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The Buzz 

FSU honors D'Alemberte with 'dedication of a window'

Former university president, 84, praised for love of history

By **Steve Bousquet** 23 hours ago



The image of former Florida State University president **Sandy D'Alemberte** will be preserved forever in a new stained glass window in the school's original library.

More than 100 friends and family gathered Monday at Dodd Hall for the unveiling of the unique portrait, which also includes four hand-painted black and white pendants that spotlight his boyhood home, the Capitol, FSU's College of Law and the FSU College of Medicine, which the Legislature created in 2000 when he was president.

"I had the vision to be president of Florida State when **John Thrasher** was speaker of the House," D'Alemberte said to laughter at the Monday afternoon ceremony.

D'Alemberte was born in 1933 in his grandmother's house at 502 South Adams Street in Tallahassee. The home is long gone and the site is now part of the Capitol complex.

Dodd Hall was the campus reading library when FSU was the all-female Florida State College for Women. D'Alemberte recalled the day that **Claude Pepper**, then a U.S. senator, was barred from the library without written permission from the college president.

The dedication ceremony was a recognition of the 84-year-old D'Alemberte's appreciation for history and the importance of architecture on the university campus in Tallahassee.

Thrasher, now FSU's president, was among several speakers who honored D'Alemberte, who was a Democratic legislator from Miami, president of the American Bar Association and the dean of FSU's law school before he was its president from 1994-2003.

Thrasher and D'Alemberte have a friendship that dates to 1974, when D'Alemberte, then the chairman of a select House committee that considered impeaching Florida Supreme Court justices, hired Thrasher, a young FSU law school graduate, as special counsel.

"When I first met Sandy, **Richard Nixon** was president of the United States," Thrasher recalled, "though not for much longer."

In his self-deprecating style, and in his familiar North Florida drawl, D'Alemberte said of the unveiling: "It's the dedication of a 'winda,' and it doesn't look out on anything."



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