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**Governor Signs New "Florida College System" Legislation
at NWF State College Ceremony**
6/12/2008



NICEVILLE, FLORIDA -- Legislation that provides students in Florida more opportunities to earn college degrees was signed into law by Governor Charlie Crist at a ceremony held June 12 in the Mattie Kelly Arts Center at Okaloosa-Walton College in Niceville.

At the signing ceremony, Governor Crist noted that, "Building on the state's workforce development research, this new bill enacts the vision of the state legislature to provide a new middle-tier system of higher education in Florida that will maximize student access to baccalaureate degrees, respond to community needs for postsecondary education, and

provide the degrees that best meet Florida's employment needs."

As a result of the new law, nine community colleges, including Okaloosa-Walton, can now quickly expand the number of bachelor's degrees they offer to allow more students access to degree fields where the demand for educated workers is exceeding the supply – such as Registered Nursing. These workforce baccalaureate programs are slated to be more affordable and cost-effective at the new state colleges than those offered at the state's university level - a benefit to both Florida taxpayers and students.

OWC has offered accredited bachelor's degree programs since 2004 and currently more than 600 students are enrolled in the college's baccalaureate degree programs in Project Management and Nursing. After the signing of the new state college bill, college president Dr. Bob Richburg announced that two new Bachelor of Science degrees will begin at OWC in August 2008 – a degree in Elementary Teacher Education and a degree in Middle Grades Math and Science Education.

"As OWC offers more four-year degrees in fulfilling its new role as a state college, students will benefit from the opportunity to have accessible, low cost baccalaureate degrees that meet their aspirations as students and meet the needs of higher education in Florida," said Richburg. He explained that OWC was approved by the Florida Department of Education to develop bachelor's degrees in 2003 and was accredited as a level II baccalaureate degree granting institution by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools the same year.

A number of states, including Florida, have recently begun providing options for their community colleges to expand the award of baccalaureate degrees so that more of their citizens are able to obtain postsecondary education beyond the associate degree level.

"With this legislation, Florida's community colleges are now in the forefront nationally for developing baccalaureate degree programs to meet critical workforce needs, particularly in teaching, nursing, and applied sciences," said Gov. Crist in his closing remarks at the historic event.

##

Federal Judge Dismisses Kelly Lawsuit Against OWC

04/20/2006

NICEVILLE, FLORIDA -- A federal judge has dismissed a lawsuit brought by a grandson of the late Mattie Kelly, effectively ending more than two years of legal challenges to the sale of approximately 12 acres of Destin property by the Okaloosa-Walton College Foundation.

"Seven separate judges in the local, state and federal courts have all ruled in favor of OWC's plan to expand the OWC Mattie Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute through the proceeds of the sale of a portion of the property Mrs. Kelly donated to the college," said Dr. Bob Richburg, OWC president. "We intend to move forward to make the artistic and environmental endeavors in Mrs. Kelly's name a reality for our community and for future generations."

The latest lawsuit, brought in U.S. Federal District Court by Lowell Kelly, had sought to bar the property sale based in part on Mr. Kelly's desire to be interred on the property. U.S. District Judge Richard Smoak of the Northern District Court in Pensacola dismissed the suit with prejudice on April 19, an action which prevents Kelly from litigating any of his claims further in federal district court.

The OWC Foundation, which was deeded the 12.73 acre Kelly estate in 1997, plans to sell the majority of the residentially zoned property to a developer and to also retain ownership of approximately one-half acre for a park that will surround the Kelly mausoleum located on the waterfront land. The OWC Foundation and the college have previously won positive rulings in several other legal actions brought separately by three Kelly heirs, a Pensacola based environmental group, and an OWC student.

"Personally, and on behalf of the college foundation, I am so pleased with the judge's ruling today," said Jim Chitwood, Executive Director of the OWC Foundation. "It affirms once again that our plans to honor Mrs. Kelly's wishes are right on track – through our operation of the institute she asked us to establish and through our perpetual care of her mausoleum." Chitwood noted that proceeds from the property sale will be placed in a permanent endowment fund through the OWC Foundation to support the college's Mattie Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute.

"Mattie Kelly's bequest called for OWC to establish a cultural and environmental institute in her name to promote the arts and study of the bay," said Richburg who explained that the college established the Mattie Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute in 1997. "Now, through the sale of a portion of the property she bequeathed to the college, we can carry on her vision with adequate funding to support the Institute's mission. It is the Institute in her name and its work for the cultural life and environmental health of this region that was Mrs. Kelly's dream."

Interest and investment earnings from the Mattie Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute Endowment through the OWC Foundation will underwrite the cultural and environmental work highlighted in Mrs. Kelly's gift to the college including:

- Naming the college's entire Arts Center complex in honor of Mrs. Kelly as the "Mattie Kelly Fine and Performing Arts Center" to memorialize Mrs. Kelly's love of the arts and to make her dream of a fine arts center for the community a reality;
- Support for biological and marine science studies associated with the Choctawhatchee Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, including support for the OWC Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance's environmental work to monitor and improve the quality of the bay; and
- Support for an annual Mattie Kelly Environmental Symposium on the Choctawhatchee Bay, and a Mattie Kelly Endowed Faculty Chair in the Environmental Sciences to focus research on the bay.

##

50th Anniversary Kick-Off Assembly & Doolittle Raiders Exhibit Dedication

3/5/2013



NICEVILLE, FLORIDA -- A year-long 50th Anniversary celebration of Northwest Florida State College officially begins with a festive 50th Anniversary Kick-Off Assembly on April 17 at 9:00 a.m. at the college's 2,100 seat Raider Arena in Niceville. Free and open to the public, the event also features the dedication and opening of a permanent Doolittle Raiders historical exhibit that is being constructed in the lobby of the new basketball Arena.

Three of the surviving WWII Doolittle Raiders crew members are scheduled to appear at the event and will be honored by the college, which has used the Raiders name for its athletics mascot since the early 1960's. The NWFSC event is also scheduled to feature a travelling display of the famous Doolittle Raiders silver goblets.

As a companion event to the Doolittle Raiders Reunion being hosted by the Fort Walton Beach Chamber, the appearance of the Doolittle Raiders at the college's April 17th **50th Anniversary Kick-Off Assembly** will be the first public appearance by the WWII heroes during the reunion weekend and is free of charge. It should be noted that the Doolittle Raiders will not be available to sign autographs during their appearance at the college.

The **NWFSC 50th Anniversary Kick Off Assembly** is the official opening for the college's anniversary year. The doors for the public will open at 8:00 a.m. and seating is on a first come basis. The public should enter through the Raider Club doors at the south side of the Arena, rather than the main doors. Following the opening assembly, the new NWFSC Doolittle Raiders Exhibit will be open to the public in the Arena lobby and will remain open until 4:30 p.m. Permanent hours for the Doolittle Raiders Exhibit will be Monday to Friday during regular college business hours and when the Arena is used for athletic games or other college events.

The college, which was established by the Florida Legislature in April 1963 as Okaloosa-Walton Junior College, first opened its doors to students in August 1964, and will celebrate its 50th Anniversary with a series of events from April 2013 through August 2014. According to Jeffrey McInnis, 50th Anniversary Planning Committee chairman and college alumnus, the NWFSC 50th Anniversary is structured around a series of five "signature events," scheduled roughly once per academic semester during the celebration, as well as a series of other events and recognitions still being finalized. A 50th Anniversary website at www.nwfsc.edu/50 will contain all anniversary news and information. The NWFSC Board of Trustees recently approved a 50th Anniversary resolution which sets the parameters of the anniversary year and highlights the college's accomplishments throughout its history.

The permanent Doolittle Raiders Exhibit at NWFSC will contain a variety of unique items from the college's collection of authentic Doolittle Raiders memorabilia, including items owned by Raiders airmen and present on the historic WWII raid on Tokyo, as well as authentic memorabilia and reproductions, including two specially commissioned scale models of the USS Hornet and Jimmy Doolittle's B-25 plane which were crafted by a nationally renowned model-maker from Texas.

Other highlights of the college's 50th Anniversary include a **50th Anniversary Gala** on October 12 featuring the spectacular national touring show **"This Is The 60's"** -- a live concert experience that combines multi-media imagery, high-concept stage design and talented vocalists with the music of the Beatles, Rolling Stones, Jefferson Airplane, Supremes, Monkeys, Janis Joplin, Temptations, Cream, Mama & Papas, Simon & Garfunkel and more! As the NWFSC 50th Anniversary signature event, the concert is billed as the "ultimate opportunity to relive the generation that altered everything from hairstyles to human rights with the best in classic rock music." Tickets for the gala are slated to go on sale in July. ##

OWC Trustees Approve New Name for College: Northwest Florida State College

7/8/2008

NICEVILLE, FL--- In a move that solidifies Okaloosa-Walton College's new role as one of Florida's first state colleges, the OWC District Board of Trustees voted July 8 to officially rename the 44-year-old institution as *Northwest Florida State College*.

"This is truly a monumental moment in our college's history," noted trustee chairman Wesley Wilkerson who said the new name best reflects the college's expanded mission to offer more baccalaureate programs that meet regional and statewide employment needs.

Trustees initially considered a slate of more than 40 different names including retaining the O-W name and simply becoming *Okaloosa-Walton State College*. "While there was discussion about keeping the current name, the trustees determined that Northwest Florida State College most accurately represents our new mission and expanded service district," noted Dr. Bob Richburg, college president. "By maintaining the college's scarlet and silver colors and the Raiders name for our sports programs - we think we've got a good balance between O-W tradition and our new state college role."

A new state law, signed by Governor Crist in mid-June at a ceremony held at the college's Mattie Kelly Arts Center, named OWC as one of nine colleges included in the State College Pilot Project with the goal of expanding access to higher education throughout the state.

"Under the law our mission is expanded, but we will also keep doing all the things we do best as a community college," explained Richburg. "The college will maintain our commitment to open-door access, associate degree programs, adult education, short-term career training programs and low tuition," said Richburg. "Our trustees remain committed to keeping the college affordable. Our bachelor's degree tuition is about 80 percent of the fees in the state university system."

Richburg said the college will phase in the new name and use up current items such as catalogs and other materials printed with the OWC name until they are scheduled to be re-ordered in a normal cycle. "Other items such as our diplomas and official seal will have to change more quickly," he said, noting that December grads could count on the new name being on their diplomas.

OWC was accredited to award bachelor's degrees in 2004 and already has two successful bachelor's degree programs in place with more than 600 students admitted in the Project Management and Nursing 4-year degrees. Two new baccalaureate degree programs, in Elementary Education and Middle Grades Math/Science Education, begin at the college in August.

"We're looking at expansion in our Business, Interdisciplinary Sciences and other areas for future bachelor's degree programs," said Richburg, who noted that additional bachelor's programs will likely be phased in over the coming years based on regional needs and feasibility. The new name and state college status will not affect the college's accreditation. The college received level two Baccalaureate accreditation in 2004 from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

The Florida College System legislation signed into law by Governor Crist also creates a Florida College System Task Force composed of community college presidents and other higher education leaders from a cross-section of the state. The nine colleges in the State College Pilot Project, including OWC, will collaborate with the Task Force to recommend a Baccalaureate program approval process and a funding model for the Florida College System. The legislation also states that the new state colleges will not offer graduate degrees or participate in four-year athletic programs.

##

County & College Break Ground for New EOC and Arena

6/23/2008



NICEVILLE, FL -- With State Rep. Ray Sansom at the controls of a 4-wheel drive backhoe, ground was formally broken Monday for construction of a new Okaloosa County 911 Emergency Operations Center and a new 2,400 seat basketball arena for Okaloosa-Walton College.

The 120,000 square-foot joint facility will sit on the southwest portion of the OWC Niceville campus. Designed for dual duty, the arena will be hardened to withstand 190-mile-per-hour winds and become the county's primary hurricane evacuation shelter.

"The project is a wonderful partnership that will benefit the citizens of this region for decades to come," noted Sansom about the \$30,674,000 project that is jointly funded by local, state and federal revenue. "Moving the EOC to be adjacent to a state-of-the-art arena that will double as a public evacuation center is an innovative step of which folks from across the south are taking notice."

According to OWC President Dr. Bob Richburg, the complex is the largest dollar-value capital construction project in the college's 44-history, "The massive scale of this facility will dominate the western portion of the OWC Niceville campus, just as the OWC Mattie Kelly Arts Center does the east portion of campus," said Richburg. "We are so pleased that the leadership of our legislative delegation secured the state funding for this important community facility."

Joining Sansom at the controls during the groundbreaking were James Campbell, chair of the Okaloosa County Commission, and Jody Henderson, chair of the college's District Board of Trustees. "OWC is proud to join in this partnership with the county," said Henderson. "I know where I'll be when the next big storm blows into town." The three men donned hardhats and all sat in the backhoe as Sansom used the machine to move a pile of dirt at the spot that will become the center court of the arena's basketball floor.

The facility includes a 74,500 square foot arena that will become OWC's main venue for the college's top-ranked men's and women's basketball program and major college assemblies such as graduation; a 20,100 square foot classroom building for ROTC and wellness courses; and a 25,400 square foot 911 Emergency Operations Center that will house a 24-hour 911, Fire, EMS and Sheriff dispatch center as well as EMS and Emergency Management administrative offices.

By comparison, the current OWC gymnasium is 35,167 square feet and seats 1,058 persons. The Okaloosa County 911 Emergency Operations functions that will move to the new facility currently operate in 8,353 square feet in Shalimar. The new 911 Emergency Operations Center was funded with \$7 million from the County toward the project -- \$4 million from local tax revenue and \$3 million from state and federal grants. While its normal operations will house county staff on a year-round basis, once the EOC is activated in an emergency, staff will be able to utilize the specially designed college classroom wing for sleeping and relief accommodations and to activate the arena for public evacuation space if necessary. "The central and high ground location on the Niceville campus is simply perfect for this much-needed 911 Emergency Operations Center," noted Dino Villani, Okaloosa County public safety director.

Site work will begin immediately with anticipated completion of the complex by July 2010. ##

Marie Snow Greene: Philanthropic Legacy Supports Visual Arts

6/17/2008



NICEVILLE, FLORIDA -- A watercolor artist and local art teacher, the late Marie Snow Greene had a long relationship with Okaloosa-Walton College through its arts and cultural programs. The OWC District Board of Trustees recently approved naming the new circular visual arts building at the college's Niceville Campus in her honor as the Marie Snow Greene Visual Arts Building.

Inspired by her association with OWC of more than four decades, Marie Greene, who passed away in March 2008, left a charitable remainder trust gift to the college valued in excess of \$2 million and contributed more than 70 personal works of art and 180 art history books which are now the nucleus of a new artist's research library at the OWC Mattie Kelly Arts Center.



Greene was a student and friend of noted artist Emil Holzhauer and several other master artists. Holzhauer would often visit Greene in her home studio in Poquito Bayou and Holzhauer's encouragement and influence can be seen in Greene's work. The public will be able to enjoy Greene's artwork when a collection of her watercolor paintings will be on display from June 22 to July 24 in the college's Holzhauer Gallery located in the Mattie Kelly Arts Center complex. The exhibit is free and open to the public.



At the close of the exhibit, a selection of more than 20 of Greene's watercolors will be available for purchase through a live art auction on Friday, July 25 at 6:00 p.m. The auction will be conducted by professional art appraiser and auctioneer Bill Garrett of Fort Walton Beach and is open to the public. Refreshments will be served.



Karen Valdes, curator of the OWC's Mattie Kelly Arts Center Galleries said, "Her watercolors have their own expressive qualities - the colors are truly vivid." Linda

Heflin, a student, friend and neighbor of Greene, said that "something needs to be said about Marie Greene the art teacher." Heflin described her "extraordinary technique in teaching brush strokes" and noted Greene's own paintings "have a strength of detail. Being the recipient of one of Marie's paintings was a high honor for the few who received them," said Heflin.

In addition to naming the Marie Snow Greene Visual Arts Building in her memory, a portion of her generous gift to the college previously named the OWC science building in honor of her husband the late Robert E. Greene Jr., a naval officer, engineer and fishing boat captain who shared Marie's passion for the arts and his own passion for the sea, until his death in 1992.

The OWC Mattie Kelly Arts Center Galleries are located on the Niceville Campus of Okaloosa-Walton College at 100 College Boulevard in Niceville and are open Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, contact the galleries at (850)729-6044 or go online at www.owc.edu/arts. ##

NWF State College South Walton Center Opens

1/14/2010



SOUTH WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA -- More than 150 community leaders gathered January 14 to formally open the newest location of Northwest Florida State College, the NWFSC South Walton Center, located off highway 331 south near South Walton High School. The college also dedicated the Allyn C. Donaldson Entrepreneurial Institute which is housed at the center and named in honor of Donaldson, a Santa Rosa Beach resident and long-time supporter of the college's educational and cultural programs.



The South Walton Center becomes NWFSC's seventh instructional location in the two-county region and its second center in Walton County, where the college also operates the Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs. Other NWFSC educational centers are in Crestview, Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field, as well as campus locations in Niceville and Fort Walton Beach.



The NWFSC South Walton Center has been in the works for more than 15 years from planning to completion. The college's Board of Trustees Chairman, Wesley Wilkerson of DeFuniak Springs, and interim president Dr. Tom Delaino recognized various individuals who played a key role in the vision and planning for the center including the late James King, former Walton County School District Superintendent, and Van Ness Butler, a former Walton County Commissioner.



Also cited were former college Walton County trustees Sally Merrifield, Elizabeth Campbell, Janet Campbell and Allyn Donaldson for their role in the project as well as numerous other former and current college trustees, governmental officials and community leaders. "Suffice it to say, this educational center for South Walton has been the goal and dream of many in the community and we thank all who had a part of bringing this dream to reality," said Delaino.

"We are so pleased to bring this convenient new college location to the citizens of Walton County," said Wilkerson, NWFSC board chairman. "Reaching out and making educational opportunities accessible is a key part of our college mission and a South Walton Center has been a central part of our college's master plan for many years - now, it is a reality."

Offered at the center this term are college credit classes such as Economics, Environmental Sciences, College Success, Intro to Humanities, Spanish, Psychology and various math courses, as well as an adult education course for speakers of English as a second language. This term the center is also offering non-credit personal enrichment courses such as basic computers, painting with watercolors and acrylics, and workshops on rose gardening and the new national healthcare bill. The non-credit classes begin in late January and February and are still accepting enrollment. Certain college credit classes have already begun, but Psychology and College Success classes start March 2 and are still accepting students.

"We want to grow our offerings each term and try to tailor them to what the local community needs," noted Dr. David Goetsch, NWFSC vice president for community relations and college centers. Thus far about 200 individuals are enrolled in the various courses at the center.

In addition to a ceremonial ribbon cutting to officially open the center, the college event also included a dedication of the Allyn C. Donaldson Entrepreneurial Institute, a part of the college's Leadership Institute efforts. Donaldson, a retired General Motors executive, is a long-time Santa Rosa Beach resident and former NWFSC Foundation board member and trustee who supported the entrepreneurial program and other endeavors through service on college boards and generous donations to the NWFSC Foundation.

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"When you say someone is a 'friend of the college', Mr. Allyn Donaldson is the epitome of that sentiment. Since he retired to this region following 40 years at General Motors, Allyn Donaldson has been everything from a mentor to a board member and just about everything in between," noted the college's interim president, Tom Delaino, in his dedication remarks. "As true friend of education in Northwest Florida, Mr. Donaldson saw a need for helping businesses and his vision established the Allyn C. Donaldson Entrepreneurial Institute. Through his vision and commitment to this region and higher education opportunities, Allyn Donaldson is truly making a path of success that others may follow."

As part of the opening, local South Walton artist Susan Lucas donated an original painting inspired by the natural beauty of South Walton. Lucas, who has a studio on 30A, made the donation in honor of Donaldson in recognition of the valuable contributions he has made to the South Walton Community and the college. Other donated works that will grace the walls of the center include more than 30 wildlife photographs donated by Walt Spence and Douglas Buck, who used canoes to capture most of the photos they shot along the northern edge of Choctawhatchee Bay. The pair noted that the essential purpose of their collection is educational - reminding observers of the importance of protecting the natural resources of the region.

The wildlife photos compliment another college program that is now housed at the South Walton Center - the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, an environmental organization which is particularly active in South Walton County with several initiatives including its Dune Lakes work to help preserve the rare coastal dune lakes that dot the region. Julie Terrell, the director of CBA, will also provide primary administrative oversight of the new NWFSC South Walton Center.

The NWFSC South Walton Center is developed on 16 acres of a nearly 30-acre site owned by the college that is part of the county's government and education center. South Walton High School, the South Walton Library and the Walton County Government Center are located on adjacent parcels of the more than 110 acres originally acquired by the Walton County Commission from the state of Florida.

The NWFSC facility consists of four buildings all under the same roofing structure with about 11,000 square feet of administrative and classroom space to serve the growing south Emerald Coast region. The last time the college broke ground for an instructional facility in Walton County was September 1970, when then Okaloosa-Walton Junior College opened its Chautauqua Center in DeFuniak Springs.

The South Walton site is the college's second facility in Walton County, one of five centers in outlying communities that are tied to the college's two main campuses in Niceville and Fort Walton Beach. Site work, architectural work and construction for the facility totaled approximately \$4.6 million. A 3,600 square foot Administrative building provides office space for faculty and staff, a conference room, a staff workroom, restrooms and support spaces. The two classroom buildings totaling 6,000 square feet and consist of five instructional classrooms, each able to accommodate an average class size of 18 to 23 students. Also included is a 1,300 square foot computer laboratory.

Other features incorporated into the college's seventh location include exterior courtyards surrounded by integral covered walkways and a signature clock tower. The site was designed with sensitivity to the creation of pedestrian friendly walkways and the preservation of the environment. The architecture of the buildings is influenced by existing South Walton County buildings, as well as that of the notable planned communities nearby, such as Seaside and WaterColor that express a distinctive Florida vernacular.

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OWC Foundation Endowment Ranks 6th in National Survey

2/28/2008

NICEVILLE, FL -- Marking its 20th anniversary, the Okaloosa-Walton College Foundation learned this week that its endowment has been ranked 6th largest among community colleges in a national study of college and universities conducted by the Council for Advancement to Education.

Lori Kelley, OWC Foundation president, and Dr. Bob Richburg, OWC President, announced the results of the CAE's 2007 Voluntary Support for Education Survey (VSE) which reviews philanthropic giving to educational institutions at more than 1,300 institutions in the U.S. who completed the survey.

"This is really awesome for our foundation's endowment to be number six in the nation," said Kelley. "What a great way to celebrate our 20th anniversary and to say thank you again to all the friends, alumni, organizations and businesses that have been so generous over the years."

Richburg also said the VSE Survey rated the OWC Foundation number two in the country in the amount of funds raised in 2007 after receiving more than \$17 million in contributions. The OWC Foundation placed second behind Salt Lake Community College.

"It is quite an honor and distinction for the college and foundation to be recognized by both rankings. We want the community to share the pride we feel in this because we were able to accomplish this through each donation," said Richburg, who added that two other Florida colleges were in the Top 10 of largest endowments with Valencia Community College (Orlando) placing first and Central Florida Community College (Ocala) ranking fifth. "We're in some great company."

Richburg said the OWC Foundation's endowment has grown from \$12,000 in 1988 to its current \$47 million due to strong involvement by community and the dedication of area leaders who serve on the foundation's board of directors. Richburg said that in terms of scholarship support for local students, the OWC Foundation awarded scholarships to a record 456 students for the 2007-08 academic year with scholarship awards totaling more than \$410,000. The foundation's total direct support to the college in 2007 topped more than \$2.3 million dollars in support of instructional programs, scholarships and other endeavors such as the fine arts and athletics.

Jim Chitwood, OWC Foundation Executive Director, explained that contributions and matching gifts create a permanent source of funds for OWC and the annual earnings from the endowment are spent for the purposes specified by donors, such as scholarship support or creation of institutes such as the Mattie M. Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute and the Allyn C. Donaldson Entrepreneurial Institute. Chitwood said the national ranking was based on the foundation's \$36 million endowment reported at the end of the foundation's fiscal year September 30th, 2007 but that the current endowment totals \$47 million as the foundation has received contributions and state matching dollars since the ranking was calculated.

"Whether it's economical, intellectual, or emotional, the true power of education is that it's transformational," foundation president Lori Kelley said. "The ability to enhance lives and help individuals grow is the kind of learning that is life altering." Kelley said the late Mattie Kelly's bequest and state match, which totaled more than \$13 million to OWC in 2007, were also transformational and "signals to this foundation its challenge and opportunity for tomorrow, next month, next year, and the next decade. For the college to continue to have an impact on students, business and our community at large, this foundation must grow exponentially in its financial commitment."

Richburg also cited the memory of Mattie Kelly for her generosity with her bequest to establish the Mattie M. Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute at OWC which has funded two distinguished teaching chairs for professors in orchestra music and environmental sciences as well as other endeavors as outlined in the gift's bequest.

As part of the OWC Foundation's 20th anniversary and announcement of the recent national rankings, Richburg also recognized "the men and women who paved the way for this foundation in 1988 and beyond" as founding officers of the foundation; including Destin businessman Larry Anchors, founding president, the late Carl McInnis of Niceville, founding vice president; former Fort Walton Beach banker Lamar Roberts, founding secretary; Fort Walton Beach businesswoman Marjorie Cummins, founding treasurer; and Niceville businessman Patrick Byrne, founding trustee liaison.

"These are bold and exciting times for this college," said Richburg. "Indeed, the role of the OWC Foundation has been and will continue to be a vital part in how we take those next steps in service to students and the community. ##