Center director, Dick Puglisi described what USF meant to Tampa's immigrants: mostly Cuban, Spanish, and Italian families. "It was an exciting period. So many of us were raised in Ybor City or from immigrant families, and we did not have the financial resources to even think about going away to college. . . . If USF had not been available to us, I would hate to think of the limited opportunities that would have been available in our lives."³¹

To avoid any financial "slips" and fulfill the educational dreams of families like the Puglisis, John Germany announced the formation of the USF Foundation. It would solicit community support for financial needs not covered through state appropriations. Sam Gibbons

²⁸ *The Tampa Times*, September 5, 1958.

²⁹ Joyce Nader, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 12, 2003.

³⁰ *The Tampa Times*, September 5, 1958.

³¹ Dick Puglisi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 21, 2003.

served as its first president, “the man who did more than any other one person to bring the University of South Florida to Tampa.” According to a September 6 *Tampa Tribune* editorial, “He caught the vision early; he worked tirelessly, at the sacrifice of his law firm, arguing Tampa’s claim from one end of the state to the other. . . . We think there ought to be a silver shovel, too. And it ought to go to Sam Gibbons.” Within days the Foundation received its first major donation, a \$2,000 student loan fund from the Mutual Finance Company of Tampa.³²

The groundbreaking ceremony lasted just thirty minutes. Construction of the first five buildings went on for over two years. From August 1958 through September 1960, USF buzzed with activity at the administration and chemistry buildings and University Center. President Allen, Board of Control architect Forrest M. Kelley, Jr., engineer Fred E. Clayton, and local architect Mark Hampton coordinated these efforts. Even with an \$80,000 subsidy from Hillsborough County, state budget cuts delayed completion of the library, life science building, and auditorium until spring 1961. Robert Simmons, Sr., of Bay Concrete Industries remembered pouring foundations those first months. First the existing vegetation had to go. Dips in the sandy terrain received fill, and a large hill between the planned administrative building and University Center required leveling. Bay Concrete received winning bids in part because it had new, six-wheel drive trucks. “In those sands, no one else in town had equipment that would serve it,” Simmons recalled. He and his crew of two battled extreme heat, wind, sand, and wild animals the summer and fall of 1958. Raccoons, wild hogs, deer, and wild turkey roamed the property. Blowing sand coated the drivers from head to foot. In all, the company poured some 48,000 yards of concrete over a fourteen-month period. Almost fifty years later, Robert Simmons, Jr. has followed in his father’s footsteps. He took over the family construction

³² *The Tampa Tribune*, September 23, 1958.

business and in 2004 expanded the Alumni Center and completed a new athletic facility on campus.

Each of the five buildings, located around a central plaza, had a specific purpose but also included space to serve several functions in the first years of the campus. The administration building contained sixteen classrooms, language laboratory, and “electronic computing center” in addition to office space. The five-story library could accommodate 250,000 books but also housed reading rooms, a permanent art gallery, faculty lounge to develop “team spirit,” and conference rooms.³³ “The campus was planned so that the library would be the tallest building, the most conspicuous building, to symbolize that the library was the heart of the university,” stated Grace Allen.³⁴ The 588-seat auditorium-theatre contained seats with tablet arms that could be raised into place for taking lecture notes. Most importantly for those who would occupy these buildings, they were completely air conditioned – the first Florida state university to enjoy such comforts. To maximize cooling efficiency, the buildings also had a minimum of windows. President Allen proudly proclaimed that even with the cool air, USF buildings cost \$14 per square foot, \$4 less than recent construction at the University of Florida and Florida State University.³⁵

As enrollment grew, Dr. Allen expected the university to add buildings to the north and south of the central plaza and to develop additional open spaces to the east and west. “The plazas will create a kind of informal mall, with each plaza planned as a quiet, restful area, conducive to meditation.” Allen planned for pedestrian traffic only around the malls, relegating cars to an outer drive dotted with parking lots.

³³ Allen, “University of South Florida Comes Into Being,” 76.

³⁴ Grace Allen, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 23, 1985.

³⁵ Undated *The Tampa Daily Times* article, USF scrapbook 1956-1961, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

In 1963, *Florida Architecture* featured an article on the new campus. “The University of South Florida has been conceived, planned and constructed literally ‘from scratch,’” the publication stated. Despite the involvement of different architects, engineers, and contractors on the buildings, unifying features of buff brick, vertical white columns, and decorative sunscreens to limit direct sunlight on the windows gave the campus a consistent look. President Allen called the style “Contemporary Progressive” and “Florida Functional.”

Others were not so kind. Four Florida architects urged USF to “humanize” the campus. Suggestions included covered sidewalks, more landscaping and areas to congregate, and the construction of additional learning areas in the center of campus. One person even suggested small electric trains to transport students from building to building. Among some of the architects’ impressions: “I would be very happy here if I were a car, but unfortunately, I’m not a car. There is plenty of space here for automobiles, but there is no room for people to talk to each other.” Another architect complained, “There is a focus on individual buildings-but not the spaces in between. Important psychological elements have been ignored.”³⁶

Despite its detractors, the USF campus was not without its early aesthetic highlights. In 1959 Tampa artist Joe Testa-Secca joined the construction project after winning a competition partly underwritten by Tampa’s Dal-Tile to design artwork for the administration and chemistry buildings. His theme, entitled *Forum*, portrayed the nature of the university where parties come together to share ideas, advance theories, and educate students. It appeared as two 8’ x 15’ Mexican glass murals with accompanying reflecting pools. Upon receiving his first commission as an artist, Testa-Secca spent six weeks in a Mexico City studio. Ten workers meticulously selected and cut thousands of pieces of colored glass according to the Testa-Secca’s life-sized

³⁶ *The Tampa Tribune*, July 23, 1967.

cartoon. When lavender proved impossible to reproduce, he substituted blues and reds and positioned them in such a way as to give the sensation of the desired color. Back in Tampa, a master tile installer placed the individual pieces into the administration building's exterior wall to create the finished work.

For the chemistry building public art project, Testa-Secca collaborated with architect Mark Hampton. They employed a new technique in pre-casting formed cement walls to incorporate a bas-relief of the artist's 12' x 70' design for *Forum II*. It continues the theme initially addressed in his design for *Forum I*. "I hadn't done a concrete relief or a bas-relief of any kind, so I experimented on what might happen," the artist recalled. "It gave me an opportunity to know something about that. It was a very nice relationship between the architects and myself."³⁷

Over the years, the administration building murals slowly faded into their surroundings. The reflecting pools proved a maintenance headache. Students kept throwing trash into the water, and grounds crews converted them into planters. With the pools replaced by soil, shrubbery encroached on the art, blocking it from view. Recently Testa-Secca's art has reappeared. Thanks in large measure to Vincent Ahern, coordinator of public art at USF's Institute for Research in Art, the greenery is gone and the murals are once again visible.

Although art flourished on the new campus, decidedly absent from construction plans were athletic facilities and dormitories. President Allen placed little emphasis on college sports and expressed this sentiment freely to prospective students. "While the university is not prepared to engage formally in intercollegiate sports in the beginning, there will be opportunity

³⁷ Joe Testa-Secca, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 8, 2003.

for physical education, recreation, and intramural sports.”³⁸ He promoted tennis, softball, soccer, touch football, badminton, archery and swimming. In February 1959, someone asked him “What sort of football team will [USF] have in 1960?” “Football! The first year? That will have to wait until we grow up. I don’t know when we’ll have football,” Allen replied. Few in the legislature welcomed competition for their beloved Gators and Seminoles. USF would wait until 1970 for basketball and until 1997 for a football team.³⁹

State budget cuts halted plans for dormitory construction on campus. “This is one of our basic needs, to get ready for residence halls by 1961-62,” President Allen protested. Hillsborough County State Representative Woodie Liles feared that without residence halls USF would be little more than a glorified community college. The legislature disagreed. It imagined USF catering to commuting students. Ever resourceful, Tampa residents organized a fundraising initiative through the USF Foundation. “Dollars for Dorms” hoped to collect \$55,000. In only several months during the summer of 1959, the campaign brought in over \$83,000. The Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency approved a \$1.2 million loan in early 1960, and USF broke ground on its first two dormitories.

Amidst the hectic construction activity, in late 1959 John Allen made the announcement that everyone awaited. USF would open on September 26, 1960, with a convocation and dedication ceremony for its projected 1,500 incoming freshmen. More than 6,000 people gathered that day for the official launch of Florida’s newest university. The crowd included President Allen, 125 faculty and staff, more than 1,000 freshmen, Governor Collins, and over 200 local dignitaries. “This is a day of joy,” Governor LeRoy Collins told those gathered. “It is

³⁸ *Accent on Learning*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1959, p. 38, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

³⁹ *The Tampa Times*, February 11, 1959.

an event of great pride for all assembled here and for many elsewhere.”⁴⁰ President Allen proudly opened the university to both current and future generations. “Young people whose curiosity has survived parental discipline, and who manage to grow to college age before learning all the answers, are invited to join our university community where they can continue asking their questions and trying to find the answers.”⁴¹

USF awarded its first honorary degree that day to George R. Cooley, research fellow with the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University and a retired businessman and banker. Governor LeRoy Collins honored John Allen with a three-inch silver replica of the university’s seal. Each charter class student received a bronze reproduction. The Board of Control had approved the seal along with the school colors (green and gold) and the motto (“Truth and Wisdom”) in February 1959.

Henry Gardner, executive director of Industrial Supply Corporation of Tampa, designed USF’s seal, and President Allen explained its significance. “The program of [USF] will include the study of the earth, its geology, geography, and life. The study of life means both plant and animal life, culminating in man and his social, economic, political, and spiritual development. Our studies will extend beyond the earth to the universe, symbolized in the seal by the sun.”⁴² Themes in the seal matched closely with the university’s colors, green and gold. “Green symbolizes life on the earth, while gold illustrates the life-giving heat and light from the sun.”

In the audience that day sat a twenty-one-year-old mother of three. Tampa native Barbara Johnson graduated from Jefferson High School in 1956, married, and started a family. In October 1959 she received a phone call that changed her life. Recalls Johnson, “My mother

⁴⁰ *The Tampa Tribune*, September 27, 1960.

⁴¹ *The Tampa Times University of South Florida Campus Edition*, September 26, 1960.

⁴² *The Tampa Tribune*, February 21, 1959.

called from her office – she was employed by the school system – and told me that the University of South Florida was accepting applications. She suggested that I apply.”⁴³ With her final transcript in hand, she submitted an application. Little did she realize she would become USF’s very first admitted student. Alongside 1,996 other freshmen, Barbara Johnson (student no. 00001) began her studies at the first independent state university conceived, planned, and built in the twentieth century.⁴⁴

⁴³ Barbara H. Campbell, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 25, 2003.

⁴⁴ Russell M. Cooper and Margaret B. Fisher, *The Vision of a Contemporary University: A Case Study of Expansion and Development in American Higher Education, 1950-1975* (Tampa: University Presses of Florida, 1982), xi.

Chapter 2: Accent on Learning

As a high school senior in Bartow, Florida, the future offered endless possibilities for Jim Vastine and his classmates. One day John Allen came to his school recruiting students for the University of South Florida's charter class. "He really gave a good sale on USF," Vastine recalled. "What his vision would be for the university; we would be the pioneers and could set the course for the university." President Allen's "way of presenting his look at the future of USF convinced me right away that I wanted to be a part of that."⁴⁵ Patricia Woods learned about USF at the 1959 Florida State Fair. The yet-unopened university had set up a booth with information packets and applications. As a teenager, Mrs. Woods had wanted a college education but her parents were unable to send her. Now in her early thirties and married, USF opened new possibilities for her. She eagerly filled out the paperwork, dropped it off at the school's temporary Hyde Park offices and waited. Within six weeks she received an acceptance letter.⁴⁶

Robert Bickel of St. Petersburg enrolled in the charter class because of USF's close proximity to his home and its affordability. His mother and father worked multiple jobs to make ends meet. No one in the family had ever gone to college. "My parents were anything but wealthy," he recalled. "We had few resources. To be frank, the economic opportunity to study at an emerging state university at very little cost to a family who worked for minimum wage was too good to be true."⁴⁷

Many other people shared this sense of excitement about Florida's newest university. "It never occurred to any of us, any employees of the university, that we would do anything other

⁴⁵ James Vastine, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 5, 2003, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library. All oral histories cited in this work are located in the Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library unless otherwise noted.

⁴⁶ Patricia Woods, interview by Andrew Huse, January 23, 2004.

⁴⁷ Robert Bickel, interview by Danielle Riley, January 26, 2004.

than succeed,” said registrar Frank Spain.⁴⁸ The optimism developed after months of hard work by Allen and his growing staff. The construction on campus proved only one part of opening the new university. Throughout late 1958 and 1959, Allen labored tirelessly with Sidney J. French of the College of Basic Studies to refine and disseminate an educational philosophy that incorporated the most current trends in American higher education. With support from the Ford Foundation, John and Grace Allen traveled the country visiting universities engaged in innovative programs. President Allen spent time learning from the Massachusetts committee charged with establishing Hampshire College. In Detroit, the Allens explored the “truly urban” Wayne State University. Trips to Michigan State, the University of California at Berkeley and UC San Diego offered additional insights.⁴⁹

From Allen’s travels and his many conversations with Dean French, “Accent on Learning” emerged, emphasizing a process of advancing and sharing knowledge. “A university is a place for those who seek sincerely to develop those intellectual qualities, interests, concerns, and skills which characterize the educated person. In no sense should a college education be regarded merely as preparation for a job,” French wrote in *Accent on Learning*.⁵⁰ USF discouraged enrollment by students interested only in specialized job training, those indifferent to developing their intellectual qualities, and those who found high school difficult or uninteresting. Instead, it would offer a breadth of learning in human culture as well as competence in a subject area of personal choice. “No one can predict the nature of changes that may take place for any individual, but a good college education must assume that changes will

⁴⁸ Frank Spain, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 17, 1985.

⁴⁹ John S. Allen to George [Miller?], July 29, 1973, University Archives, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

⁵⁰ *Accent on Learning*, 1959, Bulletin of the University of South Florida, 29.

take place for many and provide for them as best it can by emphasizing broad fundamentals of knowledge and intellectual skills.”⁵¹

The university set out a series of objectives to prepare students for life’s challenges. It promised an outstanding quality of education, an interdisciplinary approach to learning, and “development and training of the mind” in order to promote maturity and objectivity. Other goals included opportunities to work independently under faculty supervision, a cooperative work study program, financial assistance to enable qualified applicants to receive a university education, a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, and engagement with the citizens of Tampa. By 1961, USF had a work-study pilot program to place students with Tampa businesses for the summer. The Hillsborough County School System, Borden’s Dairy, several banks, Tampa Electric Company, Tampa General Hospital, and other organizations opened their doors for the new university. In May 1962, NASA approved USF as a Cooperative Education employee source and agreed to take eleven teams of students into its training program.⁵²

On campus, university leaders organized academic units and instituted programs to foster a well-rounded education. Students took classes not in separate departments but in one of four interdisciplinary colleges: Basic Studies, Liberal Arts, Business Administration, and Education. In Basic Studies, freshmen enrolled in “Functional English,” which emphasized writing, speaking, listening and comprehension skills. The class also taught students how to use library resources effectively. “Functional Foreign Language,” “Problems in Natural Science,” “Human Behavior,” “Problems in Mathematics,” “The Humanities,” and “The American Idea” rounded out the college’s compulsory curriculum. Juniors and seniors selected a major and gained

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 31.

⁵² Office of Research, *Building a Research University: A USF Retrospective*, Annual Report, 1994-1995, 15, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

specialized knowledge in the other three academic divisions. A mandatory “capstone course” for seniors drew together all four years of university education and related Basic Studies classes to upper-level work.

The All-University Book initiative offered recommended reading as another way to integrate academic disciplines around a common theme. Administrators also hoped to generate continuing discussion between and among students and faculty. The first selection was *The American Presidency* by Clinton Rossiter. Other choices included *The Quiet American* by Graham Greene, *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, Juan Ramon Jiminez’s *Platero and I*, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, and *The Conscience of a Conservative* by Barry Goldwater. According to Professor Jack Fernandez, some students bristled at administrators telling them what to read. Others, like James Vastine, felt it “was a nice thing to bring together everybody and to think alike about learning.”⁵³

Teaching and learning on campus had practical implications off campus. Professors Bruce Cameron and Richard Brightwell wrote that as Florida’s only urban university, “in addition to general education functions, [USF] may have some special utility for the area in which it is housed and . . . may owe some services to this area beyond the instruction and research which comprise its principle academic functions.”⁵⁴ To this end, in 1966 USF opened a “Learning Center” in downtown Tampa to counsel and train unskilled workers. Sororities volunteered in the Intensive Tutorial Program, which helped underprivileged students improve in their studies. A year after its founding, the program was the largest in the nation, utilizing 1,500

⁵³ Jack E. Fernandez, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 4, 2003; and James Vastine, interview by Yael V. Greenberg.

⁵⁴ *The Tampa Times*, January 21, 1968.

tutors in twenty Tampa Bay area schools.⁵⁵ In 1968 Community and University Service Encounter (C.A.U.S.E.) began recruiting and placing student volunteers in human service agencies. When African Americans boycotted Sarasota County schools in 1969, USF students stepped in to teach in the “Free Schools” set up in their place. Further afield, in the mid 1960s proportionately more students joined the Peace Corps from USF than from any other college or university in the nation.⁵⁶

Service to the community occurred on campus as well. The auditorium hosted Tampa Bay area leaders to discuss issues facing society, including urban education. A one-day seminar on “The Community Response to Crime” drew local, state, and national officials as well as representatives from the FBI, courts, and newspapers. The College of Education dedicated itself to urban problems when it became involved in the Model Cities Program. USF Faculty offered elected officials brief government courses and provided research services on issues including family structure, nutrition, and health.⁵⁷ Professors helped Tampa and St. Petersburg elementary and junior high school teachers develop their curriculum, and on Saturdays during the school year the university opened its doors to local school students seeking educational enrichment in the arts, humanities, languages, and math. The summer brought children to campus for youth sports, including baseball, archery, golf, track, gymnastics, swimming, wrestling, and tennis.⁵⁸

USF’s educational philosophy and emphasis on engagement attracted faculty and staff nationwide. When Dean of Women Margaret Fisher visited campus she reacted favorably to the school’s interdisciplinary approach and the strong reputations of John Allen and Liberal Arts

⁵⁵ *The Oracle*, October 2, 1969.

⁵⁶ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, May 13, 1963.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, April 15, 1963; *The Tampa Tribune*, January 22, 1968; *The Oracle*, September 25, 1968, April 2, 1969.

⁵⁸ *St. Petersburg Times*, September 11, 1966; *The Oracle*, December 4, 1968, July 9, 1969, May 26, 1971.

College Dean Russell Cooper. Anthropologist Simon Messing came in part for the boundless possibilities that his position offered. He learned in his interview that faculty would have the freedom to create their own programs, “the freedom you don’t have at an established institution,” he remembered.⁵⁹ English professor Jack Moore found USF to be a “very experimental school” and “open to professors performing in various ways.” Chemist and future College of Natural Sciences Dean Theodore Ashford “was intrigued by the ‘glowing terms’ the persuasive Cooper used to describe the new venture. . . . I could see it as the educational center for the entire Southeast.”⁶⁰

Biology professor Gerald Robinson learned of USF from his dissertation advisor at the University of Minnesota, where Russell Cooper had served as associate dean. “A lot of people heard about him coming down here [to Tampa] and in our initial faculty were ten people who had doctorates from the University of Minnesota.” Robinson defended his dissertation in late July 1960, packed up his belongings, and moved into a Seminole Heights home that his fiancé bought for them. They married August 13th and went on their honeymoon. On September 1st he reported to work at USF.⁶¹

As faculty prepared for classes, President Allen dealt with persistent inquiries about the role of college sports on campus. “The University is not prepared to engage in inter-collegiate sports in the beginning,” he cautioned.⁶² Most students did not seem to mind. “I think he really wanted to set University of South Florida apart from the University of Florida and Florida State and the University of Miami by having that noble quest of having just accent on learning, and

⁵⁹ Simon Messing, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, January 16, 2004.

⁶⁰ Jack Moore, interview by Nancy Hewitt, August 20, 1985; “USF honors dean whose vision sparked progress, excellence,” *intercom*, February 17, 1982.

⁶¹ Gerald Robinson, interview by Andrew Huse, November 11, 2003.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 38.

perhaps making a community that was just that,” stated Barbara Johnson.⁶³ John Melendi, university bookstore manager, recalled an additional element to the decision. “Dr. and Mrs. Allen were unbelievably fantastic people. People thought he did not like football. He did not want it because he was afraid the funds would divert from academics.”⁶⁴ If students wanted to attend a football or basketball game in the 1960s they could do as student Philip Amuso and friends and watch the University of Tampa or drive up to Gainesville.⁶⁵

President Allen supported intramural sports on campus. As a student, Ernest Boger recalled a very strong sports program at USF. English professor John Iorio boasted of his department’s football prowess in January 1967 and challenged Basic Studies dean Edwin Martin to a game. “Our team will not compete with Professor Iorio in the composition of ridiculous rodomontade, but will be content to settle the issue on the playing field.” A week later Professor Ernest Cox in Visual Arts announced a new faculty team “casually put together but with mighty purpose.” He warned that they would “soon put English to the test.”⁶⁶

History Professor Georg Kleine took his students to Chinsegut Hill nearly every semester after he arrived in 1968. As an extension of his classroom, the estate in Hernando County just north of Brooksville offered both academic, recreational, and social opportunities. A two- or three-day retreat with Kleine might include volleyball or soccer games, nature walks to Lake Lindsey, study sessions, and debates. Chinsegut “has turned out to be the single most significant, lasting benefit because so many friendships have been made. I have gotten to know

⁶³ Barbara H. Johnson, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 25, 2003.

⁶⁴ John Melendi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 22, 2003.

⁶⁵ Philip Amuso, interview by Danielle Riley, April 17, 2004.

⁶⁶ *The Oracle*, January 11, 18, 25, 1967.

so many students so much better because of it. Chinsegut to many of my students is truly a magical word.”⁶⁷

Even before Dr. Kleine brought students to Chinsegut, the property offered an informal venue for dialogue and interaction. Dean Howard Johnshoy first welcomed students there in June 1961 to discuss the curriculum, leisure activities, instruction, and long-range planning. Dean Sidney French of the College of Basic Studies called Chinsegut “the place where both administration and student voices mix to discuss philosophically the problems of growth.” For Dean Russell Cooper, it was the place to go when “we have to get away and think.”⁶⁸ Time and again in the 1960s, Chinsegut Hill served as an oasis for recreation as well as frank discussion and problem resolution amongst administrators, faculty, and students.

As a student, Margaret Miller appreciated the university’s focus. “John Allen, as I’m sure others have told you, was very keen on the arts. [He] talked about the arts possibly even being like a football team in terms of being a catalyst for community interest in the university and for getting the prestige and the program and the university out in the community. . . . There was always that rapport between the city and the university, even in those very early years. At that point, we were it. There wasn’t a Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center. There wasn’t a Tampa Museum [of Art].”⁶⁹ Within several months of the opening convocation, the USF Orchestra played its first concert in the newly constructed auditorium, theatre students staged Thornton Wilder’s 1931 drama *Pullman Car Hiawatha*, and opera singer Mary MacKenzie serenaded campus. Wednesday afternoons the communications department had coffee hour and Reader’s Theater, which included readings from novels and short stories. Once a month it put on

⁶⁷ Georg Kleine, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 19, 2003.

⁶⁸ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, April 2, 16, 1962, October 7, 1963.

⁶⁹ Margaret A. Miller, interview by Andrew Huse, January 22, 2004; Armin J. Watkins, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, August 13, 1985.

more elaborate events. Communications major Joyce Nader recalled an outstanding production of *The Catcher in the Rye*. Music professor Armin Watkins welcomed USF faculty contributions off campus to the Tampa Philharmonic and Florida Orchestra. In March 1963, “University Showcase” welcomed the community to campus for two days of art displays, music performances, and demonstrations. John W. (Knocky) Parker was recognized as USF’s “Professor of Ragtime” in January 1964.⁷⁰

University Center Program Director Phyllis Marshall described two excellent programs the first year of classes. Every Friday afternoon the UC ballroom hosted a jazz program. The other program, “Meet the Author,” brought writers to campus to speak. Yearly events like Spring Fling at USF’s Riverfront Park on the Hillsborough River east of campus offered games and picnicking. Marshall’s influence on student life cannot be underemphasized. As Liana Fox explained, “Phyllis Marshall was just absolutely wonderful. . . . She took all of us and made sure that we were not just involved but in charge of running the UC, deciding what the activities would be and how they would go, and directing us where we needed to go to lobby for any support we needed. . . . We were learning not just in the classroom, but we were learning what it was like to be university students.”⁷¹

For most people, learning to be a university student at USF did not include dorm life. Initially, the state gave no money to build resident halls, leaving federal and private funds to support these facilities. In 1960, 98 percent of students commuted to class. Ten years later, 73 percent commuted, with 20 percent living in dorms and 7 percent in private apartments. Ernest Boger recalled his commuting woes. “Over the years I had six automobiles . . . which means that

⁷⁰ Armin J. Watkins, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, August 13, 1985; *Building a Research University: A USF Retrospective*, 17.

⁷¹ Liana Fox, interview by Andrew Huse, July 21, 2003.

they lasted about a semester each!” On some days he hitched a ride with one of the campus custodians that lived in his neighborhood. “It was an interesting experience in survival.”⁷²

Robert Bickel lived at home because the university offered no accommodations his first several semesters. “I remember my commuting group. We commuted here in a 1956 Oldsmobile.”⁷³

Before Alpha Hall’s completion (equipped with a nuclear fallout shelter) in September 1961, the university’s first residents comprised forty-five women housed in twenty-two rooms on the fourth floor of the University Center. The state university system had recently begun co-educational residential living when Bickel moved into Alpha his second year. “My recollections . . . of Alpha were that there was both a feeling of excitement about being a residential student body, but also a little bit of a feeling of isolation because the place was so small.”⁷⁴ Men and women shared a single building. A set of doors on each floor separated the sexes. “Visitation” across the barriers was not permitted. In late 1962 and early 1963 Beta and Gamma Halls opened to accommodate growing student demand and permitted separate facilities for males and females.

Even with same-sex dorms, campus officials kept a close eye on residence activity. Vicki Ahrens recalled her experiences in Kappa Hall in 1969. “In the lobby there was a metal card slot with a punch card for every resident in the building. You clocked in when you left and when you came back. There was a person on duty in the lobby twenty-four hours a day. You had to show your I.D. and punch in and punch out. Guests had to be escorted. They would call you from the lobby and say you had a visitor. It was a very controlled environment.”⁷⁵

⁷² Ernest Boger, interview by Andrew Huse, December 2, 2003.

⁷³ Robert Bickel, interview by Danielle E. Riley, January 26, 2004.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Vicki Ahrens, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 3, 2003.

Linda Erikson lived in Gamma Hall and served as a resident instructor in the mid 1960s. Rules dictated that female students return to their dorms by 11:00 PM on weekdays and midnight on the weekends. If a woman wanted to spend the night elsewhere, she needed written permission from a parent. Under no circumstances were males allowed in women's rooms. The controlled environment also included frequent roll calls for mandatory fire drills, the occasional trash shoot fire, and for pranksters pulling the alarm. Local hospitals, state patrols, and even jails received calls in search of the missing. A Standards Board adjudicated minor violations, but "serious infractions" such as staying out all night were reported immediately to university authorities. Punishment could be swift. One evening in March 1967 someone threw the switch at the TECO substation feeding electricity to campus. Male residents poured out of their dorms and some entered the female dorms under cover of darkness. The Dean of Women ordered her charges to lock their doors, close their windows, and draw their drapes. When several dozen women opened their windows and began shouting to the men below, the dean ordered them to read the dorm rules and write papers about their infractions.⁷⁶ With time, regulations eased. Curfews were extended in 1967, clocking in and out disappeared by 1970, and dormitory residents wrote their own visitation policies and hours. In 1973 the Board of Regents officially recognized the rights of students over age eighteen to entertain visitors in their dorm rooms, though debate raged on over the hours and nature of those visits. Even today rules require that residents escort guests while in the building.

For several years in the 1960s terrible overcrowding occurred in USF dormitories and student beds spilled out into common areas. General enrollment soared and a decade-long policy prohibited non-commuting students under the age of twenty-one from living off-campus. Space

⁷⁶ *The Oracle*, March 15, 1967.

was at such a premium that the university temporarily barred students residing within twenty miles of campus from occupying a dorm room. The opening of six Andros Complex buildings and the privately run Fontana Hall eased congestion and gave students more options. Fraternities and sororities clustered members on certain dormitory floors. Student Government and intramural sports conversations flourished in the halls.

Hundreds of students living together in a single building produced both headaches and hilarity. Shared dorm rooms and bathrooms with messy or loud roommates could be difficult at best. In April 1969 Gamma I West threw a “Bathroom Bash” to make light of these trials and tribulations. “Did you ever realize how much of your life you spend in a bathroom?” streamers asked. Soft drinks on ice in a bathtub greeted partygoers. A graffiti contest followed a competition to see who could flush a toilet twice in the shortest time. In one of USF’s stranger residence tales, Joe Engressia ran afoul of university authorities in 1968 for a unique and much sought-after skill. Blind since birth, Engressia learned how to bypass the long distance telephone system by whistling at the correct pitch and interval. Soon, he was collecting dollars from fellow dorm dwellers to place long distance calls for them. His telephone whistling career came to an end when a suspicious operator tracked him down to USF. Disciplined by the university, GTE considered him for a troubleshooting job and dropped the charges. The Associated Press picked up on an *Oracle* article detailing Engressia’s exploits and made him infamous.

Residential life slowly grew to become a highlight of many students’ time at USF. “You only go to live in a dorm or an apartment one time,” reflected Vicki Ahrens. “You now have no one to wake you up every morning. I think that you can always relate to freshmen students based on that transition. It is a new phase of life.”⁷⁷ Liana Fox’s Sicilian mother and Cuban

⁷⁷ Vicki Ahrens, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 3, 2003.

father did not take easily to the thought of their daughter living away from their Tampa Heights home. They relented only when a family friend attending USF needed a roommate. “It was the best of both worlds,” according to Fox. “You got to enjoy the university experience as much as you wanted and when you got homesick you just packed up your car and drove home.” After a year living with the family friend, Fox moved in with Jane Duke of Kissimmee, Florida, whom she had met on the floor. “She taught me about okra and tomatoes, and I taught her about black beans and rice.”⁷⁸

Eating together is a significant part of campus life, though relatively few options existed either on or off campus in the 1960s for such activity. When USF opened, Morrison’s Cafeteria held exclusive rights to provide food on campus. From a facility on the first floor of the University Center, Morrison’s offered three meals a day in its cafeteria-style eatery. Students living in the dorms bought food plans, and commuters stopped in for a bite to eat between classes. Student Margaret Miller remembered purchasing a meal plan even though she lived in an apartment off campus. “I came in for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It was a meal ticket that we all used. . . . Food brought us all together.” Liana Fox offered similar sentiments about the UC cafeteria. “There was a wonderful connection there of what was going on on-campus to the people who were driving back and forth.” “A lot of [Greek] rushing occurred informally at meal functions as people would come together to lunch and dinner. It was a very collegial environment,” stated Vicki Ahrens.⁷⁹ That sense of community continued as the university population grew to include dining facilities in the Argos, Andros, and Fontana residence complexes. When a snack bar opened on the library’s top floor, many faculty members ate there.

⁷⁸ Liana Fox, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 21, 2003.

⁷⁹ Margaret Miller, interview by Andy Huse, January 22, 2004, and Liana Fox, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 21, 2003, Vicki Ahrens, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 3, 2003.

In the early years, especially, USF's small size offered interactions unknown at many other universities. On July 24, 1960, Grace Allen invited every USF wife and female staff member to come to her home. Together, they established the USF Women's Club, which continues to this day as social, cultural, and charitable volunteer organization. Librarians Mary Lou Harkness and Judy Keeth enjoyed employee badminton and volleyball games at lunch and picnics after work. Chemistry professor Jack Fernandez established close friendships through his participation in the summer 1961 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The smaller campus suited English professor John Iorio. "Professors used to know many of the students. Walking across campus in the early years one would say hello to ten-to-fifteen students. This does not happen anymore."⁸⁰

The 1960s brought enormous growth to USF and gradually ended many of the programs planned in the late 1950s that depended on small classes and a close learning environment. With just under 2,000 students in 1960, enrollment grew 680 percent to 15,635 in 1969. Each year, the student body increased an average 22 percent. Over time, the program lost some of its unique qualities and no longer provided students with opportunities to engage faculty in discussion and learn in an intimate setting.

With expanding enrollment in Tampa, President Allen and his staff looked for additional facilities to augment USF course offerings and overcrowded freshmen housing. In 1965 he obtained permission from the Board of Regents and federal government to assume thirty-five acres of land on St. Petersburg's Bayboro Harbor adjacent to downtown. Mindful of Pinellas County's desire for a state university, Allen had strong advocates for his plan. City Council, area

⁸⁰ John Iorio, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 12, 2004.

business leaders, and then chairman of The Times Publishing Company Nelson Poynter actively sought the USF presence.

The campus site had served as one of the largest Merchant Marines training centers in the southern United States during WWII. Dedicated in July 1941 as the United States Maritime Service Training Station (USMSTS), the base offered an intensive education in seamanship and boat operations. Graduates carried supplies to armed forces overseas and protected ship convoys on the high seas. Prior to its decommissioning in the early 1950s, USMSTS schooled approximately 25,000 young men. For several years, Pinellas County offered vocational training on the Bayboro Harbor land. From 1960 to 1963 Florida Presbyterian College (now Eckerd College) occupied the buildings, before moving to its permanent home on Pinellas Point. Over the next two years, the county operated the Florida Institute for Continuing University Studies.

On July 1, 1965, USF formally took possession of the property and prepared to offer classes and housing to an overflow of freshmen sent from the Tampa campus. Just over 250 students and essential university personnel lived and worked in the old USMSTS barracks. Most of the few faculty assigned to teach introductory courses commuted back and forth across the bay. Political science professor Tim Reilly gladly accepted his new assignment but had a few questions. “I asked Dean Martin, who was then dean of the College of Basic Studies . . . to whom do I report. He said, ‘well there’s a telephone there. Call over if you need any help.’”⁸¹

Accommodations were uneven in the beginning. “The brochures made it sound like it was Miami Beach,” one student complained, “but just look at it.” Secretary Donna Christensen and acting dean Lester Tuttle shared an office in an old bathroom. Tuttle put his bookshelves in the bathtub. Campus business manager Earl Bodie had no money for a librarian at first, so he

⁸¹ John Timothy Reilly, interview by Lucy Jones, November 19, 2003.

helped buy 900 books from a local bookstore. Students came in at their leisure to borrow and return items on the honor system.⁸² Only certain buildings had air conditioning, study space was scarce, and the pool once used by the maritime service cadets required repair. Resident Hall A included wood paneling, rugs, and draperies, while unit B contained few furnishings and threadbare rugs. In one dorm room a woman accidentally dropped her mouthwash into the sink. The sink broke, but the bottle came out of the ordeal unscathed! “We are paying the same money as the Tampa campus students and are receiving a lot less,” one person complained.⁸³ Professor Reilly had another way of dealing with the inconveniences expansion brought. When the Tampa campus library refused to allow him to return borrowed books by campus courier, he sent them through the U.S. Postal Service to President Allen and requested that he take them back to the library. Allen agreed and instructed the library to accept books returned through intercampus mail in the future.⁸⁴

Despite the growing pains, the campus thrived. Continuing renovations and improvements to Building A added teaching and research labs and a small library. Building B received a new student lounge, window air conditioners, office renovations, and more classrooms. USF’s continuing education program offered elementary education courses in 1966 and graduated a class of fifty-one in 1968, the first degrees conferred at the Bayboro Campus.

In late 1965, USF initiated the Marine Science Institute, an interdisciplinary program involving faculty from seven departments in three colleges. One of the project’s strongest supporters, Stanford University graduate William Taft, had helped San Francisco clean up its

⁸² Donna Christensen, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 15, 1985; Earl Bodie, interview by Milly St. Julien, July 12, 1985.

⁸³ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, April 26, September 13, 27, November 15, 1965; *St. Petersburg Times*, September 2, 1990.

⁸⁴ Sudsy Tschiderer, “This is our legacy,” *Bayboro Briefing* 7 (Fall 1990): 3.

harbor before become director of USF's Division of Sponsored Research. The Florida Department of Natural Resources already occupied a spot on Bayboro Harbor, and USF officials believed that a strong collaboration could result. Three full-time faculty members on the campus devoted themselves to planning, administration, teaching, and research. "Probably no other oceanographic institution has ever been established with such excellent facilities as those provided by the St. Petersburg Campus," boasted USF administrators. "The location of the Institute, at the center of the edge of the great continental shelf of the Florida Gulf Coast and in the midst of the metropolitan area of the Sun Coast, is another of its unique advantages."⁸⁵ Before long, grant funds began flooding into the program. Physical sciences professor Ashim Chattrojee and chemist Dean Martin received \$11,000 from the U.S. Bureau of Commercial Fisheries to examine the chemistry of seawater. Marine zoologist Joe Linton directed another early fisheries study on the effects of pesticides on marine life. Soon talks were underway for a Ph.D. program in Marine Biology, and the statewide Florida Institute of Oceanography opened at the behest of the Board of Regents in nearby facilities in 1969.

By 1968 an easing dormitory crunch in Tampa, student demands for expanded course offerings, and the success of marine science altered the St. Petersburg campus's original mission as a place to house and teach freshmen. Faculty began offering classes in education, business administration, engineering, basic studies, and liberal arts to juniors, seniors and graduate students. County residents enrolled in several dozen continuing education courses on subjects such as gardening, education, banking, and religion, and the Peace Corps trained students there before sending them abroad. English professor Harriet Deer remembered the significant number of women who sought business or education degrees but could not afford the childcare necessary

⁸⁵ *Accent on Learning: General Catalog of the University of South Florida, 1969-70*, vol. 11, no. 4 (May 1969): 11-12.

to commute to Tampa. “We even developed class scheduling practices which took into account the hours when children were likely to be in school,” she proudly remembered.⁸⁶ Founding regional campus dean Lester Tuttle arrived with high hopes for Bayboro’s future. “If local students responded by enrolling in the new courses, and if they demonstrated a desire for a broader range of offerings, President Allen committed the University to respond, accordingly,” he recalled.⁸⁷

St. Petersburg Junior College graduate Joan “Sudsy” Tschiderer “stumbled upon the barracks in Bayboro Harbor” in 1969 and enrolled in four courses. Her instructors were “phenomenal” and her classmates “motivating.” A world geography class taught by Harry Schaleman, Jr., had just five students, including Dottie Spicer, the wife of St. Petersburg mayor Don Spicer. “It was an experience that had so much vitality in the classroom. Even outside the classroom, although we had a somewhat humble environment, it had a special charm all its own.”⁸⁸ Visits to the harbor by the British Navy, racing yachts, and students who moored in their boats between classes gave the campus a unique “marine” flavor.

In 1969, the Florida Legislature officially recognized the Bayboro Campus as “University of South Florida – St. Petersburg,” and the next year over 1,000 students enrolled full time on that campus or sought dual enrollment on both sides of the bay. Bayboro faculty offered nearly forty classes in five colleges in 1968. Within two years, the number of courses doubled. Despite the growth, Bayboro enjoyed and celebrated its small college feel. Professor Deer walked

⁸⁶ Harriet Deer, “Education for Leisure,” *Bayboro Briefing 7* (Fall 1990): 6.

⁸⁷ Lester W. Tuttle, “A Proud Beginning,” *Bayboro Briefing 7* (Fall 1990): 4.

⁸⁸ Joan “Sudsy” Tschiderer, interview by Lucy Jones, October 10, 2003.

around campus and registered students on the spot, making change out of a shoebox. Students affectionately called campus “an island of youth in a sea of senility.”⁸⁹

Back on the Tampa campus, some students thought it “crazy” that USF did not have a football team. As early as 1961, a sports writer for the campus edition of *The Tampa Times* ran afoul of USF administrators for his continuing agitation on the athletics question. Several years later, Dean of Students Herbert Wunderlich cancelled a scheduled March 1964 visit from Chicago Bears quarterback Billy Wade. According to the *Oracle*, the dean feared that Wade’s visit might “lead us to false hopes that aren’t realizable.”⁹⁰ The following year and many times thereafter, students rallied formally or informally for intercollegiate football. In 1965 Pat Paleveda printed cards at his father’s shop asking “Why Not? Intercollegiate football at USF.” He and other committee members urged students to pin the cards to their shorts while on campus. The group met with President Allen, who explained that the school lacked the more than \$250,000 necessary to form a team.⁹¹ In 1967, Student Government urged the Board of Regents to launch a study to determine if USF should add football and basketball to its athletic program. Administration officials resisted the proposal citing five reasons: neither were economically feasible, athletics would deemphasize USF’s “Accent on Learning,” the community would not support the two sports, professional football was causing college football’s demise, and corruption and gambling would grow on campus. Attitudes toward football had not changed in 1971 when then USF Athletic Director Dr. Richard Bowers announced that a team was “just not economically feasible.” He continued to insist that professional football had threatened college teams in Miami and Los Angeles and offered ample

⁸⁹ *The Oracle*, March 5, 1969.

⁹⁰ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, March 23, 30, 1964.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, November 15, 22, 1965. See also, *The Tampa Times USF Edition*, November 22, 1967, November 6, 20, 1968.

alternatives for student enthusiasm.⁹² Repeated efforts by Student Government in the 1970s and 1980s to bring intercollegiate football to campus proved unsuccessful. Not until 1997 would USF students get their wish.

If students failed to win a football team from President Allen, they were successful in persuading him to accept tennis, swimming, and soccer. In USF's first-ever intercollegiate sports event, a men's squad defeated Florida Southern College's soccer team on September 25, 1965, and in August 1968 the university joined the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The school's first swim coach, Bob Grindley, recalled that the administration did not allow the swim team to compete between Monday and Friday. Instead they could only participate in meets on weekends. Furthermore, swimmers were not allowed to leave campus for competitions until 5:00 PM on Friday afternoons. These restrictions did not appear to hurt team members, who earned All American honors twenty-seven times between 1969 and 1976, including four-time winner Joseph Lewkowicz, and finished second in the NCAA Championships in 1971.

USF learned that even without football, they needed a school mascot. The discovery came in spring 1962 as students ordered class rings. The salesman had set aside a part of the ring for an engraving of USF's mascot, but there was no symbol to put there. The Student Association unanimously decided to hold elections to choose the mascot. In a similar 1960 contest, some people had suggested "the fighting desert rats" or "fighting desert camels." With more grass on campus, the administrators hoped for a more fertile-sounding animal. The Olympians, Athenians, Dolphins, Porpoises, Hawks, El Compeadors, Barracudas, Golden Eagles, Cougars, Sting Rays, Conquistadores, and Florida Crackers each received votes. By the

⁹² *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, November 29, 1967, April 7, 1971.

narrowest margin, students picked “Buccaneers,” but the naming committee erroneously believed that a junior college in Pensacola had already taken the name and disqualified it from further consideration.

Robert Bickle, of Beta Hall, introduced the number two choice -- Golden Brahma. “I was sitting around in one of the dorm’s rooms just talking about the idea of sports and a mascot. . . . One thing led to another. We came up with the idea that Florida was the second biggest cattle state in the country. The idea of a Brahman Bull was both very specific to Florida in many ways. We looked at the color. I remember us thinking green and gold. The Brahman Bull was identified with the Palomino color. We felt gold and the bull were very unique; nobody else had it.”⁹³ After more debate and wrangling among USF students, the university unveiled the Golden Brahma at the “All-University Weekend’s” Trimester Fun Fest in October 1962. *The Tampa Tribune* pointed out that a Brahma is an Asian chicken, not a bovine. USF quickly added an “n” to the name, forming “Brahman Bulls,” the correct spelling.⁹⁴

USF’s new mascot promised school spirit at a university where a real Brahman Bull may have suffered from malnutrition on campus. In 1960, there was nothing for an animal to eat. “You felt like Lawrence of Arabia at times,” recalled student Julian Piper. “It was really an amazing experience, when the wind whipped up between the buildings you had to cover your mouth against the blowing sand. There was no grass or trees.”⁹⁵ The charter class barely made a dent on the barren landscape when it planted twelve young oaks in December 1960. Several months earlier, grounds superintendent Curtis Carver and his crew set about landscaping 640 acres surrounding the university center and administration and chemistry buildings. Things got

⁹³ Robert Bickel, interview by Danielle Riley, January 26, 2004.

⁹⁴ *The Oracle*, September 10, 24, October 8, November 5, 12, 1962.

⁹⁵ *The Tampa Tribune*, September 26, 1995.

so bad that students called one area “the desert.” Others dubbed USF “Sandspur U.” To get grass to grow, workers laid down 5,000 cubic yards of peat, mined from USF’s own peat bog. They installed sprinklers, regraded the land, and planted 1,500 pounds of Paraguayan Bahia grass seed.

With no system of paved sidewalks in the first few years, students trudged over the young seedlings, thereby frustrating beautification efforts. Administrators originally wanted to place sidewalks where students wore paths, but workers ultimately placed the sidewalks without considering foot traffic. Geometric-patterned sidewalks soon stretched around the campus, and students continued to walk on the grass. Student Lurlene Gallagher put her sidewalk frustrations in verse: “I think that there shall never be/A thing more asinine to me/Than in keeping with geometric lines/Sidewalks placed for mere design.”⁹⁶

Throughout the 1960s, the grounds crew continued efforts to provide more greenery. Hedges went up to encourage sidewalk use. Workers planted mature trees in order to provide “instant shade.” Magnolias and oaks as well as boulders, shrubs, and lights around a fountain enhanced Crescent Hill. By September 1967, USF’s landscaping crew had put over 500 trees in the ground.

Expanded landscaping on campus paralleled construction in general. Linda Erickson recalled the 1960s building boom. “That was a fact of life at USF. More buildings would open every fall than you could visit.”⁹⁷ In April 1961 the university’s growing library moved out of temporary quarters in the University Center ballroom to a brand new building next to administration. Before carpet became commonplace, the library used a cork flooring to mute ambient noise. Though a good idea in principle, the floors did not hold up to traffic and some

⁹⁶ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, May 27, 1963?

⁹⁷ Linda Erickson, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 5, 2003.

came apart. Built to hold 250,000 volumes, the first library lasted barely a decade before plans began for an even larger structure. In March 1964 the university's planetarium welcomed its first visitors, and within six months 70,000 people had come from the surrounding communities. Planetarium director Joseph Carr remembered how workers erected the dome from prefabricated pieces. The building closed in 1990, but its thirty-foot dome survives at the Museum of Science and Industry on Fowler Avenue.⁹⁸

With all the sun and sand, students may have felt more comfortable in beach attire, but campus fashion in the 1950s dictated otherwise. Men in a jacket and tie and women in a skirt below the knee was the norm at many American universities. USF administrators' expectations echoed prevailing custom. Although absent from the first student handbook, a section entitled "Student Conduct, Dress and Discipline" appeared the following year. It read, in part: "Noticeable or gross departures from expected standards of conduct or dress on the part of students will first be considered errors of judgment. . . . Persistent violations of expected standards or established regulations will involve appropriate disciplinary action."⁹⁹

What constituted expected standards of dress differed widely, especially during USF's first academic year when no written policy existed on the issue. Without clear guidelines, rancor ensued. In February 1961 the student newspaper admonished bad dress habits in an editorial on the subject. "During exam week it was noted by many students and faculty members that our previously high standards in dress were abandoned for a more casual attire. In some people's opinion, casual should be replaced by sloppy. . . . Our dress patterns are of prime importance in

⁹⁸ Joseph Carr, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 26, 2003.

⁹⁹ *Accent on Learning, 1961-1963*, 161.

making the proverbial good first impression. . . . The proper dress for recreation and play is not acceptable for attending class.”¹⁰⁰

It did not take long for some students to equate any dress code -- written or unwritten -- with “oppressive restrictions on personal liberty.” In reply to a *Campus Edition* editorial, a student calling himself “Free Thoughts” wrote, “Rigidity in the control of individual actions instituted now will set an evil precedent for the future of our school. Our nation was founded upon the great democratic principles of the right and of the ability of each individual to control his own life. Can it be that the guiding principles of American democracy are inadequate as the guiding principles of an American university?”¹⁰¹

As winter turned to spring, temperatures rose, hemlines shortened, and student attentions turned to romance. One editorialist commented on the changes. “God’s gift to woman, the college male, blossoms out in Bermuda shorts come springtime. The coeds silently look at the knobby kneed specimens and say a prayer of forgiveness for their thoughts toward the administration. But, nevertheless, they humbly attend classes clad in the full regalia of the sweet old fashioned girls.”¹⁰² Not everyone thought of USF women as “old fashioned girls.” Philip Amuso recalled bringing a date home to meet his mother. “What kind of girl would wear a skirt like that?” she asked her son afterward.¹⁰³

In May 1961, anger over the dress code came to a boil. Dean of Students Howard Johnshoy’s “red memo” instructed students to conform to the university’s unwritten policy and warned that they were becoming “careless in their dress.” Demonstrators responded by

¹⁰⁰ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, February 20, 1961.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, March 6, 1961.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, May 8, 1961.

¹⁰³ Philip Amuso, interview by Danielle Riley, April 14, 2004, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

exhibiting “tacky dress of all sorts.”¹⁰⁴ On May 5 several dozen students marched around the Administration Building patio demanding the right to choose their clothing. Protestors played bongo drums and sang the national anthem. “We want Johnshoy, We want Johnshoy,” they chanted. Anonymous calls to local newspapers warned of the impending unrest. A local television station called USF to ask about “a riot of 5,000 students.” Soon known as “The Shorts Riot,” the event failed to influence administrators. Several days later Dean Johnshoy appeared before 150 students to announce formally that USF officials expected students to wear appropriate dress or face possible suspension, even expulsion. He also promised a written policy for the following school year.

A written dress code remained on the record from fall 1961 until 1973, but many students ignored it. In July 1964 a disgusted student opined, “A few days ago, while walking to class, a new sight confronted me. Not only were the people in view sloppily dressed and in general smelly-looking, but they were also barefooted.”¹⁰⁵ In May 1965, *Campus Edition* devoted a column to the rising trend of bearded men. With flip flops, visible undergarments, low-slung jeans, and micro-skirts the norm among today’s USF students, the days of mini-skirts and Bermuda shorts seem almost Victorian.

When students were not protesting what went over their stomachs, they were protesting what went inside them. By spring 1961, the student newspaper began carrying stories on the growing displeasure with campus food services. Concurrent with the “Shorts Riot” in May, students lobbied for better food and the addition of Cuban sandwiches to the menu. Complaints included cold, starchy, greasy, and fatty food, watery drinks, dirty silverware, long lines, limited

¹⁰⁴ *The Tampa Tribune*, May 14, 1961.

¹⁰⁵ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, July 27, 1964.

menu choices and hours of operation, inexperienced chefs, even intestinal viruses.¹⁰⁶ Other students seemed less concerned. “Compared with hospital cafeterias, it’s not so bad; however, it’s nothing compared with Morrison’s downtown cafeteria,” commented Rose Anne Castro.¹⁰⁷

Company officials defended the quality, variety, and value of their meals against the growing criticism. In 1964, the food plan cost just \$0.57 a meal, up five cents from 1960. Foodservices manager Ronald Willis hoped to keep his head above water given the rising demand for meals expected in fall 1966. “There’s just so much room. In September, when we serve country steaks, we should have about 2,000 orders ready to serve when the line opens. Our problem is where to put them all.”¹⁰⁸ Each day campus chefs prepared 975 pies, 10,800 rolls, 10,000 cups of coffee, 2,880 eggs, and 20,000 hamburgers or cheeseburgers. Willis expected to serve 27,000 meals a day by 1967, up from 2,700 in 1960. Still, Morrison’s foodservice consistently lost money -- over \$12,000 in March 1966 alone. Breakage or loss of dishes and silverware accounted for a good portion of the problem, on average \$2,000 each month.¹⁰⁹

OINC had little sympathy for Morrison’s financial plight. In April 1969, the Organization for the Involvement of the Neglected Community arranged a demonstration against the company’s exclusive contract. Outside the cafeteria, students tossed food they did not want to eat into a trailer full of pigs. Leo Gallagher, who later went on to a career as a comic, tried to justify the bizarre stunt. “From bitter experience we all know that if we want decent food we have to get Morrison’s off campus. We believe that having the students feed the pigs is the best way to make Morrison’s lose money.” To emphasize its point, students carried signs reading

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, March 6, May 15, May 22, 1961, July 30, 1962, March 1, 15, May 31, 1965, January 10, 1966, October 11, November 22, 29, 1967, April 23, December 3, 1969.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, July 30, 1962.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, June 14, 1965.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, October 24, December 5, 1960, January 27, 1964, May, 23, 1966.

“You are what you eat,” and “Bust Morrison’s.” OINC walked a leashed piglet into a food committee meeting later that day.¹¹⁰ In 1970 the Board of Regents approved cancellation of the company’s contract and it left campus.

Some students did not like the food on campus, and there were few choices nearby. In 1963 the County Commission applied zoning restrictions to the area around USF in an effort to prevent an explosion of unregulated growth. The Commission’s report read, in part: “Unless proper guidance and restraint are exercised, this bordering land could well become an unsightly and inappropriate hodgepodge of . . . boardinghouses, apartments, motels, gas stations, drive-in restaurants, and bars.”¹¹¹ Instead, Fowler and Fletcher Avenues offered relatively little alternative to available campus cuisine. The University Restaurant on Fowler west of 30th Street and later a Burger King at Fletcher and 30th would have to suffice throughout the 1970s.

Popular with faculty, staff, and students, the University Restaurant offered some of the best food in town, recalled Paul Griscti. Owners Basil and Pete Scaglione made Italian and Spanish dishes and “some of the best cheeseburgers in the area.” The bar was often full of staff and faculty making a quick trip over for lunch. They might return for a drink or two at the end of the day.¹¹²

Not everyone in the USF community could enjoy a meal at the University Restaurant. Until 1964, the eatery did not admit blacks. This long-held southern custom came to an end thanks to the courage of USF faculty and students. Ernest Boger, the university’s first African American student, recalled one evening in November 1963 when he joined fellow band members for a meal; however, the University Restaurant manager refused to serve them. “If they aren’t

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, April 16, 1969.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 22, 1963.

¹¹² Paul Griscti, interview by Danielle Riley, April 21, 2004.

going to serve Ernie here, we're not going to eat here," one student proclaimed, and the group filed out.¹¹³ The following day, students and faculty began to picket the establishment. Some on campus called for a "behind the scenes" approach to persuade the Scagliones to integrate. More activist elements disagreed and continued their public displays of dissatisfaction. They paid a price for their efforts. Shortly after midnight on December 6, approximately a dozen thugs approached the students and viciously beat several of them. Advocating non-violence, the picketers did not retaliate, but they reevaluated their approach. Fraternity members suggested raising community support for integration. They wanted to poll local businesspeople on whether they would continue to frequent the University Restaurant if it served blacks. Basil Scaglione briefly considered building a separate room to house integrated parties. In the end, the U.S. Constitution intervened. Passed in July 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed public discrimination in public accommodations, including restaurants, cafeterias, lunchrooms, lunch counters, and soda fountains. "There is no other way," Scaglione stated. "The bill is now the law of the land."¹¹⁴

Even before President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Bill into law, USF and hundreds of other formerly all-white colleges and universities across the South desegregated. Florida officially ended segregation in state higher education in 1955, and the University of Florida admitted its first black student later that year. In 1961 Tampa Blake High School graduate Ernest Boger chose to attend USF. He needed to stay close to home and could afford the low tuition. Another reason influenced his decision. "There was a certain freshness about it . . . you could feel the university coming alive!" Without the long traditions evident at other schools, Boger enjoyed an active student life and experienced very few examples of

¹¹³ Ernest Boger, interview by Andrew Huse, December 2, 2003.

¹¹⁴ *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, December 16, 1963, January 20, July 13, 1964.

“ugliness.” Joanna Tokley echoed these sentiments, citing cordial treatment from her fellow students in the mid 1960s. She also recalled how few blacks she encountered in or outside her education courses. Just 2 percent of USF’s 12,500 students were black in 1968. Maura Barrios noticed only a small number of working-class Latinos that sat with her in class in the late 1960s. “I was the only person from my high school here at USF. It was a very lonely, alienated kind of world culturally. I felt like this exotic sort of foreigner in my own hometown.”¹¹⁵

Apart from custodial services, the university hired its first full-time black employee, Deborah A. Holmes, in January 1965. She worked in the dean’s office at the College of Basic Studies. Eva Pride and Sherman Thompson became USF’s first African American faculty members in 1966. Blake High School principal Richard Pride came three years later. Eva Pride taught English and Developmental Reading in the College of Basic Studies for several years before moving on to the recently opened Hillsborough Community College. Richard Pride stayed at USF for twenty-six years and retired in 1995.

As the 1960s progressed, USF and other schools went from merely admitting to actively recruiting minority students. For many years Dr. Pride ran Upward Bound, a nation-wide program that helped students from low-income families go to college. In 1966, two hundred high school sophomores and juniors (80 percent of whom were African American) came to campus over the summer, where they attended classes aimed at preparing them for college. Dr. Pride worked closely with local high school principals to recruit students year after year. “Our program was one of the largest and most successful programs in the country,” he admitted. “We

¹¹⁵ Ernest Boger, interview by Andrew Huse, December 2, 2003, Joanna Tokley, interview by Andrew Huse, October 14, 2003, Maura Barrios, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 13, 2003; *The Oracle*, May 1, 1968.

placed over 3,000 students in college.”¹¹⁶ USF students helped make Upward Bound valuable by volunteering as tutors, conducting assessments, and serving as mentors.

Initially, relatively few Upward Bound participants enrolled at USF. To increase the number of black students on campus, the University Senate advocated a “Proposal for Increasing the Number of Negro Students” (later changed to “Disadvantaged Students”) in July 1968. The proposal called upon professors to visit predominantly black high schools to recruit, waive some entrance requirements, and offer remedial counseling. To provide greater interracial communication and a more engaging and relevant curriculum, students established One-to-One and the Afro-American Society. One-to-One offered discussions on topics such as Black Power. The Afro-American Society, led by Otha Favors, lobbied for improvements to the only Afro-studies course offered in 1969. Students boycotted the class, marched to President Allen’s office, and presented written demands. They called for raising black enrollment to 10 percent of the student body, creating an independent, degree-granting Black Studies Department, hiring more black faculty, and establishing a separate black scholarship and loan fund. The University Senate approved more black studies courses leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree. Allen sent a sympathetic response but noted that only officials in Tallahassee could establish new academic programs. Black student leaders were “encouraged” but noted, “It does not give us everything we want or that we deserve.”¹¹⁷ In September 1969, the Afro-Studies Program began with three black instructors.

Efforts on behalf of integration, racial equality, and other “liberal” causes carried unintended and serious consequences for the university. The activities caught the attention of Bradford County state senator Charley Johns and his Florida Legislative Investigation

¹¹⁶ Richard Pride, interview with Yael V. Greenberg, August 22, 2003.

¹¹⁷ *The Oracle*, April 30, May 7, 21, 28, 1969.

Committee (known as the Johns Committee). Johns and fellow rural legislators sought to thwart political reform, which threatened their disproportionate power in Tallahassee, by focusing attention on the alleged lifestyles and political beliefs of their opponents. In the immediate aftermath of the Tallahassee Bus Boycott of 1956, committee attention looked first at integrationists. By 1958, Johns linked supporters of racial equality with homosexuality and communist subversion. As a disproportionate number of integrationists worked at Florida universities, the Johns Committee moved to investigate faculty at the University of Florida, Florida State University, and Florida A&M in 1957-1959.

Even before Charley Johns's arrival, forces in the Tampa Bay area were at work against "stupid, boring, as well as immoral" literary works and the teaching of evolution in the classroom. At the urging of state representative Joe McClain of Pasco County, some religious groups, and the Florida Coalition of Patriotic Societies, President Allen cancelled a campus lecture by controversial speaker Jerome Davis in March 1962. Yale University officials had forced Davis from his teaching post in New Haven following his testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee. He raised the ire of the *Zephyrhills News*, which called him "a workhorse for communist fronts." Several weeks later, concerned USF parents met with Tampa mayor Julian Lane to discuss the USF curriculum and their children's education.¹¹⁸

The Jerome Davis affair brought a flood of mail. A Brandon man thanked the president for upholding "high ideals." "May the dear Lord in Heaven always give you a good horse and an easy saddle when the trails get rough." Others disagreed. "Whether Dr. Allen's actions were spurred by fear of repercussions from some ultra-conservative faction or merely concern over

¹¹⁸ James A. Schnur, "Cold Warriors in the Hot Sunshine: USF and the Johns Committee," *The Sunland Tribune* 18 (November 1992): 11; John S. Allen Papers, box 4, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

marring the arbitrary public image of the university, I cannot say. But in any case it was a direct infringement of academic freedom.”¹¹⁹

In this politically charged climate, the Johns witch-hunt came to USF in April 1962. *The Campus Edition* “welcomed” the Johns Committee in a May 28 editorial. “We didn’t know they were so interested in our welfare. What we admire most about these people is their vocabulary. Communist, homosexual, pornography; communist, homosexual, pornography. There is rhythm, beat and emotional impact in that chant. It will serve as the perfect background music for any play they wish to direct on campus during the next few weeks.” The committee intended to conduct its work from a room at the Hawaiian Village Hotel on Dale Mabry Highway. Seeking to appear cooperative, President Allen invited the group to hold its interviews in the open on campus.

On August 25, *The Tampa Tribune* carried a front-page story on the committee’s findings, released while top USF administrators vacationed between academic terms. The article drew from over 2,500 pages of testimony to highlight staff allegedly picking up young male students, atheists on the faculty teaching evolution as fact, “obscene” literature like *The Catcher in the Rye*, and other “intellectual garbage” assigned in class. Editorials blasted the committee’s activities as a disgrace and its report as a “shameful document,” but President Allen felt he could not ignore the findings. Always mindful of protecting the university from potential harm, Allen feared the Johns Committee’s power to pressure the Board of Control for his ouster and/or punish USF during the state budgeting process.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ John S. Allen Papers, box 4, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

¹²⁰ *The University of South Florida Campus Edition*, May 28, 1962, *The Tampa Tribune*, August 15, 25, 1962.

Caught between faculty demands for academic freedom and attacks against the university, Allen walked a tight rope. In June 1962 he rescinded the recent contract offered to Vanderbilt University political science and history professor Denna Frank Fleming. Local groups as well as the Johns Committee considered Fleming subversive and a “pro-Soviet apologist” and did not want him on campus. Fleming complained to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which censured USF for its handling of the termination. In fall 1962 President Allen suspended newly appointed assistant English professor Sheldon Grebstein. The Johns Committee had singled out Grebstein for teaching about beatnik authors. A faculty group appointed by Allen investigated the embattled professor and unanimously recommended that the president reinstate him. Allen hoped to find a middle ground between Board of Control calls for termination and the faculty’s insistence on academic freedom. In the end, he censured Grebstein for “poor judgment.” Grebstein left USF the following semester.¹²¹

The Johns Committee’s influence waned by 1964, and it disbanded officially in July 1965, but the damage had been done. USF became the first public university in Florida censured by the AAUP, a black mark that lasted until spring 1968. Faculty and staff here at the time vividly remember those difficult days. “It was the saddest time of my life here,” admitted Phyllis Marshall. Librarian Mary Lou Harkness understood the threat the Johns Committee posed and was saddened by the rift created between President Allen and the faculty. “It was very harmful to the university and it took a while to recover. The university came out better than it might have, but it left scars.” Business professor Richard Dutton arrived in 1963. “So many disturbances created with so few results,” he reflected. “I think it slowed down the image of the university.

¹²¹ Schnur, “Cold Warriors in the Hot Sunshine,” 12-13; Dan Bertwell, “‘A Veritable Refuge for Practicing Homosexuals’: The Johns Committee and the University of South Florida,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 83 (Spring 2005): 410-31.

Other people did not have much to go on about USF but what they may have read in the newspaper or seen on television.” For student Dick Puglisi, the events “sent a chill through the whole university. Faculty and students were wondering what was going on. Could USF continue to grow and prosper?” John Iorio was more sanguine as he reflected back. “The history of universities . . . has always been this kind of struggle between the political and educational.” The Johns Committee probably did not leave a lasting impact on the campus, Iorio commented, because most people were defiant of it. “The sixties after all loosened up an awful lot of things. It created fears, but it also created . . . new parameters of behavior, of dress, of thinking, of attitudes.”¹²²

The wounds caused by Charley Johns had little time to heal before other national events and issues arrived on campus. “We were in the Cuban Missile Crisis,” stated librarian Jeanine McNair. “They kept talking about Key West being ninety miles from Cuba. They plotted the missile trajectory, which could conveniently hit Tampa. . . . I can remember some of the students went back up north. Their parents called them and told them to come home because they were in missile range. That is when they designated the Student Services Building [then the library] as a civil defense center.” McNair also vividly recalled the day John F. Kennedy was killed. “Classes were all in session. The minute the word came the classes stopped. At the time Andros Center had a television in the lounge as well as the University Center had a television lounge down in the first floor. The students were just glued to the television for about four days after that. It was a real blow because we were all disciples of Kennedy. Everyone was going to join

¹²² Phyllis Marshall, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 22, 2003, Mary Lou Harkness, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 10, 2003, Richard Dutton, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 13, 2003, Dick Puglisi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 21, 2003.

the Peace Corps and we were going to save the rest of the world. There was a lot of spirit at that time. It was very devastating.”¹²³

At USF and elsewhere, opposition to the Vietnam War and student demands for a greater voice in campus affairs grew increasingly more heated in the mid and late 1960s and early 1970s. “All the guys were registered for the draft,” recounted Vicki Ahrens. “There was the whole issue of when they graduated what was their lottery number and how soon would they be drafted. The time period shaped a generation.”¹²⁴

Many people on campus during these years considered them active times. A year following the Tet Offensive in early 1968, Ray Cooper returned from Vietnam and noticed “It had started to hit the fan in terms of student unrest.” Jack Fernandez remembered, “It was not a time of bliss and peaceful and idyllic study and research. It was a very tumultuous period for everybody.” Under the umbrella of USF students’ Radical Action Coalition, one might find such groups as the Student Mobilization Committee, Youth International Party, Art Vanguard, Student Missionaries for New Truth, International Revolutionary Melodious Marching Caucus, Vocations for Social Changes, and several others. With rising alcohol and drug abuse and unauthorized rock concerts, police paid more attention to campus activities. Students, in turn, rallied against what they saw as police excesses in stopping this behavior. Claimed student Sara Gilbert, “You never knew when you were going to run into a protest.” She found them “kind of scary” and stayed away.¹²⁵

¹²³ Jeanine McNair, interview by Milly St. Julien, August 23, 1985.

¹²⁴ Vicki Ahrens, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 3, 2003.

¹²⁵ Ray Cooper, interview by Andrew Huse, June 24, 2004, Jack Fernandez, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 4, 2003, Sara Gilbert, interview by Andrew Huse, October 21, 2003. A 1971 report revealed that 40-50 percent of USF students used soft drugs such as marijuana on a “fairly frequent basis,” according *The Oracle*, September 29, 1971.

Much of the debate over Vietnam and other local and national issues appeared in the press, and beginning in September 1966 the discourse found a new vehicle on campus. After six years and 221 issues, *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition* gave way to USF's self-published newspaper, *The Oracle*. Approximately 8,000 "new and bigger" papers first appeared each Wednesday and included more photographs of student life, advertising and classified ads, as well as additional room to cover campus events and topics such as clubs and organizations, fine arts, and sports. With oversight from professors Arthur M. Sanderson and Steve Yates, who served as publisher and general manager respectively, student editor Harry Haigley and his larger staff set out to define the new enterprise's mission. Written and edited by students, the paper would not act as "a house organ for the administration" but instead sought to serve the entire university community. "We will publish only news we feel will inform, enlighten or benefit members of the university. We will strive to evaluate articles on the news value and not whether someone in the university would or would not like to see the information in print. . . . We shall not hesitate to point out what we feel is wrong and right with the university system, our social norms, or our goals of life." Though not entirely new, the editorial policy did cause some concern among administrators. "They really looked over our shoulder a lot in the early years. We had no censorship . . . but everything we put in the paper was read first by faculty advisors," Haigley recalled.¹²⁶ The close oversight may explain the birth of alternative underground publications like *Eye of the Beast*, produced for a short time in the early 1970s by USF's radical Church of the Apocalypse. *The Beast*, as it was called, carried stories that appealed to both "straights" as well as "freaks."¹²⁷

¹²⁶ *The Oracle*, September 6, 1966; Harry Haigley, interview by Danielle Riley, April 27, 2004, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

¹²⁷ *The Oracle*, January 15, 1971.

Stories about the U.S. presence in Southeast Asia made *The Oracle's* pages with regularity and revealed the dichotomy of opinions. In late 1966 Students for Peace and Freedom formed to bring about an end to hostilities in Vietnam and an alternative to the United States policy of war. At a University Center rally in October 1967, someone dropped balloons inscribed with peace slogans from a second floor balcony. Opponents on the ground stomped on them to show their distaste. Signs reading "fight poverty, not people" were met by placards asking, "Who preserved your right to be here?" In November 1968, USF students joined a draft card demonstration in downtown Tampa. Protestors were prevented from turning in their draft cards, but the experience was not lost on the men with military deferments. Said student Bill Schwoer, "We feel as though we've been bought out by the system to the extent that we surrender our constitutionally guaranteed rights of protest for that omnipotent gift of a II-S deferment. Our purpose is to show our brothers who cannot afford this gift that we sympathize with them."¹²⁸ As the war dragged on, members of the Campus Ministers Association and some one hundred students gathered on the University Center Mall to pray for an end to fighting "Until we really love our enemies, we cannot call ourselves Christian," admonished Father John Linnehan of the Catholic Student Center.¹²⁹

Ranging opinions about the war spilled over into the classroom. History professor Robert Goldstein invited USF graduate Douglas MacCaskill to speak about his experiences as a platoon leader. "The morale of the V[iet] C[ong] is cracking," Lieutenant MacCaskill promised. "The Communists cannot possibly win in Vietnam unless the American people fail to defend themselves and the other people in the world who are too weak to defend themselves."¹³⁰ The

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, November 13, 20, 1968.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, May 18, 1972.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, March 28, 1966.

local chapter of The New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam saw dissent as a positive and educational opportunity. On October 15, 1969, it arranged a Vietnam Moratorium. Events included a film and panel discussion, speakers, and a “peace-rock” concert on Crescent Hill. Students performed “At Home in Vietnam,” a play written by USF professor Jack Moore. Two colleges agreed to devote class time during the day to talk about the war, and nearly 2,000 people marched in a night vigil to end the moratorium.

With the anti-Vietnam demonstrations came rallies in support of the right to protest. In June 1968, the USF administration denied Students for a Democratic Society permission to form a local chapter. Active on 300 campuses around the nation, SDS was blamed for instigating riots at several universities. When SDS announced it would hold a protest on campus, President Allen issued a policy statement promising to use off-campus police to restore order and to suspend demonstrating students. The organization postponed its march and called for a “free press” to “combat the establishment-oriented *Oracle*.” Tensions over the SDS at USF continued. Student leader Ben Brown came into conflict with Student Government and lost a University Senate bid because of his SDS connections and his remark that “with a responsible student government, SDS could not exist.” Several weeks later, in new elections, the winning Campus Coalition party voted 30 to 3 to place Brown in the Senate.¹³¹

Renewed efforts in April 1969 to charter an SDS chapter came to naught. Students and faculty passed out organization literature to highlight its “ridiculous” positions, and a Committee for a Rational University formed to work against SDS activities on campus. Amid the growing furor, the group’s national secretary, Michael Klonsky, visited campus. “This is a vulgar place,” he raged. “This is the brain center of world imperialism. The university in America is where

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, June 12, 26, July 24, October 9, 16, 30, 1968.

your counterinsurgency research gets done, your germ and chemical warfare research gets done. . . The administration is afraid, they're running scared now. And that's why they're desperately trying to keep SDS from getting here.”¹³²

Amidst the near constant wrangling, President Allen dropped a bombshell. On November 10, 1969, he held a press conference and stated, “The life of a university is by its nature vigorous and rigorous. Because of this, I have thought of retirement prior to the mandatory age.” Although he stopped short of formally announcing his resignation, the comment caused a storm. The Board of Regents complained it had no notice of his intent to leave nor could it coordinate the timing of his departure. The North Tampa Chamber of Commerce gave Allen a vote of confidence and lamented that he had been “constantly harassed by a minority of militant students and recalcitrants whose only purpose is to disrupt and disorganize others with their verminous thought and propaganda in the hope of overthrowing our American educational system.” *The Oracle* grumbled about the Chamber’s hyperbole and all the attention devoted to the topic.¹³³

Into 1970 speculation grew over Allen’s future, and with each passing week he became more embattled. The University Senate, which comprised faculty, staff, and students, complained about his role in changes to its rules and composition. Student Government accused him of trying to “factionalize” the student voice. Faculty objected to disintegration of the All-University approach and growing college independence. When the president refused to endorse USF’s first-ever constitution, tensions escalated further. In September 1969 Allen had proposed the document’s creation, but he contended that the resulting text was unworkable. In an open letter to *The Oracle* on May 13, he defended his position. He wanted something that translated

¹³² *Ibid.*, April 16, 23, 30, May 7, 1969.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, November 12, 19, December 3, 1969.

Florida laws, Board of Regents rules, and university policies into “the format of a constitution.” The document set before him sought to reorganize USF, and he could not support it. “The Senate is on a collision course with the President, waving a red flag in front of him,” one faculty member commented.¹³⁴

On July 4, 1970, at age sixty-three, John Allen resigned his presidency. He looked forward to traveling throughout Asia with wife, Grace, and upon his return accepted a position as special advisor to the president of the newly created University of North Florida. The Board of Regents named USF’s administration building after John and Grace in recognition of their tireless efforts on behalf of the university. Before leaving campus, 1,000 faculty, staff, and students lined up to say goodbye and shake President Allen’s hand. Said Vice President Elliott Hardaway, “In his 13 years at USF he has built a great university. I am sure he is tired.”¹³⁵

In USF’s first academic year, John Allen oversaw a \$2.4 million budget, ten buildings, under 2,000 students, and 341 faculty/staff in four colleges. A decade later, USF boasted a \$38.4 million budget, seventy-three buildings, nearly 18,000 students, and 1,741 faculty/staff in the original four colleges plus engineering, which began classes in September 1964. Plans for medical and nursing schools were well underway. Not a single dormitory stood on campus in 1960. It had twelve a decade later. The St. Petersburg campus, with its signature Marine Science Research and Training Center and Marine Science Institute, gave the university a Pinellas County presence starting in 1965.

For managing this enormous physical growth and the many academic programs that underscored it, John Allen’s contributions are undeniable. When he died in December 1982 at age seventy-five, *The Tampa Tribune* eulogized, “Immortality is achieved in so many marvelous

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, April 22, 1970. See also March 11, April 29, May 6, 13.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, July 6, 1970.

ways, and this gentle Quaker, John Stuart Allen, has possessed it as part of the lengthening shadow of a great and growing institution.”¹³⁶ He was a master builder, but he also experienced the tumultuous political and social times during which he presided. Conceived in the 1950s but born and raised in the 1960s and 1970s, the university faced a divide between administrators and students over fundamental issues like shared governance and freedom of speech and expression. The Greatest Generation cherished patriotism, duty, and frugality. Products of the Great Depression and World War, they believed in the American political system. Their children grew up in a different world with unprecedented opportunity for many but growing inequality for others. National tranquility tempered by the threat of nuclear annihilation led to growing youth disillusionment and unrest. Certainly, other American universities underwent periods of turmoil, but most of them had a long history on which to fall back. USF had no traditions to help guide its course. John Allen launched a university, and he left somewhat battered by the rough seas that characterized higher education in the 1960s. Presidential successors Cecil Mackey and John Lott Brown would chart their own route through the 1970s and 1980s.

¹³⁶ *The Tampa Tribune*, December 28, 1982.

Chapter 3: Expanding Opportunities

On January 18, 1971, the Board of Regents met to consider applicants for the presidency of the University of South Florida. Under consideration was Dr. Cecil M. Mackey, executive vice-president and professor of law at Florida State University. A native of Montgomery, Alabama, Mackey had come to Florida via Washington, DC. In the mid 1960s he served as director of the Office of Policy Development for the Federal Aviation Agency and later became assistant secretary for Policy Development in the U.S. Department of Transportation. After eighteen months in Tallahassee, the regents contacted him about the USF opening. In conversations back and forth with the board, a number of things attracted Dr. Mackey to the school. “There was an opportunity to do something in leadership and development of an institution [and] that type of work had always appealed to me,” he stated. “The chance to come here with a new institution and try to make it the best.”¹³⁷

The Board of Regents acted quickly, and in early February the newly appointed President Mackey came to campus for the first time to meet with students, faculty, and administrators. In a letter to the student body, Mackey wrote of his excitement at joining USF. “I believe that the future of higher education in our state depends to a great extent upon what we do at South Florida. I want you to know that I am dedicated to making the University of South Florida a distinguished educational institution – a university that serves the people whose support makes its continued existence possible.”¹³⁸

¹³⁷ Cecil M. Mackey, interview by Andrew Huse, November 24, 2004, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library. All oral histories cited in this work are located in the Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library unless otherwise noted.

¹³⁸ *The Oracle*, February 5, 1971.

Dr. Mackey arrived quietly and with little fanfare for his first day of work on February 1, 1971. “There was no introduction to the community. There were no ceremonies, nothing formal. I just came in [and] went to the president’s office . . . with very little direction,” he remembered. Only later did USF hold a modest inauguration event. “The times were turbulent,” he recalled. Lavish ceremonies “simply were not appropriate . . . so we never did that.”

In that subdued atmosphere the new president conducted an early assessment of the university. He recognized USF’s principal strength in its people – the men and women who believed in the institution and committed themselves to doing their best work. He also identified what he felt the school lacked -- “a cohesive vision for the institution [and] a decision about where it should be going [and] what the future was to be in terms of quality, the breadth, the scope of the institution.” After careful consideration he believed that USF should become a “metropolitan” research institution. “My sense at the time of my appointment was that a future as a major research university was not inconsistent with our commitment to outstanding undergraduate teaching as part of USF’s heritage,” he said. “It seemed to me that in order to serve the people of the state of Florida and play a role a state university might play . . . it was absolutely necessary to develop a strong research tradition at USF.”¹³⁹

In an effort to implement this strategy, President Mackey transformed USF’s top leadership. By July 1973, forty-two administrators had left their positions.¹⁴⁰ In their places, President Mackey hired Carl Riggs as his vice president for academic affairs and Albert C. Hartley to serve as vice president for administrative affairs. “Cecil Mackey . . . had newer thoughts about the university. He was more of a business type person. He realized that the

¹³⁹ Cecil M. Mackey, interview by Andrew Huse, November 24, 2004; Office of Research, *Building a Research University: A USF Retrospective*, Annual Report, 1994-1995, 23, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

¹⁴⁰ *The Oracle*, July 12, 1973; Robert H. Fuson, interview with Nancy A. Hewitt, August 8, 1985.

university had people here who were very much involved with the beginning, but you needed other people to come in to take it to the next step,” Lee Leavengood recalled.¹⁴¹ Vice president for academic affairs and interim president Harris Dean quickly recognized the differences between Mackey and his predecessors at USF. “Dr. Allen belongs to my generation,” he remarked in conversation shortly after his retirement in 1972. “Dr. Mackey was born the year I graduate from college. That makes quite a generation gap. John Allen is deliberate, calculating, cautious, and conservative. Cecil Mackey is young; he’s a quick thinker, positive, and likes to move into action rapidly.”¹⁴²

President Mackey undertook a formal reorganization of the university’s curriculum. Most notably, in the fall of 1972 he implemented plans begun under Harris Dean and closed the College of Basic Studies, which he believed replicated offerings at the community college level, and broke apart Liberal Arts. He added four new colleges in their place: Fine Arts, Language & Literature (later Arts & Letters), Natural Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences with specific disciplines housed in each. Within the new colleges, other changes occurred. The leisure studies program disappeared (the only one of its kind outside of Europe), graduation requirements no longer included controversial physical education credits, and “The American Idea,” a required senior seminar, was phased out.¹⁴³

The changes met with mixed reviews. Historian Charles Arnade asserted that Mackey transformed USF from “basically a Tampa Bay university” to a state university with the new research mission. According to staff member Ray Cooper, Mackey, “took what was . . . a quaint liberal arts college and turned it into a university, or at least laid all the groundwork.” No longer

¹⁴¹ Lee Leavengood, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 28, 2003.

¹⁴² “Dr. Harris Dean discussed USF, John Allen, Cecil Mackey, the Board of Regents and other things,” *Tampa Magazine* 4 (April 1972): 21-23.

¹⁴³ *The Oracle*, June 2, October 6, 1971, March 31, 1972, April 6, June 12, 1973.

would USF be thought of a “a sleepy, little, regional university,” recalled curriculum and instruction department assistant professor (now Honors College dean) Stuart Silverman. “This is going to be a place that will shine and that will move up the university ladder.” Professors John Iorio, Albert Gessman, and some others and were less sanguine. “We immediately caved in and went the way of the other universities, which makes us a lot like everyone else,” lamented Iorio. Gessman described USF’s first ten years as “exciting and productive” but with Mackey “everything was broken up and started fresh. . . . It has all become quite run-of-the-mill.”¹⁴⁴

With the new college and departmental structure in place, degree offerings at the undergraduate and graduate levels mushroomed in size, especially at the graduate level. During Mackey’s presidency and continuing under the leadership of Interim Presidents William Reece Smith (1976-1977) and Carl Riggs (1977-1978) and President John Lott Brown (1978-1988), bachelor degrees grew from two to seventeen, and graduate degrees from nine to twenty-six, as the accompanying table indicates.

Year	1971		1976		1988	
Number of Colleges	5		8		9	
	degrees	subjects	degrees	subjects	degrees	subjects
Bachelors offered	2	50	5	87	17	100
Masters offered	8	40	10	84	23	85
Doctorates offered	1	3	3	9	3	19

It seemed that nearly every year the Board of Regents approved another academic program at USF. The university became the first in Florida to award a Bachelor of Independent Studies, which allowed students to earn course credits outside the traditional classroom setting.

¹⁴⁴ Charles Arnade, interview by Andrew Huse, March 25, 2004, Ray Cooper, interview by Andrew Huse, June 24, 2004, Stuart Silverman, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 6, 2003, John Iorio, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 12, 2004, Albert Gessman, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 18, 1985, Margaret Fisher, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 11, 2003.

In 1964, the Board of Regents approved USF's first graduate studies program (an M.A. in elementary education), and initiated planning for master's degrees in education, liberal arts, basic studies, and business administration. In the late 1960s, the Department of Gerontology offered the only M.A. in aging studies in the United States. The first Ph.D. program (in biology) was approved in 1967 and four years later Joseph L. Houbrick graduated with a dissertation entitled "Taxonomy, Anatomy, and Life Studies on the Genus *Cerithium* in the Western Atlantic." Tallahassee approved an M.A. in anthropology, chemistry, audiology, and speech pathology in 1973, and by 1975, USF had one of only a dozen graduate library school programs in the Southeast. The next year students could begin earning an M.A. in criminology or a Ph.D. in medical science. In 1980 the Graduate School was established, and in 1984 the university became the world's first to offer a Ph.D. in applied anthropology. On the St. Petersburg campus, the Board of Regents named the Marine Science Department a "Center of Excellence" in 1978, the only such prestigious designation at USF at that time. Five years later, mathematics, science, computers and technology joined this elite group.

Faculty and students alike appreciated the enhanced focus on graduate education. Chemist and College of Natural Science Dean Theodore Ashford worked tirelessly in the late 1960s and 1970s to bolster graduate degrees in math and the sciences and felt upon his retirement in 1982 that USF had fulfilled its early promise, "in some ways, beyond my expectations." According to Max Dertke, psychology professor and dean emeritus of the Florida Mental Health Institute, "The road to prominence at a university lies with the quality of your students and the quality of your graduate research programs."¹⁴⁵ Anthropologist Alvin Wolfe believed that most faculty members applauded the growing graduate focus. "Most of us feel that

¹⁴⁵ Max Dertke, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 6, 2004; "USF honors dean whose vision sparked progress, excellence," *intercom*, February 17, 1982.

it is more interesting to teach graduate students. You get into deeper issues. It opens up the door to more research.”¹⁴⁶ Alexander Ratensky, founding director of the FAMU/USF Cooperative Master of Architecture Program, came to USF in 1986 because “the opportunity to start something from scratch at the graduate level was very appealing.”¹⁴⁷ As an aspiring executive MBA student at USF in 1983, Greg Nicolosi “was really intrigued by the sport of being in a charter class.”¹⁴⁸

Given Florida’s blustery higher education climate, several colleges and departments adopted creative ways of meeting student demands. The College of Engineering developed its programs despite University of Florida dominance over engineering education in the state in the 1970s. Electrical engineering professor Michael Kovac remembered how civil and environmental engineering at USF became structures, materials, and fluids (or SMuFs!), and energy conservation substituted for mechanical engineering in order to avoid conflicting with UF offerings. “Engineering students were delighted to have a place in Tampa where they could get an engineering degree. They did question why USF had the different names for the departments,” he reflected.¹⁴⁹ Not until 1982 could USF officially offer a B.S. and M.S. in chemical, civil, computer, industrial, and mechanical engineering. Philosophy professor Willis H. Truitt had a different issue with his course on Marxism. Explained Richard Taylor, “When it got around to offering the course, it was first titled Marx or Marxism . . . but the officials here at USF felt that wouldn’t fly, so he was asked to re-title the course. He came up with the title Post-Hobbesian Materialism, which just seemed to do fine!”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Alvin Wolfe, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 4, 2003.

¹⁴⁷ Alexander Ratensky, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 20, 2003.

¹⁴⁸ Greg Nicolosi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 28, 2003.

¹⁴⁹ Michael Kovac, interview with Yael V. Greenberg, May 19, 2003.

¹⁵⁰ Richard Taylor, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 9, 2003.

Elsewhere at the university, “Energy and Humanity” addressed energy problems while educating students in conservation. “We also look at all the energy alternatives, such as solar and nuclear power. . . . The economic incentive is going to become stronger and stronger as time goes on,” the instructor explained.¹⁵¹ When nearly a hundred students signed a petition to the English Department, faculty offered a class in J. R. R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy in fall 1974. Physical education taught a Frisbee course. Darryl Paulson gave his students first-hand knowledge of the election process with a course on political campaigning. “One of the things I tell students . . . is that there’s a tremendous opportunity out there, both in terms of running for political office as well as serving as a political consultant.” In 1987, USF became the first state university to offer a women’s studies degree, and the next year became the first to teach a class on AIDS.

Some of the greatest changes to USF’s curriculum came in the area of health sciences. In July 1971, the College of Medicine admitted twenty-four students to its brand new program. Two years later, fifty students began classes in the College of Nursing. In 1984 the College of Public Health completed the triumvirate of programs and associated new buildings on the northwest corner of the Tampa campus.

Plans for the health sciences at USF had begun under President Allen to address a serious void in physician training both in Florida and across the nation. As the state population grew, University of Miami and University of Florida could not produce nearly enough graduates to keep pace. In May 1962 a USF special committee proposed a medical and dental school in Tampa to the Board of Control but wondered openly about the funding. “It is doubtful that the state can, in the near future, stand the cost of constructing and operating a third complete four-

¹⁵¹ *The Oracle*, January 28, 1980.

year medical school. “However, it must look forward to doing so within the next twenty years.”¹⁵² The following April, Hillsborough County State Senator Tom Whitaker, Jr., introduced a bill ordering a feasibility study for a school of medicine at USF, and throughout much of 1964 Tampan welcomed Congressman Sam Gibbon’s lobbying efforts to build a Veteran’s Administration hospital near the campus. Most VA hospitals in the country went up near medical schools, sparking rumors about USF’s growing chances for one. In early 1965 the VA finally selected a site on 30th Street near Fletcher Avenue for its \$18.8 million hospital and the Florida legislature provided initial funds in 1967 for the planning and construction of a regional mental health facility (to become the Florida Mental Health Institute) located on the Tampa campus. In addition, University Community Hospital announced plans to complete its nearby facilities in June 1968 and federal funding existed to build medical school classrooms. When all the pending projects came to fruition, USF would have nearly \$50 million in medical facilities located in the immediate area. Despite state budget shortfalls, the threat of cuts, and a delay receiving initial accreditation, President Allen was optimistic about opening a medical school by 1970 or 1972.¹⁵³

On the nursing front, the legislature approved USF’s program in 1965 and Dr. Allen appointed the first dean of the College of Nursing in 1968. Within a year, Gwendoline MacDonald had assumed the college’s leadership and hired faculty to develop the curriculum for a bachelor science in nursing degree. In 1977 the college started training registered nurses in Tampa and offering the B.S. degree at the St. Petersburg and Sarasota campuses. Three years later nurses could earn an M.S. degree, and in 1998 a Ph.D. program began. From its early home

¹⁵² *Tallahassee Democrat*, May 27, 1962.

¹⁵³ *The Tampa Times*, April 9, 1963; *The Tampa Times USF Campus Edition*, March 30, June 22, July 20, November 2, 1964; *The Oracle*, August 2, September 27, November 15, 1967; John Melendi, interview with Yael V. Greenberg, June 22, 2003.

in a handful of non-descript trailers, nursing professor Ona Riggin experienced how the college made “a rapid transition from the time money was appropriated, the proposal for the college was written, and [it] graduated its first class.”¹⁵⁴

When Cecil Mackey arrived at USF in early 1971 neither nursing nor medicine had offered any classes. The medical school consisted of “a sign planted in a pile of sand on the back corner of the university property.”¹⁵⁵ By the time he left in 1976, the College of Medicine had graduated several classes. Yet, Mackey could claim little credit for its success. Donn L. Smith, hired under John Allen, replaced acting dean Alfred H. Lawton and brought the project to fruition. Smith’s background included military service under General George Patton in WWII and building the University of Louisville’s medical school. Charter faculty member Joseph Krzanowski recalled that Smith “initially came across as being a rather straight-laced individual – pleasant and kind. . . . He was an interesting man, the kind of person we really needed at the time.”¹⁵⁶ He arrived on the Tampa campus in January 1970 wearing cowboy boots and a pair of jeans. He knew there was a tremendous amount of work to do in order to meet a July deadline for federal matching funds. From his office in the administration building he drafted a mission statement, prepared schematic drawings for construction phases I and II, and projected a business plan and enrollment figures all in just six months.

As planning continued, Dr. Smith received a phone call at 1:00 P.M. on November 28, 1972, from a friend in Tallahassee who was closely watching the special legislative session then in progress. He warned that the legislature would consider the medical school’s appropriations request at 5:00 P.M. that day. Smith and business manager John Melendi rushed to the state

¹⁵⁴ Ona Riggin, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 15, 2003.

¹⁵⁵ Cecil Mackey, interview with Andrew Huse, November 24, 2004.

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Krzanowski, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 13, 2003.

capital with a model of the proposed building in the back of a rented station wagon. They carried it up the steps and walked into a meeting unannounced. Melendi remembered it surprised everyone that Smith had the model. The presentation eased ongoing efforts by House Speaker Terrell Sessums and President Pro Tempore of the Senate Louis de la Parte to secure the school's funding. Both houses approved USF's request that day.¹⁵⁷

Hiring faculty for the as yet unopened medical and nursing colleges proved a challenge. Ona Riggan credited Gwendoline MacDonald's connections as past president of the National League of Nursing for some of the success. "Also, as one brings on more faculty you know people in your specialty area and you begin to tell them about all of the advantages here," she acknowledged. The faculty talked about USF and the College of Nursing and became so enthusiastic that the potential faculty members also became enthusiastic. Some of the people who came to interview "just really fell in love with the college, the faculty, and the university."¹⁵⁸

Dean Smith and his four department chairs emphasized the opportunity to start something new and shape its growth in their recruitment strategy. "These were very brave people who came here as senior-type faculty," he stated.¹⁵⁹ Joseph Krzanowski had no intention of coming to USF when pharmacology and therapeutics department chair and future College of Medicine dean Andor Szentivanyi first contacted him about a position. He had just finished a post-doctorate in neurochemistry at Washington University and planned to take a job at the Mayo Clinic. But the calls from USF kept coming. Krzanowski thought about his options, and one snowy day in March 1971 decided to make a visit to Tampa. As he looked at the plans for the

¹⁵⁷ John Melendi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 22, 2003; *The Tampa Tribune*, November 13, 1995.

¹⁵⁸ Ona Riggan, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 15, 2003.

¹⁵⁹ Donn L. Smith, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 24, 1985.

health science building he became intrigued. “How many people in their career would have the opportunity to help develop a new college of medicine.”¹⁶⁰ The more he thought about it, the more he realized the excitement and adventure of starting something from scratch. According to physiology professor Greg Nicolosi, “You were getting people that were essentially giving up positions at established institutions to come in and take a chance and roll the dice. That was what made it so exciting, because everybody was there because they wanted to see something different, they wanted to make something happen, they wanted to help the place grow, and really had some pride in getting it off the ground.”¹⁶¹ Dr. James Polson shared the vision. Szentivanyi had plans to study the patho-physiology of bronchial asthma, and Polson’s medical background fit that research agenda well. “We were getting the opportunity to participate in research as well as participate in the setting up of a medical school,” he remarked.

As with any new venture, the medical school faced early growing pains and experienced early successes. Greg Nicolosi perceived funding tensions between the well-established University of Florida medical program and USF. “I think they [UF] were concerned about what would happen to their own funding, if not immediately then, down the road. I think that there were enough students in the state to populate two [state medical schools] and enough patients for a referral base. Their problem with us was at a legislative level of whether there was going to be enough money in the pot.”¹⁶² Psychiatry department founder Walter Afield and others sensed not everyone in Tampa relished a medical school in the area. “The fear was that these doctors would be trained, they would bring in faculty, they would go out into practice, they would

¹⁶⁰ Joseph Krzanowski, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 13, 2003.

¹⁶¹ Greg Nicolosi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 28, 2003.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

compete with us,” he said. According to Joseph Krzanowski, “In professions like medicine, if you don’t see patients, it’s not a guaranteed salary, so competition becomes a big issue.”¹⁶³

Whatever local apprehension may have existed largely dissolved as USF became more rooted in the medical community. The medical school initially hoped to build a teaching hospital, but the venture’s prohibitive costs soon ended that dream. Instead Dean Smith sought affiliations with local hospitals and their doctors. Medical students received instruction at Tampa General Hospital, which served as USF’s primary teaching facility, and also at the Veteran’s Administration Hospital. Specialized practicums occurred at All Children’s Hospital in St. Petersburg and St. Joseph’s Hospital and the Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI) in Tampa. FMHI officially became part of USF in July 1981, and the same year the Board of Regents approved a \$63 million cancer center at USF to conduct research, offer treatment, and train students. In 1985 the Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children opened to treat orthopedic conditions. “The idea arose because of our interest in research and patient care, and it required a location near a medical college,” said Tampa Shriners executive vice president Lewis Molner.¹⁶⁴ The medical school’s reliance on the private institutions to provide clinical training proved beneficial, James Polson felt. “We had the advantage of having an already established hospital and working medical community to interact with.” In his opinion, the USF-Tampa General relationship helped garner more community support for the medical school.¹⁶⁵ “Our students, to this day, have a reputation for leaving here with lots of hands-on, practical experience,” Greg Nicolosi proudly stated. “They know how to do things. They know how to deal with patients.

¹⁶³ Walter Afield, interview with Danielle Riley, February 25, 2004; Joseph Krzanowski, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 13, 2003.

¹⁶⁴ *The Oracle*, October 22, November 4, 1980, January 12, 1981, March 2, 1982, January 27, October 9, December 3, 1984, October 7, 1985.

¹⁶⁵ James Polson, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 14, 2003.

It's not a theoretical basis, it's an actual base. That's what [Dean Smith] wanted out of them, and our clinical faculty really put their own reputations on the line.”¹⁶⁶

Working with Tampa General and the V.A. Hospitals also helped address USF's critical facilities shortage. Until 1975 the medical school lacked its own building. Classes opened on the fourth floor of the Science Center, with office space and the anatomy lab located in the basement. For the next year, state funds built the nearby surge building – so named because USF was “surging” ahead -- for additional classroom space. Some faculty relocated their offices into the more commodious V.A. Hospital after it opened in fall 1972. “It was quite a move because there were lots of debates about who was going to have which end of the hallway,” Krzanowski recalled.¹⁶⁷ When students and faculty finally moved into Phase I of the new medical school building, it contained basic science departments, teaching areas, a library, cafeteria, and bookstore. Phase II added clinical departments, an auditorium, and additions to existing space. Together, both projects cost less than \$30 million.

In 1978 plans began for a comprehensive cancer treatment and research center on the Tampa campus. Local state legislator and USF graduate H. Lee Moffitt served as the project's driving force in Tallahassee. A cancer survivor himself, he watched three friends with cancer leave Florida for treatment and ultimately die of the disease in their early thirties. “Mourning and anger spur you on,” Moffitt said. “Lawmaking creates opportunity. Too many die. That's why it's a war.”¹⁶⁸ Moffitt conceived of the state's first cancer as an independent entity affiliated with USF. The hospital ultimately incorporated as a not-for-profit with its own board of directors. It received construction funding from Florida cigarette taxes and management services

¹⁶⁶ Greg Nicolosi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 28, 2003.

¹⁶⁷ Joseph Krzanowski, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 13, 2003.

¹⁶⁸ *The Tampa Tribune*, July 24, 2005.

from a private company. Dean Smith worked closely with architects and contractors on the 380,000-foot building, which won the 1983 Design Award for Excellence in Architecture from the Florida Association of the American Institute of Architects. The following year, the Florida legislature voted to name the hospital for Moffitt (then Florida House speaker) in recognition of his critical role in bringing the cancer center to fruition. When the Moffitt Cancer Center opened in October 1986 after nine years of planning, it included a covered walkway both physically and symbolically linking it to the USF Medical Center. “What this center will offer,” stated USF Medical Director Richard Karl, “is a singular cancer care focus . . . kind of care that takes place only in an active, academic research setting.”¹⁶⁹

USF’s dynamic and growing medical environment made attracting students to the College of Medicine relatively easy. “We just put the word out quietly that we were going to take students, and we sent out applications the first of July,” recalled Dean Smith. “We got 440 applicants for twenty-four spaces. . . . The first person admitted was J. Caroline Setzer, a young lady who was a native of Florida. She got her application in first. I think she was standing at the door waiting when we opened the office.”¹⁷⁰ Neither Setzer nor her charter classmates seemed to mind the cramped and temporary quarters and predominantly junior teaching faculty. They were excited to be members of the charter class and showed a positive and spirited attitude despite being “guinea pigs.” “They got the idea to have hockey games during breaks. They had wads of paper for hockey pucks, and brooms or other kinds of sticks for hockey sticks. They went to town and had a great time during the ten-minute breaks between classes,” remembered Polson.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ “Moffitt Cancer Center schedules spring opening,” *USF* 28 (no. 1, 1986): 10; “A hospital comes to life,” *Ibid.*, 12; “Moffitt structure wins design awards,” *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁷⁰ Donn L. Smith, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 24, 1985.

¹⁷¹ James Polson, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 14, 2003.

The demanding pace of coursework made short but frequent breaks a necessity. Until 1982, medical schools students at USF enrolled year-round and graduated in three years. The curriculum addressed the national physician shortage by getting doctors into practice more quickly, but it also created a highly stressful climate. “The problem was that it was a brutal, unforgiving program,” admitted Greg Nicolosi. “If you have a death in your family, if you get the flu, if you break a leg, if you fail a course, I mean this was a tragedy waiting to happen. There was an enormous amount of pressure there to get through the program.”¹⁷²

USF’s small classes helped ease some of the pressure caused by the grueling schedule, and it produced excellent doctors. “We had twenty-four students in those first couple of classes, so you knew them and you knew them well, and you probably knew their parents and you knew their life history. With twenty-four, it wasn’t hard to do. [The faculty] knew [the students’] weaknesses and they knew their strengths, and they really worked hard with them to be as good as they were going to be when they went through the door. I really believe, to this day, the very best students that we turned out came out in those first years. You had a student/faculty ration you’re never going to duplicate.”¹⁷³

Producing excellent students became only part of the medical school’s mission. It also conducted path-breaking research aimed at improving people’s lives. In September 1973 the College of Medicine received its first endowed chair, in cardiovascular research, from the Suncoast Heart Association. The Suncoast Gerontology Center, established within the USF Medical Center in 1980, reflected “a major commitment . . . to develop an interdisciplinary research and training program” and grew to include an endowed chair in Alzheimer’s Disease biomedical research. Medical faculty and graduate students worked with local hospitals to study

¹⁷² Greg Nicolosi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 28, 2003.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

and treat a wide variety of health issues, including AIDS, diabetes, deafness, mental health and aging, blood disorders and immunology, burns, child abuse, brain tumors and other cancers, and the infectious diseases.

Other significant research projects and solutions at USF began in the 1960s and became increasingly common in the 1970s and 1980s. In May 1961 chemist T. W. Graham Solomons received the university's first research grant -- \$2,750 to study the synthesis and properties of certain organic molecules. Later that year, the American Chemical Society awarded Jesse S. Binford \$2,400 to investigate the chemical properties of substances at high temperature. In September 1964 the National Science Foundation gave \$21,800 toward a manual for identifying the plants of subtropical Florida. Peter C. Wright and two other faculty received support from the U. S. Agency for International Development in 1965 for a twenty-month study on the impact of literary programs in Guatemala. These projects were important but difficult in the 1960s. "To do research at USF in those days was a monumental struggle," Solomons recalled. There were three people in the [chemistry] department, some laboratories, but no equipment."¹⁷⁴

To promote additional research, the university sought to create a more conducive atmosphere. It established the USF Research Institute to house multidisciplinary sponsored activities and grants, which totaled approximately \$250,000 in 1965. Three years later, grant funds exceeded \$2 million, and John Allen received approval to create a Division of Sponsored Research "to give further encouragement to the faculty in developing a quality research program." William H. Taft became its first director in 1971.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Office of Research, *Building a Research University: A USF Retrospective*, Annual Report, 1994-1995, 15, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

Support for research begun under President Allen gained considerable momentum under Cecil Mackey and Carl Riggs. “Recruiting Carl Riggs and bringing him to USF as Vice President for Academic Affairs was an early commitment to make research a central part of USF’s overall academic programs,” explained Mackey. Riggs’s experience as a researcher and as vice president for Research and Graduate Studies at the University of Oklahoma made him an excellent candidate to provide strong leadership to research activities. “When I came to USF in August of 1971,” recalled Riggs, “much of the University still believed it would continue to be a relatively small, essentially liberal arts institution. . . . During my recruiting visits to the campus, President Mackey and I had an easily made agreement that the University had to be gently moved toward the large, complex, multi-campus institution that it was destined to be, and that the change had to include much more emphasis on research.”¹⁷⁶

USF moved into the 1970s with a new approach to the balance between teaching and research. Administration placed a greater emphasis on recruiting established research scholars, hired recent Ph.D.s with a strong interest in research and publishing, involved graduate students in research, and more closely tied promotion and tenure to a faculty’s research and publication record. The changes brought results. In 1978, sponsored research funding stood at \$9.9 million and grew to \$23.3 million in 1986.

The explosion in grant-funded projects included work on the molecular identity of heavy-metal pollutants and the history of Tampa. Biologist Richard Mansell discovered a process to make grapefruit sweeter, for which USF received its first-ever patent royalties in 1984. In 1970 the National Institute of Mental Health gave a small grant to the psychology department. Researchers set out to determine how USF alumnus Joe “The Whistler” Engressia had so

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

successfully bypassed telephone operators with his whistling skills while on campus in the late 1960s. In the College of Education, senior Steve Marsh invented “Tommy” in 1971 for use in elementary school teaching. The “seven-foot robot, made of wood, masonite, plastic, and wire, has a large red, lighted heart and a huge green, revolving Plexiglas top. Multicolored lights, which serve to hold student attention, adorn the top.”¹⁷⁷

Marine science faculty received state and national recognition for their work. In the early 1970s, they began the first-ever study into the environmental impact of shell dredging on Tampa Bay. Other researchers looked at hydrilla, a weed that threatened “freshwater life and the balance of nature throughout Florida.”¹⁷⁸ After over a decade of work, chemist Dean Martin and staff at the Southwest Florida Water Management District isolated a cypress derivative that inhibited its growth. In recognition of the important work undertaken in marine science, the Board of Regents established the statewide Florida Institute of Oceanography at Bayboro Harbor in 1978. USF named marine science professor William Sackett its first distinguished research professor in 1983. By the end of the year, his colleagues John J. Walsh and Robert M. Garrels also held the prestigious designation. In 1988 the U.S. Geological Survey selected Bayboro Harbor as the home for its new National Center for Coastal Geology and established a cooperative with the university. In the humanities at USF St. Petersburg, Dean John Hinz created the Asparagus Club, so named after a passage in Thoreau. The club enabled faculty to share their research with the community. “It was a very nice event,” remembered history professor David Carr.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ *The Oracle*, May 26, 1971.

¹⁷⁸ *The Oracle*, January 19, 1972.

¹⁷⁹ David Carr, interview with Lucy Jones, October 6, 2003, Kent Fanning, interview with Lucy Jones, October 29, 2003; “Ocean Research Center Anchors Bayboro Campus,” *USF Today* 5 (Spring 1978): 4.

In the College of Engineering research begun over thirty years ago resonates today. In the mid 1970s faculty and students constructed an electric car to experiment with alternatives to the gasoline engine. Participants in the project were optimistic. “If we can make this type of car practical, demands for gas would go down. It would probably be much cheaper to ‘fill ‘er up’ with electricity than with gas.”¹⁸⁰ A 1982 a joint venture with Japanese researchers looked at the feasibility of the proposed Florida Bullet Train System. Japanese National Railways, which funded the initiative, hoped USF would “become the training center for experts and managers for bullet train operations in Florida and the United States.” The following year, a pair of “laser scissors” cut the ribbon for the new Center for Engineering and Development and Research (CEDAR) at Honeywell Inc.’s north Tampa plant. The event marked a growing national trend toward cooperation between industry and higher education. In 1985 CEDAR moved on campus to the new College of Education building.¹⁸¹

The University of South Florida’s growing research culture accompanied a continuing emphasis on art, performance, and literature. By 1984, a task force investigating performing and visual arts at state universities found USF’s departments to be among the best in Florida. The designation stemmed from the breath, scope, and quality of faculty and program offerings. Art has had a long tradition at the university, beginning in 1960 with Joe Testa-Secca’s ceramic mosaics adorning the administration and chemistry buildings. In 1968 Graphicstudio opened to engage in research and collaboration in art making. Presidential portraits by art professor Harrison Covington were commissioned and currently hang in the Sam and Martha Gibbons Alumni Center. His Leonardo da Vinci-inspired sculpture “Proportions,” displayed in the library, won a juried competition in 1974. Humanities professor Gladys Shafran Kashdin’s

¹⁸⁰ *The Oracle*, February 23, 1977.

¹⁸¹ *The Oracle*, May 28, 1982.

works on the Everglades and Florida rivers hung on campus and off, including in the University Center, public libraries, and museums. To support public art, the Florida legislature created the Art in State Buildings Program in 1979. Sponsored by House majority leader (and future USF president Betty Castor spouse) Sam Bell, the legislation set aside one half of one percent of new state construction funds for the acquisition and placement of artwork in and around new public facilities. The program, which had its greatest impact in the 1990s, allowed USF to work with the nation's top public artists. Together, they developed projects to enhance campus aesthetics and to enrich the cultural life of students, faculty and staff.

USF's most famous piece of art never got off the ground. In 1971 negotiations began with Pablo Picasso for the rights to construct a 100-foot high sculpture of his work "Bust of a Woman." It would, according to art professor James Camp, give the Tampa campus "the largest sculpture in the world by the greatest twentieth-century artist."¹⁸² The Board of Regents approved the project the day after Picasso's April 1973 death, and President Mackey formed a steering committee to raise the estimated half-million dollars in construction costs. Fundraising did not go well. By December, the committee had collected only \$73,000. A groundbreaking ceremony and "Victory Luncheon" were indefinitely postponed. The deteriorating economic climate and exclusive focus on large donations hindered efforts, as did the sculpture's design. Some saw it as a masterpiece. "How often will you get a chance to participate in a potential future 'David,'" asked Charles Hampton of *Tampa Magazine*. "Bust of a Woman," Hampton believed, would allow Tampanas "to sense the 'now' and the future of our world and become a part of it." Striking a far different tone, one *Tampa Tribune* reader called it an "emasculated, distorted, impersonalized figure alleged to represent a woman," and another reader described it

¹⁸² *The Oracle*, February 5, 1971.

as “a hideous monstrosity.” According to USF graphic designer Ray Cooper, “there was certainly a majority that thought the thing was a hideous piece of God-knows what.” By September 1975 the project had collected only half the needed sum and became inactive.¹⁸³

In spite of the Picasso project’s failure, the arts continued to thrive in other respects at USF. The university’s active theatre department staged many plays, including an “insane” version of Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*, Federico Garcia Lorca’s *Blood Wedding*, William Goldman’s *The Princess Bride*, Moli`ere’s *The Misanthrope*, and David Birney’s adaptation of *The Diaries of Adam and Eve*. In 1978 theatre department alumni set up shop in a shopping center and began performances all over the Tampa Bay area. At the time, “The Alice People,” as they were known, comprised the only professional theatre company in Tampa. This made USF’s theatrical presentations an integral part of the arts community not only at the university but throughout the city. The same year the Florida Symphony Orchestra presented “The Barking Pussycat,” a musical comedy written by USF students Nancy Wetmore and Ron Holton. Students took first place in a 1979 statewide competition of the American College Theatre Festival for its production of Carol Goldini’s comedy *Servant of Two Masters*.

For different comic relief, five thousand people packed the gym to see Cheech and Chong in January 1976. In October 1978 comedian/performance artist Andy Kaufman performed in the gym. His unusual act included a three-piece band, a reading in Yiddish of *MacArthur Park*, bad jokes, sobbing, a levitation act, and a wrestling match against a female challenger. “They booed

¹⁸³ *The Tampa Tribune*, September 30, 1973; Charles H. Hampton, “Tampa and the Arts,” *The Muse* (December 1973), in Picasso Scrapbook, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library; Charles Hampton, “Picasso Comes to Tampa,” *Tampa Magazine* (August 1971): 8; Ray Cooper, interview with Andrew Huse, June 24, 2004.

him and he loved it,” an *Oracle* review read. “Kaufman has the ability to make an audience do anything. He can make them laugh at him, feel sorry for him, and even sing along with him.”¹⁸⁴

USF welcomed internationally renowned literary figures. In October 1972, the University Lecture Series sponsored a “thickly-bearded and spectacled” Allen Ginsburg, who chanted, sang, and read his poetry to a captivated and capacity crowd in the University Theatre. Students gathered around television sets in ten locations to view the performance over closed-circuit television. Ginsburg spoke on the war in Vietnam, capitalism, Buddhism, and Jack Kerouac. Haikus, chants, and songs ranging in content from social and political commentaries to drug use punctuated his campus visit. The Afro-American Studies Program presented Biafran poet Okogbule Wonodi and author Nkem Nwanko in February 1973. Cicely Tyson opened the Fourth Annual Celebration of Literature in February 1976. Isaac Bashevis Singer spoke as part of the communication department’s “Celebration of Literature” in April 1980. Alex Haley came for Black Emphasis Month in February 1981, and Maya Angelou helped launch Women’s Awareness Week at USF in April 1985. The annual Florida Suncoast Writers’ Conference, established in 1972, continues to bring award-winning authors to USF for workshops and lectures aimed at aspiring and published writers.

On the music scene, the university offered wide variety of acts and musical genres. The St. Petersburg campus hosted Spring Collage for a week in April 1971 and the USF Jazz Lab Band in November 1973. Folk singer Richie Havens played the first Bayboro Jam at the Bayfront Center in November 1978 to benefit the marine science program. Mythril, a band organized in fall 1974 by faculty members Art Woodbury and Hilton Jones, combined East Indian music, jazz, rock, and European classical orchestrations into a unique, avant-garde hybrid.

¹⁸⁴ *The Oracle*, October 16, 1978.

The Music School's popular Christmas Madrigals performances brought together campus and community each holiday season. Ars Nova Wind Quintet, consisting of USF music faculty, released a 1977 album of woodwind music that it recorded in the Fine Arts Auditorium. New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner began funding annual USF Symphony scholarship concerts in Tampa and Sarasota in 1980, and Leslie Bassett, winner of the 1966 Pulitzer Prize in music for his *Variations for Orchestra*, performed and lectured at the Student Composer's Symposium in January 1985.

For those seeking something a little more raucous, the University Center opened its Apocalypse Coffee House (renamed The Empty Keg) in October 1970 with live folk and country-western music. For more than twenty-five years, the intimate UC hangout featured local and national musical acts, dances, parties, and beer! The annual River Riot at Riverfront Park was anything but intimate. For many years, it offered upwards of 5,000 people an opportunity to “drink beer, listen to music, drink beer, dive off a bridge, drink beer, watch suntanned bodies, and drink more beer.”¹⁸⁵ In April 1981 the Sun Dome welcomed its first staged concert when Alice Cooper rocked a boisterous crowd, and the USF Gospel Choir performed with the rock band Foreigner at the Lakeland Civic Center on March 28, 1985.

WUSF-FM 89.7 and WUSF-TV Channel 16 offered additional cultural outlets when they first aired in 1963 and 1965, respectively. From a modest ten-watt radio transmitter and only three or four hours a day of programming, WUSF-FM upgraded its operations in 1965. A 1,024-foot tower in Riverview, shared with the television station, enabled many more people to tune in to hear weekly programming that included opera, jazz, discussion, drama, and a variety show. “From Bach to the Beach Boys,” the campus newspaper said of the student-run operation and

¹⁸⁵ *The Oracle*, April 13, 1981.

one of only two non-commercial radio stations in the state. In September 1966 WUSF-TV began broadcasting six hours a day, five days a week and offered shows for children, a Spanish-language news program called “Enfoque,” and educational programming presented by USF faculty. Marketing professor Merle Dimbath gave reports on the stock market and John “Knocky” Parker presented a show featuring silent films. In December 1969, the television station announced a competition to award and air productions created by young adults.

Under Cecil Mackey’s administration, WUSF underwent changes. A new FM stereo transmitter announced in January 1971 boosted the radio station to 85,000 watts, the most powerful educational radio transmission in Florida. Later that year, a \$57,000 Department of Education grant gave WUSF-TV the ability to broadcast programs in color. Mackey embraced the potential to broadcast educational content and personally used airtime for a weekly “Open Line” series to communicate with the university community. USF students worked at the radio station and produced hard-edged news stories, but budget shortfalls and reorganization in July 1975 forced out the paid news staff. At the same time, WUSF began airing “Mediawatch,” Tampa Bay’s first show aimed at media criticism. Mass Communications chairman Emery L. “Pete” Sasser worried that his students no longer had a place to obtain practical news broadcasting experience. After some discussion, WUSF-FM allowed students working for class credit to prepare in-depth radio stories of local impact to air each day.¹⁸⁶ In 1977 the station began the first radio reading program where volunteers read magazines, books, and local newspapers for the visually impaired in Florida.

As students and administration negotiated WUSF-FM’s news content, a similar debate occurred over the music. The station welcomed the large audience that a powerful transmitter

¹⁸⁶ *The Oracle*, October 21, 1975.

permitted, and it expanded the hugely popular “Underground Railroad,” first aired in 1968. The show “pioneered progressive rock programming in Florida,” according to program director Dave Dial.¹⁸⁷ President Mackey and acting director of educational resources Manny Lucoff questioned the appropriateness of rock and roll on a university radio station and sought to focus on “serious music.” WUSF would emphasize classical music, which Mackey believed was “more related to the academic thrust of the university.”¹⁸⁸ The president had his supporters. “Your recent action of curtailing the jazz coverage was a good first step toward improving the programming to a level which might be considered worthy of the cultural level expected from any university in an advanced nation,” wrote one Crystal River listener. “It would have been better to have eliminated such hideous noise altogether.”¹⁸⁹ In this polarized climate, the Underground Railroad saw its airtime dramatically curtailed, and students and administration argued publicly over the future direction of the station. Time and again student government called for an alternative format to include less classical music and more folk, nonwestern, progressive, electronic, and bluegrass. Newly arrived station manager John Young replied that he did not foresee major changes to WUSF’s classical and public affairs format. The Underground Railroad, removed from the airwaves in 1973, did not return, although several hours of student content aired each week. In September 1979, WMNF 88.5 FM hit the airwaves. The non-commercial, community radio station offered programming “in the spirit of the Underground Railroad” and thereby filled an important niche for USF students.¹⁹⁰ On campus, the fledgling student-run WBUL cable FM station first aired on May 23, 1988, from an Andros Center classroom and could be heard in the UC’s Empty Keg, dormitories, and several other

¹⁸⁷ *The Oracle*, February 15, 19, 1974 (quote from Feb. 19).

¹⁸⁸ *The Oracle*, September 26, 1975.

¹⁸⁹ **Letter to President Mackey, July 9, 1976, Iron Mountain box, Jazz Nite.**

¹⁹⁰ *The Oracle*, April 12, 1978.

buildings. WUSF-FM may have had limited appeal with students, but the community embraced the station. In 1991 *Tampa Bay Life* readers named it the best radio station in the listening area.

USF's strong reputation in the arts came more slowly to athletics. In the early 1970s, university students and faculty enjoyed vibrant and varied intramural sports activities, but relatively few intercollegiate teams competed for school prestige and pride. Several squads proved an exception to this rule. In November 1972 the NCAA designated the men's soccer team the "top college division team in the South" and awarded it the privilege of hosting the first post-season tournament in its nine-year history. The NCAA returned to Tampa several more times to play championship soccer.¹⁹¹ In 1981 the men's team won its fifth Sun Belt Conference title in six years, and in 1984 it ranked 17th in the nation. Avid soccer player Kerry Sanders graduated from an Orlando-area high school in 1978 and decided that he wanted to play professionally one day. USF had a "fantastic soccer team" at the time, he recalled. He set his sights on USF and hoped to move on to the Tampa Bay Rowdies. His plans did not work out as he imagined. Today, Sanders is internationally recognized as a correspondent with NBC news.¹⁹²

Other sports also enjoyed success on campus in the 1970s and 1980s. The men's tennis team placed first in the Sun Belt Conference in 1977-1980 and again between 1985 and 1988. The women's team also dominated conference play from 1984-1984. The golf team finished second in state competition in 1978, and the next year the cross-country took top honors in conference play. The baseball team won consistently in the early 1980s and filled the stadium with 2,500 to 3,000 fans. During the 1982 season the team played nationally ranked University of Florida in Gainesville and again in the NCAA tournament's first round. USF won both times

¹⁹¹ *The Oracle*, November 9, 1972.

¹⁹² Kerry Sanders, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, October 30, 2003.

but lost to eventual national champions the Miami Hurricanes. It was good to be part of a “breakthrough team,” acknowledged outfielder/pitcher and future women’s softball coach Ken Eriksen. After many winning seasons, women’s slow-pitch softball won USF its first national title in 1983 when it bested Florida State University in the American Softball Association Tournament. They won again the next year before joining the NCAA’s fast-pitch league in 1985. In other sports, female athletes shone as well. The U.S. Lawn Tennis Association ranked USF third in the nation its inaugural year, and the volleyball team won the Sun Belt Conference championship in 1987. Boasted coach Debbie Richardson, “Without a doubt we had the best talent and the best team in the tournament. Several of the other coaches told me that they didn't think anyone in the Conference could stop us.” Women’s intercollegiate athletics had come a long way since President Mackey and the University Athletic Council initiated “an experimental year” for women’s sports in 1972. Still, women’s sports suffered from relatively poor visibility and limited budgets compared to the men.¹⁹³

USF’s intercollegiate athletic program took an exciting step forward in July 1969 when athletic director Richard Bowers announced that USF would begin a men’s basketball team the following year. Women’s basketball would hit the court in 1972. President Allen’s support for the initiative stemmed in part from the persistent desire for a team. Student government presidents Frank Nichols and John Greer actively campaigned for a stronger intercollegiate athletic program with university administration. Nichols’s leadership in 1969 helped set the stage for Greer’s ultimate success in achieving a “major level of college sports” in 1970. According to Greer, “I think that that had some impact on campus life and some impact on the relationship between campus and the community.” Allen’s decision to support basketball also

¹⁹³ *Twentieth Century* 10 (1986-87), 46; *The Oracle*, September 28, 1972.

came as a compromise to football, which he felt was far too expensive to operate. Bowers recalled the day Allen called him into his office. “Do you think it’s time that we started basketball?” the president asked. “Yes, sir. I think it’s time that we had a major spectator sport,” Bowers replied.¹⁹⁴

John Kiser, USF’s first basketball scholarship recipient, arrived in 1970 to play for the all-freshmen squad. “That’s what I wanted . . . to be with something that was progressive, that I could grow with and be part of [the] history of the university. You don’t get those chances very often,” he stated.¹⁹⁵ Under first head coach Don Williams, Kiser and his teammates got off to quite a start. Playing their home games at Curtis Hixon Hall, the Golden Brahms finished its first season with a 19-4 record and averaged 100 points a game against junior varsity and junior college opponents. Kiser scored the school’s first-ever points, a free throw against University of Florida’s freshmen on December 4, 1970, at Curtis Hixon Hall. USF won the game 85-78. Dennis McClendon of *Tampa Magazine* celebrated the city’s newest spectator sport and looked forward to when the “Baby Brahman cagers” would “move from teething on junior colleges to digesting some solid food in the like of Alabama, Mississippi State, Wake Forest, and St. Bonaventure.”¹⁹⁶

The transition to NCAA play would take time and include some setbacks. In 1974, past Atlantic Coast Conference coach of the year Bill Gibson left the University of Virginia for Tampa, but he died tragically of a heart attack after just a year in Tampa. Assistant coach Chip Conner led the men’s team to a 19-8 record in 1975-1976, USF’s last season playing outside an established league. In 1976 the Golden Brahms helped form the Division I-A Sun Belt

¹⁹⁴ John Greer, interview by Andrew Huse, May 11, 2004; “Supermen . . . Wonder Women,” *USF Today* 5 (Winter 1978): 7; Richard Bowers, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 13, 2003.

¹⁹⁵ John Kiser, interview by Andrew Huse, August 4, 2004.

¹⁹⁶ Dennis McClendon, “USF Varsity Basketball,” *Tampa Magazine* 3 (December 1971): 12-15.

Conference with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and remained in the league until USF joined the Metro Conference for the 1992-1995 seasons. The men's and women's basketball teams continued to experience ups and downs during its fifteen years in the Sun Belt Conference. A poor start to the men's 1979-1980 season, which ended 6 and 21, cost Coach Conner his job. In April USF stunned the basketball world by hiring nationally renowned coach Lee Rose away from Purdue University, a recent Final Four participant. Players and fans were elated. Others wondered whether the university had not compromised its "accent on learning" for an emphasis on "big-time sports" and the revenue it would bring.¹⁹⁷

Student athlete Tony Grier played his first season in 1979-1980. "Academically, I knew that the university was definitely on fire," he recalled. "It just really became a school that had a lot of credibility . . . and the future did look bright." Under Coach Rose "we were now considered an elite program in the state, without a doubt. . . . I was proud, as well as my teammates, to have a coach of his level." According to Grier, Rose brought "mental toughness" to the team and wanted to elevate the basketball program to keep pace with the overall growth of the university. "In doing so, we needed to really believe in ourselves. He really showed us, each day, that if we did what he said, and we followed the program, that success would follow. And we knew it from day one."¹⁹⁸

On November 29, 1980, USF officially opened the Sun Dome with a close loss to Florida A&M University, 65 to 63. "I was really pleased with the way the team didn't quit and with the good crowd turnout," Coach Rose said of the historic game.¹⁹⁹ Several weeks later USF lost again to Duke University in a nationally televised game carried by ESPN, but wins came more

¹⁹⁷ *The Oracle*, April 17, 1980; "Blazing a Trail: USF Basketball heads into its 26th season," *USF Magazine*, 37 (Fall 1995): 28.

¹⁹⁸ Tony Grier, interview by Andrew Huse, January 27, 2005.

¹⁹⁹ *The Oracle*, December 1, 1980.

often than losses in Rose's first season in Tampa. The Bulls (as USF teams came to be called in the early 1980s) went 18 and 11, set a school record with twelve straight victories, and received its first-ever post-season bid to play in the NIT. That is not what Grier remembered most fondly. His most cherished memory as a USF basketball player occurred during the 1981-1982 season during intrastate play. "We beat Florida on the first night and we beat Florida State on the second night to win the first ever Florida Four Tournament. . . . We were the best team in the State of Florida that year." The national media took notice. On December 14, 1981, college basketball in Florida received a four-page spread in *Sports Illustrated*.²⁰⁰

Success on the court paid dividends on campus. With winning records came growing visibility, and the university enjoyed greater success in recruiting. Students enjoyed exciting matches against some of the nation's best teams, and attendance and school spirit grew. An enthusiastic cheering section called "The Rose Garden" sprung up in the Sun Dome stands, and the team developed its "first certified loony." According to *Sports Illustrated*, a band member named Kevin Cramer "drops his French horn and performs an awkward semi-striptease during time outs."²⁰¹ For additional musical entertainment, student Kerry Sanders and friends began an impromptu kazoo band in the late 1970s. Beginning several years earlier, groups like the Commuter Rooters, Big Green Scream Machine, Brahman Bullhorns Pep Band, and Bullettes got fans cheering.²⁰² In honor of USF's twelve-game winning streak, humanities chair Theodore Hoffman wrote a fight song in 1981.

Go you Brahmans!
Go you Bulls!

²⁰⁰ Tony Grier, interview by Andrew Huse, January 27, 2005; Jack McCallum, "Four On The Floor In Florida," *Sports Illustrated*, December 14, 1981, pp. 26-28, 33.

²⁰¹ McCallum, "Four On The Floor In Florida," 27.

²⁰² Keevin D. Williams, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, November 3, 2003, Kerry Sanders, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, October 30, 2003.

*Golden Brahmans,
Golden Brahmans,
USF Bulls.
Quick and tough and smart and tall,
You're the best in basketball.
The cheers of the crowd
Show that we are proud
Of the Brahmans,
Go you Bulls!
Golden Brahmans,
USF Bulls
U
S
F
Bulls!*

Grier successor Tommy Tonelli also reflected positively on his USF career as a player and part-time assistant coach. He received offers to play at Big Ten schools, but playing for Lee Rose at USF held particular appeal. “I felt like [USF] gave me the best opportunity to play and potentially start the four years that I was going to be here as a player . . . and it worked out,” he stated. Tonelli enjoyed playing alongside Charlie Bradley, who he described as “probably the most recognized player in South Florida history.”²⁰³ As a sophomore in 1983 Bradley led the nation in scoring and received Sun Belt Conference player of the year honors. By 1985 he had become USF’s all-time leading scorer (surpassing Tony Grier) and the first player to have his jersey retired. A year after Bradley left, the “volatile” Lee Rose resigned and Bobby Paschal took over a team that struggled with losing records through the late 1980s.²⁰⁴

In addition to “big-time” NCAA sports, athletics for the physically disabled has played an important role at USF. Since 1979, the university has hosted the regional Special Olympics and in 1983 opened a facility to accommodate the games. Events included bowling, swimming, gymnastics, and track and field, and participation increased from 500 athletes to several thousand

²⁰³ Tommy Tonelli, interview by Danielle Riley, March 17, 2004.

²⁰⁴ Dan Walbolt, Sr., interview by Andrew Huse, July 13, 2004.

over the years. “During that time, our students took an active part, commented physical education professor Louis Bowers. “There were other types of activities as well. There were wheelchair games and other things that our students participated in.”²⁰⁵ In January 1981, physical education major George Murray won the International Wheelchair Racing Association’s world championship in Miami. He completed the twenty-six-mile course in a 2:12:31. Two years later, USF honored him with its Outstanding Athlete of the Year Award. Soon after graduation, Murray received another honor. Of more than 6,400 entrants in the Search of Champions Contest, his picture appeared on millions of Wheaties cereal boxes. During the Seoul Paralympic Games of 1988, USF Sarasota student Cindy Gettinger took home four gold medals in swimming.

USF’s classrooms, research labs, arts, and sports teams drew students, staff, and faculty of diverse backgrounds, needs, and abilities. As a part-time student and full-time USF utilities superintendent on the Tampa campus, Adrian Cuarta utilized the GI Bill to come to USF and received a partial fee waiver as a utilities superintendent working on campus. “In those days you were required to go to class. If you missed two or three classes in a semester you could lose your benefits. . . . The VA office here on campus was very helpful to veterans.” VIP, or Veterans Information Person, provided academic counseling for ex-servicemen, especially those struggling academically. Les Miller came back to school on the GI Bill in 1975 after four years in the U.S. Air Force. “No one in my family at that time had gotten a college education. . . . My father and mother always told me, ‘we want you to be better than we were. The only way you can do that is to get a good education.’” Miller acknowledged that he struggled with his course work at first. “I remember the first class I had, the first test I took. I got back a big whopping F.

²⁰⁵ Louis Bowers, interview by Andrew Huse, December 15, 2003.

It was tough.” Political science professor Arthur Levy stepped in to help. “He pulled me aside. He changed my life. He got me focused on what I had to do. . . . After I became student body president, I was still taking some classes from him.”²⁰⁶

USF’s rise as a metropolitan, research institution came from its ability to recruit and retain a diverse and talented group of faculty, staff, and students. In an effort to attract Florida’s graying population, the St. Petersburg campus initiated Project Focus in 1976 to enroll “mature” students between ages twenty-six and fifty-five. The following year State Senator Betty Castor introduced a bill in the Florida legislature designed to offer senior citizens the same supportive and nurturing environment that younger people enjoyed at USF. When it passed in the 1980 regular legislative session, Florida Statute 240.235 allowed state residents age sixty and older to attend university classes, space permitting, for free. The new law, stated Castor, “would be a very good thing to do here at South Florida because there has been so much discussion about bridging the gap between the university and the community.”²⁰⁷ Within months of passing, seniors eagerly signed up. Under Lee Leavengood’s direction, the Senior Citizen Tuition Waiver Program blossomed with as many as 300 seniors a semester taking regular classes. By 1994, Leavengood oversaw a Division of Senior Programs, which included fee waivers as well as SeniorNet and Learning in Retirement. Pauline Guyer, a seventy-seven-year-old participant was delighted when she found out USF’s commitment to seniors’ education. “I just love the academic world,” she beamed.²⁰⁸ Shirley Petty took classes in history, botany, and logic. Bob and Dot Thrush remembered the free literature, sociology, and geography classes offered at USF St. Petersburg. “I always thought that [seniors] added a lot to the classroom discussions. It made

²⁰⁶ Les Miller, interview by Andrew Huse, January 6, 2004.

²⁰⁷ *The Oracle*, February 7, 1977.

²⁰⁸ *The Oracle*, January 28, 1981.

it more intergenerational than the traditional student body. You had people who had practical experience in the same discussion area as people who had had book learning.”²⁰⁹

Since the day the university opened, its efforts to embrace and harness the full potential of American society have met with growing levels of success. “I think to USF’s credit, at least over the more than thirty years that I’ve been here, the university has consistently and conscientiously and deliberately made efforts to improve access and opportunities for people of all races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions . . . but it’s an uphill battle at the very beginning,” commented philosophy professor Richard Taylor.²¹⁰

The “battle” for greater diversity has been fought on many fronts by many people and with many goals in mind. For some, the struggle has been over improved access and opportunity. Others have sought to celebrate shared identity. Still others have worked to educate and cultivate increased tolerance. The Black Student Union, Black Pan-Hellenic Council, Latin American Student Organization, and other groups organized to enhance their visibility and participation in campus affairs. Students met to discuss USF fraternities and sororities, acknowledging that there was a divergence along color lines and seeking ways to redress the issue. Faculty and students raised awareness about gaps in the curriculum and in the library’s collections, and administrators responded by developing African American and Jewish studies programs and by rushing additional and specialized materials to the shelves. A seminar entitled “Black-White Uptight” brought together students and faculty to promote

²⁰⁹ Shirley Petty, interview by Andrew Huse, November 7, 2003, Bob and Dot Thrush, interview by Lucy Jones, March 19, 2004.

²¹⁰ Richard Taylor, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 9, 2003.

communication. “We’re trying to get blacks and whites together to discuss their relations on campus,” Brian Jones explained.²¹¹

In 1971, USF hired Troy Collier as assistant to the vice president for student affairs to help attract black and other minority students to the Tampa campus. The six-foot-nine All-American basketball star and ex-Harlem Globetrotter counseled students and shared information. “Our main problem is to get everyone informed with the real facts – and to get those facts believed. Minority group people need to have confidence that we are doing everything we can to help and that they are really wanted and have at least a few real friends.”²¹² A decade later, Project Thrust continued in Collier’s footsteps. “Students Affairs works hard to encourage blacks,” commented Rosalie Hill of the Equal Educational Opportunity Office in November 1981. “In that way, it opens doors. But the problem is how do you get people inside the door.”²¹³ On the St. Petersburg campus, Project Thrust tutored struggling students, many of who were new to college. This initiative and others like it proved that a strong recruitment and retention strategy paid dividends. African American student enrollment rose over 10 percent between 1982 and 1983.²¹⁴

In addition to these efforts, organizations like the Institute of Black Life and Latino Advisory Committee engaged the community in order to recruit and retain students. Donna Parrino recalled the demographic growth and diversity of Tampa’s Latino community in the 1970s and 1980s and its implications for USF. “That snowball was beginning to gain momentum. This was forming and that was forming. Those were the beginnings of a Latino agenda here at

²¹¹ *The Oracle*, February 12, 1981.

²¹² Dennis McClendon, “Big Man on the Campus,” *Tampa Magazine* (February 1972): 14.

²¹³ *The Oracle*, November 3, 1981.

²¹⁴ *The Oracle*, February 3, 1984.

the university.”²¹⁵ Within the African American community, Dr. Juel Smith got more involved dealing with issues of race and enrollment, and community members called for greater engagement by the university in local concerns. As a counselor, Smith and her colleagues saw a number of black students who could not afford to continue attending classes. “So, we’d get on the phone and we’d try to help, and so it was kind of due to that that I started asking the African American community to give, to do more, to help more students here on campus.”²¹⁶ The Institute of Black Life, established in 1986, ensured that USF’s mission of teaching, research, and service addressed the practical needs of its African American constituents. It partnered with the Urban League and together they established an African American advisory board and inner city office to plan strategies and share problems. Student enrichment programs, scholarships, graduate fellowships, faculty research, community service, and fundraising activities resulted.

Initiatives on campus to accommodate, educate, and foster cooperation between people of different religions, ethnic and national backgrounds, sexes, sexual orientations, and physical abilities occurred as well. Jewish students formally establish a Hillel chapter in 1976 to come together and also to provide a dialogue on “all sides of political issues that relate to either Israel or the American Jewish community.”²¹⁷ The mid 1970s also saw the formation of Arab and Iranian Clubs to socialize together and educate the USF community about their heritage, history, and views about political issues at home and abroad. International affairs professor Abdelwahab Hechiche, who served as faculty advisor to the Iranian Club in the late 1970s, recalled plenty of heated discussions, especially over the Iran hostage crisis and Israeli-Arab conflict. Women’s centers opened on the Tampa and St. Petersburg campuses to address specific needs and

²¹⁵ Donna Parrino, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 8, 2003.

²¹⁶ Juel Smith, interview by Danielle Riley, February 20, 2004.

²¹⁷ Nicky Spivak, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, December 11, 2003.

concerns. *The Oracle* began a column called Womanity, and “Women’s Awareness 1982,” sponsored by the Equal Opportunity Affairs Office, offered forums on sexism, reproductive rights, and job opportunities as well as bibliographies of women, women’s culture, and women’s research.²¹⁸ Gays and lesbians organized the Gay Coalition in October 1974 to support the campus’s “large gay community.” Several years later, the Coalition sponsored “Gay Day,” to raise awareness about the university’s homosexual population and “show that gays are really no different than straights – they dress the same, they look the same. They just have different sexual preferences.”²¹⁹

USF’s flat terrain, warm climate, and modern buildings made it so attractive to students with physical disabilities that it enrolled more disabled students than any other college or university in the country, stated registrar Linda Erickson. “Students from all over the country were referred to USF for admission,” and Erickson met with each person to help them select a class schedule and navigate the campus.²²⁰ Louise Frederici chose to attend USF for its relative accessibility. She rated the university “good but not excellent. I’d rate very few places excellent,” she admitted.²²¹ Staff member Doug Andrews struck a similarly hesitant tone. I don’t feel angry at the discrimination,” he commented. “It’s so subtle that people aren’t always aware of it. We simply experience the world differently.”²²²

To make USF more inviting for those with disabilities, faculty and staff worked on several fronts. Special education assistant professor Bernard Lax’s 1971 course “Visually Handicapped in the Classroom” addressed special needs in a practical way. He required that his

²¹⁸ *The Oracle*, March 24, 1982.

²¹⁹ *The Oracle*, October 24, 1974, May 24, 1977, October 16, 1979.

²²⁰ Linda Erickson, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 5, 2003.

²²¹ *The Oracle*, May 5, 1976.

²²² *The Oracle*, February 21, 1981.

students spend a day blindfolded in order to better understand the experiences of their sightless peers. WUSF initiated a radio reading program for the visually impaired. Stated station manager John Young: “Ours is the first reading program in the state. We hope it will stimulate others.”²²³ With passage of the federal Rehabilitation Act in 1973, which extended civil rights and protection from discrimination to the disabled, President Mackey and other administrators toured the campus in wheelchairs to learn firsthand about difficulties moving around the campus. An advisory committee recommended more than \$625,000 in improvements, including electric doors and more ramps on USF buildings. “The main thing we have to work on now is awareness of the handicapped on the part of the university. . . . It will be a big thing to consider in the future,” commented student advisor Mildred Singletary.²²⁴ For USF’s efforts, in 1977 the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare listed it as one of the leading campuses in the country for its treatment of and accessibility to the handicapped.²²⁵

The 1970s and 1980s also saw progress at USF in addressing the growing nationwide need to hire, pay equitably, and promote more female and African American faculty. Cecil Mackey formed the Committee on the Status of Women in May 1971 to “determine if the University has fallen short of its goal of non-discriminatory practices and procedures insofar as women are concerned, and if such practices and procedures are found to contain discriminatory features in theory or practice, ways to eliminate them.”²²⁶ The resulting report, completed in February 1972, made several suggestions. It recommended the establishment of a full-time

²²³ *The Oracle*, November 9, 1977.

²²⁴ *The Oracle*, August 5, 1977, July 26, 28, 1978.

²²⁵ *The Oracle*, May 23, 1977.

²²⁶ Cecil Mackey to Members of Sub-Committee on Status of Women, May 11, 1971, box 3, Gladys Shafran Kashdin Collections, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library; Phyllis Hamm, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 8, 1985, Donna Christensen, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 15, 1985.

position of assistant to the president for women's affairs and an advisory board to the assistant to the president for women's affairs. President Mackey responded by extending the life of the committee and making it advisory to the president. The report called for "immediate equalization of salaries for faculty and staff women in instances where there had been discrimination on the basis of sex."²²⁷ Mackey reacted by forming a committee to redress salary and promotion inequities on a case-by-case basis. Regarding committee concerns about university and statewide policies on maternity leave, the president made it possible for women to use accumulated annual leave as maternity leave for up to six months and he requested that the Board of Regents permit use of accumulated sick leave as well. He also acted on the committee's suggestions to establish a women's studies program and to create uniform grievance procedures. President Mackey did not support the committee's proposed affirmative action plan for women. He argued, "I believe that an effective program of identifying qualified applicants and giving them equal opportunity in every consideration for professional employment is appropriate, but I do not believe that it would be appropriate to give the kind of preferential treatment on the basis of sex that was suggested by the Committee."²²⁸ Mackey took more aggressive action to hire African Americans. He released a new equal opportunity plan with an affirmative action policy and appointed four assistants to deal with discrimination complaints in April 1973.

Statistics collected in 1974 and 1975 and personal recollections reinforced the scope of the hiring problem. In 1974, 95 percent of USF professors were white males. The following

²²⁷ Cecil Mackey to Juanita Williams, April 11, 1972, box 3, Gladys Shafran Kashdin Collections, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

year 96 of 104 applicants hired at USF were male.²²⁹ Criminology professor Kathleen Heide arrived at USF in 1981, just the second female in a department of twelve faculty members. Carolyn Pinkard's colleagues sought to hire faculty with certain specialties in order to create a well-rounded department and did not pay enough attention to hiring female and minority candidates. Michael Kovak remembered just two women on the engineering faculty in 1977, a problem that mirrored national trends.²³⁰ Even when USF hired female and minority candidates, they did not always stay for long. St. Petersburg history professor David Carr recalled his department's frustrations. "We would recruit a bright and promising African American, and the moment it became known that he was bright and promising, the job offers from other institutions would pour in and you would lose him. It was like we were on this stationary bike."²³¹

In response to the difficulties, individuals and groups redoubled their efforts at increasing faculty diversity and equity. Business professor Melvin Smith, appointed the university's first black academic dean in 1977, hoped his presence would give black students "someone to talk to." "I'm not just interested in black students, but in all the students who have lacked opportunities in their past."²³² Accounting associate professor Jack L. Smith was new to USF in the early 1970s and took the task of improving conditions seriously. "It was something that was very serious to my heart to deal with – to improve the climate in which I was going to work." When the dean of fine arts position opened in 1987, John Smith's colleagues appointed him to the post. "I was shocked but pleased. I wasn't sure I was ready for that, but I was talked into it. .

²²⁹ *The Oracle*, June, 25, 1974, April 9, 1975.

²³⁰ Kathleen Heide, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 11, 2003, Carolyn Pinkard, interview by Nancy A. Hewitt, July 16, 1985, Michael Kovak, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 19, 2003.

²³¹ David Carr, interview by Lucy Jones, October 6, 2003.

²³² *The Oracle*, November 8, 1977.

. . . That was indeed a challenge.”²³³ In other steps forward, government and international affairs professor Susan Northcutt began a women’s caucus, which for several years met once a month and fostered networking and friendship opportunities. Human effectiveness department assistant professor Richard Pride helped established a black caucus with similar goals in mind, and the organization received support from President Mackey. In 1980 President John Lott Brown reorganized the then moribund Committee on the Status of Women. “I think there are things that can be done by this committee,” stated member Joni Long. “The existence of this committee reflects well on our school.”²³⁴

The growing diversity of USF’s faculty, staff, and students paralleled the university’s growing geographic reach. “It is great to have a great public university willing to put its programs off in satellites,” stated Sarasota campus dean Robert Barylski. “The notion of having one university that is strong at the center and serving the whole community of Tampa Bay is very attractive.” President Mackey also understood the opportunities regional campuses offered. “We had a deliberate, calculated, understood reason for being wherever we were. . . . We took education *to* people.” Mackey took education to Florida legislators as well. “We [would] be their university, and the likelihood of their supporting us [was] much greater,” he noted. Expansion of the St. Petersburg campus and into Polk and Sarasota Counties provided “a legislative base of support that we would never have been able to build programmatically in any other way for years and years.”²³⁵

²³³ John L. Smith, interview by Danielle Riley, June 15, 2004.

²³⁴ Susan Northcutt, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 28, 2003; *The Oracle*, January 18, 1980.

²³⁵ Robert Barylski, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 10, 2003, Cecil Mackey, interview by Andrew Huse, November 24, 2004.

USF St. Petersburg needed to expand in order to meet the growing student demand for courses. Faculty offered forty-five classes to 560 students in Quarter II of 1969. By Quarter II of 1974, 153 classes enrolling just under 3,500 students vied for limited space on campus. Projections into the early 1980s suggested as many as 7,500 students would take classes at USF St. Petersburg. After debate between city, county, and state officials and competition from nearby Albert Whitted Airport and Bayfront Medical Center, USF received thirty-five acres of land adjacent the original thirteen-acre site.²³⁶

Even with a major expansion, Bayboro Campus maintained the small college flavor that made it so popular with faculty and students. “It was small. It was charming. It was quirky. It was fun,” stated future city council member Virginia Littrell, who graduated with her mother in 1986. “No matter what your particular discipline was, you knew faculty members and students in other disciplines because there were so few students on campus.”²³⁷ Jim Schnur appreciated how the close-knit atmosphere influenced the curriculum. “When I came here to the St. Petersburg campus in 1986, it was like the best of all worlds. One of the things that really struck me about this campus, aside from the beauty, was the interdisciplinary focus of the faculty, that you saw a lot of cross-discussion.”²³⁸ Historian Ray Arsenault arrived on campus in August 1980 and helped create that unique identity. “Most of our students here will do anything to stay on this campus, to not go to Tampa. It’s not just because they don’t want to drive across the bridge. I think there’s a deep loyalty and sense of affection, which I think is growing, actually. It has a lot of what you’d expect in a small liberals arts college. It has a sense of place.”²³⁹

²³⁶ *The Oracle*, July 31, September 26, 1973, *The Tampa Tribune*, February 8, 1974, *St. Petersburg Times*, January 12, December 15, 19, 1974.

²³⁷ Virginia Littrell, interview by Lucy Jones, October 28, 2003.

²³⁸ Jim Schnur, interview by Lucy Jones, November 3, 2003.

²³⁹ Raymond O. Arsenault, interview by Lucy Jones, February 9, 2004.

With a separate sense of place came some logistical issues. As early as late 1971, the *Crow's Nest*, Bayboro's own campus newspaper, complained about limited hours for spring registration. "Each quarter our campus is forced to endure the dictates of Tampa and the registrar's office as to what day registration will be. . . . Tampa, wake up!! Our fees are the same, the credits we take equal yours. Stop treating this campus like an unwanted step-child."²⁴⁰ By 1975 campus officials emphasized fourteen academic programs that could be completed entirely at St. Petersburg. In late 1982, the same year as Bayboro's first separate commencement ceremony, President Brown traveled on a "diplomatic" mission to "extend a conciliatory hand to Bayboro students who have said recently that they are tired of receiving second-class treatment." He brought unwelcome news about the realities of state budgeting. "I believe in providing everyone with a fair share, but that can't mean full equality," he said. "To achieve that, we'd have to duplicate every single program on the Tampa campus. . . . I don't think the legislature would look too kindly on such a request."²⁴¹ The branch campus system could prove somewhat prickly for faculty hired and evaluated by departments centered in Tampa. Stated library dean Kathy Arsenault, "We were not able to develop the distinctive programs that we felt our community needed. The faculty felt that the Tampa campus did not appreciate the special burdens of teaching on a small campus where everyone knows your name and expects you to be available. Some felt they were slighted or considered second string."²⁴²

The relationship between the branch and main campuses might be compared to relations between parent and child. With age comes a desire for greater independence and decision-making power. In St. Petersburg, as the campus grew, it bristled at an authority structure

²⁴⁰ *Crow's Nest*, November 24, 1971.

²⁴¹ *St. Petersburg Times*, December 1, 1982.

²⁴² Kathy Arsenault, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 23, 2003.

centered in Tampa and sought more freedom and resources to shape its own identity. In Sarasota, USF adopted a full-grown and independent-minded teenager in New College when the two schools officially merged on July 1, 1975. Plans for the “adoption” began the previous year and grew out of USF’s desire to expand its limited presence in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Facing financial uncertainty, New College’s board of trustees made the controversial decision to ask the Board of Regents to purchase the small, private liberal arts college and incorporate it into the State University System.²⁴³ For months before its transfer to USF, administrators from both institutions worked out details that would make New College USF’s tenth college. “It was a challenging and exciting time,” noted regional campuses dean Lester Tuttle. “Our job was to maintain the integrity of New College’s highly individualized mode of instruction while bringing it into the state’s system of standardized formula-based learning.” Tuttle also expanded the upper-level extension courses USF had offered from temporary quarters at Sarasota High School. These classes led to USF degrees in business, education, social and behavioral sciences, arts and letters, natural sciences, and nursing. “We had two different types of students,” stated Tuttle. “Those attending the University Program who had associate degrees and were mostly part-time commuter students, and the New College student, first time in college in a classical, residential, liberal arts tutorial program with admission standards.”²⁴⁴

To accommodate both student groups, faculty offered University Program classes at night. Complementary New College classes occurred during the day. Bob Turner lived in Bradenton while commuting “at least every evening for class” on the Sarasota campus. Early teaching facilities were cramped and makeshift, but “the campus was gorgeous, right on the bay

²⁴³ *St. Petersburg Times*, May 7, 1974, *The Oracle*, May 22, 24, 1974.

²⁴⁴ Terry J. Cone and Furman C. Arthur, “USF at Sarasota: Ten years later,” *USF Magazine* 27 (no. 6, 1985): 4; “New College Becomes USF Sarasota,” *USF Today* 2 (September-October 1975): 4; *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, August 25, 1975.

front. . . . The first time I saw it it was breathtaking.” As a mature student, he recognized the importance of an academic environment conducive to his needs. “It seemed that I always got lucky, and we had some very good, knowledgeable, and tolerant professors -- very willing to help. My feeling about them was that they were on a mission to bring some education to a group of people that were mostly night students. . . . If they weren’t there, we wouldn’t have [had] that opportunity.”²⁴⁵

The merger was not without its difficulties. Staff had to apply for their own positions and learn state procedures for purchasing, record keeping, hiring, and other processes. Secretary Millie Randolph remembered the situation with amusement. “Not only did I have to apply for my own position, I had to make the interview appointments for everyone else who wanted to apply for it.”²⁴⁶ Purchasing agent Frank Dolan will never forget his first dealings with the state system. “The first thing I learned was that you need a UCD form (University Charge Document) to get any kind of supplies. So I went to the Tampa campus office stores and asked for a pad of UCD forms. I found out right away that I first needed a UCD form in order to buy UCD forms!” A Tampa employee handed Dolan the necessary form. “I’ll always remember how kind and helpful everyone on the main campus was,” he recalled. “All of us at New College were a little fearful at becoming part of the huge state system, but because of the attitude of the people in Tampa, our path was a lot smoother.”²⁴⁷

Working together, USF and New College forged partnerships with the Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota airport, and Asolo State Theatre to enhance the educational culture in Sarasota and Manatee Counties’ historic waterfront district. “That became the general strategy policy line

²⁴⁵ Robert Turner, interview by Danielle Riley, June 8, 2004.

²⁴⁶ Cone and Arthur, “USF at Sarasota,” 4.

²⁴⁷ Cone and Arthur, “USF at Sarasota,” 4.

for all of our public speeches and documents -- that USF would lead the development of that district. We would focus on New College and the university's academic needs, but we would also be mindful of the special feature of that district. The district notion was to pull all of that together so it would really only be one campus -- one setting that everyone could enjoy," stated Sarasota campus dean Robert Barylski.²⁴⁸

The two organizations also collaborated to maintain New College's separate identity within USF. The New College Foundation, comprising members of the college's board of trustees and USF Foundation staff, raised funds to enable New College to maintain its selective admission standards, small classes, and curriculum. With financial pressures growing, the state stepped in to help with a grant in 1979. If the New College Foundation raised \$3.5 million, the state would add another \$2.5 million. Success in that endeavor brought another match offer and a profitable capital campaign between 1982 and 1985. Under New College President Rolland V. Heiser, the school's assets grew from \$1.9 million to \$11.8 million and enrollment climbed. The Chicago-based John D. and Catherine MacArthur Foundation donated \$300,000 to the college, calling it "one of 16 distinguished, liberal arts colleges in the nation." After twenty-five years of affiliation with USF, New College wanted its independence once again. By an act of the Florida Legislature the school became an independent public honors college for the State of Florida on July 1, 2001.

Further South, USF expansion spread to Fort Myers in 1974, one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. In its first year, just over 450 students took late afternoon and evening courses held at the Gwynne Institute, an old downtown public school building provided by the Lee County School Board. Four classrooms, a two-room library, portables vacated by the

²⁴⁸ Robert Barylski, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 10, 2003.

College of Nursing, and professors from the Tampa faculty comprised the branch campus. Associate vice president and dean of regional campuses James Heck recalled that the trip from Tampa to Fort Myers before completion of I-75 involved a five-hour journey down, a three-hour class, the night spent in a hotel room, and then the drive back north the next morning. To ease the long commute, USF inaugurated “Air by Heck” in fall 1980. Faculty parked their cars at Tampa International Airport, boarded a private plane, taught, and flew home later that evening. “I can catch up on sleep, talk with people from other departments, or do some work. It saves three to four hours of my time per day, and that time is money to me,” said education professor Dan Purdom.²⁴⁹

After years of growing enrollment, Florida Senator Frank Mann (R-Fort Myers) successfully lobbied the legislature for \$6 million and USF Fort Myers broke ground on a fifty-five-acre property adjoining Edison Community College in June 1980. The local community funded scholarships and an endowed chair in nursing. “We’re very fortunate to have the active interest of a diverse group of people who support us in various ways,” acknowledged campus dean Linda Lopez McAlister. The Fort Myers Advisory Council developed plans for an M.B.A. program and minority scholarships. Following its establishment in 1977, Town and Gown organized graduation receptions, presidential inauguration and retirement dinners, awards ceremonies, fund raising drives, and “Lunch with a Genius.” The latter program, in cooperation with the College of Arts and Letters, promised to bring more cultural events to campus.²⁵⁰

When dedicated in November 1982, the new USF campus formalized an educational alliance between USF and ECC. Each institution agreed to share some facilities while retaining

²⁴⁹ James Heck, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 28, 2003; Jean Andrews, “Flying faculty make the campus connection,” *USF Magazine* 24 (January 1982): 4.

²⁵⁰ “USF supporters abound in Fort Myers,” *USF Magazine* 26 (January 1984): 22; *The Oracle*, September 24, 1974, May 6, September 23, 1976, September 25, 1980, November 6, 1981.

separate academic identities. “The whole has become greater than the sum of its parts,” explained psychology professor Carnot E. Nelson. “The library is a good example. Because we are both putting funds into it, we have a library that is usually not available at an average junior college.” Students from both schools registered for classes in the same location, shopped in the same bookstore, ate in the same cafeteria, and sat in the same performing arts center. USF offered bachelor degrees and a few Masters degrees. Edison provided the first two years of courses leading to those degrees. ECC administrator Nanette Smith summed up the partnership in this way: “The USF connection has been a beautiful marriage. Like any relationship, you have to work at it. We decided at the very beginning that whatever needed to be done, if it were for the interest and benefit of the students, we would make it work.”²⁵¹

For nearly twenty-five years, the relationship proved beneficial for USF and residents in southwest Florida. At its peak in the mid 1990s, the campus enrolled 3,000 students in twenty degree programs. Over time, the distance from Tampa, insufficient funding, and the region’s skyrocketing population necessitated additional higher education resources. Support from local and state officials trumped opponents of a new institution, and the Board of Regents recommended the creation of an independent, tenth state university in January 1991. On 760 acres of land donated by Ben Hill Griffin III, groundbreaking ceremonies occurred in November 1995 and classes opened in August 1997. Two months earlier, USF Fort Myers held its last graduation ceremony and dissolved its partnership with Edison Community College. The newly created Florida Gulf Coast University assumed responsibility for offering university degrees in USF’s place.

²⁵¹ Cheryl Koenig, “A Marriage of Minds: The union of the University of South Florida and Edison Community College is idyllic,” *Gulfshore Life* (April 1986): 30-32.

The University of South Florida's growing student body and regional expansion in the 1970s and 1980s prompted significant construction, and the period buzzed with activity on the branch campuses and in Tampa. In June 1978 St. Petersburg broke ground on phase one of a major expansion, to include an 82,000-volume library (now Bayboro Hall), classroom/office building (now Davis Hall) and a small central utilities plant. In 1983 USF officials authorized a campus activities center, contingent upon Board of Regents approval. Construction did not begin until June 1988. In March 1984 groundbreaking occurred for the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, and the following month the campus dedicated Coquina Hall. Delayed because the original design encroached on Albert Whitted Airport, the \$2.8 million, 34,540-square-foot building included a cafeteria, bookstore, offices, a photo lab, and classrooms. "We welcome the long-awaited completion of the first phase of development of USF's Bayboro campus," Dean John Hinz beamed. USF at St. Petersburg has become a vital component of the cultural and economic life of the city and county. We look forward to working together with the community and being part of an ever-more exciting and vital St. Petersburg."²⁵²

In Sarasota, projects estimated at \$11 million began in 1981 with a new library and a bridge over U.S. Highway 41, which divided the campus. Sarasota philanthropist Harry Sudakoff gave a sizable gift to construct a multi-purpose auditorium, and in June 1983 workers broke ground on the Sudakoff Lecture and Conference Center. Former U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig opened the facility in January 1985 with a lecture.²⁵³ USF Fort Myers spaded its first soil on September 26, 1980, with plans for four two-story buildings arranged around an open plaza. Phase I of the \$6 million plan called for 70,000 square feet of space to serve an

²⁵² *The Oracle*, November 11, 1982, February 10, 18, 1983, April 11, 1984; *Crow's Nest*, May 30, 1978, April 6, 1984; *St. Petersburg Times*, June 14, 1984.

²⁵³ *The Oracle*, April 10, 1981, January 20, June 17, 1983, January 28, 1985.

estimated 720 students. A future expansion could ultimately accommodate 2,300 students. The four buildings included a natural concrete finish, copper-colored galvanized steel roofs, and large roof overhangs to provide shade and to complement nearby Edison Community College's architecture.²⁵⁴

Tampa saw the lion's share of USF's new construction and renovation projects. From a student body of 17,900 in 1971, the campus grew to nearly 30,000 students by 1988.²⁵⁵

Administrators could barely keep up with facilities to accommodate the ballooning population. Chemistry labs, unchanged since 1960, received much-needed upgrades in 1976. The bookstore, photography labs, University Center, medical and nursing schools, athletic facilities, and Village Housing Complex also experienced internal improvements and/or landscaping.²⁵⁶

From a once desolate and sandy landscape, the sight of green became more common as grass grew in and trees grew taller. In 1970 USF's Botanical Gardens, still in its infancy, promised visitors that in twenty years it would reach maturity. Even a rare snowfall in January 1977 did not concern the garden's director, who saw the event as a way to see which plants could take the cold weather. If faculty, staff, and students failed to see much difference on campus, Florida wildlife enjoyed their relatively lush surroundings. Gophers burrowed year-round, erupting piles of soil in the grass. "The have no respect for where they dig," complained the grounds keeping supervisor. "Squirrel aggression" caused concern in the mid 1970s after the

²⁵⁴ Susan Mueller, "First soil spaded at Fort Myers," *USF Today* 23 (October 1980): 3; "Fort Myers campus nears completion," *USF Magazine*, (January 1982): 5.

²⁵⁵ *USF Bulletin, 1971-1972; St. Petersburg Times*, May 14, 1987.

²⁵⁶ *The Oracle*, March 9, October 6, 22, 1976, November 1, 1978, May 21, 1982, October 10, 1984, September 19, 1985, October 3, 1988

little critters bit three dormitory residents. “The students are feeding the squirrels all these peanuts, and they’re going crazy,” observed resident instructor Mary Easler.²⁵⁷

With new dormitories and other construction occurring throughout the campus, USF’s squirrel population had many places to encounter peanut-wielding students. From just 41 buildings in 1971, Tampa boasted 64 buildings in 1987. In the early 1980s, six major projects had begun or were underway, including the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, Shriners Hospital for Children, a Special Olympics facility, fine arts complex, and engineering building. In the late 1980s the student services building grew wings, the USF Art Gallery opened in a new facility, and a special events center opened behind the University Center on Crescent Hill, rankling some students who petitioned to save the popular green space. New parking lots struggled to keep up with the increased demand, and crisscrossing bicycle paths encouraged people to leave their cars at home.²⁵⁸

A critical dormitory shortage caused campus officials in Tampa to turn away 600 students for the fall 1977 quarter and nearly 1,500 students in fall 1979. The following year housing director Ray King lamented the “worst housing shortage in history,” with ninety students living in converted lounges. USF unsuccessfully attempted to purchase nearby Fontana Hall apartments and succeeded in securing a \$3.5 million housing loan from the U.S. Department of Education. A trip to a manufactured housing plant convinced administrators, students, and engineers that factory-built dormitories could economically solve the serious housing shortage, but bids well in excess of USF’s means forced new plans. In the end, traditional construction techniques prevailed and the new Village dormitory complex opened in fall 1983. Designed

²⁵⁷ *The Oracle*, October 6, 1970, January 12, 28, November 23, 1977.

²⁵⁸ *The Oracle*, February 5, March 3, 1976, November 20, December 7, 1978, May 4, 1979, November 25, 1980, June 24, November 17, 1981, January 20, 1983, November 9, 17, 18, 30, 1987, January 13, March 2, June 21, September 30, 1988.

more like an apartment building, the new dormitories contained discrete units with private bathrooms and cooking areas and entrances to the outside of the building rather than off a shared hallway.²⁵⁹

As president, one of Cecil Mackey's first priorities called for an \$8.2 million "graduate library." Projected as "the largest non-medical educational building in the state of Florida" at seven stories and 154,000 square feet, the new building opened to serve all students and up to 750,000 books in April 1975. Librarian and later Board of Trustees member Sonja Garcia witnessed the big move. "We had a caravan of book trucks that came out of that window, down a ramp, and right across the parking lot into a designated door in this building and right onto the shelf. It was masterful."²⁶⁰

Not all new projects went as well. Just six years after it opened, the Arts and Letters building required a new roof to prevent continuing damage to ceiling tiles, carpet, and equipment. Recalled director of the physical plant, "I remember some problems when the building was being built. . . . We had problems with the roof since the day the building was accepted." USF considered fining contractors constructing the business administration building for their continuing delays. It finally opened in September 1979. In September 1987, the university dedicated its new \$10 million, 100,000-square-foot engineering building, part of a planned \$60 million complex expected to open by the year 2000. Even before it was finished, leaks in two computer labs ruined the ceiling and carpet, and an elevator motor caught fire, spewing smoking and summoning police and firefighters. The ribbon-cutting ceremony did not

²⁵⁹ *The Oracle*, October 28, 1977, March 29, September 24, October 3, November 6, 1979, September 23, 1980, September 9, November 4, 1981, September 6, October 15, 26, 1982, January 28, February 1, May 9, 1983.

²⁶⁰ *St. Petersburg Times*, March 1, 1972, February 25, 1975, *Tampa Times*, January 17, 1974; Sonja Garcia, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, January 28, 2004.

go as planned. Pouring rain forced planners to shorten the outdoor event and ruined an elaborate chain reaction device designed to cut the ribbon. Just as guests finished touring the building, fire alarms sounded.²⁶¹

Although frustrating, construction mishaps are not uncommon. Few people were prepared, however, for the difficulties surrounding completion of the innovative but untested design for the Sun Dome. Plans began in the mid 1970s when the Special Events Center Building Committee rejected calls for a performing arts hall and decided that a multipurpose center was its first priority, and it allocated nearly \$8.5 million to the project. In February 1977 the Board of Regents approved plans for a \$7 million, 10,000-seat “mass-seating facility with an air-supported roof” at USF and a larger twin at the University of Florida. Begun in November 1977, the proposed “Mecca” for USF sporting events, graduation exercises, and concerts was scheduled to take two years to complete. A “Whatchamacallit” contest conducted in April 1979 by WFLA radio personality Jack Harris encouraged students to suggest names for the multipurpose center. “I think the contest will generate interest in the place [and] point out the uniqueness of the place,” stated Dan Walbolt, vice-president of student affairs. Gini David won when she became the first of seventeen people to submit the name “Sun Dome.”²⁶²

Problems plagued construction. A crane tipped over causing an estimated \$200,000 worth of damage. Flaws with the pioneering design sent the architects back to the drawing board. Cracks formed in many of the support columns, and some people questioned the building’s safety. Complexities with the unproven air-supported roof added additional delays. In March 1980 the Teflon roof was raised, and officials planned for a December opening and

²⁶¹ *The Oracle*, November 23, 1977, September 24, 1979, October 1, 1987, January 14, 1988.

²⁶² *The Oracle*, January 28, 1976, February 12, 18, May 11, 14, 1976, February 9, 10, October 25, November 22, 1977, March 6, 1979; “It’s the Sun Dome! Student picks name,” *USF Today*, 21 (May 1979): 5.

nearly \$1 million in cost overruns. The date came and went. “At the earliest and with a lot of ‘ifs,’ the Sun Dome may be completed in a year,” cautioned USF director of facilities planning Mike Patterson in March 1981. Finally, in November 1981, four years after the ground breaking, the Sun Dome received its finishing touches.²⁶³

Within just two years, serious problems appeared. The building required over \$400,000 in repairs to the concrete, which had allowed water to seep through and threatened to rust the reinforced steel. In July 1988 heavy afternoon thunderstorms tore open and deflated the roof, causing an estimated \$70,000-\$100,000 in damage. According to *The Oracle*, the Sun Dome was “at the center of legal proceedings that could go on for years, could involve more than 10 law firms and have already cost USF students hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees.” Three separate multi-million-dollar legal actions, two with the construction company and the other with the architectural firm and engineers, dragged on for six years and resulted in little gain for the university. Despite the frustrations, the Sun Dome “changed the perception of this campus in a way that probably is unique in its history,” remarked Dan Walbolt.²⁶⁴

Construction frustrations paled in comparison to USF’s recurring budget woes. Economic downturn, shortfall, deficit, price increase, and cutback became all too common terms and turned the university’s fiscal operations into a roller coaster ride. By 1975 USF’s operating expenses since 1960 totaled some \$383 million with construction alone placing \$72 million into the local economy and new construction projects estimated at \$16.3 million. As one of the three

²⁶³ *The Oracle*, September 24, 1979, January 25, March 3, 4, August 11, 1980, March 5, November 13, 1981.

²⁶⁴ *The Oracle*, September 16, October 21, 1983, April 22, 1985, July 12, 1988; Dan Walbolt, Sr., interview by Andrew Huse, July 13, 2004.

or four largest industries in west-central Florida, USF's budget situation affected the overall strength of the regional economy.²⁶⁵

Within this interlinked economic environment, President Mackey struggled through the oil crisis and recession of the mid 1970s that delayed campus construction and new academic programs, pushed up tuition, and forced down operating budgets. A moratorium on Ph.D. programs in 1973 locked USF into a mere six, while Florida State had forty-eight and University of Florida fifty-six. In early 1975 the Board of Regents briefly considered a proposal to eliminate freshmen and sophomores from USF and force them to attend community colleges for their first two years of coursework. Mackey expressed his opposition. "Freshman are an important part of the university. . . . For many college students, the opportunity to go to a four-year college is important." Following a proposed 20 percent slash to USF's 1975 budget, President Mackey took his concerns directly to the university community and legislators. "While the state funding formulas recognize a direct relationship between student enrollment and the need for additional faculty positions, an explicit recognition of the unique costs incurred in most of the supporting functions when the university is operating educational programs at multiple locations is missing," he complained. In a memo to all faculty members he warned of class-size increases, cuts to programs and research, no salary increases or program improvements, delays in acquiring new equipment, admissions cuts, and increasing student fees.²⁶⁶

Fiscal year 1976-1977 looked so bleak the State Senate warned USF could lose sixty-five existing faculty positions, thirty-four teacher education professors, and thirty-one research

²⁶⁵ "University of South Florida: Twenty Years of Growth and Service," *USF Today* 3 (January 1976): 7.

²⁶⁶ *The Oracle*, July 26, 1973, January 24, 1975; *St. Petersburg Times*, January 24, February 4, 1975; "Mackey Takes University Problems To Legislators and Community," *USF Today* 2 (March 1975): 7; Cecil Mackey to Members of the Faculty, January 28, 1975, reprinted in *The Oracle*, January 30, 1975.

faculty. When vice president of academic affairs Carl Riggs broke the news to college deans, expletives could be heard muttered in the room. Actual cuts turned out to be lighter, but “we did take hits,” remembered art professor Harrison Covington.²⁶⁷ “We didn’t have a Tampa telephone for nearly two years,” lamented Fort Myers director of operations Roy Mumme. “Hell, nobody at Tampa would call us because they didn’t want to spend the money.” With faculty travel budgets slashed, face-to-face communication proved difficult as well.²⁶⁸ Library director Mary Lou Harkness trimmed eighteen hours from the schedule in 1974. Two years later she warned that USF held a book collection 35 percent below the standard for a university of its size and would have to cut an additional \$200,000 in new book expenditures. Members of “Students Against Cutback” took action and held a six-hour protest in the library and rally outside Riggs’s office for improved funding. The group went on to the Governor’s Mansion and State Capital in Tallahassee. New money was not forthcoming. The quantity of uncatalogued books became so bad by 1978 that Harkness requested forty part-time employees to augment the twelve people struggling with the growing piles. University students and employees, including vice-president Carl Riggs, volunteered their time over winter break to process and shelve the backlog. When the situation had improved little by 1983 librarian Donna Parrino concocted a more elaborate protest. She and a colleague borrowed a coffin from a local funeral home and placed it in the library entryway. A printout listing periodicals slated for cancellation flowed out of the open lid and an accompanying petition received numerous signatures.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ *The Oracle*, May 26, 28, 1976; Harrison Covington, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 18, 2003.

²⁶⁸ “After Eight Long Years, USF Fort Myers Finally Has a Campus to Call Its Own,” *USF Magazine* 24 (October 1982): 4; *The Oracle*, April 6, 1976.

²⁶⁹ *The Oracle*, October 25, 1974, February 10, 26, April 6, 20, September 30, 1976, November 11, December 8, 1978; Donna Parrino, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 8, 2003.

The constant battle to secure adequate funding wore thin on President Mackey. In mid July 1976 he announced his resignation effective August 30, citing the lack of funding for higher education in the state of Florida as a reason for his decision. He took on the presidency at doctoral-intensive Texas Tech University and from there became president of Michigan State University in 1979.²⁷⁰ His five years at USF dramatically reshaped the university, earning him supporters and no small number of detractors. “I found it difficult to walk along any path and leave any stone unturned, and I think that may have been a characteristic of my administrative style,” reflected Mackey, “That’s not always the way to make life easiest for oneself, but those rocks sort of needed to be turned over.”²⁷¹

The Board of Regents appointed Tampa attorney, law professor, and Rhodes Scholar William Reece Smith, Jr. as Mackey’s interim successor. Smith had co-chaired USF’s Task Force on Missions and Goals and chaired President Mackey’s Council of Advisors before the BOR named him to the top post.²⁷² Regent Chester Ferguson explained the decision as an effort to improve relations between the university and surrounding community. “I have a country boy’s respect for higher education,” said the incoming president of his Plant City upbringing. “It has given a lot to me.” Like his predecessor, Smith spent considerable time at USF on budget-related issues. After the United Faculty of Florida and Board of Regents agreed to faculty raises for 1977, the state legislature cut the increase for lack of funds. The president refused to comment on the recently formed union but did admit, “I think the faculty in the system, generally

²⁷⁰ *St. Petersburg Times*, July 18, 1976; *The Oracle*, September 21, 1976; Jim Bruss, “Mackey Resigns at USF, Takes Texas Tech Post,” *USF Today* 4 (Fall 1976): 2.

²⁷¹ Cecil Mackey, interview by Andrew Huse, November 2, 2004.

²⁷² Bob Bradshaw, “Regents Appoint Reece Smith To Serve as Interim President,” *USF Today* 4 (Fall 1976): 3-5.

speaking, are underpaid.” A study conducted by USF’s Division of Institutional Research in 1979 showed that the state paid professors on average 12.4 percent below the national average.²⁷³

Amidst the budget battles, Smith did not lose his sense of humor. In a letter to Kappa Sigma fraternity he referenced the kiss-a-thon the group recently held. “I understand the President (and therefore the interim president) frequently is an ex-officio member of campus organizations. If so, I regret you did not see fit to consider whether I should have been allowed to exercise my ex-officio prerogatives in this instance. Perhaps my availability for rendition of a kiss would have frightened away prospective customers and thus reduced the income you hoped to receive from the event, but maybe not. I was once elected Bachelor of the Year by the Spinster’s Club of Tampa and loss of a little hair does not necessarily mean a loss of one’s romantic mystique. Further, being invited to join with the brothers in rendering service for a worthy cause would have greatly enhanced my morale and Presidents, at least Interim ones, can also use a morale boost occasionally.”²⁷⁴

For far more serious reasons, and despite favorable reviews during his brief term, Smith declined consideration as the permanent president and stepped down in May 1977. “No candidate for a presidency in the history of a state university system would have had as much and as widespread support as he would have had,” lamented social and behavioral sciences dean Travis Northcutt.²⁷⁵ Carl Riggs stepped into the presidency and Smith returned to the practice of law with some relief. “I am gratified to know that I do not have to operate [my] law practice subject to the restraints and regulations that apply to a public university. . . . I think that funding

²⁷³ *St. Petersburg Time*, August 21, 1976; *The Oracle*, July 22, 29, 1977, December 4, 1979.

²⁷⁴ William Reece Smith, Jr., to Kappa Sigma Fraternity, April 22, 1977, [Location?](#)

²⁷⁵ *The Oracle*, March 29, 1977.

will continue to be a problem for the system, as education must continue to compete with other essential government agencies for diminished resources.”²⁷⁶

On October 31, 1977, the Board of Regents announced that Philadelphia-native Dr. John Lott Brown had accepted the position as USF’s third permanent president and would begin in January. A retired Naval Reserve commander and professor of psychology and optics at the University of Rochester, Brown came to Tampa with an impressive resume. He served as graduate school dean and later vice president for academic affairs at the University of Kansas, lectured at Columbia University and the University of Freiburg in Germany, directed a graduate training program at the University of Pennsylvania’s School of Medicine, and headed the psychology division at the Aviation Medical Laboratory in Johnsville, Pennsylvania. During a whirlwind, three-day visit to the university in November, Brown met with administrators, faculty, students, staff, alumni, community leaders, and the press. On USF’s relative position to other Florida universities, Brown stated “I think Florida State University and the University of Florida should probably take a back seat to USF in some programs, and USF should probably take a back seat to UF and FSU in some programs.”²⁷⁷

Little did President Brown realize that on his first day at work he would confront just how far back USF might have to sit. On January 16, 1978, *The Oracle* welcomed Brown with an editorial entitled “The Honeymoon is Over.” “We’d like to welcome new USF Pres. John Lott Brown,” it began. “But frankly, we’re a little concerned about Brown’s attitude toward the Board of Regent’s Role and Scope proposals – the master plan for growth (or stagnation in the case of USF) of the State University System (SUS).” The controversial planning guidelines contained several key items antithetical to USF’s continued development as a metropolitan

²⁷⁶ “Smith Presidency Closes,” *USF Today* 4 (Summer 1977): 3-4.

²⁷⁷ “USF’s Third President: John Lott Brown,” *USF Today* 5 (Fall 1977): 3-4.

research institution. Policy statement 1 defined instruction as the SUS's major objective, and Policy 3 forecasted no increased demand for Ph.D.s. Policy 26 caused the most consternation. If adopted, it would concentrate graduate programs at the University of Florida and Florida State University. Brown believed the policies did not present "a major threat to the university" nor did he feel that "the legislature or the regents would prevent us from expanding," but faculty and Tampa legislators strongly disagreed and characterized the plan as "horrible" and "a disaster." In response to intense lobbying, the BOR modified several Role and Scope provisions and passed it without Policy 26.²⁷⁸

President Brown appeared more concerned over state funding formula that consistently provided USF less money per student than other universities. In 1980 he wrote Governor Graham "to convey my deep personal concern over the use of a funding formula that includes an arbitrary classification component that threatens the future of the fine university for which I have a major personal responsibility."²⁷⁹ 1986 USF ranked the second- largest state school in Florida but ranked eighth in funding. The legislature's heavy reliance on full-time equivalent (FTE) to apportion state funds proved the main problem. The formula favored schools like the University of Florida and Florida State where most students enrolled for a full complement of classes each semester. The University of South Florida and other urban, metropolitan institutions educated large numbers of part-time students that filled classroom seats but counted for only a fraction of 1.0 FTE. Without a formula that accounted for and better funded these "non-traditional" students, the school continued to struggle.

In many areas of university life, budgets declined and costs went up. In 1980 the university fell \$300,000 short in paying its annual utility bill, and administrators investigated the

²⁷⁸ *The Oracle*, January 6, 11, 17, 19, February 7, March 7, 1978.

²⁷⁹ *The Oracle*, August 1, 1980.

feasibility of instituting a four-day workweek to conserve energy. “What are you going to do with those students who live here?” critics countered. “For 2,700 students, it’s their home.”²⁸⁰ The idea quickly died. When the food services provider received a 20 percent rate increase for the 1979-1980 school year, student government president John Goldsmith promised “to raise holy hell” and ultimately convinced university officials not to renew the company’s contract. In order to cover a projected \$830,000 deficit in the Traffic Department, USF raised the cost of a parking permit 25 percent to \$25 in 1982. Dorm fees increased, hiring froze and workers were laid off, President Reagan slashed federal financial aid, freshman admittance rates dropped, and tuition increased by double digits.²⁸¹

Budget woes and other growing pains slowed but did not halt meteoric growth in nearly every area of university life in the 1970s and 1980s. When President Brown arrived in January 1978, he presided over a \$100 million budget. When he resigned in May 1987, citing his long length of service and the tiring schedule, the budget had grown to \$250 million. Student enrollment increased from 23,000 to 30,000, making it the second largest university in the state and thirty-second largest in the nation. The USF Foundation received \$600,000 in gifts in 1978; a decade later it raised \$14 million in one year. Sponsored research grew from \$9.9 million to \$23.3 million. National merit scholars increased from zero to seventy, and twenty-three endowed chairs were established. The curriculum added thirty-eight new degree programs, and 100 new buildings dotted the landscape.²⁸² Brown remained at USF, where began several important research projects dealing with the visually impaired. He served as president of the

²⁸⁰ *The Oracle*, February 1, 1980.

²⁸¹ *The Oracle*, January 9, 1980, March 3, 1982, March 2, August 28, January 21, April 9, May 8, June 3, 1985; *The Tampa Tribune*, August 27, 1986

²⁸² *St. Petersburg Times*, May 13, 14, 1987.

Florida Association of Colleges and Universities and became interim president of Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts in the mid 1990s.

Over the course of just twenty years, USF had grown and changed in ways that made it nearly unrecognizable from the small university founded by John Allen in 1960. In the 1970s and 1980s, 210 buildings popped up and new campuses sprouted to meet the needs of an education-thirsty state. USF shifted its academic focus from undergraduate teaching to include dozens of graduate programs and cutting-edge research projects in medicine, the sciences, arts, and humanities. Intramural sports gave way to NCAA competition, raucous crowds, and championships in basketball, soccer, and softball. A rather small and homogenous population of students, staff, and faculty mushroomed in size and shifted to reflect more accurately America's diverse make up and its promise of unfettered opportunity. As the last decade of the twentieth century began, the University of South Florida sat poised to become a premier research institution and one of the top public universities in the United States.

Chapter 4: Emphasis on Research

Freshman Susan Keil's day was anything but ordinary on April 13, 1988. She attended high-level meetings, consulted with staff, reviewed university documents with top USF administrators, and dined over white linen in the faculty staff lounge. Recently named University of South Florida president Francis T. Borkowski did not fare as well. He ate pasta salad, cottage cheese, and grilled cheese in a dormitory cafeteria. He stood in line for registration, arrived late for English class (where he took notes on *Oedipus Rex*), and received a citation for "co-habitation and violation of visitation hours at Gamma Hall," an all-female dormitory. As the winning ticket holder for Gold Council's first-ever "trading places" day, Keil enjoyed her unique opportunity to see university administration from the inside. Still, she was relieved when the day ended. "I'm an active person, but I'm surprised how he does it," she said of the president's grueling schedule. "You can have your headache back now," she told Borkowski.²⁸³

President Borkowski's "headache" began just four months earlier when the Board of Regents named him to succeed John Lott Brown. The Wheeling, West Virginia, native and grandson of Polish immigrants grew up immersed in his ethnic heritage. His parents emphasized formal education in a world where many people in the community left school to help support their families. He was one of the first in his extended family to finish high school. An accomplished accordion player, he attended Oberlin College, earned a degree in science and music education, and planned to teach at the high school level. A chance trip to a music festival in Aspen, Colorado, changed Borkowski's life. He took up the clarinet, earned a chair in the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, completed graduate work in music at Indiana University, and

²⁸³ *The Tampa Tribune*, *St. Petersburg Times*, and *The Oracle*, April 14, 1988.

married fellow musician Kay Kaiser. After several more years teaching and playing clarinet professionally, he went back to graduate school and earned a Ph.D. in music education from West Virginia University. In 1967 the Borkowskis moved to Ohio University. He moved quickly into administrative positions, first as assistant director of the School of Music and ultimately as associate dean of faculties. From Ohio, he became vice-chancellor at Purdue University, where he worked to shape Purdue's three combined campuses with Indiana University before leaving for the provost's job at University South Carolina in 1978. Borkowski felt comfortable and confident in his role as university administrator. "The principal points of excitement were the opportunity to enhance and better the learning environment on campus," he remarked. "I enjoyed working with faculty and students. . . . It was not unlike conducting an orchestra."²⁸⁴

Mid way through his tenure at South Carolina, Borkowski began thinking about a university presidency. A colleague nominated him for the opening at USF, and he soon received a letter asking him to submit his credentials. He complied, "never really thinking that I would have the opportunity of landing the job." During a round of interviews in Tampa, he was "very attracted to the campus's many opportunities" but felt the landscape "pretty barren." He liked the idea of shaping the future of a young university with little established tradition and appreciated USF's commitment to the arts. One of 146 candidates vying for the job, Borkowski made the short list and accepted the position at a meeting with Board of Regents chancellor Charlie Reed in the Atlanta airport.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ Francis T. Borkowski, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 18, 2004, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library. All oral histories cited in this work are located in the Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library unless otherwise noted.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*; *The Oracle*, October 12, 17, 1988.

“The primary reason enunciated by the regents was related to the experience Borkowski had, relative to the other candidates,” said College of Business dean James Pappas. “His substantial experience coupled with his philosophy and vision of what a major university should be made him an idea candidate for the job.”²⁸⁶ For his part, the new president expressed excitement at the opportunity to lead USF and to make it one of the top twenty-five public universities in the country within ten years. “I don’t know of a comprehensive research university in the nation that has grown so rapidly as USF.” He committed himself to improving the physical appearance of the Tampa campus, raising more private funds, expanding the medical school and College of Public Health, and starting a football program. Borkowski believed football would help bridge the gulf between the university and surrounding community, facilitate development of a more exciting campus life, and give USF the national visibility it needed and deserved.²⁸⁷

The inauguration occurred during Homecoming Week in October 1988. The six months of planning gave the new administration opportunities to enhance its public relations and boost student and alumni attendance. President Borkowski and past president John Lott Brown rode in the “Take a Walk on the Wild Side” parade and attended a festive cookout for upwards of 1,500 people at the business school. A black-tie party at the Sun Dome, champagne breakfast at the Hyatt Regency downtown, and orchestra performance ushered in a new era at USF. Borkowski marked the occasion by inviting the nation’s top thinkers in business, education, and government to engage university and community leaders in a two-day conference on pressing local, state, and national problems. “Visions for the Future: Creating New Institutional Relationships” focused on health care, transportation, and urban housing. “I thought maybe we could use the

²⁸⁶ *The Oracle*, January 7, 1988.

²⁸⁷ Francis T. Borkowski, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 18, 2004.

inauguration as a vehicle, a platform. . . . I wanted to put academic substance into it, deal with the issues Florida is facing, and enhance the university's reputation," he explained.²⁸⁸

USF's reputation had already received a boost with the creation of a new campus in Polk County earlier that year. On January 23, 1988, officials dedicated the \$8.5 million Curtis Peterson Academic Center in partnership with Polk Community College. More than five years in the making, the venture owed much to the Florida senator honored in the building's name. As chairman of the Senate Education Budget Committee, Peterson spearheaded legislative funding for the project in 1982 and actively supported the joint undertaking between USF and PCC. According to Bernard Mackey, associate dean for regional campus affairs, "Peterson encouraged both those institutions and systems to think strongly about putting on their public education capital outlay list a joint-use center in Polk County. . . . Amazingly, in the next session of the legislature it was funded." September 1986 groundbreaking ceremonies presaged the union's academic benefits. Rather than hold the event on the 130-acre site north of Bartow, organizers held a dinner at the Lakeland Center with the theme "PCC/USF: An Idea That Sparks The Imagination." Dirt from the site sat piled on a raised platform and a robot named Peter C. Collegiate dug into the ground and said, "I dig PCC/USF Lakeland!"²⁸⁹

In spring 1989 just under 500 USF students enrolled for classes at the Lakeland campus, and PCC enrolled nearly 1,500. A "frontier of technology," President John Lott Brown had called the new facility, referring to its computerized teaching and video network that tied Lakeland to Tampa. Engineering professor Frank Young recalled the early days when he had just ten students in class. "We had a mission that included use of distance education so were equipped with two very nice studios virtually like those in engineering in Tampa. They seated

²⁸⁸ *The Tampa Tribune*, October 15, 17, 1988; *St. Petersburg Times*, October 9, 15, 1988.

²⁸⁹ Bernard Mackey, interview by Andrew Huse, August 4, 2005.

about thirty-five students, and we began receiving the graduate engineering courses through what's called the FEEDS system, that's Florida Engineering Education Delivery System. They expected us to get by with fewer classrooms because we could reach out with distance learning. We found that about half of the students that we served would not have been able to take courses at the university without the service that we provided.”²⁹⁰

Seven years later Lakeland enrollment approached 800 for USF degrees in education, computer applications, criminology, and social sciences. The increase was not unexpected. “For many years, the freshman and sophomore experience at USF was very limited, particularly in terms of the number of students because the major feeder was through the community colleges,” explained Mackey. With PCC and USF students sharing the same facilities, “all they have to do is walk across the quadrangle rather than drive fifty miles to the next institution.” Lakeland Campus Executive Officer (CEO) Preston Mercer echoed Mackey’s emphasis on the synergy between the community college and university. “The availability of place-bound residents to get a quality state-supported education without having to drive a long distance” is critical. People who otherwise would not be at USF are getting university degrees close to home, he stated. The regional campus also brought world-class research faculty to an area with a projected growth rate of 80 percent by the year 2000 and helped in the economic development of a high-tech corridor along Interstate 4. Before businesses decide to relocate, explained Mercer, usually the first thing they ask about is access to education. They want a trained workforce, and they want educational opportunities for themselves and their employees. “Every time you see a regional campus go in

²⁹⁰ Lanta Barbara Barrett Milligan, *Building Futures to Last a Lifetime: A History of the First Twenty-Five Years of the Development of Polk Community College, Polk County, Florida*, rev. ed. (private publisher, 2003), 74; Frank Young, interview by Andrew Huse, August 8, 2005,

someplace around the country, usually you see economic development follow closely after that.”²⁹¹

With Lakeland’s enrollment numbers far surpassing expectations, pressure mounted for a second building. A \$10 million expansion in 1991 doubled the campus’s size by adding the Learning Center, which contained a joint-use library, learning labs, general and computer classrooms, and faculty offices. Even with the growth, the Lakeland campus remained relatively small and easy to get around, according student services director Willette Roach. She heard students say all the time that they could walk in the door and get to a live person just like that. “We operate on a much smaller scale, so I think students get more of a one-on-one atmosphere. That has always been a plus for us.”²⁹²

USF students had more degree choices in Tampa than in Lakeland, but the latter offered important courses found no where else in the region. In the fall of 1991, the campus boasted an impressive new program to train teachers educating students with learning and emotional problems. The cooperative effort between the university and Polk County public school system served as a model for other school districts. Bessie Davis, a teacher’s aide at Alturas Elementary School, appreciated the new-found opportunity to finish college with a certificate in exceptional student education. “It’s been my dream, but in the past I haven’t been able to schedule classes because I have to work,” she said. “This program enables me to work and go to school. When I finish, I want to stay right here and teach in Polk County.”²⁹³

Throughout the 1990s, Lakeland made progress as USF’s youngest branch campus. St. Petersburg continued to experience growing pains as the university’s oldest. By 1990, it boasted

²⁹¹ Preston Mercer, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 16, 2003; Bernard Mackey, interview by Andrew Huse, August 4, 2005; Milligan, *Building Futures to Last a Lifetime*, 73.

²⁹² Willette Roach, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 9, 2003.

²⁹³ *The Tampa Tribune*, September 23, 1991.

forty full-time faculty and 3,300 students and struggled with Tampa over funding for faculty lines, infrastructure, and new academic programs. Five deans in five years between 1985 and 1990 created some instability, but in fall 1992 the campus welcomed dean and chief executive officer Harold W. (“Bill”) Heller after an exhaustive two-year search. Before he arrived, people warned him that a regional campus system posed difficulties, especially in terms of control. Undeterred, he viewed the future of the school as a four-year, residential campus with unique programming. He did not want to be “everything to everybody,” but Marine Science and the Poynter Institute gave St. Petersburg a national reputation in marine, environmental, and media studies. Education, history, and business also offered growth opportunities. Heller wanted to enlarge the campus, build breadth and depth throughout the arts and sciences, offer more daytime classes, and focus more on engagement with the local community. His vision required careful coordination and no small amount of political finesse. “We are all in the same business; we all want to serve the students of the Tampa Bay region; we’re all the University of South Florida,” he trumpeted. Some Tampa-centered departments made every effort to accommodate St. Petersburg’s aspirations, but others bristled at its desire for faster growth and autonomy. “We felt more and more ready and confident that we could do it on our own, stated library dean Kathy Arsenault. “Relationships grow and change.”²⁹⁴

For political science professor Darryl Paulson, Heller’s vision was music to his ears. Paulson arrived in 1974 and experienced many years of little or no growth. “We had, in most of the disciplines in arts and sciences, two, three, or probably at most four member faculties in most programs and couldn’t grow for one reason or another. . . . For twenty-five years I was one of two political scientists. I certainly didn’t want that on a permanent basis. I think the fact that

²⁹⁴ Harold W. Heller, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, September 4, 2003; Kathy Arsenault, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 23, 2003.

we've got now five political science members is a tremendous change for this campus and a tremendous opportunity.” According to St. Petersburg campus events coordinator Joan “Sudsy” Tschiderer, Heller was very important in helping St. Petersburg develop its “own academic world” with an improving curriculum and stronger relationships in the community.²⁹⁵

Sarasota/Manatee continued its growth with a student population of nearly 2,000 by the end of the 1990s. Older students living and working in Sarasota and Manatee Counties particularly appreciated the education opportunities provided on the campus. Derek Williams was a new father and Publix employee when he decided to go back to school for a bachelor's degree in finance. The Florida native chose USF Sarasota-Manatee because of its location, reputation, and hands-on opportunities. “Sarasota/Manatee offered me an opportunity to get to know every one of my professors . . . and really it was a personal relationship . . . that helped me really accelerate the learning process because of those intimate relationships that I formed.” Faculty encouraged him to use his connections with the university to “explore all avenues,” to network, and build relationships between people on and off campus. When not in class, he worked with an accounting and financial services firm in town. “Those are a lot of the people that I personally took advantage of by sitting down and speaking with them and getting their perspective on the profession,” he recalled.

Even with responsibilities to his young son, course work, and employer, Williams managed to find time for an additional role. At the urging of his faculty advisor, in 1999 he successfully sought the student government presidency. “Part of our goals during my term was to continue to build on the profile of USF in the Sarasota-Manatee area.” He met with student government officials from other campuses four times a year to exchange information and

²⁹⁵ Darryl Paulson, interview by Lucy Jones, March 22, 2004; Joan M. Tschiderer, interview by Lucy Jones, October 10, 2003.

evaluate particular programs. Of primary importance for Williams was his ability to promote Sarasota's local identity and autonomy in response to specific needs. "Being able to work with new people and do something good for the community and the area," gave him great satisfaction. He took particular pride in initiating a list-serve to reach out to students, many of who commuted to classes and felt isolated from day-to-day campus affairs. The equitable allocation of state funds remained somewhat contentious, especially for people who felt the campus should receive more attention and resources. Upon graduation, Williams got involved with Sarasota's alumni association and recently became its president. "I'm really proud of USF. I'm proud that we've been able to evolve the way that we [have]." ²⁹⁶

The creation and growth of USF campuses did much to advance educational opportunities in Florida, but it did little to improve political and economic climate for higher education in the state. A \$300 million sales tax shortfall in 1988 forced deep budget cuts and talk of increased taxes in Tallahassee. Instead of funding a \$175 million increase requested by the State University System, the legislature cut 3 percent from existing coffers. The effects of Florida's economic hardships threatened to cripple USF. The Board of Regents floated an idea to make University of Florida the premier (or "flagship") university in the state and to cut funding for other institutions. Graduate teaching and research assistants fought to keep their tuition waivers, which the BOR sought to remove from their contracts "for tax reasons." In 1990-1991 alone, USF lost over \$6 million from its General Education Budget. Complained anthropology professor Gilbert Kushner, "To even get a daisy wheel for my typewriter is nearly impossible." Enrollment growth screeched to a halt, faculty and staff lost their jobs, and 460 classes were cut from the schedule. "We collectively . . . are going to be hurting," acknowledged

²⁹⁶ Derek Williams, interview by Danielle E. Riley, May 5, 2004.

Borkowski. *The Tampa Tribune* published an article comparing USF to the University of California at San Diego (UCSD), both state institutions founded in quickly growing coastal areas in the mid 1950s. Much higher levels of federal, state, and private funding had made UCSD one of the top six up and coming public universities in the nation.²⁹⁷

Instead of expanding USF's programs, as the president had planned, the university went into a period of retrenchment. "We can't be all things to all people," Borkowski explained. I think it's too many things for the resources we have." In order to pare down budgets, the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center laid off nineteen employees and eliminated thirty-five vacant positions. "We're not in a crisis situation at all," announced Assistant Public Relations Director Anne Goff. "But there is a need to push back and reshape the direction of the center for the next year."²⁹⁸

The College of Education went without chairs or directors in four departments and eliminated or delayed eleven vacant faculty positions. Despite initiating new Ph.D. and MBA programs, the College of Business Administration experience zero growth in faculty lines. Some public health and nursing programs disappeared from branch campuses altogether. Florida Mental Health Institute closed the Residential Aging Unit and let go fourteen employees. USF Lakeland director Yvonne Ralston admitted in January 1991, "We have stopped making long-distance telephone calls except to assign classes and talk to students, and we have cut the travel budget except to enable commuting professors to get here." Florida House Speaker T. K. Wetherell claimed that he purposely singled out schools so that taxpayers would "feel the pain" of low tax

²⁹⁷ *St. Petersburg Times*, March 28, 1988; *The Tampa Tribune*, February 16, March 29, April 16, 1988, November 13, July 21, 1989; *The Oracle*, May 17, September 18, 1988.

²⁹⁸ O: June 21, 1990

returns. “You’ve got to get pressure on the education system ... it’s not nice to use the kids, but that’s the political reality.”²⁹⁹

At his annual address to faculty in September 1991, President Borkowski told the crowd of nearly 350, “I’m here to cry ‘uncle.’” The school’s 1991-1992 budget had dropped by \$8 million. In 1989-1990, state appropriations totaled \$7,156 per student. In 1991-92, funding adjusted for inflation fell to \$5,018, making it one of the lowest in the nation. The state’s funding formula exacerbated these difficulties. Universities with higher full-time to part-time student ratios, larger base budgets, and higher enrollments figures tended to fair better at budget time. As a metropolitan university, USF had more part-time students, a relatively smaller base budget, and it controlled enrollment growth in favor of program quality by adjusting admission standards. Moreover, USF had fewer alumni in the legislature looking out for the school’s interests.³⁰⁰ In this competitive and unpredictable budget environment, suggestions surfaced to close branch campuses, lay off 112 faculty or 290 staff, or prevent 2,100 students from continuing their education at USF. “This is one of the campuses the regents have looked at,” admitted Lakeland director Yvonne Ralston. “If [Governor] Chiles’ investment budget is not passed, the fate of this campus as well as Fort Myers and Sarasota is uncertain.”³⁰¹

Calmer heads prevailed but deep cuts still occurred. To save funds, President Borkowski combined the university’s three liberal arts colleges into the College of Arts and Science. He announced plans to eliminate 137 staff positions and threatened to phase out the Library Information Sciences graduate program as well as programs in medical and engineering

²⁹⁹ *The Tampa Tribune*, January 4, 1991.

³⁰⁰ *Updated Report to the Florida Legislature: New Funding Methodology Based on the 1988-89 Legislative Request*, Approved by the Board of Regents, January 28, 1988; *Report to the Florida Legislature: Proposed Funding Model*, Approved by the Board of Regents, December 3, 1993, University Archives, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

³⁰¹ *The Tampa Tribune*, March 25, 26, 1992.

technologies. Course offerings shrunk, library hours decreased, and the book budget plummeted. A study by the Association of Research Libraries, which represents the premier research institutions in North America, recommended that USF spend \$58 million to remediate its collections. In 1989 the school spent \$3 million for this purpose, ranking it among the lowest in the country, according to librarian Sam Fustukjian.³⁰²

Borkowski successor Betty Castor fared somewhat better on the budget issue when she first assumed the presidency in 1994, but legislative support remained unstable. “USF Marks Most Successful Legislative Session in Years,” boasted *USF Magazine* in summer 1994. The university brought home nearly \$23 million in new funding for construction and renovation and \$1.2 million for additional library resources. “The growing academic reputation of USF combined with some very hard work on behalf of our governmental affairs staff and a long list of legislators made this a fruitful session for the university,” stated Castor. Programs to benefit from the infusion of funds included the Marine Science Program in St. Petersburg, a new Institute on Aging, the Area Health Education Center, and the Autism Center in the Florida Mental Health Institute. “After the lean budget years of the late ‘80s and early ‘90s, we’ve finally gone through a session in which the state university system made some headway, rather than losing ground or just maintaining the status quo,” President Castor acknowledged. “Our goal is to put a few of these back-to-back.”³⁰³ The university would not be so fortunate.

Early in 1994 President Castor submitted two separate proposals to the Florida Senate in response to proposed cutbacks. The first budget addressed a threatened 25 percent reduction in higher education funding, which Castor described as “absurd” and “demoralizing.” To make

³⁰² *The Tampa Tribune*, May 7, 1990, March 25, 1992; *The Oracle*, June 20, September 11, October 16, 24, 1991, January 7, 1994.

³⁰³ “USF Marks Most Successful Legislative Session in Years,” *USF Magazine* 36 (Summer 1994): 10; *The Oracle*, June 27, 1994.

ends meet, she raised tuition – three years in a row by up to 10 percent a year. Parking and residence hall rates also saw steep increases.³⁰⁴ In October 1994 BOR Chancellor Charlie Reed spoke on higher education in Tampa. With more money spent on prisons than education, Reed feared that Florida would not keep up with the rising demand for higher education. “I see a rocky future if we don’t convince our political leaders that higher education is important.” Per-student spending had decreased by \$2,000 in recent years. Out of each state dollar, 7.8% went to education, while corrections got 9.5%.³⁰⁵ Then USF vice president Laurey Stryker took a philosophic tone with the budget rollercoaster. “I think you plan for ups and downs,” she cautioned. “Just like in our own household, you have to have a contingency plan. That’s how you do it. Also [you have to] get the word out. . . . I think there’s more of an opportunity to have a voice that puts a face on what higher education really means.”³⁰⁶

Faculty, staff, and students raised their voices loud and clear to protest budget cuts in the early 1990s. The University Textbook Center donated \$25,000 in order to maintain a reasonable variety of summer courses. “Because of the budget problems, we thought we could help out with the summer program,” explained bookstore administrator Jeffrey Mack. Representatives left Tampa bound for the state capital with a mile-long petition to state legislators. Part of the “Save Our Schools” campaign, the lengthy appeal protested years of poor public funding. Senior Craig Bertuglia became so upset over funding for public education, he began a hunger strike. “It isn’t confrontational,” explained Bertuglia. “It isn’t in someone’s face saying ‘Look at me and my cause,’ but rather it shows the people in power that I’m willing to suffer for what I believe in.”³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ *The Oracle*, February 9, 28, 1994.

³⁰⁵ *The Oracle*, October 7, 1994.

³⁰⁶ Laurey Stryker, interview by Andrew Huse, February 12, 2004.

³⁰⁷ *The Oracle*, April 3, October 11, 21, 1991.

The passion and commitment students put into protests, the administration harnessed in the community. In the first major fundraising drive in USF history, Campaign USF had raised nearly \$120 million by late 1991, making it the most successful effort in State University System history to that time. Among the gifts, Tampa Bay Buccaneers owner Hugh Culverhouse gave \$4.6 million, the biggest single donation to that date. “We hope this will help provide the education so dearly needed by our young people to compete in our modern society,” he explained. President Borkowski delighted in the overwhelming response to USF’s funding plight. “The success of Campaign USF is attributable primarily to the extremely high level of support received from alumni, friends, foundations, and corporations in our service area and throughout the state and nation,” he remarked. “The communities we serve have indicated quite conclusively, through their support of the campaign, the high level of importance they place on the teaching, the research, and public service programs offered by USF. For this we are both honored and grateful.” Under President Castor, support continued to grow with gifts large and small to all areas of university life. For example, the USF Women’s Club presented her with a check for \$5,000 to support the library. Staff in the physical plant created and grew a scholarship fund to support continuing education. Longboat Key businessman Robert Roskamp gave \$5 million for Alzheimer’s research, Bayard Angle bequeathed \$3 million to the library for technology and the Florida Studies Center. The Marrell Foundation offered \$1.14 million for research on children with developmental disabilities, and Citigroup donated a half million dollars to the USF Charter School. By 1997 USF had the second largest endowment in the State University System with \$124 million invested.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁸ *The Oracle*, October 13, 1988, September 27, 1991, October 14, 1995, June 5, 1997, July 2, 1998, February 12, May 20, July 15, 1999; Adrian Cuarta, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 16, 2003.

Endowment income enabled administrators to supplement public finances with a funding strategy designed to support more robust physical growth. Private gifts and the state match program, auxiliary funds collected in areas like food services, leases, student activity fees, and bonds supplemented state appropriations to make new and renovated buildings possible. In November 1988, the university broke ground on the Special Events Center (SEC) just north of the University Center. Some people opposed construction on their beloved Crescent Hill and sought alternative sites for the auditorium. UC director Phyllis Marshall “felt like crying” when crews came in to remove the old oak trees, but future SEC production manager Joseph Ingrao pointed out that the Special Events Center was “something that the students really really wanted.”³⁰⁹ Other Tampa projects begun or completed in the late 1980s and 1990s included the USF Art Museum, WUSF radio and television studios, University Tech Center to house Graphicstudio, the School of Architecture, and Tampa Enterprise Institute, the Gus Stavros Center for the Advancement of Free Enterprise and Economic Education, a student health center, and campus recreation facility. Renovations occurred in the student services building, Science Center, University Center, and arts and letters building (renamed Cooper Hall in memory of Liberal Arts dean Russell Cooper).

USF St. Petersburg added thirty-five acres in the early 1990s to accommodate new growth, and a building boom ensued. The Campus Activities Center welcomed students in January 1990. Crews moved the historic 1904 C. Perry Snell, Jr. House to campus in August 1993, and less than two years later the 1890-1891 John C. and Sarah Williams House was saved as well. Today, the two beautifully restored homes sit next to each other and serve as office space for campus programs and faculty. The Marine Science Department and Florida Marine

³⁰⁹ *The Oracle*, November 3, 1988; Joseph Ingrao, interview by Andrew Huse, September 23, 2004.

Research Institute occupied the design-award-winning, \$21 million, 140,000-square-foot Knight Oceanographic Research Center in 1994; the new Nelson Poynter Memorial Library opened its doors in 1996 and renovations occurred to the old building; construction finished on the YMCA/USF Family Village in 1998; and work began on a new pediatrics research building and Florida Center for Teachers.³¹⁰

On the Tampa campus, completion of the Communication and Information Sciences building in 1992 marked a transformation in architectural design. The new building's shape, addition of trellises and atrium lobby space, and use of color set CIS apart. "It was very well received," stated planning and programming division head Barbara Donerly, and so the Facilities Planning Department carried the design over to other buildings. "We immediately started taking the colors on the CIS building and weaving them through the campus, whether it be as paving material or something else." Pitched roofs, circular rotundas, and courtyards also found their way into new building construction in the 1990s.³¹¹

One of USF's most architecturally significant projects got its official start in January 1988 when the Foundation announced fundraising efforts for presidential housing on the Tampa campus. President Borkowski explained the reasons for the home. "There is no better expression of warmth and hospitality and cordiality than to invite someone into your house." He looked forward to events for the student body. "I can envision student receptions and parties inside and outside the house, including ice cream socials for new freshmen and graduating seniors and their parents." He also acknowledged opportunities "to host distinguished visitors to

³¹⁰ Ron Faig, "Marine Science Booms at Bayboro: USF St. Petersburg Lands New \$21-Million Sea Center," *USF Magazine* 36 (Fall 1994): 15.

³¹¹ Barbara Donerly, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 30, 2003; Gerhard Meisels, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 25, 2003.

the campus and provide a setting for social events in conjunction with special events on campus, such as lectures, conferences, concerts, plays or sports events.”³¹²

The desire for a presidential home spurred efforts to raise the private funds needed to make it a reality. In 1989 Tampa attorney Julian Lifsey and his wife, Mary Ann, made a \$600,000 donation to the cause. “After building three houses and beach condos, she “loved to see something come out of the ground. I told [Julian] one evening that I heard they were indeed going to be serious about a president’s home, and he thought we could really have fun doing it. He was excited about giving money to a foundation for something tangible, something that our grandchildren could see.” Local homebuilder Jim Walter added another \$800,000 in honor of his friends Julian and Mary Ann.³¹³

Mr. Lifsey passed away before construction began in 1993, but Mrs. Lifsey played an active role in the venture. Along with President and Mrs. Borkowski and several Florida architects, she sat on the jury that selected Winter Haven architect Gene Leedy’s vision out of a field of thirty-eight entries. Leedy described his design for the \$1.2 million structure as a “classic contemporary house with an antebellum character.” Mrs. Lifsey explained, “I probably would’ve been more open to a contemporary building, but I was voting for Julian and he liked things very traditional. It was a blend of Julian and I.” Kay Borkowski liked the Fowler Avenue side of the house, which she described as “a second front.” “It will be very distinctive with a veranda, two-story columns and a fountain that will be lighted at night.”³¹⁴

³¹² “Design Chosen Fr President’s Mansion,” *USF Magazine* 32 (Spring 1990): 28.

³¹³ *The Oracle*, January 21, 1988; *The Tampa Tribune*, August 8, November 18, 1989; Francis T. Borkowski, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 18, 2004.

³¹⁴ “Design Chosen Fr President’s Mansion,” *USF Magazine* 32 (Spring 1990): 28; *The Tampa Tribune*, August 8, November 18, 1989.

The Borkowskis left for Appalachia State University in Boone, North Carolina, before the 9,000-plus-square-foot, \$1.7 million Lifsey House was completed in the late summer of 1994. The president's decision to resign stemmed in some measure from a growing list of issues on campus and his difficult relationship with Board of Regents chancellor Charlie Reed. "I don't believe that he was interested in . . . seeing a third large, comprehensive research university established here," Borkowski explained. The president strongly supported starting a football program, a move that Reed and some regents opposed. Borkowski felt that in his final year, the university was penalized "in a number of subtle ways" because of this initiative. "The university was not actually getting its fare share relative to other institutions because of football." He faced the decision of either abandoning the sport or leaving the school after laying a foundation for the program.³¹⁵

Borkowski's handling of an escalating controversy surrounding the conduct of basketball player Marvin Taylor created additional strain with the BOR. "This lasted about two years, and things were really bad," recalled Provost Gerhard Meisels. "There were stories in the press. A lot of the staff meetings were taken up by the president seeking advice on how to proceed."³¹⁶ A BOR report on the Taylor case released in January 1992 recommended "major, structural, procedural and personnel" change at USF to address future issues involving student conduct. The following month, the vice president of student affairs resigned amidst the negative publicity.

³¹⁵ Francis T. Borkowski, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 18, 2004.

³¹⁶ Gerhard Meisels, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 25, 2003; Francis T. Borkowski, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 18, 2004; *The Tampa Tribune*, May 16, July 4, 1993, February 26, 1994.

Borkowski apologized to the Board for his role in the episode and promised changes to school policy.³¹⁷

Elsewhere on campus, a series of issues in the health sciences, battles with the legislature, claims of micromanagement by the Board of Regents, audits and inquires about spending practices, and budget cuts combined to make 1990-1992 “the shortest 10 years of my life,” claimed Borkowski. In November 1992, the president had a candid meeting with the chancellor in which “he was very clear that he was not interested in my continuing . . . so we decided it was in the best interests of the university to look for another position.”³¹⁸

At his farewell picnic in June 1993, President Borkowski reflected on his time at USF as “an exhilarating and heady experience” and looked ahead to “a splendid opportunity” that awaited him at Appalachian State University in North Carolina. He had accomplished much in just five years. Enrollment grew from 30,000 to just over 34,000 and included more minority students than ever before. The school’s ranking by size among public universities jumped from thirty to twenty-two. The Foundation’s endowment grew from \$21 million to \$61 million during that period, and research grants increased from \$37.3 million to \$60 million. USF estimated its economic impact on Tampa Bay at \$1.1 billion. The president colleagues lost a “very fair” and “warm and personable” man, and the Lifsey House lost its champion with the Borkowskis’ departure.³¹⁹

With a new president not expected to take office until spring 1994, the Board of Regents appointed former University of Florida provost Robert Bryan as USF’s temporary head. Bryan

³¹⁷ *The Oracle*, January 27-29, February 3, 5-7, 12, 1992; *The Tampa Tribune*, February 2, 5, 6, 1992; *St. Petersburg Times*, February 8, 1992.

³¹⁸ *St. Petersburg Times*, September 11, 1990, July 17, December 3, 1992; *The Tampa Tribune*, February 25, 1992

³¹⁹ *St. Petersburg Times*, May 16, June 26, July 1, 4, 1993; Harold W. Heller, interview with Yael V. Greenberg, September 4, 2003; *The Oracle*, May 12, 17, 1993.

began his position July 12, 1993, and immediately won over faculty, staff, students, and the community. He tabled plans for a new visitor parking tag, arguing that it conflicted with the university's mission to reach out to the community. He eliminated several administrative posts in an effort to streamline the bureaucracy and cut costs. "He's decisive," said Mass Communications chair Donna Dickerson. Other people found him direct, clear, quick to respond to questions and concerns, and appreciated his humor-laden memorandums.³²⁰

Bryan's arrival in Tampa on a temporary basis coincided with plans to hire Borkowski's permanent replacement. A forty-two-person search committee, including former governor Bob Martinez and former (and future) mayor Dick Greco, met to consider potential candidates. The prospect of a female president generated discussion during the summer meetings. At an open forum in Tampa to discuss the search, Tampa Mayor Sandy Freedman expressed her interest that a woman might serve for the first time in the school's top post. Yvonne Ralston, campus director and executive officer at USF Lakeland, reminded the search committee when it visited that "the role of the regional campuses of the University of South Florida are just as important as the other needs a new president will address." Senator Rick Danzler of Winter Haven cautioned that the new president should be familiar with the workings of Florida's political system, "one of the most complex and bureaucratic in the nation."³²¹

By early October, the committee had received a total of 122 nominations, including eight USF faculty members, retired General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, and Florida Commissioner of Education Betty Castor. In mid October the BOR released the names of thirty individuals still under consideration, including Castor who had given up her seat on the Board to seek the position. Of the six finalists for USF's presidency, three were women and three were men.

³²⁰ *The Oracle*, July 1, 12, 22, August 23; *The Tampa Tribune*, August 18, 23, 1993.

³²¹ *The Tampa Tribune*, September 23, 1993.

Castor interviewed on campus in late November and faced tough questions from some faculty concerned that she was not an academic, did not possess a doctorate, and therefore could not advance the university's research mission. Research, she explained, was a "recurring theme" in her interviews for the presidency. "I had to convince a number of people . . . that I understood research as a part of the teaching enterprise." She promised to appoint a provost with a "strong academic background" and acknowledged the "dialogue and debate" over her qualifications. "I told them I could serve in this position well -- that I was not only familiar with the university and the importance of USF to the state of Florida and to this region. I talked about my background, and tried to stress my commitment to education and of course the external dimensions that I thought prepared me better than someone who would come from a strictly academic point of view. . . . So I tried to play to my strengths." The BOR interviewed all the candidates one last time in December. On January 6, 1993, *The Oracle* announced that Betty Castor had been selected as USF's first female president. She would take office officially on January 17. More than 500 people turned out to welcome her on her first day of work.³²²

In late 1994, President Castor and husband Sam Bell became the Lifsey House's first residents, though they also owned a home in Tampa. "When I discussed my coming here with the Chancellor," Castor recalled, "the understanding was that I would reside in the Lifsey House. It was never open to discussion. The Foundation had put a lot of money into this big contemporary home. I, frankly, felt that I should obviously live there, and I enjoyed living there." The couple shared spacious living quarters on the second floor, which included four bedrooms, a guest suite, and office. On the ground floor, the president entertained from large living and family rooms, visitor lounges, and a formal dining room. Castor assistant Lori Ruse-

³²² Betty Castor, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, January 19, 2005; *The Oracle*, November 18, 19, 30, December 1, 2, 7, 1993, January 14, 1994.

Dietrich recalled a lot of activity at the Lifsey House when it officially opened in August 1994. President Castor's inauguration, official receptions, informal pizza parties, holiday get-togethers, and even a wedding kept Lifsey House manager Laura Graham quite busy.³²³ Architect Leedy felt the home really made a difference on the Tampa campus. "It's a gateway o the university," he observed. "If you drive down Fowler Avenue you see McDonald's, Wendy's, and all that is wrong with our society – the confusion and chaos. And then turn and see the large green area and the white Lifsey House, that is so refreshing as to what is across the street."³²⁴

Under President Castor, the university continued to construct new and sometimes eye-catching buildings. In late 1994, USF had twenty-two projects underway worth approximately \$100 million in design and construction. Creative and entrepreneurial approaches to piecing together public and private funds stretched limited dollars further. Private money supported the Sam and Martha Gibbons Alumni Center, and bond issues paid for new dormitories and a parking garage near the Special Events Center. Capital Improvement Trust Fund dollars generated from student fees built the fine arts gallery, bookstore, new recreation center, and enabled an expansion to the Sun Dome and UC. State monies, from the Public Education Capital Outlay Fund, went to much-needed science center and dormitory renovations, a health science research center, new College of Education building, Center for Urban and Transportation Research, and extension to Alumni Drive. USF announced plans to continue its educational

³²³ Betty Castor, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, January 19, 2005; Lori Ruse-Dietrich, interview by Danielle Riley, June 21, 2004; *The Tampa Tribune*, August 8, November 18, 1989, September 24, 1994; "Design Chosen Fr President's Mansion," *USF Magazine* 32 (Spring 1990): 28.

³²⁴ *The Oracle*, November 28, 1994.

outreach initiative by leasing 15,000 square feet for classroom space in the new glass and steel Port Authority building on Channelside Drive in downtown Tampa.³²⁵

As new construction projects grew slowly from dream to reality, the University Center slipped into history. On March 3, 1994, before a crowd of 400 people, the Phyllis P. Marshall Center was born in its place. During her thirty-four-year career, much of it as UC director, Phyllis Marshall worked tirelessly to enrich university life. “My clients, my loves,” she called the students with whom she collaborated so closely. “She was our champion,” acknowledged student government senator Harold Oehler. One charter class member paid a particularly emotional tribute to Marshall. “Outside of my family, you were the most influential person in my life. . . . You have been a confidant, a best friend, an adviser and a role model of the first class.” Local radio personality and Marshall cousin Jack Harris struck a humorous cord when he quipped that she was “the only one of us to have a building named after her that has indoor plumbing.”³²⁶

Efforts to rename the UC began seven years before the actual event. Amidst renovations to the University Center in the late 1980s and Marshall’s declining health, student government officials determined the building should carry her name, and they wrote a resolution to that effect. “As well intended as our resolution was, it had absolutely no power in law,” recalled Oehler. For the building to carry Marshall’s name, the Florida Legislature would have to pass a law. Oehler contacted Democratic state representative Mary Figg of Lutz for help, and they met to discuss the effort. “I was alone and nervous, meeting a powerful legislator and asking her to buck the system which normally named buildings after university presidents and million-dollar

³²⁵ Lynn Rothman, “Our Edifice Complex: USF’s \$100-Million Face Life,” *USF Magazine* 36 (Fall 1994): 6-7; *The Oracle*, May 2, 18, 1995, January 6, 1997, March 2, 1999.

³²⁶ *The Oracle*, March 4, 1994.

donors. Mary took our cause on as her own, and what started as a whisper from the students was turning into a roar.”³²⁷

Getting a bill through the legislature often requires considerable efforts of persuasion, but USF students had neither the money nor a lobby firm to act on their behalf. Oehler grabbed a map of Tallahassee and jumped into his Volkswagen bug with fellow student senator Angela DiCarlo. She had worked for state senator Betty Castor and knew the capital like the back of her hand. “When we got to Tallahassee, Angela was unbelievable. Soon we were jumping out from behind doors, just happening to run into legislators and senators as they left committee meetings, bumping into them in their favorite bars, getting in front of everyone we could, letting them know about this lady named Phyllis Marshall and what she means for generations of students.” In the end, Representative Figg twisted just enough arms in the final hours of the 1987 legislative session to turn a resolution first passed by student senators into a Florida State law that officially renamed the UC upon Marshall’s retirement in 1994.

For Phyllis Marshall, the March 3 dedication ceremony was bittersweet. Her extended family could not be there, and both her parents had passed away. “My dad would have been so proud to know that I’ve climbed that high,” she said. “I’m a little kid from nowhere and I worked my way all through school.” For Harold Ohler and Angela DiCarlo the dedication was doubly sweet. They helped push a student government resolution through the Florida legislature. In the process, they fell in love and married.³²⁸

Love was not the only thing blossoming on the USF campus in the 1990s. Significant efforts to landscape and beautify the Tampa campus began under President Borkowski came to

³²⁷ Harold Ohler, remarks at Phyllis P. Marshall memorial service,” April 18, 2005, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

³²⁸ Phyllis P. Marshall, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 22, 2003.

fruition under Castor's leadership. While living in the Lifsey House, she rode her bicycle around the Tampa campus, making notes of areas needing improvement. "It did distress me that the campus was not more attractive, and I worked very hard to work with the university architect . . . and our facilities staff to really put more emphasis on the appearance. . . . I just thought it was time for shade. It was time to do something more dramatic with our physical landscape."³²⁹

Castor's aesthetic sense mirrored a major university review begun in the early 1990s, which found the Tampa campus uninviting for students, staff, and faculty and recommended dramatic improvements. Campus architect Steven Gift helped develop early plans to improve USF's "central core" -- the space contained by the administration, student services, and fine arts buildings and university and special events centers -- and to enhance the entrance to the university off Fowler Avenue. Changes called for "enhancing the outsides of buildings" and to "recreate MLK [Martin Luther King, Jr.] Plaza, stretch canopies between the buildings in the central core, and build an outdoor amphitheatre and bell tower."³³⁰ A ten-year master plan, created in consultation with Sasaki Associates to address USF's "new look," earned a merit award in urban design from the American Society of Landscape Architects for its use of unified open spaces and appeared in the October 1994 issue of *Landscape Architecture*.

Improvements to MLK Plaza occurred with enthusiastic input and support from students. First dedicated in 1982 as a Black Student Union and student government project in honor of the slain civil rights leader, the plaza remained sun drenched and barren for the next decade. "We wanted a place where individuals could sit in a peaceful environment and large groups could gather," recalled Barbara Donerly. In the middle of a trellised central walkway covered with bougainvilleas and jasmine, planners placed a bust of Dr. King, which artist L. Ackley-Eacker

³²⁹ Betty Castor, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 16, 2005.

³³⁰ *The Oracle*, October 30, 1992.

recast from a statue of the civil rights leader in 1996. The statue radiates five granite bands pointing to the major cities in King’s life, and his famous “I Have a Dream” speech appears etched on a granite wall at the far end of a large reflecting pool with fountains. Donerly explained that planners expected students to play in the fountains, but she has never seen anyone doing this.³³¹ For physical plant director Adrian Cuarta, completion of the MLK Plaza in the spring of 1997 was the turning point for the Tampa campus. “It solidified the notion that USF needed to develop an external environment and connect it to the internal environment in order to bring it all together into an environment that people would enjoy,” he said. “People now start to appreciate that and want more of it, which is a great thing.”³³²

To complement USF’s improving natural environment, the university increased its commitment to public art begun decades earlier. “We were doing mostly flat artwork for building interior,” explained USF Contemporary Art Museum director Margaret Miller of the period before the late 1980s. “Spaces between buildings were sort of left out.” Miller hoped new projects would transform a “dry wasteland . . . into a scenic, artistic place to congregate.” President Borkowski revived efforts begun in the early 1970s to erect Picasso’s “Bust of a Woman” and place it between the Lifsey House and Alumni Center. The president and Lifsey designer Gene Leedy believed it would elevate USF’s national image and serve as a springboard to bring additional sculptures to campus, but the large price tag and waning interest ended plans once and for all.³³³ Instead of attracting a Picasso, the 1990s began a flurry of over two-dozen new art installations in and around new buildings on all USF campuses under the leadership of USF public art coordinator Vincent Ahern. The projects added to the individual identity of the

³³¹ Barbara Donerly, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 30, 2003.

³³² Adrian Cuarta, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 16, 2003.

³³³ *The Oracle*, February 16, 1990, September 12, 1994; *St. Petersburg Times*, October 5, 1994.

buildings and campuses they served. “Each campus has its own personality, its own unique kind of presence,” said Ahern. “I get to have conversations with the folks that make those campuses unique and bring something to them. I very much feel in a way that the function is kind of a bridge back and forth, and it’s an exciting opportunity to get to know the vast group of folks that make up the University of South Florida in the collective sense.”³³⁴

In St. Petersburg in 1994, Ned Smythe created the keystone sculpture and Venetian gold-tile mosaic *Our Shadow* in the newly built Knight Oceanographic Institute. Robert Kelvo’s 1996 *Alexandria* hangs in the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library. Three large arches suspended in the atrium depict classical structures that housed knowledge in ancient civilizations. Scattered throughout the library, seven life-size sculptures of Kelvo’s hands contain a single word – tolerance, beauty, truth, inspiration, justice, wisdom, and courage. In 2002 *It Heals Up* appeared on the side of All Children’s Hospital and USF Children’s Research Institute. The forty-foot-long paint, aluminum, and steel work gifted to the university by artist James Rosenquist is “an optimistic sculpture about showing how the magic of the human body can overcome terrible afflictions with the magic and hard work and expertise of the doctors and staff.” Ahern recalled the day the giant brightly colored band-aid was installed. “I had the opportunity to watch a group of kids going by with their mom. [They] immediately looked up and said, ‘Mom, Mom, look it’s a giant band-aid. This is for us.’”³³⁵

The Tampa campus shared an interest in the connections between art and healing. A 1991 outdoor sculpture entitled *Sanctuary* by Ellen Zimmerman combined rocks, pillars, water, and sky to offer a place of tranquility and reflection next to the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and

³³⁴ Vincent Ahern, interview by Danielle Riley, June 27, 2003.

³³⁵ Lisa Cunningham, “Public Art at USF: Places to gather, study, and socialize,” *USF Magazine* 37 (Spring 1995): 12-13; Tom Wagner, “Artful Oasis,” *USF Magazine* 39 (Winter 1997): 23-27; Vincent Ahern, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 27, 2003.

Research Institute. It's a place for people to recover, to get themselves together after bad news," explained Vincent Ahern. Inside Moffitt, master craftsman and stone setter Richard Fleischner replicated a work by the Russian Supremacist painter Kazimir Malevich using a linoleum inlay for the lobby floor and granite elements both indoors and outside.

USF blended art and science in other projects. In March 1995, officials dedicated Nancy Holt's internationally acclaimed twenty-foot aluminum structure *Solar Rotary*, funded in part by *The Tampa Tribune* and located between Cooper Hall, Business Administration, and the Communication and Information Sciences building. The three-year collaboration with faculty and students in architecture, astronomy, engineering, geology, history, and the library casts a circle of sunlight on five bronze plates representing significant events in Florida history at precise times during the year. On sunny or even hazy days *Solar Rotary* casts its sun symbol shadow in a continuously changing pattern on the pavement below. Once a year, at 1:31 or 1:32 PM on the day of the summer solstice a large ring of sun shines on the sculpture's central circular seat, a million-year-old meteorite found near Dade City. In *Unspecific Gravity*, artist Doug Hollis drew from the molecular form of water, marine biology, and chemistry. Located near the bio-science building, the work contains so much information amount the atomic makeup of elements that high school students could make field trips to the campus for education purposes. USF art, engineering, mass communications, and science students participated in the installation. "We felt it was important," said Ahern," that as part of the university, we should involve the students. Not just as part of a committee to determine the type of art, but as members of the team that create it, and in so doing, learn from it."³³⁶

³³⁶ Lisa Cunningham, "Public Art at USF: Places to gather, study, and socialize," *USF Magazine* 37 (Spring 1995): 12-13; Tom Wagner, "Artful Oasis," *USF Magazine* 39 (Winter 1997): 23-27; Vincent Ahern, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 27, 2003.

Ahern's commitment to art and teaching echoed a university-wide emphasis on a relevant, challenging, and hands-on curriculum aimed at a diverse student body that included growing numbers of international and minority students. By the fall of 1999, nearly 1,000 USF students hailed from 109 different countries in Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe, the Near, Middle and Far East, and Southeast Asia. Students from India -- many enrolled in engineering courses -- formed by far the largest single group, followed by Chinese, Venezuelans, British, Canadians, Brazilians, French, Kuwaitis, and many others.³³⁷

Just 3.9 percent of the student population in 1989, African Americans comprised 8.5 percent ten years later. The increase resulted from a more focused effort across campus. In the late 1980s, the USF Foundation allocated funds for the "recruitment and retention of meritorious black students." Grants enhanced the university's efforts to attract minorities into the sciences. As a recruiter, Dr. Samuel Wright recalled, "It was my charge to get out there and preach the USF gospel, and I did just that . . . and believe it or not all kinds of things started happening." He focused initially on engaging the African American community but soon turned his attention to other underrepresented groups. Five or six times a year, he assembled staff in the admissions office for a "Multicultural Road Show" (now "Showcase USF") to reach potential students and their families. "Each One, Reach One" enlisted students to recruit other students and to spread the word about USF. Donna Parrino continued her work with Latinos, a student population that grew from 5.2 percent to 8.2 percent during the 1990s. In 1993, interim president Robert Bryan created the office of Latino Community Advancement, and Parrino went about improving community relations and raising funds. In 1999 she applied for and ultimately received a large ENLACE grant from the Kellogg Foundation. "Engaging Latino Communities for Education"

³³⁷ *University of South Florida 1999-2000 Fact Book*, 42.

funds enabled her and her staff to recruit more effectively from selected area public schools with large Latino populations.³³⁸

New courses and programs for USF's diverse and growing student body sought to keep pace with new global issues and rapid advances in the sciences and technology. Additional languages classes helped students fulfill the state's foreign language requirements. A human sexual behavior class drew over 600 interested students and required a fourth section. The College of Public Health continued its leadership role in the fight against AIDS by offering a course that focused exclusively on the virus. International studies courses focused on the growing impact of globalization, and, in January 1991, the Committee for Middle East Studies formed to promote a dialogue after the Persian Gulf War. After several years of planning and federal support secured by Congressman Bill Young, the USF Globalization Research Center opened in 2001. In St. Petersburg, the Ethnics Center opened in 1990 to address general ethnical theory as well as business and journalism ethics. Nursing returned to the campus after the Florida Legislature approved funding. Working closely with President Castor, campus dean Bill Heller launched a ten-year plan in 1994 to enhance curriculum and increase course offerings in an effort to make USF-St. Petersburg a dominant force in Pinellas County education. In 1998, Castor convinced the BOR and Florida Cabinet to allow the St. Petersburg campus to accept freshman for the first time in thirty years.³³⁹

In 1995 President Castor helped launch the interdisciplinary Latin American and Caribbean Studies Initiative. An extensive study of strengths in the field and a prolonged planning process to better coordinate resources resulted in a formal graduate program and

³³⁸ *University of South Florida 1988-1989 Fact Book*, 15; *University of South Florida 1999-2000 Fact Book*, 87; Samuel Wright, interview by Andrew Huse, February 16, 2005; Donna Parrino, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 8, 2003.

³³⁹ *Crow's Nest*, October 31, 1994; *The Oracle*, June 18, 1998

undergraduate certificate established in 1997. “Public health and medicine, medical anthropology has been very active, and literature and language is always there. We thought USF had very unique opportunities to do something special,” explained LACS assistant director Maura Barrios.³⁴⁰

Since its inception in 1983 under Dean of Undergraduate Studies William Scheuerle’s leadership, the Honors Program (now a College) has grown by leaps and bounds and offers the best and brightest students opportunities to interact with faculty and each other in the classroom and laboratory. Small classes, research internships, community service, and an honors thesis are hallmarks of the popular and innovative learning environment. “Once these students are enrolled in the program, the staff and faculty provide exceptional experiences in which the students tell other about,” explained Dean Stuart Silverman. “In one case, a student even recommended the program to her mother and now both mother and daughter are completing the coursework together.”³⁴¹

After more than two decades working with an ever growing number of honors students each year, Silverman has found them highly goal oriented, motivated, and committed to academic success. They come to USF “already having an idea of what profession they might be interested in pursuing; usually these professions are ones that the average student has never heard of.” For example, as the age of seventeen, an honors student may come to USF knowing that they want to be a pediatric thoracic surgeon or a biomedical engineer.” Wayne Paugh graduated in 1993 and had a different career in mind. Today he is chief of staff to the undersecretary of commerce for intellectual property in the United States Patent and Trademark Office in

³⁴⁰ David Schenck, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 8, 2003; Maura Barrios, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, June 13, 2003.

³⁴¹ Stuart Silverman, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 6, 2003.

Washington, D.C. When it came time to choosing a university, the Honors Program put USF “over the top.” The support and guidance he received from Silverman steered him toward a double major in mechanical engineering and communications. “Stu Silverman was a safety net and inspiration for all of us. It may not have sounded like much going in, but looking back it was huge,” he said. “He kept on me. Eventually I heeded his advice and ended up as ‘Most Outstanding Graduate’ in the mechanical engineering class.”³⁴²

In the medical sciences, USF received one of just two \$1.6 million grants to train graduate students in biomedicine. “There’s a shortage of young people going into biomedical research,” said microbiology and immunology professor Herman Friedman. He hoped the funds would support research aimed at finding a cure for AIDS. The National Institutes of Health named the Department of Ophthalmology a national headquarters for the study and treatment of optic neuritis, an eye disease that can lead to blindness.

The late 1980s and 1990s brought an ever-closer association between teaching and research. An “urban environment is a laboratory for first-class research,” said President Borkowski as he set about to make USF “distinctive and distinguished . . . one of the nation’s top public universities by the year 2001.” He appointed chemist George R. Newkome as his vice president for research and Gerhard Meisels as provost to work toward this goal. The university hired more faculty with strong research interests, emphasized research and publications as well as teaching for promotion and tenure, and lobbied in Washington to help secure more federal research dollars. These efforts bore fruit. Successful research proposals and grant funding skyrocketed from \$31.4 million in 1987 to \$161.3 million in 1999.

³⁴² Ann Carney, “Scholarly Pursuits,” *USF Magazine* 45 (Summer 2003): 2-7.

Projects engaged a vast array of disciplines. A 1988 Florida statute established the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) in the College of Engineering. This congressionally designated National Urban Transportation Institute employs an array of full-time researchers to work with policymakers, transportation professionals, educators, and the general public on issues related to public transportation and planning, intelligent transportation systems and demand management, alternative fuels, and safety. In the fall of 1995, USF enrolled its first class in the Graduate Interdisciplinary Transportation Program, a cooperative effort between civil engineering, public administration, and economics.

Several other major research initiatives began in 1988. The U.S. Geological Survey passed over twenty-one other programs and announced plans to develop a national research center for coastal geology in cooperation with the marine science department at USF St. Petersburg. USF's Suncoast Gerontology Center received a grant to establish an Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center to serve a seventeen-county area of southwest Florida. The Institute for Biomolecular Science opened in Tampa to improve molecular biology. The National Institutes of Health designated the Department of Ophthalmology as the national headquarters for the study of optic neuritis, a crippling eye disease. In the largest grant to that date in State University System history, the defense department's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) gave \$25 million to headquarter a microelectronics project at USF involving six other universities.

USF's role as the western anchor on Florida's High Tech Corridor initiative (University of Central Florida provided the eastern anchor) served to stimulate and benefit from technological research in the region. In the late 1990s, Florida ranked sixth in the nation in high-tech jobs and the fifth largest exporter of high-tech goods. The information technology industry

along Interstate 4 between Tampa and Orlando grew at 60 percent each year, microelectronics by 30 percent, and Internet service providers by 77 percent. Researchers in the Tampa Bay area received more than twice the number patents than their colleagues in any other part of the state. To foster continued technology growth, USF President Betty Castor and UCF President John Hitt joined forces with Enterprise Florida to influence corporate decision makers to invest in the corridor. “We recognized that if we could bring high-tech, high-paying jobs to any part of the corridor, the whole region would benefit” Castor said. In July 1996 the cooperation and focus led to the creation of the Florida I-4 High Technology Corridor Council. For its part in the initiative, USF took the lead supplying “human capital” in four major research areas: microelectronics, information technology, medicine, and marine technology. New or expanded graduate programs in computer science, management information systems, business administration, and biomedical engineering filled to capacity with USF students practically guaranteed employment upon graduation. “These companies generally could go anywhere,” stated USF Research Foundation Executive Director Michael Fountain. “They tend to cluster where the infrastructure is in place, with a medical school and a place like Moffitt and a medical community that can help them grow.” Explained one computer software developer in the I-4 region, “We not coming [here] to save money. We’re coming to find the best people. . . . We go where the talent is.”³⁴³

In AIDS and cancer research, pharmacology, cardiology, public and mental health, pediatrics, water quality, laser and fiber optic technology, computer chip design, road safety, industrial engineering, and dozens of other fields, talented USF faculty and their students played

³⁴³ Michael Reich, “Sunny Skies & Silicon Dreams,” *USF Magazine* 41 (Winter 1999): 19-23.

a key role.³⁴⁴ In 1991 the university placed in the Top 100 research institutes in the nation for this work and in 1993 entered the top fifty among public universities. In recognition of these achievements, in April 1994 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching designated USF as a “Research University II” for sustaining three or more years of federally sponsored research grants totaling between \$15.5 and \$40 million and granting fifty or more doctoral degrees annually across at least fifteen disciplines. Only University of Florida and Florida State received “Research I” status in the state. In 2000 the Carnegie Foundation revised its classification scheme and grouped USF, UF, FSU, and Florida International University together as “Doctoral/Research Universities—Extensive,” its highest ranking.

The new Carnegie classification came just a year after the Board of Regents divided Florida’s state universities into categories. In January 1999 BOR Chancellor Adam Herbert initiated discussions on creating a three-tiered system: Research I, Research II, and Comprehensive. “I believe the absence of focus leads to mediocrity,” he said. “We must not operate 10 mediocre universities in Florida.” Months of lobbying and deliberations culminated in an announcement at a packed BOR meeting on November 23, 1999, in the Marshall Center. In recognition of USF’s growth in graduate studies and externally funded research second only to the University of Florida, the Board voted unanimously to place it with the century-old UF and Florida State University in the top tier. “This is not USF saying we are a major research university,” stated Vice President for Research George Newkome. “This is an objective third party saying this.”³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴ See, for example, *University of South Florida Office of Research: Annual Report, 1997-1998*.

³⁴⁵ Michael Reich and Lynn Rothman, “Research Won,” *USF Magazine* 41 (Winter 1999): 24-25.

USF's reputation for research at the state and national levels would not have been possible without collaboration between faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students in the lab. In 1998, the university established the Office of Undergraduate Research to provide structure and guidance to this effort. "The value of doing research as an undergraduate, even as early as the freshman year, can't be overemphasized, said Newkome. "Again and again we hear from students who have taken part in research that has raised their educational experience at USF to an entirely new level. Research is real life . . . and the discovery of that fact is often a spark that ignites a passion."³⁴⁶ In 1999, the Office of Research paid tribute these efforts with a publication entitled *Continuum: Building a Research University*. Kimberly Might Rogers wrote software to collect data and monitor patients recovering from surgery for Dr. Frank Bakke and Robert Smith in the USF Department of Anesthesiology. Elementary education major Patricia Allen put her thesis research on death and grieving into practice counseling a young student whose father had just died in an accident. "Invaluable, amazing, and fun" Sheldon Salins used to describe his work with Dr. Thomas Klein and Cathy Newton on the regulatory affects of interleukin-12 on macrophage cell production of interferon gamma. Microbiology major Elizabeth Rezai-Zadeh received an IBS-Wood Fellowship to work with Dr. Larry Solomonson and Dr. Gary Hellerman on a project to explain molecular determinants and mechanisms important in regulating the production of nitric oxide by endothelial cells. Whether conducting research in medicine, engineering, education, the sciences, arts, or humanities, hundreds of undergraduates have received an enriched academic experience and have contributed to USF's growing reputation as a world-class institution.

³⁴⁶ Office of Research, *Continuum: Building a Research University, 1998-1999*, 2.

When not in the classroom or lab, the university's over 30,000 students initiated and enjoyed an extraordinary diversity of extracurricular opportunities aimed at furthering entertainment, recreation, socializing, and education at USF. In 1990, 160 religious/ethnic, academic, honorary, international, fraternity/Hellenic, and sports/recreational organizations existed on the four campuses. Ten years later, the number had grown to 276 and included groups such as the Advertising Club, Society of Women Engineers, Panhellenic Council, Mortar Board Honor Society, Muslim Student Association, Homecoming Steering Committee, Project World Health, Pride Alliance, Resident Hall Association, and Sailing and Wind Surfing Club.

These diverse organizations sponsored or participated in an even more diverse array of public programs. Authors, activists, academics, and artists came to USF with such regularity that no one seeking something to do needed to look further than a university venue. Maya Angelou filled the Special Events Center to capacity and left 2,000 disappointed people without seats when she visited Tampa in February 1993. "An Evening with Professor Spike," featuring Spike Lee, offered insight into the filmmakers creative and political views. The Sun Dome hosted Jimmy Buffett, Frank Sinatra, Vanilla Ice, and Bob Dylan. The St. Petersburg campus welcomed Mississippi civil rights hero James Meredith, former attorney general Ramsey Clark, poet and commentator Andrei Codrescu, theologian and novelist Andrew Greeley, and Native American activist Russell Means. In April 1996 the campus participated in the first-ever Harborfest, a community-wide celebration of the harbor and its institutions. At USF Lakeland, student government held a multicultural festival in November 1994 complete with dance, music, storytelling, and art. "The world is for all of us," the student-selected theme announced.

To provide support and fellowship and to build understanding on campus, a variety of groups formed around ethnic or religious affinities. Friends of Internationals began at USF in

1998 to offer assistance and companionship to international students and has since spread to a half dozen other Florida cities. The group serves as the first point of contact for new arrivals, offers assistance getting settled, plans outings and educational programs, and will also pair a student up with a local family to help ease the transition into a new and unfamiliar environment. “There are many many people throughout the community . . . who just have a heart for these people and were getting involved,” explained organization founder Roland Grenouillou. Muslim women formed a group called the Sisters United Muslim Association to “promote Islam positively and to establish tolerance and understanding in the community” while also providing a support network for other Muslim women. Gurukulam of Tampa assists Indian students acclimate to the university, offers free tutoring, and plans recreational activities. “We had a cricket tournament,” explained member Vasanta Chivukula. “Cricket is a big, big, big game in India, just like football is over here.” The African Students Association organized Africa Week to showcase African culture and cooperated with other groups like the Club Creole to put on events.³⁴⁷

For students interested in politics, USF offered a wide variety of choices. Student Government (SG) remained an excellent way for the leaders of tomorrow to hone their skills. *Florida Leader* recognized the renewed quality of SG’s leadership in 1996 when it named the university best in the state. The magazine paid particular attention to the organization’s orientation activities, recruitment, volunteer work, more effective use of student fees, and SoberRide program. Later that year, student body president Joe Whalen was elected head of the Florida Student Association and lobbied the Board of Regents and state legislature on behalf of

³⁴⁷ *The Oracle*, March 28, 1996; Roland Grenouillou, interview by Andrew Huse, May 25, 2004; Vasanta Chivukula, interview by Andrew Huse, December 2, 2003; Joseph Quarcoo, interview by Andrew Huse, January 7, 2004.

all college students.³⁴⁸ At the state and national level, campus Democrats and Republicans registered voters, rallied supporters at election time, and invited speakers to campus. In October 1996, USF St. Petersburg cosponsored the vice-presidential debate between Democratic incumbent Al Gore and Republican challenger Jack Kemp.

Not everyone on campus took political causes seriously. In October 1995, the People Organized for Oppressed Pumpkins (POOP) voiced dissatisfaction with the Halloween display at a campus eatery. “We at POOP wish to lodge a complaint against Subway for its display of horrible, violent images of slashed and mutilated pumpkins,” the group’s spokesman stated. “Even though our members represent a very small percentage of Subway’s customers, we ask that it be more sensitive to our cause and remove these offensive and violent images.”³⁴⁹ In a **February 24, 2000**, letter to *The Oracle*, SG President Brett Chambers discussed the need for more tradition at USF, specifically a “naked tradition.” According to Chambers, “the time to try something outrageous is in college.” Many schools, including Michigan, Virginia, and Princeton, had a tradition of nude events, and he believed USF should follow suit. Chambers would not address queries as to his possible participation in such events. Understandably, student reaction to the proposed tradition was mixed.³⁵⁰

The late 1980s and 1990s proved a great era for USF athletics, with male and female athletes earning All American honors in seven different sports and men’s and women’s teams winning championships left and right. Michelle Scarborough and Matthew Suggs proved outstanding shots as they led the coed rifle team to three top-three NCAA finishes (1987-1989) and were named All Americans four years in a row (1987-1990). Susan Veasey received All

³⁴⁸ *The Oracle*, March 19, November 27, 1996; *Florida Leader* (1996): p. 7.

³⁴⁹ *The Oracle*, October 20, 1995.

³⁵⁰ *The Oracle*, February 24, March 1, 2, 2000

American status three times (1990-1992) for skill at golf, and the women's golf team won its first ever Ryder Florida women's Collegiate Golf Championship in April 1994.

In 1990, men's basketball won the Sunbelt Conference title and earned a berth in the NCAA Tournament. A narrow third-round loss to Marquette University in the National Invitation Tournament in March 1995 kept the team out of the NIT's final four. "Maybe we haven't been around for 75 years, like some other programs, but we have a foundation," explained player Jesse Salters. "We have a lot of accomplishments for a program this young. Our job is to build upon that and make things even better."³⁵¹

Off the court and on the field, the men's soccer team defeated the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to win the Metro Conference Championship in November 1991. Four years later, women's varsity soccer debuted. "This team has a lot of talent," said starting forward Ann Wagner before the season. "I think we can hold our own. And people always remember the first year. We're all really excited."³⁵² Wagner's early optimism was well placed. Her team went 11-3, including nine shutouts. In 1998 it did not lose a game and won the Conference USA Championship. Other conference championship teams included men's tennis in 1990, 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2002; women's tennis in 1991-1995, 1997, and 2000; and women's volleyball in 1986-1989, 1995, 1996, and 2002.

The USF baseball team under coaching icon Eddie Cardieri had a particularly good run during the 90s. After sweeping its opponents in the Sun Belt Conference and advancing to the NCAA Atlantic Regionals in 1990, the team debuted in the nation's top twenty-five the following year. It won nineteenth straight games before losing to Western Kentucky University in late March. Putting a positive spin on the tough loss, right fielder and future New York

³⁵¹ "Blazing a trail: USF Basketball heads into its 26th season," *USF Magazine* 37 (Fall 1995): 29.

³⁵² Conference USA: A bigger kick for women's soccer," *USF Magazine* 37 (Fall 1995): 8.

Yankee draft pick Mark Hubbard remarked, “It’s probably good the streak ended, in the sense that it’s not the focus of us winning.” “It still would have been nice to see the streak go on a little further,” he added.³⁵³

For two-time Academic All American Christopher Heintz, 1969 USF alumnus and long-time Oakland Athletics manager Tony LaRussa represented an important connection between the university and opportunities in professional baseball. Heintz credits Scott Hemond’s success in the mid 1980s with helping to put USF baseball on the map and serving as an inspiration to future players. Oakland drafted Hemond 12th in the 1986 draft and he played a variety of positions for the LaRussa from 1989-1994. Heintz helped USF win championships in the Metro Conference in 1993 and Conference USA in 1996, before joining the Minnesota Twins in the Major Leagues in 2005.³⁵⁴

USF also enjoyed great success on the diamond with its women’s softball team, begun in 1985. Under coach Ken Eriksen, the squad won conference championships in 1996-1998 and went to NCAA regional finals in 1996-1998, 2001, and 2003. Eriksen caught the eye of U.S. Olympic officials, and he joined the coaching staff for the 2004 Olympic team.

Between 1994 and 1997, Amber Wright played an important role in the softball team’s accomplishments with her “serene, calm, confident leadership style.”³⁵⁵ She chose USF after the school offered her a generous scholarship. “I was so excited . . . I marked it down on the calendar as one of the best days of my life,” she recalled. “I was elated . . . that someone thought I was good too.” Wright came to campus to sign her letter of intent with two friends from high school also chosen to play for the team. “They had a press conference at the school. . . . The

³⁵³ *The Oracle*, April 1, 1991.

³⁵⁴ Christopher Heintz, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, January 14, 2004.

³⁵⁵ *2004 USF Bulls Softball*, p. 11.

press were there taking our pictures as we signed this little piece of paper. . . . I felt like a superstar.” Her first team practices proved somewhat intimidating. I thought . . . I’m never going to start here. I’m never going to play. . . . I remember being nervous every day at practice for at least two weeks.” Wright credits friendships formed with her teammates for her transition onto the team. One of the greatest moments in her college career – the day USF defeated the University of Florida. “It was a squeeze bunt play . . . there was somebody on third base that was going to steal right on the pitch. . . . I got the bunt down . . . it was just a really neat feeling to feel like [I] had a part in winning a really big game. . . . The part that was so neat was the way that everybody else reacted. . . . Everyone just went crazy.”³⁵⁶ Wright went on to play for the Women’s Professional Fastpitch Orlando Wahoos and Tampa Bay Firestix before returning to USF as assistant softball coach in June 1998.

If USF sports fans went crazy for softball, they nearly lost their minds when the university fielded a football team in 1997. Formal plans for the expensive and controversial addition to the athletic program began under President Borkowski in October 1991 when he convened a group to study a football program’s feasibility. “I feel very good about [football] now,” he stated at the time. “There is a window of opportunity to build a competitive, high-quality football team.” Touchdown 2000, an organization determined to bring the sport to USF by the end of the decade, could barely contain its excitement. Student Government President Brian Tannebaum insisted in November 1990 “no school in Florida is more prone to getting football and more hot for football than USF. I would say five years is a realistic estimate. . . . I think the students and community would support a football team at USF more than anyone can imagine.” Amidst the growing anticipation, *Oracle* sports editor John Cotey warned everyone to

³⁵⁶ Amber Wright, interview by Andrew Huse, April 29, 2004.

remain patient. “The answer to college football is a month away. . . . The answer will go through numerous questions: Do we need football? Is the cost worth it? Can private funds be raised? Will football make that big a difference to USF’s campus and stature? Is football what we need to become one of the top ten institutions in the country?”³⁵⁷

On March 20, 1992, the President’s Committee Studying the Feasibility of Football reported to President Borkowski that it believed football was viable at USF. The following day, the president referred the matter to the Athletics Council for further consideration. As the deliberations continued, a variety of campus groups rallied supporters pro and con. An *Oracle* poll of student support for football, 94 percent of respondents favored starting a team. Enthusiasm for raising activity fees to offset the program’s costs dropped slightly to 88 percent. A Student Government rally in November 1992 featuring former Tampa Bay Buccaneer All Pro and future Pro Football Hall of Fame member Lee Roy Selmon and current Buccaneer Ron Hall proved a “**tremendous success**” in energizing program advocates. The Faculty Senate did not share the excitement for fear of “financial instability and shrinking resources” and concern over the sport’s potential impact on “the environment and culture of the USF campus.” Communications professor Manny Lucoff feared “putting football on this university’s agenda adds up to big deficits. Deficits for a school that has always operated on the cheap.”³⁵⁸

The Athletic Council made its decision on December 3, 1992. In a 15-2 vote, it passed a resolution to “initiate efforts to determine if non-state appropriated resources are present to support intercollegiate football at the University of South Florida.” The need to raise an endowment and secure BOR approval for an increase in student athletic fees did not dampen

³⁵⁷ *The Oracle*, November 8, 1990, September 3, 1991.

³⁵⁸ *The Oracle*, January 14, 30, 31, February 6, August 17, November 3-5, 10, 20, 1992; *University of South Florida Bulls Football: 2004 Football Media Guide*, 10.

Alumni Association Director Richard Lane's enthusiasm. "They want us to go and get the money? Five million? Sure! No problem." He already knew what colors he wanted to see on the uniforms, "the uniform that Notre Dame wore in the Sugar Bowl last year," he exclaimed. "Gold pants, dark green jersey, gold helmets – South Florida Bulls. It'll be awesome." In August 1993, area businessmen Frank Morsani and Payton Adams assumed leadership of the Fundraising Steering Committee for Intercollegiate Football and set about raising \$10 million, with an intermediate goal of \$5 million.³⁵⁹

To assist in developing a successful football program, on July 12, 1993, Athletic Director Paul Griffin hired Tampa sports legend and future National Football League Hall of Fame player Lee Roy Selmon to serve as associate athletic director for external affairs. "We positioned Lee Roy to be the identity of our team before we had a team," explained Griffin. Selmon saw his new job as "a lifetime opportunity to facilitate lots of young men getting an opportunity to get a college education." His coworkers realized the enormity of the challenge that lay ahead. On his first day of work they presented him with aspirin and antacids.³⁶⁰

Under Griffin's, Selmon's and President Castor's leadership, the university oversaw a fundraising drive that secured \$5 million by late June 1995. The following month, the BOR approved a \$0.50/credit hour student fee increase (expected to generate \$350,000 annually) to support football's operating budget. USF officials carefully studied NCAA rules, assessed the political climate, and surveyed community support in preparation for a formal request to the Board of Regents. Many on campus were mindful of the University of Central Florida's struggles to build a financially sound program in the early 1980s and did not want to make the

³⁵⁹ *The Oracle*, December 3, 4, 1992; *University of South Florida Bulls Football: 2004 Football Media Guide*, 10.

³⁶⁰ Paul Griffin, interview by Andrew Huse, September 16, 2004; Lee Roy Selmon, interview by Andrew Huse, April 7, 2004; *The Oracle*, July 15, August 24, 1993.

same mistakes. “We knew we were only going to have once chance,” stated Griffin. “We had to be really prepared.” Castor lobbied BOR Chancellor Charlie Reed, who had reservations about a football program at USF.³⁶¹

On August 29, 1995, BOR members visited USF to view athletic facilities and seemed favorably disposed. Laurey Stryker remembered meeting with the Regents. “We had this parade of witnesses, which included one of the priests in town [Monsignor Higgins of St. Lawrence Catholic Church]. . . . Whoever was chairing the Board of Regents said ‘now you’ve even got [God on] your side!’” In the end, the BOR’s athletic committee voted 6-1 to approve creation of a Division I-AA football program. “It’s not done yet,” explained President Castor. “One more meeting, but I think that you could say that it looks like it’s going to happen.” On September 15, 1995, at a full BOR meeting in Orlando, the group voted 13-1 to approve USF’s football program.³⁶²

Upon the announcement, the dozens of USF students in attendance burst into applause and presented each BOR member with a green and gold souvenir football. “It’s about time we had football, stated Tampa regent and alumnus Dennis Ross. “This was the missing link for our university. I’m very proud, as are the other 100,000 people of the alumni of that institution.” Regent Elizabeth Lindsey warned her fellow board members, “To Gators, Seminoles, Rattlers, Knights, and Hurricanes among the regents, you now have a ‘Lady Bull’ to contend with.” Freshman Barry Matthews looked forward to the school unity and campus activities football would bring. Paul Griffin beamed, “You can be assured that there are a lot of young men who would want to be the first people to play for the University of South Florida. Recruiting them

³⁶¹ Betty Castor, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 16, 2005; Paul Griffin, interview by Andrew Huse, September 16, 2004.

³⁶² *The Oracle*, August 28, 30, September 15, 1995; Laurey Stryker, interview by Andrew Huse, February 12, 2004; John Gerdes, et al., “Field of Dreams,” *USF Magazine* 37 (Fall 1995): 3-4.

will not be that difficult.” Tampa civic officials got so excited, they proclaimed a USF Day in celebration of the new football program. On campus, a rally to encourage school spirit and share enthusiasm over the decision brought out a large crowd. “This is the kind of excitement football will bring,” stated Student Government President David Quilleon. “Football is something you can get excited about as soon as you start fall classes”³⁶³

Before recruiting could begin, USF needed a head coach and a place to play home games. Griffin negotiated with Tampa Stadium, home of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, to play there, and in late 1995 he interviewed four people for the coaching job. Kansas State University defensive coordinator Jim Leavitt received the most attention. A graduate of Dixie Hollins High School in St. Petersburg, Leavitt had built the Kansas State Wildcats into the top ranked defense in the nation. He first heard of the opening at USF from long-time friend and baseball coach Eddie Cardieri and wanted the head coaching position “in the worst way.” Stated Leavitt, “What a great challenge – to start football from scratch. . . . To be able to come home to do what I love. . . . Most people in life never have that opportunity.” On December 3, 1995, he got his dream job. He finished a great season with the Wildcats by winning the Holiday Bowl and shortly thereafter moved to Tampa.³⁶⁴

By February 1996, thirty-six players had signed letters of intent to play for Coach Leavitt. In the end, USF’s first-ever recruiting class would grow to eighty-one. Almost all had played their high school ball in Florida. “To be quite honest with you, it wasn’t a hard sell,” said Leavitt of his early recruiting efforts. “We got some great guys.” “It was totally from scratch . . . some very humble beginnings. . . . Everybody just supported each other. . . . We [knew] that it was

³⁶³ *The Oracle*, September 18, 20, December 1, 1995; Paul Griffin, interview by Andrew Huse, September 16, 2004.

³⁶⁴ *The Oracle*, December 1, 12, 1995, January 8, 1996; Jim Leavitt, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 11, 2004.

going to take time and a lot of hard work,” remembered Selmon of the first year. Chad Barnhardt, the team’s first quarterback, took a circuitous route to USF. As a Lake Wales High School graduate, he passed up an offer from Coach Cardieri to play baseball. Before coming to Tampa, Coach Leavitt tried to recruit Barnhardt to play football at Kansas State University. Barnhardt chose the University of South Carolina but did not get many opportunities to start. He returned to Florida soon after Leavitt joined USF. It was the right decision. The coaches were “very good guys. . . .They were honest and fair. . . . There’s a lot to be said about that group of coaches. They were outstanding people. . . .They taught me a lot.”³⁶⁵

Jim Leavitt proved a great teacher on the field and a popular personality in the community. On September 5, 1996, he held his inaugural weekly radio show, “Jim Leavitt’s USF Bull Session,” in anticipation of the team’s first practice scheduled for the following day. Several weeks later, 5,000 people and one angry bull turned out for the team’s first intrasquad scrimmage. Rocky I-AA, a 2,000-pound, three-year-old gray-black Brahman bull, stood in a pen behind the soccer stadium’s bleachers that day and did not interact with fans. It’s best to keep the bull to himself, warned owner Robert Woodard, Jr. “They’re a mean species.” Rocky I-AA mellowed over time and served as a major attraction for excited fans before home games. After two seasons with the Bulls, Rocky I-AA’s owner retired him to the comforts of a pasture.³⁶⁶

As the team practiced, Griffin and Selmon finalized the inaugural season’s schedule, and fans got excited. Eleven schools confirmed their intention to play against USF. With dates and opponents announced, fans opened their wallets. By June 1997 over 13,000 people had paid to attend every home game, thereby breaking the national season ticket sales record for Division I-AA schools. Alumnus Joyce Nader and her husband were among the new fan base. “We were

³⁶⁵ Chad Barnhardt, interview by Danielle Riley, May 25, 2004.

³⁶⁶ *The Oracle*, September 24, 1996

real excited when we found out USF was getting a football team. . . .I think it has brought us even closer to the university because it gives you a tie in to the university every single year.”³⁶⁷

On September 6, 1997, the Bulls played their first-ever intercollegiate football game against the Kentucky Wesleyan Panthers before a capacity crowd of 49, 212 fans at Tampa Stadium. The coin toss featured University of Tampa and ex-Miami Dolphin and San Francisco 49er star Freddie Solomon, and the marching band from Bloomingdale High School played at halftime (USF would not have its own Herd of Thunder marching band until 1999). The Bulls won the game 80-3 and scored eleven touchdowns on 548 yards of offense.

For junior starting quarterback Chad Barnhardt the game “was a lot of fun. . . . Everything clicked. [It was] a perfect day. It didn’t rain. It was just beautiful. [There was a] huge crowd, and everybody was so excited.” Lee Roy Selmon “was so emotionally charged up about it, as was everyone else. . . . I’ll never forget. It was a great game, and our Bulls had their inaugural win. . . . It was a lot of excitement for a lot of reasons and maybe a little bit of stress too.” Coach Leavitt recalled that “everything went so well -- it was an incredible night.” There was one little exception, however. Before the game, kicker (and future Arizona Cardinal) Bill Gramatica informed him that they had forgotten the kicking tees. Thinking fast, Leavitt asked former Buccaneer Lee Roy Selmon to try and find some in the stadium. After much running around, tees were eventually located and the game began, much to the coach’s relief.³⁶⁸

USF lost more games than it won in 1997, finishing 5-6, but the season offered plenty of valuable playing experience for the young team, generated fan support, and set the program on a

³⁶⁷ Joyce Nader, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 12, 2003; “Just Do It,” *USF Magazine* 39 (Summer 1997): 26.

³⁶⁸ *The Oracle*, September 14, 1997; Lee Roy Selmon, interview by Andrew Huse, April 7, 2004; Chad Barnhardt, interview by Danielle Riley, May 25, 2004; Jim Leavitt, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 11, 2004.

firm footing. The Bulls opened 1998 ranked number twenty-four in the *Sporting News* Division I-AA preseason poll and beat The Citadel 45-6 in its first game at the new Raymond James Stadium. Between 1998 and 2003, the football team enjoyed winning records and in 2000 officially entered Division I-A. Between September 2000 and October 2003, the team enjoyed a school record twenty-one-game home winning streak.

Chad Barnhardt enjoyed emerging traditions within the football program during the 1997 and 1998 seasons. Before home games, players met together at Fontana Hall for their pre-game meal. For road games, a chartered plane carried only players, coaches, parents, and boosters. Many players lived together in the dorms, and strong relationships off the field bred greater success on the field. Holding team meetings in the trailers that housed the football offices “was a tradition that a lot of people kind of joked about,” Barnhardt said. Coach Leavitt had his own positive memories of those first few seasons. He took pride in establishing a disciplined program with players focused both on their education and careers. Quarterback Marquel Blackwell earned I-A national player of the week honors in *USA Today* for his outstanding performance against the University of Pittsburgh Panthers on September 8, 2001. USF had four players who made All-Conference USA in 2003, and five players earned Academic All-American recognition in the team’s first three years of competition. In 2001, Bill Gramatica, Kenyatta Jones, and Anthony Henry found work in the National Football League. In all, two-dozen USF players saw action in the NFL between 2001 and 2004, including linebacker Kawika Mitchell, selected by the Kansas City Chiefs in the second round of the 2003 draft. Their achievements “gave us a million dollars worth of worldwide advertising,” Leavitt reflected.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁹ Tom Wagner, “Three for the Show,” *USF Magazine* 43 (Spring 2001): 16-17; Jim Leavitt, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, March 11, 2004.

Having achieved many successes across university life, President Castor made the decision to leave USF in late 1999. “Actually, I did not seek another career opportunity,” she explained. “I was very happy at the university. Sometime during the late spring, a colleague submitted her name for president of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in Washington, DC. “That was the beginning of a process where they recruited me. . . . They were looking for someone who had a career in education, but who understood the issues surrounding teachers, and they really wanted someone with some university understanding. It was a position that was very intriguing to me. . . . So I became very excited about that. . . . I think it was more the challenge than anything else that led me to accept that position.” Leaving USF in September “was a very tough decision,” she said.³⁷⁰

President’s Castor’s farewell party on September 10 at the MLK Plaza proved a bittersweet affair. Two years in the making, the “Herd of Thunder” marching band debuted at the event. She received a framed copy of the USF fight song and a certificate from Student Government President Brett Chambers naming her an honorary lifetime member of the SG Senate. Student Affairs announced their intention to rename Gamma Hall in her honor. Athletic Director Paul Griffin called her “the first lady of USF football” and presented her with lifetime tickets to home games. “She picked up the ball and ran with it and crossed the goal line,” he said. She was especially effective in deflecting the bureaucratic interference in Tallahassee. . . . Without her . . . [football] wouldn’t have been a reality.”³⁷¹

President Castor’s vision extended to other areas as well. According to Dean Emeritus of the Florida Mental Health Institute Max Dertke, she “realized the potential and did more than

³⁷⁰ Betty Castor, interview with Mark I. Greenberg, March 16, 2005; *The Oracle*, August 23, 1999.

³⁷¹ Paul Griffin, interview by Andrew Huse, September 16, 2004; *The Oracle*, September 10, 13, 1999.

any other president to maintain the institute. She realized what it could be and realized how the state could benefit from a training and research institute that was producing knowledge about mental health.” Other faculty and staff shared Griffin’s and Dertke’s praise. “You began to see the political [clout] of USF emerge based on the experiences that she brought,” noted Director of Admissions and Registration Vicki Ahrens. “Her goal was to make USF the university of choice -- the whole Research I designation and lobbying to make sure we got our share.” School of Library and Information Science Professor Kathleen McCook acknowledged that the president “beautified the campus. Community engagement started with her. The medical school grew. It was a positive time in the ‘90s.”³⁷²

Observers might claim that the previous four decades had been “a positive time” overall for the University of South Florida. A comparison of 1960/1961 and 2000/2001 figures reveals remarkable growth. Enrollment rose from 1,997 to nearly 36,000 students; faculty positions increased from 109 to 1,843; A&P employees climbed from 30 to 472; and USPS lines mushroomed from 202 to 1,912. USF conferred not a single degree in 1960/1961, 3,477 degrees in 1970/1971, and 6,512 in 2000/2001. Only one person received a Ph.D. during the 1970/1971 school year. Three decades later USF conferred 131 doctorates. With more students, faculty, and staff on multiple campuses, the university needed facilities to accommodate them. Ten buildings offered a total of 267,917 sq/ft in 1960/1961, but 357 buildings with 7.7 million sq/ft existed forty years later. More people and facilities required more funding to operate, and USF’s total budget ballooned from \$2.4 million the year university opened to \$793.9 million at

³⁷² Max Dertke, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 6, 2004; Vicki Ahrens, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 3, 2003; Kathleen McCook, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 20, 2004.

the turn of the twenty-first century. The USF Foundation grew from infancy in 1960 to hold \$351.5 million in assets in 2000.³⁷³

In USF's last "State of the University" address of the twentieth century, Provost and Acting President Thomas J. Tighe looked to the future. He touched upon long-term enrollment plans to increase graduate and medical students and to grow undergraduate enrollment at the regional campuses, goals consistent with a Research I university. He addressed efforts to increase research, scholarship, and creative activity. He emphasized the need to foster interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research and education; and he encouraged greater engagement with the local community and region. "I believe that we have a significant opportunity to make a name for ourselves as the best in several areas," he stated. "I believe that USF truly can become a nationally recognized university of excellence. . . . I truly believe in the long-range potential of USF."³⁷⁴

From humble beginnings at mid century, USF's size, diversity, research accomplishments, and big-time NCAA sports revealed considerable institutional maturity four decades later. In July 2000, new leadership arrived to harness the university's strengths and direct its energies into the new millennium.

³⁷³ *University of South Florida 2000-2001 Fact Book*, 6-10, 28.

³⁷⁴ Thomas J. Tighe, "State of the University," October 21, 1999.

Chapter 5: Focus on Top Fifty

“The first day of your presidency is a very important day to plan . . . because it’s very symbolic,” stated USF’s sixth president, Judy Genshaft. On her first day, July 5, 2000, the high-energy new leader hosted distinguished faculty members for breakfast at the Lifsey House. She walked over to the Library, where she accepted a \$1 million donation from the Tampa Bay History Center for the USF Libraries’ Florida Studies Center. She ate lunch with the University Leadership Council; toured the East Holly Apartments, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center, and several construction projects; met with student groups; and had dinner with regional campus directors. “She’s very approachable,” noticed Assistant Director for Student Affairs Debbie Lum. “You can walk right up to her and shake her hand. Most students don’t get to do that to their university president until commencement.” After nearly seventeen hours of meetings, tours, and shaking hands, the president’s day ended after 10:00 PM that evening.³⁷⁵

Genshaft’s first day underscored an impressive work ethic and dogged determination to advance the interests of her university and the community. “I grew up in an environment where success is valued. You had to work hard and give back to others and the community,” she said of her upbringing in Canton, Ohio. “I was expected to succeed and to make a difference.” Rather than enter the family’s nationally recognized meat packing business, Genshaft chose to make a difference in counseling psychology. Upon graduation from Kent State University, she accepted her first faculty position at Ohio State University in 1976, where she researched and wrote extensively about gifted students and intellectual assessment. She served as department chair, chair of the Faculty Senate, presidential intern, and associate provost for regional campuses before accepting the deanship of the School of Education at the University at Albany

³⁷⁵ Judy Genshaft, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, April 23, 2004; *The Oracle*, July 6, 2000

of the State University of New York in 1992. Just three years later, she became provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Dr. Genshaft first heard of the University of South Florida in the 1980s when some of her psychology colleagues left Ohio State to accept positions in the College of Education. Years later, when contacted about the presidency, the prospect of coming to USF intrigued her. “I was really very excited,” she recalled. As an applicant, her experiences at Ohio State and SUNY Albany proved particularly valuable. “I understood regional campuses – that was important.” She had participated in collective bargaining and faculty negotiations. She could draw from lessons learned working with the New York Legislature, developing and implementing strategic plans, and fundraising.³⁷⁶

In January 2000 Genshaft learned that she was one of eight remaining candidates for the USF presidency. Following an interview in Tampa, which showed her strong command of the university’s past and a clear vision for its future, she became one of three finalists. “The main thing you want to do is keep that momentum,” she told audiences during her interviews. “There is always new ground to plow.” The search process also included an extensive set of interviews in Albany, which she arranged for BOR Chancellor Adam Herbert and several search committee members. The group met with politicians, faculty, students, and community leaders to assess her qualifications and suitability. “It is difficult in the interview to develop an insight,” said Herbert about his visit to New York. “When I was in Albany, the opportunity to visit the incubation facility and see how critical her role is -- it is something you cannot see from a candidate in an interview process.” Despite the rigors of the search, Genshaft remained optimistic and encouraged by supporters. “As soon as I visited and talked to people here, I felt a real

³⁷⁶ Judy Genshaft, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, April 23, 2004; Michael Reich, “Meet the President,” *USF Magazine* 43 (Winter 2001): 14.

connection . . . that this was the right place for me and my talents,” she explained. “I could really see how I could make a difference here.” In March 2000, the Board of Regents voted to give Judy Genshaft her chance.³⁷⁷

Just a month on the job, President Genshaft held a retreat with the university’s top officials to discuss how USF could achieve greater national prominence. “We are very comprehensive, but we absolutely have to focus on our strengths to get better,” she told those assembled. “We don’t have enough money to go around for everything.” She asked her top leaders, “Are you setting the national standard for others?” And if not, what will it take for us to do so?” The leadership team she assembled in her first months in Tampa shared her vision of USF as a nationally prominent research university, and the president’s excitement about the future soared. “There is a tremendous amount of desire among faculty, staff and students to move to the next level,” she said. We’re ready to move forward.”³⁷⁸

Efforts to create a clear vision and enhanced national position for the University of South Florida received further amplification in President Genshaft’s first “State of the University” address, in October 2000, and in her Inaugural Address in February 2001. She spoke of four goals for the university: to become into a premier research university; to offer high-quality undergraduate and graduate instruction; to strengthen social, educational, and cultural development in Florida and the Tampa Bay region; and to bolster economic development through research and teaching that drive job creation. To reach these goals, the president emphasized diversity. “Because of our sense of place as an urban and metropolitan institution, a commitment to diversity is more natural at the University of South Florida than perhaps at some

³⁷⁷ Judy Genshaft, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, April 23, 2004; Reich, “Meet the President,” 15.

³⁷⁸ Reich, “Meet the President,” 16-17.

other types of institutions.” She asserted that USF should measure its development as a major national research institution according to nine criteria established in a recent national study: total research and development expenditures, federally sponsored research and development spending, the number of National Academies faculty members and prestigious faculty awards, doctoral degrees awarded, postdoctoral appointments, SAT scores, and endowment size and annual contributions. She acknowledged that only four state universities in the nation ranked in “The Top American Research Institutions – 2000” and proposed that “we begin to examine what makes Berkeley, UCLA, Michigan and Chapel Hill so strong, and start paying attention to what we need to do to match those strengths. . . . I believe it is time to engage in a process of rethinking where we are going, and how everything we are doing contributes to what we want to be.”³⁷⁹

Fulfilling the vision and goals articulated by President Genshaft and embraced by most faculty, staff, and students would not be easy. USF faced a series of challenges between 2000 and 2003 that required considerable attention and redirected energies for a time. As the university had done time and again in the past, it managed to overcome adversity, find solutions, and grow in the process.

The first challenge involved Florida’s evolving system of higher education. In spring 2000, in response to constitutional changes that restructured the Florida cabinet, the Legislature engaged in an overall reorganization of state education governance and voted to put the Board of Regents under “sunset review.” After much discussion, the Legislature created a new K-20 system with thirteen-member local Boards of Trustees (BOT) for each state university and a Florida Board of Education to oversee issues of statewide consequence affecting kindergarten

³⁷⁹ “President Genshaft’s State of the University Address,” October 4, 2000; and “President Genshaft’s Inaugural Address,” February 23, 2001.

through doctoral programs. The reorganization plan also provided for regional campus boards in St. Petersburg and Sarasota. The legislative changes removed universities from state agency status and offered them greater fiscal autonomy and flexibility. Ultimate authority over strategic planning, tuition, budget requests, bachelor's and master's programs, property and finance, salaries and personnel, and academic freedom and student conduct fell to the Trustees.

Anticipating the governor's appointments, due out any day, President Genshaft acknowledged some anxiousness. "This is like my first year all over again," she said. "This is a whole new system we're putting into place. That's why it's so dramatic. So it's a matter of getting [the trustees] to see the potential I see in this university."³⁸⁰

Governor Jeb Bush appointed USF's charter board in the summer of 2001, which included twelve business and civic leaders and the Student Government president. Florida Senator (and past SG president) Les Miller (D-Tampa) had played a key role in ensuring a student voice in the BOT. At its first meeting on August 17, the board elected real estate advisor Richard A. Beard as its chair and attorney Rhea F. Law as vice chair, and the group got down to business developing policies and procedures and reviewing USF's mission and goals. "This is a group of powerful, well-connected people," said USF Associate Vice President for Government Relations Kathleen Betancourt of the new board. "They have ties to the community, but they also have influence in Tallahassee." President Genshaft also seemed pleased. "We got people who really understand the nature of research and how it provides a service to everybody in the state," she said. "We're different than a teaching institution or a community college. I admire the governor's choices."³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ Michael Reich, "Welcome Aboard," *USF Magazine* 43 (Summer 2001): 26; *the Tampa Tribune*, June 17, 2001.

³⁸¹ *Ibid*; *The Tampa Tribune*, June 26, 2001.

Not eighteen months into the new governance structure, the educational landscape changed once again when Florida voters overwhelmingly passed Constitutional Amendment 11 in November 2002. The amendment retained Boards of Trustees to administer each public university and added a faculty voice to that body. A new Board of Governors would “operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system.”³⁸² The amendment’s chief backers, led by U.S. Senator and former Florida Governor Bob Graham, opposed what they saw as “meddling politicians” and the “wasteful duplication of facilities or programs.” They wanted to resurrect a single state university system comprised of all public universities and reduce the governor’s and legislature’s control. “I am not pleased with where I think we are headed, and I would like to play a role in reversing that decline,” the senator stated. Ex Board of Regent and USF Sarasota Community Leadership Council member Liz Lindsay saw additional benefits to a new board. “I think Florida needs a Board of Governors . . . because we are a large system,” she stated. “I think we need a coordinating body because we cannot afford repetition at all eleven state universities. They have to specialize, particularly in the upper divisions, and I think that takes some coordination.”³⁸³

Graham’s initiative also garnered support from many public school teachers and university faculty. The 3,200-member United Faculty of Florida (UFF) had lost the right to represent university faculty members in collective bargaining when the Board of Regents folded, and the Boards of Trustees contained no faculty representation. “To us, this is a matter of survival,” explained UFF President Tom Auxter. USF Past president Cecil Mackey weighed in from his post at Michigan State University. “This is a wise plan, brought forward by a respected

³⁸² Article IX, Section 7, *Florida Constitution*.

³⁸³ Peter Schmidt, “Flip-Flop in Florida?” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 1, 2002; Liz Lindsay, interview by Andrew Huse, June 11, 2004.

public official who has a wealth of knowledge of higher education. It offers the best way of assuring excellence in Florida's public universities,” he wrote in a *Tampa Tribune* opinion piece. USF’s Faculty Senate did not take a position on the amendment, reflecting a division among faculty at the university and a feeling that it was not the senate's role to weigh in.³⁸⁴

Florida’s university presidents, Boards of Trustees, and Student Government presidents strongly opposed Amendment 11 as “potentially disastrous” and bristled at attempts to convert “well functioning local university boards of trustees to administrative boards with little or no real power.” Opponents saw the proposed changes as “turning back the clock to a time of total Tallahassee control of every aspect of university life” and wanted to grow the economic development and collaboration opportunities fostered by the 2000 reorganization of higher education. “Help us set our universities free to pursue research and economic development in partnership with other education institutions and with the private sector,” they implored.³⁸⁵

In keeping with Florida voters’ wishes, in December 2002 Governor Bush announced his appointments to the Board of Governors, effective the following month. “I trust they will serve Florida’s university system fairly and bring Florida’s students to even greater levels of achievement,” he said. The seventeen-member group (fourteen appointed by the governor) included USF Board of Trustees member and Outback Steakhouse founder, chairman, and CEO Chris Sullivan. “We’re just looking for a fair shake,” said USF BOT Chair Dick Beard. “We want our voice to be heard.”³⁸⁶

President Genshaft experienced firsthand the impact of Florida’s tumultuous changes in higher education between 2000 and 2003. Hired by a Board of Regents, she reported to a Board

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*; *The Tampa Tribune*, October 5, 27, 2002.

³⁸⁵ “University Presidents Opposed to Amendment 11,” *EveryMonday*, October 28, 2002 (http://www.imakenews.com/orcc/e_article000103861.cfm)

³⁸⁶ *The Tampa Tribune*, December 24, 2002.

of Trustees a year later. Less than two years after that, a new Board of Governors oversaw higher education in the state but had yet to work out its precise relationship with local BOTs. Sensing widespread concern about university governance, the president released a memorandum to faculty and staff on January 13, 2003. She assured the university community on things that had not changed – academic freedom, guidelines for evaluation and tenure and promotion, employment status and classification, and benefits. Far more complicated were issues related to employment contracts and collective bargaining. Historically, the BOR and statewide unions negotiated the collective bargaining agreements that set the terms and conditions of employment for faculty and staff throughout the state university system. President Genshaft stated that recent governance changes transferred legal authority to each Board of Trustees to negotiate for its university. Negotiations could begin as soon as the Public Employees Relations Commission certified the exclusive bargaining agents for USF’s employees. In place of expired contracts, temporary rules implemented by the BOT would govern relations until permanent rules could be negotiated. After nearly a year and half of protracted negotiations, collective bargaining agreements were reached with unions representing faculty, graduate students, and police officers.

Concurrent with and related to dramatic changes in the governance structure for state universities of Florida, pressures mounted to split USF St. Petersburg and USF Sarasota from the Tampa campus and to create independent public institutions. For decades tensions (real and perceived) had existed over the allocation of resources, admissions, expansion of academic programs, hiring and promotion of faculty, and other key decision-making powers. Some faculty, staff, and students on the regional campuses, with support from powerful state legislators, bristled at what they perceived as Tampa’s dominance over the university’s affairs and unwillingness to support more rapid growth in Sarasota and St. Petersburg.

Under USF interim president Richard Peck (December 1999-June 2000), these tensions boiled over into a lively discussion about the university's future. Genshaft began her term as president defending USF from proposed legislation to create independent universities in Sarasota and St. Petersburg.³⁸⁷ In a November 2000 presentation to the Board of Regents, she defended multi-campus structures and outlined her plans to enable USF's regional campuses to thrive. "Multi-campus universities are one of the great innovations in American higher education because they allow states to maximize their investment in university infrastructure to serve the largest number of people and communities," she said. She addressed the benefits to students attending "a university that is accredited, well established, and well known." She noted benefits to taxpayers through the fiscal advantages of shared technology, purchasing, and economic development. "Every Chamber of Commerce and other group we've talked to has responded with enthusiastic written resolutions of support for keeping USF together," the president reported. "What they want is for USF to expand its comprehensive research university presence in the region."

President Genshaft also acknowledged areas of concern on the regional campuses and the need to grant them a level of autonomy commensurate with their institutional maturity. On the St. Petersburg campus she outlined plans to add more full degree programs, to organize the campus into three colleges, and to increase enrollment significantly. She recommended that USF St. Petersburg develop its own legislative budget request and that state funding generated from its enrollment and tuition payments go directly to the campus. She suggested that it assume some administrative support services, such as admissions and financial aid, and she indicated her

³⁸⁷ *The Oracle*, March 9, 2000.

desire that USF St. Petersburg explore separate accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

At USF Sarasota/Manatee, the president called for more course offerings and additional degree programs, students, and faculty. She recommended, in the short term, that the campus retain close ties to academic departments in Tampa but acknowledged that continued growth would bring more autonomy. As for USF Sarasota/Manatee's relationship with New College, President Genshaft recognized their "completely different missions and student bodies." She proposed to secure and develop new campus sites for USF Sarasota/Manatee and to appoint a campus CEO. New College would receive greater autonomy and strong encouragement to seek separate accreditation.

As USF's youngest campus, Lakeland should continue its close administrative relationship with Tampa, the president contended. Growing enrollment figures and plans to expand degree offerings placed considerable strain on space at the joint-use facility shared with Polk Community College. Funds were needed for a new facility and a long-term strategic plan for growth and development on campus was underway.³⁸⁸

Support from President Genshaft and other top USF officials for a reorganized regional campus structure and considerable lobbying at the local level tempered efforts to break off USF St. Petersburg and Sarasota/Manatee as independent institutions. Instead, in its spring 2001 session, the Florida Legislature mandated that the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee be operated and maintained as separate organizations and budget entities of the University of South Florida, and that all legislative appropriations appear as separate line items in the annual General Appropriations Act. The

³⁸⁸ "President Genshaft's Presentation to the Board of Regents," November 16, 2000, Miami, Florida.

legislation stated that students enrolled at any USF campus would have the same rights and obligations, and it called for the creation of separate campus boards appointed by USF's Board of Trustees and individual campus executive officers selected by the president. Contracts for central support services would enable the economical provision of payroll processing, accounting, technology, construction administration and other desired services across campus. Legislators also requested that the St. Petersburg and Sarasota/Manatee campuses apply to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) for separate accreditation. Another statute broke New College from the University of South Florida and made it the state's eleventh independent public university effective July 1, 2001.³⁸⁹

Legislative changes came at a particularly significant time, as USF prepared for its own decennial SACS reaccreditation in 2005. To address SACS questions about modifications in USF's structure and St. Petersburg's application for separate accreditation, the university sought to clarify its organizational makeup. In October 2004, the Board of Trustees approved designation of the university's evolving multi-campus arrangement with fiscally autonomous yet complementary campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota/Manatee, and Lakeland as a "system." "The USF System provides significant benefits to students, taxpayers, the broader Tampa Bay region as well as the State of Florida," university officials stated. "Through coordinating the delivery of higher education across four campuses, the USF System provides students with increased access to, and choice of a high quality University education." Although new to Florida, multi-campus university systems are common in the United States. USF has patterned its future development after the University of Houston System, with four separately

³⁸⁹ The 2001 Florida Statutes, Title XV1, 240.527, 240.5275. and 240.5277.

accredited campuses under a single governing board, each campus with its own mission, and each campus with an executive officer that reports to a system chancellor/president.³⁹⁰

Alice Murray, associate vice president of administrative and academic support services on the Lakeland campus, understood the benefits to a system approach at USF. “We would not be doing our community a good service by breaking away from USF and obviously our commitment is to our community,” she said. “Autonomy allows each regional campus to focus on the needs of their respective communities and then to build the programs needed.”³⁹¹

As President Genshaft worked to implement new state-mandated governance structures and to keep USF’s multi-campus system together, she found herself embroiled in a controversy that threatened years of progress increasing diversity at the university. Barely a month after her arrival, the president learned about allegations of racial discrimination and retaliation against an African American female basketball player. Initial events, which occurred in early 1999, received attention from Athletic Department officials and appeared resolved, but several months later problems resurfaced and the coach dismissed the player from the team. The athlete filed an official complaint alleging discrimination and retaliation, and the university began an investigation through its Equal Opportunity Affairs (EOA) office. Shortly thereafter, the basketball player filed a federal lawsuit, to which the student athlete’s attorney subsequently added additional plaintiffs from the team and its staff.³⁹²

In the wake of considerable negative media attention, President Genshaft sought to bolster the community’s and public’s confidence in USF’s integrity by commissioning an

³⁹⁰ “University of South Florida System: Frequently Asked Questions,” and State University System of Florida Chancellor Debra Austin to USF President Judy Genshaft, March 24, 2005, University Archives, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

³⁹¹ Alice Murray, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 27, 2003.

³⁹² *The Oracle*, August 29, 30, September 8, 20, 28, October 3, 11, 25, 26, November 1, 16, 17, 27, 2000.

independent inquiry led by Judge Joseph Hatchett, Florida's first African American justice of the Florida Supreme Court and later Chief of the U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. Hatchett set about reviewing the university's policies and procedures for dealing with allegations of racial discrimination, an approach that included but expanded beyond the women's basketball case.

In October 2000, the EOA released its findings and concluded that reasonable cause existed to believe that the basketball coach had engaged in retaliation. The university terminated her contract. In January 2001, Judge Hatchett completed his report. He recommended that the EOA investigate all formal or informal complaints of racial discrimination and suggested procedural changes to the timetable for complaints, investigations, and appeals. President Genshaft worked closely with top administrators to improve the organizational structure that oversees diversity and equal opportunity actions. A new, high profile Diversity and Equal Opportunity Office with an associate vice president in charge joined the president's staff and advised her on diversity and equal opportunity compliance issues. Following the resignation of Paul Griffin, President Genshaft filled the athletic director position with Lee Roy Selmon. His college and NFL careers, key role bringing football to USF, and active participation in civic affairs made him a popular candidate at USF and in the Tampa Bay community.³⁹³

Other positive changes occurred as well. In April 2001, the president appointed distinguished USF sociologist David Stamps as her provost and vice president for academic affairs, following a national search. Stamps had joined the university in 1982 and served for five years as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences before becoming interim provost in July 2000. Over his career, he exhibited a deep commitment to diversity, as demonstrated by his scholarly

³⁹³ Judy Genshaft and Jack Wheat, "Leading a University During Controversy: Challenges Faced by a New President," in *Leadership Amid Controversy: Presidential Perspectives*, ed. Judith Block McLaughlin, New Directions for Higher Education Series, no. 128 (Winter 2004): 47-60.

work on race and ethnicity and his position as chairman of the research committee for diversity. “I think diversity has become a priority of the entire university,” he said. “When you have an institution this size, incidents will happen. But hopefully we’ll create a climate that when something does go wrong, people will say, ‘That’s very unfortunate, but I think USF reacted in the appropriate manner.’”

The permanent appointment made Stamps the highest-ranking African American administrator in USF history. “He has been a stalwart in championing excellence and integrity in USF’s academic programs,” said Genshaft of the hire. “David is the right person at the right time.”³⁹⁴

Provost Stamps developed a faculty enhancement program designed to encourage the hiring of minority faculty, and the university brought aboard Doug Hartnagel as associate vice president for enrollment planning and management to increase minority recruitment and retention. In 2001 USF received a W. K. Kellogg Foundation Grant to address the dearth of Hispanic students on campus. ENLACE, Engaging Latino Communities for Education, involved thirteen southern universities in an effort to increase the number of Latinos attaining college degrees. Under Donna Parrino’s direction, ENLACE at USF engaged several Hillsborough County public schools with large Hispanic populations, Hillsborough Community College, and the Hispanic Services Council to lessen drop out rates and increase student performance. “She has been most supportive of diversity,” said Parrino of President’ Genshaft. The Latino Advisory Committee has had good dialogue with her. She had pledged her support to make changes.”³⁹⁵

USF’s efforts paid dividends. In 2001-2002, the university led the state in minority enrollment with a student body that comprised 11.1 percent African Americans, 9.8 percent

³⁹⁴ *St. Petersburg Times* and *The Tampa Tribune*, April 10, 2001.

³⁹⁵ Donna Parrino, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 8, 2003.

Hispanics, and 5.3 percent Asian-Pacific Islanders. The following year, the Faculty Academic Enrichment Program helped recruit a strong group of minority faculty. USF took pride in August 2005 when The Princeton Review's *The Best 361 Colleges 2006 Edition* named the school number eighteen on its diverse student population list. "This is yet another indication of USF's progress toward becoming one of America's top public research universities," said President Genshaft. "Our primary mission is serving students, and we are proud that those surveyed for this publication spoke so highly of the education they received."

On the morning of September 11, 2001, few USF students, faculty, or staff were able to concentrate on USF's educational mission. Shortly before 9:00 AM, the first of two commercial airliners slammed into and ultimately brought down the World Trade Center's twin towers (WTC). In Washington, DC a third plane smashed into the Pentagon. A fourth plane crashed in a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The physical destruction, loss of life, and discovery that Islamic terrorists had hatched and carried out the attacks shook the nation to its core and unleashed intense worldwide attention on international terrorist organizations.

As news of the devastation in New York and Washington spread at USF and elsewhere, people struggled to understand how and why the events had occurred and their implications for the future. Mathematics graduate student and African Students Association member Joseph Quarcoo was on campus when he learned what had happened. "It's a shock . . . what people can do to this great country," he said. Persian Club president Amin Mokrivala recalled that 9/11 "did not really change the way that I was treated on campus . . . but it definitely changed the way I felt."³⁹⁶

³⁹⁶ Joseph Quarcoo, interview by Andrew Huse, January 7, 2004; Amin Mokrivala, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, April 12, 2004.

For USF associate professor Robin Murphy and her lab of graduate assistants, there was little time for reflection. Within just several hours of the WTC's collapse, they sprung into action to join rescue efforts at the site. Their shoebox-sized robots, which include cameras, heat sensors, microphones, and lights, were extremely helpful for New York City's urban search and rescue mission. The group drove seventeen hours to the WTC site and arrived in the early morning hours. "When we arrived the first impression of New York was that of a fall, crisp night," Murphy remembered. "As you got closer, it was literally covered in gray ash. Cars looked as if they were covered in snow. Tons of paper was jammed into building crevices."

Following security clearance, Murphy and her students set to work instructing emergency teams on the technology's ability to navigate tight spaces and transmit data and video images back to rescue workers. "There were concerns about collapses and temperatures," explained graduate student Brian Minten. That's where the robots proved their value." For the next eleven days, the talented group from USF helped engineers design search patterns and plan for debris removal. The national media soon picked up on their important work. Stories of USF's robotics professor and her students made the pages of *Newsday*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and Professor Murphy appeared on the *Today Show*, and ABC News. The positive coverage revealed to the world some of USF's best and brightest researchers.³⁹⁷

Another USF faculty member also appeared in the news in the aftermath of 9/11, but this appearance brought the university much unwanted publicity. On September 26, tenured computer science professor Sami Al-Arian was a guest on Bill O'Reilly's Fox News talk show. Al-Arian planned to speak out against the attacks, but he never had the chance. "What is going on at the University of South Florida, state-funded institution?" O'Reilly asked instead.

³⁹⁷ Judy Silverstein Gray, "Robots at Ground Zero", *USF Magazine* 43 (Fall 2001): 17-18.

“Suspected terrorist Ramadan Abdullah Shallah actually taught classes there. He is now one of the leaders of the Palestinian Islamic jihad.” Al-Arian replied that he was shocked when Shallah became leader of the jihad movement, but O’Reilly seemed unconvinced. “You’re bringing a guy over here who gets paid by the good citizens of Florida and then goes back and becomes one of the lieutenants or generals of Islamic jihad, but you don’t know anything about it. . . .” He pressed further and quoted from an Al-Arian speech in Cleveland in 1988 in which the professor was quoted as saying, “Jihad is our path. Victory to Islam. Death to Israel.” O’Reilly concluded the combative interview with provocative remarks. “I’d still shadow you,” he told Al-Arian. “I’d go to Denny’s with you, and I’d go everywhere you went.”³⁹⁸

The O’Reilly Factor interview proved explosive in the aftermath of 9/11, but revealed little new information about Al-Arian. The Kuwaiti native, born to Palestinian parents, came to the United States in 1975 and earned a Ph.D. from North Carolina State University before USF hired him in January 1986 as an assistant professor in the Computer Science and Engineering Department. In October 1988, Al-Arian incorporated the Islamic Concern Project (which included the Islamic Committee for Palestine) and two years later founded the World and Islam Studies Enterprise (WISE), to serve as an Islamic think tank, in Temple Terrace. In January 1991, USF’s Committee for Middle Eastern Studies (formed to promote dialogue after the Persian Gulf War) and WISE held a joint conference on “Palestinian-Israeli Peace Negotiations: A Palestinian Perspective.” Ten months later, the Committee for Middle Eastern Studies signed an agreement with WISE to sponsor academic conferences, seminars, and lectures; provide students with work-study opportunities; and publish papers. Over the next several years, USF and WISE held a number of programs, offered Arabic instruction, and supported graduate

³⁹⁸ Bill O’Reilly, “Interview With USF Professor About Terrorism,” *The O’Reilly Factor*, September 26, 2001, LexisNexis Academic Transcript # 092601cb.256.

students in their studies. In the College of Engineering, Al-Arian received several teaching awards and grants and earned tenure in 1992.

Then, on November 21, 1994, a PBS documentary by Steven Emerson entitled “Jihad in America” aired on local television stations. Among other allegations, it linked Al-Arian and his Tampa-based Islamic Committee for Palestine to Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, the radical Muslim cleric whose group was connected to the February 1993 WTC bombing, and the documentary claimed that Al-Arian served as head of the Islamic Jihad terrorist group’s domestic support network. Al-Arian denied all charges, called Emerson’s work “a deliberate attempt to defame and distort the cause of Muslim organizations in the United States, stated that his antisemitic comments were poorly translated from Arabic and taken out of context, and blamed Israeli intelligence and Emerson for spreading lies. A two-part *Tampa Tribune* story in May 1995 further investigated ties between USF, WISE, and the Islamic Committee for Palestine. The story drew “a web of connections” between Al-Arian, his Tampa organizations, and terrorist leaders representing Islamic Jihad and Hamas.³⁹⁹

In the wake of growing information about Al-Arian and his real and alleged associations, USF acted in May 1995 to investigate its relationship with WISE, and on June 5, 1995, Interim Provost Michael G. Kovac announced that USF had suspended all links to the group. Associate Provost Tennyson Wright subsequently found procedural violations in the USF-WISE affiliation regarding a graduate assistantship and adjunct teaching position, and the university began a review of all partnerships with outside entities.

³⁹⁹ *The Tampa Tribune*, November 23, 1994, May 28, 29, 1995; Denise K. Magner, “Professor Draws Attention for Alleged Link to Terrorism, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 9, 1995.

The October 1995 appearance of past WISE Director Ramadan Abdullah Shallah in Damascus, Syria, as the new head of Islamic Jihad significantly escalated attention on Al-Arian and USF's relationship with his Islamic think tank. Immigration, customs, and FBI agents searched WISE's headquarters, Al-Arian's home, and his office at USF. Several months later, the INS denied Al-Arian's petition for U.S. citizenship, and federal officials stated in unsealed court documents that they believed WISE and the Islamic Committee for Palestine were fronts for international terrorists.

Shallah's connections to Islamic Jihad stunned the university and brought swift action. In January 1996 President Castor commissioned attorney and past USF interim president William Reece Smith, Jr., to conduct an independent, external investigation of events revealed by and related to media reports alleging that Al-Arian and WISE were associated with Middle East terrorist activities. Smith's May 27, 1996, report surveyed WISE and seven of its associates, looked at the USF-WISE relationship, addressed various concerns ranging from religion to curriculum to faculty bias, drew conclusions, and made recommendations.

Based upon the information and sources available to Smith at the time, his 214-page report found no connection between WISE and the creation of USF's Committee on Middle East Studies in January 1991. Of the March 1992 USF-WISE agreement, Smith believed the Committee on Middle East Studies *could* have done more to learn about WISE but considered "it unreasonable to suggest that the Committee should have engaged in intensive independent inquiry and research." Smith praised the university for responding promptly to many issues raised by the media, in particular USF's decision to suspend all activity with WISE and to explore alleged irregularities in the payment of graduate assistants and adjunct professors. Smith offered mild criticism of what he considered an erroneous belief among several USF

administrators that a state university could do nothing about a faculty member's off-campus conduct and utterances. "Reasonable inquiry is appropriate," he wrote, "if off-campus activity threatens to disrupt a university's primary mission."⁴⁰⁰

By May 1996, top USF officials believed that Sami Al-Arian's off-campus conduct and utterances had disrupted the university's primary mission, and Provost Thomas Tighe placed Al-Arian on leave with pay pending completion of the on-going federal investigation into his activities. Smith commented favorably on this decision in his report: "Dr. al Arian's off-campus activities and utterances are subject to claim as political speech protected by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution," he wrote. "They also implicate concepts of academic freedom. There are, however, limits to the application of the principles of free speech and academic freedom, and a faculty member whose conduct or utterances exceeds those limits is subject to the sanctions of a university and, possibly, the sanctions of law. . . . In my view, the action that the University has taken in placing Dr. al Arian on indefinite leave is appropriate and is in the best interests of both the University and Dr. al Arian."⁴⁰¹

For two years Al-Arian remained off campus while federal authorities conducted their investigation and USF officials waited for more information. Seeking the status of federal efforts, **USF attorneys** wrote the U.S. Justice Department in February 1998. The following month, U.S. Attorney Charles R. Wilson informed the university that it would not comment on its ongoing inquiry. Without law enforcement information to justify Al-Arian's continued leave, the university permitted the computer science professor to resume his regular duties in August

⁴⁰⁰ Wm. Reece Smith, Jr., "Report to President Betty Castor, University of South Florida, in re USF/WISE Relationship and Related Matters," May 1996, pp. 11, 39, 63, 95, available electronically in the USF Libraries Catalog.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 26-27.

1998. Al-Arian's appearance on the O'Reilly Factor two years later once again forced USF to deal with its controversial faculty member and the problems his activities caused the university.

Within a day of Al-Arian's television appearance, President Genshaft's office received a barrage of angry phone calls and emails. Amidst her efforts to position USF as a top research university, the president and her staff instead found themselves fending off hostile questions and verbal attacks from alumni, donors, and local citizens. A bomb threat called into the Computer Science and Engineering Department closed the building for several hours on September 27 and faculty were sent home. President Genshaft quickly called top administrators, the university police chief, dean of the engineering college, and several others to a meeting. They discussed the safety of the engineering building, the campus, and Al-Arian himself. The group recommended that he should once again be put on paid leave, a decision the Board of Trustees overwhelmingly supported the following day. Al-Arian had received threatening calls and also was concerned about his safety but wanted to continue teaching. Officials discussed distance learning but concluded that a tenured professor could not fulfill all of his responsibilities working off campus.⁴⁰²

Over the next several months, President Genshaft, Provost Stamps, and many others at USF struggled with the implications should the university fire a tenured professor. While faculty and administrators engaged in lengthy, often heated, discussions about Al-Arian's fate, the university received legal advice that it could take disciplinary action against Al-Arian for the disruption his activities had caused on campus. "I respect, I value academic freedom, and I know this is an exceptional and unique case," the president stated. "This man brings harm's way

⁴⁰² Sharon Walsh, "Blaming the Victim?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 8, 2002; President Judy Genshaft, "Message to USF Community," September 28, 2001, USF--Genshaft, Judy, Al-Arian Collection, Special Collections Department, USF Tampa Library.

with him when he comes onto campus. . . . I don't want to wait for somebody to be killed or to be harmed to take action.”

Others saw the situation differently. “This has major national ramifications,” explained a USF government and international affairs professor. “We recently became a level-one research university -- one of only three publics in Florida. In that environment, do you want to deny academic freedom, deny tenure?”⁴⁰³

As debate on campus raged, the Board of Trustees took action. On December 19 the university's thirteen trustees met in a hastily convened emergency meeting to consider firing Al-Arian. “We've got a man who's been involved with terrorism organizations,” stated BOT Chair Dick Beard. “It's imperative, under conditions of 9/11 and the interruptions on the campus, that we act.” Following several presentations and lengthy discussion, the board voted 12-1 to “terminate Al-Arian as quickly as University processes will allow.”⁴⁰⁴

In a subsequent statement issued by President Genshaft, she reiterated USF's commitment to academic freedom but asserted that it protected “the pursuit of ideas in a faculty member's field of academic expertise.” “The reports to the Board today indicated the extent to which [the Al-Arian] situation continues to disrupt the affairs of the university. This controversy over Dr. Al-Arian is consuming resources of many divisions of the University, and based on information presented to trustees today, it will continue to do so as long as the current arrangement continues. The University Police advise that we cannot guarantee the safety of Dr. Al-Arian and students, faculty and staff around him if he were back on campus.” The president

⁴⁰³ Sharon Walsh, “Blaming the Victim?,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 8, 2002.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*; Minutes, USF Board of Trustees Emergency Meeting, December 19, 2001.

revealed that the Office of Academic Affairs would notify the professor of USF's intent to terminate his employment and give him ten days to respond.⁴⁰⁵

The Board of Trustees decision received strong reactions. "I was there and saw the process," said one faculty member. "The board treated the faculty with contempt." "The charges are a trumped-up pretext, because the real charges are illegal," declared another professor. Many others took a different stand. "I DO NOT feel safe with Al Arian on Campus," stated one Tampa student. "Its [sic] shameful and frightening as both an alumni [sic] and parent as to what has and is transpiring," came an email from Cooper City, Florida. "You have made the right decision, please do not let anyone change that." A father in Tampa wrote, "my son just graduated from USF on December 15, 2001 and I no longer have to hear from my relatives up north that he went to Jihad U." A Coral Springs parent explained, "My daughter starts college this fall. We visited your campus last April. She is, however, attending UCF in part because of the Al-Arian situation." Governor Jeb Bush weighed in with a statement strongly affirming USF's decision. "President Genshaft and the USF trustees have rightly concluded that the taxpayers have no obligation to continue paying a teacher whose own actions have made it impossible for him to teach."⁴⁰⁶

USF's stated intention to fire Al-Arian did not immediately result in his termination. On January 9, 2002, the Faculty Senate met to discuss the issue. The Senate president, USF president, provost, Dr. Al-Arian, and numerous senators spoke at the emergency meeting.

⁴⁰⁵ "Statement of University of South Florida President Judy Genshaft, December 19, 2001," USF--Genshaft, Judy, Al-Arian Collection, Special Collections Department.

⁴⁰⁶ PRIMER Petition Supporting Dismissal of Dr. Al-Arian, Mar.-Apr. 2002, Al-Arian Collection; "Statement By Governor Jeb Bush Regarding University of South Florida Professor Al-Arian," Bush, Jeb, Al-Arian Collection, Special Collections Department.

During two hours of sometimes impassioned discussion, a motion to support the BOT's and president's call for Al-Arian's termination failed in a floor vote.⁴⁰⁷

Faculty reaction to the tenured professor's announced dismissal and interest in the case from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) gave university administrators pause and led to a cautious approach. Over the next fourteen months, university leaders consulted formally and informally with faculty, staff, and students. Persistent negative media attention continued, and despite USF's concerted public relations efforts, it suffered setbacks in its strategic plan to become a top public research institution. In March 2002, a three-person AAUP committee visited USF to gather information and reported two months later that it believed Al-Arian's statements were protected under academic freedom. AAUP members would ultimately condemn the university over the Al-Arian matter.⁴⁰⁸

Seeking additional legal input, the university drafted a "Notice of Intent to Terminate" in August 2002, sent a copy to Al-Arian, and requested that a Hillsborough County circuit court judge determine whether terminating the professor violated his constitutional rights. The case moved to federal court, where in December 2002 Judge Susan C. Bucklew ruled that she would not comment on USF's "Notice of Intent to Terminate" and that alternative remedies existed to revolve the dispute.⁴⁰⁹

Over two years after USF placed Dr. Al-Arian on administrative leave, the United States District Court, Middle District of Florida brought a fifty-count indictment against the professor

⁴⁰⁷ "Verbatim Transcript: Emergency Meeting of the Faculty Senate," January 9, 2002.

⁴⁰⁸ The American Association of University Professors, Committee A, "The Al-Arian Case at the University of South Florida," June 1, 2002; "Resolution Condemning the Administration of the University of South Florida," American Association of University Professors, Al-Arian Collection, Special Collections Department.

⁴⁰⁹ President's Update Regarding Dr. Sami Al-Arian, August 21, 2002, USF--Genshaft, Judy, Al-Arian Collection, Special Collections Department.

and seven codefendants, and federal law enforcement officials arrested him on February 20, 2003. The indictment alleged conspiracy to commit racketeering; conspiracy to murder, maim, or injure persons or places outside the United States; conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization; conspiracy to support specially designated terrorists; obstruction of justice, perjury, several alleged immigration and naturalization violations; and multiple alleged interstate commerce infractions. Six days later, President Genshaft terminated Al-Arian. “Dr. Al-Arian has repeatedly abused his position at the university,” the president explained. “He has misused the university’s name, reputation, resources and personnel. . . . Dr. Al-Arian’s statements about his activities have been false and misleading, and he has failed to meet our high professional standards. . . . This action is based on his conduct alone, not his ability to freely speak in the classroom on controversial topics or his rights to free speech outside the classroom. No longer will he be able to hide behind the shield of academic freedom.”⁴¹⁰

With state and local higher education governance issues largely resolved and links to Dr. Al-Arian severed, President Genshaft and the rest of the USF community returned their full attention to a strategic plan designed to position the university as a top research institution. In April 2003, at her Spring Address, the president celebrated the University of South Florida’s “resilience” as it worked toward these goals. “We have endured,” she said. “We are in a way stronger than before, having shown ourselves to be up to the challenge and the scrutiny. And we continue to make steady progress toward our strategic vision.”⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ *United States of America v. Sami Amin Al-Arian et al.*, Courts -- U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida, Al-Arian Collections; Statement by USF President Judy Genshaft, February 26, 2003, USF--Genshaft, Judy, Al-Arian Collection; S. David Stamps to Dr. Sami Al-Arian, February 26, 2003, [folder?](#) Al-Arian Collection, Special Collections Department.

⁴¹¹ “President Genshaft’s 2003 Spring Address,” April 21, 2003.

Despite particularly tight state budgets, the threat of massive cuts in the aftermath of 9/11, and considerable damage and personal stress caused by the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, USF experienced dramatic growth in many key indices. Faculty hires and awards increased. USF enrolled more graduate students and conferred more doctorates. Research funding soared, and private donations rebounded. A \$5 million pledge from charter graduates Jack Boyd and his wife, Janis, established scholarships in athletics and business. Efforts to entice more National Academy members to the faculty, raise medial SAT scores, and elevate faculty salaries continued.

In the fall of 2004, President Genshaft publicly unveiled a “Top 50 in Five Years” initiative to refine goals and measure progress toward becoming a top public research institution. The program evolved out of USF’s existing strategic plan, which included nearly 100 benchmarks based upon national standards of excellence. In order to prioritize measures reported by the Top American Research Universities, used by the elite Association of American Universities for membership eligibility, and adopted by the Board of Governors to guide the Florida State University System, USF leaders refined and refocused on eighteen criteria in four categories: 1) faculty quality assessment examined National Academy memberships, awards, publications, and National Research Council ratings; 2) research quality and productivity measured research expenditures, contracts and grants, patents, and postdoctoral fellows; 3) student selectivity and achievement focused on median SAT scores, recruitment of National Merit and Achievement Scholars, minority enrollment figures, graduate rates, and licensure/certification exam pass rates; 4) and private support counted endowment assets and annual giving.

University leaders set ambitious annual goals in the four areas noted above in order to try and reach Top 50 status by 2008. USF has made important progress toward this aim. In 2003-2004 total research expenditures climbed to \$213.3 million, making it one of the fastest growing research universities in the nation. To reach Top 50 status, USF needs to spend \$377 million by 2008. The USF Foundation's endowment grew to \$270.9 million and annual giving amounted to \$41.9 million in 2004. By 2008, USF wants to raise a \$406 million endowment and \$91 million in annual gifts. In fall 2003, the university employed eighty-five postdoctoral appointees. By 2008, it hopes to have 200. SAT scores climbed twenty points to 1070 in Fall 2003. By 2008 USF would like to admit students with a median SAT of 1188.⁴¹²

USF's academic and research aspirations also involved changes for intercollegiate athletics. On November 4, 2003, President Genshaft announced the university's intention to join the Big East Conference, effective July 1, 2005. "This is a monumental step and defining moment for USF athletics," the president stated. "The invitation to join the conference confirms what many of us already know: USF has a national-caliber athletics program with a reputation as a solid, competitive, rapidly growing program."⁴¹³

Under Athletic Director Lee Roy Selmon, twenty-nine USF student athletes had earned Conference USA academic medals in June 2002, and the university finished second that year in overall GPA. On the field, USF senior Kerine Black became the first person to win four individual gold medals at the Conference USA track and field championship in May 2001. The football team handed the University of Pittsburgh its biggest upset at home in 111 years, when

⁴¹² "President Genshaft's 2004 Fall Address," October 6, 2004; Michelle Carlyon, "Record Breaking Year for Research," *USF Magazine* 46 (Fall/Winter 2004): 4; "Top Institutions in Federal Research-and-Development Expenditures, 2003," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 29, 2005.

⁴¹³ *The Oracle*, October 15, November 3, 5, 2003; "USF to Join Big East," November 4, 2003.

the Bulls defeated the Panthers 35-26 in September 2001. The following May, the USF Women's Sailing Team received its first-ever invitation to the National Championship.

Big East membership had important implications for scholarship and research as well. When it joined, USF was the youngest but largest of the sixteen conference members. It ranked fourth in both total and federal research expenditures and sixth in faculty awards. Notre Dame's \$2.5 billion endowment offered something to shoot for. "It was clear to me that if we were to join the Big East, we would be in the company of universities that represent who we are and who we aspire to be," President Genshaft explained. "It's a great opportunity to be affiliated with great institutions that see USF the way I see USF. These are universities that will be solid university partners over the next decade, and I believe our affiliation with them will advance our brand as a national research university. Academically and athletically, it's strategic positioning."⁴¹⁴

To help meet its strategic goals in the classroom and laboratory, the university developed or expanded academic offerings and improved its physical plant. New programs included several dozen graduate certificates; masters' degrees in Environmental Science and Policy, Applied Behavior Analysis, and Latin American and Caribbean Studies; and doctorates in Applied Physics, Second Language Acquisition, and Instructional Technology. Under the leadership of newly appointed Dean Stuart Silverman, the honors program was transformed into a degree-granting Honors College. The Humanities Institute, established in 2002 and directed by William Scheuerle, initiated a public Great Book Series, offered financial support and a forum for USF faculty research, and has brought internationally recognized writers and scholars such as Thomas Friedman, Salmon Rushdie, and Nobel Prize-winning physicist Horst Stromer to speak

⁴¹⁴ Ann Carney, "Big News . . . Big East," *USF Magazine* 45 (Fall 2003): 4-7; *Top American Research Universities Report* (2004).

on campus. The Joint Military Science Leadership Center, funded by a federal defense appropriation and directed by U.S. Army Reserve Colonel Luis Visot, opened in fall 2004 to train and educate ROTC cadets, officers, and midshipmen. At USF St. Petersburg, Programs of Distinction in Florida Studies; Environmental Science, Policy, and Geography; Journalism and Media Studies; and Social Responsibility and Corporate Reporting offered students and faculty groundbreaking, cross-disciplinary collaborations in four designated specialties. USF Lakeland continued to develop its strength in information technology.

In spring 2005, the University of South Florida received the largest gift in its history. Drs. Kiran C. and Pallavi Patel gave \$34.5 million, including the state match, to create an internationally recognized Dr. Kiran C. Patel Center for Global Solutions and to construct a signature building on the Tampa campus for this important venture. Using Florida as one of many research laboratories, the Patel Center focuses on five key areas – economics, trade and development, health, safety and human security, sustainable environments, and culture and the arts – in order to develop models and present research with local, national, and global applications. The Center also supports and improves education in Florida and around the world and contributes to improving the human condition. “I have lived much of my life seeing the extremes of the human condition,” stated Dr. Kiran C. Patel. “It is my vision to build a center that focuses on creating real solutions that deliver a sustainable quality of life for all people.” To this end, USF’s Globalization Research Center will serve as the Patel Center’s research and education arm. Collaborative roles also exist for the International Affairs Center, Global Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Action, Latin American and Caribbean Studies

Program, Center for International Business, Health Sciences Center, Center for Entrepreneurship, and Center for Biological Defense.⁴¹⁵

Completed, ongoing, and planned buildings to support USF's strategic goals in teaching and research included WUSF-TV's state-of-the-art studios, the Psychology/Communications Sciences & Disorders Building, and Lawton & Rhea Chiles Center for Healthy Mothers and Babies, which opened in 2001. Work on the Engineering Building III and American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge finished up in 2002. In 2003 the USF Dr. Kiran C. Patel Charter School welcomed its first students and teachers, Moffitt's Stabile Research Building opened, and the Edward Kopp Engineering Building underwent renovations. The following year saw completion of the new Intercollegiate Athletic Facility, which offered student athletes and coaches much-needed offices, locker rooms, and conditioning and training areas, and the Sam and Martha Gibbons Alumni Center doubled in size. In 2005, USF unveiled the College of Nursing, Children's Medical Services Building, Natural and Environmental Sciences Building, Nanotechnology Research Building I, College of Business expansion, and Chemistry building renovation. To ease perennial commuting woes, new parking structures completed, in progress, and planned in Tampa and St. Petersburg promise more spaces for faculty, staff, students, and visitors.⁴¹⁶

The USF Research Park of Tampa Bay, a hub for biotechnology and life sciences exploration and entrepreneurship, opened in June 2005 with two buildings and more than 230,000 square feet of laboratory and office space to link USF researchers with corporate partners in need to expertise. President Genshaft brought the idea for the facilities from the State

⁴¹⁵ Jacqui Cash, "Global Impact," *USF Magazine* 47 (Fall 2005): 23-27.

⁴¹⁶ Ann Carney, "Building a National Research University," *USF Magazine* 46 (Fall/Winter 2004): 21-23; Anne Delotto Baier, "New Ways to Teach, New Ways to Treat," *USF Magazine* 45 (Fall 2003): 19-21.

University of New York at Albany, where as provost she saw a similar interdisciplinary research center and business incubator bear fruit. Creative financing that leveraged support from the USF Foundation, academic colleges, Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, Florida High-Tech Corridor, and private industry enabled the project to break ground in January 2004 and accept its first tenants eighteen months later. Among an initial twenty businesses with offices in the park, eight are faculty startups. The completed Interdisciplinary Research Building houses the Center for Biological Defense, and the Business Partnership Building includes the Tampa Bay Technology Incubator.⁴¹⁷

To solve housing shortages and enhance residential and social life at the university, the Magnolia Hall opened in 2001. Maple Hall and Greek Village accepted their first students in 2003, and Cypress Hall was completed the following year. By fall 2004, nearly 4,500 students called USF their home away from home.

Initial proposals for fraternity and sorority housing at USF dated back thirty years, but protracted discussions on the precise nature of the university-Greek partnership, site and chapter selection, infrastructure needs, and ambitious fundraising goals delayed construction of Greek Village for years. In the end, the university replicated a model used by only one other school in the country – to build the homes itself and lease them back to the Greek organizations (eight fraternities and six sororities). “The university was willing to step out of the box for us,” said senior Tiffany Messingham, a Tri Delta member and recruitment vice president for the Panhellenic Council. “They definitely opened a door and we’re walking through it.” The fourteen houses built around a central courtyard offered living and meeting spaces, recreational areas, and high hopes for the future. “Greek life has taken a very positive and exciting twist at USF,”

⁴¹⁷ Michael Reich, “USF Scientists Mean Business,” *USF Magazine* 45 (Summer 2003): 17-19; *The Oracle*, January 24, 2005.

Messingham commented. “We now have our very own home away from home. And it’s so much fun.”⁴¹⁸

USF St. Petersburg also understood the importance residential life played on campus and broke ground on its first residence hall in March 2005, a 354-bed complex featuring apartment-style living. “The character of the campus is going to change dramatically,” stated Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Mark Durand. “Currently all of our students are commuter students and this will provide a residential atmosphere we have never had before.”⁴¹⁹

On the Sarasota/Manatee campus, Campus Executive Officer Laurey Stryker and her staff planned for student enrollment to double to 3,000 by 2007. University officials expected some of the growth to come from the USF School of Hotel and Restaurant Management, the first new school on a regional campus in USF history. “In 40 years in the business, I have never had a program where community interest and involvement was so great,” commented Associate Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs Peter French of his efforts to establish the two-year degree offering. The combination of classroom learning with hands-on experiences at local restaurants and hotels had attracted over sixty students by fall 2004.⁴²⁰

To accommodate new programs and students at USF Sarasota/Manatee, work began on the Mediterranean-style Crosley Center, with its flexible seminar, video conferencing, computer lab/training, and classroom space as well as a 150-seat lecture hall. When completed in August 2006, the nearly 100,000-square-foot facility would house campus administration and faculty

⁴¹⁸ *The Oracle*, August 27, 1990, February 15, September 4, 1991, September 4, 1992, October 14, 1993, June 8, 1995, December 4, 1996, January 26, 1998, October 20, November 3, 1999, February 13, 2002, August 25, 2003; Harold Nixon, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, August 5, 2003; Michael A. Farley, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, September 12, 2003; Ann Carney, “A Place to Call Home,” *USF Magazine* 45 (Fall 2003): 15-17.

⁴¹⁹ *The Oracle*, March 31, 2005.

⁴²⁰ Ann Carney, “Five-Star Partnership,” *USF Magazine* 46 (Fall/Winter 2004): 26-30.

offices, student and food services, daycare, and athletic facilities. The Crosley Center project also incorporated a public art commission awarded to Michele Oka Doner. Her terrazzo floor with bronze inlays drew from the unique environmental characteristics of the site.⁴²¹

At USF Lakeland, groundbreaking ceremonies occurred in May 2004 for a USF/Polk Community College Joint-Use Technology Resources Center. The expansion and remodeling offered approximately 125,000 square feet of teaching, research, office, and student support for both institutions and the rapidly increasing student population of central Florida's Polk, Highlands and Hardee Counties. The facility included state of the art technology and spaces for students, faculty, and staff of the two institutions to interact in a "solid core" building as opposed to the quadrangle configuration of the existing buildings.

Later that year, USF Lakeland officials announced the donation of 530 acres of land from the Williams Companies, Inc., of Tulsa, Oklahoma, to build a primary campus at the eastern intersection of Interstate 4 and the Polk Parkway. The new property will better enable the university to extend educational opportunities to the 2,600 junior, senior, and graduate students currently enrolled in degree and certificate programs and to prepare for an expected student body of over 15,000 by 2025. A new master plan for the campus calls for construction of a 100,000-square-foot building to begin in 2008 with finish in 2010.

Other USF projects in the construction or planning phases include the Center for Aging and Brain Repair and independent Johnnie B. Byrd, Sr. Alzheimer Center and Research Institute. Design work continues on the ROTC/Joint Military Science Leadership Center, Center for Advanced Health Care, Marshall Center expansion, Visual & Performing Arts Teaching Facility, and additional residence halls.

⁴²¹ *The Oracle*, November 26, 2002.

As the University of South Florida celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2006, the next fifty years offer great promise and excitement. “If we could accomplish this much in less than fifty years . . . our future indeed looks bright,” commented criminology professor Kathleen Heide. Goals are firmly set, and USF students, faculty, and staff continue to make progress toward becoming a top public research university. “You have a spirit of expectation about the future,” said retiree and student Merle Allshouse. “This campus is on the move. It’s going to be growing. It’s going to be expanding.” Chemist Gerhard Meisels believes that “USF will become a better university; the quality of its offerings will increase. It will be a more focused university. . . . It will continue to be a strong and even stronger research university.”

The future holds challenges as well. Attracting the best and brightest students and faculty, prioritizing and funding nearly infinite wishes with finite resources, negotiating the dynamic nature of public higher education in Florida and the nation, and building upon growing traditions will continue to require careful thought and strong leadership. “This university is a great treasure, but it is a treasure that needs to be protected and nurtured,” said alumnus and Stavros Center director Dick Puglisi. “USF needs to give to future generations the opportunity that it provided to me, my friends, and my family. It should also be a beacon of opportunity.” Graduate Liana Fox believes that “this particular university has served the community of Tampa in a way that universities around the state have not served any other city. If the decision makers continue to keep that foremost in their minds, it will be the most successful university in this state.”

For the past fifty years, people have made the University of South Florida what it is today. People will shape the next fifty years. “Never underrate your ability as an individual to have an impact in a very positive way on this institution,” prompted College of Marine Sciences

dean Peter Betzer. Future USF students, faculty, and staff could also adopt provost and vice president for academic affairs Renu Khator's personal philosophy: "I am absolutely focused here; I am totally committed here; and I am going to enjoy every single minute. Then leave the rest to destiny."⁴²²

⁴²² Kathleen Heide, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 11, 2003; Merle Allshouse, interview by Lucy Jones, February 3, 2004; Gerhard Meisels, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, March 25, 2003; Dick Puglisi, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, May 21, 2003; Liana Fox, interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 21, 2003; Renu Khator, interview by Mark I. Greenberg, February 20, 2004