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Florida Poly hires lawyer

Has background in conservative politics

Gary White
Lakeland Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Five months after Florida Polytechnic University eliminated its Office of General Counsel, the school hired a legal adviser with virtually no professional experience in higher education.

The Lakeland school did not publicly announce the hiring as university counsel of Katie Glenn Daniel, who had spent

the previous seven years working for anti-abortion organizations before joining Florida Poly in late March.

Daniel participated in her first meeting with Florida Poly's Board of Trustees on April 30, and her inability to answer questions from trustees resulted in the delay of a planned vote on raising tuition rates for out-of-state students.

After the meeting, an outside

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Katie Daniel, the new university counsel for Florida Polytechnic University in Lakeland, speaks at the April 30 virtual meeting of the Board of Trustees. Daniel was hired into the new position without apparent professional experience in higher education.

PROVIDED BY FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY



Lakeland's iconic France Langford Promenade and The Loggia are cracking, showing signs of damage and ongoing water instruction ANDY KUPPERS/THE LEDGER

Lakeland to study cracking in its famed promenade

Sara-Megan Walsh
Lakeland Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Cracking along Lakeland's iconic Frances Langford Promenade has sparked concerns, causing city to launch a nearly \$80,000 study for answers.

Richard Baker, the city's manager of facilities maintenance, told city commissioners at their June 12 agenda study that Lakeland's beloved promenade and its loggia have been damaged.

"What we're basing this on right now is a visual inspection of the promenade," he said. "The wall itself is moved a little bit that we've noticed because its in sections, so we can see movement in it."

Baker said there's been groundwater penetration, with water coming out of the ground under the grotto which is becoming "a little more active." There are cracked tiles and obvious signs of deterioration in the area.

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Lakeland's iconic France Langford Promenade is cracking with tiles cracking and lifting. The city plans a nearly \$80,000 study to determine that cause.

Miller gets new term on school board

3 incumbents face challengers

Gary White
Lakeland Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Lisa Miller will receive a third term on the Polk County School Board without facing an opponent, but elections will be held for three other seats.

The deadline to qualify for the ballot in School Board races was June 12 at noon. Because no one else filed to run in District 7, Miller automatically gains another four-year term.

Three other incumbents will face challengers in the nonpartisan elections.

Longest-serving board member faces challenger

Sam Neelam qualified to run against six-term School Board member Kay Fields in the District 5 race. Neelam, a technology executive, filed to run in early January.

Neelam, a member of the Florida Polytechnic University Board of Trustees, has reported nearly \$45,000 in campaign funds. Of that amount, Neelam has given \$40,000 to his own campaign.

Fields did not file to run until April 20. She has so far reported only \$850 in campaign contributions.

Current chair faces challenge from college student

Justin Sharpless, seeking a second term in District 6, drew a lone opponent, Kasen Hampton of Lake Wales.

Hampton, 19, is a student at Polk State College studying public administration. He graduated in 2025 from Candlelight Christian Academy in Lake Wales.

Sharpless, chosen by peers this year as chair of the School Board, has reported nearly \$45,000 in campaign contributions. Hampton has reported just under \$1,000.

Three-way race in District 3

In District 3, voters will choose

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