

The New College Challenge Launches Week of Conversations About Resilience

The New College Challenge launch brought hundreds of attendees to New College of Florida campus for conversations on coastal, economic and social resilience.



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-- Last week's [New College Challenge](#) launch week brought hundreds of attendees to the [New College of Florida](#) campus. Students, faculty and staff (along with business, community and higher education leaders) engaged in community conversations about coastal, economic and social resilience.



The New College Challenge is a commitment to resilience of all kinds and the transformations necessary to achieve that resilience. For our campus, our community, our state and for generations to come"

New College President Patricia Okker, Ph.D.

THE NEW COLLEGE CHALLENGE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR COASTAL RESILIENCE

The series began with a kickoff brunch on Tuesday, October 25, under the bayfront tent. New College President Patricia Okker, Ph.D. introduced the crowd to the unifying, year-long initiative. The New College Challenge, she explained, was designed to bring together students, experts and leaders from top universities and industries who will work to address the challenges facing our region and the world today. Throughout [The Challenge](#), New College will become a community incubator for

brainstorming new ideas and solutions for the future.

"Whether through the unprecedented disruptions in the world of work, pressures on higher education, or the urgency of coastal resilience, this is no time for the status quo. The New College Challenge today is, at its heart, a commitment to resilience of all kinds and to the transformations necessary to achieve that resilience. For our campus, our community, our state and for generations to come," said Okker.

And the launch of The New College Challenge—with its series of discussions about protecting

coastal campuses and communities—could not have arrived at a more critical time. Less than a month ago, Southwest Florida experienced the devastating effects of Hurricane Ian, prompting locals to reimagine how to better safeguard against future environmental impacts.

New College has already enlisted experts and design teams from Harvard, Yale, the University of Florida, the University of South Florida, Kean University, Syracuse University and the University of Miami to lend their unique perspectives.



New College of Florida bayfront

“New College can play a key role in retaining top talent for our state. The New College Challenge is our vehicle to get us there,” said New College President Patricia Okker, Ph.D. “The design teams we’ve invited will help us find new and fresh ways to improve our infrastructure, to ensure that our campus supports our students. The relationships with employers, community members and other academic institutions we are developing through The Challenge will ensure the very resilience of New College.”

THE CHALLENGE KICKOFF

The October 25 kickoff event welcomed Taryn Sabia, Ed.M., M.Arch, MUCD, Director, Florida Center for Community Design + Research, Associate Professor of Research at the University of South Florida and the co-founder of the urban design collaborative Urban Charrette, Inc.; Teri Hansen, the president and CEO of Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation; and Kevin O’Farrell, Ph.D., the chancellor for the Florida Department of Education’s Division of Career and Adult Education to discuss the topic of resilience, moderated by DreamLarge Founder Anand Pallegar. William Dudley, a New College alumnus and the former president/CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, also discussed the topic of “resilience” from an economic/financial perspective.

On Wednesday, October 26, New College kicked off its “New Topics” lecture series with “Climate Crisis Now! Learning and Landscapes in a Changing Environment.” Speaker Chris Reed, professor at Harvard University and the founding director of STOSS Landscape Urbanism, shared his ambitious vision to be climate-ready in order to protect coastlines.

And on Friday, October 28, crowds converged for the “Designing for Resilience” Symposium on coastal resilience and adaptive strategies. National experts presented case studies and research

relevant to the Gulf Coast, and input from the community offered direction for their ongoing work.

RENOWNED EXPERTS JOIN THE NEW COLLEGE CHALLENGE

David Brain, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology and Environmental Studies and Director of the Urban Studies Program at New College,

Amber Whittle, Ph.D., Executive Director of Southface Sarasota,

Marty Hylton, Heritage Conservation Specialist,

Cecil Barron Jensen, ReMain Nantucket Executive Director,

Claire Martin, ReMain Nantucket Project Manager

Carolyn Cox, Executive Director of the Florida Climate Institute

Bob Miklos, Founder of designLAB architects

Alan Plattus, Director of the Urban Design Workshop and Professor of Architecture and Urbanism at Yale School of Architecture

David Mohney, Dean of the Michael Graves College, Architecture and Design at Kean University and Wenzhou Kean University

Jeff Carney, Associate Professor + Director Florida Institute Built Environment Resilience (FIBER) School of Architecture at the University of Florida

Ted Brown, Professor in the School of Architecture at Syracuse University

Sonia Chao, Associate Dean of Research, University of Miami School of Architecture, Co-Director, Master of Professional Science in Urban Sustainability and Resilience, Faculty Research Fellow on Climate, Environment and Resilience, UM/A

The New College Challenge will continue throughout the year with many more conversations about resiliency and issues facing the broader regional/statewide community.

About New College of Florida

Founded in Sarasota in 1960, New College of Florida is a top-ranked public liberal arts college and the Honors College of Florida. New College provides students with limitless, original opportunities for success through a highly individualized education that integrates academic rigor with career-building experiences. New College offers more than 50 undergraduate majors in arts, humanities and sciences; a master's degree program in data science; and certificates in technology, finance, and business skills.

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