

**CONFERENCE BLUES:** The troubles for the men's basketball team continue. The Golden Panthers were defeated 71-66 by the New Mexico State Aggies on Jan. 24. FIU lost its seventh straight Sun Belt Conference game. After starting the season on a winning note, the team has struggled and dropped their record to 7-12. For more on the team, turn to page 12. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

## Sutton travels long road to educate students

By **EVELYN MARTINEZ**  
Contributing Writer

The students in the crowded classroom of about 50, chatter quietly as they await their English professor. There are barely any empty seats left, which tells me that this is a class that students don't want to be late for. Some of them appear tired, yet, they still make the effort to attend James Sutton's Shakespearean Comedies class.

The quiet chatter slowly comes to an end as Sutton enters the room. He breaks the ice with a small joke about their performance on their last exam and puts them at ease by saying that they have a chance to work on it if they are not happy with their grade.

The students relax at the realization of his genuine humaneness. The man with the Ph. D. from Yale University clearly remembers what it's like to be a student.

Through his experience of first getting into Yale, Sutton can relate to the anxiety and pressure that students face in college.

"Like every other student [at Yale], I spent my first semester or even year there knowing that my admission was a fraud and I was waiting for this to be discovered and summarily kicked out, sent to the Midwest where

I came from," Sutton said.

But Sutton never got kicked out. He later realized that almost all of his classmates were feeling the same way he was and it was then that he learned to relax and was able to have a great time. This might be the reason why he is so compassionate towards his students. It might also be the reason for the advice that he shares with current English majors.

"Relax! English is not a professional degree. It's a lifelong ticket to learning, creativity and thinking," Sutton said. "You're going to get a job! You can become a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, a bum, a hippie, a corporate raider ... it all depends on you—your vision, your imagination and your hard work."

Sutton's journey into the field of English began as early as his childhood when he would curl up with a good book in his favorite armchair at home. His mother loved to read and this was naturally instilled in him. Throughout school his favorite teachers were always English teachers.

Sutton attended Northeastern University where he attained a Bachelor of Arts.

"I actually started at NU as a physics major and kept going

See **SUTTON**, page 3

## Simulations let rookie doctors learn without risk to living

By **ESTHER LANDHUIS**  
Knight Ridder

Pilots in training must master countless maneuvers on flight simulators before stepping into the cockpit of a loaded 747. But in medicine, new doctors often learn by practicing on real patients.

Now, hands-on, simulation-based learning is reshaping medical education. Some use dummy patients and operating room sets, while in the newest systems, the patient and the emergency exist only on a computer screen.

Experts say the shift is long overdue. Besides the obvious safety concerns, the apprenticeship approach—where trainees shadow and assist experienced physicians—has other drawbacks.

"People just can't experience everything with real patients because it's totally dependent on who rolls through the door," said anesthesiologist Dr. David Gaba, an associate dean at Stanford University's School of Medicine.

And often what's even harder than acquainting the hands with a scalpel is training the head to make high-stake decisions. You wouldn't let an unseasoned medic call the shots during a complex operation—not when a patient's life is at stake.

Now, though, medical rookies can work together to treat robotic "patients" in 3D World, a web-based virtual reality "hospital" where far-flung trauma team members can rehearse emergency-room crises.

In a sample computer scenario, the patient gets

wheeled into the emergency room after a car crash has fractured his left leg, wounded his chest and sent his heart rate skyrocketing.

Each team member—represented as a character clothed in scrub garments—selects from an array of medical interventions, such as "check airway" and "take blood pressure," by clicking an on-screen menu. The patient's vital signs change accordingly. Communicating real-time on headphones, the trainees navigate high-pressure emergency scenarios developed jointly by medical faculty at the Stanford University School of Medicine and Sweden's Karolinska Institute.

"The degree to which people felt immersed in the 3D World was surprising,"

said Dr. Phillip Harter, a Stanford emergency medicine physician who led 16 medical students in a spring pilot. "It wasn't like, here we go, we're playing a game. They were really in there taking care of a person."

3D World is a video-game version of life-like dummy patients at simulation centers that have existed for more than a decade at about a dozen U.S. medical centers—including Stanford, Harvard and the University of California-Los Angeles.

In a 2,200-square-foot emergency room setup in the basement of Palo Alto, Calif.'s Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Stanford's newest doctors take turns caring for special "patients" like Sam—a computerized dummy that blinks, breathes and even



**BREAK FOR NEW DOCTORS:** Rather than performing in life-threatening surgeries, new doctors will now face simulations rather than actual surgery to minimize risk patient's lives. **COURTESY PHOTO**

bleeds. His vital signs rise and plunge in response to the novices' actions.

"With simulation, even the inexperienced people can be 'it,'" said Gaba, whose team runs a mandatory simulator-training course for anesthesiol-

ogy residents at Stanford and the Veterans Affairs hospital. "There's no one assigned to rescue you if you get into trouble."

As the trainees sweat and struggle to save Sam,

See **DOCTORS**, page 2



## NEWSFLASH

## CAMPUS

## Comedy Show at Biscayne Bay Campus' Wolf Theatre

What do Black Entertainment Television, 99 Jamz and the Biscayne Bay Campus have in common? Comedy.

The Student Programming Council hosted a comedy show that featured the comedic styling of Arvin Mitchell and Benji Brown on Jan. 21 at the BBC's Wolfe Theatre at 9 p.m. The event was entitled "The SPC Comedy Show", and was hosted by comedian Louis "Treluv" Smith.

Mitchell is best known for his role as the bartender on BET's "Comic View" and has recently been featured as a presenter for the 2004 BET Music Awards.

Brown can be heard daily on the 99 Jamz "Big Lip Bandit Morning Show" and has a new comedy DVD, "In Touch with Reality," coming out soon.

"I listen to Benji every morning on 99 Jamz," said freshman Lashan Taylor. "I think he was the best, but Arvin was good too."

The event's DJ kept those who arrived on time entertained by playing music, and they continued to play through out the night. There were plenty of good seats available because everyone refused to sit in the front row so they wouldn't be picked on by the comedians.

After the show, the chairs were cleared, and the music was cranked up for the party. The comedians also stuck around to party with the students.

## INTERNATIONAL

## Scientists see robots doing household chores by 2015

By the year 2015, robots will be doing most of the household chores, and by 2025, seismologists will be able to detect huge earthquakes before they strike, according to predictions made by about 2,600 leading experts and scientists in Japan.

About 4,200 scientists, university professors, engineers at private companies and researchers at independent administrative corporations were asked by the Education, Science and Technology Ministry to make predictions about what new technologies might be invented within 30 years.

About 2,600 of those polled answered 860 questions, including positing a timetable for each technical innovation and another for when the nation might see widespread use of such technology. The questions were asked of those working in about 13 fields, including electronics.

According to the answers collected by the ministry, most of the experts said that between 2011 and 2015, every household would have a robot doing chores such as cleaning and laundering. They predicted that in the next decade, cancer treatments derived by applying an increased understanding of the cancer-causing mechanism would be available, the officials said.

They also said that between 2011 and 2015, telephones capable of simultaneously translating one language to another would be widely used, effective weight-loss medications would be available and a cure for AIDS would be found, ministry officials said.

Between 2016 and 2025, they predicted technology would be developed to detect earthquakes stronger than magnitude 7, leading to a reduction in fatalities and injuries, while a cure for Alzheimer's also would be found, the officials said.

spotlight  
on Panther Pagan Union

By **BEATRIZ DOMINGUEZ**  
Contributing Writer

Witchcraft, magic and the devil are only a few of the misconceptions that surround the Pagan religion. Most people are usually unaware of what Paganism really is.

"I've always associated Paganism with evil," said student Alain Castellano. "I was always told that they performed anti Christian rituals and therefore I've tried to stay away from people in that group."

The Pagan religion is growing quickly and thousands of resources have been launched to inform people about it. One of those resources is right here on campus.

The Panther Pagan Student Union was founded by senior Daniel Villar and his friend, FIU graduate Roniel Vallejo because they believed that

FIU students who didn't fit into other religious organizations deserved a place to grow spiritually without prejudice or judgment. On Sept. 22, 2004, the PPSU became an official religious asso-

ciation," said Villar.

Villar explains that Pagans usually believe that they are a part of a seamless whole with all of nature.

They regard life as sacred, and only some

Christians, who are interested in learning more about Paganism.

"Paganism is a very complex religion," Villar said. "There really isn't one definition for what a Pagan is. Like any other religion, Paganism is not for everyone, but if you are interested in obtaining more information about Paganism, the PPSU is a great way to get started."

The PPSU meets every Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the Graham Center fountain. The group discusses

upcoming events such as community service with other religious groups, spiritual retreats, outreach programs and lectures like the one given by Priestess Reverend Cheryl Richardson. Villar urges anyone who is a practicing Pagan or is simply curious to join the weekly meetings.

"We aren't a group of devil worshippers. We are a group of open-minded and positive individuals who believe in spiritual connections and come together to share those beliefs."

Daniel Villar

Panther Pagan Union President

ciation at FIU with Villar as the group's president. The group is dedicated to spreading awareness about Paganism.

"We aren't a group of devil worshippers. We are a group of open-minded and positive individuals who believe in spiritual connections and come together to share those

Pagans actually believe in and practice magic. Pagans are brought together by their innate longing for tribal community, reverence for all life, celebration of diversity and intellectual curiosity and honesty.

The PPSU is open to anyone of any religion, including Catholics and

## Virtual system replaces risky surgery for doctors

From **DOCTORS**, page 1

Gaba and his colleagues watch the action through a one-way mirror in an adjoining control room. Clicking a few buttons, the instructors can make Sam breathe faster, dilate his pupils and - if conditions warrant - send him into sudden cardiac arrest.

Although it's a fake patient, the stress is palpable. "I became very anxious," said Stanford anesthesiology resident Dr. Heidi Witherell of her first simulator session. "My heart rate probably went up 40 beats per minute."

Several weeks ago, she found her second run just as exhilarating but far less harrowing. "It allows you in training to make mistakes in a non-threatening environment," she said, "and to ask for help in ways that get other people involved in the problem-solving."

In 3D World's virtual emergency room - created using Atmosphere, an online chat software developed by San Jose, Calif.-based Adobe Systems and Poser, a three-dimensional character design tool from Curious Labs in Santa Cruz, Calif. - the problem solvers wouldn't even need to be in the same room.

Although Harter and

others acknowledge that simulation-based approaches will never replace apprenticeship training, they are excited about using the system as a distance-learning tool.

"The potential is huge," Harter said. "We can train people from all over the world in various parts of medicine ... different types of illnesses and injuries that they may not see frequently enough to keep up their skills."

And compared with a simulation facility - with setup costs ranging from \$300,000 to several million dollars and training fees of \$800 to \$2,000 per clinician per day - the Web-based system would certainly be economical.

Acknowledging the significant cost of building and equipping such facilities, one company, Boston Scientific, has designed a simulation center on wheels—a 35-foot bus containing a computerized patient and cardiac catheterization unit. During a recent stop at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View, Calif., cardiologists stepped aboard to practice using a new heart surgery tool on "Simantha," a lifelike dummy developed by Denver-based Medical Simulation for vascular procedures.



**NEW TRAINING METHODS:** A new virtual training system will alleviate new doctors by training them in simulation rather than being responsible for a patient's life in surgery. COURTESY PHOTO

"A lot of the learning is, what are the things that could happen to the patient while using the device?" said Dr. James Joye, medical director of El Camino's cardiac catheterization lab. "As devices get more complex and patients sicker ... the margin for error in that early learning curve becomes very important."

As Joye threaded a wire toward Simantha's beating heart, the mannequin blurted, "Doctor, I have a pain in my chest" and later,

after a few adjustments by Joye, "Thank you, that feels better."

Some envision mock hospitals filled with Simantha-like patients and other tools for simulator training. "The surgeon of the future will be able to rehearse an operation on a patient-specific hologram and deliver the perfect operation, erasing the mistakes with robotic assistance," said Dr. Thomas Krummel, chair of surgery at Stanford's School of Medicine.

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# Professor hopes to inspire students, teach English's value

**SUTTON, from page 1**

with this for two-and-a-half years until my incomprehension and the gift of Cs and Bs I was receiving on exams, got the better of me," Sutton said.

It was no surprise that Sutton changed his major to English and later on went to the University of Michigan for his Masters of Arts.

It was at this point that his life would change. His favorite professor was a renaissance teacher who led him to Florence.

"I spent one glorious year, 1988-1989, following my M.A. from Michigan," Sutton said. "I suppose you could say that this was the year that changed everything—the year that led me to renaissance studies, the year that made me appreciate art and architecture and space as I never had before. The year that really made my admission to Yale as a doctoral candidate in renaissance studies possible."

Of all the wonderful things Sutton has learned in his academic career, he said that Shakespeare was the most fascinating.

He said that Shakespeare's plays change every time you look at them, just like life. He said that Shakespeare

wrote during a time in which religious confession, belief and practice was a matter, sometimes, of life and death, and where the intertwining of religion and politics, and often literature, was

married and has a two-and-a-half-year-old son, Alexander, to whom he and his wife have read to since the day he was born.

Sutton is also the head advisor for the English

Sutton also recently finished writing his first book: "Materializing Space at an Early Modern Prodigy House: The Cecils at Theobalds, 1564-1607."

"James was under a lot of pressure to finish his book," said McIntire. "He took the summer off, worked hard and accomplished it. It's very admirable. Not everyone can do that."

Sutton has many plans for his future. Academically, he wants to write at least one more book, in his field, if not more.

He also wants to help his department grow and strengthen and he eventually wants to be promoted to full professor.

"Most of all, I want to keep teaching young people, conveying my love and interest of renaissance literature and life to them, helping them see that despite the passage of 400 plus years, these texts and times still have vitality and value," Sutton said.

**"James doesn't get many incentives from being the head advisor, but he does a great job!"**

Carmela McIntire  
English Department Chair

common.

Sutton believes that a lot about life can be learned from Shakespeare.

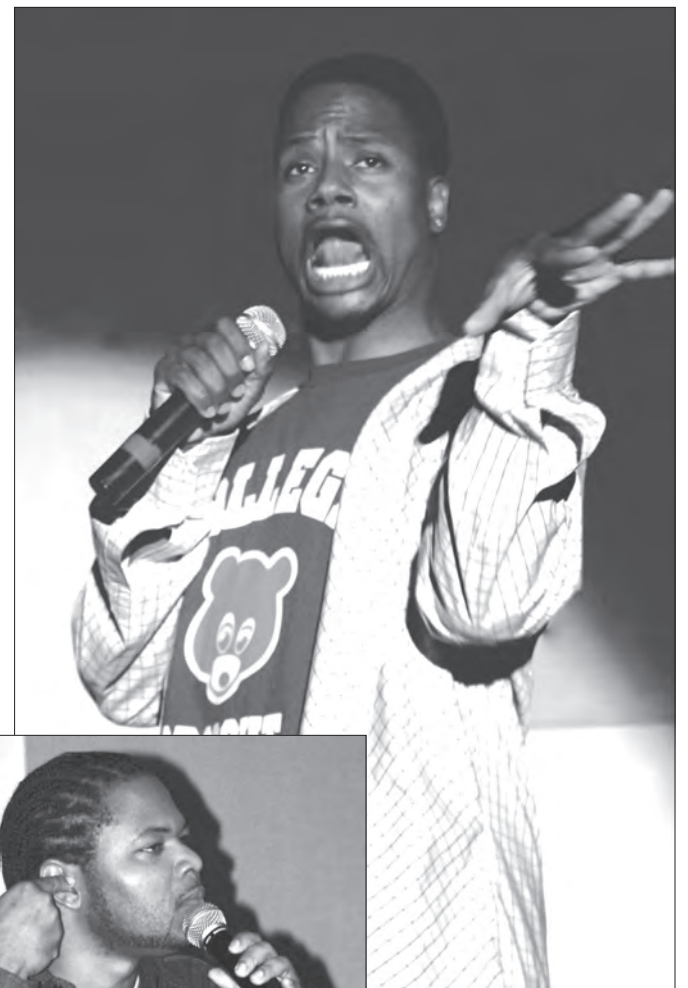
"Shakespeare's comedies have taught me that women are usually more clever than men; that marriage can and should be a joyful, creative, talkative affair, but is always ever so fragile," Sutton said.

Sutton is happily

department at FIU.

"James doesn't get many incentives from being the head advisor, but he does a great job!" said Carmela McIntire, English department chair.

"He constantly gets great evaluations from his students. He is very genial and easy to work with, as he always volunteers to help out in the department."



**SPC COMEDY SHOW:** Students and faculty attended the SPC Comedy Show at the Biscayne Bay Campus' Wolfe Theatre on Jan. 21. Students came to enjoy comedic talents like Arvin Mitchell (above) and host Louis "Treluv" Smith (right). JESSICA MARSHALL AND MELISSA RODRIGUEZ/THE BEACON



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# OPINION

Alejandra Diaz Editor In Chief • John Lovell Managing Editor • Leoncio Alvarez Opinion Editor

## EDITORIAL

### Lack of school spirit may be attributed to an unnecessary UM envy

FIU seems to have become a playground for those who aren't excited about much in life. Walking around campus, you cannot help but overhear comments like "I can't wait to transfer out of here" and "this place is such a hellhole."

What one doesn't seem to comprehend is why anyone would waste so much money each semester to come to a place where he will be unhappy? Not too far from the UP campus, a dainty little place called Miami Dade College can be found where a less expensive education awaits those discontented souls at FIU who will end up transferring to another university after achieving basic requirement credits for an Associates Degree.

School spirit at FIU is at an all time low and most students walking around in UM gear, would tell you that. Perhaps it's that FIU doesn't sell enough of its official gear or the teams just don't win enough to skyrocket sales. It's safe to say that most high school's can pack more people on a rainy Wednesday afternoon than FIU has during its entire 2004 football season.

Some students who chose FIU as "their" university already knew what they were getting themselves into. The talk around Miami has always been that FIU is just a place where those not good enough for UM can go.

The university you attend should be a place where you are content to be. A place in which after graduation, you would be proud to be a part of its alumni.

Is UM even all that to boast about? According to the University of Miami website, forty percent of all classes at UM are taught by a Teaching Assistant. So you pay three times the tuition cost at FIU, and you don't even get taught by an actual professor? How does that make any sense?

Two out of every ten UM students will eventually end up transferring to FIU or a lesser known university because tuition costs are way too high. Seems like FIU doesn't end up being such a bad decision after all.

The time has come for Golden Panthers to be happy with whom they are and the University they attend. Stop making up nonsense about how after this semester you will be transferring out, most likely your grades still won't be good enough and UM probably still won't accept.

FIU must be doing something right if it at least hires the proper faculty to satisfy your growing educational needs and not a person who has just a couple more years of experience under his belt.

– Leoncio Alvarez,  
Opinion Editor



LUIS NIN / THE BEACON

## Freshman suffer in English due to FCAT

By JAMIE BLANCO  
Staff Writer

"I'm in the 12th grade and am still having FCAT shoved down my throat every day," said frustrated Varela High School senior, Ben F. Badger Jr. FCAT materials, skills test, prompts and activities are often found on the desks of juniors and seniors – even those in advanced placement classes.

In a time of elevated emphasis on examinations and school accountability, the greater importance seems to be over the statistics and not on actual college preparation in Florida.

There are 39 low performing Miami-Dade County schools that have been put on zone watch. This means longer school days and regular assessments for diagnosis and monitoring.

While these intensive steps may help to elevate the status of these schools and help struggling students with the exam, it seems that Florida has forgotten that our education does not end at the 10th grade.

"I don't feel like there's any need for me to be here," said Cornelius Troy, a Northwestern Senior High student who goes to school an extra hour, four times a week. "I already passed the FCAT."

Apathy is a dangerous force and students who feel unimportant tend to take on an attitude of indifference. They are left unchallenged, uninspired

and have low expectations of themselves and little care for the future.

As a result, 37 percent of high school students who do pass the FCAT do not go on to college. Of those who do pursue further education, it can still be a difficult experience.

"The data shows that even though they pass the test, it does not guarantee that they will do well in college," said Vivian Lorenzo-Guerra, a teacher at Felix Varela Senior High School. "Many students pass

found. Sadly, we know that our students can't measure up to international standards - yet. But even passing the FCAT will not ensure that they do; ... we should fear asking too little more than we fear asking too much," said Rudy Crew, new Superintendent for Miami-Dade Public Schools.

Even more concerning than low bar standards for graduation are the low performances of students.

According to the 2004 FCAT result media packet, 32 percent of African-American students, 42 percent of Hispanic students and 63 percent of White students performed at or above grade

“Apathy is a dangerous force and students who feel unimportant tend to take on attitude of indifference.”

the FCAT but once they get to a college setting, they have to take remedial classes.”

If your reading and writing levels are not above the FCAT required levels, getting into the college of your choice becomes difficult.

English Professor Donald Watson says that he is not "hypercritical" of the test. "The majority of my students haven't been asked to do much writing in high school," he said.

His daughter is a student of the Miami-Dade County public school system. "The longest paper she wrote was for a photography class not language arts," said Watson.

"The math needed to pass the 10th grade FCAT, generally is taught in middle school in the rest of the world, a study by one respected national group

level. "Students show improvement in reading at every grade level except eighth and 10th, where the percent of students reading at or above grade level has decreased and students reading below basic levels increased," according to 2004 FCAT results.

Crew has laid out a set of new objectives for a school system plagued in the past by chronic corruption.

He plans to eliminate low-performing schools, and increase academic achievement for all students by bringing cost-efficiency to the district's construction and business practices.

We've heard of idealism before in Miami Dade County, and gotten a raw deal in the end. Hopefully, the past will not continue to repeat itself.

## WINNER & LOSER

### WINNER



**Firefox Web Browsing:** The web search company has joined forces with the elite Google, in order for both companies to one day take on the predominant Microsoft Internet Explorer. First FIU, now Google... what else does Firefox need?

### LOSER



**Sizzling Cars:** Thieves in Canada are following weather reports that show which cities are going through cold fronts, to steal cars that have been left warming up in driveways. For precaution, citizens have been told to sleep in their cars everyday.

## SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off in GC 210 at the University Park campus, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beacon@fiu.edu. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. If brought in to an office, a legitimate ID may be accepted instead of a phone number. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 400 words.

# The Schizophrenic Life of the Resident Assistant

By **CRISTELA GUERRA**  
Staff Writer

Life as a Resident Assistant has become a new existence for me – an innovative way of life – if you will.

But of course, with all new jobs people have their moments of uncertainty. I realized this early on when I saw how intricate each part of the RA application was, and how detailed they were in getting to know the type of person you are.

I know now, however, that I am not the same person I was a semester ago. This RA position has made me grow more than I could have ever imagined.

Not many people would strive to become almost a parent, to 40 new college students. At most the university would encourage a complete level of control in your hallway but not to also become friends with the residents.

However, the ultimate objective is to build relationships that will last a lifetime and to have them impact one another's lives, as well as mine. Hopefully this will provide residents the support they need in difficult moments.

An RA's life turns you into one person with a million and one personalities. To make it less schizophrenic, you wear many hats and each day you encounter a new hat to add to the growing pile.

Our hats? We have more hats than we do names: RA and hall monitor, sometimes even mentor or counselor, disciplinarian and friend.

What is our calling? To allow residents of Panther Hall, Everglades, University Park Towers, University Park Apartments and our neighbors to the north in the beautiful Biscayne Bay Campus, a chance to see what commuters often never discover – the wide

and I work were I live. The idea is a ridiculous irony because one cannot get away from that fact.

Nevertheless, there is no denying the change in people when they experience one semester in this position. With all the stress of school work, papers piling up at your desk and your organizer sitting lonely and abandoned in some drawer, you are still awake attempting to think of another stimulating activity for

Life is an unpredictable conundrum of events and occurrences.

Most will agree that this job adds more ups and downs than the fastest roller coaster on earth.

My theme since the beginning of the semester has been, "The Matrix," because it is so appropriate to the period of one's life in college. You have to free your mind and adjust to the new living-on-your-own thing, and follow the white rabbit into a new land of wonder where the "real world" is just a hop, skip and a jump away.

Once in a while, if your lucky, you do have those people who guide you along the way. I'd like to think of us as some of those people.

The life of an RA is filled with: programming, flyers, paint, lots of glitter, a few gallons of glue, debates, long hours of conversation, dirty dishes, torn bulletin boards, fire alarms and the not-so-sweet sounds of the RA beeper, along with phone calls at ungodly hours of the night.

As a resident you could live under water or on the moon and you might even become a cartoon character.

As an RA we have the best of both worlds. We experience the college life and work along with students to make their FIU experience the most memorable it can be.

Would I do it all over again if I had the chance? In a heartbeat.

“An RA's life turns you into one person with a million and one personalities.”

variety of opportunities and experiences the true college life offers, filled with diversity and color.

To live in a residence hall in any college can often be, for some, a very disappointing encounter. The new environment, home sickness and being on your own and coming to a new school can all be extremely nerve wracking, for both the student and the parent. It's my responsibility to reach out to those individuals in my hallway.

I am trained to assimilate a community of 40 completely different personalities – in a giant melting pot of loud noises, energy and emotion; into some sort of togetherness. No one can ever tell me, "Don't bring your work home with you," because I live where I work

your overly hyper next door neighbor. You do see the fruits of your labor...you also become extremely well known.

Do I go crazy? All the time! This job is not for the weak at heart and definitely not for the narrow minded. We encounter some of the craziest, kookiest situations on a daily basis...you would not be able to script some of this stuff.

The happy times all mix in with the harder times, whether it's just meeting a brand new resident for the first time or just another late night call about a noise complaint where you have to ask them to "please keep it down." "I understand ... and I hope you think about this a little more next time," is the epitome of the word RA.

## QUOTEABLES

*"My dream is to coach in the NFL, probably for the Steelers."*

– **Snoop Dogg**, rapper and actor, in an interview with New York Daily News, on coaching his son's football team.

*"Michael Moore and I actually have a lot in common – we both appreciate living in a country where there's free expression. But, Michael, if you ever show up at my front door with a camera, I'll kill you."*

– **Clint Eastwood**, actor and director, after picking up a prize at the National Board of Review

*"I start with the bra. If the bra's right, everything falls into place."*

– **Kate Winslet**, actress, on how she

prepares to get into character for any movie she is in.

*"The last marriage that was televised was Prince Charles and Lady Di, and that didn't work out too well."*

– **Donald Trump**, entrepreneur and billionaire, on his decision to not televise his wedding.

*"He had it all. A little bit of devil, a whole lot of angel, wit, charm, good looks, superb timing and great, great class."*

– **Bette Midler**, actress and musician, on her thoughts on the untimely death of talk show host and comedian, Johnny Carson.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

### How much school spirit do you think you have?

- A lot, you will never find me without my blue and gold.
- Some, I attend some games here and there.
- Not a whole lot, I'm not ashamed or anything, I just have too many things going on.
- We are the FIU pelicans right?

Cast your vote at [www.beaconnewspaper.com](http://www.beaconnewspaper.com)

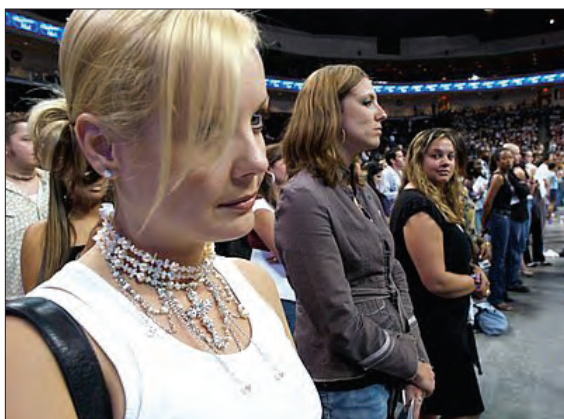
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# Idols

THE ODDS ARE AGAINST YOU



**FAME AND FORTUNE:** Contestants in Las Vegas (left) await their turn to audition for a chance to advance on the hit TV show "American Idol." In St. Louis (right) one of the several thousand contestants auditions in front of the camera. COURTESY PHOTOS

## Thousands seek fleeting stardom in popular TV show auditions

By ANA RIBEIRO  
Contributing Writer

I remember the afternoon as being bright. The sun slowly turned into a lush, orange half-circle and then disappeared behind the cloudless horizon; the stars settled in the undisturbed firmament and finally disappeared upon the returning light of morning. Stamped on the back of my hand was the number 357.

I sat in my uncomfortable beach chair, for one, two, 12, 18 hours, squeezed in a narrow corridor between the wooden bar of the boardwalk and the back façade of the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. In my head were dozens of songs I could have performed and images of the fame and fortune I could have achieved. My internal agitation, the lack of a reclining function in my beach chair, and soaring voices and guitars around me (in an improvised luau), kept me awake until the moment of truth. With a quivering body, but a firm voice, I entered a door and stood in a room from where I'd have no

access to Hollywood.

### WELCOME TO "AMERICAN IDOL"

"You're going to Hollywood!" has become the mantra in the prayers of thousands of aspiring singers. The judges — Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson — are the bearers of their fate. The show depicts many "Idol" contestants of humble origin, who have to make a real effort and sometimes spend all their savings on traveling hundreds of miles to attend auditions. Their happiness and ability to buy food and transportation after these expenses, hinge on the judge's decision. This season, one 28-year-old contestant said that she had to sell her wedding rings to make it to the audition in Washington, D.C. She also said that if she isn't able to express herself through music, she'll "probably die." Another applicant, a young dancer/janitor, wasn't so fortunate. The judges turned him down and he had to go beg for money out in the street to return

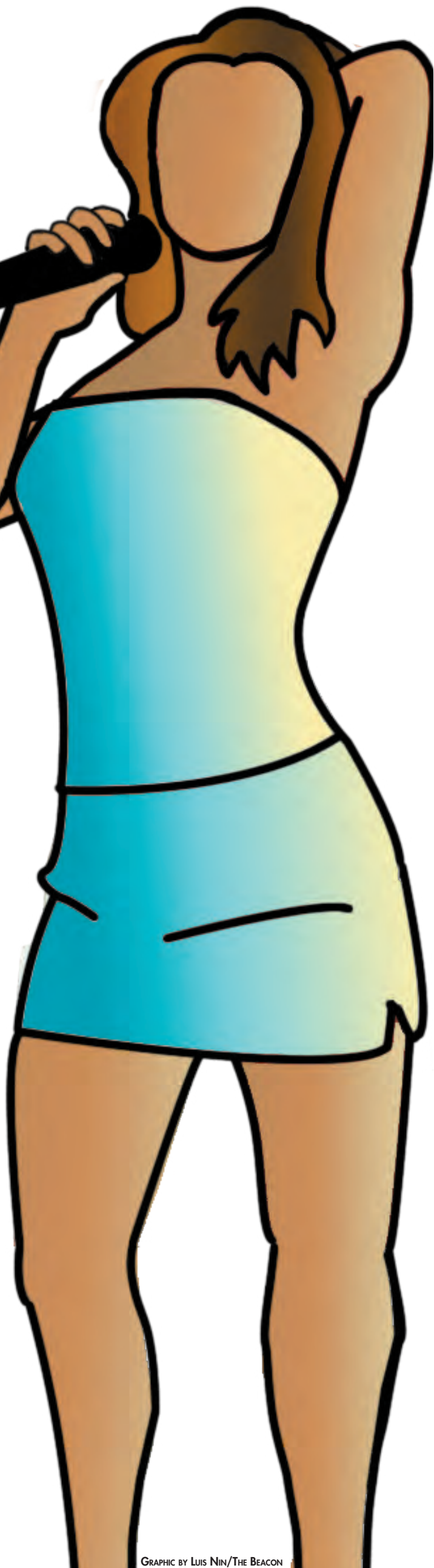
home.

Fortunately, all I had to do after the audition was take I-95 and go cry into my pillow.

How much of "American Idol" is true and how much is staged will probably remain a mystery to its viewers. Some people can really sing and make it to Hollywood. Others really think they can sing, and not even Simon Cowell's humiliating comments dissuade them. Still, others just want to make an appearance, while in the most extreme cases, some want to achieve an impossible degree of ridiculousness. But it can be figured that the bad singers are the ones who get the viewers interested in the beginning of the show. So, the producers need to deliver a quota of those to the three judges. I can say with confidence that I don't sing badly, or I wouldn't be doing vocal performances for a living. Yet I couldn't get past the first phase of auditions for season two.

After waiting in line 18 hours for an "American Idol" audition,

See IDOL, page 7



GRAPHIC BY LUIS NIN/THE BEACON



# Fame escapes 'Idol' contestants

IDOL, from page 6

I made it to the entrance of the Fontainebleau Hotel. Once inside, I had to wait six more hours until my turn came. There were some cameras and reporters outside, but the number doubled inside. Hundreds of us were eventually deposited into a large ballroom, which had dozens of doors along its perimeter. I looked around and saw girls shaking their behinds and belting out Aretha Franklin tunes to catch the media's attention. The guys were hardly less discreet.

Amid all the noise and crowding, the producers managed to call out numbers and line people up in groups of five in front of the doors. During my long wait, I got to know some of the contestants.

One girl bawled her eyes out because she had the flu and sounded hoarse. I asked her to sing for me, and although she did sound terrible, I told her not to worry. "At least she isn't trying to turn her performance into a circus act," I thought to myself. But perhaps a circus act was exactly what they were looking for.

My group of five finally stepped across the threshold into the audition room, and stood before a young woman with no relation to the three celebrity judges. Perched on a tripod was



**BUG EYED:** A contestant in Washington, D.C. loses her sanity and makes a face at her "American Idol" judges. After waiting in line for such long hours, scenes like these are very common.

COURTESY PHOTO

a camera, and the young woman asked each of us to look into it during the individual performance. We each got about 30 seconds of air time that never went on the air. In my opinion, all five of us sounded decent enough to progress at least to the next round, without needing to use gimmicks to make an impression. But her words hit us in the head

like a brick.

**"YOU'RE ALL VERY GOOD, BUT YOU'RE NOT WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR"**

I had been so confident that I'd made it. I wanted to ask her why I couldn't get a shot, but in my dumb-foundedness I didn't. I wished for a moment that I would've sounded ridicu-

lously horrible. Then I would have a chance to see Simon, Paula and Randy to surprise them with an admirable rendition. How many more rounds until the actual judges? I didn't care to find out. I walked out of the hotel and talked to no one. I even pretended I didn't see the people I had met who came out of the rooms hopping like excited rabbits, clutching yellow slips of approval. What had they done that I hadn't?

Idol Kelly Clarkson has sold more than two million records and has been nominated for a Grammy. Fantasia Barrino won two Billboard Awards in 2004. William Hung - the hilarious, awful-sounding Chinese Ricky Martin impersonator from season three - got a record deal and his own fan clubs, and has sold more than 30,000 records.

What's the formula for success? I don't believe there is one. I see success in show business as an oil fountain hit mostly by chance. If you don't find it, you might experience some frustration, but live a blissfully simple life. You'll never know what it's like to be at the top of the world, only to fall sooner or later.

Once you get your hands on fame and fortune, you might become dependent on it. Just like oil, it runs out.

# TV Land no place for role models

BY HEATHER SVOKOS  
Knight Ridder  
Newspapers

Can you imagine how TV would be if all the parents were as cool as Sandy and Kirsten Cohen? Well, even that would get old. Truth is, the bad apples make it fun to watch. Here's our salute to a few of the worst parents on TV.

**JULIE COOPER,**  
"THE O.C."

Such fun, that Julie - she's a lying, selfish, manipulative, materialistic, marrying-for-money, world-class liar - AND she slept with her daughter's ex-boyfriend. She's not bad, she's just written that way.

**HOMER AND MARGE SIMPSON,**  
"THE SIMPSONS"

We all know Homer is more of a missing link than a parental role model. But let's not overlook Marge's maternal ineptitude.

Once, when Lisa was so sad she didn't feel like smiling, Marge advised: "Well, it doesn't matter how you feel inside, you know? It's what shows up on the surface that counts. ...Take all your bad feelings and push them down, all the way down, past your knees until you're almost walk-



THE SIMPSONS COURTESY PHOTO

ing on them. And then you'll fit in, and you'll be invited to parties, and boys will like you, and happiness will follow."

**JACK AND LAURA BRISTOW/IRINA DEREVKO,** "ALIAS"

Let's see. Parents are double, triple or quadruple agents. Dad brainwashed her as a child. Mom shot her. Ah, nothing says familial love like traumatic deception and a gaping bullet wound.

**GEORGE AND LUCILLE BLUTH,** "ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT"

Dad committed light treason by building homes for Saddam Hussein; Mom is as cold as a frozen banana

on a stick.

**COTTON HILL,**  
"KING OF THE HILL"

The angry little stump of a man spawned a baby boy, whom he named Hank ("Always wanted a boy named Hank.") When his older son, also named Hank, pointed out the obvious, Cotton solved the problem by calling the baby "Good Hank."

**THE PARENTS ON**  
"THE PEANUTS SPECIALS"

Who, on Thanksgiving, leaves their kids alone so they're forced to forage for their own Thanksgiving meal, which they make out of toast and popcorn?

# WEEKend

THURSDAY • JANUARY 27

**Want to know why partners cheat?** Never Satisfied: Why Men/Woman Cheat is a seminar sponsored by the Black Student Union. The event will take place from 7p.m. to 9 p.m. at WUC Panther Square.

**The National Panhellenic Council presents "Myths and Perceptions,"** a discussion about all things Greek. If you want to know all about the Greek the event will start at 5p.m. and will take place on the 1st Floor lounge of Everglades Hall. If you're interested in joining and would like more information visit <http://www.fiu.edu/~greeks/>.

FRIDAY • JANUARY 28

**Biscayne Bay Recreation Presents Kayak Day by the Bay.** Get your swimming gear on and head behind the pool area by the bay at 12 p.m. For more information please call 305-919-4595 or visit <http://wuc.fiu.edu>.

SATURDAY • JANUARY 29

**Catch Coka Lani and the Beat Street Team** at Potamkin Hyundai South, 21111 S. Dixie Highway. Stop by from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for free Beat Prizes while supplies last.

**We care! A Tsunami Benefit Concert** featuring Protagonist, Empire, Message In Blood, The Fluent, Hearts Over Rome, Stop This Fall, Dead Lions, Unwanted Superheroes, All Absence, Madelyn, Mason, Breathing Chemistry, Lejeune, Weapon X, Where Is Monday, Echo Me Astronaut, A Fragile Line, and more at the Pompano Inddor Skatepark, 2171 Blount Rd. 12:00p.m. \$8

SUNDAY • JANUARY 30

**SPC Campus Entertainment is presenting WWE Royal Rumble Viewing Event.** Join SPC at Gracie's Grill for this exciting event! Come early. The Pay-Per-View event starts at 7p.m. Visit [www.wwe.com](http://www.wwe.com) for more details on all the Royal Rumble action!

**The play, "Real Men,"** will be showing for the last time at the Coconut Grove Playhouse. It explores the lifetime of men and their relationships with their mothers, wives, children and each other. Written by Tony and Grammy Award winner Charles Strouse. For more information call (305) 442-2662.



January 27, 1302

On this day, poet and politician Dante Alighieri is exiled from Florence, where he served as one of six priors governing the city.

Dante's political activities, including the banishing of several rivals, led to his own banishment, and he wrote his masterpiece, "The Divine Comedy," as a virtual wanderer, seeking protection for his family in town after town.



# Preacher labels sorority members 'whores'



**REPENT OR PERISH:** "Brother Jim" Gilles reads aloud to students at FIU on Jan. 13, sparking several arguments amongst the crowd. **JESSICA MARSHALL / THE BEACON**

By **DIANA SEMPERE**  
Contributing Writer

On Jan. 13, dozens of FIU students filled the Graham Center fountain area and stood in awe, as they watched an unknown preacher fervently wave a Bible in his hand and ludicrously scream his interpretation of the word of God.

People laughed, others became enraged and some were even calling their friends on their cell phones so they too, could come and watch the spectacle that was occurring.

"It didn't seem like he was legit or like he sincerely meant what he was saying," said sophomore Leif Elliott. No one had any idea who this man was, or what rock he crawled out from, until he gallantly introduced himself "I, Brother Jim, love all of you sinners! If you don't repent you will go to hell!"

According to his website, [www.thecampus-ministry.org](http://www.thecampus-ministry.org), Brother Jim Gilles, a born-again Christian street preacher, has been touring U.S. universities since 1982 in an attempt to save the nihilistic youth of America from eternal damnation.

Unfortunately for Gilles, who converted during a Van Halen concert in the early 80s, his methods of insulting and deprecating the public have done more wrong for his mission than good.

"He seemed insane," said junior Paul White. Gilles accused all the

women in the crowd, especially those in sororities, of being whores. He also said that fraternity members have no other objective but to get drunk and rape girls.

"Preachers like him are fun to watch because they are so unpredictable," said freshman Quiana Balaez.

Brother Jim's allegations did not lead to any praises from the crowd. Instead, his arrogant mannerisms provoked loud bursts of laughter and mockery, which only frustrated him and inspired him to say even more spiteful and derogatory comments.

"I didn't like his way of being so extreme and condemning. Brother Jim's approach was too radical," said Andrea Felix, president of Campus Crusade for Christ. "I can't condemn him or people that aren't Christians because Christians aren't like that. But I believe that his organization makes it seem like every group from FIU is as intolerant as him, and that is definitely not true."

His most unbelievably ignorant and irrational comment was his indisputable belief that God caused the tsunami in Southeast Asia because he could no longer tolerate the homosexuals and drug addicts of the area.

When he said this, people in the crowd snapped back, screaming arguments that he could not defend himself

against, thus proving that Brother Jim is not capable of reasonably arguing any of his positions without hiding behind a Bible. "College students are smart enough to see ignorance and that is why Brother Jim's testimonies are laughed at," said junior Rene Villa.

"As a Catholic, I believe it's incredible that he preaches about a vengeful God and can claim to be Christian when Jesus' message is one of love and acceptance, not of judgment and smite."

The question on everybody's mind that afternoon was, "Who in FIU would sponsor or allow someone like him to set foot on our campus?"

Apparently, no religious group on campus invited him, and according to university policy, he is legally entitled to speak his mind as long as he does not disrupt the essential function of the university.

His website even has a banner that reads, "328 CAMPUSES IN 49 STATES AND 6 COUNTRIES: Hundreds Saved, Successfully Won Dozens of Court Battles, Legally Opened Over 50 Closed Campuses." This is one of the many examples of how the law can protect speech that offends and upsets people.

Unfortunately for Brother Jim, the message he has fought so firmly to preserve, serves no other purpose than to entertain and provide a good laugh for students everywhere.



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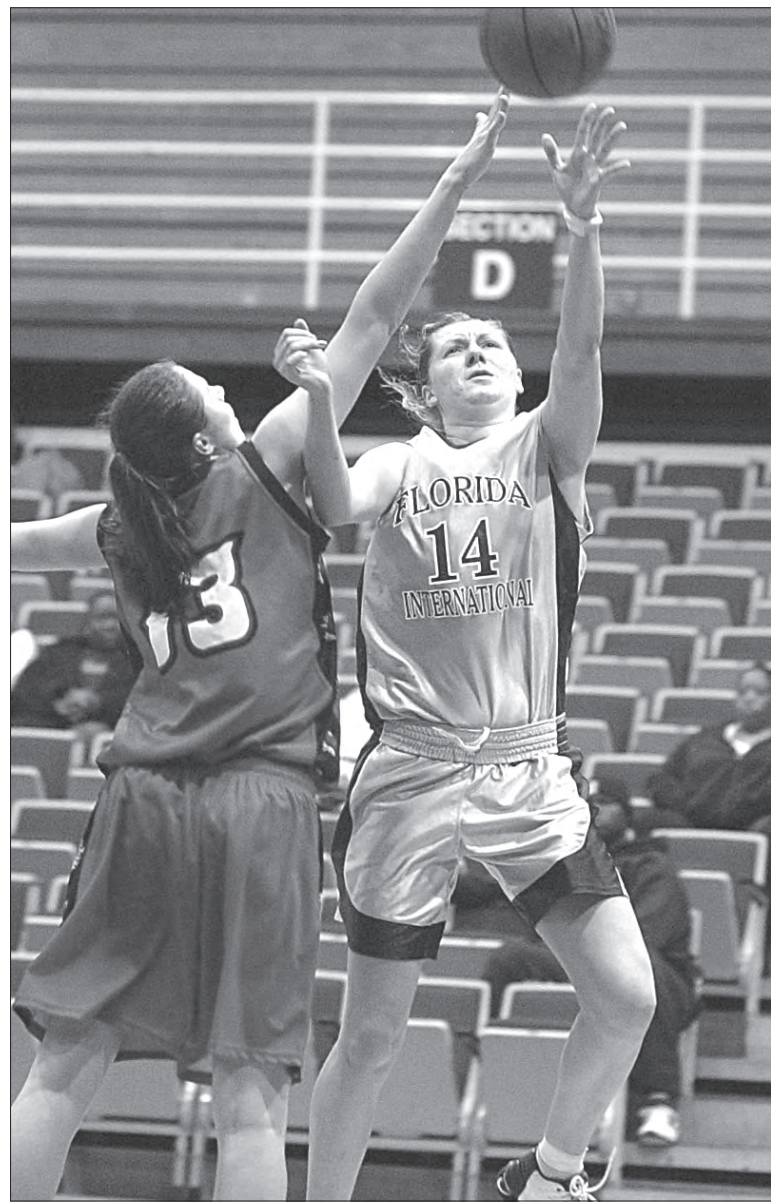
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**DOUBLE DIGIT LOSS:** Louisiana-Lafayette shot 50 percent in the second half and outscored the Golden Panthers 22-5 over the final nine-and-a-half minutes to come from behind for the 68-58 Sun Belt Conference win at Pharmed Arena on Jan. 24. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**

# BE A GOOD SPORT

A COMIC STRIP STRICTLY FOR SPORTS FANS

BY HARRY COLEMAN AND LUIS NIN

## A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE: DOLPHINS 2005



# BASEBALL PREVIEW!

Look for a full preview of the Golden Panther baseball team in Monday's edition of *The Beacon*.

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# FIU has dropped nine of last 11 games

SUN BELT, from page 12

5-of-11 from behind the arc.

The Golden Panthers were once again plagued by mental mistakes in the opening session, getting called for countless traveling violations; they turned the ball over nine times while shooting a combined 11-of-24 from the floor.

The Aggies, who played from behind for most of the opening frame, led 34-30 at halftime partly because of their three-point shooting.

FIU managed 28 points in the paint and was led by junior Ivan Almonte who shot 4-of-7 from the floor and ended the opening period with 11 points.

Senior Junior Matias was once again restricted to just eight minutes on the floor in the opening half, as he continued to suffer from pain in his left leg.

A limping Matias played limited minutes all night and saw the floor for only 19 minutes, finishing the game 1-of-11, shooting for a meager five points.

Junior Mike Mitchell, who leads the Aggies in scoring on the season averaging 13.3 points per game, shot 4-of-6 for nine first half points, hitting the three pointer that brought New Mexico back into the game.

Lou Henson's Aggies shot 26-of-52 as a team from the floor; the team averages just 43 percent for the season and ranks eighth in the conference. Uncharacteristically, the Golden Panthers gave away easy offensive rebounds all game and never managed to regain the lead.

New Mexico State guard Josh Jenkins connected on 3-of-6 from behind the arc, finishing the game with 11 points;

his counterpart Mitchell also connected on another three for the Aggies.

Mitchell, a junior from San Antonio, finished the game with 23 points on 10-of-16 shooting, one shy of tying his career high of 24 against New Mexico.

New Mexico State, who lead the Sun Belt in three-pointers made at 7.71 per game and is third in three-point percentage at 36.9 percent, shot a combined 9-of-24 from downtown.

Almonte led the way for Rouco, completing his seventh double-double of the year, and managed a career-high in points (29) and rebounds (16) in the loss.

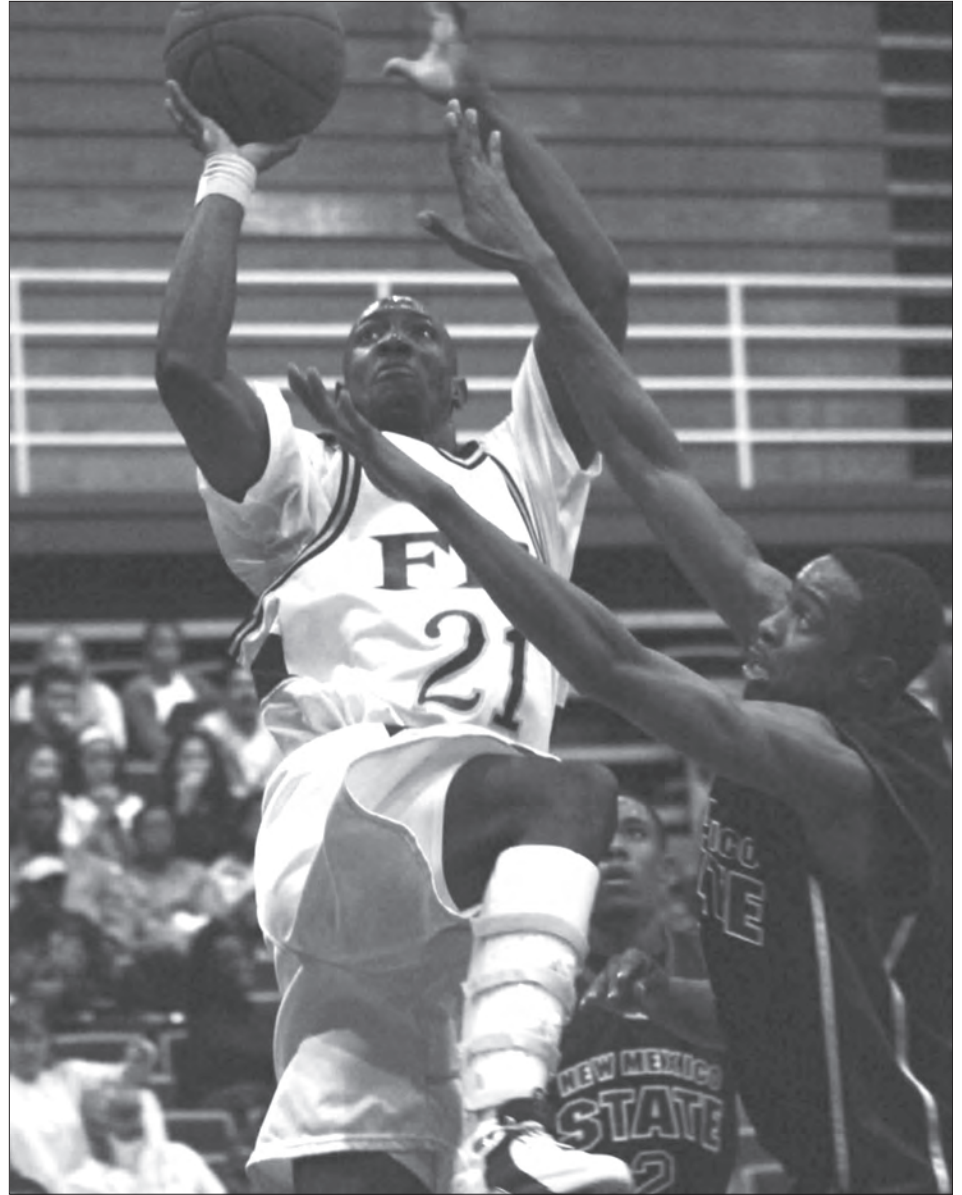
FIU continues to struggle as they drop their seventh game in a row and sixth straight in the conference. The team has dropped nine of the last 11 games. Their season totals drop to 7-12 and 0-6 in Sun Belt play.

"We've got to get better as a group, but I'm proud of them," said Rouco. "They've given me every single ounce of effort. Now, we as a staff have to make some adjustments to turn this thing around."

New Mexico State, who has struggled all season, ends its six-game losing streak with its first conference win of the year and moves to 5-13 overall and 1-4 in the conference.

FIU takes the court again on Jan. 30 against conference foe Arkansas-Little Rock who got the best of them, 67-57 the first time around in the Sun Belt opener on Jan. 6.

FIU lost another player. Last year's all-star Raphael daSilva has resigned from the team. DaSilva is the third player to leave the team this season.



**STRUGGLING:** FIU has yet to win a Sun Belt game. Ismael N'Diaye (above) finished the game with 11 points on 4-of-8 shooting. FIU wasted the efforts of N'Diaye and of Ivan Almonte, who finished the game with 29 points. JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

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**UNCERTAINTY!:** Since Ricky Williams' retirement, many have questioned his character and passion for the game. A return to Miami is still possible. **COURTESY PHOTO**



**ONE MAN TEAM:** During the 2002 and 2003 seasons, Ricky Williams ran the ball more than any other running back in the league. **COURTESY PHOTO**

## Let Ricky return to team

**HARRY, from page 12**

lot of leaders and character last season, and what did that lead to? The Dolphins had one of the worst records in franchise history.

Getting number 34 back would also save the team money. The Dolphins are exploring trade options for the Bills Travis Henry or Bengals Rudy Johnson. The team is also looking at free agents Edgerin James and Shaun Alexander. In order to land one of these players, which aren't nearly as talented as Williams, by the way, the Dolphins will need to unload cash or trade one of their top defensive players like Patrick Surtain or Zach Thomas.

Landing Williams would cost the Dolphins nothing. It would actually save the team money because he owes them over eight million dollars.

You can argue that if Williams returns he will continue to smoke pot. But, I think he can turn his life around because

the Dolphins have a disciplinarian coach and a Bill Belichick disciple in Nick Saban. Williams needs a father figure who can guide him and help him realize his full potential.

Williams is a confused individual but an amazing and talented athlete whom Dave Wannstedt completely squandered.

If you were one of the most talented running backs in the NFL and had to run the ball on every down because of Jay Fiedler's interceptions and Dave Wannstedt's incompetent coaching, you'd probably want to forget about football, move to Australia and smoke pot with Lenny Kravitz for the rest of your life too.

Saban can work well with Williams and help him recover his love of the game. Winning can cure everything. If the Dolphins bring back Williams and the team starts winning, no one will remember this past season. Bring back Williams and start the Super Bowl parade.

## Keep Williams far away

**XAVIER, from page 12**

plenty of, but has spent mainly on the defensive side of the team.

Some people might say that Saban may want Williams back only to trade him to another team, make him someone else's problem and get something in return. But in reality, Ricky is worth to another NFL team what his future degree in holistic healing will be worth in the real world.

Regardless of his prowess on the field, no team wants to risk anything of value for a potential walking positive drug test. So unless Saban wants a pack of gum, a used tire, a tin can, an old boot, or any other cliché symbolizing "worthless" in return for Williams, that is not the path he is going.

A "homer" is someone who blindly supports their team no matter what. It may sound like a nice thing, but these "homers" would go as far as to sup-

port their team even if the team starts to rethink it. Harry "the flaming homer" Coleman is telling you to take Ricky back. He's obviously not looking after the integrity of the team.

Thankfully, friends of Ricky have stated that he has no plans for returning to the game. Which is good for everyone because the farther away he is from everyone, the less of a distraction he becomes. Also, considering that he is now a vegan, the farther he stays from everyone, the less likely they'll be to catch a whiff of his horribly putrid body order. I know. I know. That was a total cheap-shot.

But in all seriousness, the Dolphins must first address their offensive line. If the people up front play like revolving doors, it won't matter who you throw in the backfield.

So Nick, show us you truly are a disciplinarian and forget about the pot-head with horrible body order. (There I go with the cheap shot again!)

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# SPORTS

12 - January 27, 2005

THE BEACON

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## Should the Dolphins take Williams back?

### He can help the franchise get back on win column

### After what he did, Run Ricky run away from team

#### COMMENTARY



By **HARRY COLEMAN**  
Sports Editor

The Miami Dolphins need a running back. That's the fact, and that's what fans have to understand.

A major reason the Dolphins finished a miserable 4-12 this past season is because of the departure of Ricky Williams. The Dolphins can comeback and reverse that record to 12-4 next season with the comeback of the same person-Ricky Williams.

Yes, Ricky may have abandoned the Dolphins, betrayed them, you name it, but he also gave his heart and soul for the team when he was here for two seasons.

In the 2002 and 2003 season, Ricky rushed the ball for a total of 775 attempts, more than any other running back in the National Football League. The former Hiesman Trophy winner aver-

aged 1,613 yards and 12.5 touchdowns for Miami.

To put that into perspective, the four guys who tried to replace Williams, Sammy Morris, Travis Minor, Lamar Gordon and Brock Forsey, ran for a combined 1,169 yards this past season for nine touchdowns.

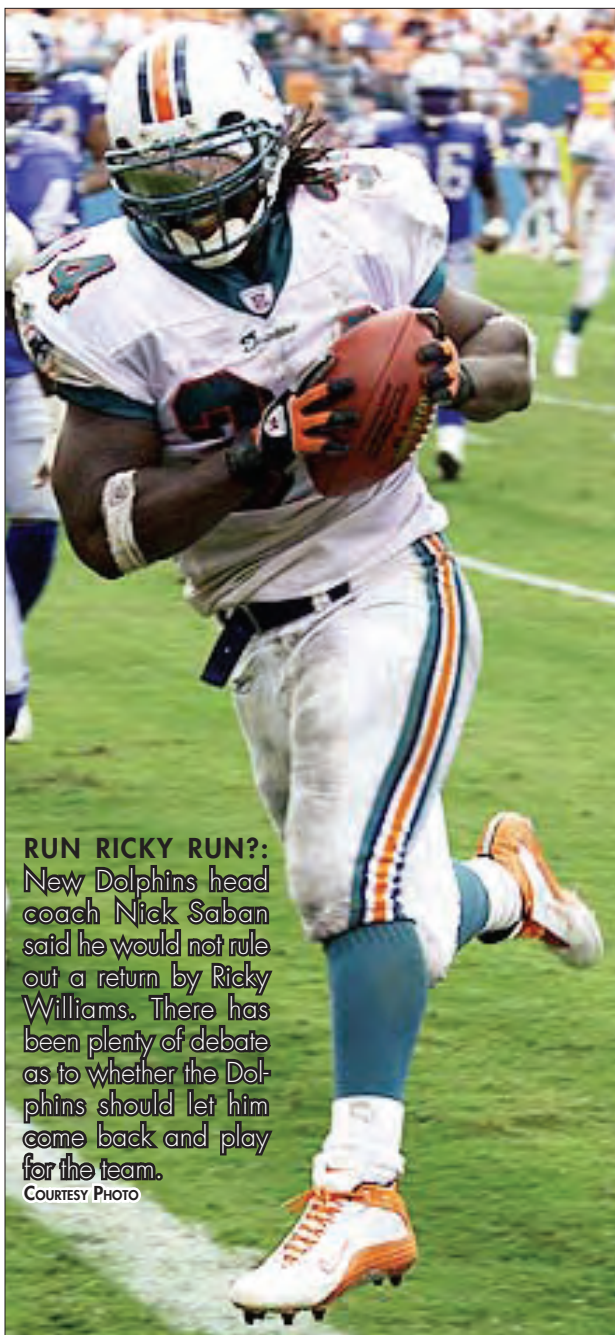
All four guys were hurt at one point during the season, and all failed to emerge as the sole starter.

Williams is not at fault for leaving the Dolphins. The team overused him. Why should he have kept on risking his body for the team when all his efforts were completely wasted by bad coaching and a terrible quarterback?

In two seasons, Ricky never complained about the load of carries he was receiving. All he did was get the Dolphins 19 wins.

The guy with the girly long hair on the other commentary on this page may argue that Ricky will hurt the team's chemistry. So what? The football scoreboard is not measured by the unity and morality of a team.

The Dolphins had a  
**See HARRY, page 11**



**RUN RICKY RUN?:** New Dolphins head coach Nick Saban said he would not rule out a return by Ricky Williams. There has been plenty of debate as to whether the Dolphins should let him come back and play for the team.  
COURTESY PHOTO

#### COMMENTARY



By **XAVIER VILLARMARZO**  
Staff Writer

After figuratively being handed the Miami Dolphins on a platter, new head coach and sovereign Nick Saban was supposed to bring something the team lacked so much of this past season: Discipline.

From the first day he was appointed, Saban has given the team much-needed change.

Then, out of nowhere, he says he'll consider taking Ricky Williams back. Now I know the Ricky Williams debate is a tired and beaten-down one, but Saban has brought it back to life for me.

He was brought here to bring structure and organization to a team that hasn't seen any since before the Dave Wannstedt-area (which, by the way, never happened. OK?). And now, all of a sudden, he decides he wouldn't mind

having the player who is the antithesis of structure and organization?

Come on, Nick. Let's look at the situation logically.

Either bring back a pseudo-hippie, compulsive, unreliable flake who has been publicly bad-mouthed by current players. He would definitely cause unrest in the locker room, or go after another stud running back through the draft or sign one through free agency.

It's not like running backs are slim-pickings this year, either. Edgerin James, who rushed for 1,548 yards and nine touchdowns this season, is from Miami and would prefer to come back home in favor of staying another year in Indianapolis.

Shaun Alexander, who was the second leading rusher this past season (and missed first place by one yard), also said he wouldn't mind playing for Miami because it is an appealing place to live.

Signing those players, however, requires offering the right kind of money, something that owner Wayne Huizeinga has

**See XAVIER, page 11**

## Sun Belt Conference blues continue for men's basketball

By **ANDONI GONZALEZ-RUA**  
Staff Writer

Unfortunately for Golden Panthers head coach Sergio Rouco, his team is still waiting for the first Sun Belt Conference victory of the year.

The Golden Panthers continued their slide on Jan. 24 with a 71-66 conference loss to New Mexico State at Pharmed Arena.

Despite a career high in points and rebounds from forward Ivan Almonte, the Golden Panthers dropped their seventh straight, continuing its longest losing streak of the season.

As the losing continues to take a toll on the team, Rouco was still proud of the performance by Almonte.

The New Mexico State Aggies and the FIU Golden Panthers both came into the match up with identical six game

tough, defensive play in the opening half, something they have done all season. For once however, they led halfway through the first period 19-12.

As the story of the season once again repeated itself, the Aggies then went on a 10-2 run to take a 22-21 lead with 6:30 to play in the half. FIU then scored a quick basket, courtesy of freshmen Kenny Simms to take their final lead of the game.

New Mexico State found the open shot from the left wing all night and finished the half shooting

**See SUN BELT, page 10**



**SIGN HERE?:** Marlins player Mike Lowell was on hand at the FIU baseball banquet on Jan. 22. **GEOFF ANDERSON/SPECIAL TO THE BEACON**