

Anna Berger

▼ University of Central Florida ▼ 3.86 GPA
▼ Sophomore in Organizational Communications

None could accuse Anna Berger of not following her heart. "I went to a leadership conference in high school and met a woman from Disney World," says the Virginia native. "I was so inspired by her that I got a crazy idea that I wanted to work for Disney one day, so I looked for schools in Orlando. I didn't know a single person, and I hadn't seen the campus."

Being alone and far from home led Berger to throw herself into campus life. "I wanted to get the whole college experience," says the 19-year-old, who is active in UCF's Student Government, Delta Delta Delta sorority, and the Student Alumni Association. This year, Berger added to her many commitments the role of conference director for Leaders Involved For Tomorrow (LIFT), a four-day gathering of high school students from around the state. As the executive team leader in the elite LEAD Scholars program, Berger oversees 10 facilitators. "I feel it's important to encourage other people to become leaders, because the more you get involved, the more people you'll meet and the better your college experience will be."

Berger's varied leadership roles make her a natural standout from other underclassmen.



JACQUE BRUNDAGE

Besides stepping up as an SG senator and serving on two committees, she is secretary of the Student Alumni Ambassador Council, rush counselor for Rho Chi, and recently sat on the Student Interview Committee for the selection of a campus life administrator. Berger, who pays for school with jobs and scholarships, also pitches in around Orlando with Give Kids the World, an outreach program for terminally ill youth, and Greek benefits including a Watermelon Bust, Anchor Splash, and Rock the Arrow. Berger

also serves as Rules and Regulations director for UCF's Dance Marathon.

Although she admits her tendency to procrastinate at times, Berger says she works better under pressure. "Deadlines help me keep on track." To stay focused, Berger constantly refers to her calendar for possible schedule conflicts. "My planner is like a friend," she says. "I try to remember to fit in a little time for myself, so that I don't go crazy."

When she's at the helm, Berger takes time to step back and get input from others. "I know when to be the chief and when to sit back and be the Indian," she says. "If it seems that a person hasn't said anything in a while, I'll ask them how they're feeling and what they think we should do."

Even as she's encouraging members to contribute, Berger keeps on pushing her staff. "Sometimes, with a large group of people, it's hard to make sure each and every person is motivated to obtain the same goal as you are," says Berger, who finds inspiration in her daily readings from *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. "I try to give them incentive throughout the project and show my appreciation for the work they're doing by giving them a little letter or a word of encouragement." Though she seems naturally self-confident, Berger credits her family for instilling in her the drive to achieve any goal. "My parents are my greatest influences," she says. "They've taught me that you need to work hard and made sure I know they're behind me all the way." 🐾

Deborah Goss

▼ Florida Institute of Technology ▼ 3.80 GPA
▼ Senior in Science Education/Chemistry

Becoming a policy-maker in college seemed natural to Debbie Goss. "I was in Student Government in high school. Immediately, when I went to college, that was one of the first things I wanted to check out," says Goss, who became SG secretary as a freshman. "At that time, there were only 12 senators, and they weren't very active at all. Now, we have 35 senators, the ratio of males to females has improved, and internationals are well-represented," says Goss, who currently serves as SG president.

To revamp SG's image, Goss, 21, created a committee to recruit members and founded a monthly newsletter. Every Wednesday, Goss staffs a table covered with paper for students to write questions and ideas. She also networked with leaders statewide as 1997-98 president of the Florida Independent Student Association.

SG's increased visibility led to Goss' invitation to become a voting member on FIT's Information Technology Executive Committee. Also, after investigating what other schools require students to contribute to campus activity budgets, Goss successfully lobbied Florida Tech to increase fees from \$20 each semester to \$100 annually to



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enhance programming.

Goss gets to know her constituents as a resident assistant and has planned activities such as a "Julia Child Party," in which RAs prepare their favorite recipes. As vice president of the American Chemical Society, Goss helps organize glass-blowing workshops, a liquid nitrogen ice cream social, and Laser Day, in which event-goers "blow stuff up, make slime, and create a gummy bear inferno." Goss, who finances her expenses with jobs, scholarships, and financial aid, was

named Florida Tech's Outstanding Junior of the Year in 1998. Beyond campus, she has tutored, worked for Easter Seals, and served as president of the Exchange Club, an organization dedicated to reducing child abuse.

When it comes to leadership, Goss is open to new solutions. "I think the most important thing to strive for is creativity," says the Colorado native. "It's important for leaders to think about why they're doing what they're doing. A lot of people get stuck performing a task or doing it a specific way, because that's the way it's been done before."

A lifelong athlete, Goss carries lessons from sports into all realms of her life. "With running, it's even more relevant to your everyday life, because it's such an individual sport." Goss joined Tech's cross country team as a junior and runs almost 50 miles a week. "You have the team there supporting you, but when you're out there on the course, it's all about you exerting every single day. That teaches you a lot about what you can do."

So her legacy will survive, Goss plans to spend the last month of her SG presidency with new leaders, working just as hard as she did in the beginning—a lesson she learned from cross country. "It all comes down to that last 10 percent, and that's the hardest part, but it can be the most important," she says. "When you're exhausted, it's so easy to give up, but then all the hard work throughout the season wouldn't mean anything. That's what kind of pushed me through to the end." 🐾