President Larry Robinson, Ph.D., and his senior leadership team meet weekly to discuss the University’s strategic priorities. From left to right: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Maurice Edington, Ph.D.; Vice President of Legal Affairs/General Counsel Denise Wallace, J.S.D.; Vice President of Institutional Communications, Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer Rica Calhoun; Faculty Senate Representative Lekan Latinwo, Ph.D.; Executive Assistant Cynthia Henry; Vice President of Strategic Planning, Analysis and Institutional Effectiveness Beverly Barrington, Vice President of Student Affairs William E. Hudson, Jr., Ph.D.; Executive Associate Director of Communications Kathy Y. Times; Director of Athletics John Eason, Ph.D.; and Chief of Staff/Board Liaison Linda J. Berger-Miles. (Not pictured: Vice President of University Advancement Shawnta Friday-Stroud, Ph.D.; Interim Chief Financial Officer Robert Schweigert and Vice President of Research Charles A. Weatherford, Ph.D.)
By Larry Robinson, Ph.D.

As Florida A&M University (FAMU) continues redefining the boundaries of excellence for institutions of higher learning in Florida and beyond, we experienced a stellar year that demonstrates our commitment to making strategically defined progress.

Our FAMU Division of Research set a record-breaking pace this fiscal year to bring more research-based financial resources into the University. During the 2018-2019 fiscal year, faculty submitted research proposals totaling $182.1 million, nearly doubling the $99.1 million during the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Research expenditures also increased from $38 million in 2017-2018 to $49.6 million during the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Seeking out these opportunities not only positions FAMU for increasing its societal impact but also greatly contributes to the global body of knowledge for scientific pursuits and helps prepare the next generation of researchers. For example, Florida A&M University has been chosen to lead a five-year, $16 million research collaboration addressing cancer health disparities in Black and Latino communities.

Along with our researchers, our students are also rising to new heights in how they use their intellectual prowess to impact the world and how they exemplify our institutional commitment to service via “FAMU Cares.”

Several Florida A&M University student groups were recognized for their humanitarian efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael. In this edition of our 2018-2019 Annual Report you will read about the FAMU football team being among the first to deliver bottled water to families in Marianna, Fla., and provide support for National Guard troops in Chattahoochee, Fla.

You will learn how we are setting the bar nationally in technology by creating the first 3D printing of a human cornea in the U.S. and our entry into Google’s groundbreaking Tech Exchange Program in Silicon Valley.

Because of our 132-year commitment to student success and being recognized as a place where students are expected to succeed, we are elated to share that the number of students applying to FAMU continued to soar among first-time-in-college students, as well as transfer students and law school applicants. You will also learn how our strategy to reach out the best and brightest high school students has resulted in our University enrolling an entering freshman class with one of our highest academic profiles.

These new students along with existing students will benefit greatly from the passion and commitment of Rattler alumni. Our alumni along with faculty, staff, friends, and supporters contributed $11.6 million in support of advancing our institutional mission. I thank all of them for their support and give credit to our stakeholders and all of the employees who come to work every day excited about conducting the important business of Florida A&M University.

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Larry Robinson

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY // RISING TO NEW HEIGHTS
NEW CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

A 700-BED residence complex featuring two four-story buildings and a dining facility are underway. The $60 million project is funded by a $125-million loan from the U.S. Department of Education’s Historically Black College and University Capital Financing Program. The additional money will be used to restructure the University’s debt on the FAMU Village residence hall, which opened in August 2014, and for enhancing existing student housing.

A $2.7 MILLION student-proposed amphitheater is underway at the site of four former residence halls, including McGuinn, Diamond, Cropper, Wheatley and the William Gray building. The Student Government Association contributed nearly $1.5 million in capital improvement trust money to the project. Additional campus parking is slated for the “Quad” section on campus, south of Lee Hall.
THE AVERAGE GPA FOR ENTERING FRESHMEN THIS YEAR. IT’S THE HIGHEST EVER RECORDED FOR ENTERING FRESHMEN AT FAMU AND REFLECTS EFFORTS TO ATTRACT MORE HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS.

THE NUMBER OF FLORIDA COMMUNITY AND STATE COLLEGES THAT SIGNED A SPECIAL TRANSFER AGREEMENT WITH FAMU.
In a three-day celebration witnessed by alumni, dignitaries, family, friends and visitors from across the globe, Florida A&M University inaugurated Larry Robinson, Ph.D., its 12th president.

Themed “Together We Rise,” the inauguration at the then 131-year-old institution of higher learning highlighted Robinson and his commitment to collaboration, community and consensus-building. It also captured the spirit of the FAMU Rising Strategic Plan, the University’s five-year roadmap and the name of a campaign started by Robinson and his leadership team to raise millions to enhance student success.

Along with performances by the FAMU Concert Chorale, the inauguration also featured the Wind Symphony and representatives of the Essential Theatre. CBS Executive Vice President of News and Alumna Kim Godwin hosted the ceremony. Festivities also included a research symposium, an evening scholarship gala and a special marker unveiling in FAMU Village.

Robinson was named president of the University by the FAMU Board of Trustees in November 2017.
RESEARCHERS FIRST TO CREATE 3D PRINTED CORNEA

Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences researchers made history earlier this summer by being the first in the United States to create corneas using a high-performance 3D printer. The project, funded by the National Science Foundation, is researching 3D printing and additive processing, which could lead to breakthroughs in helping patients with eye problems and reduce the need to conduct testing on animals.

FAMU pharmacy professor Mandip Sachdeva, Ph.D., who leads the University’s three-person research team, said he envisions a future where this quick process of manufacturing corneas using high throughput 3D printing technology becomes a routine procedure.

The group, which also includes Shallu Kutlehria, a doctoral student from India, and Paul Dinh, a biology major from Tallahassee, spent a year and a half creating an entire 3D model of a blinking eyeball. The corneas are printed in 3D by a bio-printer and created from materials that include human cells.

Ultimately, the team plans to file patents on the emerging technological breakthrough that, hopefully, will one day be used to treat visually impaired individuals.

FAMU SETS RECORD-SETTING PACE FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Florida A&M University’s Division of Research is on a record-breaking pace to bring more research dollars into the University. This past academic year, FAMU nearly doubled the amount of proposals being submitted for funding.

FAMU honored 10 faculty members and President Larry Robinson, Ph.D., earlier this fall for their commitment to research excellence. It is a tradition for the University to recognize principal investigators and faculty for their unique and outstanding work during a luncheon at the beginning of the fall semester.
Florida A&M University has been selected to receive a five-year, $16 million grant to establish a center that will address cancer health equity in Black and Latino populations, while also providing cancer research, education and training experiences.

The grant, funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), a division of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), is led by FAMU scientists R. Renee Reams, Ph.D., and Kinfe “Ken” Redda, Ph.D., both faculty in the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Awarded under the NCI’s U54/Comprehensive Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equity Program, the project is the first of its kind that allows parallel collaboration from multiple principal investigators from other universities, also known as a “Triad Partnership.” Institutions partnering with FAMU include the University of Florida and the University of Southern California. Funding for the project titled, “Florida-California Cancer Research, Education and Engagement (CaRE2) Health Equity Center” will be equally distributed across the three universities.

NEW INITIATIVE PROMOTES MORE WOMEN FACULTY IN STEM

Florida A&M University launched an initiative earlier this year that seeks to improve the campus climate for women faculty in STEM and social and behavioral science fields (SBS).

The initiative is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) as part of its ADVANCE program, which seeks to promote equity for STEM faculty through evidence-based systematic change strategies. The five-year NSF grant award is $2.97 million.

Marcia Allen Owens, Ph.D., associate professor of environmental science, is the principal investigator of the FAMU ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Initiative which will support delving into the climate, culture, policy and practices that potentially stand in the way of recruiting black women and advancing them through the ranks at FAMU. Owens is also director of FAMU’s newly created Center for Faculty ADVANCEment.

Under the initiative, 20 women STEM and SBS faculty will be selected as fellows and will receive mentorship and development opportunities over the course of five years.

The initiative is endorsed by President Larry Robinson, Ph.D., and aligns with the faculty development goals included in the University’s FAMU Rising Strategic Plan.
FAMU WELCOMES FIRST FEMALE DRUM MAJOR

The Florida A&M University Marching “100” welcomed its first female drum major in the band program’s 72-year history during the fall 2018 semester.

Cori Renee Bostic was a junior broadcast journalism major when she was selected alongside two other new drum majors, Joshua Honore and Marquel Bowen.

Bostic, the daughter of FAMU Marching “100” alums Cory and Lenise Bostic, is the oldest of eight children and is from Decatur, Georgia.

In March 2019, Bostic received an additional honor when she was recognized at the African Diaspora Awards in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

STUDENTS WIN ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETITION AND SCHOLARSHIPS

A five-person team from Florida A&M University placed first in a competition akin to the “Shark Tank” to show in Detroit, Michigan. The Moguls in the Making entrepreneurship competition had initially included 500 student applicants.

FAMU’s team included Livi Grant, Keishon Smith, Nalani Kelley-Marsh, Emmanuel Dawson and Earl Perry. Each of them received a $5,000 scholarship, an internship at Ally Financial Inc. and a MacBook Air computer for their plan, which offered a unique artificial intelligence system that crafted tailored solutions to empower small, minority-owned businesses in Detroit.

FAMU JOINS GOOGLE’S TECH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

A group of Florida A&M University’s leaders and students visited Google’s Silicon Valley headquarters last fall to kick off FAMU’s selection into the Tech Exchange Program.

Five students, who are pursuing computer science degrees in FAMU’s College of Science and Technology and one professor, Clement Allen, were selected for the yearlong residency program. They included Tavia Cannon, Cornelius Cook, Christopher Griffin, Jonathan McKinley, and Garrett Tolbert.
Melody Lynch, former president of the Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association, Brittanii Wade, FAMU Law Class of 2026, Edward Venegas, Barry Law and Elisa Schneider, FAMU Law, were recognized for their outstanding pro bono volunteer work.

Brittanii Wade and Elisa Schneider volunteered at the Legal Aid Society of the Orange County Bar Association. Schneider volunteered with the Guardian ad Litem program, which helps children in the foster care system. Wade volunteered with the Family Law and Immigration law department, which helps clients with immigration and family law matters.

At the Orange County Bar Association's annual pro bono luncheon on January 24, 2019, in downtown Orlando.
FAMUANS RISE TO NEW HEIGHTS AS FILM PRODUCERS

Two Florida A&M University alumni are soaring to new heights in the realm of film producing through projects that both debuted in theaters across the country.

Alumnus Amir Windom and the Crawfordville minister who helped him produce the movie “Canal Street” held a screening earlier this year for FAMU students, faculty and staff. “Canal Street” is a Christian-based drama about a teenager, Kholi Styles, who tries his best to succeed in a new environment.

Alumnus Tirrell D. Whittley also had his first film project “Amazing Grace” — a documentary on Aretha Franklin’s landmark 1972 gospel album — to hit theaters this year. Whittley is CEO of an Atlanta-based marketing firm, Liquid Soul, who co-produced the documentary with record company executive Alan Elliott. “Amazing Grace” was Whittley’s debut production. Whittley also serves on the FAMU Foundation Board of Directors.

FAMU ALUM CHosen AS NEW CEO OF CONVERSE

Florida A&M University Alumnus G. Scott Uzzell made the FAMU family proud when he was selected as the new president and CEO of Converse, Inc., earlier this year. The American shoe company is a subsidiary of Nike, Inc.

Prior to his new post, Uzzell served as the president of the Venturing & Emerging Brands Group (VEB) for the Coca-Cola Company. He holds a bachelor’s degree in business from FAMU.

As head of Coca-Cola’s VEB Group, Uzzell oversaw a portfolio of high-growth brands including Honest Tea, ZICO Coconut Water, Fairlife Milk and Suja Juice.

Uzzell, who has also worked for Procter & Gamble and Nabisco during his career in sales and marketing, is also a member of the Florida A&M University Foundation Board as well as a member of the Executive Leadership Council.

KEEPERS OF THE FLAME LIGHT UP GIVING WITH $11.6 MILLION IN DONATIONS

The Florida A&M University Office of Advancement ended the 2018-2019 fiscal year with a trend-setting fundraising pace of just over $11.6 million in donations. The funds included $4.6 million in new cash gifts; $5.4 million in pledge collections and another $1.6 million in pledges, according to figures provided by Shawnta Friday-Stroud, Ph.D., vice president of FAMU’s University Advancement and executive director of the FAMU Foundation.

Key donors included Bernard and Shirley Kinsey, R. Grant Seals and his son and daughter-in-law, Rupert LaWendall Seals and Karen Ann Scott, along with groups like the FAMU National Alumni Association (NAA) J.R.E. Lee Chapter of Jacksonville. Many were honored during an annual recognition of individuals and organizations last fall who have contributed more than $100,000 to the university.

The Kinseys have donated more than $350,000 in the past two years. Their gifts include new uniforms purchased in 2017 for the Marching “100,” service to the NAA, donations of art and artifacts to the Archives and support of the Foster-Tanner Art Gallery. As the past co-chair of the FAMU Industry Cluster, Bernard Kinsey helped the University garner millions of dollars in monetary donations and other resources from corporations and individuals.

R. Grant Seals, former dean of the College of Agriculture and Sciences, established the Dr. Rupert Grant Seals and Georgetta Lynem Seals Endowed Scholarship to support students in the College of Agriculture and Food Services. Rupert LaWendall Seals and his wife Karen Ann Scott established an endowed scholarship to support students in the College of Science and Technology.

The J.R.E. Lee Chapter’s donation of $100,000 has already helped many students achieve their dreams of attending FAMU. Since 2014, the chapter, which has more than 233 members, has presented more than $40,000 in scholarships to 51 students attending the University.
As part of his Florida A&M University 2019 Spring commencement address, former Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum shared his journey of growing up as the son of a bus driver and construction worker, who also sold roadside vegetables.

As a student, the 2018 Democratic gubernatorial nominee, who was elected as Student Government Association president and a Tallahassee city commissioner while enrolled at FAMU, told graduates their time on campus should be transformative.

Gillum’s speech was one of three FAMU commencement ceremonies for the daylong festivities that included more than 1,220 students being awarded degrees.

During the afternoon ceremony, music industry executive Nicole Wyskoarko shared her personal journey of how she went from a struggling Brooklyn law school student to a music industry attorney who worked with artists such as Kanye West, Alessia Cara and Justin Bieber. She addressed graduates for the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering, College of Law, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the School of Architecture and Engineering Technology and the School of nursing.

Hip-hop recording artist, actor, author and activist Common spoke to students from the College of Science and Technology, College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities and School of the Environment during the evening ceremony. As a student known then as Lonnie Rashid Lynn, he attended the FAMU School of Business and Industry from 1987 to 1989, then left to pursue a music career. During the event, the entertainer was presented with an honorary doctorate in Fine Arts for his activism and his creative work.
Vonda Richardson, FAMU’s associate director of Cooperative Extension Programs, was awarded the 2018 Thomas Monroe Campbell Award, one of only three recipients in the nation honored with the award this year.

Thomas Monroe Campbell was the first appointed Cooperative Extension agent in the United States in November 1906 and headed the first extension program as a field agent for USDA. The award was given by Tuskegee University’s Farmers Conference awards committee.

Under Richardson’s leadership, the Extension Program recently helped feed Gadsden County residents impacted by Hurricane Michael with hot meals. She also plays a vital role in providing free produce for FAMU’s pantry for students and members of the community in need of food.

Several Florida A&M University groups were recognized for their humanitarian efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael.

The FAMU College of Law family, along with community partners and friends, responded in a huge way to help fellow FAMU students, faculty, staff and others impacted by Hurricane Michael.

FAMU President Larry Robinson, Ph.D., traveled to Orlando to accept the generous contributions on behalf of those in need. Dr. Robinson also arrived with a donation of supplies for the hurricane relief drive, including bottled water, personal hygiene products, canned goods and hurricane supplies.

Earlier this year, the FAMU Department of Athletics was honored by the Mayor of Tallahassee and City of Tallahassee Commission and the Leon County Board of County Commissioners for its community service efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael.

The FAMU football team was among the first to deliver bottled water to families in Marianna, Fla. The Athletics Department assisted the Salvation Army and the U.S. National Guard days after the Category 5 hurricane struck the Florida Panhandle. Nearly 300 FAMU athletes also provided a three-hour relief for exhausted National Guard soldiers in Chattahoochee, Fla., by rationing food and water supplies to those impacted by the storm.
Throughout the year, Florida A&M University Athletics has continued uplifting the University with stellar performances on and off the playing field. Last spring, FAMU’s Baseball team won the 2019 Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) Baseball Championship.

The FAMU Rattlers Men’s Basketball team also enjoyed a year of triumph during last year’s season. With new head men’s coach Robert McCullum at the helm, FAMU enjoyed its best record in a decade. Some highlights included Men’s Basketball team senior Justin Ravenel being picked as first-team All-MEAC after leading the team and finishing fifth in the league in scoring at 15.6 points per game. Freshman M.J. Randolph made the All-Rookie team and was picked as MEAC Rookie of the Year.

During FAMU’s 2019 Student-Athlete Advisory Committee’s Fang Awards ceremony, two athletes were recognized for holding the highest GPA. Punter Chris Faddoul won Male Athlete Highest GPA and women’s basketball player Taylor Dark took the title for Female Athlete Highest GPA. Both scholars rank on the honor roll with a 4.0.

Despite transitions in leadership, Athletics continued its trek to improved outcomes for athletes by increasing awareness of campus-wide NCAA compliance responsibilities and strengthening policies and procedures. Some improvements include:

- Enhanced Athletics certification with the addition of four certified academic advisors, a learning specialist and two designated employees in the Registrar’s Office.
- Introduced a monitoring and audit function within FAMU’s Division of Audit and Office of Compliance and Ethics to allow for targeted oversight of Athletics.

RATTLES TRIUMPH ON AND OFF THE FIELD

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The University remains in stable financial condition with more than $480 million in net position at the end of the fiscal year. The University’s capital and non-operating revenues totaled $133 million and $144.6 million respectively for the 2018-19 fiscal year, representing a 6.0 percent increase compared to the 2017-18 fiscal year due mainly to an increase in grants and contracts of $4.5 million. Operating expenses totaled $271.1 million for the 2018-19 fiscal year, representing an increase of 1.5 percent when compared to the 2017-18 fiscal year. Total assets increased by $37 million, total liabilities increased by $52 million, and total net position decreased by $26.6 million. The increase in current assets of $2.4 million is primarily due to investments and cash.

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$3.7 million; total liabilities increased by $22.9 million, and total net position decreased by $26.6 million.

The University’s operating and non-operating revenues totaled $132.5 million and $144.6 million respectively for the 2018-19 fiscal year, representing a 6.0 percent increase compared to the 2017-18 fiscal year due mainly to an increase in grants and contracts of $4.5 million. Operating expenses totaled $271.1 million for the 2018-19 fiscal year, representing an increase of 1.5 percent when compared to the 2017-18 fiscal year. Total assets increased by $37 million, total liabilities increased by $52 million, and total net position decreased by $26.6 million. The increase in current assets of $2.4 million is primarily due to investments and cash.

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FAMU’S STREAK OF EXCELLENCE SPANS ACROSS THE CAMPUS

Last fall, Florida A&M University earned reaccreditation for the next ten years from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Students within the College of Agriculture and Food Sciences won top honors at the 34th Annual Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) Career Fair and Training, including first place in undergraduate Speaking Contest; first place in the Land O’Lakes Case Study; second place in the National Research Discussion Contest; second place in the Annual Bunge Case Competition; and third place in the MANRRS regional Lincoln Douglas Debate.

Four new deans joined FAMU this year, including Allyson L. Watson, Ph.D., dean of the College of Education, Richard Alo, Ph.D., dean of the College of Science and Technology, Michelle Ferrier, Ph.D., dean of the School of Journalism and Graphic Communication and Johnnie L. Early II, Ph.D., RPh, Fellow NPhA, dean of the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

FAMU-FSU College of Engineering celebrated a new partnership with researchers and engineers from Eglin Air Force Base to train undergraduate students in areas critical to the U.S. Air Force. The Air Force Research Laboratory at Eglin will fund a $400,000 grant to create the Air Force Research Laboratory Scholars program.

FAMU received $880,000 in funding from the Florida Legislature under a program that gave the university the lead role in educating minority populations statewide about the potential benefits of medical marijuana and the pitfalls of smoking illegal pot. Under the Medical Marijuana Education Research Initiative, FAMU receives $10 from each $75 identification card obtained by those approved to purchase medical marijuana.

In spring 2019, the Electrical Engineering Technology program within FAMU’s School of Architecture and Engineering Technology (SAET) hosted its 3rd Annual Vex Robotics Competition. About 100 middle and high school students from across north Florida participated in the event, which is a qualifier for a Florida State Championship event.

FAMU’s School of the Environment has been selected by the U.S. Forest Service to establish a Center for Spatial Ecology and Restoration (CSER). CSER will focus on the development and distribution of applied geospatial systems as well as training the next generation of geospatial scientists.

The School of Graduate Studies and Research co-hosted the 40th Annual Southern Conference on African and African-American Studies, Inc. earlier this spring.

FAMU’s School of Journalism and Graphic Communication students seized top honors at the Florida Associated Press Broadcasters Association’s 2018 Awards Ceremony in Orlando. Earlier this spring, Winners included Monica Myers, first place for Best Digital/Website Content; Morgan Martin, first place for Best Hard News Feature Story; Cierra Richardson, second place for Best Light Feature; and Giselle Thomas and Kiah Lewis, second place for Best Light Feature.

FAMU was ranked among the Top 10 Best Florida Schools to earn a graduate degree in nursing online by NursingDegrees.com. FAMU’s program also ranked among the top five programs in the state of Florida by the Online Journal of Issues in Nursing.

FAMU entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ross University’s School of Medicine to boost the number of Rattlers entering medical school.

FAMU received $880,000 in funding from the Florida Legislature under a program that gave the university the lead role in educating minority populations statewide about the potential benefits of medical marijuana and the pitfalls of smoking illegal pot. Under the Medical Marijuana Education Research Initiative, FAMU receives $10 from each $75 identification card obtained by those approved to purchase medical marijuana.
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