

The *Women* for FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Spring/Summer 2015



W4FSU WELCOMES FIRST LADY JEAN THRASHER

Several Women for FSU executive members recently had the pleasure of meeting our new first lady, Mrs. Jean Thrasher. Throughout our lunch together, Jean shared her enthusiasm for her new role and relayed stories of her fifty-year marriage to President Thrasher. When President Thrasher asked Jean how she felt about taking on the role of first lady, Jean immediately responded, "As long as it's your passion, it's mine, too." Jean emphasized that whether it was raising their family together, or raising one billion dollars, they were going to do it as a team. This passion, along with her impressive commitment to women's issues, will make Jean a wonderful new addition to the Women for FSU.

As conversation flowed, it became readily apparent that Jean's priorities as our first lady are very closely aligned with the mission of the Women for FSU, which emphasizes engaging and celebrating women as well as investing in our University. As Jean told us about her background and interests, a pattern of engaging and celebrating women and philanthropy emerged. Jean has an extensive resume of volunteer service and philanthropic commitments, including leading Girl Scout troops, participating in both the campaign to save our Historic Capitol and the creation of the Domestic Violence Center in Clay County, and serving 12 years on the board of the Lighthouse Learning Center, a preschool for special needs children.

As explained by our executive board chair, Sherrill Ragans, the W4FSU objective is "aligning women with FSU, and finding them ways to contribute." Jean is coming to us with a legacy of contributions to women of all ages as well as a passion for philanthropy. She expressed her commitment to the success of *Raise the Torch* and her support of the University and its students.

When asked about her favorite moment on campus so far, Jean said she enjoyed having her entire family in the President's House for Thanksgiving. The Thrashers have three children

and eight grandchildren. Daughters Jennifer and Julie are both FSU alumna and they look forward to welcoming their oldest granddaughter, Ashley Jean, to FSU next fall. The Thrashers' son, Jon, is part owner and operator of a printing business.

We very much enjoyed visiting with Jean, and I hope you will join us in welcoming her to the Women for FSU. We look forward to many great events together. 🌿

—Sarah Coakley



Jean Thrasher

SIXTH ANNUAL BACKSTAGE PASS HIGHLIGHTS



Sherrill Ragans

Spring is blooming in Tallahassee and on the FSU campus we cherish, announcing a season of renewal. Those who participated in Women for FSU's Sixth Annual Backstage Pass are also renewed, refreshed and assured that as we engage and invest with other FSU alumni and friends, Florida State will be well on its way to a top 25 ranking among the country's public universities. I extend my deepest thanks to all who contributed to such an exemplary event. Look for the announcement of our 2016 date and plan to attend a weekend that highlights FSU programs that will amaze and energize.

As we experience the beauty of a North Florida spring, FSU is blooming in another way. Alumni and friends are encouraged to invest in FSU's future by participating in *Raise the Torch*. When we invest in our chosen FSU passions, we help Florida State meet its \$1 billion campaign goal!

W4FSU celebrates all women who are committed to FSU, and we welcome your continued involvement and invite you to share the W4FSU story in your community. Please email me at swragans@aol.com if you would like to connect, or if you have any questions and suggestions. ✨

—Sherrill Ragans
Chair, Executive Committee

WOMEN FOR FSU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Florence Ashby | Sherrill Ragans |
| Lynn Bertram | Cherie Rowland |
| Sarah Coakley | Marilyn Spores |
| Cassandra Rayne Gross | Janet Stoner |
| Julie Granger Kritz | Jaimi Wacksman |



Top: Attendees gather for a group photo during Friday's events.

Right: W4FSU members participate in an art therapy session led by College of Fine Art students.



Left: Saturday afternoon began with a tour of the Coyle E. Moore Athletic Center.

Right: A College of Nursing student explains hands-only CPR to W4FSU members Julie Granger Kritz & Julie Gillespie.



Left: College of Nursing student Katherine Gallagher shares her story.



GIVING BACK: FSU DANCE MARATHON



Jenna Jackson, executive director of the FSU Dance Marathon reserved time from her much-deserved spring break following this year's Dance Marathon to speak to me about her four-year involvement with this popular student-led initiative. Dance Marathon at FSU is an annual 40-hour event where more than 1,800 students stay awake and on their feet to raise awareness and funds for local beneficiaries, including Children's Miracle Network Hospital, UF Health Shands Children's Hospital and the FSU College of Medicine.

Jackson explained that funds raised benefit local children and the FSU community. She stated, "The connection with the College of Medicine has been around for some time now and allows for an even deeper connection to the school. Children's Miracle Network support stays local because it is all about helping local kids. We

noticed so many kids at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital had also spent time at Shands, so our two beneficiaries are those who regularly help our local Tallahassee children."

Since its inception in 1996, Dance Marathon has raised more than 5.3 million dollars. This year—the organization's twentieth anniversary—Dance Marathon surpassed their 1 million goal! These funds will be divided evenly between Shands and the FSU College of Medicine, supporting research, the Arts in Medicine program and the purchase of new equipment. While the amount raised is impressive, Jackson was quick to stress that what made her involvement special was the opportunity to make a difference in her community. Jackson also recalled the tremendous support she felt from the University, noting that President Thrasher and Jean Thrasher were in attendance. Jackson

recently graduated in May with a bachelor's degree in retail merchandising and product development and with a double minor in business and leadership studies. It's inspiring to see her example of leadership, and we hope Jenna will join us for Women for FSU events. ✨

—Sarah Coakley



President Thrasher and First Lady Jean Thrasher participate in Dance Marathon.

CONVERSATIONS IN PHILANTHROPY:

Where is YOUR passion for FSU? How are you fueling your flame and participating in *Raise the Torch*? Are you involved with a particular FSU college, with the Division of Student Affairs, or perhaps with FSU athletics? Do you serve on a committee? Do you mentor students pursuing degrees in your profession? Are you telling prospective students that FSU is a great university to attend? FSU needs the investment of YOUR time, talents and treasures to remain a preeminent university in Florida and attain a top 25 status nationally. W4FSU is open to all women who feel a passion for FSU, both alumnae and friends of the University are welcome.

Connecting with the Women for Florida State University can help match your passion

for FSU with the student, academic or athletic program that fuels your love for this great University. You can engage with new friends and reconnect with others by participating in our annual Backstage Pass event where different FSU programs are profiled. You can attend our Women's Leadership Institute as a facilitator and help a diverse group of 40-50 young women learn about and evolve their personal leadership skills. You can also host an event in your area where women can share stories of their love for Florida State and the many ways in which they support FSU.

We hope you will be active in W4FSU and invite you to invest in the many opportunities this organization provides. In our last newsletter, we mentioned that Women for FSU has a goal

to reach \$250,000 in the W4FSU Endowment that supports the Women's Leadership Institute, and we have a second goal to increase the number of W4FSU members who annually contribute to FSU. We hope you will help us meet these goals. You can invest in a University program by working with a development officer or by contacting the dean overseeing the program you are most interested.

As we strive to reach the top 25, raise \$1 billion and continue our designation as a preeminent university in the state of Florida, FSU needs you! ✨

—Janet Stoner

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT W4FSU.ORG



The *Women* for
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION
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TALLAHASSEE, FL 32310

W4FSU TO BE REPRESENTED AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

W4FSU and the Center for Leadership and Social Change are thrilled to share that our Women's Leadership Institute program will be highlighted at the upcoming National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Annual Conference. NASPA's mission is to be the principal source of leadership, scholarship, professional development and advocacy for student affairs. As "the leading association for the advancement, health and sustainability of the student affairs profession," the association

has more than 13,000 members across 25 countries, and NASPA's Annual Conference annually attracts 6,000 attendees. The Center for Leadership and Social Change submitted a program proposal that highlighted their partnership with W4FSU and, after a competitive program proposal and selection process, our session was chosen! Erica Wiborg and myself will be presenting the session in New Orleans this spring. The session, entitled:

Co-Authentic Women's Leadership Learning, aims to connect women's leadership identity development, emotionally intelligent leadership scholarship and innovative ideas in alumna support and fundraising. W4FSU is thrilled for this partnership with the Center and the impact Women for FSU is making in Tallahassee and beyond. 🌸

—Dr. Laura Osteen

HONORING OUR GIFT OF WISDOM AWARD WINNER

Sharon Lechter, the Women for FSU Gift of Wisdom award winner, was celebrated at the closing dinner of the Sixth Annual Backstage Pass. Lechter graduated magna cum laude from Florida State University in 1976 with a Bachelor of Science in accounting and has been blazing a trail for women since she accepted a position with Coopers + Lybrand early in her career as a certified public accountant. She was one of only a few women hired by the company at the time. Lechter exemplifies the values of community, leadership and philanthropy that

are at the heart of the Women for Florida State University culture. Lechter is the co-author of a number of best-selling books related to personal development, financial literacy and entrepreneurship, including the international blockbuster "Rich Dad Poor Dad" and 15 other books in the "Rich Dad" series. In 2008, President George W. Bush appointed Lechter to the first President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy and she served both President Bush and President Obama in that position. As founder and CEO of Pay Your Family First, a program that empowers families with financial literacy and money management strategies, Lechter has developed a number of programs to benefit women, children and families. A committed philanthropist, Lechter gives back to communities that have a global impact as both a volunteer and a benefactor. She is a member of the Business Advisory Board for EmpowHER, a company focused on women's health issues. Lechter also serves on the national board of the Women Presidents' Organization and the national board of Childhelp, an organization founded to prevent and treat child abuse. The Women for FSU are proud to recognize



Lechter poses with President Thrasher, who spoke during the Gift of Wisdom award presentation.



Gift of Wisdom Award winner Sharon Lechter is pinned by W4FSU Chair Sherrill Ragans

Sharon Lechter for her many contributions to the betterment of women and as a deserving recipient of the Gift of Wisdom award. 🌸

—Angela Totman