



# Hackers invade UTS system



KRT CAMPUS GRAPHICS



By GIOVANI BENITEZ  
In-Depth Editor

As the university launches a new campaign to filter viruses in FIU e-mail, it faces a new "critical" challenge – one that originated from a potential hacker attack involving some 165 computers on campus, University Technology Services announced last week.

"Programs were placed on the systems and a scan was done. It doesn't mean that anything was necessarily taken from the system. I'm more concerned about identity theft," said John P. McGowan, chief information officer and vice president of information technology.

The program allegedly retrieved usernames and passwords for FIU administrators, UTS representatives and others in the university community. However, the financial system was not compromised, McGowan said.

This isn't the first time FIU has dealt with hackers. In June 2002, keystroke tracking software was found on the computers in one of the Green Library's student labs.

The program was designed to record everything a student typed on the computers, including credit card numbers used when placing online orders. Ultimately, the FBI linked the hacker attack with members of the Russian mafia and an arrest was made.

Nearly three years later, the

university still deals with similar situations, but FIU is not alone.

"They're not just probing our network, they're probing many networks, and when they find weaknesses in systems, they then start to utilize programs that are capable of a brute-force examination of those systems to see if they can compromise them," McGowan said.

The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse in San Diego tracked a series of hacker attacks since February on university computer systems across the country.

The University of California at Berkeley, Tufts University, Boston College and Carnegie Mellon University are just a few on the list. Just last weekend, hackers broke into the Georgia Southern University online store, but much like in FIU's case, there is no evidence that financial information was ever stolen.

Kia Makki, Lucent Technology professor at FIU's Telecommunications and Information Technology Institute, said that cyber security awareness is key

in a world where privacy is an increasingly valued commodity.

"Maybe the university has to offer some short training courses, [much] like they offer short training courses for PantherSoft. People need to know what the issues are and what they need to look for. You have to be able to carefully protect yourself," said Makki, who is currently planning an international workshop on mobile and wireless security in Miami for March 2006.

Meanwhile, McGowan insists that the university, as well as

federal agencies, are still investigating the latest security breach, but suggests that students, faculty and staff should routinely shut down their computers in an effort to prevent future hacker attacks.

Most recently, the university implemented a new anti-virus and anti-spam system for all FIU e-mail accounts. The program will identify e-mail messages considered to be of highest risk. A UTS field team will also visit several university offices to make sure all computers are virus-free and secure.

## Senior leaves mark in student affairs

By ANA SANCHEZ  
News Editor

Onika Williams enjoys doing the ordinary things most college students do — listening to Kanye West, eating sushi at her dorm with friends and sleeping whenever she gets a chance. However, she is not your typical college graduate.

Not only did she take 21 credits this semester and work part time at the Office of Admissions, but she also maintained a 3.59 grade point average along with four scholarships.

Four years ago, Williams became the Salutatorian of her senior class at Home-

stead Senior High School and was accepted to eight universities, including the University of Florida, Virginia Tech, Spelman and Florida State.

So, why did Williams decide to attend FIU? Her reason was simple.

"Out of all the schools that I was accepted to, FIU was the one that didn't treat me like a number. They really cared whether I came here or not," Williams said.

After winning the Martin Luther King essay contest, Williams got recruited by Provost Mark B. Rosenberg her senior year to come to FIU.

He spoke to Williams and her mother about what FIU had to offer and gave them a tour of

FIU while William's mother told Rosenberg how well her daughter was doing in school. Four years later, Williams will be the first generation college graduate in her family that includes seven siblings.

"My parents support me 100 percent and I want to make them proud," said Williams on her accomplishment of receiving a degree.

Over 90 percent of students who attend Homestead Sr. High are minorities, and English is not their first language, which puts them at a disadvantage when it comes to standardized tests. Students are not even aware of the procedures needed in order to attend a university.

"We weren't even told about

taking the SATs or ACT. We would see more recruiters from the military at our school than colleges coming to visit us, so students don't even take the tests," said Williams.

Williams is one of the few Homestead graduates who came to FIU and she hopes to be an example to those students. If she did it, she knows many could do the same.

"I come from the same place that you come from and if I can do it, you can do it too," she said.

Throughout her college years, Williams had a unique experience of Rosenberg

See WILLIAMS, page 3

## NEWSFLASH

## ON-CAMPUS

## Wine and Food Festival raised \$800,000 for FIU

The fourth annual South Beach Wine and Food Festival, presented by *Food & Wine* magazine, entertained more than 23,000 people Feb. 25-27 and raised approximately \$800,000. All proceeds of the event will once again benefit the FIU's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management's teaching restaurant and the Southern Wine & Spirits Beverage Management Center.

Over 100 international celebrity chefs, such as Emeril Lagasse, Mario Batali, Todd English and Nigella Lawson, food personalities and world-renowned wine makers, wowed patrons by serving up the best in the wine and food world against the backdrop of South Beach's famed sand, surf and sun.

For three straight days, patrons quenched their thirst with an astounding 750 varieties of wine, champagne and fine spirits. All together, more than 22,000 bottles were poured during the weekend, which included the glamorous Moët & Chandon BubbleQ, educational wine seminars, an exquisite dinner series and the hugely popular Grand Tastings. The event attracted 6,000 people to a tented "village" on the white sand overlooking the Atlantic Ocean between 10th and 13th streets on Ocean Drive.

One hundred and forty local restaurants and caterers added to the excitement on both days' Grand Tastings by providing generous samples that gave patrons a comprehensive taste of South Florida's eclectic food scene, which continues to gain international attention.

Next year marks the fifth anniversary of the South Beach Wine & Food Festival scheduled to take place February 24-26, 2006.

"We are excited about the fifth anniversary of the festival and are honored to announce the participation of world renowned chefs, Ferran Adria and Thomas Keller in 2006," said founder and director for the festival, Lee Brian Schragar.

## Biology student lives on in his contribution to science

Robert J. Smiddy glided through the complex arpeggios of a Chopin Marzuka with the same ease and grace with which he swam 200 yards in under two minutes. He struck people with his talent as he won swim meets and piano contests. But ultimately, these will not be the reasons he is remembered.

Smiddy's zeal to unravel a ribbon of DNA will be his legacy. His quest to pierce the genetic armor of a bacteria associated with cystic fibrosis is what will go down as his contribution as a college junior. Smiddy died in September at the age of 20 from mononucleosis complications.

On May 2, Smiddy's family will receive his posthumous degree and the biology thesis he was working on, during one of FIU's commencement ceremonies. During that same ceremony, his labmates and professor will announce the endowment of a scholarship of \$25,000 and the winner of another award in Smiddy's name. The ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. at the Pharmed Arena at the University Park Campus.

According to Kalai Mathee, Smiddy's genetics professor and lab supervisor, Smiddy's thesis project included decoding the DNA structure of a bacterium associated with cystic fibrosis. The bacterium, called *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, invades the weakened respiratory system of people who have the disease and develops a coating that protects it against the body's immune system. As the body escalates its response, and the bacteria grows, the lung tissue is destroyed in the struggle, eventually killing the patient. To date, antibiotics have been unable to penetrate the bacteria's tough, mucous membrane.

"It's been so heart warming to see how his lab mates and other friends have contributed to memorialize Robert," said Smiddy's father, William Smiddy, an ophthalmology professor at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. "But at the same time, it's going to be hard being there."

- Damian Grass  
Assistant News Editor

## Steel, cement price slow construction

By KAREN BUITRAGO  
Contributing Writer

Buried utilities and infrastructure problems are being blamed for the delay of Biscayne Bay Campus' new cafeteria, scheduled to open in the summer of 2006.

FIU has spent more than \$4 million toward the construction of a new dining facility and fitness center at the Wolfe University Center.

According to Nick DiCiacco, executive director for business and finance, the funds for the construction are coming from the Capital Improvement Trust Fund (CITF), which consists of payments made to the state from universities resulting from student fees.

"On the CITF, the University gets what was contributed plus interest on a 3-4 year cycle," DiCiacco said.

The funds for the construction are also coming from auxiliary funds, which are the profits of vendor enterprise.

This includes bookstore and food service, which means that students contribute financially to the construction.

The initial budget did not include the rising prices of steel and cement.

"[Prices] continue to escalate because of demand," DiCiacco said.

The planning for the construction took approximately six years.

However, actual construction started two years ago. Vice Provost Raul Moncarz insisted that these delays are normal in construction.

"I know it's bothersome for the students, but we have to be positive," Moncarz said.

Moncarz added that BBC has encountered



**DUSTY SITE:** Cafeteria construction is delayed at the Biscayne Bay Campus and it is scheduled to open in the summer of 2006. ALEX HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

construction problems and unexpected costs, not only with the new cafeteria, but also with the fitness center and the health center.

Brian Haynes, director for student affairs, agreed.

"Any time construction is delayed for a home, a commercial freight [or] school building, costs are going to be more," Haynes said.

The new cafeteria is expected to house possible vendors. DiCiacco said that food contracts are currently out for bid. The current cafeteria features Grille Works, Pizza Hut, Subway and Star Spangled Café, in addition to soda machines, snacks, sushi and a salad bar.

Lack of food variety was a recurring concern among students who frequent the current cafeteria.

"The [staff] is friendly, but there's not much vari-

ety," said freshman Jael Fernandez.

"I get tired of eating Subway everyday. It would be good if [it] had more [of a] variety," said senior Sergio Carmona.

Some of the students remain oblivious to the construction.

"I didn't know that we are having a new cafeteria," Carmona said, adding that he visits the cafeteria's in between classes and likes it because "it's pretty quiet."

Besides the lack of food choices, the cafeteria hour of operation causes an inconvenience to students.

The cafeteria opens Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Fridays, the cafeteria closes at 2:30 p.m.

Monday through Friday, the University Park cafeteria opens an hour earlier than the one at BBC.

"When we get to [the

UP cafeteria] at 6:45 a.m., you already have something to eat," said freshman Dagmar Ocasio. "[At BBC] the cafeteria opens at 8 a.m. and the only things you can eat are sushi, a Jamaican patty or a burger."

Ocasio mentioned that the scheduling is an inconvenience for the evening students because the cafeteria now closes at 6 p.m. Moncarz said that there is not enough demand from the estimated 7,500 students and the 10,000 staff members at BBC to introduce new things to the menu.

At UP, there's triple that population, which consequently creates demand for variety.

Moncarz added that the administration is working hard to make sure the cafeteria opens in a timely manner.

"I hope it could open tomorrow," Moncarz said.

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# Student encourages campus involvement

WILLIAMS, from page 1

always checking her grades to see if she was doing well in school.

"Not everybody gets to say that the provost of a major university knows your name and family," Williams said.

Getting involved in school came natural to Williams, who belonged to many honors societies and was an active member of the Delta Sigma Pheta sorority.

She also interned at Disney World where she did her thesis for the Honors College. In Orlando, she see got to see her idol, Kanye West, perform at Disney's House of Blues.

Last year, she attended Alternative Spring Break with the International Business Honor Society in Bangkok, Thailand, where she found a love for sushi and a passion for helping abused women.

"I find Onika to be a caring, sensitive and intelligent individual, which is why I think she was a perfect fit for the work she was doing in Bangkok," said Malcom Vivian, graduate assistant and civic engagement coordinator.

In Bangkok, Williams and

her peers worked alongside the association to promote the status of women.

They focused on the care of abused women and those who carried the HIV virus. They are currently working on a project in which these women can sell their embroidery in the United States.

Williams will continue to oversee civic involvement through the Japanese Exchange Teaching (JET) Program. For a year, she will be teaching English to children in Japan.

"Onika is a very endearing individual who doesn't mind taking challenges and going to places that normal people would not dare to go. She's about to leave for the JET Program and we are really excited for [her]," said Terrance Cribbs-Lorrant, graduate advisor of Greek Affairs.

What inspired Williams in the JET Program was the International Business Honors Program and the Japanese I and II classes she took at FIU.

On May 3, she will walk in the commencement ceremony and graduate with a bachelors degree



**AWARDS CEREMONY:** Onika Williams is recognized for her academic accomplishments at the Excellence Awards given by the Student Support Program and the Multicultural Programs and Services. COURTESY PHOTO

in Business Administration and a minor in Asian Studies. Williams would like to continue her studies and go on to law school.

Reflecting on her FIU experience, Williams fondly remembers

meeting Black Panther activist Angela Davis when she came to speak at the university.

"Never in my wildest dreams I thought I would meet Angela Davis. I went up to her, she signed

my book and had my picture taken. She is somebody I really look up to," Williams said.

Williams encourages students to get involved in school as much as they can.

Her message to students is to change what they don't like and to take advantage of the opportunities at FIU.

"Don't just take your classes and leave. Get involved because when something happens that you don't like, you can't complain because you weren't there to do anything about it. Use your voice and opportunities given at FIU," she said.

The soon to be FIU alumna thinks that students should not take FIU for granted.

"Just because the school is within your reach and it's in your city, that doesn't mean it's something you have to settle for. FIU is a premier university and I think people get caught up in the idea of having to go away for school that they look over opportunities that they have right here. Just because it's not six or eight hours away doesn't mean it is not good enough," Williams said.

## Ceremony planning stage over for students, faculty

By ANA SANCHEZ  
News Editor

After years of academic studies, 3,200 FIU students are expected to hear their names read at graduation ceremonies held from May 3 to May 4 at the Pharmed Arena at the University Park campus.

For the past couple of weeks, the Office of the Registrar has seen long lines of seniors working on the final details of the application process toward commencement and waiting to receive the tickets for family and friends attending the ceremony.

A week before the ceremony, the Office of the Registrar serviced 960 students who were waiting for tickets.

The application process for the ceremony includes filling out the commencement confirmation form and getting approval of completion of credits by advisors.

Graduation Supervisor Gisela C. Cabrera stresses the importance of applying for the graduation ceremony at the right time.

"As important as commencement is, it is more important to apply for the correct semester in which the student is going to complete all necessary courses in order to earn their degree," Cabrera said.

Students are advised to start applying the semester

before they finish all the requirements to graduate and not in the middle of the final semester, which ultimately slows down the process of approval.

It is important that hopeful graduates understand that walking the ceremony does not mean that they will graduate and they will not receive their degree until all their requirements are met.

Although Tania Vazquez, who is majoring in psychology, applied mid-semester, the application process went smoothly. While standing in line to get tickets for the ceremony, Vasquez recounted her commencement preparations.

"I went to my advisor to check for my credits, then I just filled the application. I have one class remaining that I plan to take in the summer," Vazquez said.

Brian Brown, who is majoring in health science, had a similarly rapid experience.

"I started my graduation application at the beginning of this semester. My advisor did it all for me. My requirements had already been done and it was quick and easy," Brown said.

Although some students will walk at the commencement ceremony, they will not officially graduate and receive their diploma if they have not completed all of their requirements and registered for the summer

semester to complete missing credits.

Students graduating this semester will not receive their diploma at commencement. Diplomas will not be distributed until 10 to 14 weeks after grades become available.

It will be a year of firsts for FIU as the College of Law will graduate its inaugural class of approximately 52 students. Provisionally approved by the American Bar Association, the College of Law will hold its commencement ceremony May 22 at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

During the ceremonies, prominent alumni will receive Distinguished Alumni Service medallions for their contributions to the community and to FIU.

Amongst these alumni are broadcast executive Michael Rodriguez, vice president and general manager of Telemundo 51/WSCV, Thomas M. Cornish, CEO of Seitlin, the largest independent insurance company in South Florida and Frank J. Bolanos, chairman of the Miami-Dade County Public School Board.

The College of Arts and Sciences commencement ceremony has the largest number of graduates this year—about 1,005 students. During this ceremony, a posthumous degree will be given to the parents of Robert James Smiddy. Smiddy passed away on

Sept. 18, 2004 of a bleeding complication from a viral disease. He had earned 119 credits for his degree in biological sciences. The

Robert J. Smiddy Memorial Award will be presented to a distinguished student from the Department of Biological Sciences.

After the commencement ceremonies a reception will follow for the alumni honored with the Distinguished Service medallions.

## DAVE MATTHEWS BAND STAND UP



ON TOUR THIS SUMMER

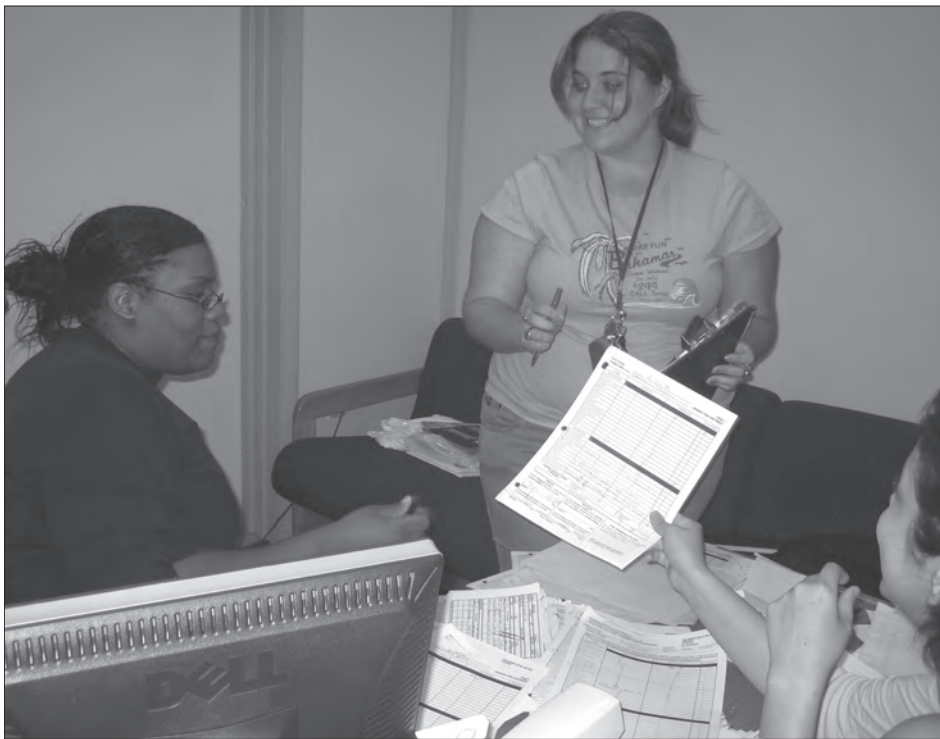
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BEST BUY

# OPINION

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# A FOND Farewell



**THE END:** (Top left) Finishing her final days as a residential assistant, Felicidad Garcia, helps her co-workers in the office. (Top right) She helps students from the UP Apartments pack up for the summer, as well as sign people out of housing (below). She will be graduating May 2 with a bachelor's degree in English. **PHOTOS BY HARRY COLEMAN/THE BEACON**

## Former RA, peer advisor reflects

By **FELICIDAD GARCIA**  
Contributing Writer

We've all grown up somewhere. When you really think about it, where did you grow up?

Where did you experience that harrowing moment when you actually related to something your father did? How about when your mother's style of handwriting suddenly snuck its way into your own penmanship 45 minutes into an essay exam?

Oh, and when you catch yourself giving a friend the same advice you resented your grandmother giving you all your life – that's the worst.

For me, growing up happened at FIU.

It happened to me in stages and in flashes. I talked to my roommate in Wal-Mart and inquired out loud, "Do you think I should get the sponge mop or the rag mop?" Suddenly, she looked up from the toilet wands and said, "Wha'd you say?" And I thought, "When did we get so boring?"

I mean, look at me, buying mops and putting a rice cooker on my Christmas list. Who am I?

At FIU, my college experience got a late start and an early

finish. I commuted my freshman year and then moved on campus the following fall. I wrote an article for *The Beacon* titled "Five Minutes is a World Away: Life on Campus," that explained my transition and how I felt that greatness would soon befall me.

I was so fantastically terrified about doing everything by myself that I felt tremendously accomplished by doing even the simplest of tasks—like changing toilet paper rolls in my new bathroom.

Now, my third and last year is over, and I'm busy separating my sell back books from the keepers. Texts: sell back. Novels: keep. I think about the courses I've taken in pursuit of my English degree: Gender and Language, African-American Women Writers, Finite Math (twice), Portuguese I ...

As I sit on my room floor in the University Park Apartments, with my books spread around me, I am reminded of the strewn college brochures from three years past. Is it really over so soon? What did I even do all this time?

Sure, I got involved. I was a



peer advisor and a resident assistant in the Honors College.

I participated in countless events: karaoke, SPC films, concerts ... everything. Sometimes I did too much and I'd have to lock myself in my room and study for the last three weeks of the semester, to make up class work.

Still, looking at my last amount of scattered notes that seem to be growing out of every bag, book and purse, I try, but can't remember a damn thing about class.

I know I got something in return for tuition fees, but what was it?

Right now, Elton John's "Tiny Dancer" is playing from my laptop, and it reminds me of midnight runs to Walgreen's for report covers and communal study

hours with friends. I realize as I write this, how true it is that nearly all learning is done outside the classroom.

With graduation looming over me like a get-out-of-jail-free card, what can I say I've gained after all this supposed "growing up?"

What can I tell others that they will find and remember from college?

I don't think I can even make that statement. To be sure, I've gleaned relatively little.

In my three years of higher education I learned: to remove my jeans from the washer just before they completely dry to keep them from shrinking, that one Hot Pocket is never enough, that you get more gas for your money in the afternoon when the heat makes the oil expand and that true love is everywhere.

I learned that getting up after two hours of sleep gets only harder with age, that my mother isn't wrong all of the time and that you must do things for yourself because no one else is going to do them half as good.

I learned that even what you do get done never comes out the way you pictured it in your mind, that

sometimes bosses make the best of friends, that you can't say "yes" to everyone and that parenthood is a reality for many of my childhood friends.

I learned that even across the miles, some friendships will never be broken.

Most of all, I learned that college isn't everything.

My blue graduation gown is hanging on my closet door, and I've put the stole and other regalia around the collar. I still need to buy the right shoes.

This Monday, when I walk across the stage, I'll know I've accomplished a lot, but also, that I've accomplished very little.

As I shake someone's hand, I'll look over at my mom, who just finished nursing school, and know that life isn't a hierarchy of the educated and the uneducated because true learning isn't about textbooks, final papers or raising your hand in class.

True learning is about love. It's about unconditional love from family and friends and strangers on the street.

And what of my grand plans? My plan is to give that love to others, and still leave a good bit for myself.

# Graduate reminisces on times at FIU

By **CLELIA CARCASES**  
Contributing Writer

I can't believe that my time at FIU has come and gone. It seems like it was only yesterday that I first came here to pursue my bachelor's degree in public relations in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Biscayne Bay Campus.

In reality, it was back in the fall of 1991.

After two years at FIU and feeling that I was going nowhere, I decided to leave and go to work with my parents.

That experience turned out to be challenging, exciting, educating and exhausting at the same time.

It was suddenly interrupted with the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

By then, I had been back at FIU for about a month. I came back because I felt I was missing something important in my life, and that was my degree. I am certain that with a degree I will have opportunities come my way that I would not have had without a degree.

Again, I felt that my pursuit of a degree in public relations was going nowhere.

So, in the fall of 2002, I switched my major to travel & tourism management in the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management.

It turned out to be a good decision, not because of the area the degree was in, but more so because of the people that I met while pursuing my degree.

I loved being in an environment where at any time during my day I could hear a number of different languages being spoken at the same time.

In the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management, we are lucky to have a student

“

I loved being in an environment where at any time during my day I could hear a number of different languages spoken at the same time.

body and faculty that come from anywhere in the world you can imagine.

We have people from the islands of the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe and even Africa and China.

In a few words, we have our own little “melting pot” in our corner of the campus.

Since this is my last semester at FIU, I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have in some way or another enhanced my experience here and made it possible for me to soon be a college graduate.

Of course, I'd like to thank my family and close friends. Even though they do not always understand why I do the things I do, they have enough confidence in me to understand that there is always a method to my madness.

Thank you to my former teacher, Mrs. Cynthia Pelaez; without her help I could not be writing these words as she taught me the English language when I first arrived in the U.S. from my homeland, Caracas, Venezuela in 1979.

Robert D. Strickland, though not my teacher directly, was instrumental in my surviving what was a very difficult time in my school life— my high school years.

I am lucky enough to be able to say that although many years have passed, I am still in contact with these two most influential people in my life and am able to enjoy and share a very special and close friendship with each of them.

Please accept my apologies if I do.

Most importantly, thanks to Diann R. Newman. Without her constant support, guidance and friendship, this long experience would not have gone as smoothly as it did.

She is truly instrumental to the success of many of the students in the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management.

To Professors Carter, Del Risco and Cole: thank you for your support, friendship, guidance and knowledge you have passed on to me; Professors Martinez and Moll, your enthusiasm is admirable! I truly enjoyed being in your class.

I thank all other professors that I have had in class or have known while on this journey.

Finally, to my classmates: I thank you for welcoming me with open arms, treating me like a friend and keeping me young even though there is easily a 10 to 15 year age difference between most of you and me.

There are so many people to thank here at FIU that I hope I don't miss anyone.

If I may leave you with a word of advice, as I have been where many of you are headed once you complete your degree here at FIU:

Whatever you do, do it with pride, do it because you love it, do it because there is a fire inside of you that you can't put out and you feel it is the right thing to do in your heart.

Do it because it will enrich your life and the lives of those around you, not your wallet. Follow your dreams.

## WINNER & LOSER



### WINNER

**Class of 2005:** Congratulations on your hard work and devotion. *The Beacon* praises you for years of dedication and achievements. Rock on!



### LOSER

**Bragging Bigamist:** A bigamist in Greater Manchester, England was caught bragging about his new 20-year old-wife on a friends reunited web site, when his other 45-year old wife caught him as she was surfing the same site. He received a 16-week suspended jail sentence for bigamy and made false declarations for the purpose of marriage.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Former Dean of School of Journalism disapproves change in SJMC grammar exam

The disembowelment of the writing program of FIU's School of Journalism and Mass Communication is a tragedy for every student of that school, (see SJMC professor resigns after 20 years, April 21 issue).

That program was 20 years in the making. When I was asked in 1983 by the then FIU provost to help straighten out what was a tiny, unaccredited department— he called it “my single biggest academic headache”— I consulted with the leadership of journalism, advertising, public relations and television in South Florida to help determine the direction the school should take.

Without fail, one of the questions every one of them asked me was the same: What are you going to do to make sure your graduates will know how to write when they apply for a job with us? The inability of many college graduates to write well was a huge problem then and remains one today.

But we decided that the buck would stop at SJMC. If applicants didn't know the fundamentals of the language— especially grammar— we did not admit them until they met SJMC standards.

Once admitted, they had to show that they were making continuing progress in our writing program during their two years with us. And contrary to popular wisdom, these demanding standards did not result in lower enrollments.

The school grew by leaps and bounds, attracting better and better students who wanted to be challenged.

The principal architect of the program was the departing Professor Kevin Hall.

What he developed soon won high praise from top journalists from around

the country. Every one of the three accreditation teams— the school was accredited in record time in 1991— singled out the writing program as one of SJMC's strong points.

More importantly, the writing skills learned at SJMC propelled its graduates upward in their careers. A dual Pulitzer Prize winner working for *The Miami Herald*, for example, told me repeatedly that SJMC's writing course leveled the playing field for him when he competed with other interns at *The Herald* from places like Harvard, Yale and Brown.

And now it has been destroyed. What replaces it is the same sort of mediocre system used by dozens of j-programs in the country.

But that is not all that's falling apart at SJMC. With the departure of a key faculty member, the international program SJMC developed over more than a decade and which strengthened journalism throughout Central America is very likely to go down the proverbial toilet.

The same fate appears to face the school's Spanish-language master's program in journalism, the first at any U.S. university. If that happens, three of SJMC's crown jewels will have been plucked.

Worst of all, there are indications that SJMC has decided to teach its students, by example, that censorship is now an acceptable part of journalism in America.

Sadly, this is happening at the same journalism school which the chair of the last accreditation team only two years ago described to President Maidique as “a top-notch national program.”

**J. Arthur Heise, Ph.D**  
Professor (ret.) and  
Founding Dean Emeritus  
School of Journalism and  
Mass Communication

## Phew! [FIU] TO THE GRADUATES OF 2004/2005

BY LUIS NIN

### CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU'VE MADE IT THROUGH ALL THE INSANE PROFESSORS, TERM PAPERS AND HORRIBLE PARKING, AND SOMEHOW, DESPITE ALL THIS, FIU HASN'T LOST YOUR PAPERWORK.

HERE'S SOME HELPFUL ADVICE:

“YOUR FAMILIES ARE EXTREMELY PROUD OF YOU. YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE SENSE OF RELIEF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING. THIS WOULD BE A MOST OPPORTUNE TIME TO ASK FOR MONEY.”  
—GARY BOLDING



# Moving *Forward* ...to the beat

By **JESSICA ISER**  
Life! Editor

Most kids jump from one activity to another for years before they settle on something they enjoy. They take ballet classes, join baseball teams or even take a stab at reading for enjoyment.

Some children will continue their hobby for a couple of years before losing interest, but for the lucky ones, that little hobby becomes a genuine passion.

Zoila Araica was one of the lucky ones. She was nine years old when she began playing the clarinet. She didn't expect to continue with the instrument or even music, but because she noticed that playing the clarinet came natural to her, she decided to give it a try.

"I started practicing and it came really easily to me. After that, I skipped levels so I really liked it. It was really satisfying," Araica said.

She continued to excel in music over the years and her hard work paid off. At the age of 15, she was elected drum major of her high school's marching band.

According to Araica, being drum major is no easy task; one has to run rehearsals, conduct field shows and discipline band members who are out of line – no matter how much older and more physically imposing they are than you.

"I was barely 15 and I was having to boss around 18-year-old guys. One time I called the band to attention and they responded except for this one guy.



**MUSIC THEORY:** Zoila Araica graduates this spring with a bachelor's in music, but said she will be returning for her master's in conducting. **JESSICA ISER/THE BEACON**

a bachelor's in music education.

"I got stuck with a bachelor's in music with a concentration in education, and that really bothered me because I did as much work as any other person getting a bachelor's in education."

Even though she is graduating, she is not done with school. She plans on returning to get her master's in conducting.

Although many people enjoy music, they do not see it as a legitimate career – the way Araica does.

"It is not respected among society, music or music education. It's belittled instead of being put on a pedestal," she said.

Because of this view of music, jobs in this field are few and underpaid considering the amount of work a music educator has to do.

Although financial stability is something Araica wants in the future, the low pay has not deterred her from going into her chosen field. She hopes to one day teach an elementary school class and pass on the gift of music she received as a child.

"If you are a part of an ensemble, you get this connection that you don't see but you feel in some way," Araica said. "If you are conducting it's even better because you get the full spectrum of all the tone colors and you are helping to create a mold out of that moment."

For being only 21 years old, Araica has accomplished more than most people her age. Over a period of five years, she has led two different ensembles as drum major; one of the most challenging and time-consuming jobs anyone can hold.

She has stepped up to the people who did not respect her, and in turn gained the respect of everyone.

She has accepted the fact that because she wants to make a career out of what she loves, she won't receive the recognition or the salary she truly deserves.

I told him to drop and do push-ups and he told me f--- you. Of course, when you're 15 you want to cry and go into a hole. But no, I just stepped off the ladder, told someone else to run rehearsal and I took him off to the side. I told him f--- you in an educated way," Araica said.

Experiences like that one helped shape and prepare her for the even bigger challenges she faced while being the FIU Golden Panther Band's drum major for the four years she has attended FIU.

She not only benefited from the experience of prior incidents, but also from having Gregory Martin, marching band and symphony

band director at FIU, around to help guide and educate her more than anyone else could.

"He helped me so much and I have no words for that," said Araica.

Araica graduates this week with a bachelor's in music, even though she officially majored in music education.

Because of conflicts between the College of Education and the School of Music, she was unable to graduate with



COURTESY PHOTO



# Beating the ODDS



COURTESY PHOTO

## Senior optimistic after criminal past

By **JULIA MARCHESI**  
Staff Writer

From the confines of a jail cell, graduating from FIU was the furthest thing from Jason Bravo's mind. Arrested for felony charges while attending Christopher Columbus High School, Bravo, 24, overcame obstacles and will graduate from FIU this spring.

Looks can be deceiving for Bravo. Once an inmate and an associate of gang members, his tattoos no longer describe his personality.

"They reflect the stages of my life and my family," Bravo said.

"Getting an education opens your eyes and helps you find your place in the world," he added. "I used to have a distorted view."

After high school, Bravo decided to further his education at FIU, majoring in economics with a minor in philosophy.

"Economics is extremely challenging and important in understanding the world," he said.

Being part of the economics honors society, Omni Crom Delta Epsilon, gave Bravo more focus on his studies.

"I made lots of friends there," Bravo said. "We'd always get together and study."

Bravo believes in giving back to the community.

"Children are one-third of our population and all of our future.

Children are one-third of our population and all of our future. From time to time, I speak to inmates at the jail I was locked up in. I talk to them about how I once sat where they sit and slept where they sleep, and now I am about to start law school.

From time to time, I speak to inmates at the jail I was locked up in. I talk to them about how I once sat where they sit and slept where they slept, and now I am about to start law school," Bravo said. "The experience makes me feel good, it's gratifying."

Bravo's grandfather, who he credits as being the main influence in his life, moved to Miami from Cuba in 1962.

"When he first got here, he was washing dishes. Today he owns a state-wide company, South Florida Express, which employs over 300 people, including myself."

Bravo has worked full-time at the family business throughout his college years.

"I oversee that the transportation of documents and checks are taken care of for over 200 branches of Sun Trust Bank in Sarasota, Tampa and Brookville," Bravo said.

During his time at FIU, Bravo's main goal was just to finish school.

"Working full-time, trying to stay out of trouble and trying to take care

of my family while going to school was challenging," he said.

These days, he listens to Bob Marley and in his spare time enjoys reading Anne Rice books and spending time with his 10-month-old son, Tyler Jason.

He looks forward to moving to Tallahassee with his wife, Heidi, and son, in order to start FSU law school in the upcoming fall semester.

"My son is my reason for doing [this]," Bravo said.

Bravo describes himself as passionate and knows he will graduate with a law degree.

"When I believe in something, I do it."

He has high hopes of one day starting a law firm with his younger brother, Paul, who is currently attending Georgetown University Law School.

Through his life experiences and complications, he leaves FIU students with a word of advice.

"Take school seriously. It is ultimately to your benefit and there are rewards at the end of the struggle."

# LIFE! 5

SOME FAVORITE THINGS  
BY JORGE ROSARIO -  
2004-2005 SGA PRESIDENT

### 1. GOOD CONVERSATION

What good is anything if you can't have a meaningful chat about it? The key to happiness and success is to be able to have a conversation in which all parties involved find significant value in what is said.

### 2. DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

Label me as one of their loyal followers. DMB's music is life. If you're a fan, you know what I'm talking about. If you aren't, you just wouldn't understand. They're coming to town this summer July 16-17. Yes, I will be at both shows.



DAVE MATTHEWS BAND

COURTESY PHOTO

### 3. COLLEGE BASKETBALL

It's refreshing to watch a game where young men play their hearts out for the sake of winning and pride - and not for a paycheck. I'll take a Princeton back door cut, a Syracuse 2-3 zone and a Kentucky Run 'n Jump over the one-on-one basketball played in the NBA.

### 4. RED WINE

It's dark, complex and robust with hints of vanilla and blackberry. A must-have with a barely cooked 14 oz. piece of meat from your favorite steakhouse. Not only will red wine get you buzzed, but it's good for your heart as well!

### 5. TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER

This classic card game involves simple math, keeping a straight face while lying and taking someone else's money. I've gotten pretty good at it. It's the perfect game for a graduating member of SGA! I'm just kidding ... seriously.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase, "goodnight, sleep tight."

- <http://www.randomfacts.org>



**HELPING OUT:** Alex Prado, the newly elected SGA president, served students ham and egg croissants at Cram Jam on May 22. Prado and other SGA members teamed up with cafeteria faculty to provide an assortment of breakfast meals for students who were studying for the end of the semester final exams. **JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON**

# Prado ready to start making a difference

By C. JOEL MARINO  
Senior Staff Writer

Alex Prado, the newly elected Student Government Association president, sat with *The Beacon* for an exclusive interview regarding his thoughts on this year's campaign, his plans for the new administration and advice for graduates that plan to stay in contact with their alma mater.

**Q: What were your feelings when they announced you had won the SGA elections?**

I was extremely excited and overwhelmed. I just couldn't thank the people who helped me out enough, because I couldn't have done it without all those that helped me campaign. So that's the first thing I felt, gratitude to all the people that helped me out.

**Q: When do you officially begin your role as University Park's SGA president and what are the first things you plan on doing?**

As far as the Board of Trustees, I begin May 1 and as far as the actual student body president, I begin May 9. Right now we're in the process of moving into a new office because we're moving from the third floor to the second floor of the Graham Center.

After that, I'm going to be working on some different issues that were on my platform.

One of these is the [Graham Center] Pit being sealed off due to fire purposes. We're working on that, and that's the biggest thing I'm working on right now, which is the biggest thing that came up.

**Q: What policies or ideas from the former administration do you want to change?**

The difference between this administration and the last is that I'm going to be holding people a little more accountable to their positions.

I also want to create certain positions based on my platform to reach out to students that haven't been heard from before – such as multi-cultural students to faith-based organizations, and making sure those get heard. That's going to be the major difference: helping out groups that haven't really been heard before while still addressing everything else that is supposed to be addressed.

**Q: What policies from the Rosario administration do you plan to continue or keep the same?**

He started the Tech Committee, which worked closely with [the University Technology Services offices] to establish a new anti-spam program that's going to be installed in the Webmail.

We're also looking for a new type of web service that's faster, quicker and more user-friendly. Those plans were very successful and I want to continue those types of projects. The Panthercard expansion is almost done as well. We're just pushing for the completion very soon.

I never liked how a lot of administrations came in and started their own agendas.

I want to finish what he did. Some of my platform plans were based on what I could get done from the last administra-

tion.

**Q: What were your thoughts on your opponent, Aurelio "P.J." Rivera?**

My opponent is a great leader. At the SGA banquet, I mentioned him. I don't have to tell him to continue serving FIU because I know he will. I think he's a great asset to FIU. I don't know what he plans to do in the future – I haven't spoken to him yet – but whatever he plans to do I wish him the best. I know he'll continue to do whatever's best for FIU students, whether he does it for SGA or through anything else he gets involved with. He just hasn't talked too much with me.

**Q: Do you think your affiliation with the Pikes helped in the campaign?**

No. Other than them supporting me, I don't think it helped or hurt at all. It was just my brothers that came out and helped me out.

I've heard that a lot of people who were in other fraternities, other sororities or who were not even affiliated with the Greeks who believed in the platform, also helped me out.

**Q: Do you think a Greek presence**

**will influence your administration?**

For the past eight to ten years, I believe every SGA president has been Greek, so I don't think it's a big deal. I'm an FIU student first, and there's nothing wrong with being an FIU student.

**Q: What do you think is the best way for graduating students to keep in contact with the university?**

I think our Alumni Association is great. They've been making great strides in staying communicated with our alumni, helping many come to our athletic events and just reminding them where they came from.

A university's prestige is based on their alumni base and all the other "traditional" universities, such as [the University of Florida] and [Florida State University] are great because of alumni coming back after establishing themselves and donating money and supporting athletic events. I think it's just important to hold FIU at great lengths because that's where they got their degrees from and if they have those degrees they'll be more important in the end.

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## Congratulations to the Honor Society Graduates.

May you reach greatness as you embark in your future endeavors as Florida International University Graduates.

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# FIU must address student concerns

MESSOD, from page 12

those saw FIU finish two games away from the College World Series.

Some see FIU's recent struggles as a sign that it's time for new management. But I have a feeling FIU is due to break it big and soon.

## TOTAL FIU OVERHAUL

FIU is slowly changing from a commuter school to a traditional college. There's nothing wrong with that, but there is something wrong with the university regularly pissing off students.

FIU must do a better job with addressing the concerns of those who pay their salaries. For people to want to be here, they have to like being here, and I don't think FIU does enough to make that happen.

Customer service sucks. Parking is always horrendous, as are the parking tickets. Construction never ends. Classes are being cut. Fees are being increased. Campus life is a joke. Guess what that means when people graduate? They don't give money to the school. And they don't give a rat's booty about this place because most people think FIU used them as money cows. There's no loyalty or gratitude when people think they've been milked.

That's a big reason why FIU gets horrible alumni support and why they can't draw decent crowds to events. You have to get people to go for the love of their school and there's little of that at FIU.

I have lots of love for this place and I wouldn't have chosen to go anywhere else, but I bet that I'm in the very small minority. Administrators have to make student and alumni satisfaction a high priority in the future or risk their plans going belly-up.

## SPECIAL THANKS

FIU has been a blast. I've had way too much work, play, travel and fun. I wouldn't change most of it. There are lots of people to thank, but I must mention Robert Jaross, Orlando Machado, Will Sanchez and Rich Kelch because each of them was instrumental in my development at FIU.

I will forever be grateful to WRGP because without it, I probably wouldn't graduate.

*The Beacon* – specifically Harry Coleman and Xavier Villamarzo – gets its props for giving me a chance to get decent clips.

Thanks to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication for having great professors, for changing the stupid grammar test and for giving me cool classmates.

But most of all, thanks to those of you who've read my articles and listened to me on the air. Extra special thanks go out to those of you who actually think I'm good. Here's hoping some media company with money to spend is one of them.

# CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS



**FIRST RATE COACH:** Women's tennis coach Ronni Bernstein was awarded Sun Belt Conference Coach of the Year after her team won its first ever Sun Belt Conference Championship April 24 at No. 26 South Alabama. The championship victory gave the Golden Panthers an automatic bid to the NCAA regional tournament, which will be held on May 13-15. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**



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# Farewell graduating athletes

*This is a team-by-team list of all the active student-athletes graduating in Spring of 2005.*

## BASEBALL

Leo Calderon, majoring in health information management.

Dennis Diaz, majoring in physical education.

Denny Hernandez, majoring in criminal justice.

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

Warren Gale, majoring in sports management.

Junior Matias, majoring in liberal studies.

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Deniz Boz, majoring in business management information systems.

Milena Tomova, majoring in finance.

## MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

Darwin Mesadieu, majoring in international relations with a minor in marketing.

## WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

Alexia Dean, majoring in health management.

Linda Louissant, majoring in

construction management.

Doursiel Moore, majoring in criminal justice.

Veneisha Williams, majoring in education.

## FOOTBALL

Doug Jones, majoring in business.

Harold Leath, majoring in business.

Dannon Monroe, majoring in accounting.

Greg Moss, majoring in physical education.

Rashod Smith, majoring in sports management.

Kevin Timothee, majoring in broadcasting.

## WOMEN'S GOLF

Laura Viveros, majoring in international business.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

Charissa Gingerich, majoring in exercise physiology.

## SOFTBALL

Amanda Nealer, majoring in travel and tourism.

## SWIMMING

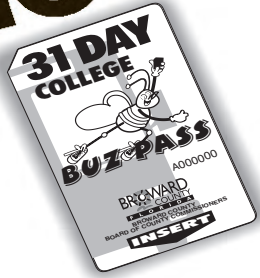
Tiffany Haynes, majoring in elementary education.



COLLAGE BY LUIS NIN/THE BEACON

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# SPORTS

12 - May 2, 2005

THE BEACON

www.beaconnewspaper.com



**LIVING THE DREAM:** Defensive back Kevin Timothee signed with the Tennessee Titans as an undrafted free agent. He becomes the first FIU football player to sign an NFL contract. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

## FIU football player signs NFL contract

By **NIKOLAY OREKHOV**  
Assistant Sports Editor

Three seasons after inauguration, the FIU football program has developed its first NFL talent. On April 25, defensive back Kevin Timothee became the first player in FIU's brief football history to sign an NFL contract.

Despite going undrafted, Timothee signed a free agent contract with the Tennessee Titans.

In a press release from the FIU athletic department, head coach Don Strock displayed his support and gratitude.

"We are certainly happy about this opportunity for Kevin," Strock said. "His size and speed

are two of his biggest assets, so he should get a good look in the defensive backfield by the Titans. We wish him all the best."

Timothee, a 6-foot-1, 191 pound defensive back, had a time of 4.28 seconds in the 40-yard dash and was the fastest player on the team.

Timothee is graduating this semester and was a regular in FIU's special teams and cornerback rotation, playing in 27 games throughout his career. He also holds a school record of 6.84 seconds for 60 meters in indoor track and field.

Timothee graduated from Plantation High School in 2000. He initially attended Ole Miss and transferred to FIU after

not getting sufficient playing time.

Timothee began his career as a Golden Panther his sophomore year, in 2002, when he played significant minutes and was constantly in the defensive backfield in eight games.

In 2003, Timothee saw action in 10 games on special teams and as a cornerback. He recorded 18 tackles on the season.

This past season, Timothee appeared in nine games. He had 15 total tackles, eight of which were unassisted.

In his FIU career, Timothee had seven total passes deflected but failed to record an interception or a sack.

## A few thoughts on the future of FIU athletics

COMMENTARY

BY **MESSOD BENDAYAN**  
Staff Writer

I, and about 5,000 others, will be part of the graduation ceremonies during the next two days. The transition from student to alumnus has begun and it's a lot scarier than I thought it would be.

But before I put on my graduation cap, I will put on a turban and dust off a crystal ball. For my final article, I will make four predictions about FIU Athletics in the near future. Wear a seat belt; it's going to be a bumpy ride.



### FOOTBALL IN DEEP TROUBLE

There are major questions to answer regarding student leadership, game management and preparation. The 2005 schedule makes last year's look like a game of patty-cake, and FIU finished 3-7 in 2004. I can't see them any better in 2005.

FIU is trying to pull a "Mission Impossible" that would make Tom Cruise wince. They're trying to succeed in college football at a school with little tradition and poor fan support. If they don't do it this year, I don't think patience will last much longer, especially with Florida Atlantic doing well. Without wins, blue-chip recruits won't take FIU seriously - and neither will anyone else. You're going to need more than Method Man and Redman to get people to come out.

Make no bones about it, head coach Don Strock, Athletic Director Rick Mello and a lot of other people's jobs are on the line in 2005.

### BASKETBALL GETS A ROLE REVERSAL

Call Sergio Rouco a miracle worker: He turned a bad team into a mediocre one. Thirteen wins in one year is impressive, considering what he inherited. Imagine what can happen when a young and decently talented pipeline is established. FIU will be a power in the Sun Belt, and they will win the league's automatic bid to March Madness at least once in the next five seasons.

I don't see similar things happening for the women's team. Cindy Russo is expected to retire after her 30th year at FIU, which is three years away. The European pipeline, built by Inge Nissen, has brought great players, but that was before bigger-name schools recruited Europeans. Now, FIU hasn't danced since 2001-02 and they have not been a post-season team for the last two years. The time is coming for FIU to re-invent itself, and I think it will happen without Russo and Nissen.

### BASEBALL GOES TO OMAHA

This one is more of a gut feeling, or maybe just bias creeping up on me. There's not a lot of recent history that says FIU will get there. They haven't done well in Sun Belt play and they'll probably have to go through a tough Florida bracket to get a chance. That's assuming they even get to the post-season - something they haven't done since 2002.

I do have one fact backing my prediction. It's not the first time Danny Price has gone through this. After FIU had their first post-season appearance in 1991, it took four years for it to return. 1995's 50-win squad broke the drought. In 1997, there were six straight post-season appearances, and one of

See **MESSOD**, page 10