

Florida Coastal: We're not for sale

Wall Street Journal story "old news and reactionary," says law school Dean Scott DeVito.

By Max Marbut
Associate Editor

Florida Coastal School of Law Dean Scott DeVito on Tuesday described the story published Saturday in the Wall Street Journal stating Florida Coastal could be sold or transition from for-profit to nonprofit status as "old news and reactionary."

He said the law school is not for sale and there are no plans for it to leave Jacksonville.



DeVito

In addition, InfiLaw, the holding company set up by Chicago-based Sterling Partners after the private equity firm purchased the school in 2004, began considering "transitioning" the school to nonprofit status through a partnership with another educational institution before DeVito became dean in June 2015, said Florida Coastal President Dennis Stone.

"We've been talking about a transition since before 2015. We began in earnest in 2015 and we've talked to a number of partners, but we can't divulge names," Stone said.

In a story published April 11



Photo by Monty Zickuhr

Florida Coastal School of Law President Dennis Stone said the school would like to relocate Downtown from its 8787 Baypine Road building in Baymeadows and is looking for potential tenants for the building.

Coastal

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in the Daily Record, DeVito said Florida Coastal had two goals: to convert to a nonprofit entity and to "join with a nonprofit university that makes sense for our students."

"The real story is that we're admitting a spring class with a 147 LSAT (Law School Admission Test) bottom quartile goal and a 150 median quartile goal," he said, compared to the fall class that had a 146 bottom quartile goal.

The minimum LSAT score required for admission to Florida Coastal in 2016 was 141.

Referring to the spring class goal, based on the most recent survey by U.S. News & World Report, "that puts us at or above 50 other law schools," DeVito said.

"We're doing the right things to get us where we need to be. We're moving in the right direction in every possible way," he added.

DeVito on Tuesday again cited the Florida Bar exam in February, when just 25 percent of Florida Coastal graduates taking the test for the first time passed.

He said he believes that prompted the American Bar Association to notify the school in October it's being evaluated as to whether it's meeting



Stone

the national organization's standards for accreditation. "Those results were distressing. We're working with the faculty to make sure they are being rigorous in the classroom. We don't need to be teaching to the bottom of the class. We need to be pulling people up as opposed to teaching down," said DeVito, who joined Florida Coastal's faculty as a professor in 2008.

In addition to a transition

away from the for-profit model, DeVito said another goal for Florida Coastal is to either move out of the school's building in Baymeadows or "have a smaller footprint" within the building.

"We're looking for potential tenants for our current building," said Stone. "We'd love to be Downtown to be closer to the courts and the law firms, which would be good for our students."

"We're not going anywhere. We will continue to be a vital part of this community," DeVito said.

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**MARK ANTHONY
DEGNER**

Photo age
progressed to 22 yrs
DOB: 7/13/92
Hair: Dark Blonde
Eyes: Hazel

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information, please
call Jacksonville
Sheriff's Office
904-630-0500 or
Crime Stoppers
1-866-845-TIPS.

Last seen Feb. 10, 2005
at Paxon Middle
School on westside
of Jacksonville, FL



**BRIAN ANDREW
HAYES**

Photo age
progressed to 18 yrs
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Hair: Red
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