



The First Academy  
2667 Bruton Boulevard  
Orlando, FL 32805  
(407) 206-8600 Phone

# The First Academy Newsletter



2008/2009 School Year  
Week of January 12th

Issue 20

Micah 6:8 Do Justly...Love Mercy...Walk Humbly

## A Word From The Headmaster

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### My Coach of the Year Nomination

He invited prison inmates to play against his high school football team! That's right. Coach Hogan of Faith Christian School in Grapevine, TX invited Gainesville State High School to play against his football team. Gainesville State is a prison for high school boys in Texas. A dangerous concept some argued. An overzealous football coach some claimed. But he is my nomination for Coach of the Year!

He told his players and the school family that he wanted to send this message to these incarcerated teens, "You are just as valuable as any other person on planet Earth." When the Gainesville Tornadoes got off the team bus at the FCS stadium, they were shocked. The banners to run through were for them - not the home team. The FCS cheerleaders were cheering for the prisoners - not the home team. The visitor bleachers were packed with FCS fans who cheered for each convict by name. One writer said, "It was a strange experience for boys who most people cross the road to avoid."

When the teams gathered at mid-field for a prayer following the game, a Gainesville State Player named Isaiah volunteered to pray. "Lord, I don't know how this happened, so I don't know how to say thank you, but I never would've known there was so many people in the world that cared about us."

As the Tornadoes boarded the bus, that would carry them back to prison, each player carried a care package that included hamburgers, fries, a drink, a letter from an FCS player and a Bible. Most importantly, they carried a memory of a Christian coach who loved them like Jesus.

St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the gospel everyday . . . and when necessary use words." Coach Hogan's actions spoke louder than his words. Way to go Coach!

Blessings,

Steve D. Whitaker, Ph.D.

Headmaster

EXCERPT FROM "HOGAN'S HUDDLE"

Attitude

"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he..." Proverbs 23:7. "Circumstances do not make the man; they reveal him to himself." This is a quote by author and philosopher James Allen. The concept that human beings have the ability to choose their attitudes, perspectives and actions- regardless of circumstances- has been around for thousands of years.

Dr. Victor Frankl, survivor of three grim years at Auschwitz and other Nazi prisons has recorded his observations on life in Hitler's camps: "We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others and giving away their last piece of bread. They have been few in number but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

William James said, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind." If your attitude is not what it should be, you can change it, and by doing so, you will change your life-for you will make it possible for you to be what you want to be! More people fail through faulty mental attitudes than in any other way. Life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I respond to it. With attitude being so important, the remarkable thing is, we get to choose the attitude we will embrace every day!

ONE HEART, Kris Hogan

### Special Announcements

- Prospective Parent Open House - Sunday, Jan. 11th 2-4
- January 16th Early Dismissal 12:15 Teacher Workday
- January 19th Student Holiday
- January 20th New US Ribbon Cutting 7:55 am

## Calendar of Events

Monday, Jan. 12	Tuesday, Jan. 13	Wednesday, Jan. 14	Thursday, Jan. 15	Friday, Jan. 16	Saturday, Jan. 17
MS Geography Bee 8:00 am E2 215-225	MS Parent Book Club 8:30 am E2 215-225	MS SGA Meeting 11:45	LS Chapel 8:40 Faith Hall	Early Dismissal 12:15 pm	No Announcements
11th Grade Guidance Meeting for Parents 9:00 am Henry Chapel		Senior Prayer with Pastor Uth 12:00 WC	US/MS Chapel 9:45 Faith Hall		<u>Sunday, Jan. 18</u>
TFA Breakfast Club 9:45 am US Conference Room		Friends of the Library Meeting 1:00 pm			ACSI Student Conference

## All School News

### PLANNING AHEAD?



The 2009-2010 School Calendar will be posted on the TFA Website Monday, January 12 under "TFA Community".

### PROSPECTIVE PARENT OPEN HOUSE

**JANUARY 11TH 2-4 PM**

Do you know a family who would be a great addition to the TFA family? Share your Royal pride by inviting them to attend a Prospective Parent Open House on Sunday, January 11 from 2-4 p.m. This is a good opportunity for prospective students and parents to get a glimpse of life at TFA, tour campus, see our new Upper School building, and meet faculty and administrators. Through our Royal Ambassador program, you will receive a tuition discount (applied to 2009-10 tuition) for each family you refer that attends Open House. There are three ways you can save money on your child's tuition through the Royal Ambassador program:

\*Refer a future Royal who attends our Open House and receive a \$100 tuition credit. \*Host an in-home meeting, inviting future Royal families and receive a \$500 tuition credit.

\*Refer a family who enrolls their child (ren) and earn a \$1000 tuition credit.

If you have any questions about Open House or about the Royal Ambassador program, please contact the Admissions Office at 407-206-8602. Thank you for being a Royal Ambassador!

### HONORS ABOUND

Our own Marsha Gegerson, Upper School Visual Arts Department, was nominated by the Association of Christian Schools International Florida Region, for representation as Teacher of the Year! Marsha's attributes include initiation of the National Art Honor Society TFA Charter in 2005, as well as a lengthy awards and honors in the professional art arena including submission in Washington DC's Smithsonian Museum permanent collection. She has been a Christian for 36 years, with roots in Judaism. She continues to mentor and model Christ's love of Creation through Visual Arts. Dr. Whitaker states that "Marsha's first and foremost goal has always been to encourage students to place God first in every day living and to encourage them to develop artistic and visual communication skills. As a result, Marsha had had a tremendous impact to the students of The First Academy." Congratulations Marsha Gegerson!

### NEW US RIBBON CEREMONY

**JANUARY 20th 7:55 AM**

The Z 88 Radio van will be joining us for this fantastic morning! On January, 20th at 7:55 a.m., we will celebrate the opening of the new Upper School Building with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

**Please join us for this great event.**

### FOUNDER'S DAY CHAPEL

**FEBRUARY 5TH 10:00 AM**

You won't want to miss this year's Founder's Day Chapel as we honor one of our treasured TFA Supporters. Please come out and join us. We'd love to see our Parents and Grandparents

### SPRING MUSICAL ANNOUNCEMENT

TFA is excited to announce that this year's Spring Musical will be "The Sound of Music". Auditions for 7th – 12th Grades will be held this semester.

### LIBRARY ANNOUNCEMENT

The library computer lab will be closed for professional development on the afternoon of January 27th. The library and the computers in the central area will still be open for your use.

### BOXTOPS & CAMPBELL'S LABELS

The First Academy is collecting box tops for the Box Tops, for Education Program, as well as Campbell's labels. Please help support your school by taking the time to cut out these items and bring them to the box in the Lower School, or MS/US office. For a list of eligible items you can go to: <http://www.boxtops4education.com/AboutBoxTops/Products.aspx> for box tops or to <http://www.labelsforeducation.com/eligibleproductsEN.aspx> for labels. If you have any questions, please contact, Don Baker at 407-230-7456

### KINDERGARTEN SCREENING FOR 2009-2010

Do you have a prospective TK or Kindergarten student or do you know of someone who needs to be a part of our TFA family? The Admissions Office is currently accepting TK and Kindergarten applications for the 2009-2010 school year. The first screening dates are scheduled for Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Yvonne or Janie in the Admissions Office (407-206-8602) for more information.

### 2009 LEE JANZEN GOLF AND GALA AUCTION

**MARCH 7 & 9**

Don't miss out on your opportunity to support the school, we have had many of our great parents calling with wonderful donations for the Gala Auction to support The First Academy. We have received vacation home packages, NASCAR tickets, SEC & ACC Football tickets, Golf Packages, Passes to Parks, Beach Condos, Restaurant Certificates, Spa Vouchers and some really big ticket items (We'll surprise you later).

It's not too late! We'd love to hear from you. Give Kathleen Pittman a call in the Advancement Office at 407.206.8643 or just stop by with any item donations that you would like to give. February 4th is our Item Deadline! Thanks for your support!

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

During athletic events in our gymnasium, please refrain from letting your students play in the gym lobby. We need to keep a safe environment for all our guests. Thank you.

### MIDDLE AND UPPER SCHOOL FINE ARTS

Boxes, boxes and more boxes! If you search hard enough, you will glimpse students in the art rooms as they continue to share the studios with over 110 boxes of equipment and materials that has been packed for our move to the new studios. No! You will not hear a word of complaint, as we are eager to be blessed by our gracious God and parents to move to a state of the art (literally) facility. Mr. Hensley has spent innumerable hours, detailing and planning our arts facility with Warren Eck. The main thing is that it is all for the glory of God, the Ultimate Creator. When our students comprehend the concept that He has put His creativity into each one of them, and their teachers help them connect to this truth, we see thrilling results with your children. Most of all, they get a deeper glimpse of God. Again, thank you, each and every one who made this dream a reality! - Mrs. Gegerson & Mrs. Collins

## Upper School News

### TESTING SCHEDULE FOR SPRING

Parents, in an effort to more efficiently serve students and teacher schedules we have reworked the testing days for the spring semester. The test days for the spring semester are as follows:

Course	Days For Testing
English & Math	Monday, Tuesday
History & Science	Thursday, Friday
Fine Arts, Foreign Lang.	Wednesday
PE & Bible	Wednesday

Teachers of these subjects will only have tests on these days. This will ensure availability for test days for teachers as well as better protect students from having multiple tests on any given day. Please make sure your student is aware of the change.

### GUIDANCE UPDATE

#### Financing a College Education in 2009

TFA and other local private high school Senior parents have been invited to take advantage of this great opportunity to learn about financing for college education. Lake Highland will be hosting a Financial Aid Night on Thursday, January 15th at 7 pm-8:30 pm. Carey Thompson, Vice President for Enrollment & Student Planning Services at Centre College will be presenting. Please take advantage of this event!

Lake Highland Preparatory School  
Harriet Coleman Center for the Arts  
901 North Highland Avenue  
Orlando, Florida 32803

#### IMPORTANT GUIDANCE UPDATE

#### JUNIORS & PARENT MEETING

On Monday, January 12th, there will be a meeting for Juniors and their parents in Henry Chapel at 9:00 am

### UPCOMING EVENTS FOR TWLOHA

January 15<sup>th</sup>, Thursday...Eat dinner at Kirkman Shoppes Chick-Fil-A. 10% to TWLOHA

February 21<sup>st</sup>, Saturday 10am-4:00pm...Get your car washed by club members at Kirkman Shoppes Chick-Fil-A. Suggested donation \$5 to support TWLOHA

For more information you may contact:  
Cynthia Collins-faculty sponsor or Tamara Allen-Club President

### UPPER SCHOOL BUILDING UPDATE

This past week furniture was delivered to the first floor, new band instruments arrived as did new computers for the Media lab and the Journalism classrooms. Currently, we are still on schedule to allow teachers to move into the new building over Jan. 15-19. Upper School students and families will be able to participate in a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on January 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:55 am at the flag pole in front of the new US Building. Be sure to mark your calendar to join Dr. Whitaker and the TFA Board members as we celebrate this historic moment.

Micah 6:8

“Do justly, love mercy  
and walk humbly.”

## Middle School News

### PARENT BOOK CLUB

Carol Grosshans, MS Principal, will be discussing a practical guide for parents to prepare our teens to triumph over temptations related to things such as peer pressure, attitude, appearance, mediocrity, and dating to name a few. Parenting Today's Adolescent: Helping Your Child Avoid the Traps of the Pre-Teen and Early Teen Years by Dennis Rainey will be used. The club will meet on January 13, 20, 27 and February 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the E2 building, Second Floor.

### EARLY DISMISSAL

Students will be dismissed at 12:15 on Friday, January 16. There will not be aftercare for grades 6-12 on that day. Please make arrangements for your student to be picked up by the early dismissal time.

### GEOGRAPHY BEE

Selected students from each grade level will be competing in a Geography Bee on Monday, January 12 beginning at 8:00 a.m. in E2 215-225. The student finishing first will have an opportunity to compete on a State level through a written test. You are welcome to come and observe the vast knowledge of our MS students.

### ROYAL ACADEMY OF THE ARTS

We are currently accepting registration forms for Session II of RAA after school classes. Most classes begin the week of January 19th and run for 10 weeks. There are class size limits and registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Courses:

Art Exploration for the Budding Artist (3-5)  
Improvisational Comedy for Theater (5-8)  
Author! Author! Chapter 2 (4-6)  
Etiquette for Young Ladies (4th – 7th)  
Beginning Orchestral Strings (3-6)  
Kids Cook! (K – 6th)  
Cool Creative Ceramics (4-6)  
Musical Theater (4th – 6th)  
Discovering Your Voice (4-8)  
Music for Little Mozarts (K – 2nd)  
Guitar for Beginners (5-8)  
Wearable Art (4th – 6th)  
Science Club (3rd – 5th)

Detailed course descriptions and the registration form can be found at the TFA web site: [www.thefirstacademy.org](http://www.thefirstacademy.org). Look under Arts and go to Royal Academy of the Arts. Registration forms may be turned into the LS receptionist, attention: Mrs. Debi Savage,

### SCHOOL HOLIDAY

Monday, January 19 will be a student holiday. School will resume on Tuesday, 1/20.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to our Middle School students who were recognized for their composition talents during the *Stories of the Season* sponsored by the Southwest Orlando Bulletin.

### RUNNER UP

Elyssa Mapple – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

### HONORABLE MENTION

Amy Oldham – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Stevie Whitaker – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Scout Westerskov – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Maka'ela Murphy – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Thomas McGlinchey – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Cami Wight – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

### SAVE THE DATE

Please join us on Wednesday, January 21 at 1:30 p.m. in Henry Chapel for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Awards. This is a great opportunity for us to focus on our Middle School students' awesome accomplishments.

### SPRING MUSICAL ANNOUNCEMENT

TFA is excited to announce that this year's Spring Musical will be "The Sound of Music". Auditions for 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grades will be held this semester.



Middle School faculty and staff would like to express their sincere appreciation and gratitude for all the wonderful gifts, good food and well wishes during the Christmas season. We feel so blessed to be a part of such a wonderful and generous family called TFA.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL AWARD WINNERS



From left to right: Back row: Amy Oldham, Thomas McGlinchey, Elyssa Mapple and Cami Wight. Front Row: Stevie Whitaker, Scout Westerskov, and Maka'ela Murphy

## Lower School News

### FIRST GRADE

First Grade is studying things God created on the 5th and 6th day of creation – ANIMALS OF ALL KINDS! We will be going to Sea World on January 30th to hear from their animal experts. We will be learning about the interesting ways God created animals and their habitats.

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### 3rd GRADE LS CHAPEL 1/15

Mrs. Dinkler's 3rd grade class will be presenting in chapel on Thursday, January 15. They will be performing several short skits on how students at TFA can demonstrate character before career.

### 5TH GRADE FIELD TRIP

To supplement our reading unit on Heritage, the Fifth Grade students will travel to Wycliffe/Wordspring in Orlando for a field trip on Friday, January 30. While there, students will learn how God's Word carries hope around the world to people in their own language and how the Bible has been preserved and shared throughout history. We look forward to this exciting day!

### TFA YOUTH BASKETBALL

Youth Sports Basketball games will begin on January 24<sup>th</sup>. That's a change from the previous date of the 17<sup>th</sup>.

### 4TH GRADE CHAPEL PRESENTATION 1/22

Miss Henry's fourth grade class will be presenting chapel on Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> in Faith Hall at 8:30 A.M. We will be performing a short skit that will be focusing on the theme of character before career, which coordinates with one of the elements from our mission statement for TFA. All parents are welcome to come see the presentation, and join in on the fun! Hope to see you there!

### ROYAL ACADEMY OF THE ARTS

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## The Arts

### HONORS ABOUND

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## Arts & Media Council

### BLUE PATRON \$50

Priority Seating to all arts events (with RSVP), Recognition in printed programs

### GOLD PATRON \$100

All items for Blue Patron and Half Price Admission to all TFA Arts Productions, **excluding food events**

### ARTS PATRON \$250

All items for Blue & Gold Patron and Complimentary Family Admission to one Fine Arts Production food event with RSVP

### ROYAL PATRON \$500

All items for Blue Patron and Complimentary Family Admission to ALL Fine Arts Productions, including food events

Call Billie Barr for more info: 407.206.8659

## Sports

### TFA SPORTS SCHEDULE

#### Monday, January 12

Girls JV Basketball vs. Lake Highland @ 6:00 PM (Home)

Boys 6th Grade Basketball vs. Pine Castle @ 6:30 PM (@ Lake Highland)

Boys 8th Grade Basketball vs. Lake Highland/ Trinity Prep @ 6:00/8:00 PM (@ Pine Castle)

Girls 8th Grade Basketball Tournament Semi-Finals (TBA) (@ Trinity Prep)

Boys Middle School Soccer Play-Off Game (TBA)

Girls Varsity Soccer vs. Riverbend Academy @ 5:00 PM (Home)

#### Tuesday, January 13

Boys/Girls JV/Var. Basketball vs. Pine Castle @ 3:30/5:00/6:30/8:00 PM (Away)

Boys 6th/7th Grade Basketball Scrimmage @ 5:30 PM (Home)

Girls 8th Grade Basketball Championship (TBA) @ Trinity Prep

Girls 7th Grade Basketball Championship @ 4:00 PM (@ Master's)

Boys Middle School Soccer Play-Off Game (TBA)

Boys Varsity Soccer vs. TFA Leesburg @ 7:00 PM (Home)

#### Wednesday, January 14

Boys 7th Grade Basketball vs. Lake Highland @ 6:30 PM (@ Lake Highland)

#### Thursday, January 15

Girls JV Basketball vs. Oveido @ 7:00 PM (Away)

Girls Varsity basketball vs. Wheaton Academy @ 6:00 PM (Home)

Boys Middle School Soccer Championship (TBA)

Boys Varsity Soccer vs. Father Lopez @ 5:00 PM (Away)

Girls Varsity Soccer vs. Orangewood @ 5:00 PM (Home)

#### Friday, January 16

Boys JV/Var. Basketball vs. Florida Air @ 4:30/7:30 PM (Away)

Girls Varsity Basketball vs. Florida Air @ 6:00 PM (Away)

Boys 7th Grade basketball vs. The Christ School @ 5:30 PM (@ The Christ School)

Boys Varsity Soccer vs. Lake Mary Prep @ 6:00 PM (Away)

#### Saturday, January 17

6th Grade Boys Basketball vs. Trinity Prep @ 12:00 PM (@ Lake Highland)

8th Grade Boys Basketball vs. Lake Mary Prep @ 8:00 AM (@ Pine Castle)

Girls Varsity Soccer vs. Lakeland Christian @ 11:00 AM (Away)

### LACROSSE TRYOUT & PRACTICE INFO

Parent/Athlete meeting on Monday, January 19th @ 5:30 PM in TFA Weightroom. Any player grades 7- 10th grade should attend. Practices will begin on Tuesday Jan 20th at 4:00 PM.

Week 1 @ PSAC

Monday: meeting 5:30 weight room

Tuesday: 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Wednesday: 3:30 – 5:30 PM

Thursday: 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Friday: 4:00- 6:00 PM

Saturday: 9:00-11:00 PM

This First week of practice will be considered a tryout to see which players will be placed on the JV Team and which players will play only on 7-8th grade team. There will be no cuts, although any athlete looking to play should be fully committed and ready for the rigors of this sport. If you are interested in playing and have not yet spoken to Coach Oliver, please do so at once, prior to the meeting on January 19th. You will be required to purchase some of the equip-

### BASEBALL TRYOUTS

Monday, January 19 3:00 - 7:00 PM

(Varsity Only)

Tuesday, January 20 3:45 - 6:15 PM (JV & Varsity)

Wednesday, January 21 3:15 - 5:30 PM (JV & Varsity)

Friday, January 22 3:45 - 6:15 PM (JV & Varsity)

Monday, January 26 3:45 - 5:30 PM (Middle School)

Tuesday, January 27 3:45 - 5:30 PM (Middle School)

Wednesday, January 28 3:00 - 5:00 PM (Middle School)

### GIRLS VARSITY SOFTBALL TRY-OUTS

JAN 12 - 3:45-5:30

JAN 13 - 3:45-5:30

JAN 14 - 3:00-5:00

Tryouts for the Lady Royal softball team are the week of January 12. Try-outs will be held at the softball field at the Athletic Complex. Players will need to attend each try-out session and will need to wear cleats and have a softball glove. We will only be fielding a varsity team this year, as the numbers were not present to have a Junior High team. Middle school girls may try-out for the varsity squad but the coaches will decide if their skills are sufficient for the varsity squad.

### FOR OUR SAFETY

Parents and Students. For your safety and the safety of all sports spectators, please refrain from going on the gymnasium court floor during half time and after basketball games. We do not want any of our children, parents or grandparents to be injured.

### TFA YOUTH BASKETBALL

Youth Sports Basketball games will begin on January 24<sup>th</sup>. That's a change from the previous date of the 17<sup>th</sup>.

### BOYS AND GIRLS TENNIS TRYOUTS

Monday, February 2 -- 3:30-5:30 PM

Tuesday, February 3 -- 3:30-5:30 PM

Wednesday, February 4 -- 2:45-4:00 PM

Thursday, February 5 -- 3:30-5:30 PM

The Boys and Girls Tennis Teams are open to all middle school and upper school students. Tryouts are at the Disney Family Tennis Courts on campus. Bring appropriate shoes, athletic wear, and tennis racquet.

The varsity team will be announced on Friday, February 6th. Team practice will begin the following week on February 9th. Varsity practices and matches are Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays during the season. If there is enough interest in a middle school Junior Varsity team, we will look into setting it up.

For more information, please contact the Varsity Coach, Mr. Earl Noffsinger (EarlNoffsinger@thefirstacademy.org).

### TRACK & FIELD INFORMATION

Track pre-season conditioning has begun, and runs daily from 3:30pm - 5:00pm. The team meets at the track on M, W, and F, and in the weight room on T and Th. There will be no technique training conducted since this is not allowed by FHSAA during pre-season, but cardio-vascular and strength training will be. If you plan to run track this spring and are not involved in a winter sport, please come out and join us. The season starts on January 26, but there will be a work day (Field Day) on Saturday, January 10 at 9:00am to prepare the track (mats, hurdles, sand pits, etc).

### The Mission Statement of The First Academy

The First Academy prepares children for life as Christian leaders who choose character before career, wisdom beyond scholarship, service before self, and participation as a way of life.

### God's Plan of Salvation

**Admit** - "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Pray: Lord, I admit that I am a sinner in need of a Savior.

**Believe** - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Pray: Lord, I believe that Jesus died and shed His blood for my sins. I believe this in my heart and not just my head.

**Call** - "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" Romans 10:13). Pray: Lord, I call upon You to save me from my sins. I confess and repent of my sins. I know that Your Son, Jesus paid my debt on the cross-a debt I could never pay despite all my good works-and I thankfully accept Your gift of eternal life in Heaven that His death makes possible (Acts 2:38-39).

If you have any comments or questions regarding the TFA Today, please contact the Advancement office at 407-206-8643 or email [kathleenpittman@thefirstacademy.org](mailto:kathleenpittman@thefirstacademy.org)

"The First Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin." For admissions information, please call 407-206-8602 or visit our website