

August 2015 • Vol. 43 No. 8

To view past issues of **The Pen**, visit
www.pinellascounty.org/hr/publications.htm.



Whit Blanton, Executive Director,
 Pinellas Planning Council / Metro-
 politan Planning Organization

Whit Blanton: New Director for a Newly Unified Planning Agency

it's been everything I'd hoped it would be. We have a dedicated, hard-working and very smart staff that is committed to the new role we'll be playing. In my first weeks on the job, I've been working with them to align distinct organizational cultures, roles and procedures into a truly unified agency with a focus on important Countywide transportation and redevelopment objectives.

I believe our mission is to align Countywide resources with a compelling vision to improve our community and the Tampa Bay region. I've spent the first several weeks getting to know the communities and agencies we work with as partners, and I'm impressed with the strong support for planning and commitment to work collaboratively. We have a responsibility to hold up a mirror to Pinellas County as an independent champion to spotlight key challenges and solutions to achieve positive outcomes from our opportunities. We have to preserve and strengthen the qualities that make us distinct. That takes thoughtful planning, cultivating strong partnerships, setting clear goals and priorities, and communicating effectively.

We're evolving as an agency, as a County and as a region. Change can cause anxiety, but it is constant. We can choose to resist it, embrace it, or work to successfully adapt, but we can't deny it. The past is not a template for the future, and that is particularly true with our organization. In the coming months, we will be unveiling a new brand identity befitting our unified agency mission, roles and responsibilities. We are developing a communications strategy designed to sharpen our focus and enhance understanding of our key eco-

When I decided to leave a successful consulting business that I helped form 16 years ago to become the first executive director of the newly unified Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) and Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), I knew I was in for some big changes. The first change was relocating from the Orlando region where I've lived since college. Through my work as a consultant in Pinellas County on various transportation, redevelopment and neighborhood plans since 1989 and many family vacations, I had fallen in love with the County's natural beauty, diversity and eclectic communities. After a short search, I found a beautiful location in Dunedin, on St. Joseph Sound near the Pinellas Trail, allowing me to bike to work and be part of that community until we are ready to sell our Winter Park home and find a more permanent residence.

The next major transition began on June 22nd, my first job in the public sector since a long-ago internship. I took the job because of the opportunity to provide leadership and make a difference in the County and the region. Thus far,

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ANNOUNCING: We now bring you the **Pen Extra** on a monthly basis. When you turn to the back pages of the **Pen** you'll find timely announcements of graduations, births, obituaries, want ads, awards, accomplishments, and more. It's our personal side and it's news you want to get even more often. We are happy to bring it to you.

nomic, mobility and quality of life issues and opportunities.

Transportation funding remains the most effective way to guide growth and shape development form, but we live in an era of tight budgets, making funding increasingly competitive. We have an incredibly complex environment in which to achieve quality transportation and redevelopment, and it takes strong partnerships to get things done. Our policymakers need a good sense of the outcomes and economic implications of their decisions, our neighborhoods and communities need to believe that their values matter, and the development community needs a predictable process and clear expectations.

I am excited to be part of Pinellas County and to help guide its future. It is a great place to live, work and play, and we have a lot to accomplish together.

Employee Spotlight

Rosa Garcia

Procurement Analyst Coordinator
Purchasing Department



What is something that only a few people know about you?

originally graduated from fashion design school in 2003. Shortly after, I joined the US Navy and got assigned to the USS Essex (LHD2) in Sasebo, Japan where I worked in supply and logistics. The Navy gave me the opportunity to visit different

countries and to learn from their cultures and their people. It was an eye opening experience that made me realize how fortunate we are to live in our country.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most?

The aspect I enjoy the most is that every day comes

with a new challenge and an opportunity to make a difference. Every purchase, regardless of the cost, is essential for the operations of the departments we serve. To me, it is very rewarding to know that the efforts of my department contribute to the success of the County's daily operations.

What piece of advice would you give to a new employee?

I think that having a positive attitude allows us to cope better with the different challenges in the workplace. A positive attitude can help us to adapt to the demands of a new working place and help us to find ways to improve and to give one's best, which I believe leads to success.

When you retire, what do you hope people will say about you at your retirement party?

When I retire, in the far, far future ... I hope people remember me as someone who encouraged and inspired them to give their best at anything they did. I'm a better person today because of good leaders who taught me to approach situations with a different perspective and who encouraged me not to give up. If I have the opportunity, I would like to do the same for others.

If you could take a vacation anywhere, where would you go?

I would go to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil! I would like to go to their Carnival Festival and also visit the Christ the Redeemer statue at the top of Corcovado Mountain. I would like to be able to take a picture from the top of the statue!

OurSpace

Don't forget to check the employee blog – **Our Space** – regularly.

Bookmark it. There is news every day!

YOU can post to the blog. It's easier than you might think – give it a try! Share your photos, celebrations, upcoming events and check for the latest news from the County.

If you have questions, please contact Mary Sault at 464-5098 or employee.communications@pinellascounty.org.

The Employee Spotlight focuses on you. If you would like to nominate a fellow employee, please send his or her name, position, and why you are nominating them to employee.communications@pinellascounty.org. View previous [spotlighted employees](#).



BLOOD DRIVE

**Every donor is
three more lives
saved!**

Mark Your Calendars

Clearwater Courthouse
315 Court Street
West Parking Lot
Thursday, October 15
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Logan Lab
1620 Ridge Road, Largo
West Parking Lot
Thursday, October 29
8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

The Pen

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A monthly publication by the
Pinellas County Human Resources Department

How to Participate:

It's easy to get involved in *The Pen*. You can contribute by informing us of noteworthy news or sending us story ideas.

You can also ask about writing a guest column or submit photos of co-workers at work in your department.

PHONE: (727) 464-5098

FAX: (727) 453-3660

E-mail: employee.communications@pinellascounty.org

In case you missed it!

We've got your back in the August [To Your Health](#) newsletter where you'll find resources to check your posture and ease back pain, along with other useful information.

ASK PEGGY



Peggy Rowe

By now you know that I've left Pinellas County for another position in Hillsborough County.

After 17 years, first as Assistant Director then as HR Director, it's been an honor and privilege to serve all of the employees of the Unified Personnel System. I have made lasting professional and personal ties that I will always treasure.

I will truly miss the people here whom I have come to think of as family and consider my friends.

The Unified Personnel Board appointed Beverly Waldron as interim director at their August 6 meeting. I am confident that Beverly and the Human Resources Department will continue to deliver the great level of service you have come to expect.

This column will continue, though instead of "Ask Peggy" it will be called "[Ask HR](#)." You can be assured of the same honest and direct answers which you've come to rely upon. Your anonymity will continue to be preserved.

I encourage you to stay focused on providing top notch services to our citizens. There will continue to be a great deal of change in the future. Be kind to each other and be flexible. Continue to learn and grow.

I wish you all well!

UPDATE: FACE of Performance

It's been almost a year since we launched the new FACE of performance management system. As with any new system, we've experienced some growing pains. We've also made a great deal of progress. The original participation goal was 50% for the first full year. As of the first week of August we're pleased to report an overall Unified Personnel System wide participation rate of 66% for at least one quarterly review.

The FACE of Performance is all about encouraging frequent dialog between employees and supervisors about setting expectations, supporting growth and development, observing and noting performance. **The focus continues to be on building relationships and trust while aligning goals**; it's not about performance evaluation forms. The quarterly reviews are important in summarizing those ongoing conversations.

There is strong support for frequent conversations and the ability to discuss career growth, and we've offered a host of resources to help you succeed at www.pinellascounty.org/HR/FACE.

- We have conducted over 143 workshops and outreach meetings in support of FACE. We started with an introduction to the new system for supervisors and non-supervisors, and followed that with sessions on summarizing performance conversations.
- We're currently offering workshops for supervisors on setting performance expectations and giving regular feedback.

- Several departments have requested customized training on how to best set and measure their specific performance expectations and goals.
- The last topic we'll cover this year is supporting growth and development. Those workshops will be designed for all employees and will be scheduled in mid-September. As always, we're available to speak with groups of directors, managers, supervisors and employees at their workplace to

"Overall FACE has been very welcome versus the old way of doing performance evaluations. I like the fact that everything is done as a quarterly and that comments can be made in an instant. This has made the evaluation process much easier and more efficient."

Steven Taylor
Records Specialist Supervisor,
Recording Services Department,
Clerk of the Circuit Court

"The best part of FACE for me is being able to use it as a training, coaching and mentoring tool for the staff."

Rockie Montgomery
Records Specialist Supervisor,
Recording Services Department,
Clerk of the Circuit Court

answer any questions and provide useful tips for effective performance management.

Next month we'll update you on pay increases.

BenefitsU

We are in the third quarter of the Wellness Incentive Program. Have you earned the maximum participation points of 200 yet? Not sure? Find out by viewing your rewards at myuhc.com. If you need help see the [UHC Help Guide](#).

Flexible Spending Account Online Shopping

Do you like shopping from the comfort of your computer? Are you a participant in the Healthcare Account (HCA) or Flexible Spending Account (FSA)? If so, then FSASTore.com may be right for you. FSASTore.com allows to you shop from more than 4,000 items all of which are eligible HCA/FSA expenses. When using your WageWorks card, all your expenses are automatically verified and that means less work for you: no submitting receipts. Check it out today!

Promotions

Promotions listed are for July 2015.

Board of County Commissioners

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Matthew Prewitt.....Sr CVB Sales Rep

Parks & Conservation Resources

Adelyne Brainard Lifeguard Sr

Spencer Curtis Parks & Conserv Res Opns Mgr

Planning

Brook Gajan Principal Planner

Public Works

Josephine Benwell Proj Mgmt Spec 1

Robert Jones..... AEO 2

Donald Lomas, Jr..... Craftwkr 1

Utilities

Theodore Filides III..... Elec/Mech Tech Sr

Business Technology Services

Belinda Amundson Mgmt Analyst

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Melissa Dondero..... Mgr Insp Gen Audit Div

Property Appraiser's Office

Pamela Johnson Prop Rclds Supv

Tax Collector's Office

Kelsey Lowe..... Tax Tech Sr

BenefitsU

Employees: Save \$500 on Your 2016 Health Premium

Employees have until December 31, 2015 to complete a biometric screening and online health assessment to obtain the 2016 preferred premium. Completing both items allows employees to save \$500 on their 2016 health premium. Not only will you save money, but you will gain a better understanding of your overall health and any risk factors you may have. Save money and understand your health; it's a win-win situation.

What is a biometric screening?

A biometric screening is a short health examination by your physician or at a convenience care clinic, that indicates your risks for certain diseases or medical conditions. The examination includes body measurements (height and weight), blood pressure testing and a small blood sample to measure cholesterol and glucose. The screening provides the information you need to complete your health assessment.

How do I complete my health assessment?

After obtaining a biometric screening, visit www.myuhc.com to complete the health assessment. The assessment is an online questionnaire that provides a private and secure personal health checkup. It's a way to jump-start a personal action plan, learn about possible risks and improve your next physician visit.

What if I'm not sure if I did my health assessment yet this year?

Go to www.myuhc.com, log in, select "Health & Wellness" on the blue bar at the top, select "Health & Wellness Tools", and check the date under "I Am" for "Health Assessment" to see if you have completed an assessment in 2015.

Employees will need to complete **both** the biometric screening and health assessment to be eligible for the \$500 savings in 2016.

And don't forget, for 2015 you earn 50 points or \$50 after completing each.

For more information, see the [Biometric Screening & Health Assessment Help Guide](#) or the [Two-Minute Tuesday video](#) on the topic.

The Pen



TECH BITS

MICROSOFT OUTLOOK: MESSAGE TEXT SIZE

Need to make the font size of an email you received larger or smaller? Use the scroll wheel on your mouse. Here's how:

1. Open an email.
2. Press the **Ctrl** key and scroll up with the scroll wheel to make the text larger. OR,
3. Press the **Ctrl** key and scroll down with the scroll wheel to make the text smaller.

Both options can also be used when pre-viewing emails in the Reading Pane.

Find more Technical Training Resources at [BTS Enterprise Technical Training](#).



FACE Tips



Setting performance expectations requires planning. There is a new ["Tips for Supervisors: Setting Clear Expectations and Goals"](#) FACE tool to help you make conversations with employees more effective.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

35 YEARS



James Coker
Utilities

Unavailable for Photo

35 YEARS Deborah Chayet, *Office of Management & Budget*

25 YEARS Denise Rucker, *Ambulance Billing & Financial Services*

20 YEARS Angel Clemente, *Real Estate Management*,
Chris Savas, *Public Works*

25 YEARS



Teri Tuxhorn, *Convention & Visitors Bureau*, Fred Roose,
Planning & Design Division, Mary Dawson-Kemp, *Clerk of the Circuit Court*

Training & Development Upcoming Classes

Some classes fill up quickly so request enrollment early through
[OPUS Learning Management](#) (OLM).

Project Management, 10/1/2015, 6 hours

Have you been asked to manage a project, or do you have tasks that could be made easier with some management insights? This seminar will help you to envision, plan, implement and evaluate a major project. These skills can also be used to successfully manage your regular workload.

The Changing Environment & Future Trends in Leadership Development 10/7/2015

The environment of today's workplace is increasingly complex, and for many, that complexity is overwhelming their capacity to cope. The skills needed for leadership have changed, but the methods used to develop those skills have not. This workshop will define trends for future leadership development and much more.

Workplace Diversity: Beyond Race, Religion & Gender 10/7/2015

Diversity is more than race, religion and gender; true diversity is appreciating all that makes us different from one another. In a diversified work environment, it is important to know not only what the differences are but how our behavior, sometimes unconscious or unintended, can impact our relationships with others. Learn to identify facets of diversity, foster organizational commitment, handle diversity situations plus intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.

To view a complete list of all courses, along with descriptions, go to the [Consortium Training Catalog](#). Need assistance? Contact Training and Development at 464-3796 or email training@pinellascounty.org.

15 YEARS

Patricia Athanson Clerk of the Circuit Court
Barbara Bermudez..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
John CarpenterPlanning & Design Division
Lidell Golden.....Utilities
James Hewston.....Solid Waste
Christine Kelley.....County Attorney's Office
Kevin Welch.....Human Services
Jeanne Wright Clerk of the Circuit Court
Elizabeth Woodbury.....Human Resources

10 YEARS

Catherine Bailey Noble.....Tax Collector's Office
Loren GuayPublic Works
Karen Haggerty.....Clerk of the Circuit Court
Steven Harper Parks & Conservation Resources
Timothy Hellijas.....Public Works
Rafael Hernandez.....Public Works
Michael LavelleAnimal Services
Nancy McKibbenPlanning & Design Division
Donna Morahan.....Clerk of the Circuit Court
William SiniffClerk of the Circuit Court
Glenn Weaver.....Public Works
Ernest WilliamsPublic Works

5 YEARS

Douglas Katez.....Tax Collector's Office
Paul Nguyen.....Tax Collector's Office
Robert Sullivan..... Business Technology Services

RETIREMENTS

Over 42 Years



Larry Resovsky
Operations Manager Assistant
Public Works

Over 30 Years



James Brown
Spray Technician
Mosquito Control

29 Years



John Burke
Water/Wastewater Plant Operator 2
Utilities

Over 26 Years



Albert Yuen
Automotive Equipment Operator 2
Public Works

Over 24 Years



Faith Swearingen
Property Records Technician
Property Appraiser's Offices

Over 16 Years



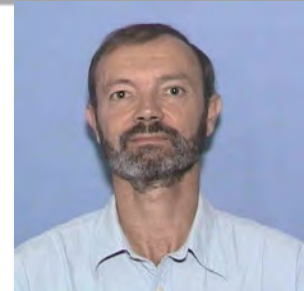
Edwin Hansen
Program Manager
Business Technology Services

Over 12 Years



John Bergstrom
Park Ranger
Parks & Conservation Resources

Over 10 Years



John Wood
Engineering Technician
Utilities

REPCO News

REPCO's September 14 meeting will be at Applebee's, 5110 East Bay Drive. Clearwater. The speaker for the meeting will be Deputy Charles Skipper from the PC Sheriff's Office. He will be speaking on Firearm Safety. For more information contact Rudy at (813) 855-3466 or rdgarcia@verizon.net.

You don't have to be a Pinellas County retiree to attend. Current employees and family members are also welcome.

UNAVAILABLE FOR PHOTO

Over 24 Years Linda Valentine, *Court Records Specialist 2, Clerk of the Circuit Court*

Over 21 Years Phillip Bramlage, *Water Quality Monitoring Manager, Utilities*

Over 17 Years Susan Dwyer, *Tax Collector Supervisor, Tax Collector's Office*

Over 14 Years Kathleen Hultgren, *Customer Services Technician 2, Tax Collector's Office*, Dale White, *Park Ranger, Parks & Conservation Resources*

Over 12 Years Maxene Alexander, *Records Specialist 2, Clerk of the Circuit Court*

Over 8 Years Robert Inserra, *Park Ranger, Parks & Conservation Resources*

Welcome Aboard!

Board of County Commissioners

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Kristin Coryn..... CVB Sales Rep

County Administration

John Bennett..... Asst Co Admin

Parks & Conservation Resources

Kristine Hopkins Grant Wkr "A"

Public Works

Terracl Mason Maint 1

Paul Miselis..... Sr Eng

William Moore AEO 3

Risk Management

Claudia Crawford..... Claims Adjuster

Solid Waste

Douglas Miller..... Wk Plng Coord

Utilities

Ara Faison Meter Rdr 2

Bina Nayak..... Wtr Resrch Proj Mgr

Tia Nimithkoune..... Meter Rdr 2

Business Technology Services

Patricia Brown Mgr, BTS

Hui Li Info Tech Analyst Sr

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Darcy Eckert Insp Gen Audit 1

Norma Williamson Mail Clk

Tax Collector's Office

Laura Banks Cust Svc Tech 1

Frankie Blasewitz Cust Svc Tech 1

Matthew Reusch..... Cust Svc Tech 1

John Shepard Cust Svc Tech 1

John Stewart..... Cust Svc Tech 1

Krystal Washington Cust Svc Tech 1



July 12 New Employee Orientation class.



On July 30th Human Resources hosted its first *Steer Your Career* conference. The event was organized to help employees develop in their current or future career path. This inaugural conference was a resounding success.

Over 100 employees from nine Appointing Authorities participated in the daylong conference.

There were opportunities for networking, workshops, and panel discussions.

The keynote speaker was Elithia Stanfield, former Assistant County Administrator with Pinellas County. She talked about the top ten things she'd done to develop her career.

There were networking activities and multiple break out sessions on topics such as resume writing, interviewing, stretch assignments, having professional development conversations and technical tips. The conference concluded with a Q&A panel.



Meagan Decker (HR) leading a class.

The overwhelming response from participants was very positive. Employees stated that it was one of the best events they had been to and that they learned great information about growing in their careers. One employee wrote:

"I came away from the Steer Your Career conference with new ideas and understanding about my career, both how it got where it was and how to steer it in the directions I choose. More importantly, I learned about how conscientious choices and clear goals will allow me to guide my life. If someone is feeling like a victim, or feeling out of control in their personal or work life, the concepts so well imparted in Steer Your Career, while not guaranteed to prevent negative life changing events from happening, empower a person to influence or bring about their personal desired life changes!"

Human Resources was happy to offer this event for employees and for the benefit of the Unified Personnel System.



Panelists: Peggy Rowe (moderator), Paul Valenti (Human Rights), Jewel White (County Attorney's Office), Allan Miller (BCC Utilities), Gwen Brooks (Property Appraiser's Office), Jonathan Ferguson (BTS), Sue Keim (HR).



Create Sustainable Solutions

Vision • Innovation • Collaboration

What are Your Green Office Policies?

Does your office discuss green procurement or build sustainable practices into strategic processes?

The [Green Pinellas Information Packet](#) is given to all new hires.



For more information about Green Pinellas, click [here](#) and provide feedback [here](#).

Want more information?

Check us out on INSTAGRAM:

[instagram.com/uf_ifas_extension_pinellas/](https://www.instagram.com/uf_ifas_extension_pinellas/)



UF IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

FROM THE RECORD KEEPER



Imaging Requests: Please Refresh Your Ink Stamps

For those departments sending records to Records Management–Clearwater for imaging, we request that your ink stamps be refreshed. When a record is stamped with a date or other information, our imaging technicians do their best to capture the stamped area. If the ink is running out in your stamp and the stamped area is faint, we may not be able to capture the stamped information in the electronic image.

If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact Michele Koehler in Records Management at (727) 453-3038.

Consumer Corner



Florida's Landlord/Tenant Law, Chapter 83, Part II, outlines the rights and responsibilities of the landlord and tenant. Know what your rights and responsibilities are before a problem arises.

A rental agreement, referred to as a lease, is a mutual agreement between the parties.

- Do not sign a lease or give a deposit unless you are certain you want to move in. If you pay monies in advance and then decide not to take occupancy, you may not be entitled to a refund.
- Make sure you thoroughly understand the terms of the agreement before you sign it. Get everything in writing, and keep copies for your records.
- Before you move in or move out do a walk-through of the property with the landlord. Make sure to document the condition of the property and any repairs that are agreed upon.

For more information or to file to a complaint contact Pinellas County Consumer Protection at (727) 464-6200 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/consumer/tips.htm.



Connie Consumer

HOW TO MAKE PUPSICLES



During National Heat Stroke Prevention Day on July 31, teen volunteers at Animal Services prepared and delivered pupsicles to shelter dogs to help them cool off.

Pupsicle Recipe

Ingredients

Sanitized bucket
Chicken or beef broth or bouillon
Pup-Peroni or other treat
Plastic cups

Directions

Mix two cups of broth (prepared) or 2 tsp. unprepared bouillon into large bucket of water. Fill each cup with broth and add one stick of Pup-Peroni or treat of choice so it is just sticking out of the top of the broth but not out of the cup. Place cup in freezer overnight. To serve, remove from cup so pups can enjoy their treats.

Pinellas County Animal Services reminds pet owners to protect their pets from the heat and learn how to treat prevent heat stroke in dogs. You can contact Pinellas County Animal Services at (727) 582-2600 if you see an animal that may be in need of assistance.



Employee and family news including kudos, weddings, births, graduations, memorials, and classified ads. Send your news to employee.communications@pinellascounty.org or call 464-5098.

Zoom. Zoom.



JT Lauro 2nd from right.

Joseph T. "JT" Lauro (Clerk) was selected by Nissan USA to travel to Silverstone in the UK to compete to become Nissan's next professional racecar driver. He went through rigorous physical testing, media testing, and on track driving tests at Nissan's headquarters in Nashville, TN. At the end of that week six people were chosen to represent the United States at the GT Academy International Race Camp, and he was lucky enough to be selected! Proud dad is Joe Lauro (Purchasing).

Young Animal Welfare Partners

On July 7, 2015 Pinellas County Animal Services partnered with Write Start Learning Center of Seminole, FL to teach the next generation responsible pet ownership. **Rusty Walker** and **Season Groves** (PCAS) discussed how to properly approach an unknown animal (let them sniff you first with parent's permission) and how to have fun with pets (please don't pull our tails or ears). With the help of *Captain Barky* and *Skipper Kitty* the children had some wonderful ideas on what to do if someone is bitten by an animal (tell an adult and report it to Pinellas County Animal Services). *Captain Barky and Skipper Kitty Set Sail* is a coloring book created to assist with this mission in mind.

The children took a facility tour and each one took home a copy of the coloring book to show their parents. The children brought many goodies for the cats and dogs that they collected with the help of friends and family members along with a donation for the Animal Welfare Fund. The children also created donation boxes that now decorate the Customer Service Center. Big thanks to the staff and children of Write Start Learning Center for being great animal welfare partners!



Introducing...



Macie Rose DiGennaro, pictured here with her big sister Gabriella, was born January 3, 2015, weighed 6 lbs., 5 ozs., and was 19½ inches long. Proud parents are Gabe and Kellie (Clerk) DiGennaro. Grandparents are Jim and Sondra Lane and Mario and Rose (Tax Collector) DiGennaro.

Digital Design Phenom

Kailey White, daughter of Chris White (BTS), recently returned from the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda) National Leadership Conference in Chicago, IL, where she won 3rd in the nation in Digital Design & Promotion. She is an officer of the Osceola High School chapter where she will be a senior this year.



Rays Honor Pass

Served in the military? You may want to learn more about the [Rays Honor Pass](#).

The free passes to games are provided to honor and thank active duty military, retired and honorably discharged veterans for service to our nation. After qualifying for an Honor Pass, pass holders can obtain two complementary tickets to as many games as they would like to attend for the remainder of the 2015 regular season.

Visit the [Rays website](#) to find out more.

