

# The *Women* for FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Winter 2018



## WLI CELEBRATES FIFTH YEAR

The Women's Leadership Institute, an annual collaboration between The Women for FSU and the FSU Center for Leadership and Social Change, strives to enhance a diverse group of undergraduate student participants' leader identity, leadership capacity and emotionally intelligent leadership style. Now in its fifth year, the Institute's evolving curriculum—based on current theory and practice in the field of women and leadership—develops, encourages and celebrates women's leadership at Florida State University.

Based on the belief that leadership is learned through experience, education and reflection, this national, award-winning institute has been described as a “ridiculously powerful” learning opportunity by student participants. Over an intensive three-day collective experience, carefully selected students and facilitators work together to increase participants' healthy self-esteem, authenticity and their ability to create a network of community and support for positive change.

WLI is allowing FSU to claim a

significant role in developing female leaders for the future. The W4FSU have much to be proud of as the founding and supporting organization of this outstanding program.

To contribute to WLI, please visit [w4fsu.org](http://w4fsu.org) and designate the Women's Leadership Institute to receive your donation.

Please contact Laura Glenn, staff liaison to The Women for FSU, by email at [lglenn@foundation.fsu.edu](mailto:lglenn@foundation.fsu.edu) or phone at (850) 644-2313 with any questions. 🌱

—Alicia Crew



*Participants discuss how together as WLI women, they can encourage and create positive change in their communities.*



Cassandra Rayne Gross

I find myself reflecting on the opportunities created during the past twelve months. The Philanthropy Committee organized exceptional events in Jacksonville and Atlanta, and locally, we hosted a retirement planning luncheon geared towards women of all ages. Additionally, the Student Engagement Committee coordinated the fifth annual Women's Leadership Institute.

Looking forward, members can expect more outreach from W4FSU as we prepare for FSU's Great Give. We are again partnering with the FSU Alumni Association and the local Seminole Club to host the third annual Inspire Awards in Atlanta. Our Program Planning Committee is hard at work arranging the upcoming Backstage Pass. Check your mailbox for an invitation, and I look forward to seeing you there! 🌸

Fondly,  
Cassandra Rayne Gross  
Chair, Executive Committee



[LEFT TO RIGHT] Judy Schmeling, Stacie Bene Harris Cox, Melanie Shoemaker Griffin and Susan Ann MacManus

## TAMPA'S WOMEN OF DISTINCTION INSPIRE AWARDS

The Tampa community came out more than 100 people strong on July 13 to support four local women who have broken the glass ceiling in their respective fields. Each were honored with this year's Inspire Award, created by the FSU Master Craftsman Studio. The evening began with networking amongst the generations of attendees, followed by the award winners answering questions, moderated by our co-host, FSU Alumni Association President Scott Atwell. This year's award winners are Stacie Bene Harris Cox (B.S. '02, J.D. '05), Assistant United States Attorney, Middle District of Florida, who fights against human trafficking; Melanie Shoemaker Griffin (B.S. '03, M.B.A. '06, J.D. '06), commercial litigation attorney at Dean Mead, the office she established in Tampa, Florida; Susan Ann MacManus (B.A. '68, Ph.D. '75), distinguished professor, Department of Government and International Affairs, University of South Florida, political commentator for all major media; and Judy Schmeling (B.S. '82), President, Cornerstone Division, Inc., catalog division and COO, Home Shopping Network, Inc. The Tampa Seminole Club co-sponsored the event along with W4FSU. Congratulations to our honorees! 🌸

—Laura Glenn

### WOMEN FOR FSU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Lynn Bertram  
Stella Cottrell  
Alicia Crew  
Laurel Fulkerson

Cassandra Rayne Gross  
Susan Hoerbelt  
Julie Granger Kritz  
Michelle Mattox

Carol McCormick  
Annie McFarland  
Michelle Sabin  
Chelsea Shackelford

Shenifa Taite  
Robin Vernon



## BACKSTAGE PASS TO THE VERY BEST OF FLORIDA STATE

I've had the pleasure of serving on the Program Planning Committee for Backstage Pass since almost the very beginning, when I met with the committee in 2008 when they asked the Master Craftsman Studio to participate in a BSP event. That was the first I heard about The Women for Florida State University and Backstage Pass. I remember thinking that my role was not only to represent Master Craftsman, but to welcome this group to our studio, to educate them about our work and to provide them with a delightful experience. As I worked closely with the committee over the months of planning, I began to gain a greater understanding and appreciation for the mission of The Women for FSU. I quickly realized that I did not want my involvement to end. These

women had started something special and I wanted to be involved in it!

Each year, as our much-anticipated Backstage Pass weekend arrives, I feel prepared as to what to expect. After all, I'm on the committee. How surprised can I be? Yet each year, our programming has left a lasting impression with me, has changed a preconceived idea I may have had about what a college has to offer or inspired me to explore more about what I learned. As I write this, I've enjoyed remembering some of my personal favorite Backstage Pass visits, the conversations they fostered and the new friendships and connections that were made.

As you receive your save the dates, we hope that the now familiar theater-style curtains will make you interested

in what is happening behind the scenes at Florida State. What Backstage Pass offers is an exclusive opportunity for 100 women to see what we're doing at FSU while it's happening. **Make plans now to join us March 23–24, 2018!**

Discovering a part of the University that I may have been unfamiliar with before is the experience I've enjoyed the most during past Backstage Pass events. Each have helped to exceed our expectations in providing an engaging, informative and interactive weekend for our guests. We look forward to welcoming you to campus and sharing another special Backstage Pass weekend with you this year. ✨

—Sarah Coakley

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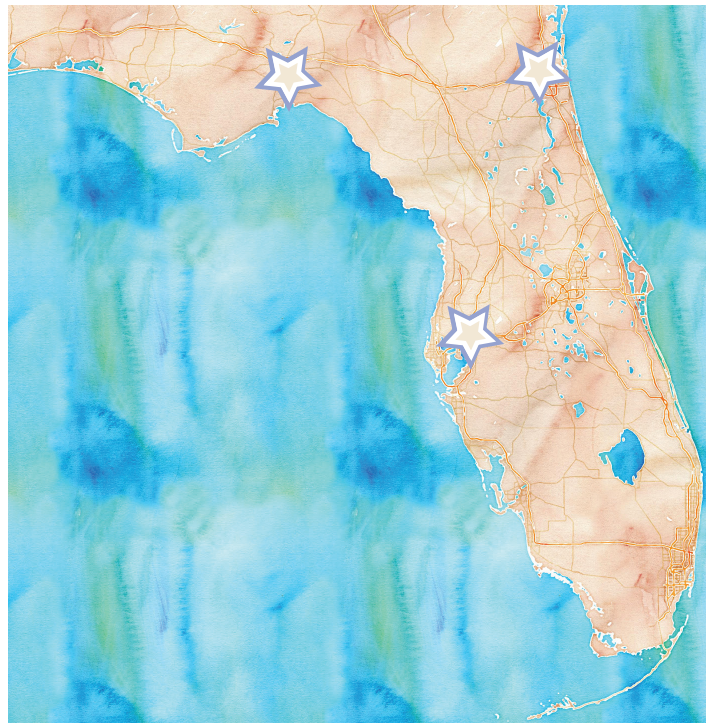
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2010 LEVY AVE., BLDG. B, STE. 300  
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32310

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## REGIONAL PROGRAMS

W4FSU's regional programs are growing! The Jacksonville group hosted Welcoming Our Daughters to FSU on June 8, an event dedicated to discussing campus safety. The Atlanta group hosted a luncheon on Nov. 14 where guest panelists discussed how women handle careers, volunteer work and giving back. And the Tampa group is progressing, working on plans for an upcoming event. We welcome new members from these events and celebrate Florida State women gathering to support our University and each other.

To get involved with a regional group in these three areas, please contact Laura Glenn, staff liaison to The Women for FSU, at [lglen@foundation.fsu.edu](mailto:lglen@foundation.fsu.edu) or (850) 644-2313. 🌸



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