

# The Women for FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Winter 2015



## WELCOME JEAN THRASHER

The Women for Florida State University is pleased to welcome Mrs. Jean Thrasher to Florida State. We look forward to introducing Florida State's new first lady to you in our next issue.

## SECOND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE EMPOWERS FEMALE STUDENTS



*Students and facilitators gather outside Dodd Hall during the second Women's Leadership Institute*

Women associated with Florida State University, from first-year students to alumnae who have been part of the FSU tradition for decades, gathered to explore female leadership and its important role in society during the Women's Leadership Institute, which took place Oct. 24–25.

WLI, an annual program in partnership with the Center for Leadership & Social Change and the Women for Florida State University, began with a Friday evening keynote address from then Interim President Garnett S. Stokes, who emphasized the belief that leadership is more than a position or title and challenged the participants to exude leadership in all facets of their lives.

Friday's events concluded with a presentation on Florida State's rich history of women and leadership from Katie

McCormick, associate dean for Special Collections and Archives, and Sandra Varry, Heritage Protocol and University archivist.

On Saturday, a select group of 48 undergraduate women were divided into groups and worked with WLI facilitators, who were FSU faculty, staff, deans and alumnae. The activities comprised of discussions around leadership identity with sessions of reflection on their own personal leadership capacity.

"The conversations were just amazing," said Marcy Driscoll, dean of the College of Education and a WLI facilitator. "The women were having these deep and nuanced conversations about leadership and gender roles in leadership. It made me really proud to have a group of such articulate, smart and wonderful women here at Florida State."

WLI challenged the participants to continue its mission to empower women to lead.

"Florida State needs the Women's Leadership Institute to establish the connection between FSU women and those women who have left irrevocable patterns in the University's past," said Kymber Green, a sophomore psychology and editing, writing and media double major from Palmer, Alaska.

"Hearing the stories of women who attended FSU throughout the past century was an unforgettable experience. It inspired me to keep developing the pieces of history I hope to tell women like myself one day in the Institute's future." ❁

by Nathan MacDonald  
Public Relations and  
Marketing Coordinator  
Center for Leadership & Social Change



Sherrill Ragans

## DARING TO BE GREAT: HAPPY BIRTHDAY KITTY HOFFMAN



Katherine B. "Kitty" Hoffman

Thanks for joining the W4FSU journey to greater engagement, more investment and wonderful celebrations of women who have a passion for FSU.

Our journey is certainly worthwhile, and we've come a long way from our beginning in 2008. Since our last newsletter, we've continued to make remarkable progress in Engaging, Investing and Celebrating our relationships with Florida State University.

In October 2014, we presented the second Women's Leadership Institute, which gave many of you the chance to share your leadership expertise with female students. Looking ahead, I hope you will join us in March for the sixth-annual Backstage Pass to the Very Best of Florida State when we will gather to learn about some of FSU's most innovative programs. At this event, we will present the annual Gift of Wisdom Award to a woman on "whose shoulders many women have stood."

The Executive Committee is expanding our plans to bring W4FSU events to some of your communities, and we look forward to the opportunity to foster one-on-one interaction between members at these regional gatherings. In the coming months, we will continue to educate ourselves—and you!—about opportunities to invest in FSU's future.

Since W4FSU's beginning, we have enjoyed incredible support from Florida State's First Ladies, and we are pleased to welcome Mrs. Jean Thrasher to this role. We look forward to showing her the great things W4FSU is doing to foster relationships between women and the University.

The opportunity to serve as chair of the W4FSU Executive Committee is a singular honor. I follow two exemplary leaders—Cherie Rowland and Jaimi Wacksman. Their efforts were upheld by creative and effective committee members and the dedicated staff support of Pat Ramsey, Allison Yu, Mandi Young and now Laura Glenn. I look forward to continuing and building upon their excellent work.

And I invite you to support and participate in all that is W4FSU and FSU! ✨

Best,  
Sherrill Ragans  
Chairwoman, Executive Committee

Katherine B. Hoffman, known to her friends and colleagues as Kitty, is one of Florida State's most well-known and well-loved alumnae. Her relationship with FSU began in 1932 when she entered the Florida State College for Women as a freshman during the Great Depression. Like many students who were fortunate enough to attend college in that era, Kitty had to find creative and resourceful ways to finance her education. As the daughter of a citrus farmer, Kitty was able to trade three truckloads of oranges to the College in exchange for tuition. Following that famous trade, she worked in the Suwannee Dining Hall as a dining room girl.

Kitty was actively involved during her four years of school, serving as president of the Student Government Association, captain of both the baseball and volleyball teams, and as a writer for the student newspaper *The Flambeau*. As involved as she was in these extracurricular activities, Kitty maintained a straight-A average and was awarded the Gilchrist Scholarship to finance her senior year. Many years later, Kitty, along with her husband Harold, established the Katherine Blood Hoffman Endowed Fund in Chemistry to support chemistry and biochemistry students. Her sentiments about creating this fund beautifully express her commitment to this institution: "FSU has been the foundation on which my life is built, how could I not give when I had received so much? I had received assistance, and I wanted to help today's undergraduates in return."

Following her graduation from FSCW in 1936 with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and bacteriology, Kitty went on to complete her master's degree at Columbia University. During her time in New York, Kitty established the first FSCW alumni chapter outside Florida in order to provide outreach to alumni who were attending the World's Fair in 1936. After completing her M.A. in 1936, she was accepted

to Duke Medical School. Her academic achievements are impressive for any student, of any generation, but are quite extraordinary for a woman in that era. Kitty is not only a scholar but also a ground-breaker for female students. Women working in male-dominated fields, such as chemistry, faced many obstacles—a great many unfair and blatantly gender-biased policies that Kitty spoke out against. When she learned of Duke's policy that female students must remain unmarried, she decided to decline attending the university. She married her husband, Harold Hoffman, and returned to FSCW to teach chemistry in 1940, became a full professor in 1973, and served as the last Dean of Women from 1967–1970. Even during the early days of FSU, some antiquated policies, such as not permitting women to wear slacks, remained in place. According to University folklore, Kitty disregarded this outdated policy and strode into meetings wearing slacks anyway.

Kitty's relationship with FSU has spanned more than eight decades. From her days as a student, to an alumna, a faculty member, an administrator and a benefactor, her devotion to FSU has been unwavering, and her dedication has been recognized in many ways, including our own Gift of Wisdom Award in 2013. Kitty was nominated for this award by Sherrill Ragans who commented that Kitty Hoffman is "Arguably the most illustrious alumna of FSU." It is no wonder Kitty Hoffman is a member of the Women for FSU, as she has always supported the University in any way she could, and we are proud to have her as a member. Kitty has consistently given back to the FSU community through her time, her teaching and through her generous endowments. It is with the warmest affection that we wish Kitty Hoffman a very happy 100th birthday, and we look forward to celebrating many more. ✨

—Sarah Coakley

# HONORING OUR OWN: GIFT OF WISDOM AWARD 2014



Tena Pate (left), recipient of the 2014 Gift of Wisdom Award, with nominator Gina Giacomo.

One of the most memorable events of the year for the Women for Florida State University is announcing the Gift of Wisdom Award recipient at the annual Backstage Pass to the Very Best of FSU. The Gift of Wisdom Award recognizes women who have made significant contributions to the University and to other women. The award exemplifies our commitment to celebrate women's achievements and good work.

Since 2010, we have had the pleasure of bestowing this honor on four, well-deserving women—Nancy Turner, Dr. Penny Ralston, Stella Cottrell and Kitty Hoffman.

I am excited to introduce you to the 2014 Gift of Wisdom Award recipient, Ms. Tena Pate.

A native Floridian born in Fort Walton Beach and raised in Niceville, Pate has achieved much

success in her career, but she noted, "It is one thing to be recognized by your peers, but to be selected outside of your professional arena for making a difference in the lives of women was truly an honor."

Pate's distinguished career in Florida's criminal justice system began after she received her Bachelor of Science in criminology from Florida State University. "Florida State provided a solid foundation for building a meaningful career and allowing me to serve the most vulnerable citizens," Pate said.

Pate has committed her life to service—working toward the betterment of our communities and promoting justice for all. Pate's term as commissioner of the Florida Commission on Offender Review expires in 2016, and she is looking forward to beginning new challenges and finding other opportunities to make a difference.

"Receiving the Gift of Wisdom Award was such an honor. When I read about the past recipients, I was amazed to be included among them," Pate said of receiving the award. We are thrilled to welcome her into this dynamic group of outstanding women.

Visit [one.fsu.edu/gift-of-wisdom-award-winner-tena-pate](http://one.fsu.edu/gift-of-wisdom-award-winner-tena-pate) for a closer look at our 2014 Gift of Wisdom Award winner. ✨

—Cherie Rowland

## CONVERSATIONS IN PHILANTHROPY:

On Oct. 17, Florida State University publically announced its campaign to raise more than \$1 billion to improve the University. *Raise the Torch: The Campaign for Florida State* is the most ambitious fundraising campaign in University history. As of the kickoff, more than \$610 million in gift commitments have already been received, and while this number is impressive, we have a long way to go.

W4FSU has set a goal of having 100 percent of our members make annual donations to Florida State University. W4FSU will be increasing our activities to engage women who are passionate about Florida State University, to increase our reach and to translate it into broadened support for FSU.

Additionally, W4FSU has set an organizational goal of increasing our endowment to at least \$250,000 during the campaign. The spendable funds from this endowment support



## RAISE THE TORCH

The CAMPAIGN for FLORIDA STATE

the Women's Leadership Institute that is offered to 40–50 female students each year. A larger endowment will allow the program to be offered to more students each year and to expand the program's length to provide a more in-depth leadership experience.

W4FSU asks you to join us as we *Raise the Torch* for Florida State, to become even more involved and to make FSU a primary recipient of your philanthropy. We want to engage in, invest in and celebrate the success of FSU!

Visit [raisethetorch.fsu.edu](http://raisethetorch.fsu.edu) to learn more about the campaign. ✨

—Janet Stoner

## BACKSTAGE PASS MARCH 20–21, 2015

The sixth-annual Backstage Pass to the Very Best of Florida State will be held March 20–21, 2015.

Join us in Tallahassee as we engage women passionate about Florida State to invest in our University and celebrate our rich history and vibrant future.

The action-packed weekend will include a behind-the-scenes look at some of FSU's finest programs and traditions and will conclude with our signature celebration dinner and Gift of Wisdom Award presentation.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Please visit [W4FSU.org](http://W4FSU.org) for additional information about the Women for Florida State University. You may also contact Laura Glenn, staff liaison to W4FSU, by email at [lglen@foundation.fsu.edu](mailto:lglen@foundation.fsu.edu) or by phone at (850) 644-2313.

## WOMEN FOR FSU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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TO LEARN MORE, VISIT [W4FSU.ORG](http://W4FSU.ORG)



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## CELEBRATE: CIRCLE OF GOLD



*Mrs. Donna Lou Harper Askew with Dale Greene, chair of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, at the 2014 Circle of Gold Ceremony*

In 1993, the FSU Alumni Association established the Circle of Gold to recognize outstanding alumni who exemplify the University's strong tradition of excellence through their personal service and achievements. Several extraordinary women have been inducted into this elite group. These diverse women expressed surprisingly similar sentiments about their continued engagement with FSU—they each shared that, as students and now as alumnae, they have gained a great deal from

their involvement with the University and want to contribute back to their alma mater. Above all, they share a desire to participate in making our University an even better place.

As I was preparing to write this piece, I listened to several past award ceremonies. Listening to these recordings told me much more than reading transcripts because I was able to hear the inflections in the recipients' voices as they shared their stories. Some women expressed an appreciation for past professors who supported and encouraged them when they were young students and, sometimes, the only women in their classes. Other recipients reflected that when they left Tallahassee, they missed that sense of connection and were thrilled to remain involved with Florida State through Alumni Association outreach.

Mrs. Donna Lou Harper Askew, class of 1955 and a W4FSU member, was among the women welcomed into the Circle of Gold in 2014. Donna Lou expressed that it would be difficult to try to condense her thoughts and feelings about her alma mater into only a paragraph or so. When I spoke with her again, however, she shared this statement: "Development of the Women for FSU gave me a new perspective and vision of philanthropy because of its weekend programs;

engaging, behind-the-scenes experiences; and facets of FSU not seen before. This opportunity, together with seeing friends from earlier days as well as meeting new ones, all who love FSU and are proud of its development, has been a joy. It has also helped me see anew how important it is for FSU women to continue to be more deeply and devotedly involved in helping FSU continue to grow in positive and uplifting ways."

As members of Women for FSU, I'm sure we can all identify with her emotional connection to the University as well as with her affinity for the Women for FSU.

The Women for FSU is proud to CELEBRATE the ladies who were honored this year:

- ▶ Donna Lou Askew, B.S. '55
- ▶ Anne Hamilton, B.S. '79
- ▶ Billie Jones, Ed.D. '72
- ▶ Mary Pankowski, Ph.D. '72 and J.D. '01
- ▶ Connie Jenkins Pye, B.S. '83 and '84, M.S.W. '85
- ▶ Janet Wells, B.S. '42
- ▶ Ginger Wetherell, First Lady of Florida State University '03-'10 ✨

—Sarah Coakley