

# CONTACT

SPRING 2018 VOL. 20



Breaking New Ground  
at the Gus Machado  
School of Business

*STU Welcomes Displaced  
Students from the Caribbean*  
p. 13

*Baseball Head Coach Named to USA  
Baseball Collegiate National Team Staff*  
p. 6

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



The future of St. Thomas University has never been brighter nor better defined. Indeed, Monsignor Casale's legacy is becoming more extraordinarily impressive as his retirement nears:

- The groundbreaking of the new Gus Machado School of Business, a state-of the art, 21st century building that will provide a center of excellence for future business leaders
- The opening of the Msgr. Casale Honors College in the fall of 2019. The Honors College will focus on the best and the brightest within the University and new prospects, providing top tier performing students a broader exposure to maximize their potential at STU with scholarships, mentoring, innovative programs, dual language, international studies and internships. These Casale Scholars will also be given the opportunity to complete an undergraduate and graduate program in less than four years. The Honors College will truly be the seed that will incubate the future of the whole University

- The Athletics Program, with actions and plans in place to expand our offerings by seven sports, including e-sports, swimming, expanded track and field, and more within the next three years.
- The expansion of our Nursing Program, within our School of Science, Technology & Engineering Management, to become a cornerstone offering at the University
- And finally, a full array of academic programs that are specifically identified and developed to ensure that STU students are competitively qualified for the best jobs upon their graduation. The Board's, faculty's, and University administration's goal is to have STU be recognized as the leading Catholic University in the Southeast. Arguably, we are well on our way. With the aforementioned new schools and programs, our confidence of reaching this aspiration is magnified in many ways.

Today, we are in the midst of our search for a new President. I must say that the caliber of the resumes and jobs that these applicants currently hold are very impressive. Here again, we are very confident that the new President will be able to take the baton from Msgr. Casale and aggressively move toward the future we all envision for St. Thomas University.

Sincerely,

John J. Dooner Jr.  
Chairman of the Board

## CONTACT

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## CONTACT

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## ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY BREAKS GROUND ON GUS MACHADO SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



On Wednesday, Jan. 24, St. Thomas University broke ground on a brand new business school—the Gus Machado School of Business—thanks to the generous \$5 million gift from South Florida business leader Gus Machado.

The ceremonial first shovel signified a major step in future of the state-of-the-art-complex, which will foster the growth of current and future St. Thomas business students.

“It is an honor to have the Machados be part of this transformative project,” said Monsignor Franklyn Casale, St. Thomas University president. “Our business programs are expanding to meet market demand, including new degree programs in Cyber Security Management and Data Analytics. This complex meets an important need of the growing business school, and with its many multipurpose uses it will be a hub where all students can meet and exchange ideas.”

In her speech to the audience, Lilliam Machado stressed the importance of education.

“We wanted to give back, to invest in the future of education because as Nelson Mandela said, ‘Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.’

Don Shula came out to support the Gus Machado School of Business

My husband and I are very positive that this will make a difference in the lives of many, many students and future generations here in Miami,” said Lilliam Machado.

The new complex will include a trading room and a global conference auditorium. Housed in it will be the Institute for Cybersecurity; the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation; the Institute for Sports Administration; and the Institute for Trade and Logistics. The Gus Machado School of Business offers 21 different undergraduate degrees and 27 different graduate degrees.

The new building is targeted to open in fall 2019.



President Msgr. Casale blessing the site of the Gus Machado School of Business

# AROUND CAMPUS

Coach Bruce Carrington, STU's Head Men's and Women's Tennis Coach, was bestowed a major honor in March by the City of Miami. The city proclaimed March 22 as Bruce Carrington Day as a tribute to his tremendous accomplishments as a tennis coach and his impactful contributions to the community.

In his 20th season as Head Coach for the Bobcats, Carrington has over 35 years of coaching experience. Carrington is an exceptional force off the court, leading his players in service work in the community while instilling the values of the NAIA Champions of Character program. A seasoned expert in his field, Carrington has been in the center of the changing face of tennis as it has expanded its reach over past decades to include African-Americans, Hispanics and other minorities.

## COACH BRUCE CARRINGTON DAY



## ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC LAW SOCIETY COMMUNITY OUTREACH: PACKAGING FOOD FOR THE HOMELESS

In February, the St. Thomas More Catholic Law Society hosted its first spring meeting and community pro bono event. St. Thomas Law students prepared more than 200 food packages for the homeless. The packages were distributed by Servidores del Servidor a non-profit, Catholic lay ministry dedicated to providing meals and services to the homeless community.

The purpose of the St. Thomas More Society is to focus on community service and promote the highest standards of ethics, civility, human dignity, justice, professional knowledge and skill in the practice of law, with the encouragement of traditional Catholic values within the St. Thomas Community.

## ST. THOMAS LAW'S HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACADEMY HOSTS 7TH ANNUAL SAO HUMAN TRAFFICKING FORUM

St. Thomas Law's Human Trafficking Academy, in partnership with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office (SAO), hosted the 7th Annual SAO Human Trafficking Forum in observance of Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

This year's theme was "Broadening the Scope: Sexual Orientation, Gender Roles, and Developing the Appropriate Response." Speakers included Meredith Dank, Ph.D., Research Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City and Aspen Hawke, Program Manager for Chrysalis Health in Fort Lauderdale.

In her opening remarks, Miami-Dade State Attorney Katherine Fernandez-Rundle highlighted the extraordinary work of the prosecuting team of SAO and also praised St. Thomas University and its Human Trafficking Academy for being the leading educational institution in South Florida to address the scourge of human trafficking.

"You really have been the leaders in this, before the rest of us," she expressed to President Msgr. Franklyn Casale, Dean Alfredo Garcia and Dr. Roza Pati.

President Msgr. Casale, who has been on the forefront of the issue, shared his enthusiasm on the recent partnership between St. Thomas Law's Human Trafficking Academy and the State Attorney's Office, and reiterated that "collaboration is the name of the game" in the fight against human trafficking.

The Miami-Dade State Attorney's Annual Human Trafficking Forum gathers stakeholders and community partners to address human trafficking in Miami-Dade County and South Florida. St. Thomas Law's Human Trafficking Academy is committed to continue working and collaborating with local leaders to develop cohesive and coherent anti-trafficking strategies.



## ST. THOMAS LAW STUDENTS' LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE ASSISTING DETAINED SOMALI REFUGEES

Professor Lauren Gilbert and eight St. Thomas Law students — Carolina Acosta-Fox, Mirtha Garcia-Alvarez, Tessa Juste, Diego Sanchez, Melany Cornejo, Catherine Perez, Vanessa Baez, Nathalia Lozano — spent two days at the Glades County Detention Center working on behalf of several Somali deportees whose flight back to Somalia got turned back in Senegal for reasons that remain unclear.

A team of lawyers including groups from the University of Miami School of Law, Americans for Immigrant Justice and Broward Legal Aid successfully sought a preliminary injunction in federal court against the return of the Somalis on that flight.

Many of these Somalians fled their country when they were small children, and entered the United States as refugees. Some still suffer PTSD as a result of their experiences, and several relived those experiences while meeting with the student teams.

## NEW BIKE SHARING PROGRAM ON CAMPUS



Lime green bikes have taken over the STU campus! LimeBike, a new dock-less bike share program at St. Thomas, allows users to find, unlock, and rent bikes with their smartphones.

There are 120 LimeBikes available for rent at various locations throughout campus, and there's no kiosk docking station so bikes can be ridden anywhere and parked at any bike rack or designated bike parking area on campus.

Next time you're on campus, tour it on a LimeBike!



Members of the student team from St. Thomas Law included Catherine Perez, Diego Sanchez, Vanessa Baez, Nathalia Lozano, Mirtha Garcia Alvarez, and Carolina Acosta-Fox.

One young man, who fled with his family when he was eight, described being carried by his father through the jungle and witnessing his sister's leg being blown off after she stepped on a land mine.

"The Glades experience was life changing," stated Catherine Perez. "After hearing some of the detainees' stories, you really start to cherish principles like freedom of religion, that the great majority of Americans take for granted. This experience reminded me of why I chose to come to law school in the first place."

Over the two-day period, the students help approximately 15 individuals.

## CONTEMPLATIONS: A GROUP ART EXHIBIT

In December, STU's Archbishop John C. Favalora Archive & Museum was home to "Contemplations," a group art exhibition featuring four artists, all born in Latin America but now reside in Miami: Emilio Falero, Beatriz Ramirez, Hernan Miranda, and Emilio Hector Rodriguez. This was the first time these artists had come together to showcase Christian Art. The pieces displayed included Renaissance and Baroque revival paintings by Falero; lavishly jeweled portraits of Mary by Ramirez; intense windows onto biblical scenes by Miranda; and organic, abstract acrylics by Rodriguez.



From left are Emilio Falero, Beatriz Ramirez, Emilio Hector Rodriguez and Hernan Miranda. Photographer: Jim Davis

# AROUND CAMPUS

## COACH JORGE PEREZ NAMED TO USA BASEBALL COLLEGIATE NATIONAL TEAM STAFF



STU Head Baseball Coach Jorge Perez '12, M.S. Education Administration, has been named to the coaching staff of USA Baseball's 2018 Collegiate National Team. Perez joins the 2018 Team USA staff as an assistant coach and first base coach under LSU Head Coach and St. Thomas University Sports Hall of Famer Paul Mainieri '82, M.S. Sports Administration.

Being chosen for the staff as first-base coach is a rare honor for someone from an NAIA school. The other three coaches are either from NCAA Division I or the major leagues. Mainieri will serve as the Manager of the USA Baseball National Team with Perez, Clif Godwin (ECU), Jim Hendry '81, M.S. Sports Administration (New York Yankees), and Brian O'Connor (Virginia) serving as assistant coaches.

Perez has led the Bobcats to six appearances in the NAIA National Championship Opening Round, including a runner up

finish at the NAIA World Series in 2015 – the best finish in school history. This year's team is in the midst of the 2018 season, and has an overall game win/loss of 35-4!

"I am greatly honored and humbled to be selected as part of the USA Baseball National Team staff," said Perez. "It is a tremendous privilege to have the chance to represent Team USA and to work with such accomplished coaches. I am grateful to Coach Mainieri and all those at USA Baseball for this amazing opportunity. Moreover, I am proud of how far we have come as a program at St. Thomas. This appointment is a testament to what our student-athletes, coaches and administrators have created at STU."



STULS/VITA Program student volunteers

## FREE IMMIGRATION CONSULTATIONS & INCOME TAX PREPARATIONS

STU Law and the Immigration Law Students Association partnered with Catholic Legal Services and Americans for Immigrant Justice to host an immigration legal screening clinic that provided free interviews and legal consultations to the immigrant community. Immigration attorneys on site met with members of the community to help determine whether they were eligible for any immigration relief.

Simultaneously, the St. Thomas Law School Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (STULS/VITA) Program, now in its 34th year, offered free tax preparation assistance by IRS certified volunteers to low or moderate income individuals and families. In addition, the site offered free electronic filing (e-filing).

## FROM THE MIAMI OPEN TO D.C.

A year ago Adrian Escarate '11, B.A. Communication Arts and master's candidate, was the designated "hitting partner" for Roger Federer, and a few weeks ago he was the designated guest of Rep. Carlos Curbelo at the President's State of the Union address.

The 29-year-old master's candidate, in the U.S. since he was 3, is among the 800,000 DREAMers eager to remain in the DACA program which allows them to stay in the country and continue their education.

Adrian was one of 25 DREAMers that Democratic and Republican lawmakers invited to the President's speech. He met several top politicians including Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, and even sat four seats away from the President's family.



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# FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

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**Dr. Judith Bachay,**

professor, was awarded the Engaged Scholar of the Year Award from Florida Campus Compact. This is the top engaged learning award for faculty in the State of Florida, and the first time it has been awarded to an STU faculty member. She received a Fulbright Award which allowed her to travel to Greece in November to work with the HOME PROJECT - providing trauma-informed counselling training to those working with refugees fleeing conflict in the Middle-East.

**Dr. Thomas Brezenski,**

associate professor, was chosen to serve on Rep. Debbie Wasserman-Schultz's Gun Violence Task Force for the 23rd US Congressional district in an effort to formulate legislation to prevent gun violence and school shootings in particular.

**Dr. Katsia Cadeau,**

professor, was recognized by the City of North Miami for the positive impact she makes in higher education and in the community.

**Dr. Andrea Campbell,**

professor, presented at the Broward County Crime Commission's 3rd Annual Juvenile Crimes Conference; and she spoke at the UM NSU Center for Autism & Related Disabilities about "Violent Media & Youth: Implications for Individuals with Autism Disorder."

**Carol Castleberry,**

law assistant professor of academic success, was a guest lecturer at Yale University during its Society and Natural Resources interdisciplinary seminar class on February 26, speaking on how people form perspectives about the natural and social world, and how these perspectives influence relationships with self, others, and nature.

**Dr. Claudia H. Herrera '10 & '17,**

director of Campus Ministry, was invited by the US-Bishops Southeast Pastoral Institute to be part of their formation faculty for their graduate programs in pastoral ministry for Hispanics.

**Dr. Giselle Jamison,**

associate professor, was reelected board member of the Florida Political Science Association (FPSA) and an organizer of its conference. The FPSA is the only organization of private and public universities that teach political science in the state.

**Dr. Jennifer Kryszak,**

professor, published an essay titled "From Encounter to Justice: Pope Francis, Catholic Sisters, and the Culture of Encounter." It is included in Pope Francis and the Event of Encounter, edited by John C. Cavadini and Donald Wallenfang.

**Cristina Lopez '98, '00 & '13,**

director of career services, published an article in the Journal of Multidisciplinary Research last September titled "Financial aid and organizational structure: Student affairs, academic affairs, or administration?"

**Dr. Michael Mulvey,**

professor, published "What was so Funny about Les Aventures de Rabbi Jacob? A Comedic Film between History and Memory," French Politics, Culture, and Society, 35.3 (Winter 2017). The peer-reviewed article has been adopted as mandatory reading for an undergraduate course and a MOOC at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

**Dr. Gloria Palaez,**

dean of the School of Arts and Education, was named President of the Florida Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (FACTE) at its spring meeting in Orlando, Fla.

**Dr. Cindy Silitsky,**

professor, published a research case study "Conducting Interviews with Men and their Partners: A Qualitative Study of Men's Experiences in Couple Therapy" in Sage Research Methods Cases, part two.

# BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP UPDATES

## \$2.5 MILLION GIFT TO STU'S HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACADEMY

In late October, the University received a \$2.5 million gift for its Human Trafficking Academy, a gift that will strengthen its work in professional education, victim and survivor counseling and legal assistance.

The gift, said to be one of the largest-ever donations of its kind, came from John Brunetti\*, chairman of Hialeah Park and Casino.

"I am determined to help educate others on human trafficking, provide support to trafficking survivors, and to stand up for the rights and the dignity that they deserve," Brunetti said at a joint press conference at the State Attorney's Office in Miami. "This gift will not only strengthen, but advance the academy's commitment to its mission of providing dignified care to victims and survivors, as well as informing the public of this horrible threat to society."

The academy, part of STU's School of Law, holds an annual five-day program of 15 intensive courses for law enforcement, lawyers, healthcare providers, teachers, students, researchers, religious institutions and community leaders on the many issues related to human trafficking.

President Msgr. Franklyn Casale received the check and thanked Brunetti at the Miami press conference.

"This gift, one of the biggest toward curbing human trafficking, will establish the Academy as the center for all anti-human trafficking efforts," he said. "It will be a collaborative center unifying the nation's experts and programs focused on victim care and support, and the education of responders and public agencies."

Besides his presidency, Msgr. Casale is the spokesperson on human trafficking for the Institute for Intercultural Human Rights at the St. Thomas School of Law. He has also testified before Congress on the reauthorization of the Human Trafficking Act.

The academy plans to work with Katherine Fernandez Rundle, Miami's state attorney, sharing resources to raise awareness of trafficking issues, and to understand local and global victims better.

\*After battling multiple health issues in recent years, John Brunetti passed away March 2, 2018, at the age of 87. Brunetti was a well-known real estate developer, owned Hialeah Park Racing and Casino for the past 40 years, and was a generous philanthropist.



## CORPORATIONS DONATE MORE THAN \$400K TO STU'S DISPLACED CARIBBEAN STUDENTS

Months after a series of three catastrophic hurricanes hit Houston, Miami, and Puerto Rico, the regions are still coping with the destruction that closed schools and universities, and displaced students and their families. In response to the ongoing recovery efforts, the Knight Foundation, Carnegie Corporation, and IBERIABANK have donated over \$400K to STU to help students displaced by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

In partnership with the Miami-based John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation allocated \$150,000 to support displaced Caribbean students continuing their studies at St. Thomas University. The Knight Foundation provided \$250,000, and IBERIABANK donated \$15,000.

In October, St. Thomas opened its doors to Caribbean students affected by the hurricanes and offered free room and board, and books. Currently the University has 68 students taking advantage of the opportunity.

"We are very grateful to these corporations for their support of displaced students," said Msgr. Franklyn Casale, president of St. Thomas University. "It's important that these students continue their higher education uninterrupted, and we are committed to helping them as much as possible."

# MSGR. CASALE'S RETIREMENT AND HONORS COLLEGE FUNDRAISING GALA

To honor Msgr. Casale's 24-year legacy, the Board of Trustees of St. Thomas hosted a retirement reception at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, Fla., on February 9, celebrating his years of presidential leadership. The reception also served as an introduction to the Msgr. Franklyn Casale Honors College and its \$5 million campaign. Leaders from across South Florida were in attendance, as well as close family and friends.



This Honors College is a critical component of our larger \$100 million capital campaign currently underway, the Blueprint for Leadership. The Blueprint for Leadership is a transformational strategic plan that is propelling the university forward which includes investments in students, faculty, innovative programs, and our campus facilities. From the beginning, an Honors College has been a cornerstone of the Blueprint, as it will drive the university to the next level by attracting and retaining academically gifted and ambitious students. It will create a more academically rigorous environment and influence high-caliber research and scholarship while allowing our students to access to a wide array of post-graduate opportunities.

For more information on how you can make a gift to the Honors College, please contact Gigi Laudisio, Associate Vice President of University Advancement, 305-628-6796, or [jlaudisio@stu.edu](mailto:jlaudisio@stu.edu).



# MAJOR GIVING SOCIETIES

St. Thomas University recently launched “Major Giving Societies” that recognize the University’s history and transitions both in South Florida and Cuba. These societies reflect cumulative giving of the University’s supporters and alumni. We are grateful for the generosity of these extraordinary donors. For more information, please visit our website at [www.stu.edu/advancement](http://www.stu.edu/advancement).

## MAJOR GIFT DONORS

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### **The Rev. Monsignor Franklyn M. Casale Society St. Thomas University’s longest serving president – from 1994-2018.**

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Catherine† and Herbert Yardley  
William Randolph Hearst Foundation

† Deceased

# YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK



Michelle Murch  
B.B.A in Sports Administration '17  
M.S. in Sports Administration  
Candidate '18

"St. Thomas gave me the opportunity to meet very successful people in the sports industry that started exactly where I did, which showed me anything is possible. I also got the chance to graduate with my bachelor's degree in three years and immediately start my master's degree; and through it all I was able to play softball."



Luisa Maria De Souza  
B.S. in Biology '13

"During my undergraduate career at St. Thomas University, I took advantage of the unique research opportunities at the School of Science, which reinforced my interest in medicine. From the moment I entered St. Thomas University I had a connection with the faculty and staff; a connection I wouldn't have had at a big university. If it weren't for the support of my teachers and staff members at St. Thomas, I wouldn't be what I am today – a medical student at Penn State."



Garrick Amedee  
B.S. in Biology '14  
M.B.A Candidate '18

"At STU, I feel like more than just another student. The teacher to student ratio allows for a more personalized experience. With the help of my professors, I was able to attain a competitive internship with the United States Department of Agriculture and compete in international finance competitions, which will give me an advantage when applying for full-time positions once I graduate with my MBA from STU."

Leana Ramos  
B.S. in Biology '17  
B.A. in English '17

"While at St. Thomas University, I participated in groundbreaking autism research. Research of that caliber isn't available to undergraduate students at other universities. It was exciting to work on something that could possibly help millions of people with autism. I credit the university's undergraduate research programs and its professors for the year-long fellowship I was recently awarded at the National Institute of Health (NIH)."



Adrian Escarate  
B.A. in Communication Arts '11  
M.A in Communication Arts  
candidate '18

"At St. Thomas I was given the opportunity to play tennis and receive academic and sports scholarships that covered 100 percent of my tuition. I was very fortunate because it weren't for St. Thomas I don't know if I would've kept studying. STU also provided a sense of community and unity unlike any other university. The professors know you by name and you form a strong bond with other students."



The Annual Fund is the primary means by which alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends provide financial support to the University. The fund provides money for academic scholarships, need-based scholarships, academic programs, campus improvements, teaching excellence and faculty developments. Make a donation today at [www.stu.edu/onlinegiving](http://www.stu.edu/onlinegiving).

# POINTS OF PRIDE

## ST. THOMAS LAW BEATS HARVARD, UC HASTINGS TO WIN NATIONAL COMPETITION

STU School of Law's trial team was crowned the 2018 ABA Labor and Employment Law National Trial Competition champions. The annual national competition, held in New Orleans, La., featured six law schools from around the country - Harvard Law School, Northwestern University School of Law, University of California Hastings College of Law, William and Mary Law School, Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, and St. Thomas University School of Law; all champions in their own regions. STU's team was represented by students Luis Garcia, Karina Harduvel, Jillian Tate, and Chanae Wood.

## SUN CONFERENCE COACH OF THE YEAR

STU's Head Men's Basketball Coach Patrick Gayle has been named the 2017-18 Sun Conference Coach of the Year! This season, Gayle led the Bobcats to the regular season Sun Conference championship and an automatic qualification into the NAIA Division II National Championships. Under the direction of Gayle, the Bobcats posted a 22-6 overall record and a 16-2 conference record, winning 13 of their last 14 games of the regular season. GO BOBCATS!

## BUSINESS GRADUATES TAKE THIRD AND FIRST PLACE IN GLOBAL INVESTMENT CHALLENGE

Five STU graduate students at the Gus Machado School of Business Fabian Heinrich, Tony Mamodaly, Elaine Pons, Luis Martin, and Garrick Amedee, came out in the top three at the Peeprade University Challenge, and first in the United States! The Peeprade Challenge is an investment competition that pits graduates from around the world against each other. Participating teams included top-tier business schools like Princeton, MIT, John Hopkins University, London Business School, University of South California, and several others.

## ST. THOMAS UNDERGRADUATE STEM RESEARCH STANDS OUT IN THE SOUTHEAST

Three undergraduate researchers from the School of Science, Technology, and Engineering Management (STEM) at St. Thomas University participated in the 50th Southeast Undergraduate Research Conference (SURC) at the University of Mississippi on February 3, where STU chemistry major Christine Curiaac garnered an Outstanding Poster Presentation Award.

## AUGUSTE NAMED HONORABLE MENTION ALL-AMERICAN

Junior point guard Samara Auguste was named an NAIA Division II Women's Basketball Honorable Mention All-American. Auguste, the Sun Conference Defensive Player of the Year each of the past two seasons and a First-Team All-Conference performer, led the Bobcats in scoring with 17.6 points-per-game to go along with a conference-best 3.74 assists-per-game.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WOMEN'S AND MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAMS!

Both the women's and men's team closed out an amazing 2017-18 season. The women finished the season with a 21-10 record and an NAIA National Championship Tournament appearance. And the men's team closed out an incredible season (23-8) in the second round of the NAIA national tournament.

## CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- In collaboration with PACT, students were involved in addressing concrete policy solutions for affordable housing, immigration, and gun violence in the community.
- At Carol City Middle School students provided over 2,000 hours of service at one of the state's most challenged middle schools.
- The STU/Haiti collaboration was been nominated for The Ashoka Innovation Award, one of the nation's top higher-education honors for social innovation.

## STUDENT DISPLACED BY STORM, STRUGGLES AND PERSEVERES WITH MUSIC

Communications major Jose Vargas, 22, came to the United States on Oct. 8 with a backpack full of all his belongings—two shirts and two pants—and a few days later he started class at St. Thomas University. Jose is one of the 68 students from Puerto Rico and other hurricane-battered Caribbean islands that chose to resume their education at St. Thomas.

Jose came to Miami looking for the basic necessities many of us take for granted: running water, electricity and a roof over our heads. But, he also came for the opportunity to continue his education and his music career.

Shortly after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, St. Thomas University began offering free room and board for college students in Puerto Rico and affected islands who wished to continue their studies, and regain a sense of normalcy.

Jose took advantage of this opportunity, which allowed him to refocus on his education and music. Jose credits his dad for the exposure to the music business, and church for the inspiration to pursue his music dreams.



But, church is where he found his voice. “I was sitting in church one day, and was inspired by the choir.”

Immediately after mass, he approached the priest and asked if he could sing with the choir. Soon after, he became a member of the choir and even learned to play several instruments including the piano, bass, and guitar.

His vocal and instrumental prowess can be heard on his first single “Tu lo Llenas Todo” available on Spotify, iTunes, and YouTube. His newest single “Se Termino,” an ode to the brokenhearted, will be playing on the radio! He wrote “Se Termino” in his dorm room at St. Thomas’ in less than two days.

You can catch the video for “Se Termino” on his YouTube channel of various social media platforms, just search for @vargasrhodes.

## ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY WELCOMES STUDENTS FROM PUERTO RICO AND VIRGIN ISLANDS

St. Thomas University faculty and staff officially welcomed 68 students from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands on Wednesday, Oct. 18. The university kicked off its welcoming celebrations with a lot of laughter, traditional Caribbean foods like mofongo and arroz con gandules, and a lot of hope for the future.

Shortly after Hurricanes Irma and Maria, St. Thomas University began offering free room and board, and free books through the spring 2018 semester for college students in Puerto Rico and affected islands who wished to continue their studies. Metz Culinary Management provides free meal plans; and Follett Corp. provides free books.



This ongoing program has been extended to our 68 displaced Caribbean students into the Fall 2018. In the short-term this is not only allowing them to continue their education, but it is also a source of reassurance for their families. By taking these students in, STU has helped these students keep on course to graduate.

“Our main objective is to provide affected college students continuity in their education,” said Dr. Irma Becerra, provost of St. Thomas University. “After the devastation they’ve been through, continuing their studies is one way to get back into the routine, and to feel a sense of normalcy.”

One displaced Puerto Rican student, Rosamari Palerm Nadal, says the university and its faculty and staff have been very accommodating.

“St. Thomas made my transition so easy,” said Rosamari, a senior majoring in biology. “The professors helped me catch up and understand the material they have already covered. Words can’t express how thankful I am for everything St. Thomas has done for me and the hard work its staff and faculty have put into seeing me succeed.”

Alongside of the customary scholarships, STU is providing a 50 percent Disaster Relief Scholarships to help alleviate financial burdens.

If you would like to help contribute to the ongoing success of these students, please contact Gigi Laudisio, Associate Vice President of University Advancement, [jlaudisio@stu.edu](mailto:jlaudisio@stu.edu), 305-628-6796.

# ALUMNI NEWS

## ANDY ELISBURG OF MIAMI HEAT INDUCTED INTO BOBCAT SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Andy Elisburg '89, the Senior Vice President, Basketball Operations/General Manager of the Miami HEAT, was inducted into the St. Thomas University Bobcat Sports Hall of Fame on Sunday, Nov. 5, at the University's ninth annual Stone Crab Dinner for athletics.

Elisburg, who served as a student manager for the Bobcat Men's Basketball team, is a 1989 graduate of St. Thomas University's world renowned Sports Administration program.

Elisburg joined the Miami HEAT in its inaugural season while completing an internship to fulfill his graduation requirement toward his sports administration degree. He has been with the HEAT ever since where he has been a part of three NBA championships while rising up the ranks to his current position.



## MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS PANEL AND NETWORKING BREAKFAST



On Friday, March 16, more than 80 alumni, students, faculty, staff, and guests from our business community attended the "Let's Make a Deal: Insights into Mergers and Acquisitions" seminar and networking breakfast on campus. Our expert panel included Gabriel Caballero Jr., Esq. '06, Partner at Holland & Knight LLP; Board of Trustees member Michael Fay, Principal, Managing Director at Avison Young; Board of Trustees Vice Chair Jorge Rico '86, Managing Partner at MBF Healthcare Partners; Board of Trustees member Mario Trueba '80, Regional President South Florida at IBERIABANK; and our moderator was Dr. Somnath Bhattacharya, Dean of the Gus Machado School of Business. The panelists discussed best practices from up-front due diligence, to deal making, to post-merger integration activities.

## PRESIDENT'S FAREWELL ALUMNI RECEPTION



On Friday, January 26, 2018, alumni and friends gathered to reconnect with each other at the President's Farewell Alumni Reception, while bidding farewell to Monsignor Casale after a 24-year leadership career at STU. Please visit [www.facebook.com/STUAlumniAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/STUAlumniAssociation) to view additional event photos.

## STAY IN TOUCH & SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Have you been promoted? Earned an advanced degree? Been honored for professional or personal achievements? Added to the family? We want to be in the know! Visit us at [www.stu.edu/alumni/classnotes](http://www.stu.edu/alumni/classnotes), email [alumni@stu.edu](mailto:alumni@stu.edu), or call us at 305-628-6601 to share your news!

Have you moved or changed your email recently? Please visit [www.stu.edu/alumniupdate](http://www.stu.edu/alumniupdate) to ensure we have your most recent contact information, and be sure to tell a friend to update their contact information too!

Like us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/STUAlumniAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/STUAlumniAssociation)

# ALUMNI NEWS

## ALUMNI FRIDAYS CAMPUS TOURS

**WHETHER YOU'VE BEEN GONE FIVE YEARS OR 50, WE INVITE YOU TO COME BACK AND TAKE A TOUR AND SEE WHAT'S NEW!**

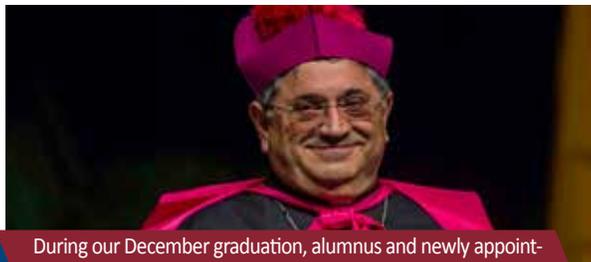
The STU Office of Alumni Relations invites alumni to come "home" for a personalized campus tour! This one-hour campus tour is a great way to revisit your past, learn about changes on campus, and explore the University's progress. Alumni Fridays campus tours are conducted on the second and third Friday of each month from 9 to 10 a.m., or from 2 to 3 p.m. To request a tour, please send an email at least two weeks in advance with your name, phone number, and total number of tour attendees to Lorena Hidalgo, Director of Alumni Relations at lhidalgo@stu.edu.

## ALUMNI & FRIENDS RECEPTION



Alumni and friends gathered at Lea Wine Bar in New York City on Thursday, April 12, to mingle with old classmates, and network with fellow Bobcat alumni in the Tri-State area.

## CLASS NOTES



During our December graduation, alumnus and newly appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Miami Bishop Enrique Delgado '15, PhD in practical theology, served as the commencement speaker.]

1968

**Joseph Cooney**, B.A. English, retired as a human resources manager from the University of Pennsylvania. He is currently an independent consultant doing organization development and leadership development work. He is a proud parent and grandparent.

1976

**Robert D'Arco**, B.A. Political Science, retired as human resource professional. He has been married to Patty for 34 years, and they have two children RJ and Melissa, and two grandchildren Gianluca and Rosalia.

1988

**Bill Chaves**, B.A. Sports Administration, is now the athletic director at University of North Dakota (UND).

1992

**Martha Ayerdis**, B.A. Criminal Justice, is now the director of human resources at ISACO International in Miami Lakes, Fla.

1995

**Elizabeth Leal Izquierdo**, B.B.A. Accounting, is a COA and a licensed risk manager. She was a CFO /COO with HCA for 12 years, and then CEO at HealthSouth Rehabilitation in Miami, Fla. for eight years. She is currently a Healthcare Consultant at LGR Holdings.

2001

**Robert E. Constant**, M.S. Sports Administration, has written the first children's book about the historic Tuskegee University, where he received his undergraduate education. "Hey Tuskegee!" follows two siblings as they relive the accomplishments of iconic African-Americans, including the university's founder, Booker T. Washington. Read more at <https://www.robconstant.com/>

2005

**Kimberly Sudakow**, J.D. Law, accepted a trial attorney position with Robert A. Ades & Associates, P.C., in Maryland, specializing in Civil Litigation.

2007

**Marjorie Constant**, B.A. Healthcare Services, is pursuing a master's degree in nursing to become a nurse practitioner.

2008

**Mariam Yanes**, J.D. Law, was elevated to partner at Miller, Kagan, Rodriguez, & Silver in Coral Gables, Fla., specializing in workers compensation law.

2009

**Schuyler Smith**, J.D. Law, was promoted to partner with Hamilton, Miller, & Birthisel, LLP, in Miami, Fla.

**Rachel Canfield**, J.D. Law, accepted a senior associate position with Farrell, Patel, Jomarron & Lopez in Miami, Fla., specializing in all stages of litigation and appeals.



## NEW YORK GIANTS HIRE A BOBCAT AS GENERAL MANAGER

**David Gettleman '86**, M.S. Sports Administration, the former general manager for the Jacksonville Panthers was named the New York Giants' general manager in January. He has been a part of six Super Bowl teams, including three winners. He was with Buffalo in 1990 and 1991, Denver in 1997 and the Giants in 2000, 2007 and 2011. The Broncos and the 2007 and 2011 Giants both won the championship. GO BOBCATS!

2009

**Dolores Hanley McDiarmid**, M.A. Pastoral Ministries, has joined the Xavier Society for the Blind's Advisory Group to help select content for publications in braille and audio, and to advise on the best use of technology and potential new initiatives. She has dedicated her life to the disabled, and meets monthly with a small group for people who are blind/visually impaired called the Circle of Love.

2010

**LaVenia Jackson**, M.S. Special Education '08 and M.S. Educational Leadership '10, was chosen as a "High Impact Teacher" in the state of Florida, which highlights teachers who are highly effective in their areas of instruction. She also completed a doctorate degree in the area of organizational leadership.

**Luis Morales**, M.S. Sports Administration, is the director of international operations and administration for the St. Louis Cardinals.

**Ashley Arias**, J.D. Law, accepted an Associate Attorney position with Vernis & Bowling in Miami.

2014

**Roy Coley**, B.A. Organizational Leadership, was appointed as the new Public Works Director for the City of Miami Beach in April 2018.

2016

**Kevin Bryant**, J.D. Law, accepted an associate attorney position with The Tarich Law Firm, P.A., in Miami, Fla., specializing in corporate and real estate law.

2016

**Kevin Bryant**, J.D. Law, accepted an associate attorney position with The Tarich Law Firm, P.A., in Miami, Fla., specializing in corporate and real estate law.

2017

**Ben Ancheff**, B.A. Sports Administration '16 and M.S. Sports Administration '17, accepted a position with Major League Baseball as a Replay Administrator based with MLB's Advanced Media branch in New York City.

**Jose Rohaidy**, J.D. Law, accepted an attorney position with Zumpano, Patricios & Winker, P.A., in Coral Gables, Fla.

## IN MEMORIAM

1968

**Raymond "Peter" Gleeson**, B.A. History, died suddenly on April 2, 2017. He was a graduate of Malvern Prep and found his way to Biscayne College due to the Augustinian connection. Peter began a career as a substitute teacher, first in Florida, and later in Philadelphia. He went back to school and trained to become a respiratory therapist, a vocation he pursued until he retired a few years ago from his last position at Mercy Hospital in West Philadelphia.

1968

**Robert Kalapis**, B.A. Business, passed away on January 29, 2018. He was interred at the Houston National Cemetery in Houston, Texas. Bob was in the Army and stationed in Germany during the 1970s.



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