John Thrasher, a Florida State University alumnus and former state senator, is the university's 15th president.

Thrasher earned a bachelor’s degree in business from Florida State in 1965. After leaving Florida State, Thrasher joined the U.S. Army where he received the Army Commendation Medal in Germany and was awarded two Bronze stars for his service in Vietnam. He was honorably discharged as a captain in 1970.

Thrasher then returned to his alma mater to earn a law degree with honors in 1972.

In his political career, Thrasher has served on a school board, in the Florida House of Representatives and in the Florida Senate.

After working in private law practice in Daytona Beach and Tallahassee for several years, Thrasher returned to Jacksonville to serve as general counsel of the Florida Medical Association. He was a partner of Southern Strategy Group, a Tallahassee-based governmental relations firm, from 2001 to 2009.

Thrasher was unanimously elected as the speaker of the Florida House of Representatives in 1998, where he supported legislation such as the “A+ Education Plan” and the largest tax cut in Florida history.

He was elected to the Florida Senate in 2009 and subsequently re-elected. He served as chairman for the Republican Party of Florida in 2010.

From 2001 to 2005, Thrasher was the first chair of Florida State University’s Board of Trustees. In 2002, Thrasher was a key supporter of legislation that brought funding to the development of FSU’s College of Medicine, and a building at the college is named in his honor.

Born in Columbia, S.C., Thrasher grew up in Jacksonville. He and his wife, Jean, have three children and eight grandchildren.