25th Anniversary in Review

The best of 1997 from the pages of Inside UNF
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The University of North Florida's 25th anniversary year is now just a memory. What a great year it was.

Students, faculty and staff along with members of the Jacksonville community were entertained by Karl Haas, inspired by Maya Angelou and awed by Elie Wiesel. In between there was fun for everyone. A homecoming celebration marked the anniversary with colorful and imaginative floats, a birthday party gave founding faculty and staff a chance to swap stories and UNF Day at Alltel Stadium gave the University a chance to shine at a Jaguars game.

The Office of News & Publications captured these events on film and published the photos in Inside UNF each month. We are proud to be able to offer the University community a collection of these photos as a memento of the anniversary year. In addition, we have included the profiles of the University founding faculty and staff which were written by our staff and published in Inside UNF during 1997.
The 25th Anniversary Gala was an evening to remember.
The Arena was transformed into an elegant banquet room which was filled with music by UNF’s Bunkey Green.

Entertainment for the evening also included National Public Radio host Dr. Karl Haas who performed a duet with Music Department Chairman Dr. Gerson Yessin. The evening started with a reception in the lobby of the Arena.

Participating in the program were UNF President Dr. Adam W. Herbert, former presidents Curtis McCray and Thomas Carpenter and Pam Paul of the Mayor’s Office who read a city proclamation declaring 1997 UNF’s silver anniversary year.
Moments from a Memorable Concert

Dr. Gerson Yessin, chairman of UNF's Music Department, accompanied Bill Brown in a memorable 25th Anniversary Concert at the UNF theater in May. The two entertained an appreciative audience with a variety of musical numbers.

After the concert, Yessin and Brown greeted throngs of well wishers in the lobby of the theater.
On the surface, what Elie Wiesel and Maya Angelou had in common was their international renown as authors and activists. But the first two speakers in the University of North Florida Presidential Lecture Series seemed to share a view that if we learn acceptance first, we can benefit from the gifts everyone has to offer.

The series was inaugurated in March by Wiesel, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. An Auschwitz concentration camp survivor, Wiesel used the occasion to condemn zealotry and urge tolerance.

"I believe that God is our father and God has many children... He likes a symphony," Wiesel told 2,500 listeners in the UNF arena. A lack of respect for the religious beliefs of others is a dangerous first step toward extremism, he added.

"I believe in the value of religion, but if anyone pushes religion beyond the scope of what it was meant to be, it becomes fanaticism," Wiesel said. "If I say only my religion is good and that I alone have the way to pursue truth, that is fanaticism."

Tickets for Angelou, the second speaker in the Presidential Lecture Series, were gone a month before the event in September. An overflow crowd of 5,000 came to hear the beloved internationally known poet and author speak.

"...we have the right to stand erect, have the privilege to call each other brothers and sisters, because in truth human beings are more alike than we are unalike," Angelou said.

She went on to describe how poetry helped her deal with the traumas of her childhood, which included being raped at age 7, then carrying years of guilt after her attacker, whom she had identified, was beaten to death.

"I was told poetry would put starch in my backbone," Angelou said. "It helped me and will always remain a rainbow in the clouds to me."

The Presidential Lecture Series was established by UNF President Adam Herbert in commemoration of the University's 25th anniversary. Its aim is to bring speakers of international renown to our area, to provide enlightening and challenging presentations which provoke continuing discussion and dialogue. As a community service, the lectures are presented free to students, faculty and staff, and area residents.

"The Presidential Lecture Series reflects a desire to give back to a community which has been so very supportive of this institution," Herbert said when he introduced the series before Wiesel's lecture began. Plans are for the University to bring two speakers of international prominence per year to Northeast Florida and present them to the public at no charge.
Pursma Balgos, a UNF alumna, waves to parade watchers from the Filipino American alumni and students' float.

These two clowns, Barbara Beach and Stephanie Ryan, represented the Student Council for Exceptional Children in the homecoming parade.

A birthday cake was selected by Zeta Tau Alpha and Chi Phi to mark the 25th anniversary.

Members of Sigma Chi Fraternity built a Greek temple.

Demonstrating Tae Kwon Do prowess was Bobby Chambers.

Brandi McCoy of the UNF Dance Attack received a motorcycle lift from Mike Apple along the parade route.

Photos by Lisa Kievet
Activities for Saturday night included a dance and coronation of the king and queen for homecoming festivities. The king and queen for this year were Andrea Rist of Alpha Chi Omega and Ken Hill of Chi Phi. Members of Alpha Chi Omega (center photo) got into the homecoming spirit while Rick Chang of Alpha Phi Alpha and Nicole Sims of Alpha Kappa Alpha were two of the candidates.

Homecoming Activities

Included among the homecoming activities in the Arena plaza was a pie throwing booth. Linda Lipe takes advantage of the opportunity to "cream" Bob Vergenz of Natural Sciences.

Musical entertainment was provided by the Mike Shackelford Band (top) at the homecoming dance Saturday night and the Osprey Band at the parade Saturday morning.

Attending the homecoming employee luncheon were Mike Spivey of the Print Shop and his two sons Markello, left, who participated in the face painting activities, and Mike Spivey Jr.
UNF President Adam Herbert cuts the 25th Anniversary cake. The cake cutting concluded the ceremony which was attended by many current and former faculty and staff.

Senior founding faculty member Andrew Farkas, director of libraries, poses for a photo with the man who hired him, Dr. Roy Lassiter, the first vice president for Academic Affairs.

Jacksonville Mayor John Delaney addresses the faculty, staff and friends who gathered to celebrate UNF's birthday. The celebration was in the Arena plaza.

25th Birthday Celebration
Photos by Tom Cain

Founding faculty member Dr. M. Reza Vaghefi (left) talks with Dr. James Parrish, original dean of the College of Business Administration during a reception following the ceremony.

Harriet the Osprey poses with founding faculty member Dr. Dan Schafer in the UNF Arena plaza during the 25th birthday party celebrations.
More than 350 UNF Alumni and friends gathered for an alumni tailgate party prior to the Jaguars game.

A happy 25th anniversary banner is flown over Alltel Stadium by Beach Banners during the Jaguars Game.

Renowned tenor Bill Brown sings the National Anthem prior to the kickoff.

Flanking the stage were 154 student flag bearers who carried flags representing students or alumni from all 50 states and 104 foreign countries.

Halftime entertainment was provided by the UNF Jazz Ensemble and the UNF Dance Attack.

UNF Day at Alltel Stadium
The First Coast High Schools Robotics Competition was won by the team from Episcopal High School. Lew Ritter (third from left) was a faculty advisor while George Cooper (right) with the UNF Electrical Engineering Robotics Team, was the technical advisor. Team members are Simon Grice, Erik Helmsin, Johan Holm, Patrick Horton, Andrew Morse, Kathryn Nichols, Bill Oaks, Michael Powell, Jiwook Seo and Nick Thornley.

Among the items on display was UNF’s robot which recently won a regional competition against some of the best engineering schools in the nation.

Photos by John Woods

To conclude the festivities, skydivers from Northeast Florida Skydive of Jacksonville entertained the crowd by doing aerial acrobatics and landing on University Green.

Dr. David Miller (right), the director of the Kiss Institute for Practical Robotics, served as the robot competition director.

The College of Computing Sciences and Engineering hosted a two-day event on campus in October to mark the University’s 25th Anniversary. Computing Sciences Day was on Friday followed by Engineering Day on Saturday.
When President Herbert and Provost Kline asked me to write a poem celebrating UNF's 25th Anniversary, I didn't say: “Yes, of course. Right away.” Rather, I said: “Yes, but... We'll see.” Thinking to myself: the world has quite enough poems already; it doesn't need another one from me.

But wanting, nonetheless, to celebrate UNF's 25th Anniversary. And knowing that words are all I have to do it with.

But they don't have to be my own words, do they? I'd always rather my students sing or sign for me.

In the early 70s, Louise Rhoads was in her late 70s. Older than I was, at the time, by half a century. Older than I am, now, by a quarter century. Older than the century.

A retired school teacher (math was her subject) who had written poems all her life, Louise somehow found her way to my writing classes, where she wrote a book of poems, *Cracker Girl*, published it, sold it (out), and taught me, along the way, just what it means to sing. Here is the whole of one of Louise's poems.

*Can't a person / Just sing—not mean / Anything / Except a song?*

Memory is my third and inner ear. Listening, I can still hear Louise's voice, older than the century, “just singing” her poem, celebrating her life. And doing it at UNF.

Valerie Anthony had already been Ophelia and Lady Macbeth by the time she came back to school in the early 90s to do an M.A. in English. She carried with her the weight of more language than she knew what to do with. I supervised her thesis, a collection of poems called *Learning to Fall*, in which she did not fall. This is my poem. Valerie wrote it for me.

*The Man Who Hears Voices*

I stumbled / into your room of books / sleepwalking, so many years voiceless / in a dream without language / You did not let me sleep / but nudged me toward words / I awoke / and signed my name / to my life.

Signature as bestower and mark of value. How many lives go unsigned? Not Valerie's. As I write this, she is a University Fellow at FSU, wide awake and writing her dissertation—a personal memoir, “My Sister's Shadow”—for a Ph.D. in English.

Louise Rhoads and Valerie Anthony stand in today for all the other students I've had at UNF whose poems and lives are in me. For twenty-five years, now, they have taught me, and taught me well.

“Language is fossil poetry.” We do not all write poems. But we are all poets.

Can't we all / Just sing—not mean / Anything / Except a song?

Sign our names to our lives?

And do it at UNF.

Commerative Soft Drinks

UNF President Dr. Adam Herbert joins Rick Ford (left) and Tom Yost, representatives of Pepsi Cola Bottlers of Jacksonville, to take the first UNF 25th Anniversary cans off the assembly line. The Jacksonville Pepsi plant produced more than five million of the special UNF cans to be distributed throughout north Florida and South Georgia.

BOTTLES

Among the last special celebratory items produced for the UNF 25th Anniversary were commemorative Coke Bottles. The 8-oz bottles of Coke Classic were distributed throughout Northeast Florida.

College of Health Building Dedicated to J. Brooks Brown

Joan Farrell, dean of UNF's College of Health, considers J. Brooks Brown to be a friend and a mentor. "You can't sit down next to him at lunch and not learn something new," she told a group of community leaders who gathered in September on campus to dedicate the College of Health building in his name.

Brown illustrated Farrell's point well during his acceptance remarks. His audience gained valuable insight into the future of Florida, Jacksonville and the University of North Florida. Noting that Florida had only 70,000 residents when it became a state, Brown reminded his audience of predictions which indicate that the state will have 15 million residents by the end of the century. By the year 2050, Florida is projected to have a population of 47 million, which represents a growth rate of 250,000 residents per year.

"With such dynamic growth comes great opportunity and potential catastrophic problems. Jacksonville and this university will be at the epicenter of this growth," he said. Brown predicted UNF would experience enormous growth and the challenge would be to continue the academic excellence it achieved in its first 25 years.

UNF President Adam Herbert said the naming of a major academic building for Brown was one of the highest tributes a university can convey on an individual. "It is an expression of appreciation and also a demonstration of respect for the accomplishments of the individual honored."

Dr. Herbert praised Brown for "his many years of exemplary and extraordinary service to the community as a caring physician, a very creative entrepreneur, a dedicated civic leader, a benefactor and as a concerned citizen."

In her introduction, Farrell noted that the name Brooks Brown is synonymous with medical and health care in Jacksonville. "But those who know and understand him know how committed he is to teaching and learning," she said.

Brown practiced surgery in Jacksonville from 1953 to 1983, serving the Jacksonville community as a medical provider for more than 30 years. In 1964, he joined several other physicians to incorporate Memorial Hospital, which evolved over the next three decades to become a major acute care hospital in the area. Memorial Hospital was reorganized in 1982 into a holding company and the following year, Brown became chairman, president and chief executive officer.

He is chairman and CEO of Genesis Health Inc., the residual holding company of the former Memorial Hospital, which operates a 113-bed tertiary rehabilitation hospital and five comprehensive outpatient centers in Northeast Florida. Last year, Genesis donated $1.4 million to the College of Health, which at the time was the largest single cash gift in the history of the University. It was matched with $1.05 million in state funds resulting in $2.45 million to be used in the establishment of the Genesis Distinguished Professorship, the Genesis Health Scholars and four College of Health research professorships.

The Florida Legislature enacted special legislation during the last session to authorize the naming of the building after Brown. Gov. Lawton Chiles signed the legislation in May.

Dr. Adam Herbert, Dr. J. Brooks Brown and Dr. Joan Farrell gather after building dedication
John Anderson

The University Police Department's reputation for outstanding service to faculty, staff and students, is in small part due to the attitude of Capt. John Anderson.

Since starting at UNF in August of 1972, Anderson has worked nearly every job in the police department and in the process received many awards including the Gabor Award, the Spirit Award from Enrollment Services and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Child Development Research Center. The awards reflect an attitude which is well-known on campus. “I try to treat everyone as they would have someone treat their mother or sister. There are so few police and such a large population. We need all the help the public can give us,” he says.

Anderson attributes that attitude to former UNF Chief of Police Martin P. Garris. “When he became chief, he changed my life to understand that there is more to policing than just putting people in jail. He taught me you can try to treat everyone as they would have someone treat their mother or sister. There are so few police and such a large population. We need all the help the public can give us,” he says.

While Anderson’s attitude is well known, his background may come as a surprise even to UNF colleagues who have known him for some time. He is a highly decorated U.S. Marine Corps veteran serving for 22 years in the reserves and on active duty including a tour in Vietnam in 1967. While in Vietnam, Anderson's heroism earned him the Navy commendation Medal and the Bronze Star with combat “V”.

The citations tell the story well. The Bronze Star citation reads: “On 29 March 1967, while engaged in a search and destroy operation south of DeNang, the Battalion Command Group became pinned down by intense fire from an undetermined number of Viet Cong. Assigned the mission of relieving the beleaguered unit, Sergeant Anderson expeditiously embarked his platoon aboard three amphibian tractors which transported the unit across the river separating them from the command group. After arriving on the opposite shore, Sergeant Anderson quickly reorganized his platoon and led the unit to the objective area. Locating the besieged command group, he skillfully deployed his men and directed suppressive fire against the enemy. Observing three Marines in the river, pinned down by the heavy volume of enemy fire, Sergeant Anderson directed a fire team to provide covering fire, which enabled two of the men to reach covered positions. Realizing that the third Marine was too exhausted to swim to shore, he unhesitatingly exposed himself to enemy fire to enter the river and assist his comrade to safety. The Navy Commendation citation described several events in which Anderson helped his men while exposing himself to enemy fire. During one incident, a member of his patrol detonated an enemy mine. “Staff Sergeant Anderson and two other Marines were wounded. Disregarding his own painful wounds, he skillfully established a defensive perimeter and a landing zone and, after directing the evacuation of other casualties, steadfastly remained with his men until the mission had been completed.” He was awarded a Purple Heart as the result of that incident. In another incident, the citation notes, “On the night of 1 August, when his company sustained numerous casualties during a mortar attack, he fearlessly exposed himself to intense hostile fire by utilizing a flashlight to lead an amphibian tractor with wounded aboard to the safety of the Battalion Command Post.”

Anderson doesn’t frequently discuss his days in Vietnam but the experience played a role in his choice of a law enforcement career. His first choice was the Duval County Sheriff’s Office. But he was turned away because he was told he was too small to be a police officer. Anderson then went to UNF where he was hired for $6,973 a year. Ever since, Duval County’s loss has been UNF’s gain.

Richard Bizot

Richard Bizot is undoubtedly one of UNF’s most active environmental faculty members.

Coming to UNF from California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, he became the faculty advisor of the Sawmill Slough Conservation Club in 1975 and coordinated the first three UNF Earth Celebrations beginning in 1977. He designed and helped establish the UNF Nature Trail System that was given National Recreational Trail status by the U.S. Department of Interior in 1978. His nature interests also played a role in his decision to lead the campaign which resulted in the choice of the osprey as UNF’s mascot.

On the academic level, Bowman has been active in mathematics and science programs. Since 1985, he has been director of the North East Florida Institute for Science, Mathematics and Computer Education, an organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of science, mathemetic and computer science education. From 1989 to 1993 he was chairman of the Department of Natural Sciences and in 1995 he became advisor for the University’s Premed Program.
Bowman says he came to UNF because it offered an opportunity to help build a university and to focus on high quality teaching. One of his most memorable experiences has been helping to build a high quality chemistry program and assisting in enhancing the quality of college education in mathematics and science in Duval County public schools.

Carol Ann Boyles

As the students attending UNF have become progressively younger, Carol Ann Boyles’ job has grown progressively more challenging.

Boyles, director for the Center for Experiential Learning and Institutional Testing, recalls that when she first started the cooperative education program at UNF most of the students were comprised of non-traditional students who already had work experience. With the admission of freshmen in 1984, the average age of students has steadily declined. “In the early days, students were interested in the work experience as well as the degree,” she says.

In her 25 years at UNF, Boyles has watched more than 30,000 students go through cooperative education programs to successful careers. The success of the program can be judged from the first student who entered the program — Larry Pelton who is now president of the Palm Beach County Business Development Board.

Boyles has had a long history of working in education even before she came to UNF in 1968. A graduate of Keuka College in Keuka Park, NY, Boyles worked in the admissions office there before enrolling in a master’s degree program at the University of Florida where her father was a professor of mathematics. After she earned her master’s, she went to work at Florida State University as a residence hall counselor. After two years there, she became the founding director of the guidance and counseling program and the academic advisement program at Central Florida Community College in Ocala where after a few years, she became associate dean of student affairs. As an assistant dean of student organizations and activities at Florida State, Boyles was responsible for 250 fraternities and 300 student organizations.

Boyles moved to Jacksonville in 1968 and became the director of guidance in the adult education program at Jacksonville Community College. In 1972, through a contact with Bill Wharton, a former colleague from the University of Florida, she applied for a position at UNF. She started as director of Cooperative Education and Placement and progressively held a number of positions all associated with career planning or cooperative education.

In that time, Boyles has found that one of the most rewarding experiences has been witnessing former UNF co-op students hire currently enrolled students. In 25 years, Boyles has developed a valuable network of connections throughout the Jacksonville business community. The connections have made it possible for many UNF students to get their first job experience.

“Cooperative education as an experiential, academic program allows companies to provide students with an individualized career education program that is built on their academic achievements and career goals. Over the years, I have seen students reaffirm their majors and make wiser career choices based upon their co-op experiences,” she says.

William Brown

Bill Brown knows that the highs and lows of both professionally and personally can make you a stronger person. Those experiences have made Brown a renowned operatic tenor who has performed throughout the United States and around the world. He has brought those experiences to UNF as a charter faculty member instilling in his students the need to be both disciplined and dedicated. The experiences which have served him well in his stellar career.

Few probably would have guessed what kind of musical career Brown would achieve when he performed as a box reciting biblical verses. His family was intensely religious and in Jackson, Miss., the church dominated life, especially in the African American community. “They put me on a box and recited biblical verses,” he recalls. “My nickname was ‘preacher’ and that was my first taste of the stage.”

Brown attended a private school in Jackson and was introduced to music. However, he loved his love of music outside of the classroom. He lived across the street from a man who had a radio show and his own band. Brown wanted to play in the band and his parents didn’t have enough money to buy him his first instrument. Brown decided to take the chance and has never regretted the decision.

“Fortunately for Brown, his grandmother convinced his grandfather to soften his opposition and thus started a musical career which was combined with academic training over the years. He entered Jackson State University with a solid reputation as a jazz musician when he says he was forced to perform a vocal solo. “I decided to be ridiculous by imitating an opera singer and sang God Bless America. Before I knew it, I was told I would major in voice.”

That decision did not sit well with Brown who saw his future in the horn. “Why did I need to major in voice? I was already established as a professional trumpet player.” However, one teacher persisted in pushing him into vocal work and one year he decided he would be an opera singer. “When I told my classmates that I wanted to be an opera singer, they all cracked up. There were no black opera singers at that time. They laughed at me, but I was serious.”

After teaching for a short time at Utica Junior College in Utica, Miss., Brown auditioned at Indiana University and succeeded in winning a fellowship in 1960 to complete his master’s degree.

Two years at Indiana led to an appointment with the Navy Band in 1962 in Washington, D.C. It was one of those experiences which marked a high point and low point in his career. Although he was the first black ever appointed to the Navy Band, it was also Brown’s first encounter with racism. “It (racism) really affected me. I became very negative and it hurt my work,” he says.

Finally, Brown says he realized that his attitude was counterproductive. “I realized that the only person I was hurting was myself.” The turnaround in his work was noticed by the president of the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore who offered Brown an associate teaching position. In 1966, Brown left the Navy and started doctoral work at Peabody where he also did some teaching. That was followed by a fellowship to Tanglewood, the most prestigious summer festival in the country in 1968.

Brown’s career blossomed after his ABC network television premier of John LaMontaine’s Christmas opera “The Shepherdes Playe” in which he had the starring role. He began performing more than 40 weeks a year around the country. It was during one six-city Florida tour that he stopped in Jacksonville as part of the FCCJ Artist Series. “I hated Jacksonville. There was a terrible stench here. If someone had told me that I would ever return to Jacksonville I would have told them they were crazy.”

But Gerson Yessin and UNF President Thomas Carpenter made it possible for many students to attend Brown’s FCCJ performance and met with him later to talk about a new university they were building which needed musical faculty. “I initially turned them down, but Gerson was persistent and told me they would be different and would understand the artistic temperament.”

Brown decided to make the move to Jacksonville to advise.”

Joe Capitaino

Joe Capitaino has seen some wild things at UNF since starting in 1972. Would you believe a cougar roaming the outskirts of campus or an alligator which decided to check out some of the buildings?
When UNF first opened it was a wilderness area with no commercial or residential development for miles around. The wildlife was abundant.

Capitanio recalls an incident involving a 5-foot alligator which was discovered taking a stroll between Buildings 3 and 4 one day. "The police came over and looked at it and weren't sure how to handle it. Finally, one officer used a long stick to keep its jaw closed and the other taped it and they dragged it by the tail to a wooded area. He (the alligator) wasn't happy. It hissed, twisted and fought them all the way," Capitanio says.

Wild things have happened in the world of technology as well since Capitanio started at UNF. The Pennsylvania native came to UNF after being discharged in 1972 from the Navy where he had been stationed at Mayport. He had been an electronic technician in the Navy and applied for a similar position at UNF working with Jack Funkhouser in Instructional Communications. "I was attracted to UNF because it was new. I always wanted to work in a college setting."

Capitanio did electronic repair work at UNF for about four years when he applied for a position in the Division of Technology as a laboratory manager. There he supervised students in a full machine shop which was then part of a program leading to a bachelor's degree in technologies.

He remained in that position until 1987 when he was transferred to the College of Education and Human Services where he is now the laboratory manager of the Education Technology Center. It's a job that involves everything from teaching education students about technology to repairing computers in the college. It's also a busy job. Last semester alone, more than 2,200 students used the services of the lab.

In addition to helping students, Capitanio also helps education faculty with technology projects both at UNF and in area schools.

Capitanio remains excited about changes in technology on the horizon. He's part of a distance learning tutoring program which he predicts will be the wave of the future. "Kids get excited about working with computers and I get excited with them," he says.

Minor Chamblin

Minor Chamblin is one faculty member who understands the value of academic freedom and appreciates that it has always been part of UNF's tradition.

When Chamblin arrived at UNF in 1972, one of the first courses he designed was on the subject of human sexuality. Since he was concerned that the film in the course could be considered objectionable by some, Chamblin went to talk with UNF's first president, Tom Carpenter. "He cut me off in the middle of my presentation and said, 'You don't have to defend this course to me as long as viewing the film is voluntary for your students.'"

A few years later, a Jacksonville PTA group protested the film and this time Interim President Andrew Robinson defended Chamblin's right to show the film since it was optional for students. "I've always been impressed with the spirit of academic freedom on this campus."

While some things like academic freedom have remained, many other things have changed since Chamblin arrived on the newly constructed campus. When he recalls his first years, Chamblin remembers the "collective sense of camaraderie and fun we had. It's the attributes this to a number of factors; the relatively small difference in the ages between students and faculty at the time, the cultural climate of the '70s and the size of the University. The traditional kind of student-faculty boundaries didn't exist then. There was much greater interaction between faculty and students than there is today."

Despite the changes, Chamblin still is ready to brag about the education provided at UNF. "The quality of the undergraduate education we provide our students is on a par with virtually any institution you want to choose in this country," he says.

The offer of an institution specializing in undergraduate education is part of the reason Chamblin came to UNF. Chamblin completed his undergraduate work at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Ill., followed by two years at the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

Chamblin had never been to Florida before he interviewed for the job in Jacksonville. "I was looking not just for a job but also for a place where I and my family could live." He decided Jacksonville had the quality of life, low cost of living and pleasant climate he was looking for. Of course, he admits, that the fact that it was 11 degrees in Lexington when he interviewed in Jacksonville also played a role in his decision.

Dale Clifford

Dale Clifford admits he loves starting things and it's clear the University of North Florida is a better place because of her unending energy.

Clifford is not only a founding faculty member, she is also the founding director of the UNF Honors Program and helped bring freshmen and sophomores to campus as the first lower division director.

These positions, in addition to her current position as associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, have given Clifford an opportunity to be an integral part of the growth and development of the University. "I'm impressed with the remarkably good job of growing we have done. The University has kept its fundamental commitment to a high quality education and a high quality faculty," she says.

Clifford has always been a quick study. Entering Vanderbilt University at age 16, Clifford's career goal was not teaching. "I thought I was going to be a diplomat. I always wanted to go to France and I decided that I should pursue a career that enabled me, as a function of my job, to go to France," she says.

Clifford went from her undergraduate studies at the University of Tennessee, still intent on using her interest in French history as background for a career in foreign service. But she discovered that "diplomatic history bored me. I wanted to teach students about French revolutionary history — and that was also a job that involved going to France, to do research." She went on to receive her master's degree and doctorate from the University of Tennessee.

She frankly admits she came to UNF because "they were willing to give me a job at a time when teaching jobs were extremely hard to come by." She recalls she was impressed then with the University's desire to hire a diverse faculty and to excel in quality undergraduate teaching.

The first years were challenging for a faculty member with no previous experience. "It's not often that a new faculty member gets a chance to help shape the curriculum for an entire history program."

Opening a University brought with it a tremendous sense of excitement for Clifford and other founding faculty and staff. "The University was just barely finished, there were no sidewalks and they were shelving books in the library up until the last minute. There was no food service except for vending machines which the students would occasionally get into," she recalls.

Clifford became the director of Freshman and Sophomore Programs in 1983 and assisted in what she describes as the most significant change in the life of the young University. "It was an absolutely necessary step for this University. The concept of having an upper division university was an idea whose time really never came."

After a stint as an interim dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, Clifford starred the Honors Program and was its director from 1989 until 1994. During her various roles at UNF, Clifford has maintained one constant, the necessity to teach. "You have to have your feet in the classroom, that's the real life of a University. It keeps you attuned to what's going on. You can administer all day and sometimes when you go home wonder if you've done anything that was really worth it. When you teach, something good always happens." That kind of enthusiastic teaching commitment is part of Clifford's commitment to UNF. "I'm intensely proud of this University. We've had our ups and downs. We've had some hard times, but we've done damn well."

Frederick M. Cole

Frederick Cole can remember the days when most of the students he taught at UNF were older than he was. "When we opened the doors, there was a great backlog of students in the region who had no way of continuing their education," he recalls.

The age difference was primarily because when UNF opened it was an upper division...
school which attracted students who had already completed junior college. "We had philosophy that the region did not need a second-rate university. It needed a first rate university and we did just that," he says.

Collins came to UNF in the summer of 1971, one of five faculty members in the Department of Accounting and Finance. "I wanted very much to become part of a teaching university. I have been delighted with University and we did just philosophy that the region did not need a second-rate university." He spent half of his time teaching and half helping students with career and academic plans. "It was a very rewarding time for us."

The University opened with about 150 accounting majors, or roughly 10 percent of the student body. An indication of the quality of the program was evident when the College of Business Administration under Dean James Parrish achieved accreditation from the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business in the first year of operation. "That was unheard of," he notes.

Collins lists the COBA accreditation as well as the SACS accreditation of the entire university a few years later as among the most memorable experiences at UNF. "We all pitched in on the accreditation. It was a very exciting time."

The Florida native attended Davidson College for a time before joining the Army and completing Officer Candidate School which earned him a first lieutenant commission.

After the Army, he attended Stetson University where he completed his undergraduate accounting training in 1962. He joined Ernst & Young in Miami and in 1963 became a controller at the Harry-Anna Cripple Children's Hospital in Eustis, Florida.

In 1965 he went to work for the University of Florida as an accountant while going to school at the same time. He earned his master's degree and doctorate from the University of Florida.

He started his first teaching job at North Florida Junior College in Madison before joining the UNF faculty to help build what has become a very strong department. "We take a great deal of pride in our work and our students. They have been outstanding," he says.

"Many people had gone to junior college and couldn't go any further, either because they needed to stay in the area or they weren't able to afford private college," he explained, adding that in most cases, the students were older than the teachers. "It was a little hard being part of such a young faculty. You ran into a lot of, 'Don't tell me how it's done, I've been doing this for 30 years.' We couldn't refer to our experience because we had experience sitting there before us."

Collins was a graduate assistant at Clark College in Atlanta and Clark/Atlanta University when he friend, Dr. Carol Sims, accepted the chair of the Department of Sociology at the newly-forming UNF. "He asked me to come and I felt very good about it," he remembered. "It was neat to be at a university at its inception and have input into shaping the foundation."

Time's predictable toll on the young idealism that abundant in the beginning has caused some changes, he added. "We were motivated to create the ideal university setting, one that was certainly not as rigidly defined as a graduate," he noted. "I think we did create it, for the most part, although one can always find room to be critical. As we got older, we got more conservative. We are now a quite established, traditional university."

Over the years, UNF's emphasis on teaching over research continued to meet Collins' needs. "I always wanted to teach. I was a country boy in North Carolina and the most exciting people I knew were teachers," he said. "I stayed here primarily because if I wanted to teach, this was as good a place as any."

Of course, Collins has done more than just teach. In 1976, he was awarded a Board of Regents minority development fellowship to complete his doctorate at the University of Florida. He subsequently instituted a model of educational theory in the Duval County secondary and primary schools developed by one of his Gainesville professors. And Collins has been actively involved in his community, serving on the boards of the Campfire Girls, Association for Retarded Citizens, and American Cancer Society.

Universities must be active in the community as individuals, Collins feels. "One of the measures of a university is how well it impacts on the community around it," he said. "Knowledge that never leaves the school is not useful."

UNF scores high on this measure, he added. "We have become involved in community objectives," Collins noted. "We helped institutions to provide new and better services for their client populations, helped government agencies, public and private education, business and industry, arts and culture."

The next 25 years should follow a similar path, he added. "I would like UNF to continue to develop as an excellent university for undergraduate teaching, along with excellent programs at the graduate level," Collins said. "But it doesn't become another Harvard research and graduate programs take priority over teaching and undergraduate programs. It's going to be pushed in that direction for prestige and research dollars, but we need to have a balance of all these things. UNF built its reputation on being a student-friendly undergraduate university with good undergraduate teachers."

Eddie Collins

On Oct. 2, 1972, Eddie Collins gazed out his office window at the white lime rock parking lot below and thought, "Boy, if we could ever fill that up, then we'd really be a university."

Of course, parking lots at the University of North Florida have expanded three or four times since then to accommodate the increasing number of students. Collins remembers it as a rainy, humid day with students wading through the unpaved parking lot to campus-wide snags and defects, including a library where the air conditioning wasn't working. Yet, in spite of the obstacles, spirits were high.

"There was a good feeling," Collins recalled. "The students were quite excited." The opening of a state university, serving upper level students, was cause for excitement, he added.

"If we could ever put a library where the air conditioning wasn't working, then we'd really be a university," Eddie Collins says.

George Corrick

George Corrick knows better than most charter staff just how difficult the University of North Florida came to being merged with the University of Florida. It was June 22, 1980, the last day of an extended session of the Florida Legislature when the future of UNF was in doubt. Legislative leaders had decided Florida couldn't afford so many state universities. A merger bill was backed by all top legislative leaders and Corrick was the UNF lobbyist fighting an uphill battle. "I felt like the little boy with his finger in the cracking dike," Corrick recalls.

The one lone champion was the late Sen. Joe Carlucci who was a friend of UNF and fought the merger bill at every turn. Corrick recalls it was a late night session of the Florida Senate and the merger bill was the last bill on the calendar. Carlucci was the last to speak and he delivered an impassioned speech against the merger. Carlucci closed with these words: "I urge the University of North Florida with the University of Florida is like pouring a half-pint of rich cream into five gallons of skim milk. Don't do it."

The speech didn't convince the lawmakers. The bill passed both houses of the Legislature. It was prevented from becoming law when Gov. Bob Graham concluded the bill was a bad law and vetoed it on the last day of the session. "It would have become law without his signature. Without Graham's veto, UNF would not be celebrating its 25th anniversary this year."

Corrick is actually celebrating his 27th anniversary with the University since he started in July of 1970, two years before UNF opened its doors for classes. He was the first vice president for University Relations, a position he held until 1984 when he joined the graduate faculty in the College of Education and Human Services.

"Like many others, Corrick says he was drawn to UNF by the challenge of starting a university from scratch and "changing all the things I didn't like about older, established universities."

While Corrick was at the University of Florida, he became acquainted with UNF's first president Tom Carpenter who persuaded him to take the position at the new university. "I planned on being here maybe five years and then move on," Corrick recalls.

He didn't move on and he doesn't regret it.

Jim Crooks

Jim Crooks doesn't have a difficult time recalling what was the most memorable experience in his 25 years at UNF. His most memorable experience occurred just last year when he taught an honors course on American poverty.

The course was an outgrowth of Crooks' philosophy that the best way for students to gain an under-
standing of poverty was to see what life is like for low-income residents by participating in their lives. He required students to volunteer for four hours each week at a community service agency. "The course brought together a lot of things. He wanted experience and social justice concerns along with classroom opportunities to have students interact with low-income residents," he says.

The results of the course were memorable as well. "Of the 21 students who took the course, probably 19 of them dramatically changed their attitudes about poverty and poor people. They came to realize that even for those who are working very hard, it is difficult to break out of poverty," he will teach the course again this fall.

That Honors Program experience in Jacksonville will be shared with educators from halfway around the world this summer when Crooks visits China. He will be making a presentation on the role of service in learning as part of an educational conference there.

For Crooks, the experience in the Honors Program reflects the social involvement he has practiced throughout his career. It's been said of Crooks that his hobby is social involvement and that's apparent when you look at his accomplishments in the community. Not only has he been very active in Jacksonville Community Council Inc. but he has spearheaded a number of individual projects, such as the establishment of an after school program in the Springfield area and a summer employment program for young blacks. He also played a major role in the United Community Outreach Ministry, a consortium of 35 churches which started an emergency services program in San Marco. He received a volunteer award from Volunteer Jacksonville for that program.

Crooks says one of the reasons he came to UNF in 1972 was the opportunity to start a history program which prepared students to live and work in the 21st century. That was the goal of the program when it was published in the University's first catalog and it remains the same goal today, evidence of its continuing relevance.

A native of New Jersey, Crooks received his undergraduate training at Yale University followed by a master's degree and a doctorate from Johns Hopkins. He was a visiting lecturer at University College in Dublin from 1964 to 1966 before accepting a position with Hollins College in Roanoke, Va.

He started at UNF as chairman of the Department of History, Philosophy and Religious Studies, a responsibility he handled for eight years. Crooks is proud of the department he helped build pointing out it has had more than twice as many distinguished professors as any department on campus. (He won the award himself in 1992.

Although Crooks served a short stint as an interim dean, teaching and scholarship have been his primary concentration at UNF. He has written two books, Politics and Progress: The Rise of Urban Progressivism in Baltimore, 1895-1911 and Jacksonville After the Fire: A New South City, 1901-1919.

Crooks was the "First Mayor of the University" at Jacksonville City Hall during Tommy Hazouri's mayoral term and has embarked on an ambitious history project which will keep him busy despite entering phased retirement.

From newspaper clippings and other sources, Crooks is compiling a history of Jacksonville since consolidation. "My goal is to go from consolidation to the Jaguars," he says noting that Jacksonville is undergoing an important transformation.

As for UNF, the historian says the University is on the right track in two ways, emphasizing quality undergraduate education and community involvement. "I hope we will continue to put money into it (quality undergraduate education). It is what makes us distinctive. Through continued community involvement, I think UNF has the potential of making a difference in the quality of life in Jacksonville."

Robert Crosby

Robert Crosby has seen many things happen at UNF since he arrived 25 years ago, but nothing rivaled the experience he had in July of 1995 when the power went out on campus.

No one knew that the lightning strike on July 7 would devastate the University's underground electric distribution system and result in classes being canceled for four days. "I can't recall that we ever went through an emergency of that nature before," he says.

Crosby was in the middle of the disaster as acting chairman of the University's Crisis Management Team. Through a team effort and many hours of work, the lights were eventually restored to power giving the University its first real chance to use the crisis management plan. By all accounts, the team worked smoothly in no small part because of Crosby's calm and deliberate demeanor. "That was probably my most memorable experience at UNF because of my personal intervention in the situation."

During calmer times, Crosby is responsible for much more than just the physical plant. As assistant vice president for Administration and Finance, Crosby also oversees the Police Department Communication Services, Environmental Health and Safety and is the budget officer for Administration and Finance. That's in addition to being chair of Computing Services, the University Technology team and the recently formed Web Page Development Committee.

Crosby's broad responsibilities stem in part from his broad base of experience at UNF. When he started in 1972, he was a systems analyst in Computing Services. He later became a supervisor and assistant director there before becoming assistant director of Planning and Analysis in 1978. In 1981, he became director of Institutional Research and Data Administrator, a position he held until 1985 when he became an assistant vice president.

Much of Crosby's life has been spent in higher education. When he was a junior in high school, he began working for the physical plant department at St. Johns River Community College and has been working in higher education in one capacity or another for more than 30 years. He came to UNF after graduating from the University of West Florida in 1972. "I guess I just enjoy being in a university environment," Crosby says explaining his long tenure.

Mary Davis

Most people at UNF either know or have heard of Mary Davis. Long time reference librarian in the Thomas G. Carpenter Library, Davis knows her way around campus and has served the University for years not only as a valuable library resource but as a member of numerous campus committees. As reference librarian, Davis scours the library's collections and all its electronic resources for answers to tough questions, provides individual instruction to students and faculty to improve their research skills, and teaches the library's skills course. As an active member of the UNF community, Davis is quick to offer her time to serve on various campus and library committees and has been a frequent participant in official campus functions, including graduations.

When Davis first began her college career, she hadn't planned to become a librarian. She originally began attending Florida A&M University seeking a nursing degree, but opted instead to pursue a career as a mother. Davis interrupted her studies for 11 years to raise a family, after which she returned to FAMU to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration. After graduation in 1971, she accepted a job with Westinghouse Credit Services, says the challenges at the University have been exciting for the quarter century. One of his biggest challenges comes later this year when Davis must supervise the changeover to a new telephone prefix for the campus which will coincide with a new area code.

Of course, mail and telephones are only part of Davis' job. He is responsible for maintaining the 26 campus emergency phones, campus cable TV services, voice mail services, cellular phone coordination and assessing requirements for new projects.

All of this is done by Davis and 10 full time employees. Davis moved to Jacksonville in March 1972 to begin working at UNF after graduating from the University of West Florida where he majored in industrial technology. While attending UNF, Davis worked full time as a cartographer and land appraiser with the Escambia County Assessor's office.

At UNF, Davis has held a number of positions. He began as an engineer and held the positions of assistant director of physical facilities and interim director of physical facilities. He has been director of communication services since 1986.

Larry Davis

Like many other founding faculty and staff, Larry Davis remembers the days when St. Johns Bluff Road was unpared and you had to use a jeep to get onto campus over a construction road frequently crossed by deer, turkeys and wild pigs.

But when Davis traveled onto the undeveloped campus, he had no idea that 25 years later the University would have grown so quickly that he would be responsible for supervising the processing of more than 1.5 million pieces of mail each year and maintaining more than 1,400 phones. Davis, director of Communication Services, says the challenges at the University have been exciting for the quarter century. One of his biggest challenges comes later this year when Davis must supervise the changeover to a new telephone prefix for the campus which will coincide with a new area code.

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Corporation, but spent only a week working for them when she was offered a position in the library with the soon-to-open University of North Florida. Davis has been one of the university's stalwarts ever since. Though Davis had worked in the FAMU library while she was a student, she and most of the other newly hired UNF library staff were unprepared for the formidable job that lay ahead. They literally had to create a library from nothing. "We basically were told we had this money and we could order anything we wanted to," she recalls. "We haven't had that luxury since. But create a library they did under the able direction of the university's original and current library director, Andrew Farkas. The University and the library opened on schedule in 1972.

Although originally hired by the library's Technical Services Division, Davis has spent most of her career working in the Reference Department. Receiving a grant-in-aid to continue her education, Davis took a year's leave in 1975 to earn a master's degree in library science from Florida State University. She has been a reference librarian ever since.

Davis attributes her longevity at the library to her fascination with reference work. "You never know what you're going to be asked to find. That is the real challenge. You have to be a generalist and know a little about a lot of subjects. If you know how to do research, you can find just about anything."

Davis has witnessed numerous changes in the library since she was first hired, but the most important changes have been technology driven. When she first started working in the library, the card catalog dominated the reference areas. Today, computers occupy as much or more space as the card catalogs and provide library users with more information than a card catalog could ever have offered. While technological advances have expanded users' research possibilities, Davis admits that these same advances present their own challenges to both users and to reference staff.

Training has become a huge part of Davis' job. "Because there are so many changes in this area, there is a constant need to train users. They have to learn where to look for the information and how to use it once they find it." The library has come a long way since UNF opened in 1972, but Davis is quick to point out that the computer will never quite replace the reference collection of a library. "A lot of people think that everything exists on the Internet, but it doesn't. Many people are discovering that and must go back to more traditional sources for many of their answers."

Davis says her biggest challenge has been her participation in the library's move into its new facilities in 1980. "We had to figure out how to take the books off the shelves and put them into the new building in the same order so we didn't have to spend a lot of time reshelving." With the help of all library staff and inmates from one of Florida's correctional facilities, the move was completed in record time with a minimum of misshelved resources.

When asked about her future plans and when she might retire from UNF, Davis acknowledges that she has considered retirement many times. "But I love what I do and I have no thought of becoming an information broker if she ever does decide to leave. "I would be a person you would come to and tell what information you're looking for and I would find it from the comforts of my office." But Davis has yet to decide to retire largely because of all the exciting changes that are the regular fare at UNF and in the library. As Davis so aptly puts it, "There have been so many positive changes at UNF. There is always something new happening. If I didn't have that change, I would be bored to death."

Paul Eggen

When Paul Eggen says he likes UNF better than any other place he has been, you should know that he has a lot to compare with. The UNF College of Education professor has worked as a curriculum consultant for international schools for 12 years, traveling to 22 different countries in that time. He generally works in Africa and the Middle East, although he has also been to several European countries and Japan in the course of his work.

Eggen earned his bachelor's degree from Northern Montana College in Havre and his master's and doctoral degrees from Oregon State University in Corvallis.

He arrived at UNF in 1972 from Oregon State where he was an instructor of science education and chemistry. He was promoted to associate professor at UNF in 1975 and full professor in 1980. Eggen says he was attracted to UNF by the idea of being a new faculty member in a new university. He said he wanted to be part of getting a new university off the ground. He says he continues to experience the satisfaction of seeing the university grow and develop and enjoys reminiscing with other "old timers" about the early years of the University.

In his years at UNF, Eggen says the most rewarding experiences have been the continuing relationship he has established with students over a quarter century.

Helon Evans

When Helon Evans started at the University in September of 1970, the Personnel Department consisted of her and the director. The entire UNF staff, which was about 20, had just moved to the Chamber of Commerce building on the Arlington Expressway.

Today, Evans is the benefits and pay manager in Human Resources, and is responsible for, among other things, making sure nearly 1,800 employees receive their pay checks on time.

Evans said she came to UNF because she wanted a job with promotional opportunities. She had worked for more than five years as a secretary in the Bureau of Entomology before coming to UNF. "The way you became eligible for a higher position in the secretarial area was to take promotional examinations which included typing, shorthand and general aptitude. Names were listed on a Register of Eligibles in order of the score made on the exams. State employers would then interview the people whose names were at or near the top of the register. I was contacted by UNF for an interview as a result of her being appeared on the register."

After being hired at UNF, Evans assisted in the hiring of secretaries for three college deans who had been hired a few weeks earlier. She made Doris Wilson and Jo Mobley aware of secretarial openings. Wilson was hired in the College of Business and Mobley was hired in the College of Education. Both are still with the University.

After several months in the Personnel Department, Evans had an opportunity to work for the director of Administrative Services. "My responsibilities included coordinating travel, including air travel reservations and ticketing for all faculty and staff. We were issued Eastern Airlines ticket stock and wrote the tickets manually. We also provided a limited word processing center using an IBM magnetic tape machine," Evans recalls.

After about six years in Administrative Services, Evans moved to the Office of the Vice President for Administrative Affairs where she served as secretary/staff assistant for nearly nine years.

In November of 1985, Evans accepted a position in Human Resources where she was responsible for processing personnel actions, UNF performance appraisals and workers compensation claims as well as coordinating attendance and leave records. After 15 months, she changed to benefits coordinator in which she processed new employees for payroll, provided information on benefits and enrolled employees in various benefit plans. While working in Human Resources, Evans also completed required courses and earned her bachelor's degree in business administration from UNF in 1987. In March of 1989, Evans was promoted to her current position.

Her job and her family keep Evans busy. She has two daughters, a son and eight grandchildren. "We are very family oriented," the Alabama native says of her activities when not at work.

Despite her years of experiences at UNF, Evans says her most memorable experience was being part of the original staff. "Being here for ground breaking and welcoming new faculty was an exciting time for us."

Andrew Farkas

Andrew Farkas has faced many challenges in his life, but perhaps none more daunting than building a library from scratch in less than two years. Farkas was hired in May of 1970 to develop a library for the state's newest university. When he started, the university was located in an office at the Florida National Bank building in downtown Jacksonville. He recalls that he started with a pencil and a pad of paper and was told to build a 100,000-volume library by the time the university opened in October of 1972.

"I considered it an exceptional opportunity, the greatest possible challenge of a librarian's career, to be entrusted with the creation of a new library from the ground up," he says. "It was a magnificent professional opportunity to be asked to recruit and hire an entire staff, establish policies, set up all the rules and procedures, build the collection by individually selecting every title and
to communicate to an architect how the interior of the library building ought to be laid out completely to one's ideas."

The UNF challenge was different from anything Farkas had undertaken before. He had worked in the library at the University of California at Davis from 1962 to 1967. Before that, he was a stacks supervisor at Occidental College in Los Angeles, where he received his bachelor's degree. He received his master's of library science at the University of California in Berkeley in 1962.

But with his trademark determination, Farkas went about building a new library. On Oct. 2, 1972, at precisely 8 a.m., the doors of the new library were opened. "All the intellectual and physical hard work we had collectively invested in the enterprise of building a 100,000 volume library for our charter class, had borne fruit just as we had planned and envisioned."

Farkas, who is now the University's most senior employee, has not stopped building the library since the day the doors opened. It now has more than 600,000 books, periodicals and government documents and 1.1 million microfiche and several database collections across the University. For this work, Farkas was awarded the 1991 Distinguished Professor Award.

A native of Hungary, Farkas still finds time to pursue his other passion — opera. He has written five books and numerous articles on the subject. His latest book was published by Amadeus Press in September. The book, Jussi, is about the great Swedish tenor Jussi Björling and his work teaching. Farkas was awarded the 1991 Distinguished Professor Award.

"The fruits of Finklum's work can be seen during every graduation ceremony when international flags line the UNF Arena. Each flag is from a country represented on campus. Many of those flags are diplomatic markers to Flinchum's jet-setting career."

Don Graham

One of the things Don Graham remembers most vividly about the opening of the University of North Florida in 1972 was the emphasis that was placed on helping students.

Graham came to UNF from the University of Houston where he had earned a bachelor's degree and master's degree in business administration. He wasn't even aware of the new Jacksonville university, until he was contacted by Dr. Warren Rose, who had been his department chairman at the University of Houston and was himself recruited to UNF to chair the Department of Transportation and Logistics.

Graham, who was working in private industry at the time, decided the prospect of helping to start a new university was more exciting. He came to UNF as an instructor/academic adviser. "I remember that the academic vice president at the time wanted to emphasize student advising. About 20 of us started in July and received a full month of training about advising. I still remember the first students we advised, I was scared to death."

Graham and the other advisers soon learned how to juggle teaching and student advising responsibilities. "There was a real effort to make advisers available to all students. I think part of the reason for the emphasis was because so many of us had horrible advising experiences when we were students."

Eventually, Graham was reassigned to graduate advising in the College of Business Administration. He held a number of positions including interim director of records and registration and interim director of graduate studies. Graham received his doctorate of philosophy from the University of Florida in 1986.

One of Graham's pet projects has been the weekend MBA program, which recently graduated its first class of 24 students. The weekend MBA program is a cohort program, meaning the same students go through the same courses at the same time. "The students interacted well together and established strong ties with one another. It's been a very satisfying experience watching the program grow," he said.

Bruce Gutknecht

"It's one thing to be turned down for a job. It's another thing to be turned down for a job you didn't even apply for. But that's how Bruce Gutknecht's career at the University of North Florida began.

Flinchum was a founding faculty member in the College of Education and Human Services. Bruce Gutknecht was a founding faculty member in the College of Education and Human Services. He was recruited to UNF from the University of Houston and was himself hired to UNF. When he completed his Ph.D. in 1972 he applied for, and was offered, several teaching positions. He was surprised when he received a letter from UNF informing him the administrative position he applied for was filled.

Gutknecht was amused to be turned down for the wrong job, and decided to accept a teaching post at Pennsylvania State University at Altoona.

"A phone call rekindled his curiosity in UNF. "The chairman called me and said, 'Are you still interested in teaching here?' I told him I was about ready to take the job in Pennsylvania," Gutknecht recalled. But a thick overnight package arrived, describing a new concept in education called competency-based teaching.

"It was a chance at something new, as opposed to the typical hear lecture/take test format," he explained. Gutknecht added that because the College of Education faculty was writing the curriculum, they worked two months before the other colleges in offices at Sandalwood High School. While competency-based teaching never fully developed as a movement, Gutknecht hasn't regretted his decision to come to UNF.

"There've always been opportunities to do something in addition to teaching, although I never wanted to not teach," Gutknecht noted. "I've done a lot of grant work, dabbled in politics as the president of the Faculty Senate, and I served as the first chair of the merged Division of Curriculum and Instruction."

One of his favorite activities was serving as chief university marshal, coordinating commencement ceremonies. "That was a lot of fun. We've got a rich commencement history around here," Gutknecht said, noting that the first ceremony was performed in the parking lot in front of Daniel Hall. When graduating classes were small, individual colleges held their own ceremonies, but all on the same night, he noted. Gutknecht took over when commencements were moved to the green, although rain could be a problem in that location.

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Former Cabinet Officer Elliot Richardson was about to address the graduates one year when, "The heavens opened. Thomas Carpenter said something like, 'I declare the ceremony over. Come pick up your diplomas next week in registration.' From there, commencements moved to the Morocco Temple and finally to the Coliseum before the UNF Arena was completed.

Today, Gutknecht continues to expect excitement at UNF, citing the increasing use of part-time faculty as an area for improvement.

"In terms of program integrity, we need more full-time faculty. We have a number of fine, nine-month specialists, but in developing curricula to continually meet accreditation standards, the burden falls on fewer people," Gutknecht said. "And one of the things that's been unique about this place is that you have full professor teaching freshmen. It's not necessary for UNF to be all things to all people, he added. "The idea that higher education is for everybody is a myth. We're seeing in today's economy that a degree doesn't equal employment, at least not in the field for which one is trained."

As a pioneer in developing distance learning, which uses computers to link student and teacher, Gutknecht said putting more resources into technology is essential. "We need to do more than talk about cutting edge technology and actually commit the funds to it," he said. "Our faculty often finds itself in the position of training teachers who work with tools with more technology than we have."

One of Gutknecht's greatest pleasures is the flexibility he enjoys at UNF in his choice of courses to offer. "I see a lot of change," he said. "The idea that higher education is for everybody is a myth. We're seeing in today's economy that a degree doesn't equal employment, at least not in the field for which one is trained."

Permission to help design and launch a university is what convinced Harmon to come to UNF in 1971. "The adventure of being a founding professor and chair at a new university is the deciding factor. Here was an opportunity to continue to invent and lead in a new university."

In the years since, Harmon has felt pleasure in helping to shape the direction of various parts of the University. He has developed and taught many courses, chaired his department, published articles and books and helped found scholarly associations and journals. And now he is president of the faculty union, a position calling upon his talents as a problem solver and negotiator as he represents faculty interests.

Summing up, he says, "One concept I have always identified with is faculty - not just the content and diplomacy openness to different ideas and respect for others who have a different way of believing. It has been a theme for my whole career."

Gary Harmon

Gary Harmon regards life as an adventure and learning journey and that goes a long way toward explaining how a Nebraska boy ended up a professor and founding chair in Language and Literature at UNF.

A native of Hastings, Neb., Harmon was a quick study and finished high school at age 16. He attended Hastings College where he received a bachelor's degree in English and history. The thirst for knowledge and adventure led him to the University of Nebraska where he pursued three graduate degrees. "I was in graduate school at 20 and two master's degrees slowed me down enough so I could mature some. The study of literature and culture requires maturity," he says. "Early on, my interest in understanding the psychology of different cultures led me to teach and write about Americans and their mythologies. Fortunately for me, the field of English has taken me in several study directions."

That maturity was accumulated in several ways, including being a residence hall counselor for men at Indiana. It was the Nebraska young man's first experience with diversity as he befriended football players and swimmers and a variety of other students in the residence halls. "I've always been stimulated by persons whose background differs from mine. That prepared me for the future," he says. By 1960, he was a young professor at Flint Community College in Flint, Mich. After earning his Ph.D. at Indiana in 1966, he accepted the division chairmanship at Morehead State University in Morehead, Ky. He was responsible for establishing the Division of Language, Literature and Philosophy. The adventure of educational experimentation in an avant-garde liberal arts college lured him to Stephens College in Columbia, Mo. where he chaired the Division of Language, Literature and Philosophy and headed the English Department until 1971. "Teaching and learning were sophisticated endeavors there, and this tuned me up for the early years at UNF when we were inclined toward invention and risk-taking as a matter of course."

The allure of helping to design and launch a university is what convinced Harmon to come to UNF in 1971. "The adventure of being a founding professor and chair at a new university is the deciding factor. Here was an opportunity to continue to invent and lead in a new university."

In the years since, Harmon has felt pleasure in helping to shape the direction of various parts of the University. He has developed and taught many courses, chaired his department, published articles and books and helped found scholarly associations and journals. And now he is president of the faculty union, a position calling upon his talents as a problem solver and negotiator as he represents faculty interests. Summing up, he says, "One concept I have always identified with is faculty - not just the content and diplomacy openness to different ideas and respect for others who have a different way of believing. It has been a theme for my whole career."

Edward Healy

Edward Healy began his career as a teacher in order to end it that way. Healy is a man who knows what he enjoys, and management isn't it. "Teaching wears on me. I see a couple of challenges, then I lose interest. It becomes dull and boring," Healy said. "Teaching never becomes dull and boring."

Healy has quite a bit of comparison. He was hired just as ground clearing began at UNF, and managed to get all the supplies and equipment managed to get all the supplies and equipment he said. "The allure of helping to design and launch a university is what convinced Harmon to come to UNF in 1971. "The adventure of being a founding professor and chair at a new university is the deciding factor. Here was an opportunity to continue to invent and lead in a new university."

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Tom Healy

Tom Healy's remarkable career at UNF has as much to do with a well-timed bottle of beer as any extensive planning on his part. Healy can still recall the day he was having a beer in the backyard of one of his professors at the University of Maryland who was completing his dissertation for a doctorate in educational administration. While he, another graduate student and the professor were having a discussion, the professor received a call from Andrew Robinson, who at the time was the assistant dean of the College of Education at UNF. Robinson was looking for someone to teach in the master's program in educational administration at a new university in Jacksonville. When Robinson asked the professor if he knew anyone interested in such a job, he responded "wait just a minute, I've got someone drinking beer in my backyard who might be interested." Healy recalls. At the time, Healy was considering three jobs, at Syracuse University, Frostburg State in Maryland or St. Cloud State in Minnesota. He hadn't even considered Florida and in fact thought Jacksonville was on the Gulf Coast.

But the phone call started Healy down a path which has taken him through more job

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challenges than just about anyone else in UNF history. He accepted the job at UNF with the idea he would stay a few years and return north. The attraction wasn't the weather as much as it was an opportunity to develop a master's level program which he had assumed would not be possible until after many years of teaching experience. He had started his career in Rochester, Minn. as an elementary school teacher and later taught at Winona State University before going to the University of Maryland for his doctorate.

Once at UNF, he taught for seven years and then became director of the Downtown Center in 1978. It took that responsibility with him when he became the dean of Continuing Education and External Affairs in 1979, a position he held until 1983.

In the following years, Healy held assistant and associate vice president positions in Academic Affairs and University Relations. He also was interim vice president for Student Affairs, for University Relations and for Administration and Finance and served a stint as athletic director. Some of his jobs overlapped with his duties as director of Governmental Affairs. For several years, he held three jobs at the same time, a distinction which he admits he does not regret losing. He was named vice president for Governmental Affairs last year.

The many changes have been good for Healy, who describes himself as someone with a short attention span anyway, and good for the University as well. The jobs have also given Healy an excellent perspective on the most significant changes to occur at UNF.

Without hesitation, Healy says the most significant change for UNF came in 1984 with the decision to admit freshmen and sophomore students. "None of us who fought for this for several years had any idea of the impact this would eventually have on the University."

With students spending four years on campus, living in residence halls, getting involved in athletics and other activities, Healy says they began to identify with the University. "This is our most effective recruiting tool and we began to grow at the rate of 5 to 7 percent a year."

Because UNF was initially limited to only 100 freshmen students, minimum admission requirements were very high. Healy says this imposed a quality standard at UNF which remains to this day and has helped to bolster the University's image in the community.

Healy can speak with authority about the University's image in the community since he has been so involved in civic activities. He has served in a number of organizations including The Players Championship, the Cecil Field Development Commission, Volunteer Jacksonville and the Jacksonville Community Council, Inc.

In the area of research, he was director, co-director and faculty participant in eight national, state and local research projects. He has chaired committees and supervised research thesis/projects for more than 75 master's degree students.

Although Herrold has been a member of 55 university, college and division committees, he says his most rewarding experience has been working directly with teachers. Herrold is currently the co-developer, coordinator, advisor and teacher of three, off-campus master's degree programs in elementary education involving more than 120 teachers.

"I have been most gratified by my long-term teaching experiences with Northeast Florida public school teachers in our Elementary Education cohort master's degree programs. You get to work with the same students for two and a half years. You really get to know each student and see changes in them and their growth as teachers," he says.
PhD in Biophysics at Michigan State University before coming to UNF. He earned his Doctor of Science degree in Education at the University of Florida, where he was also chair of the natural sciences department. He taught physics and technology courses at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, and finishing graduate school at Florida State University, Jones says he was offered a job at UNF and accepted it in spite of my vow. I thought well maybe only two years will be okay, and here I remain in year 25. He says he has enjoyed many of the uniqueness of the smaller setting. He has taught many different courses in nuclear engineering and has been a visiting professor in the Department of Instructional Communications at Auburn University, and was an assistant professor in the Department of Social Science Education at the University of Georgia.

Like many charter faculty and staff members, Jacobsen lives in a Rush of something... expectation, excite­ment. The prospect of engaging bright young physicists to our staff and the University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn., whose teaching career included 25 years ago.

The traffic was horrible that day and I was detoured on many roads and bridges and lost. "I vowed I'd never live here. The traffic was horrible that day and I was detoured on many roads and bridges and lost." says he was from smitten with Jacksonville after his first encounter. During his time as a undergrad­uate in the mid 1960s he came through Jacksonville on the way to Daytona on spring break. "I vowed I'd never live here. The traffic was horrible that day and I was detoured on many roads and bridges and yes, I got lost!" recalls Jones.

Born in Fort Monroe, Va., Jones was raised an Army brat and moved often. After receiv­ing his undergraduate degree from the University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn., and finishing graduate school at Florida State University, Jones says he was offered a job at UNF and accepted it in spite of my vow. I thought well maybe only two years will be okay, and here I remain in year 26! Jones started his career at UNF as a cataloger, moved up to head the library's Circulation Department and "got hooked on automation. Now I'm both head of the Public Services Division of the library (including all service units) and coordinator of library systems. As a gadget person, I guess I'm in hog heaven," Jones says.

Looking back, Jones says he recalls the special challenges that led to opening day, such as occupying the first building with no electricity, no water or plumbing, no...
elevators, no roads and setting up to open in the August heat.”

Jones says he has enjoyed being an integral part of UNF’s past. “I really enjoy what I do and the size of UNF lets us try innovative ways of doing things without being bogged down with the instilled traditions of previous generations. We made our own history. Not only do I like UNF, but I enjoy the collegiality of working with all the SUS libraries.”

**Sybil Jones**

The temporary job was only supposed to last six months when Sybil Jones accepted it in 1971. Her husband didn’t want her to return to work after a 15-year absence to raise their four children, and although Sybil’s youngest was now in kindergarten, she agreed. But she loved the job, the time stretched on, and the OPS position (similar to a contract agreement) turned into a full-time job with benefits. “It has been a long six months,” Jones said of her more than 25 years at UNF, with a smile.

Jones spent the first eight years as secretary in Natural Sciences, where one of her favorite aspects of the job, student contact, was common. When students thinking of dropping classes came to see her and received her encouragement to continue, she was often the only one who ever knew their doubts.

“One of the members of the first graduating class at UNF was my student worker. She wanted to drop out lots of times but I refused to let her have a negative attitude,” Jones recalled. “I recently saw her in the grocery store after all these years and she told me it was because of me that she graduated and had a decent job. It makes you feel real good to have had a positive impact like that on someone’s life.”

Another joy to Jones was her coworkers, who helped the non-scientist with the concepts and principles referenced in her work. “It was all a new language to me,” Jones said. “I couldn’t have made it without them. We were a little family and we still keep in contact after all these years.”

Jones later became executive secretary in Computing Services, where she remains today. Although there is less interaction with students, she still enjoys her coworkers. “You couldn’t ask for better people to work with,” Jones said, then notes the department’s growth. The first 20 PCs which initially served the student body in the lab now number over 200.

“It’s been exciting to have been a part of Computing Services, which not only experienced tremendous growth within,” Jones stated, “but has also been a vital part in the technological advancement of the whole university.”

The changes she’s witnessed during UNF’s first 25 years are “amazing and exciting,” but Jones adds they are also “bittersweet.” “When we were small, you knew everybody and you could call them by their first names,” Jones explained. “Now I can walk all the way across campus to another office and not see anybody I know.”

The original faculty and staff were such a small, closely knit group. Jones added, that former UNF President Thomas Carpenter held one of the first Christmas parties in his home, with plenty of room for everyone. A career highlight occurred in 1993, when Jones was awarded “USPS Employee of the Year” by the CARE task force. She accepted the honor with characteristic humility but still shines with pride at its mention.

Lately Jones has noticed that some of her long-time colleagues are retiring, and “I’m on a countdown basis myself,” she admitted. “I have mixed emotions. I’ll be sad to leave next summer,” she added, her voice softening.

Sybil Jones remembers a time “before everyone had a computer on their desk,” and when planks were placed across muddy paths leading from the parking lots to the buildings. But from her early years at UNF, she mostly remembers students. Lots of students. And lots of them will always remember Sybil Jones.

**Sudarshan Kuthiala**

Sudarshan Kuthiala could have gotten off to a better start at the University of North Florida. He missed his first day of classes, then, when he did come in, he got a flat tire.

“I was the first absent-minded professor,” he laughed.

“Thomas Carpenter [then UNF president] called me at home and asked me what happened. He was upset but he calmed down later.” Dr. Kuthiala explained that he was unclear about his class’s starting date because of last-minute schedule changes. When he did report for work, UNF’s gravel parking lot inflicted the first flat tire he ever experienced.

Dr. Kuthiala turned to teaching because he was sick of bureaucracy and tired of the government. Not this country’s, but those of his native India where he was director of the Population Council, a government agency researching population issues to produce official policy.

The results of Dr. Kuthiala’s research went unheeded, he explained. “After four years, my conclusion was that India really didn’t want to do anything about population control for political reasons,” he said. “When I left in 1972, the population of India was 430 million. Now, it’s 1 billion.”

Dr. Kuthiala returned to the United States, where he had completed graduate work at the University of Chicago and a doctorate at the University of Kansas in sociology and criminal justice courses at the University of Georgia. He sought a teaching position and his wife, a residency as a physician. They found both in Jacksonville, Florida.

His wife began her residency at University Hospital and Dr. Kuthiala began teaching research methods, demography, and other sociology and criminal justice courses at UNF.

The newly-formed university was as unlike the slow-moving bureaucracy Dr. Kuthiala had left as he could get, he said.

“I enjoyed constantly arguing with students who were 10, 15, 20 years older than I was,” he remembered. “It was a challenge to teach them that science and knowledge are more than personal opinions.”

After his wife was recruited by the U.S. Navy and accepted a post at the Naval Air Station, the Kuthialas settled into life in Jacksonville, raising a family and joining the community. Dr. Kuthiala is president-elect of the Hindu Temple and also provides studies for the city of Jacksonville, including a report on population projections in Duval County through the year 2010, and a study on the transfer of people from welfare to work conducted at the Durkeeville Housing Project. In addition, he serves on the nominating committee which interviews candidates for judgeships in the 4th Judicial District.

“I’ve been involved in community affairs for a long time,” Dr. Kuthiala noted. “It gives you the feeling that you’re giving something back to the community you’ve made your home.”

Dr. Kuthiala’s publications extend beyond this area, with a textbook called Industrial Workers in India, and a completed manuscript on India’s transition from a socialist to a capitalist country. Still, Dr. Kuthiala feels publishing should be kept in perspective.

“There’s a debate in academia about what publishing means. If someone were creating tremendous amounts of new knowledge, that would be different,” he said, adding that the rush to be published can be harmful. “Our studies, completed quickly using little hard science. He hopes UNF will not join this trend. "If we capitulate to the ‘publish or perish’ dilemma, it will be at the cost of good teaching. We need to be consistent in our emphasis on teaching, research and community service.”

Opportunities to go elsewhere have been presented throughout his 25 years, and Dr. Kuthiala has accepted faculty exchange positions including two years at the University of Maryland and two years at India’s National Institutes of Health. But, “I seem to keep coming back to Jacksonville,” he admitted. “My children and my wife feel this is our home. We are rooted here. And besides, my wife doesn’t want to live in snow.”

**Len Lipkin**

The date of Oct. 2, 1972, marks Leonard Lipkin’s most memorable experience at the University of North Florida. “The campus came alive, students went to class, and excitement was in the air,” says Lipkin, a professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. “In the evening, there was something I had never seen before: classes after 6 o’clock. A whole new group of students arrived.”

Before coming to UNF, Lipkin had been on the faculty at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kan., and at the University of California at Berkeley. The decision to take the position as an associate professor in 1972 “offered the opportunity to concentrate on quality, innovative teaching along with research. We had the chance to build a major and design courses suitable for the students.”

Lipkin served as chair for the department from 1984-1992.

Lipkin says he was also interested in the Venture Program, a special selection of courses for liberal arts majors being offered at
Science Foundation grant, which deals with
innovative courses that might be done out of the
field... nothing unusual that gave a lot of flexibility.

In addition to his classes, Lipkin is currently
involved in implementing a National
Science Foundation grant, which deals with
integrating technology into high-school
curriculum.

Rick McAuslin

**Frank McLaughlin**

Before Frank McLaughlin came to UNF, like many of the
original faculty, he wasn't sure what he would find. And, like
many of the others who have remained for the past 25 years, he
had no idea that UNF would become his academic home.

McLaughlin was hired as associate professor and chairperson of the Department of
Management, Marketing and Business Law in 1971. Prior to coming to UNF, he was an
associate professor of business administration
at the University of Richmond.

Other past positions included working as a chemical
engineer for Owens-Illinois (now Jefferson
Smurfit Corp.) in Jacksonvile and serving in
the Navy as a destroyer engineering officer.

When UNF opened its doors to students in
1972, there were only four buildings, two of which
were used for classrooms. McLaughlin
said he accepted the position at UNF partly
because of the excitement of starting a
university from scratch and partly because he
liked the Jacksonville area.

McLaughlin recalls with a smile his first
visit to the UNF campus in a jeep to survey
the progress of the new university. After the
vehicle became hopelessly stuck in the mud,
McLaughlin says he and his companion were
forced to take a long walk down Beach
Boulevard just to find a telephone to call for
 assistance.

After building the department,
McLaughlin returned to full-time teaching in
1978 as a professor of management. In 1983,
he became assistant dean of the College of
Business Administration, and was named
associate dean in 1986. McLaughlin served
the College in this capacity for 13 years,
including service as an interim dean, and
then returned to teaching again last year.

"But what remains at UNF are many:
the city, the location of the university, the
excitement and fulfillment of working at a
young university and the opportunity to
work with respected colleagues. I think any­
where you go after a while there's a certain
amount of loyalty. But certainly starting the
university was really a lot of fun," he says.
Janice Nowak goes so far back at UNF that she had already been promoted once before operations moved to the campus.

Nowak began as a secretary in the controller's office on Nov. 2, 1970, after completing an associate's degree at Florida Junior College, now FCCJ. "I was like a lot of people in the Jacksonville area when UNF opened," Nowak said, explaining that she had gone as far in college as she could before the University was available. And like a lot of those early students, she worked full-time while attending school.

As her education progressed, so did Nowak's career. She became staff assistant in the Dean of Students' office, then moved to Financial Aid, first as assistant director, then associate director, and finally, her current position, director. She also completed her bachelor's degree in business education but during her internship, Nowak discovered she preferred the work she was doing.

A quality Nowak misses from UNF's earliest days was the lack of seating at the small setting afforded. "I was 21 and being introduced to the president of the University, all these deans... it was a little overwhelming," she noted. "We were guinea pigs for the dog and pony shows they would give on things like the Venture Studies office, the mobility program..."

Nowak also fondly recalls the "play days" when staff, students and faculty would divide into teams for such events as canoe races, egg tosses, tug-of-wars and tricycle races. It also was rewarding she said she served on the University Senate, a governing board which decided issues related to students, faculty and staff, and comprised of members of all three groups.

One of the best changes has been the community's growing awareness of UNF, she added. "For years, you would tell people when you worked and they'd say, 'Is that the place off Beach Boulevard?' and you'd say, 'No, that's FCCJ,'" she said. "It makes you feel proud now when you tell them and people say, 'You work there? That's a great place. How long have you been working there?'" Nowak continued, "It's like to think you contributed a part of that starting out process... that all those proposals I typed for my boss made a difference," she paused. "And I still feel that way because I'm still contributing."

Although retirement is distant, Nowak has left realizing her dream. "I'd like to give financial aid to every student who needs it, and," she added laughing, "not have a single complaint. We'll keep striving to do that."

Satya Pachori

A native of India, Satya Pachori came to the University of North Florida after three years on the faculty at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo., having earned his Ph.D. at the University of Missouri in the summer of 1969. He says it was the rare opportunity to shape the curriculum at a new institution that drew him here to UNF.

"I felt a challenge to help build a new university by contributing to English major and minor, and in other academic fields.

And in the process, Pachori said he contributed to the University's development in other ways as well: "I brought a new dimension to the University's mission by virtue of being an international faculty member and thus helping to pioneer East-West literary relations in a Southern state."

Pachori joined UNF in 1972 as an assistant professor of English; received tenure in 1975; was promoted to associate in 1977 and to full professor in 1984; served as graduate coordinator in 1987-1992; and served as interim chairperson for the Department of Language and Literature from 1990-93.

As one might guess, Pachori is not one to rest on his laurels. His list of accomplishments is quite extensive, including 45 different courses designed and taught at UNF; publications—two books by the Oxford University Press and the Macmillan Company—and 19 articles in refereed journals; 36 research presentations at such prominent literary conferences as Modern Language Association, the Philological Association of the Pacific Coast, the Southern Comparative Literature Association, the American Comparative Literature Association, the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters, the John Keats Bicentennial Conference (Harvard University), the Sixth Biennial Conference (University of Pennsylvania), the Third International Conference on the History of Language Science (Princeton University), the Ninth World Sanskrit Conference (University of Sydney, Australia) and others. He has also lectured in his fields of specialty at Oxford University, University of Geneva, University of Amsterdam, and several universities in India.
During his sabbatical last year, he is also editor of South Asian Review, the official journal of the South Asian Literary Association (MLA) and a reader of PMLA (Publications of the Modern Language Association) manuscripts in Asian studies. Throughout the years, he has concentrated on the areas of English Romanticism, restoration and Eighteenth-Century British Literature of the East India, Comparative Literature—East and West, British novel and literature in translation.

Some of his more notable memories at UNF were during his time as chair of the University Promotion and Tenure Committee from 1978-80 and as chair of the University Faculty Development Committee, from 1989-90, when, Pachori said, "I had the most memorable experience in evaluating the scholarly work and projects of my colleagues—some of them performing an outstanding job. They were exemplums of a perfect coordination of scholarship and teaching, a rare sight on other campuses in the state and region."

Joseph Perry

For many founding faculty members, the job at UNF was and seeing if it could be raised to a higher level.

"All of us who came here 25, 26, 27 years ago had a substantial amount of influence in the very beginning in determining the kind of institution UNF was going to be, what kind of college and what academic philosophy it would follow," he recalled. "We had an almost populist ethic. We were here to provide educational services to the community, taking people where they were and seeing if we could raise them to a higher level.

Perry added that surveys had shown UNF's founders that their students would likely be older and work during the day.

"For the first few years it was almost like after World War II, where you had people in their twenties and thirties coming to a university. At one point, the median age was over 30," he noted. "Those were the days when you could talk in class about negotiating a mortgage and know that 90 percent of the people in the room had done that or had bought an automobile on an installment loan. You can't talk about those things to an 18-year-old who has just come out of high school. So the mix of students has changed over time and our approach to them necessarily has changed."

Perry could relate to his students since he had worked at a Sears regional mail order processing plant in Atlanta while attending graduate classes at Georgia State, mostly at night. Later he went on to finish his Ph.D. at Northwestern.

Having experience at a larger school like the University of Florida led Perry to appreciate the value of a place like UNF. He said he would prefer that the University maintain its close atmosphere.

"I expect UNF is going to grow with the community, which is about two percent per year right now," he said. "Economists talk about negative externalities. That means if you have too many people in a place you start getting increased pollution, traffic jams. All of a sudden you discover that when you drive into campus at nine in the morning, there's a long line of cars in front of you and you can't get to class on time. Being small has its advantages."

He also wants UNF to avoid developing its sport programs at the cost of its educational offerings.

"Sports brings in a lot of dollars but it creates interesting problems in the classroom with athletes who don't have time to attend classes," Perry said. "When football is a religion, I'm scared that if we get too heavily into sports then it's going to take away from the academic side, which is why the University exists in the first place."

Perry believes that, just as when it started, UNF's mission is to meet the community's need for higher education.

"A lot of programs have come and gone in 25 years but they served a need at the time. For example, we have the College of Health that didn't exist 20 years ago simply because this is one of the growth areas of our economy," he noted. "In a way, we're a reflection of what the community needs.

While he has immediate plans to retire, Perry said at some point he might want to trade his department chair to pursue more teaching and research projects.

"There are a lot of things I want to do and a lot of places I want to go but I can't go or do if I'm tied down to an office five days a week," he acknowledged. "I think in a few years I'll just move over into the fast track," Perry said with a chuckle.

Christine Rasche

Sometimes, what you think you want isn't what you want at all, but what you didn't even know you wanted it. Christine Rasche learned 25 years ago after she accepted a job offer from a nonexistent university in a place she never been before.

"What I didn't know about myself when I interviewed is that I like getting projects off the ground and that haven't been there before," Rasche explained, adding that some former colleagues from UNF's earliest days preferred a more settled atmosphere. "They aren't here anymore. You had to be able to handle a change of chaos and constant change, and some of us thrived on that."

Rasche earned bachelor's degrees in sociology and English from Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Ill., and both a master's and doctorate in sociology from Washington State University in St. Louis. She currently serves as associate professor of criminal justice in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice. She directed UNF's undergraduate and graduate criminal justice programs. From 1989 to 1996, she directed the women's studies program as well. Now, in addition to serving as president of the UNF Faculty Association, she is also chair of the American Society of Criminology Division on Women and Crime. She is the recipient of numerous community and educational awards.

When her dissertation professor urged her to consider UNF, Rasche had just earned her Ph.D. in sociology and was hearing over offers from several prestigious sociology departments, including that of the University of Wisconsin.

Rasche saw that she would have greater teaching and challenges at UNF. "If I had gone to Wisconsin I would have felt suffocated. It was old, established, prestigious, eminent-laden... I might well have been stifled in that setting. As a new face, I would have been invisible. But if I went to a smaller university like UNF, I would have had a much bigger role."

Rasche explained. "The clincher at UNF was they wanted somebody who could teach a variety of sociology courses but also criminology.

"I wanted a job without ever seeing the actual UNF campus, since the 4-wheel-drive vehicle needed to access it was not available the weekend she interviewed. Later, when St. Johns Bluff Road was completed and she was moving to Jacksonville, Rasche wanted a look.

"The day I drove down to Florida with all my worldly goods, I had my mom with me to help me move," she said. "We drove onto the campus and at first we saw nothing but trees, no buildings. The first sign of humanity was a hand-painted sign nailed to a tree by the lake that said, 'No Fishing! No Swimming! Alligators there!'." Rasche added that some former colleagues from UNF were eager to learn and full of their youth.

"They were eager to learn and full of their own life experiences. As a new face, here at UNF, most of the students were older than I was at the time. Many were working professionals, middle-aged folks who were making a career change. They were eager to learn and full of their own life experiences."

"The main quality which drew Rasche to UNF is the same one that keeps her here after 25 years. She was struck with the commitment to teaching and building something really excellent from scratch," she noted. "Here was a school, which had no faculty, no students, no campus and no recognized name but it had key administrators who, to a man— and they are all men back then—talked about a commitment to good teaching."

As a sociologist, Rasche acknowledges that institutions change as they mature but hopes UNF will retain elements of its origins. "I see the University facing really interesting challenges and I want us to be Inside UNF 25th Anniversary in Review 27
creative in meeting them. Things like reduced funding, an increased push toward electronic or distance-based education, more use of part-time faculty, trying to serve a bigger population of students—all these must be confronted creatively," she said. "It requires effort and commitment at the very top, and we have that right now in our president and provost. In the same way we used to be creative about how to get the phones to work, how to keep the deer out of the road, I hope we never lose that kind of upstart creativity.”

Donna Rawlins

What was originally a decision based on convenience turned out to be much more for Donna Rawlins, coordinator of Auxiliary Services. Rawlins was hired in 1972 by then Bookstore Manager Marty Weisben, when the bookstore was located in a small building at the back of the Florida Chamber of Commerce Building on the Arlington Expressway. At the time she was working as a textbook secretary at Middle Tennessee State College in Murfreesboro, Tenn., and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

When Rawlins accepted the position with UNF, she also had received a job offer at Jones College. "Since I lived in the south side of town, I wanted to work closer to where I lived, rather than travel too far away," she said. "I thought Bill Rawlins would love it if we could reduce the unnecessary barriers between administration and faculty. It seemed to come early in the UNF experience, almost like a boss/labor relationship,” he noted. “I remember responding to a vice president's urgent request to help advance UNF in the community by going to the Regency Mall and passing out literature.”

Neither retirement nor greener pastures tempt Schafer, mainly because of the dedicated students UNF attracts, he said. "I've always been a great fan of the UNF student. In the beginning, the average age was 33. I never had to worry about them not having homework done on time," Schafer said. "And it hasn't changed much. We have very good freshmen. In that respect, I don't think there's a better teaching job anywhere in America. I've not looked for a job since I came here and I don't intend to.”

Dan Schafer

History department chair Daniel Schafer is more interested in the future than the past. At least when it comes of instruction,” he said. "Time has passed but no pencil and the chalkboards which rendered them basically untouchable, are still used as classrooms. I just can't think of anything worse for the college experience than portables," Schafer said.

Distrust between management and instructional staff is a longtime problem, he added. "I would love it if we could reduce the institutional barriers between administration and faculty. It seemed to come early in the UNF experience, almost like a boss/labor relationship,” he noted. “I remember responding to a vice president's urgent request to help advance UNF in the community by going to the Regency Mall and passing out literature.”

Neither retirement nor greener pastures tempt Schafer, mainly because of the dedicated students UNF attracts, he said. "I've always been a great fan of the UNF student. In the beginning, the average age was 33. I never had to worry about them not having homework done on time,” Schafer said. "And it hasn't changed much. We have very good freshmen. In that respect, I don't think there's a better teaching job anywhere in America. I've not looked for a job since I came here and I don't intend to.”

Stephen Shapiro

Economics Professor Stephen Shapiro was one of a handful of educators and administrators that arrived in Jacksonville to help build a new university in 1972. Originally hired as an assistant professor, Shapiro says besides the basic motivation of a new job, he took the position at UNF because he wanted "to be part of building a new university. Not many people ever get that opportunity.”

Before coming to UNF, Shapiro taught at the University of Utah, Clemson University, Old Dominion University and the University of South Carolina. Shapiro was promoted to associate professor in 1976 and full professor in 1993. He has served as director of UNF’s Center for Economic Education since 1989. Promoting economic education at all levels has long been one of Shapiro’s professional goals. “I’ve always been interested in economic education,” says Shapiro, who took part in discussions of a center for economic education at UNF that began in 1974. Shapiro says he is proud of the many successful programs provided by the Center for Economic Education over the years, including teacher training, assistance with
Robert Siudzinski

He already had a job as director of special education at New York's Adelphi University and Florida wasn't his favorite state. But Robert Siudzinski readily accepted and to join the charter faculty as chairman of the special education department of the University of North Florida.

"The opportunity to start a new program comes once in a lifetime," he said. "So I took it."

UNF's special education program wasn't projected to begin until at least 1978, according to Siudzinski, but community need demanded it start when the university opened in 1972.

"We were assigned to start a graduate program in mental retardation, however the strong need in the community was for training teachers of the learning disabled and emotionally disturbed as well," he recalled. "We overcame the limitations they first gave us with innovative programming, given the small faculty we were originally assigned, only two FTEs."

The answer was non-categorical programming, Siudzinski explained, with certification offered in all three instructional areas: learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, and mental retardation. "We were 25 years ahead of our time at UNF," he noted. "The state has now become interested in non-categorial programming and may well adopt it in the near future."

Recognition of the innovation is not new. In 1979 the program was selected as one of three "Programs of Excellence" in the United States by the American Association of College Teachers of Education. The following year, it was voted "Outstanding Teacher Preparation Program" by the Florida Association of Teacher Educators. As department chair throughout this period, Siudzinski recognized the importance of the special education faculty and staff in the program's success.

"We had a clear-thinking faculty that was creative and a department secretary, Gerry Stage, who kept us all in line," Siudzinski said. "The faculty is a good working team, which is illustrated by its low turnover rate."

Some of the program's best alumni also work at UNF, he added, naming Lynne Raiser, Lib D'Zamko, and Janice Seabrooks as examples. Working with the Florida Institute of Education, which seeks to unify educational programs at all levels, was a highlight for Siudzinski. The FIE was started by Dr. Andrew Robinson, former UNF interim president. "He was a good man to work with, an achiever and a good human being who did a lot for this institution," Siudzinski said. "It's sort of sad because I occasionally ask the students in class if they know who he was. They know the name on the building, but not the man."

Dr. Siudzinski began phased retirement last year, and will teach again in the fall of 1998. He looks forward to delivering more lectures on the Enneagram, a 2,000-year-old method of personality typing on which he is a recognized authority. Travel and photography are also high on his list of pursuits with more leisure time. Still, he has a special affinity for the University of North Florida.

"The 25 years went so fast. It only seems like a couple of years," he said. "I look forward to continuing the relationship."

Linda Smith

A native of Jacksonville, Linda Smith says it seemed less like chance and more like fate that she came to work at the University of North Florida.

"I was finishing my master's degree at UNC at Chapel Hill, having decided that I wanted to work in a university library, when I heard that there was going to be a brand new university in my hometown. I couldn't wait to apply and when I left Chapel Hill on Friday in May 1972 I started in my new position on Monday in Jacksonville," she says.

Smith was originally hired as a cataloger and assistant university librarian. In 1974, she was promoted to associate university librarian and also held the title of head of the cataloging department, starting in 1975. In 1983 she was promoted to university librarian.

"From a professional standpoint, Smith says the most significant change has been the move from a card-based catalog to a computer-based catalog. "The introduction of LUIS, the library's on-line catalog, continues to have an enormous impact on everything I accomplish in the Library. However, Smith says, "upon reflection I think the most powerful memories are of the people. I have the good fortune to work with very memorable people—people who give me the freedom to work hard and enjoy every day. And that's what I remember: the cumulative challenges of every day and the excitement of figuring out how to overcome the last obstacle in the path of progress."

Gerald James Stine

Biology professor Gerald Stine says despite numerous other opportunities over the years he's stayed at UNF because of the "academic freedom, the freedom to expand and do what I want, and to teach the courses I want to teach."

That freedom has given Stine the opportunity to publish 12 single-author, college-level textbooks on genetics, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. Two additional books on HIV/AIDS will be in print before the end of the year, bringing Stine's total of college level textbooks on that subject to eight, more than anyone else in the world, Stine says.
Publisher's Stine's books are Macmillan, William C. Brown, and the most recent half dozen by Prentice-Hall.

The early days at UNF have many fond memories for Stine. For example, the student body offered unusual challenges. Back in the first years at UNF, Stine says, many of the students were older than their professors. "They were older, wiser and more experienced, and they were quite manipulative. Their life experiences were greater than those of their teachers." Stine's special memories include simply watching the campus grow over the past 25 years and the introduction of sports teams and the necessary facilities, such as the Aquatic Center, the Arena and the baseball field.

Terry Tabor

Terry Tabor, chair of the Department of Health Science, has told the story many times of his first attempt to get to UNF's campus but it bears repeating. In 1971 Tabor accompanied Jack Netcher, then chair of the College of Education, to the site of the state's newest university. "We stopped the car and got out on what I guess was St. Johns Bluff and we started to hike and we continued to hike. We walked and walked and we never found anything. We finally gave up," Tabor says laughing.

Despite the physical evidence, Tabor says the opportunity was too good to pass up. He left his position at the University of Tennessee and moved to Jacksonville. The chance to come to a new university "was unique in that it was a starting point."

Tabor says he has enjoyed watching and participating in the evolution of the study of health at UNF, from the College of Education to the opening of the College of Health and to the creation of a health science department and curriculum. Tabor says he moved to the College of Education in 1988 because his career had become oriented toward exercise physiology, and that the move has allowed him to concentrate more on research. Currently he is studying the physiological responses to various types of exercise equipment.

The history of teaching health has evolved much in the same way that UNF's health science studies have evolved, Tabor says, with the focus changing from reactionary to preventative. "The changes in the College of Health are really like what's happening in the nation with health care," he says.

Tabor says he is especially proud that his daughter Leigh Ann (born during the first year of UNF's existence on Oct. 25, 1972) is not only a student at the University but is majoring in health promotion. "It makes UNF more special to me."

Reza Vaghefi

It was the first day of class. Reza Vaghefi asked his students from outside of Jacksonville where they were from. "St. Augustine," said one. "Orange Park," said another. "The north," said a third. Vaghefi was interested, thinking the student meant Michigan or Minnesota. "Where in the north?" he asked. "Fernandina Beach," answered the student with complete sincerity.

Vaghefi tells this story from UNF's early years to illustrate what for him is a central tenet: that exposing students to diversity, new thoughts and unfamiliar cultures is vital to a college's mission. This belief led him to develop UNF's most recent and impressive academic programs, international business, within the College of Business Administration. A native of Iran, Vaghefi was himself seeking a broadening of thought when he chose to pursue his doctorate at Michigan State, winning a fellowship to Stanford University in 1965. He and his wife, Dr. Simin Vaghefi, a professor in UNF's College of Health, returned home in 1969 when he accepted a post as assistant governor of a central bank. Later, while attending a conference in the United States, he heard about a new university opening in the fall of 1972.

Like many other founding members of UNF, Vaghefi didn't plan then to stay for 25 years. But unlike many others, he did leave, accepting a vice chancellorship at a new university in Iran.

"It was an ambitious program. We were set to exchange faculty with Harvard," Vaghefi recalled. "Then the Iranian revolution happened. The whole thing collapsed. I realized I could not possibly work with the new regime, so I rejoined this university."

When asked of what accomplishments he is proud during the years at UNF, Vaghefi doesn't hesitate. "I have an accomplished family," he answers. "That's the most important thing." Seven textbooks, including a strategic management text to be published in 1998, articles in domestic and foreign business journals, and numerous awards for teaching and scholarship are also to his credit.

Vaghefi's spacious new office in the College of Business Administration, where pictures of his grandchildren are displayed as prominently as one depicting himself and dignitaries including the Queen of Iran, is a far cry from the first office he occupied. "It was next to the telegraph building. I was the first one in Building One," he laughed. "This is a tremendous improvement."

Vaghefi continues to advocate a varied student body, and notes students from Poland, India, Mexico, Columbia and many states are enrolled in his courses. He believes the benefits of diversity to UNF are tangible.

"It raises the standards. There is more curiosity and the students ask very intelligent questions," Vaghefi said. "The larger number of international students is just one more sign UNF is maturing."

Vaghefi believes UNF is on target. "We can produce what the president wants. We can offer the best undergraduate program in the state," he declared. "It is achievable."

Dianna Wilson

When Dianna Wilson arrived at UNF in May, 1972, she realized she would need all her skills of adaptation, flexibility, and commitment. The Civil Rights bill had passed only about six years earlier. African-Americans were just beginning to move into job markets they couldn't get into before," she recalled. The first staff Wilson worked with was very young, like myself. And since segregation had been our previous lifestyle, we were open to fresh ideas and willing to respect cultural differences."

Shortly before taking the job at UNF, Wilson attended Florida International College (now FIU) and planned to continue her education at Bethune Cookman College on a music scholarship. "When it was announced that a state university was coming to Jacksonville, it didn't particularly excite me because my heart was focused about 90 miles away on Bethune Cookman," she explained. But a series of events in Wilson's life caused her decision to pursue secure employment instead of continuing with school.

She applied for and got a job on the 1930s-era switchboard leased for the school's temporary offices, which she nicknamed, "Monster." The early days were hectic, she said. "The word was out about this new campus. We had questions of all kinds. We used to try and see how many calls we could take at one time. There were screaming faculty and staff members who needed outside lines while the public was calling on the incoming lines."

The school had the latest phone equipment when it opened on its St. Johns Bluff site, Wilson added. During those years, she advanced to supervisor, then clerk IV, and finally her current position as fiscal assistant in Physical Facilities. But she noted that promotion opportunities were not as open as she would have liked.

"In 25 years there was good and bad," Wilson stated. "I was in a position to observe, which is a good position to be in. I observed my own mistakes and other people's and I improved. I observed injustices that taught me to strive harder and believe things will change. Often times, they did. I observed indifference in people and learned how to be on the best possible terms with them."

And although Wilson at times considered leaving, she sees the wisdom in staying at UNF. "After the first ten years, I really had a passion for telecommunications things so I tried to pursue a job at AT&T. But when they split up the phone companies, 25,000 people were laid off," she said. "Then I was almost hired by People's Express Airlines just before they went out of business. I decided I just better direct my attention here for awhile."

Wilson laughed and shook her head. "The next thing I knew, I had been 15 years. I don't know when 20 years slipped in, and now it's 25." A highlight of Wilson's 25th year was being voted USPS Employee of the Year.

Looking back on those years, Wilson recalls two former UNF colleagues with special regard. "I had great admiration for Dr. Andrew Robinson. He talked to me constantly and said, 'Dianna, I just believe you've got secret potential,'" she recalled. "I [asked] Police Chief Martin Garris. During some down moments in my life, he motivated me." She paused, then added, "And most of all, God has made the difference in my life."
student assistants when they complain their classes are too tough, "What is tough whenever you're determined? With persistence and perseverance that toughness is still there but you can do it, you can make it."

Doris H. Wilson

Doris Wilson's title at UNF is administrative assistant, a rather simple classification for a very complicated job. Among her duties is assisting both College of Business Administration Dean Earle Traynham and Associate Dean Jeff Michelman; all personnel and payroll matters for the College; foundation accounting; travel arrangements and reimbursements; ordering of supplies and maintenance of some equipment; and maintaining the filing system to name a few. Despite the long list, Wilson has no complaints and offers a simple explanation for why she has stayed in the same office all these years: "I like working in the College of Business Administration. I've been very happy here. I've had a lot of good people to work with."

Wilson came to the University in 1970 when UNF was in the planning stages. Prior to accepting the job here she was working for the state Board of Health. "I was here when the AIDS cases were hired. I helped the Dean (then James M. Parrish) recruit," Wilson says. She chose to come to UNF because it offered the opportunity to advance in her career and because she wanted to attend college. While working at the University, Wilson received her AA degree in business from Florida Community College at Jacksonville. She has earned 25 hours toward a degree at UNF and continues to occasionally take classes for professional development.

Wilson said her most memorable experiences of UNF's first few years are of moving into the buildings and having the first students begin classes. "This was a very exciting time for those of us who started working prior to the development of the campus."

Janice Wood

When she was first contacted about working at the University of North Florida Janice Wood says she was reluctant to take the job. She had experience in managing reading programs in elementary schools and was happy in that field. "I really never had any intentions of working at the college level. I turned the UNF job down three times."

But as fate would have it she began teaching a course in Jacksonville for the University of Miami. The experience pointed her toward a new direction of higher education. "I figured out I really liked working with adults," says Wood. In addition, the years of observing elementary and secondary teachers convinced her that there was a need to improve some teaching methods being used in the school system. "I saw teachers using some strategies that weren't effective. That's what really got me interested in teacher education."

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Wood received her bachelor's degree from Cedarville College in Cedarville, Ohio. After teaching in Dayton, Ohio, she married her husband, Lowell, who was also an educator, moved to Fort Pierce, Fla., following a Christmas vacation to the Sunshine State. They taught at Fort Pierce, and later moved to Duval County. She was a supervisor in a federally funded reading program for the county when she was offered the opportunity to come to UNF. She received her doctorate at FSU while teaching here.

Looking back on the early days at the University Wood says it was a particularly difficult time for her. She had a 1 year old son and while teaching classes she traveled to Florida State three times a week to work on her Ph.D. in early childhood education, which she received in 1974. But the hard times had rewards. "It was also a wonderful time designing and developing the early childhood program at UNF," Wood says.

She was involved in the development and implementation of a new primary education program. The new certification program, designed for those studying to become teachers of children age 3 through third grade, required a separate certification and represents a significant change from prior years. She's also been instrumental in the development of many community projects, including the establishment of family resource centers and early literacy initiatives.

"It's very rewarding," Wood says of her career at UNF. "It's nice to see students grow and then see them in the classroom teaching. Most of our students get hired in urban schools. That's the toughest place to work and our students succeed."

Lou Woods

Though UNF has become more of a traditional university, COBA Professor Lou Woods and members of the original faculty recall the institution's nocturnal past with fondness. "Many of our faculty now don't remember what it was like to teach totally at night. We were all here at the same time," Woods recalls of the early days at UNF University.

Originally from Massachusetts, Woods' family came to Jacksonville in 1957 and he later graduated from Boiles School. He received his bachelor's degree from Jacksonville University and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After teaching for a few years at East Carolina University, Woods says he heard about a new university opening in Jacksonville and applied. He was confident the move would be a good one: "My contention was that Jacksonville was the best kept secret in the South. That's still my contention...I knew the community and I knew its potential."

Even 25 years ago moving from Greenville, N.C., to Jacksonville was a major change for Woods. "(At ECU) The fast food restaurant was also a gas station. Jacksonville was really uptown." Of course Jacksonville did have its limits. "In 1972 Jacksonville only had two Chinese restaurants in town, just to give you some idea of how much it's grown," Woods says. He started out teaching courses in both economics and geography and continues to do so.

Both the area and the University have changed over the years and many beneficial relationships have been created. One such affiliation - with the Central American country of Belize - began in 1984 when Woods and Betty Flinchum, director of the Office of International Programs, applied for a USIA (United States Information Agency) grant. "We wanted to open a program somewhere in the Americas and Belize seemed like a good place. It was a developing country and it had just gained its independence," Woods recalls. Although funding for the program has officially ended the residual effects continue, including the influx of Belizean students to the University and the creation of a master's of education program providing teachers in Belize with the opportunity to earn a degree from UNF.

As Woods predicted the decision to come to UNF has been a positive one. "It's comfortable. It's been interesting to watch the maturation of the University and to participate in the early years and the development of it."

Gerson Yessin

Hired in September 1971 as chair of the Department of Fine Arts, Gerson Yessin says it was the opportunity to accomplish something big that tempted him to come to UNF.

The prospect of coming in on the ground floor of a fine state university was very exciting to me. Being able to design the curriculum for art and music and form a new department was a stimulating and challenging opportunity," Yessin says.

Prior to coming to UNF, Yessin had been the assistant dean of the College of Fine Arts at Jacksonville University for 13 years. After serving 10 years as UNF's chair of fine arts, he returned to teaching in 1981. Then in 1990, he took the helm as head of the music department.

Although it started out as a sleepy little program, Yessin says the music program has definitely come into its own. "The thing that turned around the music program was the addition of a jazz program (in 1986). It was a first class program and after that the whole department became alive. It brought with it fine professors and scholarships that attracted the finest students and that has not abated." He cites the recent invitation to the 1997 Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland as testament to the program's success.

As he looks back, Yessin says the first year was probably the most memorable for him. "The first year before the university opened was a rare experience. Chairs, deans, vice presidents and the president all worked in one huge room, subdivided by shoulder high partitions. We all mixed in various combinations to talk about the philosophical direction of the new university. Discussions were frequent and animated. A feeling of uniting in a great common goal pervaded the entire group."
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