



## *A Note from the Dean*

Our work as faculty and staff at CCI focuses primarily on the educational opportunities and experiences we make available for our current students. To achieve our educational mission, we try to enhance both engagement and learning in our instruction and research collaboration, as well as through experiential learning opportunities such as practicums, internships, leadership, and service both on and off campus.

At the same time, we recognize that we are part of a larger network of alumni and community partners who are also essential to the success of our educational endeavors. Our alumni serve as mentoring partners as well as guest speakers in our classrooms. Leadership Board members help reach out to alumni and build stronger connections. The School of Communication Science and Disorders has partnerships with service providers in Florida to allow students to obtain practical training, and the Hispanic Marketing Communication Advisory Board builds connections with leading professionals to help support student success. Our links with alumni in information services and in information technology both support our programs and help build community in the IT sector in Tallahassee and North Florida in the TalTech Alliance.

At our April 2022 CCI Alumni Reception and Leadership Board meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, I was struck by the strong affinity and support of the alumni and their interest in the activities and prospects of current students.



*Stephen McDowell*  
Interim Dean

In this issue of Connection, we highlight stories about the relationships with our community partners. These connections, you will see, are important in supporting high quality student experiences today. These relationships are also crucial as we look to the future, and identify the opportunities we should seek out to build resources to meet long-term needs in student support, facilities, staff, and faculty.

We thank you for your interest and support, and are glad to hear about other ways we can engage with our broader CCI community going forward.

**CONNECTION IS GOING DIGITAL!**

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## PROFESSOR MARK ZEIGLER LEADS INITIATIVE FOR INCOMING STUDENTS

Starting college can be tough. As Faculty Director of the Bryan Hall Learning Community, Professor **Mark Zeigler** helps to facilitate the transition for incoming students by creating a small community within their residence hall to engage and learn with.

"I enjoy watching [the students] fall in love with their school when they realize all the opportunities amid the welcoming community that is FSU," said Zeigler. "Without Bryan Hall, that long COVID year would have been void of student interaction. It was a challenge, but worth every second of time and worry."



## DIGITAL MEDIA PRODUCTION STUDENTS GAINED HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE THROUGH "THREE TORCHES" SHOW



Students in the Advanced Feature and Reporting class created a new monthly feature which highlights our exceptional university community. While instructors provide support and guidance, the program is primarily student-produced.

"The opportunity to host the first edition of Three Torches was a wonderful experience," said student **Jordan Karnbach**. "Having such a talented production team made the process seamless. I hope the show continues to highlight all of the amazing work from FSU students, and that we can pass the torch to a new generation of Noles."

## VISITING FACULTY MEMBER HELPED ORGANIZE COLLECTION DRIVE AT FSU TO SUPPORT UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

**Dr. Svitlana Jaroszynski**, a Ukrainian and Visiting Faculty in the School of Communication, is working with others throughout the Tallahassee area to implement a collection drive for Ukrainian refugees. Collection boxes have been placed at the CCI offices in UCC and in the Innovation Hub. "Three students from a class I teach organized collection drives in their sororities and societies," said Jaroszynski. "This feels amazing and we always post about it on social media so that our friends in Ukraine know that people in Tallahassee think about them."



## COMMUNICATION STUDENTS GAINED REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE IN ADVERTISING STRATEGY

Since Spring 2014, when Dr. Jaejin Lee first established a partnership with the Florida Center for Prevention Research (FCPR), students in Advertising Strategy courses have worked on real-world campaigns in the classroom. This tradition continued in Fall 2021 as students worked on campaigns such as the sample featured on the right, created by student **Madison Dodd** and her team for "The Real Project," an initiative sponsored by the National Social Norms Center at Michigan State University that acts as one of FSU's alcohol abuse prevention programs.



## DOCTORAL STUDENT VICTOR LUGO PRESENTED ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN TEAM SCIENCE

On March 3rd, 2022, doctoral student **Victor Lugo** presented at the Southeast Regional Clinical Translational Science Symposium. His presentation, "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Team Science," gathered responses from over 900 researchers across the United States about their perspectives on team science.



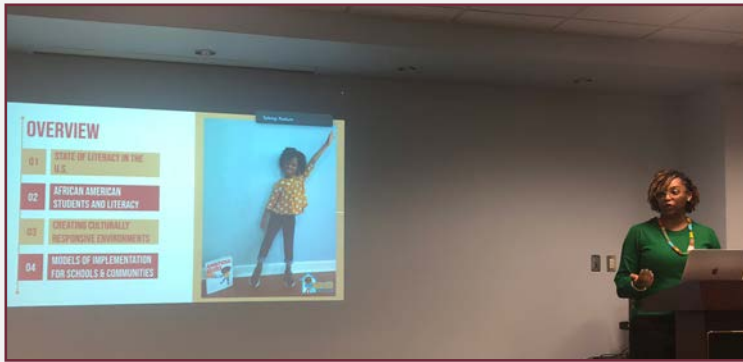
*Victor Lugo*

## DR. HUGH CATTS RECOGNIZED AMONG WORLD'S TOP SCIENTISTS

**Dr. Hugh Catts** is one of several CCI faculty members who have been recognized among the world's top 2% of scientists based on their number of citations. In his research, Catts focuses on the early identification and prevention of dyslexia and other language-based reading disabilities.



*Hugh Catts*



## DR. LAKEISHA JOHNSON PRESENTED ON PROMOTING DIVERSE READERSHIP IN THE CLASSROOM

Assistant Professor **Dr. Lakeisha Johnson** spoke at the Milton S. Carothers Faculty Lecture Series on February 15th, 2022. Her presentation explored the benefits which readers of diverse backgrounds bring to the classroom, as well as culturally responsive practices in literacy instruction. "Representation matters," said Johnson. "Promoting diverse voices is a critical component of allowing readers to see themselves reflected and mirrored in what they read. Books can introduce us to dreams that we didn't even know were possible."

## DR. CHRIS CONSTANTINO PRESENTED AT TEDxFSU

**Dr. Christopher Constantino** was one of two FSU faculty members chosen to speak at TEDxFSU on April 6th, 2022, where he spoke about stuttering and its effects on the speaker. "Usually I'm speaking to a very narrow audience, either people who stutter or speech-language pathologists," said Constantino. "But this event gave me the opportunity to reach a wider audience of people who may have had no prior interest in stuttering." He wanted listeners to know that "stuttering is not just ok but can be good! Our imperfections can be opportunities for vulnerability. The more vulnerable we can be, the more opportunities we will have for intimacy."



## SCSD FACULTY PARTICIPATED IN MEDICAL DISABILITY WORKSHOP

On February 26th and March 5th, 2022, SCSD faculty participated in a series of workshops that allowed students to gain hands-on experience with tools used for individuals with disabilities, such as cochlear implants and augmentative and alternative communication devices. A faculty team, led by **Dr. Michelle Therrien**, also presented on considerations for engagement and participation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## CCI LAUNCHED BLACK MEN IN TECH PROGRAM WITH FOUR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL PARTNERS

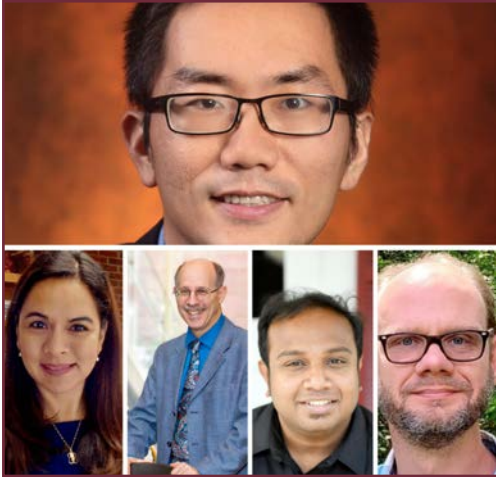
Black Men in Tech (BMIT) is a new CCI project that focuses on strengthening the pipeline for young Black men interested in STEM. BMIT students work with qualified teachers who receive direct instruction from FSU IT faculty and student ambassadors (pictured right) and are mentored by African American IT industry professionals. "I believe this rare and precious opportunity to educate our young African American males about the advancement of technology is priceless," said Rickards High School Principal Douglas Cook. "Seeing more young African American males in middle and top management IT positions in the future will empower our young males to explore their options."



## FSU RESEARCH TEAM RECEIVED 2021 AHIC BEST INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AWARD

An FSU interdisciplinary research team, led by **Dr. Zhe He**, received the Best Interdisciplinary Research Award from the 2021 Aging and Health Informatics Conference (AHIC) for its presentation. Dr. He is joined by **Dr. Mia Lustria** (Information), Dr. Neil Charness (Psychology), Dr. Shayok Chakraborty (Computer Science), and Dr. Walter Boot (Psychology).

Their study was rooted in computer-based training intended to enhance cognitive ability in senior adults. "Cognitive training is a promising approach in lowering the risk of Alzheimer's disease and such training requires a high level of adherence," said Dr. He. "This project demonstrates how machine learning can be used to predict adherence to technology-based cognitive training programs among older adults."



## CCI FACULTY MEMBER AND ALUMNA AWARDED CSCW BEST PAPER AWARD AND A RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTION TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

**Dr. Yolanda Rankin** and iSchool alumna **Kallayah Henderson** received the Computer-Supported Cooperative Work's (CSCW) Best Paper Award and a recognition for their study, "Resisting Racism in Tech Design: Centering the Experiences of Black Youth". This study examines the relationship between Black youth and emerging technologies – particularly, how speech-based interfaces play a role in the lives of Black children. "History shows that Black people are thinkers, inventors, visionaries, scientists, artists, etc.," said Rankin. "We are creators, and, as such, we have a lot to offer the world of technology."



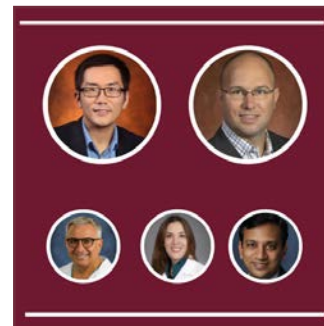
## ISCHOOL ALUMNUS YEVGENY SENKEVICH MAKES FRESH FOOD ACCESSIBLE WITH ROBOJUICE

CCI alumnus **Yevgeny Senkevich** is making fresh, healthy food easily accessible with ROBOjuice, a self-service beverage kiosk that automates juice, smoothies and other specialty drinks. Currently, he has a team of seven working to get ROBOjuice ready for its first location, opening in 2022.



## FSU MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM RECEIVED A NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH R21 GRANT

Dr. Zhe He, Dr. Michael Kilian, and their research team recently received a \$395,200 R21 grant for their project, "Prediction of Health Outcomes and Adverse Events in Pediatric Organ Transplantation in Florida."



## Finding Community

Forward by Mafé Brooks, Director of Development

*I would like to pay tribute to Paula and Scott Neidorf by sharing this story about their son, Kevin Neidorf, a 2013 Digital Media Production alumnus. They established the Kevin Neidorf Student Award in honor of their son, whose life and legacy will continue to live on in our CCI/FSU community and beyond.*

- Mafé Brooks

Kevin Neidorf was a force for good on two wheels. His love of learning, exploring and helping others took him to far-off places. But wherever he roamed, he significantly impacted individuals and the wider community.



Kevin Neidorf

Kevin's mother, Paula Ginsberg-Neidorf, recalls he fell in love with cycling young and started building and fixing up bicycles at just 14 years old.

Hailing from Plantation, in southern Florida, Kevin chose FSU because of the broad course offerings around film and media production—he had taught himself how to shoot and edit video in high school, helping out fellow students and teachers alike.

Buoyed by his mother's advice to "find his community" at Florida State, Kevin sought ways to use his skills with bicycles to make friends and make a difference. He was captain of the FSU Cycling Team and created films featuring cycling competitions and the cycling team. One of those videos, "The Magic Hour," won the 2014 Pedals 4 Professionals Contest from the Reliance Foundry. He also worked at the local charity Crank It Up, where he fixed and built bicycles for Tallahasseeans.

Graduating with honors from FSU in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Digital Media Production, Kevin jumped headfirst into combining his love for bicycles and the outdoors with his newly acquired skills and long-standing talent. After graduation, Kevin moved to Columbia, South Carolina, to work in digital video production for Hawley-Lambert, a major U.S. bicycle retailer. Intrigued by the outdoor pursuits and community in the Pacific Northwest, Kevin moved to Portland, Oregon, where he became creative director for River City Bike Shops.

"Kevin is a great example of what we hope for all our students at CCI," said Dr. Stephen McDowell, Interim Dean of FSU's College of Communication and Information. "He was able to take his talent and passion for media production and what he learned at FSU and make an exciting and successful career."

Kevin's life was tragically cut short in a fatal accident in 2019 at just 28 years old. People mourned his loss across continents and countries. Paula and Scott Neidorf were determined to have Kevin's memory and legacy live on.

The Neidorfs established a student award in Kevin's name at FSU's College of Communication and Information, which will make a difference for talented students for generations to come. By creating the award as an endowment, where the principal is invested and never spent, Kevin's life and talent will be remembered in perpetuity.

"What I liked about donating to create this award at FSU is that it would be specific to Kevin," shared Paula. "I want the recipient to feel a personal connection to him and what he contributed during his short time in our lives."

To read the full story, and to support the Kevin Neidorf Student Award, please visit <https://foundation.fsu.edu/our-impact/force-good-two-wheels>.

Story by FSU Foundation staff

Thank you for continuing to support student success at [giving.cci.fsu.edu](https://giving.cci.fsu.edu).

Questions about giving? Contact Mafé Brooks at [mafe.brooks@cci.fsu.edu](mailto:mafe.brooks@cci.fsu.edu) or (850) 645-8312.

# CLASS NOTES/COLLEGE HAPPENINGS

**Joseph Albano** (B.S. '06) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for his company Ardent Eagle Solutions (AES).

**Terrie Ard** (B.S. '97) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for her company The Moore Agency.

**Amanda Barksdale** (B.S. '02) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for her company Barksdale Custom Pools.

**Chloe Barr** (B.S. '20) started a new position at Allison Aubuchon Communications, a company founded by a fellow CCI alumna.

**Blake Brannon** (B.S. '17) currently covers all things Mississippi sports as a weekend sports anchor in Biloxi.

**Dr. Jennifer Brown** (B.S. '03, Ph.D. '12) received the Russell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching from the University of Georgia.

**Malia Bruker** (B.A. '05) received the Outstanding Teaching in the Major award at FSU.

**Ryan Cappy** (B.S. '97, J.D. '00) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for his company Cappy Law.

**Victoria V. Carlton** (B.S. '18, M.S. '19) launched her new company, Carlton Creative Co.

**Fabeanne Collins** (M.S. '09), **Dr. Pablo Correa** (M.A., '14, Ph.D. '18), **Ariana Davis** (B.S. '18), and **Dr. Lars Stoltzfus** (B.A. '12, M.A. '14) participated on CCI's panel EDI in Action: A Dialogue with Former CCI Students.

**Juliana Cortes** (B.S. '20) was promoted to the role of Senior Market Development Representative at GRIN.

**Chris Cyrille** (B.S. '18) spoke at TEDxUF on how fashion ties into self-image.

**Lauren Daly** (B.S. '20) recently accepted a producer position at Youtube.

**Marquita Gooch-Voyd** (M.S. '11) was named Georgia Librarian of the Year in 2021.

**Terri Gotschall** (M.S. '14) and **Natasha Williams** (M.S. '13) presented at the National Medical Library Association's Annual Meeting.

**Kaye Grandstaff** (M.S. '21) recently started a new position as a Business & Integration Architecture Specialist at Accenture.

**Robyn Hillison** (B.S. '03) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for her company Capital Speech & Language Therapy Services.

**Brittany Holland** (B.S. '14) was promoted to Director of Media Strategy & Planning at the National Basketball Association (NBA).

**Caroline Krantz** (B.S. '18) recently completed the entirety of the Appalachian Trail.

**Pamela Monroe** (M.S. '09) recently became the Library Director for Leon County Libraries as well as a member of the Florida Librarian Association Board.

**Janet Naughton** (M.S. '15) helps uncover under-documented Florida history as an academic librarian and historian.

**Brooke Pautsch** (B.S. '91) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for her company Lucky Goat Coffee.

**Mary Katherine Pittman** (B.S. '17) started a position as Strategic Policy Advisor in the Office of the Governor for the State of Alabama.

**Aaron Rich** (M.S. '03) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for his company Aaron Rich Marketing.

**Rob Rogers** (B.S. '92) recognized as a Seminole 100 recipient for his company Hadjo Media.

**Dr. Awais Saleem** (Ph.D. '17) became an Assistant Professor at Lamar University.

**Yevgeny Senkevich** (B.S. '08) is the co-founder and CEO of ROBOjuice which helps make fresh, healthy food more accessible.

**Charlotte Sherman** (M.S. '05) published her second picture book, *Mermaid Kenzie: Protector of the Deeps*, on January 18, 2022.

**Donnica Smalls** (M.S. '12) is making health information accessible, consistent, and inclusive through her role with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**Bethany Swanson** (B.S. '13) recently received the Reubin O'D. Askew Young Alumni Award for her continued contributions to the FSU community.

## SHARE YOUR CLASS NOTE

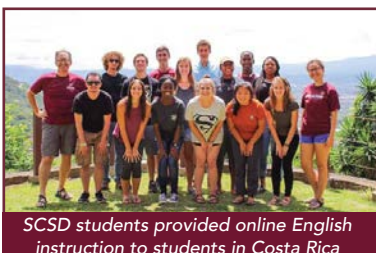
Send your update, class year, and degree to:

[hello@cci.fsu.edu](mailto:hello@cci.fsu.edu)

Please note not all updates may be printed.



CCI students received free headshots just in time for graduation



SCSD students provided online English instruction to students in Costa Rica



Arrowhead Advertising placed first at the AAF District Competition



Leadership Board member Linda Alexionok received an Inspire Award



Students and faculty were recognized during the Honors and Awards Ceremony



Students and staff visited Washington D.C. to meet with the CCI Leadership Board



Local tech companies came together at the Launch Tally event on March 23rd, 2022



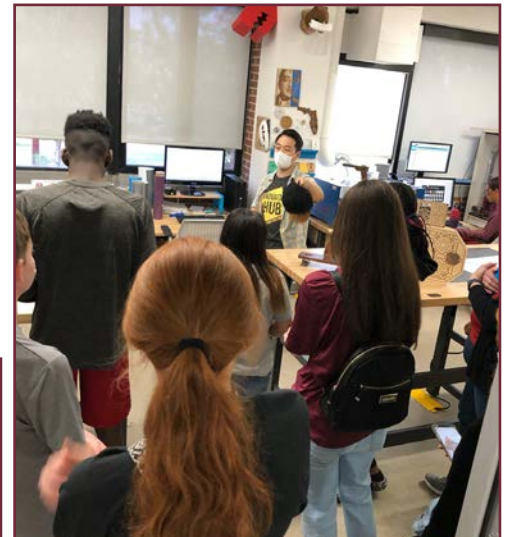
Students, alumni, and faculty came together for the annual Women in Leadership Conference



11 CCI students were inducted into the Garnet and Gold Scholars Society



Students networked with local tech companies at the Tally Job Hop



High school students took a tour through CCI's facilities



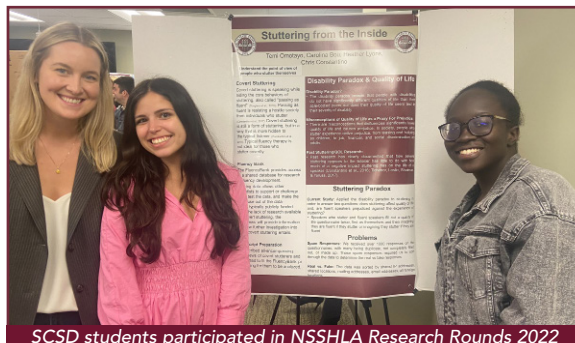
11 CCI students were recognized among this year's Torchbearer 100



4 CCI alumni participated in an EDI panel for the College



CCI students visited high school students in Panama City, FL



SCSD students participated in NSSLHA Research Rounds 2022



Alumna Dr. Jennifer Brown received an award for excellence in undergraduate teaching from UGA

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## CONNECTION IS GOING DIGITAL!

Starting in Fall 2023, all newsletters will be available in a digital format only. In order to receive future editions, please use the QR code to update your contact information with the best email address to reach you.



### Meet the Leadership Board - Walt Bower

Growing up, I moved around more than anyone else I knew. Believe it or not, I attended 34 schools during my K-12 years in Michigan, Florida, Indiana, Iowa and Louisiana. In addition to a lot of instability, no one in my family had ever attended college. I vividly remember a teaching assistant telling me I wouldn't get far in life because I listened to hip hop and R&B music in high school. To say the odds were stacked against me is an understatement, but I persevered, stayed focused on my academics and was accepted to FSU in the Fall of 2004. Getting accepted to FSU was only the first step. After challenging semesters in the College of Engineering, I ultimately changed my major and pursued my Bachelors in IT from the then College of Information. It was here that I found my calling and I still recall all of the fond memories from my classes and the meaningful connections I made with my professors. My time at FSU was the best time of my life and I will cherish the impact that my professors had on my life. When others didn't believe in me, my professors were always there to keep me moving forward. Today, I am the IT Director at mctlaw in Sarasota, FL. I would not be where I am today without the connections I made at CCI. Because of these experiences and connections, I joined the Leadership Board in 2019 to give back to those who believed in me when others did not. Being able to connect with other alumni, students and faculty has been a rewarding experience for me and I hope that it is for you as well. Feel free to email me at [walt.bower@icloud.com](mailto:walt.bower@icloud.com) and share your story on your experience at CCI, your favorite memories and how you overcame the odds to get you where you are today. I would love to hear your story!



**Walt Bower**  
'08 B.S., '10 M.S.  
CCI Leadership Board  
Member

