The SCC Foundation celebrated the silver anniversary of its annual Dream Gala on Feb. 21 at the Orlando Marriott Lake Mary. Community and business leaders from around Central Florida attended the sold-out black-tie event, helping the Foundation raise more than $100,000 for student programs and scholarships.

“The Dream Gala is a celebration of SCC’s commitment to changing lives,” said Matthew Hodge, SCC’s Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the SCC Foundation. “Without a doubt, the scholarship and program support made possible through the event will impact countless students at a time when it is needed most.”

Mix 105.1 radio personality Scott McKenzie served as master of ceremonies for the 25th annual Dream Gala, leading guests through a live auction, raffle and performance by comedy satire group The Second City.

The auction was hosted by WFTV 9 Anchor Barbara West and her husband, Wade West, and featured trips to the Augusta, Ga. Masters golf tournament, Ireland, Las Vegas and New York City. The New York City vacation package included tickets and behind-the-scenes tours of “Saturday Night Live” and Broadway’s “The Little Mermaid,” donated by prominent SCC alumni Paula Pell and Norm Lewis. Pell is a lead writer at “SNL,” while Lewis plays King Triton in “The Little Mermaid.”

The SCC Foundation Dream Gala has become an annual celebration for Seminole Community College, its supporters and the community. To date, the event has raised more than $1.5 million for the College and its students.

Aspiring dentist becomes SCC’s fourth straight Jack Kent Cooke Scholar

For the fourth consecutive year, a Seminole Community College student has earned the honor of being named a Jack Kent Cooke Scholar.

Sally Rodriguez, a single mother from Winter Springs, competed against 450 applicants for the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation’s Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, the largest private scholarship in the country for community college students. She will receive up to $30,000 per year to complete her bachelor’s degree and up to $50,000 per year for graduate coursework.

“I couldn’t believe it; I still can’t believe it,” said Rodriguez, 25, one of only 30 winners nationwide. “It is certainly a lot to take in, but I am very excited and very thankful for the support.”

The win puts SCC at a level of academic excellence that few schools can claim. In fact, only one other college in the nation – Cottey College in Nevada, Mo. – has had four straight Jack Kent Cooke Scholars since 2006.

Rodriguez, who will graduate from SCC this summer, is a first-generation American – her parents are from Colombia – and the first in her family to attend college. She is a member of the Art & Phyllis Grindle Honors Institute, president of the Phi Beta Lambda student business organization and a leadership officer for Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. She also works part time for a dental office.

In the fall, she will head to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she will pursue her goal of becoming a dentist specializing in oral and maxillofacial surgery.

“My professors and advisers at SCC inspired me to reach beyond the stars,” Rodriguez said. “Now, thanks to them and the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, I am able to turn my dreams into a reality.”

Lalita Booth, a 2006 SCC graduate, was honored with Seminole Community College’s Distinguished Alumnus Award during the Spring 2009 Commencement Ceremony on May 1.

Once a homeless single mother, Booth was the only Truman Scholar in the State University System of Florida in 2008. She graduated from the University of Central Florida on May 9 and has been accepted to Harvard University’s Business School and John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Booth is the founder and program director of Lighthouse for Dreams, a local high school outreach program that teaches teens to manage money. After completing Harvard’s Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Policy degree programs, she plans to focus her career on making financial literacy a part of the welfare system.

Booth was also recognized at the Foundation’s 25th annual Dream Gala on Feb. 21.

Education commissioner receives honorary degree

During the Spring 2009 commencement ceremony, SCC presented Florida Education Commissioner Dr. Eric J. Smith with an honorary Associate in Arts degree for his distinguished service to the state’s education system.

Smith, who was also the graduation speaker, began his career in Florida more than 30 years ago as a classroom teacher. His commitment to evoking positive change in the field of education led him to several administrative positions in Florida school districts, and eventually to district superintendent appointments in Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland.

Smith previously served as Senior Vice President for College Readiness for the College Board, where he led a college-preparation project called EXCELerator. He is a past Chair of the College Board’s Board of Trustees, as well as a Board of Directors member for the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. He has also served as Chair of the National Assessment of Title I Independent Review Panel since 2003.

Smith was named Florida Education Commissioner in 2007.

President’s Club supports students

The Foundation’s Presidents’ Club is dedicated to connecting its members with SCC students.

On March 3, four Presidents’ Club members participated in the College’s Business Etiquette Dinner, an event aimed at teaching students proper practices for eating and mingling at business and social events.

Throughout the evening, nearly 30 students from SCC programs like New Directions, Student Government Association, Honors Institute and the African American Cultural Forum had the opportunity to network with Presidents’ Club members and get hands-on practice introducing themselves and shaking hands.

The dinner was hosted by the Career Development Center and funded through a Foundation Mini-Grant.

On April 3, the Presidents’ Club Advisory Council launched a speaker series for the SCC community offering industry-related discussion and insight from Central Florida business professionals.

The first installment, called “Engineering and Manufacturing in the 21st Century,” featured a panel discussion and keynote address. The panel included representatives from Wharton-Smith, Inc., Mitsubishi Power Systems and Progress Energy; the keynote speaker was Richard Swart, President and CEO of decimal (Dot Decimal). Swart is also a Presidents’ Club member and SCC alumnus.

The Presidents’ Club Advisory Council is working diligently to raise $155,000 for the College’s areas of greatest need by the end of June. To date, the Advisory Council has raised $125,388 and is 81% of the way to its goal.

Please renew your Presidents’ Club membership by June 30, and help give the Advisory Council the push it needs. Currently, the 2009 Presidents’ Club has 102 members: 85 renewals and 17 new members.

Advisory Council Update

The Presidents’ Club Advisory Council has been actively working to promote the Presidents’ Club and engage members in the life of the College.

This spring, the Council has:

• Supported SCC’s Business Etiquette Dinner on March 3 and had four Presidents’ Club members participate.
• Hosted its first speaker series event on April 3, called “Engineering and Manufacturing in the 21st Century.”
• Held an evening Networking & News event on April 15.
• Met regularly to renew and increase Presidents’ Club memberships.

The Presidents’ Club Advisory Council’s mission is to expand membership benefits, improve social and networking events, and create avenues for members to interact with SCC students, faculty and staff. The Council is open to any interested member of the Presidents’ Club.

Staff Profile: Karla Mirabelli

Foundation Office Assistant

Karla Mirabelli joined the Foundation staff in December 2008. An international student from Brazil, she knew little English when she moved to the United States in 2004.

Committed to improving her English skills and excelling academically, Mirabelli completed the College’s Language Institute Program before enrolling in classes at SCC. She maintains a 3.5 GPA, is a member of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society and is a 2008 recipient of the Foundation’s Sentry Management Scholarship.

After graduating this summer, Mirabelli plans to transfer to Stetson University to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree in Accounting. She says her position with the Foundation has been an “amazing opportunity” and considers the practical accounting experience she has acquired to be invaluable.

Mirabelli, who credits Professor Terri Meta for recommending her for the job, has been married to her husband, Cleide, for more than a year. The couple met in the United States, though he, too, is Brazilian. Together, they enjoy traveling and learning about different cultures.
Gould family endows $10,000 nursing scholarship

Longtime SCC supporter Norman and Jean Gould have created a new scholarship opportunity for the College’s nursing students and faculty. The Gould Family Endowed Scholarship for Nursing, established in December 2008, is open to nursing students with a 3.0 GPA or higher, as well as nursing faculty wishing to pursue an advanced degree from the University of Central Florida.

"By endowing this scholarship, we were hoping to lead by example and encourage people to contribute to a scholarship as a way to commemorate a milestone or honor a special event," said Jean Gould. "With an endowed scholarship, the gift will last in perpetuity."

The Goulds are charter members of the Foundation’s Presidents’ Club and have supported the annual Dream Gala since its inception 25 years ago. In addition to their personal contributions to the College, Jean Gould is active with Femmes de Coeur, a non-profit organization that donates annually to SCC’s nursing scholarships.

SCC reaches out to interior design industry

SCC's Interior Design faculty and staff thanked 18 representatives from area design firms for their support of the College's proposal for a Bachelor of Applied Science degree during a luncheon at SCC's Heathrow Campus on March 31.

Michael Staley, Dean of Economic Development and Employer Services at SCC, briefed the industry members – who included several SCC interior design program’s outreach plans. On Jan. 8, the Florida Board of Architecture and Interior Design approved SCC’s proposal, and on Jan. 21 the state Board of Education gave SCC the go-ahead to offer the bachelor’s degree. The curriculum has been finalized, Staley says, and classes are scheduled to begin as early as January 2010.

To publicize the first state four-year interior design program in Central Florida, SCC will develop an alumni database and e-newsletter. The College will also depend on word-of-mouth endorsement from interior design alumni and industry professionals.

For more than 30 years, SCC’s Interior Design Program has been a leader in Florida. It was the first community college program in the state to become accredited and graduates more students than the other six Florida community college programs combined.

To be accepted into SCC’s Bachelor of Applied Science in Interior Design degree program, applicants must:

• Have an Associate in Science degree in Interior Design from any Florida state community college;

• Have an Associate in Arts, Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree from a regionally accredited institution in an area other than Interior Design, plus 21 credit hours of technical Interior Design courses.

Dream Cup Challenge draws more than 100 golfers

The SCC Foundation welcomed 29 teams of business leaders and College supporters to its 26th annual Dream Cup Challenge Golf Tournament, held April 13 at the Heathrow Country Club.

The 18-hole competition featured course contests, appearances by SCC President Dr. E. Ann McGehee and the Raiders’ nationally ranked women’s golf team, dinner and an awards presentation.

Before the tournament kicked off, Dr. McGehee presented two Raider basketball players with the Mack Blythe Outstanding Freshman of the Year Awards in recognition of their athletic and academic accomplishments. The recipients are:

• Kayo Taylor, a 6-foot-8-inch forward and a graduate of Oak Ridge High School in Orlando. Taylor averaged eight points and 12 rebounds per game during the 2008-09 season and earned All-Conference Honorable Mention. He maintains a 3.08 GPA and plans to become a high school teacher after finishing college.

• Eglah Griffin, a 5-foot-8-inch guard from Fort Myers and a Freshman Mid-Florida Conference athlete. A former FSCAA Women’s Basketball Player of the Week, Griffin averaged 16.8 points per game during the 2008-09 season and led the Lady Raiders with 68 three-point shots. She is active in the community and maintains a 3.8 GPA.

Chuck Baragona, Bog Collette, Rich Ravel and Mitch Arnold of Heathrow Country Club won the tournament with a score of 54.

Presidents’ Club Networking & News Event

Mack Blythe Award winners Kayo Taylor (left) and Eglah Griffin (center) are recognized by Masal Blythe, Dr. McGehee and men’s basketball Head Coach Bobby Washington.

Dr. McGehee stands with the winning team from Heathrow Country Club.

Ben Newman and Dede Schaffner stand with Trishelle Copeland-Johnson (center), SCC’s first New Century Scholar and the only student in Florida to be named to USA Today’s All-USA First Team.

Dr. Carol Hawkins, Sam Click, Nancy Schwab and Russ Minnefield

Bobbie White, Jane Ashley and Peter Angarakis
The local chapter of the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) recently honored De de Schaffner, Rob Panepinto, Dek Bruce, Patti Neveleff, Steve Cook, Mercedes Bermejo, Randy Berridge, Art Abbott, and Harvey Massey, among others.

In April, 40 SCC interior design students received top honors: 4 SCC interior design students whose competitive submissions, including four students who received top honors: Kristin Sellers, first place (prize valued at $3,000); Vicki Hudson, second place ($500); Rachel Miller and Heather Sozio, third place ($350 each); and Vicky Zajac, honorable mention.

Supporting organizations for the competition included the Magic trounced the Chicago Bulls 107-79. The event, organized by the Foundation and the Magic organization, was a fundraiser for SCC’s Student Government, Honors Institute and Athletic programs.

“Women Strong, an organization that makes high-impact grants available to improve the lives of Central Floridians. Economic Development Award recipient by the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission, has been named to the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission Board of Directors.

Derek Bruce, Foundation Board of Directors member Steve Cook has accepted a position with Shunts & Bowen LLP. Foundation Board of Directors member, has launched a new company with Tico Perez, called Edge Public Affairs, LLC.

SCC faculty member and Presidents’ Club Advisory Council member Dr. K. Kay Delk has been appointed to the Advisory Board for The Legacy Club at Alaka Lakes.

Matthew Hodge, Vice President of Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the SCC Foundation, has been appointed to the CASE District III Board of Directors.

Harvey Massey of Massey Services, Inc., has been named the 2009 James B. Greene Economic Development Award recipient by the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission.

SCC President Dr. E. Ann McGee has been named a trustee for the Phi Theta Kappa Foundation Board of Trustees. The Phi Theta Kappa Foundation raises funds to benefit the PTK International Honor Society, which recognizes and encourages the academic achievement of two-year college students.

Presidents’ Club Advisory Council member Patti Neveleff has become a member of 100 Women Strong, an organization that makes high-impact grants available to improve the lives of Central Floridians.

Rob Panepinto, Vice President of Conexions, Inc., received the Board Member of the Year Award from the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens.

Foundation Board of Directors and Presidents’ Club member Paul Roeker has accepted a position with the legal firm Roetzel & Andress.

Dede Schaffner, a member of the Seminole County School Board, SCC Board of Trustees and Foundation Presidents’ Club, was honored by the Seminole County Boy Scouts at their annual Golden Eagle Dinner for her commitment to the community and her years of service.

In April, SCC’s Information Technology and Resources Department, with the help of the SCC Foundation’s Office of Grants Development and Management, received the $30,500 Emergency Communication and Alert Equipment for State University System of Florida and Florida Community College Campuses grant.

The local chapter of the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) recently honored 40 SCC interior design students for their competitive submissions, including four students who received top honors: Kristin Sellers, first place (prize valued at $3,000); Vicki Hudson, second place ($500); Rachel Miller and Heather Sozio, third place ($350 each); and Vicky Zajac, honorable mention.

WELBRO Building Corporation reached a milestone anniversary this year, celebrating 30 years in business.

Wharton-Smith, Inc. also reached a milestone anniversary, celebrating 25 years in business.

SCC students honored during a ‘Night with the Orlando Magic’

Approximately 500 SCC students, faculty, staff and supporters enjoyed a “Night with the Orlando Magic” on March 11, as the Magic trounced the Chicago Bulls 107-79. The event, organized by the Foundation and the Magic organization, was a fundraiser for SCC’s Student Government, Honors Institute and Athletic programs.

Students from each group sold discounted tickets to the game, raising a combined total of almost $5,300 for future projects.

Rosangela Santiago, a member of Phi Theta Kappa honor society and a recent SCC grad, sold 25 tickets and was named the top student seller. She received an autographed Magic basketball for her efforts.

Before the game, SCC student Coral Bryan, the Foundation’s 2008-09 Orlando Magic Scholarship recipient, was recognized at center court. A 2008 Winter Springs High School graduate, Bryan received $750 to help pay for books during her freshman year at SCC.

Mark your calendars!

- SCC closed on Fridays – May 11-July 31, 2009
- SCC closed for Independence Day – Thursday, July 2, 2009
- Finance Committee Meeting – Tuesday, August 11, 2009, 7:30 a.m.
  SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 311
- Presidents’ Club Advisory Council Meeting – Thursday, August 20, 2009, 8 a.m., SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 138A
- Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, August 25, 2009, 7:30 a.m.
  SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 313
- Board of Directors Meeting – Tuesday, September 1, 2009, 7:45-10 a.m.
  SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 138
- Annual Presidents’ Club Dinner – Thursday, October 1, 2009, Time TBA
  Heathrow Country Club
- Presidents’ Club Advisory Council Meeting – Thursday, October 22, 2009, 8 a.m., SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 138A
- Finance Committee Meeting – Tuesday, November 3, 2009, 7:30 a.m.
  SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 311
- Executive Committee Meeting – Tuesday, November 10, 2009, 7:30 a.m.
  SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 311
- SCC closed for Thanksgiving Break – November 25-27, 2009
- Presidents’ Club Networking & News Breakfast – Thursday, December 3, 2009, 8 a.m., Heathrow Country Club
- Board of Directors Meeting – Tuesday, December 8, 2009, 7:45-10 a.m.
  SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 138
- Presidents’ Club Advisory Council Meeting – Thursday, December 10, 2009, 8 a.m., SCC Heathrow Campus, Room 138A
- Dream Gala – Saturday, February 20, 2010, 5:30 p.m.
  Orlando Marriott Lake Mary

Orlando Magic Scholarship recipient Coral Bryan (right) stands with her mother (left) and Foundation Development Director Sarah Bixis Johnson during the Magic’s pre-game presentation.