

# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

2013-2014

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SSS STUDENT SPOTLIGHT	2
CAMPUS QUOTES	3
IMAGES OF SUCCESS	4
SSS HIGH ACHIEVERS	5
SSS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS	5
STUDENT ESSAY	6
STUDENT SUCCESS	7
SEMINARS FOR SUCCESS	8
IMAGES OF SUCCESS	9
SSS GRADUATES	10
ALUMNI UPDATE	11
SSS CONTACT INFORMATION	12

## MEET THE SSS STAFF

- Reba Garth, Director
- LaSaundria Glenn-Bass, Administrative Specialist
- Shawn Moore, Counselor
- Marcus Glover, Counselor
- LaTosha Thomas, Counselor
- Cynthia Schaefer, Counselor
- Jerry Silva, Summer Program Coordinator
- Jerilys Fernandez, Student Asst.
- Breionka Miller, Peer Counselor
- Taylor Collier, Peer Counselor
- Antonio Morales, Peer Counselor
- Paul Jean-Louis, Peer Counselor



## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

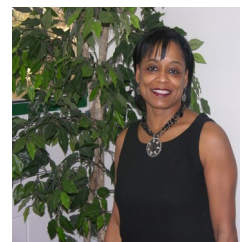
The Student Support Services Program (SSS) has experienced another outstanding year! SSS is a federally funded program that provides effective academic and personal support for a diverse population. The program is intended for first-time-in-college students who have been identified either as first-generation college students, as having low-income family status, or both. SSS is designed to significantly increase the retention and graduation rates of its participants. The program is committed to providing proactive, comprehensive, and innovative services to enhance our students' success at USF. SSS provides a plethora of services, including: academic advising and monitoring, personalized individual

and group counseling, computerized tutorial assistance program, computer lab, course registration, residential summer program, financial aid assistance, SSS scholarships, social and cultural enrichment programs, and seminars that broaden career perspectives, improve academic skills, and promote self-confidence. In part because of these services, **92% of our program participants are in good academic standing.**

As Director, I am currently accepting students for summer 2014. I am also preparing to begin the grant-writing process to secure continued funding for 2015-2020. Overall, I have secured approximately \$7 million in federal grants for USF to maintain the program at the university.

We are pleased to present you with our 2013-2014 newsletter. In this edition we highlight our student success at the University of South Florida and beyond, including our current program participants and SSS alumni. Our partnership with various university, local, state, and national associations afforded leadership experiences for our students.

I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter. **We are "BULL-ISH" about student success!**



Reba Garth, Director

**SSS STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: JERRY SILVA**

*SSS senior student Jerry Silva is being spotlighted for his outstanding achievement as a USF student. Jerry has achieved success in college, both in and out of the classroom. We salute Jerry for representing SSS so well!*

While SSS has many outstanding students, Jerry Silva was chosen for this spotlight feature because of his accomplishments while at USF. Born and raised in Miami, Jerry was raised by a single parent who worked eighteen hour days in order to make ends meet. Despite his modest upbringing Jerry remembers a house full of love during his childhood. Jerry was admitted into several universities, but chose USF as his best option for advancing his education. After many discussions with his family, Jerry chose to attend USF because it was not too far away from home, yet it provided him with the opportunity to grow and mature into manhood. As a first generation college student, Jerry was admitted into USF through SSS — an opportunity for which he continues to be grateful. One of Jerry's fondest memories at USF was meeting his first set of roommates. He remembers feeling some culture shock while meeting people who had different norms and unique ways of living life. He looks back at that experience as a time that allowed him to open up and be more accepting of different cultures.

Jerry has remained active in SSS even after his required 2-year participation contract was over. Jerry's favorite memory involving SSS was the summer of 2012, when he worked as a Peer Counselor for the incoming freshmen SSS students. His duties included providing intensive social and academic support for incoming freshmen students to help them be successful at USF. This position allowed him to meet students of different backgrounds who had all the same goal of earning a college degree. He was proud to be someone the new students could look up to and felt blessed to provide them with as much assistance as possible to help them have a successful transition into USF. He also feels grateful that SSS gave him this opportunity and trusted him enough to be one of the first points of contact for the program. His success as a Peer Counselor helped him transition into his current role as the SSS Summer Program Coordinator. In this position, Jerry helps incoming freshmen students with their admission paperwork and allows him to interact with younger SSS students as a role model and mentor. Consequently, Jerry has been an active and productive member of SSS during his entire tenure at USF!

During his time at USF, Jerry has also been active in other parts of campus life. He has been a member of the Cuban American Student Association, which has allowed him to celebrate his cultural heritage while networking with other students of similar backgrounds. Jerry is also a member of the Phi Sigma Theta National Honor Society, which is a testament to his dedication to academic excellence. Jerry has also participated in the INROADS program, whose mission is to "develop and place talented underserved youth in business and industry, and prepare them for corporate and community leadership" (<http://www.inroads.org/>). In addition, Jerry has recently joined Sigma Lambda Beta International Fraternity, Inc. This organization encourages its members to focus on leadership development, academic success, travel, networking, and brotherhood. These are traits Jerry hopes to exhibit and continue developing throughout his lifetime.

Jerry has participated in these various campus activities while also maintaining employment. In addition to his work with SSS, he has worked with USF Campus Recreation as an Intramural Official and Training Specialist, wherein he officiated over 100 intramural games and led informative training sessions for over 75 incoming referees.

*(Continued on page 3)*



*...continued from page 2* Jerry has also earned the honor of being selected as a Fellow in the NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUFP). This program provides mentoring for traditionally underrepresented and historically disenfranchised populations, as a way to help diversify and broaden the Student Affairs profession. As a Fellow, Jerry will have the opportunity to pursue scholarships, on-campus mentorship, and professional development events. This fellowship is particularly important for Jerry who plans to earn a Master’s degree in Student Affairs after graduating from USF. Jerry plans to graduate in May 2014 with a B.S. in Criminology and a Minor in Business Management.

Jerry believes that SSS helped him by providing him with the necessary building blocks and structure necessary for success as a USF student. He believes that SSS provides students with hundreds of resources to become a successful college student and leader in the community. Jerry’s final thoughts show his gratitude for SSS: “ I would just like to thank the entire SSS staff for being who they are. They genuinely care about this program and the students that come through the program. USF would not have been the same without each and every one of them. I am extremely thankful to have them in my life. They have demanded nothing but success from me and are a major reason I am the person I am today.” Very nice words from a humble and successful student. **SSS honors standout senior Jerry Silva for his academic and personal achievements!**

#### CAMPUS QUOTES: HOW HAS SSS HELPED YOU TRANSITION INTO USF? WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT/USEFUL PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE GOTTEN FROM SSS?

**Jasmine Taylor, Junior, Psychology:** “SSS helped me become aware of all of the opportunities here at USF. They became my family away from family and helped me meet so many new people. One of the things I love most about SSS are the Counselors. They are always available and ready to listen of help. Without SSS, I truly would be lost here!”

**Leon Riley, Junior, Mechanical Engineering:** “SSS has put me on a path to success!”

**Crystal Martinez, Sophomore, Criminology/Pre-Law:** “SSS has given me the opportunity of a lifetime. If it weren’t for SSS I would not be enrolled at USF. I am not just a number. I am cared for in SSS. I am a successful student because of SSS.”

**Shao-Hua Wang, Junior, Business Administration:** “SSS has provided the best services. My SSS Counselor is always there to help me through all of the obstacles academically. Her advice is always helpful, too. SSS program is the best program on this campus!”

**Brittani Penrod, Sophomore, Criminology:** “SSS has been a family for me. It has helped me in classes as well as everyday life! With love and support, SSS is always there for me no matter what — academics or personal issues.”

**Andrea Bueno, Sophomore, Pre-Nursing:** “SSS has helped me understand my financial aid better.”

**Windell Blair II, Junior, Business Administration:** “SSS has helped me become an adult. It not only motivated me to take my grades seriously, but has also made me mature as a man.”

**Michelle Almonor, Sophomore, Business Administration:** “SSS is most definitely a blessing for me! I am a first generation college student and did not have guidance for the transition from high school into a university — but with the help of SSS I found my way! The seminars are informative, the Counselors are supportive, and SSS as a whole is one of the best things that happened in my life.”



SSS students have BULL PRIDE!





*Congratulations to the following freshmen and sophomore SSS students with a USF GPA of 3.0 or above*

Puja Rudra  
Maxwell Schmidt  
Randy Schutt  
James Seidel  
Samantha Shrader  
Sarah Simpson  
Victoria Smith  
Jayde Stansell  
Lauren Sullivan  
Christian Sumalpong  
Lauren Swertfeger  
Bianca Tabor  
Nikeya Tarver  
Jasmine Taylor  
Jazzette Taylor  
Olubusola Teniola  
Jacob Tesvich  
Daniel Trevino  
Althea Tyrell  
Brandon Vega  
Mackenzie Velez  
Jacob Votos  
James Wiley

~Caine Wilson, Sophomore, Pre-Athletic Training

Kali Martin  
Saranique Morgan  
Kenny Ramos  
Bianca Tabor  
Maria Thompson

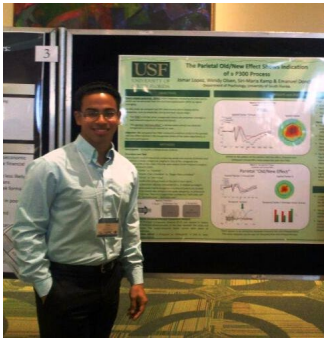




## SSS STUDENT SUCCESS COMES IN MANY FORMS!

- ◆ Congratulations to the SSS students who presented research at the **Undergraduate Research and Arts Colloquium** in April 2013:

Yara Perez del Castillo  
Jomar Lopez  
Gladys Munoz  
Sarah Parsi  
Chantell Robinson



Jomar Lopez conducted undergraduate research

- ◆ SSS also had students represented at the **2013 Graduate and Postdoctoral Scholar Research Symposium** hosted by the **USF Office of Graduate Studies**. The symposium provided a wonderful developmental opportunity for undergraduate students and an opportunity to network and interact with graduate students and post-docs from programs in which they may hope to become a part after graduating from USF.

- ◆ Congratulations to Esther Auzirus! Esther is a sophomore Nursing major who was selected as a scholarship recipient by the **Florida Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel, Inc. (FAEOPP)**. FAEOPP is an organization for all TRIO employees in the state of Florida. Esther competed against several other TRIO students across the state. This financial assistance will help Esther successfully complete her studies at USF.

- ◆ Crystal Martinez is honored to receive the **First Generation Matching Grant** for 2013-14. Funds for this program come from donations to the USF Foundation and matching funds from the State of Florida. Crystal is a 2nd year SSS student at USF, but is classified as a Junior because of her credits from Advanced Placement classes in high school. She is a Criminology major with a minor in Political Science, and she is also a member of the Honors College. Crystal plans to pursue a career in Law so that she can give back to society and help others achieve the American dream.

- ◆ Krystine White is a sophomore Public Health major who participated in the **USF Education Abroad** program in Madrid, Spain during the summer of 2013. During her stay, she also visited Barcelona and Paris. Krystine notes that her favorite part of the trip was meeting new people and creating memories together. The most challenging aspect of her study abroad experience was learning a different culture...and learning how to use the Metro system was a challenge, too! Ultimately, Krystine found her study abroad experience to be rewarding and enriching because it expanded her mind: “I recommend anyone who can, to go study abroad at least once in their college career. The experience was priceless and something that I look back on very frequently.”



Krystine White learned about a different culture while studying abroad in Spain

*“Student Support Services has given me opportunities that I would not have had the chance to experience. Attending college was a major concern — financially — for my family. SSS has helped me gain confidence, meet new people, and introduced the most to me at USF.*

*I am so appreciative for what SSS has done for me!”*

~Taylor Frye, Junior, Psychology

## STUDENT ESSAY: "SSS IS THE BEST PROGRAM AT USF"

**Student Support Services** is basically the reason that I am attending USF and for that I am extremely grateful because I really feel at home here with all of the friendships that I have made and the support of my amazing counselor who is always there for me.

I am attending the University of South Florida because I wish to one day become a Pediatrician. **SSS** is really helping me out with one day reaching this goal. I understand that to attain this goal that I have, I really need to buckle down on school work because medical school is extremely hard to get into. When I graduate from here I want to at least have a 3.8 GPA and possibly attend a medical school in New York or Massachusetts, or at least do my residency up there.

I believe that it's important to have a college education because in this country if you want to do anything that's going to pay more than minimum wage then you need to actually have a degree. It isn't how it

was years ago when my parents' generation or my grandparents' generation was growing up where you didn't really need a degree because there would still be plenty of jobs available to you. These days even without a degree you are still not guaranteed a job either, but you at least have a way better chance than someone without a college education. Another reason I think it's important for me to have a college education is just because without a college education, there is no way that I can attain my goal of one day becoming a pediatrician.

One thing that the **Student Support Services** has given me is access to amazing an amazing counselor that always listens to all of my problems very diligently and tries her best to solve any problems that I might have, even if it doesn't seem to be a very big problem. This program also helped me make friends that I love very much. Because we were all

living together and had similar classes and had to go to the same meetings and seminars, I became extremely close to a lot of the students in this program. **SSS** has given me someone to turn to whenever I need something because it's like we are all a huge family inside of USF. I see **SSS** students literally everywhere.

Another thing that **SSS** provides me with is seminars that help us all with issues that we may be facing at the moment or will one day in the future. Seminars also are sometimes very informative on things that we have questions for like financial aid or registering for classes for example.

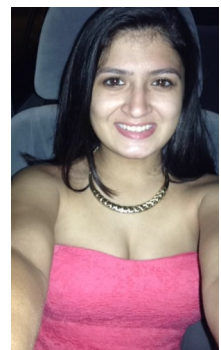
**SSS** also makes sure to let me know all of the resources that I have available to me on campus for free that can be useful to me. They make sure that I stay on track with everything from my academics to the clubs that I should be joining, to my social life as well. My

counselor makes sure that everything in my life is going smoothly and if it's not, then she offers up her advice and points me at other resources that could help me as well. With **SSS** I feel like I always have someone there that cares about me, someone that I can confide in whenever I have a problem, and someone that will just always be there if I ever just need to talk to someone about basically anything.

This program helped me out a tremendous amount this summer as well by getting me grants and scholarships to pay for my summer classes in my first semester here at USF. That helped me out a lot because I didn't expect for the semester to cost as much. Also, since college costs so much and over the years all of the loans that I have to take out are going to accumulate, it was nice to have at least one summer that I didn't have to worry about because it was already paid for by scholarships and grants.

To give back to **Student Support Services**, I will always make sure that everyone knows who got me here and where I am going to go because of this great program. I'm going to be available to **SSS** whenever I am needed and going to start making my appointments extremely early so that it doesn't frustrate my counselor so much.

**Student Support Services** has overall been a blessing for me. It has helped me out so much already and I can only imagine how much help I am going to receive in the future as well. I'm glad that I came in to USF in this program because I wasn't even planning on attending this school but decided last minute that I should do so, and I have not regretted my decision ever since.



~Melanie Medrano,  
Sophomore, Psychology/Pre-Med

## SEMINARS FOR SUCCESS!

SSS seminars are designed to give students important information and announcements to help them be successful at USF and in life beyond. These seminars cover topics such as:

- How to register for classes using OASIS
- College major exploration and career decision
- Embracing diverse perspectives in a global world
- The benefits of undergraduate research
- The benefits of living on-campus and joining campus organizations
- How to read a DegreeWorks report and calculate a college GPA
- Tips for college success, including navigating the library, time management, stress management, study and test-taking skills
- Financial aid and scholarship information, including how and when to complete a FAFSA and Bright Futures renewal criteria
- Preparing for graduate or professional school



Thank you to the many USF departments who contribute to the success of 2013-14 SSS seminars via presentations and handouts for students...

Career Services  
Wellness Education  
Campus Recreation  
USF Federal Credit Union  
The USF Counseling Center  
Tutoring & Learning Services  
Office of Multicultural Affairs  
USF Office of Graduate Studies  
Office of Undergraduate Research  
Students with Disabilities Services  
Financial Education & Outreach Program  
University Scholarships & Financial Aid Services  
Center for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention

***We greatly appreciate our many collaborative partners on campus!***





# Student Support Services

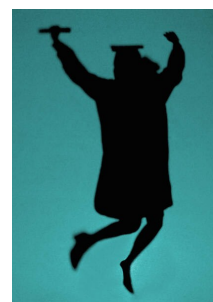
**USF** UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH FLORIDA





## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2012 AND 2013 SSS GRADUATES OF USF!

Detrice Albert-Ellis, B.S.W., Social Work  
 Carlos Alvarez, B.A., International Business  
 Jennifer Andre, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Justin Andrews, B.A., Political Science  
 Kayla Angelone, B.A., Elementary Education  
 Jacquelin Arango, B.S., Marketing  
 Kiyuana Armalin, B.S., Public Health  
 Tiffany Ashman, B.S., Applied Science  
 Jeanselmo Barreto, B.S., Management  
 Calisha Belen, B.S., Elementary Education  
 Joanna Belizaire, B.A., Mass Communications  
 Shallyn Bensonhuber, B.A., Communication  
 Jewel Bernard, B.S., Public Health  
 Chelsea Bevel, B.A., Mass Communications  
 Khadijah Bey, B.S., Physical Education  
 Daralyn Bogan, B.A., Communication  
 Austin Bowen, B.A., Criminology  
 Renee Campbell, B.S., Accounting  
 Maribel Caputo, B.A., Psychology  
 Stephanie Cardona, B.S., Elementary Ed.  
 Anthony Castanon, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Joy Celestin, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Devon Chang, B.S., Management  
 Daphne Choute, B.A., Psychology  
 Shaniqua Clark, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Carl Cunningham, B.S., Biomedical Sciences  
 Michaela Cunningham, B.A., Psychology  
 Shantaya Dawes, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Barbara Delestre, B.S., Elementary Education  
 Austin Dudley, B.A., Criminology  
 Sade Duncan, B.S., Elementary Education  
 Nushaye Elliott, B.S., Management  
 Simone Facey, B.A., Sociology  
 Kyela Faett, B.A., Communication  
 Eduardo Feliz, B.S., Public Health  
 Chelsea Flint, B.A., Criminology  
 D'Satrius Florence, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Franklyn Foster, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Elizabeth Fuentes, B.A., Sociology  
 Rasheen Gadson, B.A., Criminology  
 Kaitlyn Garcia, B.A., International Studies  
 Amanda Garretson, B.A., Communication Sciences & Disorders  
 Jonathan Geneus, B.A., English  
 Omar Gonzales, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Raymond Gonzales, B.S., Management Information Systems  
 Zuleika Grant, B.A., Psychology  
 Rebekah Greer, B.S., Elementary Education  
 Alexandria Gullage, B.S., Public Health  
 Candace Guy, B.A., International Studies  
 Thu-Thao Ha, B.S., Public Health  
 Courtney Hadley, B.S., Elementary Education  
 Aubrey Hall, B.A., Women's Studies  
 Danielle Hall, B.A., Sociology  
 Ashley Hance, B.A., Anthropology  
 Kierra Harden, B.A., Mass Communications  
 Ciara Harris, B.S., Public Health  
 Geoffrey Higgins, B.S., Accounting  
 Nicole Hollimon, B.A., Criminology  
 Crystal Houston, B.A., Psychology  
 Ashyia Ivey, B.S., Management  
 Kanika Jack, B.A., Psychology  
 Jacob Jackson, B.A., Communication  
 Jacqueline Jackson, B.S., Early Childhood Education  
 Jose Jaime, B.A., Criminology  
 Tracy Jean-Pierre, B.A., Criminology  
 Monica Jimenez, B.A., Communication Sciences & Disorders  
 Kanesha Johnson, B.A., Criminology  
 Myles Johnson, B.S., Public Health  
 Joanne Joseph, B.A., Sociology  
 Rothenarda Joseph, B.S., Biomedical Sciences  
 Kayla Langford, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Tamyrnara Leconte, B.A., Psychology  
 Sara Linares, B.S., Civil Engineering  
 Diana Londono, B.A., International Studies  
 Heidi Lugo, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Sandy Macenat, B.S., Public Health  
 Ana Malpica, B.S., Finance  
 Samuel Maritato, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Philip Marler, B.A., Economics  
 Matthew Mason, B.S., Finance  
 Daniel Mayes, B.A., Criminology  
 Elarrge McMillon, B.S., Science Education  
 Dwayne McNaught, B.S., Public Health  
 Aline Milfort, B.A., Psychology  
 Breionka Miller, B.S.W., Social Work  
 Isiah Miller, B.A., Mass Communications  
 Brittany Moore, B.S., Management Information Systems  
 Brian Moore, B.A., Criminology & Psychology  
 Courteney Morris, B.A., Communication Sciences & Disorders  
 George Netterville, Jr., B.S., Music Education  
 Angelica Newton, B.A., English  
 Jennie Nwokoye, B.S., Biomedical Sciences  
 Karissa O'Neill, B.S., Special Education  
 Lonnie Oxendine, B.A., Economics  
 Jadell Patricio, B.A., Criminology  
 Shanique Patterson, B.S., Health Science  
 Sainfonie Placil, B.S., Public Health  
 Caroline Polanco, B.S., Public Health  
 Evenie Poteau, B.A., International Business  
 Takiyah Powell, B.A., Criminology  
 Ingrid Quinones, B.A., Political Science & Criminology  
 Andrea Ragin, B.A., Communication  
 Wendy Roman, B.S., Mathematics Education  
 Cesar Ramos, B.S., English Education  
 Dominick Ray, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Gamar Remy, B.A., Criminology  
 Alicia Roberts, B.A., Psychology  
 Andrew Robinson, B.S., Information Studies  
 Ryan Rogers, B.S., Management Information Systems  
 Michael Rosado, B.A., Economics  
 Anthony Saavedra, B.A., Economics  
 Kahlil Sada, B.S., Public Health  
 Deborah Saldana, B.S., Health Sciences  
 Aruba Sami, B.S., Public Health  
 Mylanie Sanchez, B.A., Women's Studies  
 David Sanabria, B.S., Civil Engineering  
 Tiara Sanders, B.A., Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
 Italo Sessarego, B.A., International Studies  
 Jotir Short, B.S., Finance  
 Ashley Smith, B.A., English  
 Jade Smith, B.A., Communication Sciences & Disorders  
 Lee Smith, B.A., Political Science  
 La'Kendra Snell, B.S., Finance  
 Kristina Sparacino, B.A., Communication  
 Marissa Stewart, B.A., Communication  
 Yvena St. Fort, B.S., Accounting  
 Shelly St. Surin, B.A., Gerontology  
 Yanan Sun, B.A., Studio Art  
 Givonni Symonette, B.S., Public Health  
 Cursten Taylor, B.A., Mass Communications  
 Justin Terzo, B.A., Theatre  
 Kassandra Timothe, B.A., Political Science  
 Jarah Tobler, B.A., Political Science  
 Jamal Tolbert, B.A., Sociology  
 Samara Toussaint, B.S., Public Health  
 Jalyssa Troupe, B.A., Psychology  
 Joshua Velez, B.A., Criminology  
 Jose Ventura, B.A., Anthropology  
 Allison Vila, B.A., Communication  
 Alejandra Villarreal, B.A., Communication  
 Sean Wallace, B.A., Criminology  
 Arielle Walls, B.A., Psychology  
 Jacara Ware, B.S., Management  
 Shanika White, B.S.W., Social Work  
 Brittany Wilkins, B.S., Public Health  
 William Willis, B.A., English  
 Alexander Yassein, B.S., Biomedical Sciences  
 Michael Young, B.A., Communication  
 Monica Ziegler, B.S., English Education  
 Kayla Zonni, B.S., Special Education





## SSS ALUMNI: MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD



• **Assu Etsubneh**

Promotions & Operations,  
ESSENCE Magazine Communications  
New York, NY

• **Eduardo Feliz**

Administrative Assistant, United Way  
Suncoast & Graduate  
Student, USF College of  
Public Health  
Tampa, FL

• **Ashley Hance**

Attending London School of  
Economics & Political Science for  
M.S. in Social Anthropology  
London, England

• **Myles Johnson**

Graduate Research Assistant &  
Graduate Student in USF College  
of Public Health  
Tampa, FL

• **Jonathan Geneus**

Writer/Reviewer,  
Binder & Binder Law Firm  
Tampa, FL

• **Jennie Nwokoye**

Attending Towson University  
for M.S. in Forensic Science  
Baltimore, MD



**Bekkah Marshall, CEHP** was raised in public housing. She values this experience because it was her initial training ground to overcome surmounting obstacles while maintaining a positive outlook. She had to extend beyond her circumstances to progress from first generation college student hopeful to an environmental professional. She had to lean on an uplifting belief system, inner strength and strategic vision. Collectively, these elements helped her deal with stigmas and limitations associated with poverty. While dealing with these obstacles, poetry became her outlet and creative voice. Now she embeds poetry and creative storytelling in her presentations. When she speaks it is evident the content is radiating from her heart, real-world experiences, strategic mind-set and optimism. While participating in SSS, Bekkah engaged in challenging scientific research while pursuing her Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from USF. In addition, she has obtained a graduate certificate in Wetland and Water Resource Management from the University of Florida. Currently as a Certified Environmental Health Professional she deals with the impact of food and water borne diseases in communities. Her experience is in food and water protection. She routinely deals with the impacts of water hygiene in connection with public health. Bekkah is also a Certified Women's Empowerment Coach and STEM/STEAM Advocate. She increased her effectiveness in empowering girls and women by becoming a Certified Empowerment Coach through the Professional Women Network. She blends her varied experiences and knowledge into a motivating platform. She is equipped to provide solutions for an alarming reality. Currently there is a critically low percentage of girls and women actively involved in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). In addition this percentage decreases when young girls and women are faced with poverty. Bekkah is able to harness her inner power and affinity with STEM to create a force of empowerment. She achieves this by conducting workshops on Emotional Wellness, Leadership, Empowerment and Self-Esteem with an underlying focus on STEM. She knows personally this has the potential to uplift, transform and inspire girls and women to maximize their gifts, talents and abilities. She is aware that her triumphs early in life were laying a foundation for her to now stand as a spokesperson. She serves as a bridge as STEM programs consider a STEAM structure.

(<http://www.bekkahmarshall.com/>)



SSS Alumni, USF Graduates: Eduardo Feliz (l) and Jonathan Geneus (r).

Both were accepted into graduate school programs — in Public Health and Law, respectively.



**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

University of South Florida  
Division of Undergraduate Studies  
4202 E. Fowler Avenue, SVC 2011 Tampa, FL 33620

Phone: 813-974-4301 Fax: 813-974-8208

Website: <http://www.us.usf.edu/sss/sss.htm>

SSS Award: 5yr. Federal \$1,587,468 (74%); State \$563,269 (26%).