A Provost Scholar is crowned Miss Congeniality 2015

Leslie Gibson
Cohort 2013

The annual Mr. and Miss USF pageant competition took place on Thursday, February 12 in the Marshall Student Center Ballroom. Sponsored by Student Government, Mr. and Miss USF is a prestigious competition that allows winners to receive recognition campus-wide, scholarships, and prizes.

This year, one of our very own PSPs Amanda Muench competed. She received the 2015 award for Miss Congeniality, an honor that is given to participants that show extraordinary friendliness and respect towards others. Amanda is a senior studying Psychology with a minor in Technical Theater who is a part of the Provost’s Scholars Program.

You probably have seen Amanda around campus or at a PSP event as she actively participates in campus life as a member of Greek Life and the Honors College, among many other organizations.

The process of preparing for the competition was extensive but Amanda enthusiastically practiced a talent (singing), found evening attire and fitness gear, and rehearsed interview questions.

Amanda hopes that participating in the Miss USF competition will help break stereotypes about the Greek community and show that there is more to sorority women than meets the eye. For her platform, she hopes to spread awareness of her sorority’s national philanthropic cause, Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA) and to work with Student Government to endorse safety at USF along with anti-bullying programs within the university.

We are all so proud of Amanda for being such a positive representation of the university and of the Provost’s Scholars Program.
To become a Provost’s Scholar, prospective students must complete an application and, if qualified, a phone or in-person interview. The familiar voice on the end of nearly every one of those calls is none other than Dr. Sondra Fogel, the Director of Special Programs within the Honors College. The majority of her time goes towards recruiting and developing the Provost Scholars Program (PSP), and ensuring the success of current cohorts.

Dr. Fogel received her Ph. D. in social work from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and has focused her scholarship and professional career on issues related to poverty, including homelessness. Volunteering is one of her favorite things to do, which she feels many students do not realize is pivotal to understanding the world around them.

“Being able to help those need it is really crucial in realizing just how close we are to each other,” Dr. Fogel said. “You’ve got to be able appreciate what you have in order to understand how other people are struggling.”

Another passion Dr. Fogel has is about being a scholar in her field of social work. She has numerous published articles and has recently been appointed the position of Editor-in-Chief for the Families in Society: Journal of Contemporary Human Services. This is the oldest journal in her field which began publication in 1920. Being able to write about major issues taking place helps her feel like the work she is doing really helps others in the long run, hopefully inspiring others to get involved and assist those in need as well.

“I think that it is so important that everyone sees vulnerable and marginalized children, families, and communities who are so often put in the shadows,” Fogel said. “I want everyone, no matter what their situation may be, to be shown personal dignity and respect from others.”

When she is not hard at work at USF, Fogel enjoys walking her cat (yes cat), and being able to take in some peace and quiet to get away from the hustle and bustle of university life. Having wanted to join the Peace Corps in what she describes as an “earlier life,” Dr. Fogel feels that even though USF may not be where she thought she would end up, she wouldn’t trade it for the world.

She thinks that although there is no official class on happiness, students should try to learn how to find the bright side of life each day. “Focusing on being kind to others, thanking those for what they do and being happy are three essential keys to success,” Dr. Fogel said. “Learning how to truly enjoy life is the best lesson one can learn.”

Dr. Fogel’s office is housed in the second floor of the Allen Building with her door always open for students. She says that if any Provost’s Scholar has questions, comments or concerns they are encouraged to come by and discuss them with her to help better their experience in the program.

“Focusing on being kind to others, thanking those for what they do, and being happy are the essentials to success.”
Discovering internships in your department

Britнии Burns
Cohort 2013

Everyone wants a good job after graduation, but what if you could know what it was like to have that job now? Well, you can with an internship. I know getting an internship sounds competitive and impossible, but the reality is easy if you know where to look.

The best place to start is looking toward your department. Being a Provost Scholar’s student you also have the ability to pull from the experiences of your fellow Provosts to help guide you in trying to find an internship.

MY EXPERIENCE:

Last semester I stumbled upon a flyer in one of my classes advertising an English department internship information session. I was intrigued to say the least. I had always wanted to get an internship, but I didn’t know where to start. The internships in the English department were surprisingly vast; I learned the real magnitude of the field upon meeting my fellow interns in the English department. The internship that I got was even better than anything I thought I could get.

I am a prospective law student, and upon expressing my interest in law I was placed in the Public Defender’s office in Hillsborough County. So far I have barely gotten my feet wet, but I feel like I am learning so much. Other interns in the English department are interning at a range of places, from a film festival to working for the Tampa Bay Lighting. At the Public Defender’s office we have interns from a variety of departments as well. The opportunities are available, so you should look for information to see what is available in your department.

WHY BECOME AN INTERN AND WHEN TO GO FOR IT:

Becoming an intern has a multitude of benefits, some immediate and some prospective. First and foremost, internships can be paid. The position I currently hold is not, but there are a good amount that are. Internships are also a fantastic resume builder. Being able to say that you have on the job experience can help you stand above the competition for grad school or job applications. When applying to grad school, your internship sponsor could also make for a very good letter of recommendation. They could serve as a person you can speak of your abilities, and not just your potential. If you are looking for a job, an internship is a great way to get your foot in the door. While it is not to be expected, being an intern at a company has led to permanent positions.

One of the best benefits that I have found with my internship is the ability to get course credit for it. Depending upon the program that your department has established, it is possible to get credit toward graduation for your time spent interning. For example, I am required to intern for 10 hours a week and I get 3 credit hours toward graduation. The English department will even let you retake the internship class a second time for additional credit. So now that you are convinced that taking an internship will change your life for the better, when should you go for it? For Provost Scholars I would suggest the spring semester of your second year, if you think you might want to take it twice. If not, aim for the fall of your third year so you can use your sponsor as a recommender for grad school applications if need be.
Catching up with Cohort 2014

Jennifer Stenback
Cohort 2012

MEET CHELSEA MULLIGAN

Chelsea is a first year Provost’s Scholar planning to double major in International Studies and German. When researching universities, Chelsea said that USF stood out “as the most prominent school in the Florida system with respect to a global focus.” Chelsea also saw the strength in the German program at USF as a major factor in her decision to become a USF Bull.

As a Provost’s Scholar, she is enjoying the accelerated program and appreciates the balance of individual freedom and academic support provided by the PSP Program. With her language and international studies focuses, Chelsea plans to continue her education by pursuing a graduate degree abroad with the ultimate goal of a globally focused career. She is currently looking at institutions in Germany, Sweden, and Austria where she would like to continue her studies in international relations or possibly branch into international journalism or European studies.

On campus, Chelsea is a staff writer for the Oracle, USF’s student newspaper. She is also involved in the Model United Nations Club and Cru, a Christian student organization. Chelsea has taken on leadership roles within both of these organizations and is looking forward to directing committees and leading students in upcoming semesters.

In her free time, Chelsea also bakes, cooks, and draws. To see her work, search @chelseamugs on Instagram. In the summer of 2015, Chelsea will be studying abroad in Germany through the USF Education Abroad program to improve her language skills. She also plans to stay in Europe beyond the program for independent travel.

The sense of community within Cohort 14 is something Chelsea really values about the PSP Program, and an aspect she hopes to see increase among all the cohorts. Since coming to USF, Chelsea has enjoyed the ease of meeting people and the accepting atmosphere of the USF campus. As an International Studies major, Chelsea has truly enjoyed the diversity of the USF community and is looking forward to building a more global perspective during her college experience.

(continued on page 5)
choice he called a “no-brainer.” After earning his Bachelor’s degree, Zachary plans to continue his education to earn a PhD in Chemistry with a research concentration in Environmental Chemistry. It is his hope to conduct meaningful research within his field, which will practically apply chemistry to real world problems.

Although it is only his second semester at USF, Zachary is very involved on campus. As a member of the PSP Social and Events Committee, he helps plan events for members of all three PSP Cohorts. For him, the Social and Events Committee makes a real impact by allowing students to get to know others in the program.

To expand his involvement with the Honors College, he is also a member of the Honors College Student Council where he serves on the Volunteer Committee. “We participate in service projects all across the Tampa Bay area, which makes me feel closer to the community at large, and is one of my favorite things about USF so far,” commented Zachary.

Outside of USF, Zachary has also participated for nine years in Odyssey of the Mind, a program that builds both social and problem-solving skills. He is looking forward to judging the competition for his home county this year. In the future, Zachary plans to expand his leadership experience by applying for an RA position and taking on a leadership role in the Honors College Student Council.

He also has dreams of using his PSP international experience to fulfill a “bucket list” dream of traveling to Germany or Switzerland to visit the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research.

During his time in the Provost’s Scholars Program, Zachary hopes to see an increased cohesion among the cohorts. His hope is that the PSP Social and Events Committee will foster that through their joint cohort events.

This hope aligns well with what Zachary has found to be the most valuable asset of his USF experience so far: “My favorite part of USF so far,” he explained, “has been the group of friends that I've built since I came here. I love how the network of people I know keeps expanding through everyone that I've met.”

For Zachary, the experiences of living in the Honors LLC and being incorporated into the Provost’s Scholars family has made a lasting impact in his college career and has cultivated a student proud to be a USF Bull.
As many of you may recall, I was away from USF and the wonderful Provost’s Scholars Program during this past fall semester. I lived in the beautiful country of Morocco in northern Africa for almost four months, visiting various locations throughout Europe on my journey as well. This was an experience that I will treasure and appreciate for the rest of my life.

I am not the same person I was at the time of my departure from America. I had heard from many sources that I would grow and that living abroad would change me, but I had no idea the extent to which they were correct. While it still is difficult to put these changes into words, something I can definitely say with total certainty is that I did not realize how much I would miss USF.

Of course, I anticipated missing friends and our beautiful campus, but I missed just about everything about USF. From chance meetings with Provost Wilcox to planning sessions with Ms. Wray to the many PSP events that go on during the semester, I found myself longing for my return to our great campus while I was away.

I returned to the United States mid-December, just in time for my birthday and the holidays.

With so many family members to catch up with and various celebrations to be had, I really didn’t have time to deal with jet lag. I figured that I would stay awake for the approximate 30 hours of travel on my way back home and then be tired enough to bypass jet lag. As it turns out, that isn’t possible.

For about a week, no matter how hard I tried to force my internal clock to right itself, I was as tired as a zombie by around 7PM and ready to wake up around 6AM. As I was on Christmas vacation, you can see why this was disappointing. So here is a word of advice to those of you planning to travel for any length of time: do not underestimate jet lag! It actually exists, and there’s nothing you can do about it but deal with it and let time fix the problem.

Another thing I wasn’t sure existed but was warned about was reverse culture shock. My directors in Morocco especially told me that going from a less developed country back to America can be a little overwhelming at first. Again, I figured that I would be fine. How much can things really change in just a few months?

The answer is a lot. A lot can change in a few months. My little trips to Italy and The United Kingdom served as buffers, though. Had I not gotten a little taste of the Western world for those few months, I believe my culture shock would have (continued on page 7)
been worse. But even with those vacations, coming back to America was both exhilarating and bewildering.

While I was excited beyond words to see the faces of my loved ones again, I was confronted with the harsh truth that life in America didn’t pause when I left. It grew as I did overseas. The music playing on the radio was foreign to me, my younger brothers and sisters all looked older, and even my local shopping mall was totally renovated. I made the mistake of going there the first full day I was home, and here is my next piece of advice: if you want to tackle reverse culture shock head on, go to your local mall. Just seeing so many Americans in one place and then the outrageous prices on items that seem so superfluous was enough to make me anxious.

It was bizarre being so happy to be back in this familiar environment yet so appalled at the fact that the clothes in these stores was the same price of a round trip plane ticket to Italy just weeks before. But that is just something that comes with living in the United States; stuff is expensive, and it may take some getting used to upon returning from a long trip in a less developed region.

Once I got past those few hurdles, I was anticipating my glorious return to the amazing University of South Florida. Before leaving Morocco, I had a few things to take care of: registering for spring semester classes, establishing housing arrangements, and confirming financial aid and scholarship resources.

For anyone else studying abroad for an entire semester, these things are essential to remember and take care of in a timely manner so as to have plenty of time to resolve any issues that may come up. Once I got back to USF, there were more matters to be dealt with.

Among the most important were finalizing my class schedule for the semester, setting up advisor appointments both with my major advisor and Ms. Wray, discussing my return to my job on campus with my supervisors, and checking the Honors College calendar for upcoming PSP events. All of these things were essential in my first week back at USF so that my transition was as smooth as possible.

After all the formalities were taken care of, I was able to relax and simply enjoy being back. I have seen old friends, made new ones, and established a routine for this semester that manages classes, work, special events, meetings, and various clubs and other extracurricular activities (such as writing for Breaking Stereotypes).

While I miss my old roommates and think about my Moroccan adventure often, I am excited to continue on with life here at USF and embrace all the opportunities that are waiting for me here as I continue with my final years as a PSP.
My name is Caitlin Dumke and I am a third year Provost’s scholar preparing for graduation this coming May. I take a full class load every semester and work around 20 hours a week at a small cafe in the basement of Moffitt Cancer Center here on campus. My major is Communication with a minor in Women and Gender Studies and I am in the process of applying to graduate schools to pursue my passion for issues in the Women and Gender Studies field.

I encourage you to ask me any questions you may have concerning the Provost’s Scholars Program or life in general. You may contact me at cdumke@mail.usf.edu. If you prefer to remain nameless in the newsletter, please let me know and I will address your question anonymously.

Dear Anonymous,

These are the three most important lessons I have learned during my time at USF!

1. DON’T PROCRASTINATE!
   
   I know you’ve heard this a million times, but it is very important! I can tell you firsthand as someone who has made a very bad habit of this over the years, that while putting off those small assignments for your classes may work, but you are not doing yourself any favors when it comes to your leadership involvement and your research project that are both requirements for graduation as a PSP student. When you wait until your senior year to begin working on them, life isn’t so forgiving. Internships, jobs, those last few upper-level courses, and many other factors can make these manageable tasks extremely stressful.

2. CONNECT WITH THE MANY WONDERFUL MENTORS IN THE HONORS COLLEGE!

   I cannot count the times that I visited Dr. Fogel or Ms. Geiger (our previous PSP advisor) during my time at USF, not only to discuss academic matters, but simply for support! Ms. Wray cares about each and every student as if they were her highest priority, and the attention that Dr. Fogel gives to each of her students astounds me. She makes the effort to know all of the PSP students on a personal level.

(continued on page 8)
Consult Caitlin (continued from page 8)

and truly cares about their success, both during their time at USF and long term. The guidance I’ve received from the individuals who collectively make this program a possibility is something that you should utilize and appreciate greatly. Not every professor can or will be able to assist you in such a way. 

3. STRATEGIZE.

When I was a freshman, I was given a rough outline of which classes I would need to complete during each semester, and when to study abroad, in order to graduate on time. I came home and excitedly searched for class options and planned out each semester and I am so happy that I did. I had a very good sense of what my class load would be like depending on the classes I chose, and I rearranged many of my plans based on the level of difficulty each semester posed. Along the way, I still had to make changes, but in the end I was able to take a few extra classes and choose a minor as well! That simple planning shaped my entire undergrad experience.

I wish you all the best!

Sincerely,
Caitlin

Changing majors and finding yourself

Kendall Griesse
Cohort 2014

One of the biggest pressures faced by college freshmen, or college students in general, is the ongoing endeavor of “self-discovery” that comes with picking a major. The decision is a pretty vital one that parents and educators alike throw at students who are often experiencing life on their own for the first time in such an ever-changing, fast-paced environment but, for most, it is one that can be made with experience and time. It is in this aspect that Provost’s Scholars can potentially find themselves in a bit of trouble: we do not have the luxury of time.

Eight consecutive semesters comes down to just three short years and while it proves to be a pretty remarkable opportunity, it is not entirely unfounded for a student to feel like time is running out.

I came into my first year of college determined to become a nurse. I came to the University of South Florida for the incredible nursing program. I cried when I received my early admission notice into the College of Nursing. I was completely positive that I had chosen the path that I was going to spend the rest of my life following. The problem with all of this was that the high school version of myself had made all of those decisions. By the end of my first semester, I had seemingly grown into another person entirely. By October, I had to force myself to go to class everyday and by the evening it was nearly impossible to make myself pick up a textbook. I was miserable and the only thing I could think of was how trapped I was feeling – I had let an entire precious semester go by... it was just too late for me to do anything but continue on with nursing! One day, in the middle of a

(continued on page 10)
Changing majors and finding yourself (cont. from page 9)

chemistry lecture, I just couldn’t do it any-
more and emailed Ms. Wray then and there.

To make a long story short, I got in with
Ms. Wray a week later and by the end of the
month, I had switched my major to behav-
ioral healthcare and even picked up a minor
in creative writing. It’s now half of the way
through my first semester in my new major
and I still find myself fascinated by my clas-
ses everyday – and I’m not even in the really
cool upper levels courses yet! I feel like I’ve
truly found “my place” within the realm of
majors and time isn’t quite as pressing as it
once seemed.

The “moral” of the story is that while our
time may be short here at the University of
South Florida, we are in no way at a disad-
vantage. Dr. Fogel and Ms. Wray are two
resources that can make nearly anything
happen so long as you reach out and talk to
them. The point of college is to find what
helps you become the best version of your-
self that you can be and, in that endeavor,
there really is no timeline.

Starting a club and becoming a leader

Erin Fowler
Cohort 2014

After meeting through Facebook last se-
mester due to mutual interest in films, some
students of USF and I decided to create a
film club here at USF. Unsure exactly of
how the process worked, we initially just
created a group on Facebook for anyone
interested in creating—or even just watch-
ing—films to join and discuss. The group
was a hit. In a couple months we were up to
60 members, and as of this writing we’re up
to 90.

Not long later we decided to start writing
up a constitution to become an official stu-
dent organization on campus. We consulted
Gregory Bowers to be our official club
sponsor, and he took us through the pro-
cess and made it substantially less confus-
ing.

After a couple submissions to the Center
for Student Involvement (the CSI) and
some tweaking to the outline of our club’s
objectives, we finally got approved and are
now the Cinematography Club is an official
organization at USF.

Our club’s objectives are rather simple: to
collaborate with one another in order to
create a finished product that tells a story
through video. We meet every Tuesday to
create an atmosphere wherein everyone can
pitch their ideas and then assemble a group
to work on it.

The club has proved to be extremely ful-
filling thus far to both me and the other
members. Since I hope to work in the film
industry in the future, it has offered an
amazing outlet to gain experience and meet
people with similar interests. Not to men-
tion that it has shown me so much about
responsible and leadership, being that I
am an officer.

The main goal of the club is to gather cre-
ative people together who enjoy the video
medium and create short projects to prac-
tice refining our skills. Last semester, the
club was very much focused on creating

(continued on page 11)
one big project, and we ended up spending most of the time trying to perfect the script for Campus Movie Fest. We were trying to write a social commentary on the age of social media based on the anonymous posting app called YikYak; however, it proved to be too serious for the tone we were trying to set, and so we moved away from that idea.

This semester, we are switching the goals from being more serious into more light-hearted creation of short movies or music videos. Since I am so passionate about film, it has been a lot of fun so far to explore what I do and do not like to create and get a better feel for what aspect of film speaks to me the most.

This club has taught me that if there is something you are passionate about that there is not already an organization for, you have the power to create your own! USF is wonderful at catering to us as young people trying to cultivate our passions, and as Provost’s Scholars we have a knack for leading. It takes a lot of hard work, dedication, and persistence, but getting involved with/starting a club is something that provides you with a massive amount of personal satisfaction.

Balancing campus perks with a busy schedule

Christy Ibrahim
Cohort 2014

As of this semester all on-campus students, such as PSPs who are strongly recommended to live on campus, now have a membership through USF with HBO Go! This gives us access to blockbuster hit movies, our favorite TV shows, skits and stand up comedies, all of the boxing you could ever want to watch, documentaries on some of the coolest people in America and around the world, and because we are mature adults, we get access to HBO’s “late night” films.

I am a fan of all forms of entertainment, however, my favorites to watch are movies such as The Hobbit and The Lego Movie, all the stand up comedies they have, and I could watch HBO’s plethora of documentaries for hours!

If you are anything like me, you could sit down for hours watching movies and shows, especially with free access to it anywhere just by using any smart phone, laptop, tablet, or smart TVs. I believe, though, that like anything else in this world, HBO Go is best when used in moderation. I recommend doing all the schoolwork that needs to be done before even thinking about what you want to watch.

We all know that once you watch one episode of Game of Thrones it takes a lot of willpower to stop watching, until you’ve run out of new episodes. This is why I think it is best to crank all of your homework out right after class, then spend some time with friends, go to work, do some studying, stay active in the community, and make sure to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner. After you call it a night and get into bed, then you can get your HBO Go on by watching a movie or an episode of your favorite show.

The reason I think it is best to watch HBO Go at night is because you can make sure you have time for everything else during the day, and eventually you will become too tired to watch anything else. If you are extraordinarily good at controlling your instinct to sleep, just set a time for yourself that you absolutely have to go to sleep in order to function the next day. Make the most of your time here at USF, get the best grades you possibly can, stay as active as you can, and watch all the HBO Go your heart desires! Just remember balance and moderation are key.
you hear it as soon as you leave a Provost’s Scholars meeting. Students are throwing questions at each other.

“What are you doing for your research project?”

“Do you have a leadership position yet?” As members of this program, our to-do lists seem to be never-ending. It can be overwhelming when you think about all of the requirements we must fulfill, in addition to the academics and extracurricular activities that already fill our plates. However, the thing we tend to forget is just how capable we are of finding ways to not only accomplish tasks, but also to excel in them.

Though I am only in my second semester here at USF, I have already learned about the balance necessary to do this. Both semesters, I took at least 15 credit hours. As it turns out, juggling the workload of five classes is quite stressful! My first tip for managing your time effectively is to prioritize. If you have three assignments due all on the same day, start with the most time-intensive one. You’ll find that once you get into a homework groove your productivity will skyrocket.

Another tip is to accomplish easy tasks as soon as you can. These are the tasks that tend to slip our minds, so getting them done early will prevent you from scrambling to complete them at the last minute.

Sometimes even the things you love will demand a huge portion of your time. I am a member of the Herd of Thunder marching band, and it is one of my favorite things about college so far. However, with anywhere from two to four practices a week, time management became crucial. On weekends with a Saturday game or exhibition performance, I really only had one day a week free from class or band.

Every minute of your free time matters, so my next tip is to block off your time to accomplish specific tasks. Use that one-hour window on Wednesday afternoon to complete your statistics homework, or take that Tuesday morning before your class to work on a scholarship application. Giving each thing you need to do its own piece of your time is a huge help in balancing your schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and free time.

Every Provost’s Scholar is expected to get involved in clubs and organizations. Getting involved takes – you guessed it – more of your time. And, unlike it may have been in high school, you won’t be able to join every club and organization that crosses your radar. Choose groups and positions that appeal to your specific interests or goals so you make the most of your time.

For example, I am a member of the Advertising Committee in the Honors College Student Council. As a mass communications major focusing on journalism, I’m learning advertising skills that

(continued on page 13)
will allow me to become a more well-rounded mass communications professional. Here, I am acquiring skills I may not learn in a class. Similarly, I am a founding member of the Bulls Against Ebola organization, primarily managing the organization’s social media pages. This is another skill I will need in my future career.

Looking at the big picture of everything we have to do before graduating, it seems like a lot. When you break it all down, though, and realize you can only take it one step at a time, everything seems less overwhelming. It will take a lot of work, but that’s why we’re here. So let’s take a deep breath, grab some coffee, and get down to work together.

Getting acclimated to great expectations (cont. from page 12)

A nifty note from the editor to graduating third years

Kari Ann Piatt
Cohort 2012

Although it is only the second month of the year, the semester is continuing on and we are already more than a third of the way done! In less than two weeks we will be enjoying spring break, and in less than three short months we will have graduated.

I wanted to send out a friendly reminder to all of you to reach beyond the expectations which you may have set for yourself this semester. Stay on top of your responsibilities and prioritize them— I cannot stress enough how beneficial this is to you as a student and a human being.

Make sure that you are filling out forms that Ms. Amanda Koslow sends out every so often, as this is asked of us in order to facilitate our success. Remember to volunteer your remaining free time to this program, because now is our chance to give back. Open up letters from graduation school with a peaceful mind and search for a career with an open heart. And remember to have fun!

Our eighth semester is here so let’s break stereotypes!