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## PAINTING FOR PEACE



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

**THE ARCHITECTURE OF ENLIGHTENMENT:** Monks construct a Mandala sand painting over a three day period at Biscayne Bay Campus.

## Students urged to speak out

### SGC-UP calls for vital letters

**BEN F. BADGER JR.**  
Asst. News Director

Budget cuts, frozen enrollments and the possible elimination of various scholarships are all issues students may be thinking about given today's political and economic climate.

The Student Government Council at University Park wants FIU students to share those concerns with their legislators through a letter-writing campaign.

"We really hope students will reach out," said Viviana Jordan, director of legislative affairs for the SGC-UP.

Jordan said students should share their concerns and experiences with legislators in order to establish a more personal relationship between the two groups. With the letters, legislators will be more likely to keep FIU in mind while making crucial decisions about budget cuts and other issues.

"We're not looking to make it seem like the letters are from the University," Jordan said. "We don't want it to be SGA only."

The Student Government Association will be in Tallahassee on March 11 as part of FIU Day when members will speak directly with legislators about FIU. SGC-UP President Marbely Hernandez said it is important to receive letters before that day.

"Last year there were significant cuts," Hernandez said. "There could be significant cuts this year as well."

According to Hernandez, students who aren't sure how to structure their letters can pick up sample letters in the SGC-UP office in Graham Center room 211.

If a student wishes to mail their letter, the SGC-UP will deliver it for the student, and pay for the necessary postage.

Students may find out who their representative is by visiting the Office of Governmental Relations' Web site at <http://government.fiu.edu>.

The site has a search function that allows students to find their representative's name and accompanying contact information.

"We want to get FIU's name out there during committee," Hernandez said.

SGC-UP urges students and faculty to mail their letters before FIU Day by mail or e-mail, but also encourages students to write in whenever they have a valid concern.

For more information, contact Jordan at [Viviana.Jordan@fiu.edu](mailto:Viviana.Jordan@fiu.edu).

## Maidique discusses FIU's future

**CHRISTINA VEIGA**  
**MARCELO GORENSTEIN**  
Beacon Staff

FIU is facing the best of times and the worst of times according to University President Modesto Maidique.

In his annual Town Hall Meetings on earlier this week, Maidique laid out the positive and the difficulties facing FIU in coming years.

First the good news: Among other things,

Maidique cited preliminary accreditation for the FIU College of Medicine, record passing rates on the Statewide Florida Bar Examination and a 20 percent increase in student applications as good signs that FIU is heading in the right direction.

"I think it's the best of times because we have the best leadership team that we have ever had and it is second to none in the state," Maidique said.

News was not as good

for other areas of the University. Most notably, Maidique warned the crowds at both University Park and Biscayne Bay Campus of the devastating effects the latest round of budget cuts could have.

"It is the worst of times because the budget threat that lies out there is incomparable to the worst we have suffered in the past," Maidique said.

The president presented six areas the University will focus on to ensure

the positive continues to outweigh the negative at FIU.

"As sad as it might seem, the first strategic imperative is to preserve the University to basically survive these cuts without damaging [its] integrity," Maidique said.

The current and pending budget cuts are the result of lower than expected tax revenue collected by state. According to the House Senate Budget Comparison, FIU

will need to identify a minimum budget cut of \$9.4 million of its \$234 million recurring state appropriation. The cuts can go as high as 10 percent—a \$23 million reduction for FIU.

The aftershock of measures to manage the budget cuts are already being felt at Florida public institutions. Late last year, the Florida Board of Governors, the governing body

**MAIDIQUE, page 3**

### SCHOOL OF MUSIC

## Big Band resonates across the globe

**JEANETTE LOPEZ**  
Contributing Writer

An average week for Teaching Assistant Ashley Baker includes attending the School of Music's masters program full time, teaching studio jazz and rehearsing for the FIU Big Band's performances.

For Baker, the Big Band gives her an opportunity to perform in many venues for a wide range of audiences.

"I suppose I speak for everyone when I say it's

one of the most rewarding experiences," Baker said.

Baker is only one of the FIU Big Band's 17 members. The ensemble includes members who play a number of instruments including the piano, bass, drums, guitar, saxophone, trumpet and trombone.

"The fact that we can come together and bring all of our individual sounds to form a cohesive unit is a unique aspect about playing with a big band," Baker said.

The band plays an array of jazz pieces. Sam Lussier,

the band's director, composes the music, but many FIU jazz artists also provide their own compositions.

On Feb. 14, the band performed at Fairchild Tropical Gardens with singer Nicole Henry, and on Feb. 20 they performed at Sunny Isles Beach.

In fall of 2004, the band went on the Holland-America Jazz Cruise, where the ensemble gave five performances: three in a concert hall and twice in the patio pool area.

"We went on the official jazz

cruise as the only big band on board, and it was a whole week. It was wonderful," Lussier said.

Each spring and fall, the Big Band performs at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center alongside four-time Latin Grammy winner Arturo Sandoval, artist in residence at FIU. The band performs much of Sandoval's own music, including other jazz and Latin jazz arrangements.

"I think the Big Band is the

**BIG BAND, page 2**

## NEWSFLASH

### Club takes time for abused, neglected and drug exposed students

FIUCARES, a pre-health student organization, is searching for volunteers from various majors to help the club fulfill their mission of supporting under served communities in Miami-Dade.

Upcoming events include assisting with food service for the homeless at Miami Rescue Mission on March 8 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and volunteering care and time to abused, neglected and drug exposed children at His House Children's Home on March 15.

Currently, until March 14, a His House Donation Drive is taking place to collect necessities for the orphanage. The list of supplies needed and the donation drop-off site is located in the Engineering and Computer Science building, room 484.

To participate in any of the club events, an application and one-time \$15 fee must be turned in at ECS 484. Any questions can be directed to [fiucares@fiu.edu](mailto:fiucares@fiu.edu).

### FIU discusses larger social issues through music and dance

The art form of Orisha Music and Dance will be presented as part of a larger discussion on social issues such as race, gender, ethnicity, culture and religion on March 8 in the Wolfe Center Ballrooms on Biscayne Bay Campus.

"Orisha Music and Dance: Discourses of Modernity and Transnationalism," is sponsored by FIU's African New World Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Center and the Department of Dance, in collaboration with community groups led by Oba Ernesto Pichardo, president of the Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye and Honorary Fellow of African New World Studies.

The day-long event begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 8:30 p.m.

The event will close with a reception at 5:30 p.m. with a live performance by Los Herederos.

Attendance is free. For more information, visit [www.fiu.edu/~africana](http://www.fiu.edu/~africana) or contact Rosa Henriquez, program coordinator, African New World Studies at [africana@fiu.edu](mailto:africana@fiu.edu), or (305) 919-5521/4264.

### Event to honor Jewish women features dessert buffet, open bar, prizes and more

"An Evening of Giving and Winning," will take place on March 17 featuring a Chinese auction, dairy dessert buffet, recording artists and an open bar.

Co-sponsored by Chabad at FIU and Chabad at the University of Miami, the event is a tribute to Jewish women for their work in the community and at home.

Prizes to be auctioned off include a trip for two to Israel, a Precor elliptical, diamond jewelry and more.

Singer and recording artist Rivkah will perform with musician Mirele Rosenberger.

Tickets to the fundraiser are \$36 for women and \$18 for students. A \$20 raffle ticket is included with the entrance fee.

Interested students may view a complete list of prizes or participate in the auction online at [www.CampusAuction.org](http://www.CampusAuction.org).

To RSVP or for more information, call (305) 226-5533, or e-mail [Sashie@chabadfiu.com](mailto:Sashie@chabadfiu.com).

~ Compiled by Beacon Staff

## DANCE 'TIL YOU DROP



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

**MARATHON:** Dancers participate in this year's Dance Marathon to raise money for the Children's Miracle Network.

# Jazz performers find fulfillment, opportunities with fellow artists

### BIG BAND, page 1

most visibly artistic group because we are playing all the time," Lussier said.

This year, the band received an invitation to attend the Monterey Jazz Festival in California on April 5 and 6. FIU is the only east coast university invited to the event.

"We are hoping to have the funds to go," Lussier said.

Although the band is compensated for some of their performances, the money goes toward music scholarships.

To raise money to attend the festival, the Big Band is selling its own CD, recorded live last year at

Thursday, and practices together an average of five hours per week, which counts as a one-credit course.

Performers with specific instruments within the band also practice together in sectionals.

"Imagine all the time and effort these guys put in, not only to make every rehearsal, but performances," Lussier said.

Each student in the band also takes the core class needed for graduation, as well as music theory and the jazz program's requirements.

Many band members have other obligations to meet, such as jobs outside



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

**AN AWESOME ORCHESTRA:** Big Band members study sheet music and rehearse together.

**“ Ashley Baker, teaching assistant**

I suppose I speak for everyone when I say it's one of the most rewarding experiences.

the Arturo Sandoval Jazz Club in Miami Beach.

To prepare for all their performances, the band meets Monday through

of school.

"It's a challenge, but it's why we do what we do. We all want to play. It's why we have chosen our field,"

Baker said.

Lussier believes involvement in the FIU Big Band provides students with exceptional time organizational skills that allows them to have a glimpse of real-world situations.

"If they want to be professional musicians, they have to be willing to work very, very hard," Lussier said.

The FIU Big Band performs more than any other ensemble from FIU. They will perform at FIU's Concert Hall on March 12 with Jim Snidero, a jazz musician from New York. They will also perform in FIU's Concert Hall on April 16 with Sandoval.

For more information contact Lussier at [samlussiermusic@yahoo.com](mailto:samlussiermusic@yahoo.com) or call 305-348-2442.

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## CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated Mar 3, 2008, the photo on page five should have credited Nathan Valentine as the photographer.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our UP office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

Accepting applications for:  
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## SGC-BBC's comptroller pushes forward

**JULIA CARDENUTO**  
Contributing Writer

He is a sports fan who likes to discuss philosophy, religion and politics. He plays the piano, violin and guitar. He is also a full time student and has a job. He is Jonathan Doozan, 21-year-old finance committee chairperson for the Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus.

Doozan reviews and approves all the expenditures of SGC-BBC.

"When different organizations and entities at the campus want to do something, I review and approve their request," Doozan said.

Doozan majors in finance and has been using his talents on and off

campus. He is a financial services representative for First Investors Corporation.

"I basically help people plan for retirement, college savings or any other investment program," he said.



**DOOZAN**

He has been the comptroller of SGC-BBC since the beginning of this year.

"Some of my goals were to streamline the paperwork to improve the management of time and money that the SGC-BBC spends. Also, to increase the accountability for the things we fund and try to maintain a good work relationship with University Park," Doozan said.

He added that he is also trying to reduce the amount of time between

people asking for money and getting it.

"Sometimes they need the money quickly and by keeping the paperwork simple I assure that there is as little confusion as possible, that the funding request is going to be reviewed and that a decision is going to be made on time," Doozan said.

Working together with SGC-BBC Vice President Cassandra Andrade, he produced a new format for the report forms for events on campus and trips that student organizations take with SGC-BBC funds.

"I think Jon is very organized and analytical. He is an extremely important part of the board," Andrade said.

Doozan explained they updated and created the new report forms to facilitate the budgeting process and serve as guidelines to allocate next year's spending.

Doozan is from Tampa and has been at FIU since 2006. He plans to graduate in Fall of 2009. Afterward, he hopes to continue in the financial services industry.

"I want to work with something related to what I am doing now or perhaps, work as the financial manager for some company," he said.

The work Doozan is responsible for at SGC-BBC sometimes interferes with his job and classes.

"When I had just started I thought I wasn't going to be able to do it all, but I wanted to get experience in the industry before I graduate. I wanted to have something ahead of time ... it is really tough."

Besides all the time management difficulty, Doozan said working in finance is good preparation.

"It opened my eyes. It was always something I was interested in but I was never too close to it.

It has been very helpful to get this experience."

Doozan believes the work he does at SGC-BBC is a great opportunity.

"I am being educated about the financial work at the university, which can be helpful[...] And all the experiences I go through; leadership abilities, working with faculty and staff, relating to people and taking responsibilities are helping me as well," Doozan said.

For students who want to join SGC, Doozan advises that they be motivated.

"You need a good work ethic and perseverance. It gets overwhelming sometimes but you have got to be committed," Doozan said. "If you are passionate about something - in my case, accounting and SGC money spending - you can go far in Student Government."

## Maidique tries to balance progress amidst budget cuts

**MAIDIQUE, page 1**

honors, the governing body of the public universities in the state, instituted the first-ever system-wide freshmen enrollment cap in order to save money.

"This means that qualified students will be denied admission to FIU," Maidique said. "The situation is critical."

As for FIU, the president announced the development of a Budget Stabilization Task Force, freezing admissions for students and non-faculty hiring and the possible elimination of programs to meet the cuts.

"Nothing is off the table, look in every corner and every nook. Sometimes a lot of small things make up a big thing," said Maidique of the Task Force.

Things may not be so grim for the future of FIU's newest addition, the medical school, which falls under Maidique's second initiative. Maidique said he received a personal assurance from the Speaker of the House Marco Rubio that the state would find funding for it.

Another point in Maidique's plan includes increased accountability by improving retention and graduation rates, as well as the addition of more advisors.

Being realistic, Maidique's fourth point includes readjusting his long-standing goal to become a top 10 public urban research university in the county.

"We're not going to be able to do that," Maidique said.



FERNANDO GARCIA/THE BEACON

**UNIVERSITY ADDRESS:** University President Modesto Maidique highlights potential effects of nearing budget cuts.

The goal is now to reach top 15 status by the time FIU turns 50 in 2015.

Increasing school spirit is another facet of Maidique's plan. He plans to do so by

is asking for everyone to do their part and be creative in order to save money.

"I was walking on campus at night with my wife when she saw the lights turned on in

**Modesto Maidique, University President**

The first strategic imperative is to preserve the University to basically survive these cuts without damaging [its] integrity.

growing FIU's athletics programs and Greek life, as well as building more dorms and providing more student activities.

The last goal presented by the president is to fill the full-time fundraising position of vice-president of advancement, which has been vacant for two years. The vacancy has led to a 30 percent decrease in fundraising, according to a Feb. *Miami Herald* story.

The president knows that times are difficult and

the Business school, she actually made me go turn them off," Maidique said.

Regarding potential tuition increases, Maidique shared a controversial resolution to the problem.

"We need to have a 50 percent tuition increase in order to fix the leak, but the president of the senate does not like tuition increases because, according to him, any increase has to be affordable by bright futures because it's his legacy."

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# CAMPUS GUN CONTROL

## Guns pose extra risks to students' safety

**BEN F. BADGER JR.**  
Asst. News Director

Guns – I'm not a huge fan of them. They just lead to senseless violence and death, but the saying is "guns don't kill people, people kill people."

While it's a perfectly nice saying, I didn't realize people could turn into little metal projectiles shred a person's insides after being launched at a couple hundred miles per hour.

Regardless of my disdain for them, the Second Amendment essentially guarantees the right to own guns. Thankfully, they are banned on college campuses across the country, with Utah being the only exception.

But after the recent string of school shootings, that are no longer limited to primary and secondary institutions, some states have been trying to push legislation that would lift the ban that prevents college students from bringing a gun on campus.

Generally speaking, college students have an extra factor of stress that the rest of the population doesn't. Adding guns to the mix is just asking for trouble.

The logic behind letting students carry guns on campus is for self defense. If they have a gun they can protect themselves from a would be attacker – or in a more extreme situation – stop someone who is on a shooting spree.

According to Bill King chief of Public Safety, students are generally not trained to use firearms.

"Students having weapons on campus could make a volatile situation worse," King said.

In addition to the added risk factor, King pointed out that securing weapons is a another key issue, considering the high theft rate on campus.

"Just think of the number of weapons that would be stolen," King said.

On the topic of securing guns, what would happen if one was set off accidentally?

When a person gets shot, they are lucky if the bullet goes through them, missing vital organs and bones. In most cases those vital organs get hit or the bullet ricochets off bone.

Guns on campus is more absurd when you consider the current crime trends.

According to the USA Department of Justice's Web site, nonfatal firearm related

crimes have been declining since 1994 before slight spike in 2005. While, homicide rates had also been at their lowest rate ever in 2005.

So the data indicates that we are actually becoming a safer country overall. Of course there is still a need to be vigilant when it comes to your safety, but simply throwing guns into the equation does not solve things, not when there are so many alternatives.

If you really feel like you have to protect yourself, there are plenty of nonlethal measures you could take. To name a few: pepper spray, tazers and walking in groups. And for people at FIU, the Panther Safety tram is available to take you where you need to go on campus. And if it's too late you can call public safety to escort you.

Allowing guns on campus just increases the likelihood they will be used.

And no, even if someone does manage to smuggle a gun onto campus does not mean everyone else needs a gun to counter them.

The last thing I want is a fire fight on campus. Saying that students need to carry guns to protect themselves from school shooters is a scare tactic.

As callous as it sounds, there have not been that many deaths as a result of school shootings, but if students are allowed to carry guns on a college campus, there will be more.

We just need to leave guns in the hands of the only people who are trained and know when to use them; the police.

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*Ben F. Badger Jr. can be reached at Ben.Badger@fiusm.com*

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## Bans are not the answer in preventing shootings

**ERIC M. FELDMAN**  
Asst. Opinion Editor

It's a good feeling to know that no one is walking around school packing heat, thanks to the on-campus gun bans that exist for most colleges and universities in the nation, including Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois University.

If a lightening up of the ban would have an effect on potential mass shootings is a complex and emotional debate, but it is fairly clear that a ban cannot keep the guns which people intend to use for harm out of a campus, or any other area where a ban is in effect.

Whether or not you own a gun (and it is a respectable decision to keep them out of your home, especially if children are present), you would probably not put a sticker on your window saying "This Home Not Protected by Firearms."

On-campus bans announce that those with malicious or psychotic intents, who may well not care about dying in the process, will at least not meet much resistance in carrying out their chaotic task.

There seems to be no legal basis for suspending the constitutionally given right to bear arms, even for those with those with concealed-carry permits, within the boundaries of campuses.

Mass shootings are not the only things against which college students have to fear, or defend against. On Feb. 15, a female University of Nevada student's body was found in a field after she was abducted from campus.

Ideally, law enforcement professionals would be the first responders to emergencies on campus, and the only

ones using lethal force to do so.

FIU has exhibited great strides in preparing the campus for emergencies, including beginning to install emergency telephones in every classroom. However a *Beacon* editorial revealed that on some shifts, Public Safety can have as little as two officers on duty, raising questions about their ability to respond to an incident, be it a terrorism-scale attack or an under-the-radar abduction or sexual assault.

The impulse to ban guns from campus also stems from the misconception that it being legal to carry a handgun equates to it being legal to use a handgun.

The Web site for the Florida agency responsible for licensing citizens to carry a concealed weapon makes it expressly clear that a life or serious bodily injury must be at risk before a concealed weapon can be used, or even displayed, and that anyone using a weapon in an unwarranted way would be punishable within the law. Citizens must also be able to demonstrate "competency with a firearm" prior to being issued a license.

These caveats dispel the worry that weapons on campus would result in a firefight amongst inexperienced gun handlers.

Guns are not the great solution to campus violence.

It is possible that in the area where a violent event breaks out, that either no other student or faculty member will be armed (which should be a great relief to proponents of the ban), or that anyone who is concealing a weapon will not feel comfortable enough in the situation to intervene.

The Second Amendment itself prescribes that the rights provided by it "shall not be infringed," and no argument can be made that a person wanting to defend his or her self while on campus by carrying a firearm in an otherwise legal fashion is actually making said campus less safe. It is fairly clear that a ban cannot keep the guns which people intend to use for harm out of a campus.

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*Eric M. Feldman can be reached at Eric.Feldman@fiusm.com*

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### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

#### Should a steadfast ban on guns be implemented on all campuses?

- Yes – Guns pose a more serious threat and are ultimately unnecessary with Public Safety on Campus.
- No – Student's have a constitutional right to bear arms, and should be able to defend themselves.

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

### SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off at GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to [joesph.marhee@fiusm.com](mailto:joesph.marhee@fiusm.com). Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words. Letters must include the writer's full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or spacing constraints.



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# DANGEROUS DRINKS

## Popular energy drinks could prove hazardous

ELYSE COLEMAN  
Staff Writer

Junior Mercy Jimenez rushed to the back of PantherStop where the beverages are kept. She picked up two drinks, a can of Rockstar and a Rockstar Juiced Mango.

"I don't always drink Rockstar," she said. "I also like Red Bull and Enviga."

After grabbing her drinks, Jimenez walked hurriedly around the store picking up snacks before making her way to the register.

"I only drink these on school days, not on weekends," she said. "I need them so I can stay awake and focus while I study."

Jimenez is not the only college student hooked on drinks promising a sudden surge in vitality.

A study released in March 2007 conducted by the Mintel International market research group found that 34 percent of energy drink consumers are between the ages of 18 and 24. That is a large portion of a booming market.

According to a report released in

December 2007 by the Packaged Facts market research group, the energy drink industry today is worth over \$5.4 billion.

"People come in to buy energy drinks very frequently, especially Red Bull, Rockstar and Full Throttle," said David Malagon, a sophomore.

Malagon is a sales clerk at Panther-Stop.

"We constantly have to refill the Red Bulls," he said.

Red Bull's Web site provides a list of benefits, claiming that it "improves performance, increases concentration and reaction speed, increases endurance and stimulates metabolism."

"I used to be completely addicted to Red Bull," said Orane Carney, a junior. "At the time I was working three jobs while going to school."

One energy beverage, Enviga, even claims to promote weight loss. A press release issued by The Coca-Cola Company on Oct. 11, 2006 describes it as "proven to burn calories."

"I heard if you drink three cans of Enviga



a day you'll lose weight, so I started drinking it," said Natasha Caplan, a junior. "It's good if it's cold but downright painful if it's warm. You kind of

**DRINKS, page 6**

## Technology eases college life



Commuting daily to and from school while loaded with 12 to 15 credits, active (-ish) memberships in several clubs and loans hanging overhead make students' lives difficult.

Where's the time for food - much less sleep - when papers and exams are eating at you?

All the studying and worrying can take a toll on days where every minute counts.

Fortunately, there are ways you can reclaim time for yourself by taking advantage of free online services and programs that help manage your school life.

Start taking stock of how you spend your time each day with [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com), a Web site that asks you to answer "what are you doing?" throughout the day - known as twittering - in 140 characters

or less.

You can create a free account, and you have the option to keep your twitters private or you can add them to the public timeline along with other users' twitters.

Whether you decide to keep your business yours or unleash your inner exhibitionist, the most important twitters you'll want to make are when you leave the house in the morning, when you arrive on campus, how long you stay and when you leave and get home.

By keeping track of the time you spend out and about, you'll be able to map out how to spend it wisely.

If it took you 20 minutes to get to campus and you live within ten, it's time to find a new route to school.

Likewise, you can keep track of how you spend time on campus and maximize your schedule for efficiency - such as figuring out whether to spend that hour between classes napping or crashing a club meeting for free food.

Time-consuming group projects can be executed online by using a few of Google's virtual applications: Groups, Notebook and Docs.

The collaborative nature of these online programs saves the entire group time and

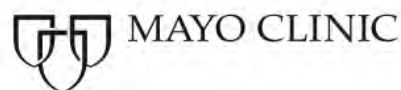
money by allowing everyone to work when and where they can effectively without losing their minds trying to match up impossible class schedules to meet up.

Use [www.groups.google.com](http://www.groups.google.com) to start a discussion forum for tossing ideas back and forth among your group as well as keeping each other updated with your project.

Together you can start a virtual notebook at [www.notebook.google.com](http://www.notebook.google.com) to keep collect research together and later share the writing load by using the handy virtual word processor at [www.docs.google.com](http://www.docs.google.com).

To access Google's services, you'll first need to sign up for an account using your current email address at the Web site

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## Nursing Graduates



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# WEEKEND RUNDOWN

## • THURSDAY • MARCH 6

**What:** Acura Miami Grand Prix sailboat races  
**Where:** Miami Beach Marina  
300 Alton Rd  
Miami Beach, FL 33139  
**When:** 10:30 a.m.  
**How Much:** Free

**What:** Reflections on War  
**Where:** Arts at St. John's  
4760 Pine Tree Dr  
Miami Beach, FL 33140  
**When:** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
**How Much:** Varies

**What:** College Night Thursdays  
**Where:** Hooligan's Pub and Oyster Bar  
9555 S Dixie Hwy  
Pinecrest, FL 33156  
**When:** 12 a.m. - 2 a.m.  
**How Much:** Varies

**What:** FIU New Plays Festival  
**Where:** Deuxieme Maison 150,  
University Park Campus  
**When:** 8 p.m.  
**How Much:** Free

## • FRIDAY • MARCH 7

**What:** Ladies Night Out Tour  
**Where:** James L Knight Center  
400 SE 2nd Ave,  
Miami, FL 33131  
**When:** 8:00 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$44.50 - \$49.50

**What:** FIU New Plays Festival  
**Where:** Deuxieme Maison 150,  
University Park Campus  
**When:** 8 p.m.  
**How Much:** Free

**What:** 10th annual Carnaval on  
the Mile Kickoff Concert  
**Where:** Ponce Circle Park  
2800 Ponce de Leon Blvd  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
**When:** 7:00 p.m. - 11 p.m.  
**How Much:** Free

**What:** KC and the Sunshine Band  
**Where:** BankUnited Center  
1245 Walsh Ave  
Coral Gables, FL 33146  
**When:** 7:30 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$34.75

## • SATURDAY • MARCH 8

**What:** Blue Man Group: How to  
Be a Megastar 2.1 concert  
**Where:** American Airlines Arena  
601 Biscayne Blvd  
Miami, FL 33131  
**When:** 8 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$50

**What:** Bernadette Peters  
**Where:** Arsht Center  
1300 Biscayne Blvd  
Miami, FL 33137  
**When:** 8 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$15 - \$75

**What:** MeZuNeen  
**Where:** Circa28  
2826 N Miami Ave  
Miami, FL 33127  
**When:** 10 p.m.  
**How Much:** Free

**What:** Splash Weekend  
**Where:** Rooftop Lounge  
1215 N. Ocean Dr  
Hollywood, FL 33019  
**When:** Varies  
**How Much:** \$40 - \$60

## • SUNDAY • MARCH 9

**What:** Pablo Francisco  
**Where:** Miami Improv  
3390 Mary St #182  
Coconut Grove, FL 33133  
**When:** 8:30 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$23.54

**What:** Karen Peterson and  
Dancers  
**Where:** Excello Dance Space  
8702 SW 129th Terrace  
Kendall, FL 33176  
**When:** 2 p.m.  
**How Much:** Free

**What:** Siempre Flamenco's Third  
Festival of Flamenco Song  
**Where:** Manuel Artime Theater  
900 SW 1st St  
Miami, FL 33130  
**When:** 4 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$25

**What:** Spamalot  
**Where:** Arsht Center for the  
Performing Arts  
1300 Biscayne Blvd  
Miami, FL 33137  
**When:** 8 p.m.  
**How Much:** \$24 - \$72

- Compiled by *Kassandra Pool*

## Energy drinks a popular, possibly dangerous option

DRINKS, page 5

have to chug it down."

However, The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) filed suit against Coca-Cola and Nestlé on Feb. 1, 2007.

According to the CSPI's Web site, Nestlé's study of Enviga was conducted for 72 hours among 31 individuals, none of whom were overweight. Consequently, the study does not prove that Enviga supports weight loss.

The CSPI also claims that Nestlé's study was previously discredited by the North American Association for the Study of Obesity. The suit has yet to go to trial.

According to a Nov. 2007 Reuters article, the high levels of caffeine in taurine, one of the active ingredients in energy drinks, can affect heart function and blood pressure.

"A majority of energy drinks are caffeine-based," said Linda Marraccini, MD. Marraccini is a family doctor with a practice in South Miami. "A lot of the time they have more caffeine than a cup of coffee."

In 2001, Ross Cooney, an 18-year-old French athlete, died during a basketball game, officially of Sudden Adult Death Syndrome.

According to Medical News Today, Cooney consumed four cans of Red Bull prior to the game. The tragedy later resulted in a ban on Red Bull in France that is still active today.

A 2007 article from the Science Direct Web site also shows a possible link

between energy drinks and epilepsy.

At least four people have reported experiencing recurrent seizures after heavy consumption of energy drinks. In all cases, once the individuals abstained from energy drinks, the seizures stopped.

"Energy drinks won't harm most people, but you shouldn't drink them if you're exercising or if you're prone to seizures or have a heart arrhythmia," said Marraccini. "However, it's not proven that they give you a real energy boost. That may just be a perceived rush from the caffeine."

According to statistics from a vending machine in the Graham Center examined on Feb. 19, over 4,300 cans, or around \$8,600 worth of Rockstar, both the sugar free and regular varieties, have been sold.

Statistics from two neighboring soda machines show that combined sales for 12 oz. cans and 20 oz. bottles of the carbonated energy drink Vault amount to approximately \$20,000.

PantherStop contains the largest variety of energy drinks on University Park.

They are also available at the Breeze-way Café and in vending machines.

Energy drinks at the Biscayne Bay Campus are also available in vending machines, the food court and the bookstore, which has the largest variety.

Drinks available at both campuses include varieties of Red Bull, Rockstar, Full Throttle, NOS and Vault.

## Google gives your life back

TECH, page 5

[www.google.com/accounts](http://www.google.com/accounts).

You can then start working on getting things done while panicking over willfully submitting your information to big brother - go multitasking!

Finally, term papers can in fact be done without support from the distraction trifecta that is MySpace, Facebook and YouTube.

Using JDarkRoom, a full screen text editor, you can experience the good ol' word processing days of the eighties when it was just you and the green text on a black screen - it's practically writ-

ing gone Spartan.

You can download the text editor for multiple operating systems at the following Web site: [www.codealchemists.com/jdarkroom](http://www.codealchemists.com/jdarkroom).

Although free, you may want to drop some change in the alchemist's tip jar for giving you back the hours you happily wasted away casting votes on *hotornot.com* before you found their handy program.

With these new ways to save time, you'll be able to seize the day as it was meant to.

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# Future looks bright despite slow start to season

VILLARMARZO, page 8

more excited to come out and play this season.

Thomas expects perfection from his players and even though the team is doing well offensively, he is not going to become complacent.

Thomas will always look for improvement.

After some shaky outings from FIU

starting pitchers against USC, the staff bounced back well against Wagner.

Yes, Wagner is a much weaker opponent than USC, but it's a good confidence booster for a starting rotation that had rough outings during the team's opening weekend.

After these first few games at home, which are in essence warm up games, the team will travel to Troy, Ala., where the real test will begin.

Facing a tough opponent to begin the Sun Belt Conference play will be a good barometer for Thomas who admittedly has not seen many Sun Belt teams in action.

However, unless the team's relief pitching improves miraculously, not much should be expected from this team in transition.

The outlook in the locker room will remain high, though, especially for the future of the program as many people,

including Athletic Director Pete Garcia, have put their faith in Thomas to turn the program into the powerhouse it should be – considering it's located in a hotbed of high school baseball prospects.

It's a tough task, considering the foundation Thomas was given.

However, it seems he's up for the challenge because he's very confident, and he knows what he's doing. The rest of us will have to hope and see.

## THE BEACON

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**MD CLINICAL**



*New  
coach  
deserves  
due  
time*



Commentary

Xavier Vilarmarzo  
Copy Editor

After being swept by USC to open the season, then taking three of four games against Wagner, a new era in FIU baseball does not seem to be here.

Teams of years past were known for losing to top-tier opponents and beating weaker teams from up north. This year is starting off no differently.

New manager Henry "Turtle" Thomas shouldn't be expected to turn things around immediately, especially with a team that has one glaring weakness: lack of pitching depth.

After years of poor recruiting and a lack of a real pitching coach since the 2004 season, Thomas and his staff are left with just 10 pitchers, most of whom lack Division I experience, which they can't be blamed for.

Through the season's first nine games, the staff has allowed at least nine runs in each of its five losses and in one of the team's wins.

This is a bad season to lack pitching depth, considering the college baseball season is now shorter than it was in years past.

For example, last season started on Feb. 3, and this season started Feb. 22.

That's three fewer weeks of rest for the pitchers - and every player on the team for that matter.

With a shorter season, relief pitching becomes increasingly important.

The negatives on this team can easily be blamed on the previous coaching staff, led by former coach Danny Price, who manned the program for 28 years prior to Thomas.

Fortunately for Thomas, the positives can be credited to him.

The team already looks better defensively and players are admittedly

BASEBALL SERIES: FIU 3, WAGNER 1

# SLUGGING AWAY

## Golden Panthers' offense scores 51 runs during series

LUCA MESSINA  
Staff Writer

The Florida International (4-5) rebounded from a disappointing 13-1 loss to Florida Gulf Coast University on Feb. 26 by taking three of the four games from the Wagner Seahawks (1-3) Feb. 29 thru March 2 at University Park Stadium.

"Every time out I think you relax a little bit more," coach Henry "Turtle" Thomas said. "Some of these guys are getting their third or fourth time out there which is good. The more times you take the hill, the better you feel about things."

If not for the bullpen's late collapse in the third game of the series, FIU would have swept the Seahawks as they blew an 11-6 lead en route to a 13-11 loss.

"We're still trying to figure it out. Five days from now we'll be playing conference games," Thomas said. "We'll found out a little bit more about those guys in the next couple of days."

The Golden Panthers' offense was active as FIU scored 51 runs while also belting six home runs.

### FIU 10, WAGNER 2

Senior and No. 1 starter Chris Allen rebounded from a poor start on opening day as he pitched seven innings

allowing two runs (none earned) in his first win of the season. He allowed five hits while striking out eight.

After trailing 2-0 early on, FIU responded by scoring 10 unanswered runs.

Junior catcher Steven Stropp led the FIU offense as he went 3-for-4 with a solo home run, two RBI and two runs scored. Senior right fielder Raimy Fuentes went 3-for-4 with three RBI.

### FIU 22, WAGNER 4

The FIU offense exploded in the first game of a day-night doubleheader at University Park, as the Golden Panthers scored 22 runs on 19 hits.

Lefthanded sophomore Corey Polizzano also rebounded from a poor first start against USC in the opening series by pitching a solid 5.2 innings. He allowed four earned on five hits, all of which came in the sixth inning. He also struck out eight and walked two. Senior Carlos Martinez earned the save after pitching 3.1 innings of scoreless relief.

The Golden Panthers led 11-0 by the fourth inning and never kept it close. Ryan Mollica led the way going 3-for-5 with a grand slam and six RBI. Senior John Petika and freshman Anthony Boza also went deep for FIU.

### BASEBALL NOTEBOOK

## Senior hurler Allen embraces role of ace

LUCA MESSINA  
Staff Writer

Chris Allen knew he was going to be the team's No. 1 starter before the season started.

He also knew that as a senior and transfer from Clemson, he would be depended on to win many games for the Golden Panthers in his final collegiate season.

After lasting only 3.2 innings and allowing ten runs (six earned) and taking his first loss of the season, Allen (1-1) responded with an impressive performance in his second start of the season against Wagner, for his first win of the season.

"I felt pretty good; it was great

to get back out there," Allen said. "I couldn't wait since my last start to get back out there and put to work some of the things that I worked on during the week."

In his first game, Allen was throwing the ball up in the strike zone, which led to USC's offensive barrage.

"The difference was location. I was more down in the zone and got a lot more ground ball outs," Allen said. "Steve [Stropp] called a great game behind the dish, and Felipe [Suarez] helped me make a couple of big game adjustments that really helped me out."

Once the Golden Panthers begin conference play, there will be added pressure for him to

pitch deeper into games. The team's shaky bullpen contributes to Allen's responsibilities as the Golden Panthers' ace.

Allen is a key part of the starting rotation which also includes sophomore Corey Polizzano and fellow senior Steven Stewart.

Every team that succeeds needs a bona fide ace, and if Chris Allen can fulfill that role, FIU will have one main component needed to succeed, as they begin the conference games which count the most.

### BIG CONTRIBUTORS

Senior Raimy Fuentes and sophomore Tyler Townsend have continued to be the most effective

Ellison (0-1) surrendered three earned runs and failed to record an out in taking the loss.

Senior Eric Hortsman started for FIU and pitched four innings. He allowed five runs, one of which was earned, and had a strikeout and a walk. Sophomore Tyler Townsend and senior Jorge Castillo both hit two-run homers for the Golden Panthers in the first inning to give FIU an early 5-1 lead.

### FIU 8, WAGNER 3

The Golden Panthers responded well to a late

inning meltdown in the previous game by overcoming a 2-1 deficit, and the bullpen pitched 3.2 innings of shutout baseball. Starter Jorge Ramos (1-0) pitched 5.1 innings in allowing three runs on seven hits. He struck out six and walked three.

"Ramos pitched well on Tuesday and felt like he deserved to get back out there," Thomas said.

Kyle Preshong, Jorge Marban and Daniel DeSimone all pitched in relief for FIU. Freshman Javier Sujo went 2-for-2 and with two RBI.

### UP NEXT

The Golden Panthers head to Alabama for a three-game set against the Troy Trojans in the opening series of Sun Belt Conference play.

It will be their first away series after opening with an 11-game home stand to start the season.



VICTORIA LYNCH/THE BEACON

**PUMPED:** The Golden Panthers celebrate after a big win. FIU is now 4-5.

### WAGNER 13, FIU 11

What looked like a definite win for FIU turned into an ugly loss as the Golden Panthers dropped the second game of the doubleheader.

After holding an 11-2 advantage through three innings, the Golden Panthers' bullpen blew an 11-6 lead in the top of the ninth inning by allowing seven runs in the inning.

Sophomore Brian Santana held the Seahawks to six runs until he allowed four runs to cut the Wagner deficit to 11-10. Sophomore reliever Evan