



## SPOTLIGHT

OPINION PAGE 6

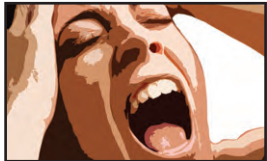


A financial staple for many Florida students - the Bright Futures program is currently facing the chopping block.

AT THE BAY PAGE 4

Make your bad days fly a kite with some Middle Eastern yogurt and a picture-perfect bayside view!

LIFE! PAGE 7



New University support group gives women the opportunity to CRYOUT and share their experiences.

AT THE BAY PAGE 4

SGC-BBC chief justice isn't afraid of speaking her mind and is determined to make rules for every member to follow.

OPINION PAGE 6

The conflict in Gaza has spurred many emotions, including those of Muslim students at FIU.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Billy Joel, Feb. 6, 8 p.m.:** After being bombarded with advertisements and huge billboards, we have come to the conclusion that the Piano Man lives at Hard Rock Live because he has been playing show after show there. Come and enjoy what is supposed to be the "last" show at Hard Rock.

**Lingerie Miami, Feb. 7, 5:30 p.m.:** Love may not last forever, but lingerie is still fun. Take a look at the latest couture lingerie at this fun event at Vizcaya.

**B-52's, Feb. 7, 7 p.m.:** Hear the once New-Wave reject band who love-shacked their way into stardom at the Jackie Gleason Theater.

**New Times groove on Battle of the Bands, Feb. 7, 9 p.m.:** Come and enjoy what Miami likes to call its "local scene" with these talented bands as they compete for fame, glory and what all bands ultimately want: women, at Gulfstream Park.

**Adult Swim Presents: Tim and Eric, Feb. 8, 7 p.m.:** Enjoy a live sketch show from Adult Swim, the real reason college kids are up late, at Revolution Live.

For the complete calendar, please see page 9 or visit FIUSM.com.

## WEATHER



**FRIDAY**  
Scattered showers  
LOW: 56 HIGH: 69



**SATURDAY**  
Partly cloudy  
LOW: 60 HIGH: 75



**SUNDAY**  
Mostly sunny  
LOW: 60 HIGH: 77

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# Cuban immigrant among Med School's first 40 students

ELSIE PUIG  
Staff writer

A framed *El Nuevo Herald* article hangs on the wall of Hanadys Ale's Kendall apartment.

It shows a picture of her grinning for the camera and opening her arms wide in front of the billboard announcing the Fall opening of the FIU School of Medicine.

Ale, who knew from the beginning the new College of Medicine was her dream school, became one of its first students.

A story like hers can only happen in a place like Miami, and she would not have it any other way.

"I feel indebted and committed to the hospitality that Miami has shown me," Ale said.



ALE

Ale, 25, came to Miami from Cuba five years ago focused and determined to become a doctor.

She knew it wouldn't be easy, so she set on her goal with fierce ambition and perseverance.

"I remember going to FIU when I came from Cuba, wanting

to know how I could become a doctor, and the advisor detailed a long and cumbersome process," Ale said.

With all of it behind her, she can go over the steps without wincing. 3,332 applications and 300 interviews later, she became one of the 40 chosen to become the College of Medicine's first class.

She waited anxiously for the opening of the College of Medicine and was one of the students who religiously attended press conferences, remembered Dr.

**MED SCHOOL, page 2**

SGC-BBC TOWNHALL MEETING

# Maidique discusses plans for future year

DAINELYS MARTINEZ  
Staff Writer

On Feb. 3, University President Modesto A. Maidique announced both good news and bad news to the FIU community.

The good news, Maidique told a crowd of students, faculty and staff at Biscayne Bay Campus' townhall meeting - held at the Wolfe Theater from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - is that there will be no additional budget cuts for this year because of the decisions previously made, which eliminated 22 programs and about 200 positions from the University.

The bad news: He doesn't know what to expect next year.

"We are like a ship, somewhat lost in the storm and we don't know exactly where the port is. We have an idea but we are not that sure," Maidique said. "We understand that there are good things that are going to come to us, like the stimulus package, but we don't even know what the stimulus package is going to be."

Yet the bad news kept coming.

"I think it's reasonable to think that in a couple of years the tuition for the state of Florida will reach the nation's average," Maidique said. "And not the average of the nation today, but the average of the nation in seven years."

Students in Florida pay an average of \$3,500 in tuition per semester, and the average of the nation is double that amount, according to Maidique. Florida is now well below average in state contribution and at the bottom of the pile in student tuition.

"So, we have two options: We can let our University and all the other ones gradually erode into Third World classifications, or we increase state revenues and we increase tuition," Maidique said.

Despite the need to make campus improvements, the money that comes from tuition increases can only be used for three purposes: to increase the number of undergraduate faculty members, to increase the number of undergraduate advisors or to provide scholarships merit or otherwise for students, according to Maidique.

**TOWNHALL, page 3**

## COOL DAYS, GOOD TIMES



GIO GUADARRAMA/THE BEACON

**NICE WEATHER:** Junior and fine arts major, Gina Moscarella, enjoyed the weather by sitting in the shade and working on her drawings Feb. 4.

# Rionda completes SGC-UP team

DAVID BARRIOS  
Senior Staff Writer

Anthony Rionda has a cold.

The 21-year old political science major has just gotten off the phone with Student Government Council at University Park Vice President Paige LaPointe, as he sits in her office. He needs the password to her computer to access it while she is out of the office.

"She's not coming in today," Rionda said. Arthur J. Meyer, president of SGC-UP, is also not in the office this afternoon.

"Of course, Paige, AJ and myself communicate with each other about as often as anyone would ever want to have to communicate with each other," Rionda said. Rionda is the chief of staff for SGC-UP. His job, as specified in the student government constitution, is to aid

in the everyday operations of the organization while overseeing the cabinet, currently consisting of 16 positions.

He also helps in office operations along with Student Government Association advisor Jose Toscano.

"With the amount of work that AJ has this year, my job has even

**RIONDA page 2**

NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

**Langerado music festival cancelled**

The music festival that drew 25,000 people to the Florida Everglades last year has been canceled due to poor ticket sales.

The seventh annual Langerado Music Festival was scheduled to take place March 6-8 in Bicentennial Park in downtown Miami.

Ticket refunds will be processed within a week.

FIU

**Emergency notification system tested**

Testing of the emergency notification system was scheduled to take place at both the University Park and Biscayne Bay Campus on Feb. 5.

Audio messages are scheduled to be sent to strategically located external speakers throughout both campuses, including all housing areas, according to an FIU press release.

NATIONAL

**Controversial Web site shuts down**

JuicyCampus.com, the college gossip Web site, has shut down its operations on Feb. 5 after nearly a year and half online. Mark Ivester, founder and CEO of Juicy Campus, said in an open letter to the public that the cause of the shutdown is due to the "tough economic times" and because online ad revenue has "plummeted and venture capital funding has dissolved."

– Compiled by Paulo O'Swath

# Chief of staff a 'great resource for SGA'

RIONDA, page 1

included to travel with him to some of the Board of Governor's meetings in Tallahassee and to help research policy," Rionda said.

He acknowledges that his job entails a lot of work.

"It's certainly not a job in which you can be out of the office for two or three days at a time. You can lose track of what's going on fairly quickly. It takes a lot of work to know what 16 people are doing, knowing where AJ is and helping Paige with whatever she's up to," Rionda said. "I first met AJ in this office early last year, actually. I was interviewing for the position of SGA lectures coordinator. We sat in this office when he was still vice president and then, when the elections approached, we had a good idea that he would be running and so I helped him throughout the process."

Rionda would help throughout the elections as AJ's campaign manager.

"The elections code is a strict set of rules. It limits where you can campaign, where you can campaign as a group, where you can wear shirts, where you can place signs. We had a campaign

team set up. It's all about getting students to want to vote and understand that we're not just there to annoy them and hand out flyers," Rionda said.

Meyer was elected in the first contested election in several years with over 3,500

and, personally speaking, a really good friend and lad to know," said Nivv Oudit, current SGA lectures coordinator.

Rionda also was instrumental in revisions to the SGA constitution that were implemented early in 2008.

*“He’s just been a great wealth of information, a great resource for SGA and, personally speaking, a really good friend and lad.”*

Nivv Oudit

Student Government Association, lectures coordinator

voters going to the polls in the 2008 elections. Rionda was asked by Meyer after his victory to assume the position of chief of staff.

"Paige and I chose [Rionda] for the job because of the exceptional work he provided for Marbely Hernandez [former president of SGC-UP] and me in last year's administration. He has been an advocate for students' rights and needs as well as for bringing an outsider 'non-greek' perspective into every equation," Meyer said.

During his time as lectures coordinator, Rionda arranged for several keynote speakers to speak at the University including Ivanka Trump, Martin Luther King III, Jeff Corwin and Rudy Giuliani.

"He's just been a great wealth of information, a great resource for SGA

Among the revisions were the separation of meetings between the executive branch and the Senate and the establishment of a proportional representation system in the Senate.

"Rather than have one senator representing each college, we set it up so that one senator would represent 1,000 people per college," Rionda said.

The House meetings, prior to the revisions, were held on

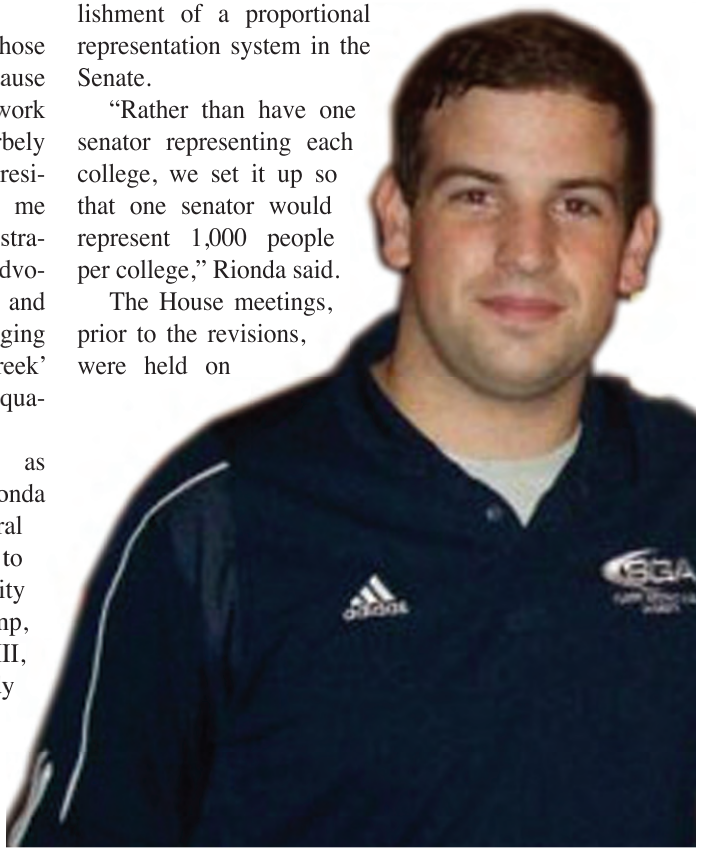
Wednesdays and were chaired by the president of SGA.

"That just didn't make any sense," Rionda said. "So we fixed it so that the Senate speaker would actually chair the meetings independent of the president."

The revisions set that Senate meetings would be held on Mondays from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m., while cabinet and executive meetings would be held on Wednesdays during the same times.

In the end, Rionda feels that his job is a collaborative effort between himself and all of SGA.

"If it wasn't for those people below me or everyone in SGA, we wouldn't be able to get what we needed done. I just like to work behind the scenes," Rionda said.



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# Art scholarship honors memory of Cuban painter

**NATALEE GIL-DEL RIO**  
Staff Writer

A group of volunteers with hopes of changing the world through service to children and communities has established a fund in memory of Cundo Bermudez, a renowned Cuban painter, to benefit two FIU students majoring in art or art history.

This group, known as the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana, helps shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, mentor the disadvantaged and care for the sick. They develop the youth as leaders, build playgrounds, raise funds for pediatric research and much more, as stated in the Kiwanis' Web site, *Kiwanis.org*.

Kiwanis has donated a total of \$16,000 to the fund to provide assistance to two juniors accepted into the School of Art and Art History at the University.

"I think it's great that the Kiwanis of Little Havana are thinking of our art students. Anyone who receives this scholarship should feel very privileged," said Ivana Harris, a sophomore. "I personally admire Bermudez's work and think naming a scholarship on his behalf is something very special that Kiwanis has created."

Students eligible for the Cundo Bermudez Scholarship must have a 2.5 GPA and be fully admitted into the School of Art and Art History.

"FIU has welcomed Cundo's work for many years," said Teresa Callava, director of sales and marketing for the Kiwanis Club of Little Havana. "We hope that Cundo's love of art, and his great relationship with FIU, will live on through this scholarship."

Cundo Bermudez was born in Havana, Cuba on Sept. 3, 1914.

In 1930, he was enrolled at the renowned *Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes*, where he studied painting for two years.

In 1941, he graduated from the University of Havana with a degree in law and social sciences and, in 2005, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of the arts from FIU.

"I have fun at what I do; the pleasure I get from painting is vital for me. I enjoy art like Mozart enjoyed his music. Some people are concerned over philosophic postulates, over universal chaos, over the atomic bomb. For me, painting is a celebration of form and color, and nothing more," Cundo said in a past interview.

Applications for the scholarship are now being accepted.

# Maidique sets up progress strategy amid budget cuts

**TOWNHALL, page 1**

In addition, the University has embarked on a new strategy that Maidique calls FIU 3.0 or FIU 3G, to continue to make progress and build a research university, yet recognizing that available funds are diminishing.

"We have watched over the past two years \$30 million in reduced funding. This is a massive cut. We have to become a leader, anything that is inefficient we have to look at, if it can be outsourced, we will outsource it," Maidique said. "We have to look at technology. We have to look at reducing our costs. We have to look at partnerships."

Furthermore, under the new FIU 3.0, funding will only be allocated to critical areas. According to Maidique, there are two critical areas of strategies: international and, put together, health, life, science and the environment.

"We want to become the school of choice nationally for international studies, and we are going to weave international throughout the curriculum in every area, which is appropriate given the globalization of the world and in particular world markets," Maidique said.

As part of that, the School of International Public Affairs has been established to bring together the entire international functions under one roof. It opened Jan. 5.

The progress of

the medical school is outstanding, according to Maidique, who said there are 40 slots for the first class in August 2009 and 80 applicants for each one of them.

After Maidique's speech, a Q&A session followed, where students voiced their concerns about bus tickets, Bay Vista Housing and tuition.

"I found this meeting to

**We want to become the school of choice nationally for international studies, and we are going to weave international throughout the curriculum ...**

Modesto A. Maidique, *president*  
FIU

be very informative giving the students a real perspective of what is in store for our University's budget," said Tanya Meyers, a public relations student and vice president of Chapter Development and Finance of Public Relations Student Society of America. "I am excited about his vision for our University being an international university and targeting national and international students based on our location and demography."

Those students wondering when improvement will be made to the residence halls were given some hope, as Maidique and Rosa Jones, vice president of student

affairs, said that a new building for the residence halls is part of their plans.

"We have established a committee to look at the dorms," Jones said. "But a new facility could have multiple services because it needs to pay the mortgage of the new establishment."

Maidique also added that a new building, part of the School of Hospitality Management, could have services and serve as a hotel.

Students expecting to see changes in the buses were not so lucky. According to Maidique, the cost of maintenance to the buses is expensive and the University cannot afford to make any changes.

Among the speakers at the meeting were SGC-BBC President Ana Maria Silva, who gave a welcome speech and SGC Vice President Kenasha Paul.

There were about 170 people attending the meeting, according to Silva.

Although Dean and Vice Provost Joseph West was absent due to a trip to China, administrators present included Cathy Akens, assistant vice president of students affairs, Bill King, director of Public Safety and Kenneth Furton, dean of the College of Arts and Science.

"What I can tell you is that FIU was here before us – and FIU will be here after us. We are not Lehman Brothers. We are not Circuit City," Maidique said.

## COMEDY DAY



ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

**JOKES FOR FREE:** Student Programming Council sponsored comedian Sheng Wang, who performed in the Graham Center Ballrooms on Jan. 28.

# Med School acquires perfect student candidate

**MED SCHOOL, page 1**

Barbara Roller, assistant dean of Student Affairs, holding up a picture of Hanadys.

Roller was Hanadys professor for various classes and former pre-med advisor.

Ale's first steps took her to Miami-Dade College before transferring to FIU through the Honors College where she majored in biology, graduating with a 4.0 GPA.

"Both Miami-Dade and FIU opened their doors to me and I am so grateful," Ale said.

She mentioned that FIU's COM curricular focus on community health through the NeighborhoodHELP program is one of the reasons it had always been her first choice.

NeighborhoodHELP matches a team of students from the fields of medicine, nursing, social work and public health to track and monitor the health of uninsured and underserved households.

Ale is currently

working as a biology teacher for ninth and 10th graders at a high school in Hialeah Gardens and finds the time to tutor students that have trouble with

Roller said admission into the school followed a holistic approach judging prospective students, not only on their GPA and MCAT scores, but also on

**Both Miami-Dade and FIU opened their doors to me and I am so grateful.**

Hanadys Ale, *student*  
College of Medicine

biology and chemistry. She also volunteers regularly at Miami Children's Hospital.

"I think doctors sometimes forget that they are dealing with human beings, who have to be treated with compassion," Ale said.

their interpersonal skills. "We needed someone like Hanadys, who was sensitive to the health needs of our community and could communicate with them," Roller said.



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SGC-BBC

## Parliamentarian implements judicial reforms

**BARBARA QUIJANO**  
Asst. News Director

Unafraid of speaking her mind, Jessica Jacques takes charge as parliamentarian, guiding the Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus to a more established future.

Appointed in the summer of 2008, Jacques, a senior hospitality management major, chose to run for the position as chief justice when her first option was taken.

"Initially, I wanted to be the hospitality management senator, but that position was filled," Jacques said.

Chief justice duties include serving as chief administrator of the student judicial branch and as parliamentarian of SGC-BBC, according to the Student Government Association constitution.

"Aside from general meetings, where I make sure they run accordingly, I also attend Senate meetings, making sure they follow *Robert's Rules of Order*, a set of rules and procedures we follow for our meetings and the way we do business," Jacques said.

The student Judiciary, as stated in the constitution, serves as the internal standards board for SGC-BBC. This board is assigned responsibilities and duties that are necessary to maintain proper division of powers, and is the chief agent

for interpretation of the SGA constitution.

"What I appreciate about her is that we haven't had a working judicial system for a long time and she made it her own. She's very on top of it all," said Kenasha Paul, vice president of SGC-BBC.

In the Fall semester, Jacques began recruiting students from BBC for the judicial board. She succeeded in her search, receiving four applicants who are now involved: Vanessa Forves, junior hospitality management major, Ronicha Azard, senior health sciences major, Stephanie Jacques, senior biology major and freshman Sanz Justin.

"Recruiting was one thing, but my goal has been to establish precedents for the following years, making our branch more purposeful because the judicial board hasn't been active in the past," Jacques said.

Whenever a student has a complaint about any issue at BBC, it goes straight to the judicial board and Jacques is looking for a specific, more organized way to go about this process.

"If we're not serving the students right, they have a right to complain, but there's nothing in writing. You can come and tell me your complaint, but that can get thrown out the window," said Jacques. "So we would set up a form to then have a hearing, presenting more of an organization."

There is nothing set up at the moment, but Jacques plans on achieving that goal in the future.

"As the one who initiated the board to be what it is supposed to be, I'm not going to be able to do everything in this span of time, but

each member is supposed to speak during the meeting.

"If you go to a job, whatever rule it is that they set for you, either you follow it or you leave," Jacques said.

Born Aug. 31, 1987, Jacques was raised in Cap Haitien, Haiti. She arrived in Miami Sept. 10, 1997.

"The change wasn't as dramatic for me, because I was younger, but it was very different," Jacques said.

She attended Miami Northwestern Senior High School, taking part in the academy of hospitality and tourism program her sophomore through senior years. She graduated with honors in June 2005 in the top 20 percent of her class.

"I want to go to grad school to get my master's of business administration," Jacques said.

"Right now I'm considering a career in event planning or event management, probably corporate."

Being a part of SGC-BBC has prepared Jacques to excel at fostering teamwork, while also developing personal goals.

"She fulfills her job with the utmost integrity, always doing everything by the books, by the constitution," said Sholom Neistein, speaker of the SGC-BBC Senate. "She's extremely assiduous in anything she does."



JACQUES

**My goal has been to establish precedents for the following years, making our branch more purposeful because the judicial branch hasn't been active in the past.**

Jessica Jacques, parliamentarian  
SGC-BBC

I will try for it to be constitutional so it can be made effective now to last as the years go by," Jacques said.

At the general meeting held Jan. 28, she handed out a paper to all the council members, detailing the rules and procedures of how

### WEEKENDS WITH PARADISE

## When you're having a bad day and all else fails, go fly a kite

Last week I thought I had one of the worst weeks ever.

A fight with a friend, along with problems at work and school and the realization that I am not going to have a Valentine's Day date, left me wallowing all weekend.

The first thing I did on Friday night was get into bed, turn off the lights, cuddle up with my dog Karma and watch *Sleepless in Seattle* and *Love Actually*.

Those are my absolute favorite love movies, and no matter how bad of a week I've had, they can always turn my mood around.

But as much fun as wallowing is, I needed to cheer myself up.

So I decided to make the best of my bad mood and go out alone on Tuesday - hey, I needed some time.

I started by going to Jerusalem Market & Deli (16275 Biscayne Blvd., North Miami Beach), which is one of my favorite places to go when I want to pig out on some Middle Eastern comfort food.

I went in just wanting a hummus sandwich, but then I saw the one drink that can make any bad day shine for me - carbonated yogurt. For those who don't know carbonated yogurt, or *duough* as the Persians call it, is one of the staples of Middle Eastern cuisine.

I prefer mint-flavored *duough*, which tastes like cold creamy milk, club soda and mint mixed

together. Add a little salt on top and you'll be in heaven, I promise.

As I sat there eating my sandwich and drinking *duough*, all of which I bought for about \$8, I began to feel the stress of the week lifting off my shoulders and felt super relaxed when I left.

Not wanting to let go of my good feeling, I headed south down Collins Avenue, with the song "These are the Good Ole Days" by James Otto blasting from my radio.

By the way, if you are ever having a bad day, play this song and it will make you smile.

As I was really getting into the second verse, I noticed a couple of kites flying over in Haulover Park (10800 Collins Ave., Miami Beach.)

So I pulled over and bought myself a kite from the Kite Store, located right in front of the park.

Right next to the Kite Store, there is a big open field, where you can fly your kite.

The best part is that the beach is right across the park, which allows you to relax and enjoy the ocean. When I'm upset, there is nothing that makes me feel better than sitting alongside the ocean, especially if you bring a good book with you, like *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert.

I got this really cool black kite with a pirate skull on it for only \$5.

As soon as I bought the kite, I wanted to try it out, but I have bad luck with those things, so I decided that I would use it when I met up with my friend Brandon later that day.

That way, if I could not get the kite to fly, I could just blame it on him.

At this point, my day could not have gotten any better.

I had a good meal, a new kite and I was about to meet up with my friend Brandon, whom I haven't seen since high school, for coffee and to try out the kite.

I needed to spend some good quality time with Brandon because he is on leave from the Coast Guard for the next two weeks.

And of course, as soon as I started thinking about my wonderful day and I'm screaming the lyrics to "Chicken Fried" by the Zac Brown Band, I got hit by a taxi.

Yes, that's right, as ironic as it sounds, on the day that I was trying to make myself feel better from a bad week, I was hit by a cab.

And to make things worse, the driver drove off after the accident to drop off his passengers, so I had to pull over in a shopping plaza and wait for the nice Sunny Isles police officer and the taxi driver to come back.

Don't get me wrong, I am grateful that other than my shoulder killing me, I am OK, and that my car is fine for the most part, but there is some humor in

getting into an accident on a day where everything is supposed to go right.

After about half an hour, the other driver came back, tickets were issued and I got back to driving.

I missed my coffee time with Brandon, so I never got to fly that pirate kite I bought.

The odd part is that while the car crash would have made my week unbearable, it doesn't bother me that much now. Maybe it is the endless amount of romantic comedies I watched, or the good food and awesome kite I bought.

But I feel that even the accident was a blessing in a way since my car and I came out of it OK.

Even with the car crash I know this week is going to be a lot better than last week.

Because it's what you make of it that makes all the difference.

*Weekends with Paradise is a bi-monthly column about things to do in North Miami Beach. If you know anywhere that I should visit in the North Miami area e-mail me at [paradise.afshar@fiusm.com](mailto:paradise.afshar@fiusm.com).*

### WEEKENDS WITH PARADISE



PARADISE AFSHAR

### DELIVERING THE NEWS



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON

**THE GOOD AND THE BAD:** University President Modesto Maidique gave a speech at the SGC-BBC Town Hall Meeting in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre, Feb. 3.



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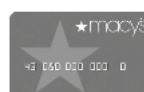
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## SHAKY 'FUTURES'

### Legislature should consider facts before taking action

**SHEMANA DIXON**  
Contributing Writer

The future isn't looking so bright. State legislators, in the dire straits of a budget crunch, have started to consider cutting funding to a program that was once considered untouchable: the Florida Lottery-funded Bright Futures Scholarship.

In a December 2008 report, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability made recommendations regarding cutting costs, specifically to the state's Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

Since the inception of the state's education lotteries over two decades ago, the lottery has transferred more than \$19 billion to the state's education trust fund, according to the program's Web site.

Bright Futures administers scholarships to Florida students who achieve high academic standards throughout high school and college, achieve high scores on college entrance exams and opt to attend in-state tertiary level institutions.

The lottery itself was authorized by a constitutional amendment passed by a majority of voters in 1986.

The following year, the Florida Public Education Lottery Act was enacted to implement the amendment, in a manner that would enable the people of the state to "benefit from significant additional moneys for education" and still be able to "play the best lottery games available."

It specifically pointed out that the proceeds from the lottery games should not substitute existing resources for public education, but be used as supplementary

funds.

The OPPAGA, by its own admission, "supports the Florida Legislature by providing evaluative research and objective analysis to promote government accountability, and the efficient and effective use of public resources."

The report listed six options for reducing the cost of the program to the state, including raising the eligibility requirements and estab-

**Regardless of how the legislature decides to trim the costs of the [Bright Futures] scholarship, some students will have to find other ways to pay higher tuition, or not go to school at all.**

lishing a financial criterion for eligibility.

Regardless of how the legislature decides to trim the costs of the scholarship, some students will have to find other ways to pay higher tuition, or not go to school at all.

After making these recommendations, the OPPAGA went on to suggest ways the lottery revenue could be increased, by

growing retailer and customer participation. The implication: reduce spending of lottery revenue on Bright Futures while encouraging retailers to stimulate customers, so we as consumers can increase revenue.

More gambling and less tertiary education is the solution to the budget problems faced by the state.

Sounds like a bright future indeed. Nowhere in the report are recommendations in the event that the lotto generates the same or higher rates of income in the coming years.

It's a long shot, but shouldn't legislators be asked to consider leaving the program alone if lotto revenue does not fall?

According to the Department of Education, FIU received close to \$20 million in monies from the Bright Futures Scholarship Fund during the 2007-08 school year. An average of about \$2,250 was received by a total of 8,836 students who qualified for aid under the program.

In the Fall 2007 semester, 18,717 full-time undergraduate students enrolled at the University, according to the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. At a glance, it appears that the proportion of students affected by this program is significant.

The Financial Aid and Enrollment Services Offices did not respond to requests for comment.

Ferral Liger, a senior majoring in biology and former Bright Futures recipient, feels that the debt he has incurred since the suspension of his scholarship is a "debilitating factor" in his life and that students will face undue financial pressure when

forced to make up for scholarship funds by other means.

In a statement in the Dec. 28, 2008 issue of the *Orlando Sentinel*, Arthur "AJ" Meyer, president of Student Government Council at University Park, said he hopes legislators look at the program's efficiency and effectiveness without necessarily making cost-cutting a main goal.

Meanwhile, a statement on the Office of the President's Web site informs students that budget cuts have caused enrollment caps to be put in place, so that students with solid B+ averages would have to be turned away, classes could become more crowded, advisers more overworked and fewer opportunities to take classes needed for graduation might be available.

The Florida Lottery transferred \$1.28 million to the Education Enhancement Trust Fund in fiscal year 2007-2008, making it the sixth time since its formation that the billion dollar mark had been surpassed.

The Bright Futures Scholarship Program, which was created in 1997, has received more than \$2.3 billion and reached more than 400,000 students.

If state legislators are going to consider reducing appropriations to the Bright Futures Scholarship Program based on projections that state lottery revenues will fall, then they should also consider the inverse scenario.

If lotto players are going to be encouraged to play more lottery, then the intention should be to increase education appropriations.

More gambling and less studying does not make for a bright future in the Sunshine State.

## Palestinians losing all hope in ending 'endless war'

**MOHAMED ABDIHAKIM**  
Contributing Writer

"It shouldn't be like this ... children, little children shouldn't be dying like this everyday," said Foad Farahi, an FIU alum.

Farahi, like people throughout the world, turns on the television to hear the latest death toll in the Gaza conflict. There have been protests all over Florida and the county demanding a cease-fire and an eventual end to the unnecessary bloodshed.

There have been other battles that made up the conflict between Arabs and Jews of Palestine dating as far back as 1948. Children were orphaned, parents buried their children and families were broken. Two groups of people have been struggling for the same patch of land, experiencing dire losses of life.

As long as there was violence making its way through Palestine, there have been cries against this conflict.

"I have been against this war since I found out it was going on," said Ammar Dandia, a sophomore

*"This war has to be 60 percent religion. It almost seems like a simplistic 'Jews vs. Muslims' boxing match."*

Rasha Baksh  
Freshman, chemistry major

majoring in mathematics.

The massive number of casualties reported on the news everyday has drawn forth a fatigued and sympathetic reaction from the youth and elderly alike.

Muslims in the United States have come to grips with an unfortunate realization: This war is most likely going to get worse before it gets better. Several members of FIU's Muslim Students Association have expressed distaste for the hopeless state that this conflict has placed Palestine in and say that despite the perception that the conflict is endless,

a compromise is the way to go.

"Sharing is not as bad an idea as many have labeled it to be. It would certainly bring hope toward finally ending the enmity between the two peoples," said Aisha Ahmed, a freshman majoring in health administration.

The hope for an end to this war is more a naive commodity than it is a real goal. Peace seems so distant in the future of Palestine that many have come to the conclusion that something has to give. That "something" is one of the sides surrendering.

Seeing how this is a war fueled



IRIS DIAZ/THE BEACON

**FOR ISRAEL:** In downtown Miami, demonstrators protest the attacks on the Israeli army in Gaza.

fiercely by religious differences, this is among the most unlikely turn of events. FIU students have apparently also picked up on this.

"This war has to be 60 percent religion. It almost seems like a simplistic 'Jews vs. Muslims' boxing match. It's wrong. Peace is not so impossible," said Rasha Baksh, a freshman majoring in chemistry.

If this is indeed a boxing match, then Palestine seems to have come to the ring without gloves. For every handful of soldiers that were killed during the recent raids in Gaza, a few hundred Palestinian lives have been

lost. Palestinian forces are clearly out-matched.

With death tolls rising and the hope for a permanent end to this war growing more and more distant as time passes, the question presents itself once again: Is it in fact that difficult to share?

As I write this, my little cousin, a first-grader, summed it up quite simply. When I tried to explain to him the nature of my subject matter, he responded with, "But why can't they just share? I share my blocks and my toys. Why can't they?"

Your guess is as good as mine.

## CRYOUT FOR SUPPORT

### New group helps women vent

MELISSA VARGAS  
Contributing Writer

Hoping to provide women with an outlet to express their frustrations, hopes and problems, Caring and Reaching Young Women of Youth and Tomorrow is one of the University's newest support groups.

The idea behind CRYOUT, which was established last Fall, is to provide a place for women to vent and share experiences about relationships, family, school, work, body image and more.

Nye Williams, an advertising major and sophomore, has only

missed one meeting and is satisfied with the group.

"It was nice to be surrounded by a group of people you can vent, worry, complain to, or share your joys with," said Williams, who recommends the group to all female students.

So far, many women like Williams have found it very beneficial and constantly go back to the meetings, according to Sarah Paulick, a psychology student who co-directs the group.

Because the support group allows women to find commonalities with other women who until then had not crossed paths, Paulick

said that has motivated them to continue attending meetings.

Understanding that she is not a professional and cannot offer remedies beyond her advice to any of the attendees, Paulick said that she chose to be the director of the support group in order to help women with issues that affect all women.

Before each session begins, the women sign in and read the disclaimer to understand what CRYOUT has to offer them.

"We state that CRYOUT is not a therapeutic group nor is any treatment being implemented. We do, however, provide support to the girls and hope to see more young women attend," Paulick said.

The women in charge of the group are not certified therapists but they provide the members with information on professional help they can seek, such as the Counseling Psychological Center, Residential Life and the Victim Advocacy Center on campus. The meetings are free.

CRYOUT meets twice a month in different residence halls from 7-9 p.m.

For more information on meeting dates, visit the Women's Center located in GC 2200.



## Digital television pushed back to June

JOELLE TESSLER  
AP WIRE

After weeks of debate, Congress is giving consumers four more months to prepare for the upcoming transition from analog to digital television broadcasting.

The House voted 264-158 on Wednesday to postpone the shut-down of analog TV signals to June 12, to address growing concerns that too many Americans won't be ready by the Feb. 17 deadline that Congress set three years ago. The Senate passed the measure unanimously last week and the bill now heads to President Barack Obama for his signature.

The change is being mandated because digital signals are more efficient than analog ones. Ending analog broadcasts will free up valuable space in the nation's airwaves for commercial wireless services and emergency-response networks.

The delay is a victory for the Obama administration and Democrats in Congress, who maintain that the previous administration mismanaged efforts to ensure that all consumers — particularly poor, rural and minority Americans — will be prepared for the switchover.

The Nielsen Co. estimates that more than 6.5 million U.S. households that rely on analog TV sets to pick up over-the-air broadcast signals still are not ready. People

who subscribe to cable or satellite TV or have a newer TV with a digital tuner will not be affected.

"The passage of this bipartisan legislation means that millions of Americans will have the time they need to prepare for the conversion," White House spokeswoman Amy Brundage said in a statement.

Wednesday's vote came one week after House Republicans blocked the bill under a special fast-track procedure that required two-thirds support to pass. This time, the bill passed the House under a regular floor vote, which requires a simple majority.

Among Democrats, 241 voted for the bill, while 10 voted against it. Among Republicans, 23 voted for the bill, while 148 voted against it.

"The country is not prepared to undertake a nationwide transition in 12 days without unacceptably high consumer dislocation," acting FCC chairman Michael Copps said in a statement. "We've got a lot of work to do, but we now have an opportunity to do it better."

The National Association of Broadcasters also welcomed the delay. The group said it will provide new television spots to promote the June 12 deadline, and work with stations to coordinate additional analog shut-off tests to raise awareness and help consumers prepare.

## Bob Marley fest brings students, faculty together

BY DAVON JOHNSON  
Staff Writer

Mellow vibes flowed freely as students connected through Jamaican music and food while invoking the memory and music of Bob Marley.

The West Indian Student Association, in conjunction with Club Africa, the Student Programming Council, the Student Organization Council at the Biscayne Bay Campus and [www.yardmassive.com](http://www.yardmassive.com), hosted a Bob Marley celebration tribute on Feb. 3 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Wolfe University Center's Panther Square.

"We are hosting this event to honor the life of Bob Marley and his accomplishments," said Michelle Garel, higher education master's student and WISA president.

There were more than 100 students, faculty and staff in attendance.

"This is a colorful, diverse experience and it's nice to know about the Jamaican culture," said junior physical therapy major Zane Bracy.

Black, gold, green and red balloons and cloths decorated the

tables at the event to pay homage to the Jamaican culture.

"Marley was born and raised in Jamaica but was very close to Africa," said Garel. According to Garel, they incorporated red into the colors of the celebration to pay tribute to Marley's Rastafarian religion and beliefs.

To complement the Jamaican-themed event, Caribbean Music Farm, a local band that plays island-

Web site. The band members hail from Antigua, St. Lucia, St. Thomas (U.S. Virgin Islands), Dominican Republic, Turks and Caicos, Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad.

"SPC-BBC helped cohort this event not only because it fell within our Pan-African Week, but also because we thought it would be a great way to honor the service, music and life of a great man," said senior tourism major Georgia

and peas. The refreshments offered also followed the Caribbean theme with Ginger Beer Reggae Style and Jamaican Kola Champagne, as well as strawberry and orange juice, lemonade and soda.

"It's a warm and positive event where everyone can get together and feel all right," said Noel Browne, Caribbean Music Farm's

leader and lead singer.

The event was scheduled to run until 4 p.m. but was cut an hour short so that it wouldn't conflict with SGA's General Town Hall Meeting, which took place in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and featured guest speaker President Modesto A. Maidique.

It's a warm and positive event where everyone can get together and feel all right.

Noel Browne, lead singer  
Caribbean Music Farm

style Caribbean music, performed and played some of Bob Marley's songs, such as "Stir It Up," "No Woman No Cry," "Is This Love" and "I Shot the Sheriff."

The band's members were professional singers and musicians with "multicultural and multinational Caribbean heritage and background," according to their official

Bedeau, marketing director of SPC.

"I'm glad [WISA] put this event together," said freshman criminal justice major Rochelle Davis, who is Jamaican. "I feel so close to my roots."

Attendants also received free food catered by Irie Isle. The menu included curry chicken with rice



NATALYA COHEN/THE BEACON

**JAMMIN':** Noel Browne, lead vocalist of Caribbean Music Farm, spices up the Bob Marley tribute by singing to Je'Hanne Gumbs, a junior English major, while walking around Panther Square, Feb. 3.

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THE CINEMATIC

# February brings screams, not sweets, to screens

January has come and gone, but February is here for a brief period of time. While February is usually about Valentine's Day rather than love, the movies that come out this month celebrate psychic espionage, a hockey-masked killer and football players turned male cheerleaders.

You cannot go wrong with this mixture of genres. Here is a look at this month's movies:

**FEB. 6  
PUSH**

A government agency known as the Division, led by a determined agent (Djimon Hounsou), is genetically transforming citizens into an army of psychic warriors and killing unwilling participants. A young man with these abilities (Chris Evans) is hiding in Hong Kong from the agency after it murdered his father a decade ago. His cover is blown when a teenage girl (Dakota Fanning) with the same abilities seeks his help to find a young woman who can influence others by implanting thoughts in their minds. When the Division finds them, this unlikely duo

goes on the run to prevent the Division from acquiring the "pusher."

**FEB. 13  
FRIDAY THE 13TH**



STEVE MESA

The hockey-masked killer with mommy issues is back in the re-imagining of the 1980 horror film, *Friday the 13th*. In 1980, Pamela Voorhees went on a killing spree at Camp Crystal Lake because she held the camp counselors responsible for her son Jason's accidental drowning. Alive and living in the woods, Jason sees this action and vows to avenge his mother's death by killing anyone who gets near Camp Crystal Lake. Two decades later, a group of college kids settle in a cabin near the lake to have a great weekend of sex, booze and drugs. When a lonely traveler stops by their cabin in search of his missing sister, last seen at Camp Crystal Lake, things take a turn for the worse when Jason Voorhees goes on a legendary killing spree.

**THE INTERNATIONAL**

What happens when the money that you put in

your bank is used to murder someone? An Interpol agent (Oscar-nominee Clive Owen) teams up with a Manhattan Assistant District Attorney (Oscar-nominee Naomi Watts) to discover that one of the world's most powerful banks is involved in illegal activities. Anyone who has been involved in a prior investigation has been murdered. They become targets of the bank, which will stop at nothing to dispose of the two.

**FEB. 20  
FIRED UP**

Nick (Eric Christian Olsen) and Shawn (Nicholas D'Agosto) are the stars of a high school football team and are not looking forward to another summer at football camp. Nick hatches a plan to join their school's cheerleaders at cheer camp and they both find themselves in a sea of gorgeous girls. When it seems like nothing can stop them, Shawn falls in love with Carly (Sarah Roemner), the beautiful head cheerleader who is suspicious of Nick and Shawn's intent. In order to win Carly, the boys must come up with some new moves for the cheer competition.



THE INTERNATIONAL



FIRED UP



FRIDAY THE 13TH



PUSH

## diversions

**Frat Ploys**  
BY JOEL MALISKAS



**STOP THE PRESSES!** art by iris amelia / story by susana rodriguez



## THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

**FRIDAY •  
FEBRUARY 6**

WHAT: Hotel Rwanda  
WHEN: 6pm  
WHERE: GC 140  
CONTACT: 305-348-3068

WHAT: Astari Nite  
WHEN: 11pm  
WHERE: The Vagabond  
CONTACT: 305-3790-0508

WHAT: Billy Joel  
WHEN: 8pm  
WHERE: Hard Rock Live  
CONTACT: 800-745-3000

WHAT: Movable Feast  
WHEN: 6:30pm  
WHERE: Gemma Lounge  
CONTACT: 305-534-3662

WHAT: Romance in a Can Festival  
WHEN: 8pm  
WHERE: Raleigh Hotel  
CONTACT: 305-534-6300

**SATURDAY •  
FEBRUARY 7**

WHAT: B-52's  
WHEN: 7pm  
WHERE: Jackie Gleason Theater  
CONTACT: 305-673-7300

WHAT: John Hammond Jr.  
WHEN: 8:30pm  
WHERE: Colony Theatre  
CONTACT: 305-674-1026

WHAT: Lingerie Miami  
WHEN: 5:30pm  
WHERE: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens  
CONTACT: 305-250-9133

WHAT: New Times groove On Battle of the Bands  
WHEN: 9pm  
WHERE: Gulfstream Park  
CONTACT: 954-457-6120

WHAT: Miami Beach Festival of the Arts  
WHEN: 10am  
WHERE: Ocean Terrace East of Collins  
CONTACT: 305-673-7577

**SUNDAY •  
FEBRUARY 8**

WHAT: Miami Heat Vs. Charlotte Bobcats  
WHEN: 6pm  
WHERE: American Airlines Arena  
CONTACT: 786-777-1000

WHAT: Full Moon Party  
WHEN: 6pm  
WHERE: Ritz Carlton South Beach  
CONTACT: 786-276-4000

WHAT: A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings  
WHEN: 3pm  
WHERE: The Playground Theatre  
CONTACT: 305-751-9550

WHAT: Adult Swim Presents Tim and Eric  
WHEN: 7pm  
WHERE: Revolution Live  
CONTACT: 954-727-0950

WHAT: The Highwaymen Exhibition  
WHEN: 6:30am  
WHERE: GC Gallery  
CONTACT: 305-348-2297

- Compiled by Mariana Ochoa

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**MEN'S OPEN # 1**

TEAM	OVERALL
Operation Repo	2-0
We Love Shones	2-0
Mickey Mouse Club	0-2
Lakeview Goons	0-1
Gamma Phi Gamma	0-1

**CO-REC**

TEAM	OVERALL
Cleveland Steamers	2-0
Air Jordan	2-0
FIUSM	0-2
IHOPness	0-2

**MEN'S OPEN # 2**

TEAM	OVERALL
ESPN	1-0
I Don't Know Dawg	0-0
Sammy A. S. S.	0-1
The Floaters	0-1
ArchiBallers	0-1

**SORORITY/  
WOMEN'S #1**

TEAM	OVERALL
Ballin'	2-0
Delta Phi Epsilon	1-1
Alpha Xi Delta	1-1
Phi Sigma Sigma	0-2

**MEN'S OPEN # 3**

TEAM	OVERALL
No Dumbish	1-0
Ballers	1-0
Dark Knight	1-0
The Ninja Turtles	0-1
Tenacious D	0-1
Good Ol' Days	0-1

**SORORITY/  
WOMEN'S #2**

TEAM	OVERALL
Aaaahh-sssss	2-0
Phi Mu	1-1
Alpha Omicron Pi	1-1
Sigma Kappa	0-2

**MEN'S OPEN # 4**

TEAM	OVERALL
Rig City	1-0
Chaos	0-0
Undrafted	0-1
DSU	0-0-1
Underestimated	0-0-1

**FRATERNITY**

TEAM	OVERALL
Phi Sigma Kappa	2-0
Kappa Alpha Psi	1-0
Pi Kappa Alpha	1-0
Pi Kappa Phi	1-0
Sigma Alpha Mu	1-1
Lambda Theta Phi	1-1
Sigma Phi Epsilon	0-1
Tau Delta	0-1
FIJ	0-2

**MEN'S OPEN # 5**

TEAM	OVERALL
Here Snowflake	1-0
Miami Lakes Legends	1-0
Nemesis	0-1
Hustlin'...Like Rick Ross	0-1
The Other Guys	0-0

All stats for intramural basketball leagues up to date as of Feb 2

# Mars to go into orbit this Fall

**SIGNING DAY, page 12**

tobal said he would have to keep South Florida recruits home for the program to be successful. And so far, he's been able to protect his turf.

Of the 23 signees, 12 of them are from Miami-Dade County. Only three players from the class are not from Florida: defensive end Thatcher Starling (Hutchinson, Kansas), offensive lineman Dave Istanich (Johnstown, Penn.) and defensive tackle Joshua Forney (South Holland, Ill.).

"The best football in America is played down here in South Florida. We live in [Miami-Dade County and we're proud of it. We want to continue to build along those lines and make sure that South Florida football is emphasized."

The Golden Panthers also got one transfer, former Mississippi State quarterback Wesley Carroll.

As a freshman, Carroll was named to the Southeastern Conferences Coaches' Freshmen All-SEC team after throwing for 1,392 yards and nine touchdowns. Carroll may be competing with Wayne Younger for the starting job in 2010. Carroll must sit out a year due to NCAA transfer rules.

Protecting Carroll in the near future will be offensive linemen Rupert Bryan, Giancarlo Revilla, Austin Tottle, Derek Wimberly and Istanich. During his National Signing Day press conference, Cristobal said the offensive line was the biggest area that needed to improve when he first came to FIU.

"They're all high motor kids, high energy kids. They play with great energy and passion and their nasty guys. I'm biased, I always will be biased. I think it's all about the offense line. When your offense and defensive line perform like they can, it changes the demeanor of that team," Cristobal said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RIVALS.COM

**LIFE ON MARS:** Larvez "Pooh Bear" Mars (Red) will have every opportunity to contribute as a freshman at FIU this fall.

"Without those guys up front you can't run an offense. T.Y. can run beautiful routes but if Paul McCall is on his back it really doesn't matter. They're the real deal and we need them more than anyone else."

The Golden Panthers also received a boost at running back when Gulliver Prep running back Darian Mallary faxed in his letter of intent. The 5-foot-9, 185-pound rusher led his team to a class 2-A state championship and led Miami-Dade County in rushing with 1,796 yards on 169 attempts.

"Darian Mallary is a home run hitter, which is what we need. He's a guy who can change the game with one play. He's a great receiver, he's excellent at catching screen passes and does a great job at making people miss," Cristobal said.

The Golden Panthers also landed kicker/punter Jack Griffin from Naples, Fla. *Rivals.com* rates him as the third best kicker in Florida.

"He's got an ultra powerful leg and he's going to come in immediately and compete for the job," Cristobal said.

"When he kicks that ball, it flies off his foot with a hurry."

All of the players in the 2009 signing class were captains of their high school football teams and Cristobal said leadership was an important element he and his staff looked for in recruits.

After landing their first All-American, coaches on the team believe FIU is starting to get more attention from recruits and coaches around the country.

"Recruiting is about working. You cannot work at FIU unless you are willing to get up earlier than the rest and go to bed later than the rest. And when you are battling big schools you have to out-work them. Are you going to win every battle? No. No big school wins every battle against other big schools," Cristobal said.

"Right now, there are labels and names and traditions that have been out there a lot longer than we have. But we're fresh, we're new and we're starting to get that sexy name because of the players that are coming over."

## Looking forward to a tasty autumn

**JULIAN, page 12**

on pieces of revenue that some feel are "rightfully theirs."

It is then refreshing when the process of procuring dinner for the next few autumns, when an administration takes every precaution to ensure the highest level of integrity during its selection process, not just from an external standpoint, but from an internal one as well.

When thinking of a nice dinner, one must not omit the vegetables that offer vital vitamins and minerals, which sustain us and help us grow. They might come from a tree or a root or something that can grow from the ground in any way.

On the subject of vegetation, consider the tree as the pillar of a category that gives oxygen, a sustaining life process that is necessary for development, and life, and more importantly, it has the ability to create new trees, to be traveled across the landscape.

Consider for a moment Butch Davis, current North Carolina head football

coach, a tree; one of those pillar types. Sure, he hasn't got a national title, but he was the captain who steered a sunken ship back to the surface across town in the late 90's, and the shipwright whom constructed the hull of a national champion.

Now consider a tree growing on its own, and mighty quickly, from the coaching line of Butch Davis, here at FIU. Mario Cristobal has become the sustainer of the FIU program that is on the rise in a hurry and paired with, particularly the last two recruiting classes, future suppers look mighty fine for the Golden Panthers.

Excitement about these victuals does not simply stem from the choicest of legumes, but from the concursion of all that is on the plate.

Choice coaches have a way of selecting, recruiting, and bringing in choice players. Over the past two recruiting cycles, of the 47 recruits that were announced on the two signing days, over 90 percent were team captains. This speaks to the level of

leadership, and integrity on, and off the field that FIU is trying to build, and have become the cornucopia, that serves as its representative centerpiece.

A good dinner is balanced, and often features a variety of quite palatable inclusions, but the representations on television and in film of the best dinners, have all of the palatability, and add family. The kind of brotherly attitude of unity that has begun to pervade the FIU locker room positively immense, and immensely positive, and to maintain that, which was probably the single most important piece added to an 0-12 team that was a possession away from a bowl game two seasons later.

The table has once again been set, with excellent fixings, and all the trimmings for a perfect family occasion and at the table sit the students and the fans, looking forward to the new tastes, and the return of those from last season, with the seasoning of another spring and summer. I'm excited for football – are you hungry too?



ADRIAN MARTINEZ/THE BEACON

**NO O.T.:** Underestimated (red) and DSU (green) struggled to a tie game in the opening week of intramural play.



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# Proof that science of recruiting is far from exact

**CHRIS TALBOTT**  
AP Wire

Rashad Johnson is the no-star All-American, the player overlooked by every scouting service in America, and most college coaches, too.

Johnson walked on at Alabama in 2004. Now after 30 starts and 11 career interceptions, the safety is likely bound for the NFL. He wouldn't trade his path for all the attention lavished on blue-chip recruits.

"That's something, when I get older and get my kids and grandkids, that's something I can talk with them

about and use it to help them with anything they have in their lives," Johnson said. "If they want to do something or be something in their lives and get disappointed and say they can't do it, I can always relate this story here."

In football-crazy America, more attention than ever gets paid to the annual pursuit of the perfect recruit — a chase that culminates Wednesday with national signing day, when players officially accept scholarships.

Yet as Johnson's story illustrates, pinpointing the teenagers who will evolve

into tomorrow's stars is tricky.

The Associated Press reviewed the top 50 recruits as named by Scout.com and Rivals.com from 2002-04, two services that essentially began as start ups but sold in recent years for tens of millions of dollars.

The AP found that when picking the 10 players with the brightest football futures, the services were right a little more than half the time, based on whether a player started 20 games or more in college, his recognition for awards or whether he made it to the NFL.

When it got to picks 11-

50, the services were even more hit and miss. Longtime talent evaluators for both sites quote similar statistics. They figure they're on target as much as 60 percent of the time, which they see as a decent record given everything that has to go right for a recruit to become a standout.

Bad grades and big parties, immaturity and injuries — any number of pitfalls can bring down a five-star athlete. On the flip side, avoiding problems can help can push a player thought to be lacking something — speed, size, toughness — to the top of the class.

Bobby Burton, a co-founder of Rivals, said the Web site is getting better each year as it puts more resources into talent evaluation.

He also readily acknowledges mistakes. He noted, for instance, that the quarterbacks who finished first and second in Heisman Trophy voting this year, Sam Bradford of Oklahoma and Texas' Colt McCoy, were rated as a five-star scale.

"It's not an exact science, period," Burton said. "Part of the reason why is kids are 17 years old and you're trying to predict what's going to happen when they're 21 years old. Who knows what's going to happen when they do go to college and drink beer?"

Not that it seems to

matter to fans.

The search for the nation's best recruits is exhaustive and includes evaluation of thousands of prospects.

Rivals has 185,000 to 200,000 Web-based subscribers, while Scout says it has 110,000 to 150,000. But the rankings have little to do with the process schools go through to identify top prospects.

"We're digging," Dan Mullen, the new Mississippi State head coach, said. "They might have a kid pop up on their screen, especially a secondary or tertiary player that we might not have been looking at. But I can tell you in the state of Mississippi, our top 25 rankings are very different than Scout's or Rivals' top 25 rankings, and those are the ones we go by."



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2009 FOOTBALL RECRUITING

## BACK TO THE FUTURE

Name	POS	HT	WT	School	Hometown
Rupert Bryan	OL	6-3	260	Glade Central	South Bay, Fla.
Anchored an offensive line that ended the regular season ranked second overall in Palm Beach County.					
*Wesley Carroll	QB	6-1	195	Mississippi State	Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Threw for 1,392 yards and nine touchdowns as a freshman at Mississippi State on 2007.					
Jonathan Cyprien	S	6-1	210	Miami Northwestern	Miami, Fla.
Was a All-Miami-Dade and District 12-6A First Team selection.					
Kenny Dillard	LB	6-1	210	Miami Northwestern	Miami, Fla.
Florida All-State Class -6A First Team selection. Led Miami-Dade County with 138 tackles. Had 10 sacks.					
Cain Elliot	S	6-2	215	Winter Springs	Winter Spings, Fla.
All-Central Florida selection, district 2-6A First Team selection.					
Joshua Forney	DT	6-4	255	Maian Catholic	South Holland, Ill.
First Team All-Chicago Parochial and First Team All-ESCC Conference.					
Jack Griffin	K/P	6-1	185	St. John Neumann	Naples, Fla.
14th ranked kicker by rivals.com and First Team All-Caollier County.					
David Istanich	OL	6-6	305	Johnstown	Johnstown, Penn.
Selected FIU over Big East schools Pitt and UConn. First Team All-State Class 3A.					
Derrick Jones	DB	5-9	185	Miami Springs	Miami Springs, Fla.
District 14-6A First Team and All-Dade County selection.					
Jarrell McGee	S	5-9	185	North Dakota State	Cocoa, Fla
Timed 4.4 speed, excellent hitting ability. Excels in run support and has a nose for creating turnovers.					
Darian Mallary	RB	5-9	185	Gulliver Prep	Miami, Fla.
Explosive returner with home run speed. First Team Class 2A All-State. Ran 4.38-40 yd dash at scout.com camp.					
Larvez Mars	LB	6-0	210	Apopka	Apopka, Fla.
Perhaps the top incoming recruit in FIU football history. 8th rated ILB by rivals.com.					
Giancarlo Revilla	OL	6-3	275	Killian	Miami, Fla.
First Team All-State Class 6A Selection, Ranked as #32 center by scout.com.					
Markeith Russel	LB	6-1	210	North Miami Beach	Miami Beach, Fla.
All-Dade selection, First Team All-District 12-6A					
Thatcher Starling	DE	6-4	265	Hutchinson C.C.	Hutchinson, Kan.
First Team All-Jayhawk Conference, Listed in rivals.com Top-100 JUCO recruits.					
Terrance Taylor	S	6-0	187	Archbishop Carroll	Miami, Fla
73 tackles, two force fumbles, four fumble recoveries and three interceptions as a senior.					
Wayne Times	WR	6-0	180	Miami Northwestern	Miami, Fla.
Elusive multi-talented offensive weapon. 476 passing yards, 173 rushing yards, and 584 receiving yards in '08					
Edgard Thelias	WR	6-3	193	Butler County CC	Bradenton, Fla
Physical possession receiver with excellent ball skills. Three Star prospect rated by scout.com.					
Austin Tottle	OL	6-4	300	Osceola	Seminole, Fla.
All-Pinellas County selection, First Team 7-3A All District.					
Rockey Vann	WR	6-0	170	Ocoee	Ocoee, Fla.
Committed verbally to FIU last August. First Team All-District 4-6A.					
Jarius Williams	WR	6-5	187	Miami Central	Miami, Fla.
Will give FIU immediate size upgrade at wide receiver. Played in Dade vs. Broward All-Star Game.					
Derek Wimberly	OL	6-5	275	Hallandale	Miami, Fla.
Hallandale Offensive Line MVP, Preseason All-Broward. Committed to FIU verbally in September.					

\*Transferred from Mississippi St. Must sit out for one year

\*\* Junior College Transfer

## Recruiting haul features five offensive linemen among 22

**CHARLIE GRAU**  
 Senior Staff Writer

FIU just landed on Mars. On National Signing Day, the Golden Panthers locked up 23 commitments including Apopka linebacker Larvez "Pooh Bear" Mars. Mars, who played in the U.S. Army All-American game, is the first All-American and four-star recruit FIU has ever picked up. In his senior year, he recorded 158 tackles,

15 for loss, four forced fumbles and an interception. The 5-foot-11, 210-pound linebacker chose FIU over Iowa State. "He really changes you on defense," said head coach Mario Cristobal. Accompanying Mars will be linebackers Kenny Dillard from Miami Northwestern and Markeith Russell from North Miami Beach. Both players were All-Dade selections. Together, the three linebackers

won four state championships and Cristobal believes they can bring that championship swagger with them. "We feel that we have one of the best linebacker classes in the country," Cristobal said. "We expect all those guys to have an impact together. Those are three down hill, explosive, extremely fast and athletic men that can rock n' roll." When he first arrived at FIU, Cristobal

**SIGNING DAY, page 10**



ROGELIO V. SOLIS/AP PHOTO

**REINFORCEMENTS ON THE WAY:** Wesley Carroll will bring major conference starting experience to FIU at the quarterback position in 2010.

## Dinner is served with recruiting class

Recruiting, or what college football has become, is a crowded meat market where game film and football camp 40-times hang on the walls in vast arrays, varying in degrees from 4.3-kobe beef types, to chuck roasts, hoping for a last minute offer because of excess weight, small stature, or damaged packaging (injuries). The patrons are coaches and boosters who shell out time and resources to capture the finest cuts of wide receiver and defensive end

— and often try to sift through the sale freezer to find a cube steak that might turn into an all-conference running back. The store front of college football recruiting has become a place where agents and crooks wait to prey on unsuspecting youngsters, who, while perhaps just wanting to play football, may be lured from the conformity of NCAA-regulations in an effort to capitalize

COMMENTARY



ANDREW JULIAN

**JULIAN, page 10**



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

**CONTENT COACH:** Mario Cristobal is excited about what has been ranked the second best recruiting class in the Sun Belt by many news sources.