

6A • THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018 • TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

## FSU hires new Title IX director, senior investigator

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Florida State University has hired a new Title IX director charged with leading efforts to address sexual misconduct prevention and response efforts.

Standy Hamblenton replaces Jennifer Broomfield, who was hired as its first Title IX director in 2005 as the university defended itself against a student accusing former Seminole quarterback Jameis Winston with rape.

Broomfield left in 2017 after reconciling with her spouse, the university said.

FSU Monday also announced the hiring of Courtney McHenry as senior Title IX investigator.

Hamblenton received a bachelor of arts in English from Washington University and earned her master's degree in

higher education from FSU in 2008. She recently served as assistant vice president for Student Advocacy, Intervention, and Accountability at Wichita State University.

McHenry earned bachelor's degrees in Criminal Justice and in Spanish from Florida A&M University in 2009, and later a master's in criminal justice from the University of Central Florida.

He previously served as a Title IX/civil rights investigator at West Virginia University.

"Filling these staff positions is an important part of Florida State's continuing efforts to educate the university community about responsible conduct and the meaning of consent as well as prevention and intervention and resources for sexual assault victims," said Sally McHenry, FSU provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

Hamblenton and McHenry begin Feb. 26.

Title IX is a federal law that ensures all education programs and activities are free from discrimination on the basis of gender, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence or other sexual misconduct.

In 2015, FSU introduced a new online reporting system resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of initial reports filed.

In 2017, 162 reports were filed, compared to 128 in 2016 and 36 in 2015.

The numbers represent the total number of cases submitted through various reporting portals and at least initially assigned a Title IX designation, FSU spokesman Dennis Schmitter said.

Some cases would have gone through a full investigation followed by a conduct hearing; others might have been transferred to HR, and some others may have been deemed not appropriate for Title IX treatment, he said.

In January 2016, FSU settled a Title IX complaint filed by Erica Kinsman, the former student who accused Winston of rape.

The \$950,000 settlement was described by Kinsman's attorney as the largest-ever Title IX discrimination settlement to a single plaintiff claiming a university's "indifference" to a sexual assault.

FSU officials, whose legal fees topped \$1.7 million, said they were confident the university would have been cleared but settled the agreement to save money.

In April 2014, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights opened an investigation of Florida State into whether its handling of the Winston rape allegations violated Title IX laws.

The investigation is still open.

Contact senior staff writer Byron Debusan at bdebusan@tallahassee.com or on Twitter @byrondebusan.

## Bethune statue, Florida Forever ready for Senate approval

Jim Turner  
NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

A plan to place a statue of civil rights leader Mary McLeod Bethune at the U.S. Capitol as a representative of Florida and a measure to set aside \$200 million a year for land preservation moved a step closer Wednesday to state Senate approval.

With little comment, the Senate postponed the bills for votes next week. One of the measures (SB 472) seeks to leave a statue of Bethune replace a likeness of Confederate Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith at the National Statuary Hall in Washington.

"We're one step closer. We're going to get there this year," said Sen. Perry Thurston, a Fort Lauderdale Democrat who is sponsoring the measure.

An identical House bill (HB 1991) also has started moving and is set to go to the House Appropriations Committee.

Smith, born in St. Augustine but with few adult ties to the state, has been one of Florida's two representatives in the National Statuary Hall since 1922. The other representative is John G. Sledge, widely considered the father of air con-

ditioning.

The Legislature voted in 2016 to replace the Smith statue during a nationwide backlash against Confederate symbols in the wake of the 2015 shooting deaths of nine African-American worshippers at a historic black church in Charleston, S.C.

Despite agreeing to remove Smith, lawmakers were unable to come up with a replacement during the 2017 session, as the House did not move forward with any of the suggestions from the Office of Florida's Program within the state Division of Historic Resources.

Bethune, whose resume included serving as an adviser to President Franklin Roosevelt, founded what became known as Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach. The university has offered to pay for the new statue.

Sen. Tom Lee, R-Thonotosassa, attached an amendment to the bill Wednesday to require the Smith statue be acquired and displayed by the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs. "I think we have a Division of Cultural Affairs, with the secretary of state's office, that can receive that important piece of Florida's

history and place it appropriately somewhere in a museum," Lee said.

Meanwhile, the Senate also is on the verge of approving a plan to spend \$300 million a year on the Florida Forever land preservation program. The bill (SB 370), sponsored by Appropriations Chairman Rob Bradley, R-Fleming Island, would use money from a 2014 voter-approved constitutional amendment aimed at increasing land and water conservation.

The \$300 million number is not a magic number, but it is commensurate with what you look at as new funds have been appropriated, via statute, whether it be (for) springs or the Everglades," Bradley said.

In past years, lawmakers directed at least \$200 million a year to the Everglades; \$64 million for a reserve in the Everglades Agricultural Area; \$50 million for the state's natural springs; and \$5 million for Lake Apopka.

The constitutional amendment directed that a portion of money from a real-estate documentary tax go into the land-acquisition trust fund. That is expected to generate \$662.2 million next year.

## Winchester

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because of what he said in long, rambling letters was his sex addiction. In 2010 she finally filed for divorce — much to Winchester's distress.

In court documents related to the kidnapping case, Mookins said Denise Williams wouldn't answer her estranged husband's frantic calls about her telling police what happened to Mike Williams, so he hatched a plan.

He hid in his car that stormy August morning and surprised her on her way to work from the way back of her Suburban and put a gun to her ribs.

"That was his way of getting to talk to her," Mookins told interviewers. "That's why he did it all this."

When reached by the Tallahassee Democrat, Mookins declined to comment, as did Winchester's attorney, Tim Jensen.

While records related to Winchester's closed kidnapping case have been combed to remove details of Mike Williams' open and active case, the two are intimately connected. State Attorney Jack Campbell has said he hopes information gleaned from the Winchester case will help solve the old mystery.

Until last month, Mike Williams was considered a missing person. But a day after Winchester was sentenced to 20 years in prison for kidnapping his now ex-wife, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement revealed they'd found Mike Williams' remains at the end of dead-end Gardner Road in northern Leon County, just five miles from where he grew up.

Agents provided no details but said the state evidence proved he was murdered.

"Our investigation is active," FDLE spokeswoman Gretl Pleasinger said in an email this week. "At this point, we have no additional information to provide."

FDLE first opened an investigation into the disappearance of Mike Williams in 2003 at the insistence of his mother, Cheryl Williams, who found troubling clues his death was no accident.

Without evidence her youngest son was dead, Cheryl Williams always believed he was still alive somewhere. Proof of his death — confirmed by comparisons of his remains with her DNA has not been easy.

"This hit me like a ton of bricks," she said.

## STATE BRIEFS

**Hurricane relief effort led by ex-US presidents raises \$41M**

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — A hurricane relief effort led by five former U.S. presidents that included a Texas concert with rock star Lady Gaga has raised more than \$41 million.

A statement Wednesday from One America Appeal said the money benefited hurricane recovery in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Spokesman Jim McGrath said

more than 100,000 donors gave \$41.3 million.

Former Presidents Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama attended the Oct. 28 fundraising concert at Texas A&M University in College Station.

**Sheriff: 2 killed, 1 injured in shooting at home**

BROOKSVILLE — Two people have died and a third person was injured in a hospital with serious injuries following a standoff and shooting in a Florida neighborhood.

Hernando County Sheriff Al Nimsch said during a Tuesday night news conference that deputies found the suspect hiding in a vacant home near the shooting scene.

Nimsch said multiple agencies worked to make contact with the suspect, who was taken into custody by a SWAT team after more than five hours. He said investigation believes there was only one shooter.

Nimsch said the suspect has a lengthy criminal history.

—Associated Press

## Francois

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the bedroom door, according to the report, picked her up and threw her to the ground, cutting her forearm, and tried to kick her out of the house.

The woman said she did not wish to press charges and that he should have known she was pregnant because she'd told him in the past. She said she was about 9 weeks pregnant.

She threatened to call the police multiple times during the fight, according to the incident report.

"She advised me she did not want Francois to get in 'trouble' trouble," but she did not see or speak with him and scare him a little," officers wrote in the 4-page report. She also said he'd "smoked weed earlier."

Francois said he grabbed her in a hug in an attempt to keep her from breaking items in the apartment and the cut on her arm came from a vase she'd smashed during the fight. He said she'd told him she was pregnant but had not provided paperwork to prove it.

Francois' friend Zaqueand White, an FSU running back, confirmed his account. He said Francois only put his hands on the woman "when he tried to prevent her from breaking things in the home and when he had to defend himself."

Francois was absent for most of FSU's season following an injury and missed FSU's senior day game against Delaware State to visit family in Orlando.

He started all 13 games as a redshirt freshman during the 2016 season and was named the ACC Rookie of the Year.

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