

May 21, 2010

CFI Tallahassee to host four-part series on freedom of choice

By Doug Blackburn DEMOCRAT SENIOR WRITER

CFI Tallahassee is not to be confused with a popular TV crime show.

It's the acronym for the local chapter of Center for Inquiry, an international organization devoted to science, reason and humanist values. Many of its 35 members, including Nobel Prize winning chemist Sir Harry Kroto, CFI Tallahassee's honorary president, have an affiliation with Florida State University.

"It seems like we're kind of FSU heavy. We're kind of Ph.D. heavy too. I'd like us to not be that way," said CFI president Gary Stillwell, who has taught courses at FSU and also has a doctorate. "I'd like us to more eclectic with more people from the community.

"We don't need just a bunch of eggheads from FSU - we want a broad base."

For the first time in its five-year history, CFI is staging a four-part summer lecture series at FSU's medical school. The series, focusing on freedom of choice, gets under way at 3 p.m. Sunday with guest speaker Staci Fox, the CEO of Planned Parenthood of North Florida. Her talk is titled "Will choice be available? Threats to pro-choice in Florida and the nation."

The series continues in June when attorney Robert Rivas, the attorney for Final Exit Network, gives the inside story of how seven volunteers of the non-profit organization have been charged with criminally assisting in suicides in Arizona and Georgia, and tells why, as he puts it, "it ain't so."

Dr. Ken Brummel-Smith, chairman of the geriatrics department at FSU's College of Medicine, joined CFI earlier this year. He'll be talking about medical and legal issues concerning the end of life when he gives the July lecture.

"All of the issues in the series are around things that are related to health," Brummel-Smith said. "It fits in with our birth-to-death kind of training that we do with students."

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