



STUDENT AFFAIRS
Connections

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS | APRIL 2011 EDITION

VOL 4 | NO 2

Campus Recreation

While Campus Recreation departments have become an integral part of most college campuses, they have grown from rather humble beginnings as many of them started out primarily as intramural sports programs. The FGCU Campus Recreation department, like those on other campuses, has grown to encompass many other areas, including aquatics, sports clubs, fitness, and an outdoor pursuits program. The one aspect of the profession that has not changed since its inception in the 1950's is the commitment of recreation professionals in helping achieve educational goals by promoting student growth and development and encouraging communal activities.

Studies conducted on the use of Campus Recreation programs indicates there is a positive relationship between recreation participation and student academic performance. The National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) contracted Kerr-Downs Research Associates to conduct a nationwide research project to determine the value of recreational sport on college campuses. More than 2,600 students from 16 colleges participated in this study, making it the largest representative group of college students from multiple colleges ever studied with respect to the value of participation in recreational sports. At one school, frequent users of their Student Recreation Center actually had higher GPA's than that of the student body overall (NIRSA, 2004). Research also indicates that while most students choose a college or university for its academic merits, another key factor in the students decision is the recreational sports, programs, and facilities.

National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (2004). *The value of recreational sports in higher education*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.

Student Employees Lead the Way

Campus Recreation recently launched an initiative to identify the impact of working for the department on student's skills. According to a recent survey using Student Voice, student employees are highly satisfied with their work experience and believe it has contributed to the development of their communication skills and problem solving abilities.



A Message From:

Amy Swingle

Director of Campus Recreation

The vision of FGCU Campus Recreation is to provide exceptional programs, services, and facilities that enhance the university experience for students. We also help develop the professional skill sets of our 100 student staff members. (Campus Recreation is one of the largest employers of students on campus.) Our student staff are given positions of responsibility. We rely on them to effectively oversee facilities, provide personal training services, serve as lifeguards, and lead outdoor trips. Through these experiences, our students have opportunities to develop and demonstrate their communication, organization, problem-solving, leadership, and teamwork abilities. These are skills that will help prepare them for success in their lives and careers.

For comments or suggestions regarding this issue, please contact:

Amy Swingle

Director of Campus Recreation
(239) 590-7936 • aswingle@fgcu.edu

Connections is available at studentservices.fgcu.edu/publications.html

Connections may be obtained in an alternative format by contacting the Office of Institutional Equity & Compliance at 239-590-7405 or 800-590-3428, or the Office of Adaptive Services at 239-590-7956.

Outdoor Pursuits: Taking Learning on the Road and to New Heights

Outdoor Pursuits is a program that was established to help students experience the natural world and foster positive relationships with other students outside the classroom.

One of the main elements of The Outdoor Pursuits program are the “adventure trips.” Past trips have included white water rafting in the Chattooga River (South Carolina), rock climbing in North Carolina, and a 140 mile “Bike Across Florida.”

According to surveys of students that participated in the adventure trips, they felt the experiences strongly enhanced their appreciation for the environment, helped them in developing positive relationships with other students, and contributed to their overall experience at FGCU. Here are some comments from students:

“I found a new sense of adventure! I had the best time trying all of the new activities and meeting everyone!”

– Participant on the Chattooga White Water Rafting Trip
Spring 2010

“Absolutely amazing trip, great times, met some great people! I would definitely do it again!”

– Participant in the Bike Across Florida Trip
Spring 2011



October 2010 Pisgah National Forest (North Carolina) Rock Climbing Trip



December 2010 Backpacking Trip to Juniper Prairie Wilderness (Ocala, FL)

Eagle Challenge Course

With funding support from Student Government, Campus Recreation is pleased to announce the construction of the Eagle Challenge Course at the Buckingham Center. The course will consist of a high team course, two ziplines, three stand-alone high elements, and a low elements course. The course is scheduled to open in August 2011. The vision of the Eagle Challenge Course is to offer students a venue to conduct teambuilding activities, foster leadership skills, develop trust and cohesiveness, challenge personal limitations, and provide outdoor meeting space for large groups.

Challenge courses have become an increasingly popular tool for university recreation and leadership programs across the country. According to a study conducted at a large southeastern university, researchers found that a one day challenge course can have a significant positive impact on a college student’s life effectiveness skills. (Flood, Garner, & Cooper, 2009). Campus Recreation looks forward to the opportunity to take our students to new heights!!

Flood, J., Gardner, E., & Cooper, N. (2009). One-day challenge course impact on student life effectiveness skills. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership*, 1, 55-75.



February 2011 “Bike Across Florida” (Ft. Myers to West Palm Beach)

The Division of Student Affairs - Completing the University Experience

ADAPTIVE SERVICES
CAMPUS RECREATION
CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE
EAGLE PARENT OFFICE

EAGLE VIEW ORIENTATION
FIRST YEAR ADVISING
FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE
HOUSING & RESIDENCE LIFE
MULTICULTURAL STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT
PREVENTION & WELLNESS
STUDENT GOVERNMENT
STUDENT SUPPORT & OUTREACH
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES
TESTING SERVICES