

TAKE FLIGHT

WITH NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE



NORTHWEST
FLORIDA
STATE COLLEGE





► Letter from the President



At Northwest Florida State College, we are committed to helping each student who comes through our doors “take flight” and excel at their individual education and career aspirations. Everything we do, from academics, arts, athletics and the environment, to high tech and job-focused training, is directed by our mission to improve the lives of citizens in Northwest Florida.

For more than 56 years, NWF State College has served as a hallmark of educational excellence. Our students complete their educational goals in diverse learning environments that blend academic rigor, high instructional quality, student support and co-curricular interests—all in a setting close to home. More than 83% of our graduates remain in this community and comprise a large proportion of the local workforce.

NWF State College plays an integral role in the advancement of quality of life and continued growth to the region. We do not take this responsibility lightly. Armed with your input, results-driven strategic direction, and a dedicated team, we are committed to being the preeminent provider of post-secondary and workforce education in Florida as well as in the nation—“The best is our standard!”

Through the employment of the College’s first major gifts campaign, *Take Flight*, we come to you seeking partnerships and investment opportunities to help build a re-engineered launch pad for current students and generations to come. Now is the time, but we cannot do it alone. I hope you will join us as we launch this critical undertaking to help more students take flight and soar in Northwest Florida.

Sincerely,
Dr. Devin Stephenson, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Devin Stephenson". The signature is stylized, with a large, sweeping initial "D" and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

► Your Community's College Today

A History of Excellence



Named one of the Top 150 community colleges in the Nation by the Aspen Institute every cycle since 2010.



Advanced to Silver Status in the Florida College System Performance Funding model in 2018.



Designated a Military Friendly® School by Victory Media for 2019-2020.



Named the first Military Order of the Purple Heart College in Florida.



Serves the highest number of students (2,537) receiving post 9/11 GI Bill benefits in the Florida College System.



NWF's Collegiate High School is a two-time Blue Ribbon School, a two-time GreatSchools.org College Success awardee and ranked first in the state in four-year graduation rates.



NWF's Welding Program nationally recognized for its students, faculty and facility.



Nursing Program ranked in Florida's top 10 among all Florida colleges and universities according to percentage of pass rates by RegisteredNursing.org.



Recognized as the Finest Local Higher Education Provider on the Emerald Coast by popular vote.



Named the safest college campus in Florida by YourLocalSecurity.com in 2019.

Northwest Florida State College is our community's college. For more than five decades, we have provided access to high-quality education for all residents interested in continuing their learning. Since opening our doors to students in 1963, NWF State College's mission has remained constant—to develop a highly skilled, educated workforce that benefits the Northwest Florida region.

The College's affordable, high-quality programs allow more than 10,000 students annually to realize their educational aspirations. Today, our graduates are respected leaders representing all corporate sectors. Our communities depend upon our alumni to remain vibrant and progressive. The College serves as a catalyst to promote social, cultural and economic advancements within our local communities.

The benefit of supporting NWF State College is simple—business, student and community demands are met and our community is a better place in which to live and work.

Today's Challenges

- *State funding does not keep pace with our ability to incorporate necessary instructional innovations, high-demand curricular offerings and infrastructure enhancements.*
- *Our students come to NWF State College with a variety of needs and backgrounds. Many students lack sufficient financial resources to complete their education.*
- *The region requires resources in place to bridge the skills gap between employers and job seekers—this includes technical as well as employability skills.*



Lori Kelley '87

- Partner, Warren Averett, LLC

"Northwest Florida State College is uniquely positioned to support our students' success in their chosen field by integrating workforce training, education and technology. We provide opportunities so students and the community can thrive. For me, it's all about the students! I feel like a proud mom when I observe students engaging in the many activities on campus. We really do make an impact on lives and that inspires me!"





Fred Thomas

- Owner, ThomCo Enterprises Inc.

"I was fortunate both of my parents were teachers so we went to college just like you would go to kindergarten. I recognize not everyone has those same opportunities so when we got a chance to get involved with Northwest Florida State College to help provide scholarships for people who wanted to go to school, it was something that caught my attention. I have been involved with the Foundation for 15 years. I think the school is a gem that provides fantastic opportunities for people in all stages of life."



► Your Community's College Tomorrow

NWF State College must remain responsive and proactive if it is to meet the needs of our rapidly changing region. Raising the educational level of our area will enhance our collective prosperity more than any other factor. It strengthens individuals, families, businesses and our communities.

We have a vision and a well-crafted pathway capable of moving the College forward. This pathway identifies priorities focusing on the improvement and expansion of student experiences and completion. Some of the initiatives identified are already embedded within the College's operations and have proven successful in assisting individuals with achieving their educational goals. Others will require additional human and financial capital. All are important endeavors as the College continues to meet the ever-changing demands of its region, corporate communities and a diverse student population.



Our Bold Plan of Action

Student Scholarships

Change lives through laser-focused financial assistance for students of promise and need—increasing access and helping students excel.

Student Achievement

Create programs and activities to advance learning and promote student retention and completion. Deliver cutting-edge, specialized services and flexible learning opportunities through state-of-the-art technology.

Workforce Development

Provide on-time and customized training to meet the needs of existing and emerging businesses with a focus on regional industry sectors.

► Student Scholarships Initiative

At NWF State College our doors are open to all who seek to learn. As a result, the College serves students of all abilities, income levels and backgrounds. While every student’s situation is unique, there is one thing that is all

too common—a financial barrier which prevents or limits college attendance. Recognizing this, we strive to keep tuition low to enable more residents to take advantage of an exceptional learning environment to fulfill their academic and career aspirations.

For many individuals, personal financial constraints make the cost of tuition, books, transportation, and other associated expenses

just too great to bear. Unfortunately, financial aid programs are not keeping pace with the rising costs of college attendance. The *Take Flight Major Gifts Campaign* for NWF State College will provide help through new and expanded scholarship funding. Scholarships make the difference in a student failing to launch or *Taking Flight*.

Opportunities

- *Fewer than half of our degree-seeking students qualify for federal student aid.*
- *Only 3% of degree-seeking students receive foundation scholarships.*
- *Only 15% of students receive grants or scholarships from other funding sources.*
- *More than 40% of NWF students attend the institution without any type of financial support.*

Solutions

New and expanded scholarships will:

- *Promote student retention and academic success;*
- *Enable students to focus on their studies instead of financial barriers;*
- *Reduce the level of student loan debt upon graduation;*
- *Accelerate the supplying of a skilled workforce to the local corporate community.*

In order to adequately provide our local corporate community with skilled employees, we must boldly step forward and lend a helping hand to prospective students of meritorious promise and financial need. Our overarching goal is to increase the number of students enrolled in pathways to advanced education and employment.



Brian & Kim Pennington

"Being a part of a community means participating in the community. We have long believed in the promise of education and how it can change lives. That's why we choose to give."



Eileen Arpke

"It has been my privilege to give scholarships and program assistance to this college since the 1980s. There are so many deserving young people who do not have the opportunity to achieve advanced schooling for one reason or another. There may not be encouragement or money from home. Or, they may never have had the concept in their mind that an advanced education is something they can achieve. I wanted to give these students a little extra boost by providing scholarships and adding what I can to College programs to make NWF a big stepping stone to a better life."

Bailey Hall
- Eileen Arpke Scholar

"I am very grateful for the opportunity the Eileen Arpke Scholarship has given me. Because neither of my parents graduated from high school, they have really pushed me to further my education. Ms. Arpke has not only provided the financial assistance I need to be successful but extra encouragement as well. With this scholarship I feel like I have an even greater support system. Thank you, Ms. Arpke!"

Scottie Smith

- Professor of Welding

"One of the things that makes NWF State College so special is our strong commitment to student success. We continually strive to enable our students to reach their highest potential."



► Student Achievement Initiative

The mission of NWF State College is to improve lives. Our team of dedicated instructional and student success professionals support this mission by providing the best in transfer degrees and an ever-expanding portfolio of job-readiness training.

However, the landscape of higher education is changing rapidly. To continue improving, to serve as an educational influencer and to stimulate regional economic growth, the College must implement emerging best practices.

NWF aspires to always be at the forefront of this change to prepare students for lifelong success. With an increasingly diverse student body, our challenge is to provide high-quality, relevant instruction that reaches students where they are, recognizes where they come from and takes them where they want to go.

Opportunities

- *Textbook costs are significant—on average for high-enrollment classes at NWF State College, textbooks cost one-third the amount of tuition for a three credit hour class; some are as high as two-thirds the tuition.*
- *56% of NWF students enroll part-time indicating that many students must work to pay for educational and living expenses, thus require flexible scheduling for attendance and completion.*
- *The College's dual enrolled population has increased by 11% over the past five years and continues to grow as more students desire to begin college studies early.*

Solutions

Enhancements for student achievement will:

- *Create an Open Education Resource Fund (Increasing Access to Higher Education) which provides free online textbooks for high-enrollment courses;*
- *Establish on-demand online programs to meet the scheduling needs of highly transient populations, such as military students, who want to learn on demand and on the go;*
- *Connect faculty and industry leaders through a Teaching Innovation Center to jointly prepare students for tomorrow's workforce;*
- *Focus on preeminence by scaling nationally recognized best practices for early college, job placement and guided pathway programs.*

► Workforce Development Initiative

Opportunities

- 64% of jobs on the Regional Demand Occupations List for Okaloosa and Walton Counties require individuals to have an industry certification.
- By 2020, at the current rate, the U.S. will fall short by five million workers due to a lack of individuals who have earned industry-recognized certifications.
- Employees who possess an industry-recognized certificate can earn an annual income up to 20% higher than employees with no post-secondary education.

The ability of local industry to be competitive is directly related to the education and skills of its employees. Northwest Florida State College meets these strategic workforce needs through the development of emerging fields of study and through the realignment of existing academic programs.

Career educational programs are the backbone of the workforce in the Northwest Florida region. From health care to cybersecurity

and welding to public safety, students are continually earning degrees and certifications from NWF State College to join the workforce and keep it strong.

Among employers in Northwest Florida, one of the biggest challenges is finding qualified applicants to fill vacant jobs in an ever-changing marketplace. To close the skills gap, NWF State College will adapt to changing labor market needs and ensure career education and training programs are targeted to address those high-need areas.

Solutions

This initiative will:

- Fund educational initiatives and programs aligned to meet immediate and high-demand industry needs such as cybersecurity, physical therapist assistant, medical laboratory technician, pilot certification program, engineering technology (robotics, mechatronics), airframe mechanic and powerplant mechanic;
- Realign curricula in growing fields to keep pace with industry standards in fields such as computer science, health sciences, advanced technology and manufacturing;
- Enable NWF State College to equip classrooms and labs with the best emerging technology and fund related professional development for our faculty;
- Expand customized short-term training and industry-recognized programs such as hospitality, culinary, welding and emergency medical training;
- Integrate into the curricula student apprenticeships, internships, and co-op experiences to promote job-readiness and placement.



Major General Don Litke, USAF Ret.

"As a Trustee and nine-year member of the Foundation Board, I have seen the impact this college has on students and our community. When we graduated from college, my wife Kay dreamed of a career in the culinary arts. She was never able to fulfill that dream because she joined me in 18 moves around the world in our 30-year USAF career. I am hoping our contributions to the Culinary Arts program will honor Kay by encouraging other aspiring students to fulfill their dreams."



► Letter from the Foundation Chair



I am proud to be an alumnus of Northwest Florida State College ("OW" back then!). Over the years education has made a tremendous impact on my life and career. I have also seen the impact the College continues to have on the lives of many, many students, families, businesses and the community as a whole. For me it is important to serve and support the College Foundation to ensure the future of the College is even brighter and stronger than it has been these many years. When you have the College

play such an important role in your own life, it only seems right that you take time to give back so others might experience that same success.

My family is proud to support a scholarship at the College. I know that the *Take Flight Major Gifts Campaign* is going to give many others an opportunity to participate in supporting this great institution, which has done more for our area than I think people really understand or could imagine. I believe this campaign is a "game changer" for the future of the College, and more importantly, for the students who will come through the doors of the College in future generations.

Now is a critical moment in the College's development. By supporting NWF State College's *Take Flight Campaign*, your contribution will directly result in:

- *Student Scholarships,*
- *Student Achievement and*
- *Workforce Development.*

Today, you have an opportunity to play an important role in enhancing the vitality of our community for years to come. Foundation board members, College trustees and leadership are 100% behind this noble effort. Please join us by supporting our major gifts campaign, *Take Flight*. Your commitment will help ensure NWF State College continues to provide quality, affordable education and training for decades to come.

On behalf of the many students your contribution will affect, you have our deepest gratitude.

Sincerely,

C. Jeffrey McInnis '80

Chair, NWF State College Foundation

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized initials 'CJ' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

TAKE FLIGHT

WITH NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE



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Northwest Florida State College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. www.sacscoc.org or 404.679.4500.

An EA/EO institution