



FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE

WORKFORCE EDUCATION

AY 24-25, Issue 4

FSW

Through collaborative industry engagement, high-impact learning experiences, and responsive curriculum development, FSW empowers students to meet the demands of Southwest Florida's evolving economy. The following highlights showcase our recent initiatives that exemplify FSW's dedication to workforce education excellence.

- Celebrating Industry Partnerships: FSW's Annual Business Advisory Board Luncheon and Awards Ceremony
- Strengthening the Educational Pipeline: Technical Colleges and FSW Enhance Program Alignment
- Developing Healthcare Training Networks: FSW Supports Maryville's Center for Children Establish AHA Training Site
- Nursing Students Provide Essential Foot Care at Local Health Fair
- Art 24: FSW Artists Transform Ideas Into Reality
- Industry Leaders Share AI Insights at FSW's Career Connection Lecture Series
- Internship Showcase Links Students with Regional Employers
- Talent Meets Opportunity at FSW's Region-Wide Career Fair Events
- The Division of Workforce Education Welcomes New Team Members



Whitney Rhyme

AVP

Workforce Education



FSW is an equal access, equal opportunity organization. More: www.fsw.edu/equity.

Celebrating Industry Partnerships: FSW's Business Advisory Board Luncheon and Awards Ceremony



The Division of Workforce Education recently hosted our Annual Business and Community Partners Appreciation Luncheon, which brought together members from FSW's 18 Business Advisory Boards representing over 350 professionals from more than 100 organizations across Southwest Florida who generously share their expertise to strengthen our programs.

FSW Business Advisory Boards

- ✓ Advanced Medical Assisting
- ✓ Architecture/Construction
- ✓ Arts / Audio Tech, Digital Arts, Stage Technology
- ✓ Business
- ✓ Cardiovascular Technology
- ✓ Computer Science
- ✓ Dental Hygiene
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Emergency Medical Services
- ✓ Health Information Technology
- ✓ Nursing
- ✓ Paralegal
- ✓ Physical Therapists Assistant
- ✓ Public Safety
- ✓ Pure and Applied Sciences
- ✓ Radiology
- ✓ Respiratory
- ✓ Simulation

FSW's business advisory boards demonstrate our commitment to aligning educational programming with industry needs. The insights shared by our business partners are invaluable in ensuring our students graduate with the skills and knowledge required in today's dynamic workplace.





PARTNER

Awards

Clinical Champion Award

NCH

NCH Healthcare System received FSW's Clinical Champion Award for their exceptional support of our health profession students through clinical placements, scholarships, NCLEX funding, and review workshops. Through these contributions, NCH has demonstrated that they are not just investing in individual students, they are investing in the future of healthcare in our community.



Pictured:

Dr. Jeffery Allbritten, President FSW

Dr. Susan Holland, Dean, School of Nursing

Risa Wildeman, Clinical Educator, Student Clinical Coordinator

Zack Tyler, Vice President, Team Engagement & Development

Business Advisory Leadership Award

Brian Zegers, Information Security Officer at Lee Health, received FSW's Business Advisory Leadership Award for his instrumental role in developing our cybersecurity program and his ongoing commitment to student mentorship.

Community Impact Award

Joe Goldstein, President of OCSIT, was presented with FSW's Community Impact Award for bringing his work with our computer science programs and his leadership in bringing the Cyber Patriots summer competition to FSW and SWFL.



Pictured:

Dr. Jeffery Allbritten, President FSW

Joe Goldstein, President OCSIT

Dr. Mary Myers, Dean, School of Business and Technology



Strengthening the Educational Pipeline: Technical Colleges and FSW Enhance Program Alignment

Academic leaders from FSW and regions technical colleges engaged in a collaborative session focused on strengthening program alignment and educational pathways, with particular emphasis on expanding articulated credit opportunities. These efforts aim to create more seamless transitions for students moving from career certifications to college certificates, associate, and bachelor's degrees at FSW.

Each year, FSW and our technical college partners, Cape Coral Technical College, Charlotte County Technical College, Fort Myers Technical College, Immokalee Technical College, and Lorenzo Walker Technical College review program alignment and update articulation agreements. By aligning curricula and creating clearer pathways between institutions, students can build on their technical education without unnecessary duplication of coursework.



This partnership represents an important step in regional workforce development, as educational leaders work together to address skills gaps and prepare students for high-demand careers. With continued partnership between technical colleges and FSW, students throughout the region stand to benefit from more efficient, effective educational journeys tailored to both their career goals and the needs of local employers.

FSW will articulate credit from 20 career certificate programs to 16 degree programs at FSW. Articulated credit pathways for each technical college in SWFL are found at: www.fsw.edu/workforce/alignment.

Articulated Credit SCHOLARSHIP
Turn your Career Certificate into College Credit
First semester free*

WHO WE ARE
Florida SouthWestern State College is committed to supporting the workforce needs of southwest Florida. Through relevant and challenging coursework, FSW equips students with the skills and education needed to thrive in today's workforce. FSW offers over 40 academic programs which are tied directly to the workforce needs here in southwest Florida.

WHY CHOOSE FSW
Affordable, High Quality Education
Transform Your Life
No-Demand Programs

Articulate
Accounting Operations CC
Business Administration CC
Building Construction Development and Training CC
Criminal Justice CC
Early Childhood Education CC
Health Services CC
Information Systems Administration CC
Network Systems Administration CC
Network Systems Administration CC
Medical Administration Specialist CC
Practical Nursing CC

First Semester Free*
Students enrolled in the first semester of a new FSW 15-credit program may also be awarded 15-credit program credit for up to 15 credit hours of previous coursework that program partners have approved for articulation.

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Applied Cybersecurity CC
Emergency Medical Technician CC
Firefighter EMT Combined CC
Firefighter EMT Combined CC
Firefighter EMT Combined CC
Firefighter EMT Combined CC
Practical Nursing CC

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Construction Management CC
Construction Management CC
Emergency Medical Technician CC
Firefighter CC
Florida Law Enforcement Academy CC
Health Services CC
Information Systems Administration CC
Practical Nursing CC

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Building Healthcare Training Networks: FSW Supports Maryville's Center for Children Establish AHA Training Site



FSW's American Heart Association (AHA) Authorized Training Center recently provided comprehensive training to the team at Chicago's Maryville Center for Children, helping them establish their own independent AHA Training Site and Simulation Lab. This initiative demonstrates FSW's commitment to sharing expertise in healthcare education.

Through intensive training sessions, Maryville's staff achieved multiple certifications, including Basic Life Support (BLS) Provider and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Provider certifications. Team members also completed BLS and PALS Instructor certifications, empowering them to independently train their staff and maintain their facility's emergency response capabilities. With their newly established AHA Training Site status under FSW, Maryville Center for Children now operates its own AHA program to maintain and expand its staff's emergency response skills.

Nursing Students Provide Essential Foot Care at Local Health Fair

A group of four Associate of Science in Nursing students recently joined their Advisor, Sarah Hamula at the Port Charlotte Public Library's Annual Sunlight Mission Health Fair, held at the Family Service Center. The event provided a valuable opportunity for these future healthcare professionals to serve vulnerable members of their community while gaining hands-on experience.

The nursing students focused on addressing a critical but often overlooked health need among homeless and low-income populations: foot care. They distributed socks and foot care products to Charlotte County residents who attended the event, many of whom have limited access to regular healthcare services.

Beyond simply distributing supplies, the students offered practical education, sharing tips and techniques for maintaining foot health—a particularly crucial concern for individuals who may spend significant time walking or standing, often in inadequate footwear. For homeless residents especially, foot problems can severely impact mobility and overall wellbeing.





Art 24: FSW Artists Transform Ideas Into Reality

In a dynamic showcase of creativity and innovation, FSW students recently participated in "Art 24," an intensive 24-hour art challenge that pushed their creative boundaries and technical skills to new heights. The event, which kicked off on Thursday, February 20, at 6 PM, brought together artists who formed nine teams and were given just one day to transform their ideas into reality.

Under the guidance of professors Nathan Harper Barry Van Boekel, students explored various mediums and approaches to artistic expression. The competition featured an impressive range of submissions, including two digital pieces and three walk-in immersive experiences, with one group incorporating live music to enhance their presentation.

The winning team distinguished themselves through their innovative use of modest materials, creating a powerful commentary on society through an unexpected medium – a pizza box. Their installation featured handcrafted "slices" that cleverly represented individual uniqueness while demonstrating how distinct pieces can come together to form a cohesive whole. This creative approach not only demonstrated technical skill but also delivered a profound message about unity and diversity through one of our most beloved foods.

The culmination of the 24-hour challenge brought students together to view and appreciate each other's work, while a panel of three judges from the local art community evaluated the projects. This professional evaluation added valuable real-world perspective and recognition to the students' efforts.

"Art 24" exemplifies FSW's commitment to fostering creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking among its art students while providing them with opportunities to create under real-world conditions and deadlines. The event's success highlights the vibrant arts community at FSW and its role in preparing the next generation of artists and creative professionals.



Congratulations to the winning teams:

1st- The Awkward Turtles

- Jamie Caravetta
- Kaitlyn Scheller
- Alex Gissendaner

Honorable Mention:

- Rotten Raccoon
- My Hand is Crampin'



Industry Leaders Share AI Insights at FSW's Career Connection Lecture Series

FSW recently hosted "AI in Action: A Cross-Industry Perspective," a thought-provoking installment in its Lecture Series that provided students with expert insights into artificial intelligence technology and its workforce applications.

The event featured two distinguished speakers from different sectors: Jonathan Witenko, System Director of Virtual Health & Telemedicine for Lee Health, and Angelo Biasi, Founder/CEO of Solvably, an AI literacy learning platform serving K-12, higher education, and corporate talent development.

Attendees benefited from the speakers' perspectives on AI implementation and received current information regarding the integration of artificial intelligence across various industries. The presentations highlighted real-world applications and emerging trends in AI technology.

The lecture offered FSW students a valuable opportunity to understand how AI is transforming professional environments and the skills needed to navigate these evolving workplace landscapes.

92%

Of survey participants agreed that attending this event encouraged them to think critically about the topic under discussion.

Student Comments

"I loved the different perspectives, and it caused me to think of AI differently"

"I liked going over the real world problems"

"I feel like the speakers took the time to speak to everyone with questions and were open to discussing taboo subjects"





Internship Showcase Links Students with Regional Employers

FSW hosted a successful Internship Showcase event where students and employers came together to share valuable experiences and opportunities.

Three students enrolled in FSW's Work Experience Internship Course highlighted their professional journeys. Jasmine Heckerman discussed her internship at Gulfshore Life, while Katie Mulligan shared insights from her time at Big Cypress Preserve, and Taylor Tocket rounded out the student presentations with reflections on her experience at Wink News.

The event also featured presentations from prominent regional employers with upcoming internship opportunities. Representatives from Bank of America, City of Fort Myers, Lee County Mosquito Control District, Owen-Ames-Kimball, and the University of Florida IFAS Extension team provided information about positions available within their organizations.

Students interested in pursuing internship opportunities through FSW can visit the college's dedicated internship webpage at <https://www.fsw.edu/careers/internships> or contact FSW's Internship Coordinator, Carrie Bohling directly at internships@fsw.edu.



Pictured: (left to right)
Carrie Bohling, Internship Coordinator
Taylor Tocket, FSW intern – Wink News
Jasmine Heckerman, FSW Intern -Gulfshore Life
Whitney Rhyne, AVP Workforce Education





Talent Meets Opportunity at FSW's Region-Wide Career Fair Events

FSW hosted a successful Career Fair Week spanning SWFL with events in Charlotte, Collier, Lee, and Hendry counties. The well-attended event welcomed **over 700 students** eager to explore professional opportunities and make industry connections.

"We love to connect talent with opportunity!" remarked Katy Madden, FSW Career Coordinator. Students at each campus had valuable chances to network with industry professionals, investigate potential career paths, and take meaningful steps toward their professional futures.

The college extended special appreciation to the participating employers who supported the events across all locations. SWFL's largest employers from various industries including healthcare, financial services, engineering/construction, education, government, and more were in attendance. These industry partners contributed significantly by sharing their time, wisdom, and employment opportunities with FSW students.



Connect with
FSW's Career
Connection Team
www.fsw.edu/careers
Careers@fsw.edu



Welcomes

New Team Members

The Division of Workforce Education is pleased to announce the expansion of our team with the addition of three talented professionals. Join me in welcoming Dr. Amanda Sterk, Natasha Teegardin, and Eli Tolli to their new roles at FSW.



Dr. Amanda Sterk

Director, Office of Corporate and Community Education

Dr. Amanda Sterk, brings over 20 years of educational and corporate experience to the Director of Corporate and Community Education role at FSW. With a passion for lifelong learning and workforce development, she is committed to expanding innovative programs that support professional growth and community engagement. Her focus is on creating accessible opportunities that connect individuals and businesses with the skills and training they need to succeed.



Natasha Teegardin

Career Coordinator, Charlotte Campus & Hendry Glades Center

Natasha Teegardin, comes to us from Goshen, Indiana and joins our Career Connection team as the Career Coordinator serving the Charlotte Campus and the Hendry/Glades Center. Previously Natasha served as Assistant Registrar at Goshen College before recently relocating to Florida with her family. Natasha bring seven years of experience in higher education to the role, with experience in both Admissions and the Registrar's Office. Passionate about supporting college students, Natasha is excited to provide FSW students with the resources and guidance needed to succeed in their careers.



Eli Tolli

Career Coordinator, Collier Campus

Eli Tolli joins the Career Connection Team as the Career Coordinator at FSW's Collier Campus. Eli is dedicated to helping students develop essential employability skills. With a passion for student success, Eli focuses on providing guidance, resources, and opportunities that prepare students for meaningful careers in Southwest Florida's workforce.

Scholarship Opportunities Workforce Programs

Articulated Credit Scholarship

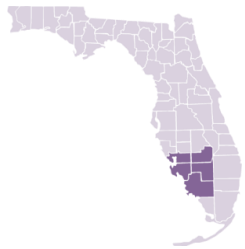


Students who have earned industry certifications or articulated credit from one of FSW's five partnering technical colleges may apply for a scholarship covering first-semester courses in their aligned program of study.

- Gold Standard Articulation through earning of industry certificate
- Completion of articulated program from one of the 5 public technical colleges in SWFL



Transforming SWFL 2025



FSW was awarded \$125,000 from the Lee County Industrial Development Authority and \$100,000 from the Elsa and Peter Soderberg Charitable Foundation through the FutureMakers Coalition.

Transforming SWFL Supports:

- [GED Pathway Program](#)
- Second Look
- Last Mile & Gap Funding
- Workforce Pathways



FSW Direct Allocation Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Fall 2025 is the last semester for funding.

FSW was awarded a direct allocation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding to expand pathways to multiple in-demand industry certificates.



WIOA Programs

- [Information Technology Support Specialist, CCC](#)
- [Network Security, CCC](#)
- [Cybersecurity, AS](#)
- [Network Systems, AS](#)
- [Architectural Design and Construction Technology, AS](#)
- [Logistics and Transportation Management, CCC](#)
- [Supply Chain Management, AS](#)
- [Nursing, AS](#)
- [Medical Assisting Specialist, CCC](#)
- [Advanced Medical Assisting, AS](#)



Email Opportunity@fsw.edu with any questions.

FSW is an equal access, equal opportunity organization. More: www.fsw.edu/equity.