

## Excitement builds as \$100 million Moran gift comes to life at FSU

BY: DAVE HELLER (MAILTO:DHELLER@FSU.EDU) | PUBLISHED: MAY 31, 2017 | 3:33 PM | SHARE: [f](https://www.facebook.com/sharer/sharer.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fnews.fsu.edu%2Fnews%2Fbusiness-law-policy%2F2017%2F05%2F31%2Fexcitement-builds-100-million-moran-gift-comes-life-fsu%2F) (HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SHARER/SHARER.PHP?U=HTTPS%3A%2F%2FNEWS.FSU.EDU%2FNEWS%2FBUSINESS-LAW-POLICY%2F2017%2F05%2F31%2FEXCITEMENT-BUILDS-100-MILLION-MORAN-GIFT-COMES-LIFE-FSU%2F) [t](https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?source=http%3A%2F%2Fhttps%3A%2F%2Fnews.fsu.edu%2Fnews%2Fbusiness-law-policy%2F2017%2F05%2F31%2Fexcitement-builds-100-million-moran-gift-comes-life-fsu%2F&text=excitement+builds+as+%24100+million+moran+gift+comes+to+life+at+fsu%3A%2F%2Fnews.fsu.edu%2Fnews%2Fbusiness-law-policy%2F2017%2F05%2F31%2Fexcitement-builds-100-million-moran-gift-comes-life-fsu%2F) (HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/INTENT/TWEET?SOURCE=HTTP%3A%2F%2FHTTPS%3A%2F%2FNEWS.FSU.EDU%2FNEWS%2FBUSINESS-LAW-POLICY%2F2017%2F05%2F31%2FEXCITEMENT-BUILDS-100-MILLION-MORAN-GIFT-COMES-LIFE-FSU%2F&TEXT=EXCITEMENT+BUILDS+AS+%24100+MILLION+MORAN+GIFT+COMES+TO+LIFE+AT+FSU:%20HTTPS%3A%2F%2FNEWS.FSU.EDU%2FNEWS%2FBUSINESS-LAW-POLICY%2F2017%2F05%2F31%2FEXCITEMENT-BUILDS-100-MILLION-MORAN-GIFT-COMES-LIFE-FSU%2F)



The renovation of the FSU Jim Moran Building is at its halfway point. The 20,000 square foot building will be the headquarters for the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship and the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship in downtown Tallahassee. It aims to become the go-to resource for government leaders, trade associations, nonprofits and entrepreneurs.

A year and a half after Jan Moran and The Jim Moran Foundation gifted a record \$100 million to Florida State University, the support already is transforming the university and creating opportunities for students and business owners for generations to come.

The gift's positive impact is gaining momentum across campus and beyond. The 22-year-old Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship has expanded its reach around Florida as a lifeline for small business owners; the new Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship has accepted its first class of students and will start teaching courses this fall; and the headquarters for this nationally unique model of entrepreneurial education is taking shape in downtown Tallahassee.


The renovation of the FSU Jim Moran Building — future home to both programs — should be done by the end of the year. On a recent morning, a worker in an aerial lift bucket leaned into an oversized hammer drill and bored holes in concrete walls that will support an east-facing bank of windows.


From this vantage point inside the headquarters, those windows will frame a view of the morning sun rising over the Jim Moran Building. It's a new day for the longtime goals of a visionary business owner who dreamed of making entrepreneurial education more accessible not just at FSU, but across the nation.

"That's the original vision Jim Moran had in 1995 when he formed the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship," said Randy Blass, the program's executive director. "This entrepreneurial training needed to be at no cost to business owners. He believed there should not be a price barrier to gaining access to expertise."

Susan Fiorito, director of FSU's Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship, said she can feel a buzz of excitement.

"Everyone is thrilled," said Fiorito, an entrepreneur herself who once owned retail stores in Atlanta. "The students are very excited about it. They view it as a wonderful opportunity. We're very lucky to be the beneficiary of such extraordinary generosity from Jan Moran and The Jim Moran Foundation."

Florida State University  
Susan Fiorito, director of the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship



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Automotive legend and philanthropist Jim Moran, who died in 2007 at the age of 88, dedicated his energy and focus to building greater opportunity for business owners. In 1995, Moran's \$1 million gift to Florida State made that happen with the help of Melvin Stith, dean of the FSU College of Business at that time, who successfully launched the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship.

Twenty years later in December 2015, Jan Moran announced the \$100 million gift to FSU to establish the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship and bring to life her husband's dream for entrepreneurial education.

"Jim believed, 'The future belongs to those who prepare for it,'" she said. "When the Jim Moran Institute was created in 1995, it made him so happy and he said then, 'It's exciting and satisfying to know that we can help the next generation of entrepreneurs start preparing now.'"

That preparation is underway at FSU and across Florida.

The Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship has enrolled 80 undergraduates in its first class. The students will earn a bachelor's degree in either commercial or social entrepreneurship. The FSU Panama City campus offers the major in commercial entrepreneurship.

A team of dozens of stakeholders has created the curriculum, including FSU's entrepreneurs in residence, faculty with applicable expertise and people from the community. Most exciting, Fiorito believes, is the interdisciplinary nature of the program.

"There is no other contribution that has affected the whole university, all 42,000 students," Fiorito said. "This gift can touch the lives of every student. To have the opportunity to start a business, enter entrepreneurship competitions, get direction and mentorship from successful entrepreneurs and work with global education — that's big."

The gift has awarded grants to 13 student businesses; expanded prize money for the "InNOLEvation Challenge," a competition for student-run businesses; increased the number of students who can travel expense-free to entrepreneurship conferences and competitions; and helped student entrepreneurs succeed.

The Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship in the College of Business also celebrated significant results in the past year and a half. It opened permanent offices in Fort Lauderdale and Jacksonville and both have full-time staff leading programs. Next, the program is considering expanding to the Tampa-St. Petersburg area.

Plans have been completed to move the annual Business and Leadership Conference from South Florida to Orlando next year to make it centrally located and more accessible to a broader statewide and national audience.



Jan and Jim Moran (FSU Photo Archives)

The gift has bolstered the vital work of the "Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans" as well. The camp teaches veterans with disabilities how to develop or improve businesses. A second similar program shows caregivers of veterans with disabilities how to run a small business out of their home so they can generate income for their family and have flexibility to care for their loved one. Both are special priorities for Blass, a veteran, and Jan Moran.

"It's easy to get fired up about these programs because it's not a common story," Blass said. "It's a wonderful example of what philanthropy can accomplish, especially when it has a strategic sense of how it's structured and what it aims to accomplish."

College of Business Dean Michael Hartline said the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship and Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship have become Florida's preeminent sources of education and training for entrepreneurs.

"The transformative power of the \$100 million gift from Jan Moran and The Jim Moran Foundation has pushed Florida State to the forefront of entrepreneurial education and further expanded the entrepreneurial ecosystem throughout the state of Florida and the nation," he said.

Fiorito said the gift will help instill a confident, can-do mindset among participants.

"We want every student to graduate from Florida State University with the skills to be able to figure out how to solve problems rather than responding, 'That's not my job. Let someone else solve it,'" Fiorito said. "Entrepreneurial thinking focuses on persistence and figuring out ways to solve problems. That's what we want, and that's what Jan Moran and The Jim Moran Foundation are making possible through their gift."

#### **About the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship (<https://jimmoranschool.fsu.edu/>)**

*In December 2015, Florida State University announced the creation of the nation's largest interdisciplinary, degree-granting school of entrepreneurship, the Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship, as part of a major gift from Jan Moran and The Jim Moran Foundation. Students will participate in traditional case study learning along with innovative hands-on application and experiences. Students accepted in the inaugural 2017-2018 class will graduate with a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts in entrepreneurship.*

#### **About the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship (<https://jmi.fsu.edu/>)**

*The Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship cultivates, trains and inspires entrepreneurial leaders through world-class executive education, applied training, public recognition and leading-edge research.*

*Jim Moran was an automotive pioneer and an entrepreneur at heart, who at the age of seven, sold soda pop at sandlot baseball diamonds in Chicago. With a career that spanned more than six decades, he built an amazing chronicle of achievements in the automobile industry.*

*His vision for the Jim Moran Institute was to provide opportunities that would help others become more successful business owners. A 1995 contribution from Jim and Jan Moran and JM Family Enterprises established the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship at the Florida State University College of Business. Since 2011, further enhancements to the Jim Moran Institute and its outreach have been made possible by Jan Moran and The Jim Moran Foundation.*

**Click here to see the full photo gallery. (<https://news.fsu.edu/multimedia/photo/2017/05/31/photos-renovation-fsu-jim-moran-building-reaches-halfway-point/>)**





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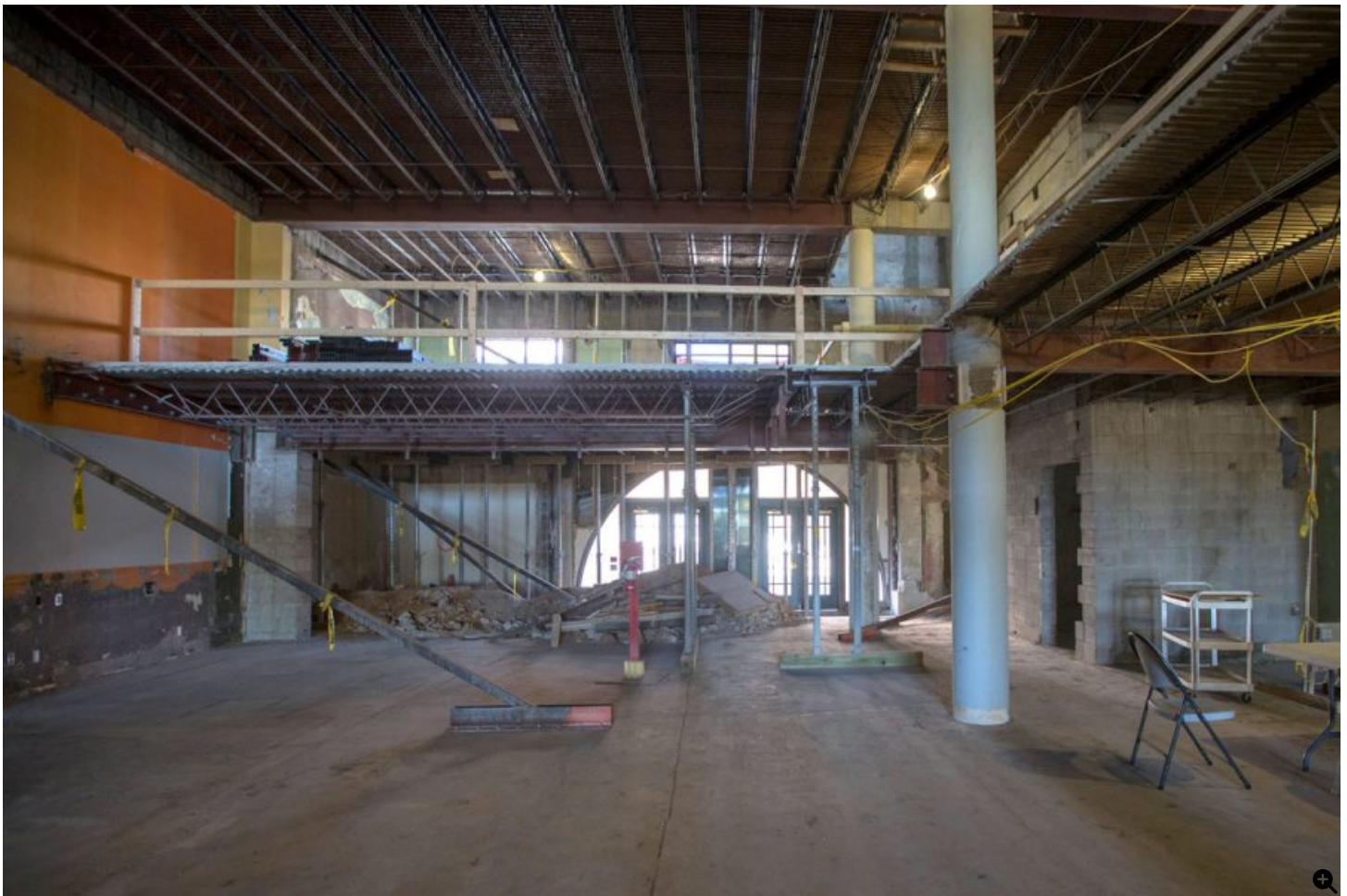
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