



## Carnegie Foundation Selects USF for Community Engagement Classification

### Philip Booth

TAMPA, Fla. (Dec. 8, 2006) – The University of South Florida is one of 76 U.S. colleges and universities that are the most engaged with their local communities. That's according to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which has selected USF for the foundation's new Community Engagement Classification.

USF, the only Florida university to receive the classification, is one of only ten public research universities accorded this prestigious status including the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, UCLA, the University of Minnesota, Arizona State University, and Michigan State University.

"We are proud of USF's extensive record of community engagement and eager to expand and sustain our partnerships with the local and broader communities we serve," said USF President Judy Genshaft, the new chair of the Tampa Bay Partnership. Genshaft also serves as a member of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the Florida High-Tech Corridor and the Florida Council of 100.

Public and private institutions participated in the classification by submitting documentation describing the nature and extent of their engagement with the community – local, state or beyond. Thus the Carnegie Foundation was able to address elements of institutional mission and distinctiveness that are not represented in other national data on colleges and universities.

"Finding new and better ways to connect with their communities should be a high priority for higher education institutions today," says Lee S. Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation. "The campuses participating in this elective classification provide useful models of engagement around teaching and learning and around research agendas that benefit from collaborative relationships."

USF anthropology professor Susan Greenbaum, who spearheaded the data collection, said that the classification process rating gave USF a chance to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the university's wide-ranging community activities and partnerships.

"The rating allows us to show what USF does," Greenbaum said. "In addition to being a very effective research institution, we are also an extremely effective metropolitan citizen. We marry the two functions."

A productive and sustainable university-community partnership is vital to the university's role in the creation of new knowledge, and also is integral to providing students with work experience and establishing a positive presence in the community, which in turn can attract future students, Greenbaum said. "The community is good for us, too. It works both ways. That relationship establishes the basis of putting into practice the theories that we have and testing the ideas that we have and making translations of the more abstract things that we come up with."

USF in recent weeks has demonstrated its commitment to community involvement, with the launch of a multimillion partnership with Silicon Valley research and technology giant SRI International, and received \$8 million to build a Florida Center of Excellence in biotechnology.

"I believe that the role of a metropolitan research university is to be part of the fabric of our communities," Genshaft said.

For more information on the Carnegie Foundation's new Community Engagement Classification, go to <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/news/sub.asp?key=51&subkey=2126>

*The University of South Florida is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities as designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. USF received more than \$310 million in research contracts and grants last year, and it is ranked by the National Science Foundation as one of two of the nation's fastest growing universities in terms of federal research and development expenditures. The university has a \$1.6 billion annual budget and serves 44,038 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota/Manatee and Lakeland. USF is a member of the Big East Athletic Conference.*

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