

DR. VAN GOGH



FERNANDO GACTIA/THE BEACON

MIX-N-MATCH: Senior chemistry student Paola G. Gracey uses her knowledge of chemistry and her love of art to create bright and energetic paintings. Gracey paints to relieve stress while working towards her degree. **Page 2**

Vendors bid for soda contract

VANESSA A. ALVAREZ
Contributing Writer

A new soda vendor could be providing FIU students with its services as early as the beginning of this upcoming Fall semester.

FIU's vending contract with the Coca-Cola Company has been on a month-to-month basis for the past year, and University administrators are looking for a more permanent partnership.

FIU is now in the process of evaluating all of its potential choices before reaching a decision.

"Our desire is to choose the best provider that would give us the best service, that would give us the best price and that would be a true partner," said Felecia Townsend, director of Business Services for the University.

The school has formed a committee that will be in charge of making recommendations to CFO and Senior Vice President of the Division of Business and Finance Vivian Sanchez as to which vendor would benefit the

“ Felecia Townsend, Director of Business Services

Our desire is to choose the best provider that would give us the best service, that would give us the best price and that would be a true partner.

University the most.

The committee is comprised of three members of the Student Government Association, faculty members, Business Services, Student Affairs, Financial Planning and Athletics. There is a total of seven voting members – the three students' votes only count as one.

The committee had its first meeting June 29 to discuss the guidelines of its project goals and will evaluate its decision based on a number of criteria the vendor must meet.

The company's profile, its experience, quality certification and other questions such as whether the company has trucks, the services it offers, pricing and the financial package itself, are all things the committee will look at.

"I'm looking at what is best for the masses and that is what we have asked everyone to do," Townsend said.

Furthermore, the committee is most interested in choosing a company whose strategy is creative and which is willing to think outside the box, Townsend said.

"It is about helping to improve the University in every area where we can make the services better for everybody," said Kenny Gelok, SGA chief-of-staff for the University Park campus, said.

Gelok, along with two other Student Government Council representatives, one from Biscayne Bay Campus and the other from

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Task force proposes mandatory insurance

MARIA CHERCOLES
News Director

Students at Florida's public universities could need proof of health insurance to register for classes by the year 2010.

According to a proposal before the Board of Governors, a student health insurance task force of 25 professors, doctors, administrators and members of the student government body from Florida's 11 public universities is working to develop a mandatory insurance plan for its over 200,000 students. This would require all state university students to show proof of insurance or to purchase an insurance plan from their university before they can register for classes.

The proposal is a response to the large student population dropping college every year due to health problems.

According to Dr. Robert Dollinger, executive director of University Health Services and co-chair of the task force, over 4,000 Florida students left college for medical reasons last year, 630 of which were from FIU. He believes this could be prevented with health coverage.

The reason insurance is so expensive, Dollinger said, is because at present those most likely to enroll are those already suffering from a medical condition or those at risk.

By bringing together so many students, the state will be able to find better plans.

He hopes that by enrolling all Florida students into an insurance plan, the premium would be lowered to \$1,000 or less.

But this is not the only reason why the task force believes the mandatory insurance will enhance the lives of college students.

The task force conducted a study showing that today's college students have a greater number and more complex physical and mental health issues than ever before. Mental illnesses, the study concluded, are the number one medical reason students drop college. He believes that if students have access to medical care and prescriptions, they will most likely stay in college.

The study also showed that 90 percent of the nation's private universities require insurance.

"The state invests lots of money into education and scholarships, but unfortunately some of these students are withdrawing and wasting the money spent on them because of health costs," Dollinger said.

The mandatory health insurance would also make Florida a more marketable state at the research and graduate level. The task force proposed to offer free insurance

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Clinic offers HPV vaccine to students

LIS-MARIE ALVARADO
Contributing Writer

Agnese Montalbo wants to get vaccinated against the Human Papillomavirus, known as HPV, after learning disturbing figures during one of her ordinary gynecological examinations.

She learned that at least six million new cases of genital HPV occur in the United States each year and that 20 percent of the pap smears done at the FIU clinic present abnormal results and precancerous HPV, which can be deadly if not treated early.

A pap smear is a standard procedure performed by gynecologists when women go for their annual check-up. The pap smear checks for changes in the cells of the cervix, which would indicate cancer.

"I do not want to be in that situation," Montalbo said. Students like Montalbo can now get their first dose of Gardasil,

a vaccine that prevents cervical cancer, at the Women's Health Center at FIU.

The vaccine is only administered to female students who are not pregnant or allergic to the active ingredients of the vaccine, such as purified inactive proteins from HPV 16, 11, 18 and aluminum.

Students like Juan Blanco are excited about the new vaccine.

"Even though it's not for me, I think it is wonderful because it saves a woman's life," he said.

Gardasil, which is delivered in three shots, prevents infection from four HPV strains – types 6, 11, 16, and 18 – which cause about 70 percent of cervical cancer cases and 90 percent of genital warts cases. Gardasil does not fully protect everyone and does not prevent all types of cervical cancer, making some students, like Francine Salas, skeptical.

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Student blends arts, chemicals

NICOLE ACOSTA
Asst. News Director

Cuqui Beguiristain, owner of miArte gallery in Coral Gables, was first introduced to Paola G. Gracey and her artwork at a *Viernes Culturales* exhibition on Eighth Street about three years ago. Since then, Beguiristain has not only displayed the 23-year-old FIU student's artwork at her own gallery, but she has collected several pieces for her own personal collection.

"What [Gracey] had there was very different. I was impressed with the fact that she was a chemistry student and could translate what she's learned in the lab onto a canvas," Beguiristain said.

Beguiristain, who defined Gracey's work as biochemical art with bright candy colors, said she has seen the chemistry major expand and refine her abstract work into what it is today.

"Her work has definitely developed. It's now a more defined, stylized and unique marriage of art and science, which makes it stand apart from other artists. How many artists use chemical elements in their compositions?"

Gracey said her grandmothers worked with paints and sculptures and her father, who has a doctorate degree in nutrition, brought home science experiments he would demonstrate to his students. As a result, she grew up with an interest and appreciation for both disciplines. Although Gracey grew up using crayons and watercolors to express her artistic side and excelled in science all throughout her academic career, she said it was not until she

entered FIU that she began to fuse her love for chemistry and painting together. Gracey said this occurred through encouragement from her art professors and through a painting accident when trying to move away the more expensive oil paints.

"One day, I was mixing my acrylic paints and it had dried in the way my paintings look like now and I thought it was so cool and something that I can take further," Gracey said.

As time went on, Gracey began to experiment with mixing house paints, acrylics, kids' finger paints and glitter together during different temperatures in different seasons in order to create more one-of-a-kind paintings.

"I'm still in the experimenting stage and I am still learning by changing the controls. It's a giant science project," Gracey said. "I enjoy it so much and I'm still learning, I still haven't found every paint I can work with and I am continuing to find out about certain paints."

Gracey also incorporates new chemistry themes, as she is taking her classes to complete her upper division courses for her major, such as organic chemistry or physical chemistry.

One such example of her work, titled "Ocean Around Us," was painted using oils on acrylic. The waves in the painting are outlined by a golden double-helix, which represents DNA. Within the waves are several fish, which Gracey said represents lysine, an amino acid necessary for the growth of human beings. Overall, she said the painting represents the joy of life as a whole, a theme she tries to represent

in all of her paintings.

"You strive to be different from other artists. By applying what I learned in chemistry is another level in my life and I'd like to teach people not what I learned in chemistry throughout my four years [at FIU] but the gist of it through my paintings, whether it's lysine or central amino acids," Gracey said.

Although Gracey feels her artwork is unique, she has also been told that it is so by people such as Robert Parente, director for the Mayor's Office of film, arts and cultural affairs for the City of Miami. Parente said when he met Gracey at another *Viernes Culturales* exhibition about five years ago, her artwork impacted him like a lightning bolt.

"Gracey uses great colors, a lot of energy and movement [in her art] and that's enough for me to want to buy her work. You look at her work and wonder 'What is that shape, what does it mean?' But to me, it's fun to look and stare at and conjure up what you want to look at," Parente said.

Gracey, who graduates this summer, said she hopes to continue experimenting with basic art supplies and eventually become an expert on what she calls a unique and colorful type of abstract art, as well as learn more about the human body by possibly going back to school to study pharmacology.

Aside from balancing school and time to paint, Gracey, who is married, also finds time to take care of her 10-month-old daughter, Ileana.

"Everybody always asks me, 'How do you do what you do?' I guess you have to stay really sane. My family comes first before anything whether it's my daughter walking or crawling. I don't want to miss it. [As for] the chemistry and painting, any time I have during work or my internship, I open up a book, I don't waste time," Gracey said.

Gracey will be displaying her artwork in galleries throughout the fall. For more information visit www.MySpace.com/paolaart.

Health care plan expected for 2010

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to research and teacher assistant students. This would bring more research-oriented students to the state and, with them, research grants, Dollinger said. The University of Florida already offers free health insurance for research students while FIU covers 75 percent of their insurance plan.

The medical coverage recommended by the task force includes up to \$250,000 of medical costs and prescription and international coverage, among other things.

If adopted, the insurance requirement would go into effect by the year 2010 and would only apply to incoming freshmen.

However, some FIU students, like nursing and health-related research students, already purchase mandatory insurance or must show proof of it. Nursing and health-related research students are required to have health insurance because they are exposed to different viruses. International students need it because of university rules.

If the measure is adopted, Florida will not be the first state with mandatory insurance. California and Massachusetts already have the registration requirement, states which Dollinger referred to as "the university trend-setters."

"When compared to other states, Florida wants to be at the cutting edge. We don't want to be left behind in caring for our students," Dollinger said.

In fact, Florida is already running a pilot of the insurance plan. This Fall, incoming freshman and transfer students at Florida State University will have to either purchase an insurance plan for \$1,440 or show proof of insurance meeting comparable requirements.

According to Lesley Sacher, director of the Student Health Center at FSU and co-chair of the task force,

it took three to four years to fully implement the proposal there after seeing so many students drop out of college due to expensive medical bills.

"There were too many students who needed care and our health center at the university grounds was not able to provide complete care," Sacher said. "Students with need of treatment would go to a physician, but would be denied treatment because of no insurance. At the end, students would end up going to the [emergency room] and having to pay the most expensive rates."

Because the insurance is mandatory, financial aid will pay the costs of qualifying incoming freshmen at FSU. One drawback: The university is not receiving more financial aid funds; limiting the amount of financial aid available for the whole student body.

Sacher believes that if the Board of Governors approves the measure, the legislature will give more funds to public universities. Also, she said, if all the universities come together, a lower premium could be possible.

According to Dollinger, it's too soon to determine whether the mandatory insurance lowered or increased enrollment at FSU this Fall.

Sacher is more optimistic and believes that enrollment will increase now that financial aid will pay the medical insurance of those qualifying.

Following the Board of Governors' last meeting held at FIU June 13, the task force is working on a more detailed report. More specifically, the board wants to know how many of those 4,000 students dropping college every year because of medical reasons would stay if their medical bills were covered.

The task force will address the board again during its Sept. 26-27 meeting, to be held at the University of North Florida.

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated July 2, 2007, the article titled "Events promote Greek recruitment" mistakenly said that sororities review and evaluate applicants and decide who to recruit based on the applicant's values. The article should have mentioned that recruitment is a mutual selection process in which applying women and sorority members get to know each other. The selection is based on whether the applicant holds the same values, will contribute to the chapter and on whether she wants to join that particular chapter.

The same article should have mentioned that there is a \$30 registration fee, not charge.

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

THE BEACON



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Club opposes soft drink

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the Pines Center, will be the only students joining the committee, and will be representing the student population.

There are a number of companies who are interested in obtaining the contract. According to Gelok, it is the law for state schools to request proposals from different companies.

"Having a university is a huge deal for a vendor," Gelok said.

Selecting the new soda vendor is significant to FIU considering there has been much emphasis placed on the contract renewal process since last September, particularly by the United Students Against Sweatshops, a student club advocating fair labor practices.

The USAS, following the "Killer Coke" campaign, has actively rallied to have Coca-

Cola banned from FIU on the allegations that the company has violated labor practices in countries like Colombia, Turkey and India.

"We feel that the goal of the University is not to get or generate the most amount of profit, but rather to be an institution that promotes human rights and a system of ethics," said Pablo Avandano, member of USAS's FIU chapter.

USAS has campaigned by passing petitions and delivering presentations on the matter in classrooms and SGA and Faculty Senate meetings.

These presentations have gained the organization the attention they needed to get their voices heard within the school administration, specifically from former SGA President Alfonso "Alfie" Leon.

"The emphasis that our executive board placed on this issue was to create a dialogue between Coca-Cola represen-

tatives and the USAS students, as well as give an outlet to USAS on providing their input on the Coca-Cola issue to the administration," Leon said.

Even with the support they were able to gain, the USAS remains dissatisfied and feels hopeless that their efforts will cause any effect on the decision of the committee.

"Universities have become businesses instead of the institutions for education that they should be and used to be," said USAS member Laura Garcia.

It remains uncertain whether the University will choose to renew its contract with the Coca-Cola Company or will opt to switch to Pepsi, or any other vendor.

The decision will be made once the committee has thoroughly reviewed its choices and weighed its options as to which company will prove FIU's biggest contributor.

New cafeteria's opening delayed due to lack of funds

NICOLE ACOSTA
Asst. News Director

While students can look forward to working out at a new fitness center this Fall, a new dining facility will not be part of the Biscayne Bay Campus' food options until possibly next Spring.

Victor Citarella, associate vice president for the department of Facilities Management, said construction of the new cafeteria and fitness center began in August 2004, but was delayed due to "unforeseen underground conditions" which required a redesign of the building's foundation.

Citarella said the structure, or "shell," built by the Stobs Brothers construction company, is part of an approximately \$5.4 million project. According to Citarella, the shell is scheduled for completion this month pending the final construction of the "punch list," which could include painting or plumbing adjustments. Completion of the punch list, however, is "not determined at this time."

The new cafeteria, which will have an array of different "grab-and-go" vendors rather than a buffet like University Park's Fresh Food Company, will feature indoor galleries, a view of Biscayne Bay and outdoor porches.

According to Citarella, both the cafeteria and new fitness center is scheduled to be legally accessible to students, faculty and staff later this month.

"This does not mean that the area will be useable as there may not be furniture or other [accessories] required



YALIMAR PANEL / THE BEACON

RUN DRY: University officials say the new cafeteria needs more money for completion.

for full operation of the facility," Citarella said.

Felecia Townsend, director of Business Services, however, said the new cafeteria space is currently just an empty shell.

Townsend said the cafeteria is an auxiliary space, that requires special funding from an outside company, such as Aramark, the University's dining service, for the build-out of the interior that will make it suitable for cooking and preparing food.

The project has been further delayed due to funding issues with Aramark and their ability to fund the interior, or "buildout" of the project, according to Townsend, who hopes the new cafeteria opens by at least November.

"FIU's Auxiliaries Department and Aramark Food Services have been working on a proposal for the interior tenant improvements for

these areas since February 2007. However, the scope of work has not been agreed upon at this time, and Auxiliaries is still investigating alternate options. Therefore, tenant improvements for a full cafeteria will not be ready for the coming fall session," Citarella said.

The University's 10-year, \$2.8 million contract with Aramark, put together about three years ago, specified Aramark as the builder of the University's food services.

Townsend did say, however, that the contract did not have enough funds for future food service buildouts, which includes BBC's new cafeteria. According to Townsend, most of those funds have already been spent, which left about \$500,000 for Aramark to contribute to the buildout of the new cafeteria. The rest of the funding will come from an FIU food service

reserve accumulated monthly through a percentage of Aramark's revenues.

But according to Jonathan Garcia, resident district manager for dining services for the University, Aramark's contract with FIU guaranteed a commission to the University each year for 10 years. Due to those negotiations, any new buildout for new projects would have to come from the University. He said the original contract never specified Aramark giving a specific amount of money for BBC's new cafeteria.

Garcia said Aramark is currently trying to come up with creative solutions to the cafeteria's funding issue, and one possible solution would be to pay a reduced commission to the University in order to contribute more to the project's funding.

"We're trying to find a solution because it's always

challenging in a University environment to finance capital projects, so if Aramark can help finance food services development, the University can invest their capital in other projects unrelated to food services," Garcia said.

Since FIU is contributing most of the funding, Townsend said she is meeting with a legal team for the University to determine whether or not Aramark could still buildout the issue. If they legally can't, Townsend said the project would have to open to other bidders, something her department is trying to avoid in order to prevent further delay of the cafeteria's opening due to paperwork and legalities that go along with state funding from a public university.

"What we're trying to do is make it as easy as possible for the University to grow their food services in line with the growth of the University," Garcia said. "Either Aramark will finance the project or the University will. It will get done, it's just a question of how."

Garcia said that in the meantime, since Aramark is still currently the vendor for the new cafeteria, another proposal will be sent to Townsend this week containing several food options, menus and prices for the new facility. According to Townsend, "most of the stuff in Aramark's proposal was on target."

Townsend said the delays in the cafeteria's buildout will not affect the opening of the new fitness center, which is scheduled to open in September, according to the Department of Campus

Recreation.

Townsend also said that the current cafeteria will remain open until the completion of the new project. In the meantime, updates and architectural plans for the new cafeteria will be posted outside of the facility.

"We're going to communicate every step of the way to get people excited about the new facility," she said.

Townsend said the new cafeteria will revitalize BBC.

"The current cafeteria has been there for 30 years and it's old and dated. Just to have something new and vibrant will really rejuvenate the campus," she said.

Garcia said Aramark's yearly losses mostly come from BBC due to "low participation and old facilities in a bad location."

Townsend said the new cafeteria, which will be located on the first floor of Wolfe University Center, is placed in the middle of the center's "traffic passage."

"Since the new cafeteria is going to be in the hub and in a place where people can congregate and be seen, it will facilitate that closeness and camaraderie that's missing at BBC," Townsend said.

Garcia hopes the new BBC cafeteria will break even profit wise.

"Everyone hopes the new facility will bring back energy and sense of community to BBC, but if enrollment continues to decline and more BBC programs move to UP, it will become increasingly more challenging for BBC to be successful or have a sense of community, much less food service options."

HPV shot now available to students

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"If the vaccine is not able to cure all types of HPV, then I see it pointless because it does not cure all types," she said.

But if taken prior to infection, the vaccine may last for a long time, protecting women ages nine to 26 from getting a cancer that is responsible for the deaths of at least 4,000 women in the United States.

Gloria Garcia, a cashier at the FIU Bookstore, has taken the vaccine and has great faith in it.

"My doctors recommend it, and anything that helps can't hurt" she said.

Kathy Kleinert, Advance Registered Nurse Practitioner at the Women's Health Center, said the vaccine is covered in the optional student health insurance

“Kathy Kleinert, Registered Nurse Practitioner

We did not have the budget for the vaccine and were unable to advertise it right away. We had to pay for it.

offered by FIU. But other students who wish to be vaccinated would have to pay with their own money, since it is not covered in the student health fee.

Kleinert also said that the center offers free chlamydia and gonorrhea urine tests for students every Friday.

"Health is accessible to the students" she said. According to Kleinert, the vaccine took FIU by surprise. The center never thought the vaccine would obtain the approval from the Food and Drug Administration so quickly, and

therefore did not plan for it. "We did not have the budget for the vaccine and were unable to advertise it right away," she said. "We had to pay for it."

Kleinert said that the immunizations cost \$130 per dose, and is given as three injections over a six month period.

But since Gardasil only arrived on the market a few months before the 2006-2007 academic year began, many students may not be able to receive the vaccine because they may not be able to afford it and they may not know it exists.

Kleinert said that the vaccine is not a replacement for pap smear tests, and that people who have taken the vaccine can still get cervical cancer since the duration of the effectiveness of Gardasil is still unknown.

"It is important to continue regular cervical cancer screenings" she said. "Only a doctor or health care professional can recommend the use of Gardasil" she added.

For now, the Women's Health Center recommends students interested in the vaccinations should check their coverage before visiting the doctor, and are welcome to call and ask if Gardasil is a good option.

For more information call the Women's Clinic at (305) 348-2401 or BBC University Health Services at (305) 919-5620.



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OPINION

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Proposal for mandatory healthcare problematic

CHRISTOPHER CABRAL
Staff Writer

If only poor and working class students had their own task force. Recently, a group of 25 administrators, professors and doctors, giving themselves the imposing and authoritative title of “The Student Health Insurance Task Force” met with members of the Board of Governors at FIU and proposed a plan that would supposedly help Florida’s students. After the group concluded that many students drop out of school due to medical expenses. The task force came up with a novel solution: make

health insurance mandatory for all college students.

Any student that can’t afford insurance would be barred from attending any of Florida’s public universities.

This proposal would be a boon for the insurance companies, giving them thousands of new customers – yet it is being sold as a magical solution to the problem of uninsured students.

Millions of people around the country cannot afford health insurance.

Finding a way to make sure that all of Florida’s students have access to health care is a noble goal. But this proposal would only put an additional barrier in front of these students who are struggling to get an education. Many of these students struggle to hold a job, attend school, pursue their career and pay their bills, and at the end of the day, they just don’t have enough money to buy health insurance.

It’s ironic that this proposal, which is being sold as a way to help curb dropout rates and help the uninsured would only raise the cost of getting an education for them, thereby making it harder for them to get good jobs that offer benefits-like health insurance.

Students fortunate enough to be able to purchase health insurance if forced to do so would provide insurance companies with thousands of new customers, who are younger, healthier, and less likely to need insurance.

Health insurance companies, who hardly suffer for lack of profit, would be the main beneficiaries from this plan.

They’d make millions and ultimately, many of those who already can’t afford health insurance may have to sacrifice their education because of it.

There seems to be a fundamental lack of understanding among those who endorse this proposal. Students who live without health insurance do so not because they don’t want it, not because they don’t think it’s important, not because they need a law to force them to purchase it – but because they simply cannot afford it.

Passing a law that would keep them out of college and hurt their chances at a better future would be foolish, if not downright ridiculous.

The task force claims that 4,000 students drop out a year due to high medical bills. That’s why everyone should have insurance, they say. You’ll find no argument with me there.

Everyone should have health insurance – but passing a law keeping the uninsured out of college would hardly accomplish that goal.

How many drop out because they don’t have enough money to cover the cost of college? How many students drop out because they can’t pay their rent, go to college and work at the same time?

Many studies performed by independent groups show that college students who come from low and middle class families are substantially more likely to drop out.

Financial reasons and the demands of employment are the most oft cited reasons.

A law requiring students from these groups to pay for health insurance, or fining students \$1,500 for lack of coverage, as Florida State University has done, would only increase the number of students who drop out for these reasons.

There is no question that such requirements would keep many students from going to college

unless financial aid was increased substantially to cover the costs. Supporters of this proposal say that financial aid

‘might’ be increased to help poorer students pay for health insurance. That would be great. There’s only one problem with that.

In the midst of a massive push to cut property taxes, Florida’s state government is trying to cut back spending across the board. Many in the state legislature worry that funding for education will have to be greatly reduced to pay for property tax cuts.

So it seems highly unlikely that the state government would support a multi-million dollar effort to increase college access for Florida’s working class students. Some members of the task force say that if all students get health insurance, the premiums will drop. This too, seems unrealistic and naïve.

Private insurers are in business to make as much money as possible for their owners and shareholders.

If a law passed requiring thousands of people to do business with them, why on earth would they choose to lower their rates? They’d make more money if they kept their rates high.

FIU offers a health insurance plan for students who can’t afford their own plans. The cost? \$1,700 per year. And that’s with FIU paying for 75 percent of that cost.

With the state planning to cut back on the budget, would they be able to continue paying so much of the cost, for thousands of students? That too seems unlikely.

The bottom line is, making health insurance mandatory for all students without raising financial aid significantly, would be a disaster for the students who can’t afford it and it is those students who need an education most of all.

Depriving them of an education essentially because they are too poor to afford insurance would be perverse.

FIU and the BOG should follow the lead of schools like California State, Old Dominion University and Kent State University by rejecting this proposal. Maybe working class students should start a ‘task force’ to get them to listen.

THE BEACON | Editorial

Coke’s questionable practices must be considered in contract bid

The recent controversy that has surrounded Coca-Cola’s international business practices brings numerous concerns about the University’s decision to renew its contract with the company.

A story published in *The Beacon*, March 29, 2007, made reference to the American Anthropological Association’s findings that Coca-Cola had collaborated with guerilla factions and has had some complicity in political assassinations and labor abuses.

These same allegations have been suggested by various student organizations and critics of Coca-Cola, among them is the United Students Against Sweatshops – who have spearheaded the Killer Coke campaign on campus.

It is our belief that in the interest of the University’s reputation as a respected institution, these accusations be taken into consideration during the entire

renewal process.

In the past, the University has made it a point to distance itself from any breaches of ethics or morality; we advocate that these claims be investigated to insure that no unsavory practices have transpired and that FIU has not bought into any criminal activities through its support of Coca-Cola.

Also, the University must follow its own precedent under such circumstances and maintain some sort of consistency in its policy when dealing with matters of ethics.

Furthermore, the student body should have a stronger say in the process than has been the case thus far, with only two Student Government Association representatives attending the proceedings.

SGA should do its part and get feedback from the rest of the student body, as ultimately they will be the consumers buying the product.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Would a small raise in tuition be accepted if it meant receiving a better quality education?

• Yes – My education is most important. The cost is not an issue.

35%

• Yes – FIU could improve in certain areas.

16%

• Sure – I really don’t care.

3%

• No – I’m satisfied with the education I’m receiving as well as the cost of tuition.

8%

• No – There is no way the University is getting anymore of my money!

38%

Total participants: 37

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.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 beaconopinion@yahoo.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.

STEPPIN' THROUGH HISTORY

GREEKS TEACH CULTURE WITH DANCE

DANIELLE KING
Contributing Writer

Throughout history, humans have used body language as a form of communication. Tribal languages, for instance, were often composed of sounds and movements.

This variation of communication is seen through what is modernly known as stepping, a dance form that combines military precision and hip-hop moves along with the use of hands, feet and other objects to make rhythmic percussion sounds.

According to *uppercountysteppers.org*, a step team web site dedicated to informing people of the art form, stepping can be traced back to an African dance called the “Gumboot Dance,” which contained chants, foot movements and hand clapping among other techniques.

The current form of stepping, however, didn't materialize until the early 20's, when members of black fraternities in the United States would gather around and sing.

Soon, movements were incorporated with singing and speaking, in turn creating stepping.

Stepping is a known art form in black fraternities and sororities, but stepping also serves as a representation of Black History.

Senior Brandon Bartley, a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., places emphasis on how stepping has distinguished black culture for centuries.

“I think stepping is what separates us from other fraternities because it represents our past culture and the way we express ourselves as a race through song and dance,” Bartley said. “That's what makes



GRAPHIC BY JONATAN ROBERTS/THE BEACON

us unique.”

Examples of stepping and black Greek-lettered organizations can be seen in various movies and television shows such as *School Daze*, “A Different World” and the recently released film, *Stomp the Yard*, as well as

in music videos such as Montell Jordan's “This is How We Do It.”

For some fraternity members such as junior Fabian Pierce, few of these movies portray stepping accurately.

“*Stomp the Yard* was unrealistic because it was out of character compared with how stepping really is.”

“...[Stepping] represents our past culture and the way we express ourselves as a race through song and dance.”

– Brandon Bartley

One of the characteristics of stepping is “the cane,” which was first introduced by Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. during its inception in 1911 and was later incorporated into the step routines of this fraternity. The cane is made of wood, wrapped

in the fraternity's particular colors and has a hook on the end.

Used by fraternities such as

Kappa Alpha Psi and Phi Beta Sigma, the cane is used for tapping and twirling, but it also holds a very strong Christian belief for some, particularly the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi.

The J-hook cane was used by shepherds

to tend to their flock; symbolically, the shepherd is Jesus Christ leading his people.

The cane upside down represents a “J” for Jesus, while the red represents the blood of Christ and the white represents purity.

Stepping isn't the only dance form performed by fraternities at the University.

FIU has many Hispanic fraternities and sororities on campus that perform their own unique moves.

Junior Stephanie Fyock, a member of the predominantly Hispanic sorority Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc., emphasizes the fact that the sorority members don't step – they “stroll,” which consists of a line formation that is similar to a train and incorporates signature moves and dance steps.

“We don't step. We stroll because the roots of stepping are from African culture and that's not our roots. We don't want to disrespect what isn't ours,” she said. “[Strolling] displays the unity and bond between sisters. It's a display of our passion through our organization. It's something that's yours and no one can take that away.”

This Fall promises to bring many events to campus that feature stepping and strolling, including the Homecoming Step Show that features most of the black fraternities and sororities at FIU.

Various “stroll-off” competitions and a diverse assortment of parties are also planned.

Despite the fun from performing and competing in such shows, stepping isn't easy.

For Sophomore Alex Miller, a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., stepping takes passion and commitment.

“It's hard work and it takes time, but it's fun.”

New definition of independence created on its day



The Meaning of Life
a column looking for the answers
C. Joel Marino

I spent the Fourth of July with my family, though I originally didn't want to do that. I live on my own now, so what kind of Independence Day would it be if I returned home because my parents wanted me to? I was free, and this wasn't what free men did.

But two things happened as I drove home that holiday morning:

1) I heard a radio story about kidnapped British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent Alan Johnston who was released that very day after four months in captivity.

2) I saw an overturned car on the side of the highway as the radio told Johnston's story. Thick smoke splattered from the car's underbelly and a woman clawed her way out of the wreck. She wore a flowery dress that got caught on the machine's shattered window.

Six other cars had already stopped to help the woman out of the mess. Shocked by what I had seen, I drove a little faster and raised the radio's volume.

“I was in the hands of people who were dangerous and unpredictable,” the announcer said at that moment, quoting Johnston from a BBC report. “I literally dreamt many times of being free and always woke up back in that room.”

I was struck by the image the quote brought up: Johnston

huddled in a dark room, alone, yearning for water or sunlight or a moment's walk.

He said that he yearned for freedom. Freedom.

Much like the phrase “meaning of life,” I think “freedom” is a word that has become a cliché, used so often that it no longer holds meaning.

The American Heritage Dictionary has nine definitions for that word. This is the one drew me the most: “Exemption from an unpleasant or onerous condition.”

I've heard people say that we can only find freedom in death. Life itself is an unpleasant and onerous condition and we will only be exempt from it once we cease to exist.

But can't life itself be freedom? From the reports I've read,

Johnston never seemed to want to die, no matter how troubling his situation became. Whenever he remembered freedom, he thought of haircuts and drinks and being with his friends, according to an interview with Scotland's The Herald.

“It really is unimaginably good to be free,” Johnston said. “Maybe you have to have been a prisoner of some kind just to know how good it is just to do the most basic things that freedom allows.”

During painful moments, I believe people are drawn to life, not annihilation.

Whatever her motives were, the woman I saw crawling through broken glass struggled to be free of the wreck because she wanted to live. Her instinct was for freedom.

For the rest of the holiday, I wondered how we tend to use freedom as a synonym for independence.

We move away from our parents and we think we're free; the Americans gained independence from the British, so they must've been free.

But freedom is more than a severing of ties – it's the understanding that life really can bring joy and that it's not foolish to hope for this.

The woman in the wreck found freedom in the wet grass just outside her overturned car.

For Johnston, freedom was a haircut, a drink with friends and a walk through familiar places.

As for me, freedom became eating steaks with my parents on a rainy Fourth of July and loving it.

REVIEWS (YOU CAN USE)

MOVIE *Transformers*

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

There is so much more than meets the eye in *Transformers*, which brought lovers of all things retro into theatres July 3.

The film, an adaptation of the 80's cartoon, will keep you on the edge of your seat from start to finish – you'll either be laughing or waiting in anticipation for something to explode.

Essentially, the film is about giant robots searching for a cube called the "Allspark," a device that could recreate their world that was destroyed.

Two robot factions, the evil



AP PHOTO

Decepticons and the good Autobots, will do anything to get the Allspark, which happens to be under the care of the human race.

It sounds like a really cheesy sci-fi movie, and in some ways, it is. Nevertheless, *Transformers* delivers a satisfying movie experience.

The acting is top notch throughout the movie, especially that of actor Shia LaBeouf, who plays the main character of Sam Witwicky, a kid who somehow ends up trying to sell a map to the location of the Allspark on eBay.

Plot aside, the movie is filled with jokes and references to the 80's cartoon. The film is not a

comedy, but lots of one-liners really make it seem like it is – the comedic elements complement the action perfectly. A quick laugh in the middle of a fight scene is usually a prelude to some huge explosion.

As for the special effects in the film, watching the various robots transform into cars or other vehicles is one of the best parts, especially when the classic transformation sound effect from the 80's cartoon is heard.

Even more amazing is how real the robots all look.

It's not a case where you're looking at blatant CGI effects. Instead, there are a lot of times where you think the moviemakers actually built working giant

robots to film.

While there are distinct and numerous differences, the film remains true to the essence of the 80's classic.

The film even has some of the original voice actors from the cartoon, including Peter Cullen, the voice of Autobots leader Optimus Prime.

If you haven't seen *Transformers*, you're missing a great movie this year.

It's a movie for everyone – you don't have to be an avid fan of the *Transformers* franchise in order to enjoy it.

But if you really want to get the full experience, it couldn't hurt to watch a few clips of the cartoon on Youtube.

GAME *Pokemon: Battle Revolution*

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

As the name implies, *Pokemon: Battle Revolution* for the Nintendo Wii is all about fighting it out – the game is a battle simulator for the *Pokemon Diamond* and *Pearl* games.

Beyond that, the game is severely lacking in just about every aspect and is a big let down following the above mentioned gems.

In *Battle Revolution*, graphics have barely advanced since those of the last *Pokemon* game that appeared on the Nintendo Gamecube.

The lack of graphical advancement is a real shame considering the extra power the Wii offers.

The graphics may be bad, but the game play is even worse.

The way the battles work is that you fight in various coliseums, each of which has a different set of battle rules.

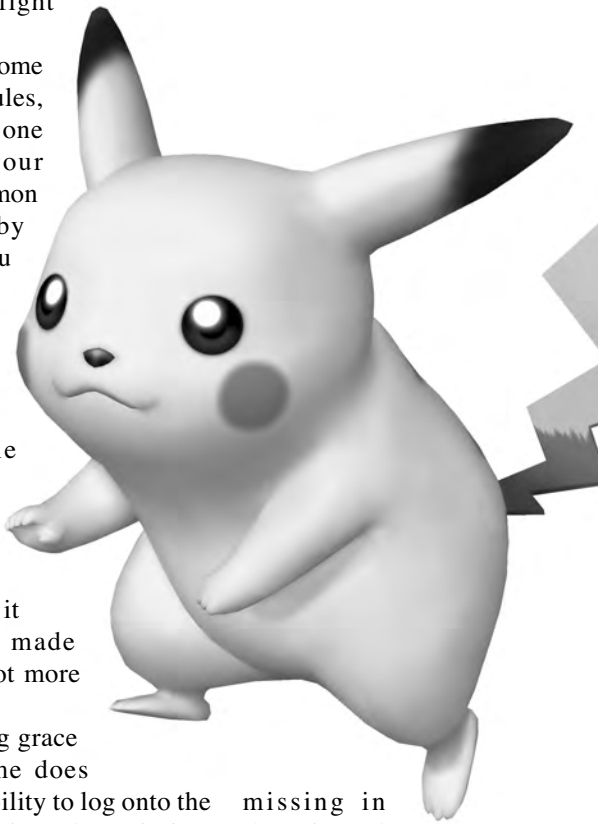
For the most part, the rules

are simple: fight and win.

There are some interesting rules, however. In one coliseum, your team of pokemon is selected by roulette; you could end up using one of your opponent's creatures.

The game really should have had more special rule battles such as this – it would have made the game a lot more enjoyable.

One saving grace that the game does have is the ability to log onto the Internet via Nintendo's wireless connection and fight random opponents; a feature that was



missing in the Nintendo DS games.

Once logged on, all you have

to do is wait for the Wii to locate a potential opponent.

Once the battle is over, you can even register the person as a friend, so if you ever want to battle again, you won't have to rely on randomly being paired up again.

Despite the game's Internet capabilities, this game has no replay value whatsoever.

Once you clear all of the coliseums and win a special Pikachu that can be downloaded to your *Pokemon DS* games, there isn't much left to do.

Speaking of downloading, the interface between the Wii and DS is remarkably smooth and easy to use in this game.

One feature of *Battle Revolution*

is the ability to copy *Pokemon* raised in the *Diamond* and *Pearl* games into the game, so that you can use your own customized team.

Gamers can also purchase rare items to be sent back to the DS games as well as buy clothes and other accessories to customize your avatar; within the game, you can adjust your avatar to look however you want.

The downside is that the items and clothing accessories are very expensive.

In order to get the points you need to buy the items you have to play through the coliseums, a process that is boring.

Overall, this is not a stand-alone game.

If you don't have *Diamond* or *Pearl*, do not get this game under any circumstances, as it will be a big waste of money.

Sadly, the few good features the game has are overshadowed by the game's obvious shortcomings.

BOOK *Queen of Babble in the Big City*

VANESSA A. ALVAREZ
Contributing Writer

Author of more of than 40 books, many of which have been bestsellers, Meg Cabot is widely recognized for her made-into-film series, *The Princess Diaries*. Her books are known for their fun flare and happy endings, and the series *Queen of Babble* is no different.

To enjoy the her recent installment in the series, you don't have to go so far as to reading the previous installment. In *Queen of Babble in the Big City*, the second in a series of three books, we find Cabot's central character, Lizzie Nichols, attempting to make it in New York City as a wedding gown restoration specialist.

This time, although faced with the unexpected, an older, more mature Lizzie decides to start practicing the art of keeping her mouth shut to avoid trouble. However, it's her visceral need to speak that ultimately enables her to succeed.



Lizzie and her best friend Shari have both decided to move to New York City to find jobs after graduation with their boyfriends Luke and Chaz. While Shari instantly lands her dream job, Lizzie, on the other hand, doesn't have that kind of luck and quickly begins her battle with the big city.

Faced with the conflict of being broke, Lizzie has to learn to juggle

two jobs, how to adjust to life in, not only a fast-paced town, but in the cut-throat, take-no-prisoners New York City, NY and how to finally snag her prince. The characters she meets and the situations she is faced with soon expose the reader to a world where the importance of self-proficiency and truth in one's self balance one another into where maturity grows, life keeps changing and the nice girl finally wins.

This book is a great read for people looking for something positive to help keep them culturally-fed this summer or just for a nice pick-me-up as the book explores the ideas of being accepting and kind to others while maintaining a well-deserved respect among peers; a lesson you're never too old to revisit. Furthermore, the world Cabot creates for Lizzie as well as all her characters is far from unrealistic or unrelatable. The reality that she reveals is the notion that even a silly girl from a small town can be a hero and save the day, one person at a time.

Take Advantage of Life!

The Life! section is looking for motivated students to fill the following positions:

- Assistant Life! Editor
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GIVING BACK



PHOTOS BY CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

PLAYING CATCH: Former Golden Panther defensive end Antwan Barnes, who was the first FIU player to be selected in the NFL Draft, shows his versatility by throwing passes to the participants of the first annual Miami Beach Blitz Youth Football Camp at Memorial Field. The camp was put on with help from Miami Beach resident Drew Rosenhaus and the Miami Beach Bulldogs youth football team.

Best players with no links to steroids should be All-Stars

BONILLA, page 8

in MLB this season.

On the other hand, he is a one dimensional player. His 42-year-old knees have wasted away his speed and hindered his fielding abilities as he has yet to record an outfield assist this season. His offensive production has not been potent enough to overlook that his fielding and running are a liability.

In addition, the player he edged

out in voting,

Alfonso Soriano, is batting .305 with 15 home runs from the lead-off position. Soriano

has stolen 12 bases and transitioned well in his second year as an outfielder recording 10 outfield assists and committing no errors.

Statistics aside, Bonds does not deserve to attend the All-Star game because if he attends, then MLB is once again turning another cheek and honoring a cheater.

Although he has yet to be caught, his close relationship to the drug company BALCO and abnormal muscle growth in

his mid to late thirties is proof enough. MLB became a haven for enhancing drug users in the 1990's due to lack of testing and the correlation between increasing home runs and increasing revenue.

Yet Major League Baseball's lack of discipline does not exonerate Bonds or anyone from enhancing their physical abilities and gaining an unfair advantage. Someone has to be burned at the stake to complement the new, strict drug policy.

“ However, one player painted a bull's eye on himself by making a stupendous leap from great hitter to the best and most feared hitter to ever swing a bat. ”

Punishing Bonds by not allowing him to participate in the All-Star game would make the biggest statement because of the same reputation that voted him into the Midsummer classic.

It would not be logical because he has never tested positive, but it would set a severe precedent in the relationship between drug use and sports.

Public outcry would be overwhelming because one of the

fundamental reasons the All-Star game is held is to allow fans to vote in their favorite players, but stripping Bonds of his All-Star honors is the only means of discrediting his journey to 756 home runs.

MLB has been very obscure the last 15 years in terms of telling fans the truth. The truth is that enhancing drug use was so prevalent in the 90's among players that one could argue they were all on an even playing field.

However, one player painted a bull's eye on himself by making a stupendous leap from great hitter to the best and most feared hitter to ever swing a bat. It may be unfair that he would be targeted out of so many offenders, but several systems are unfair, including the All-Star voting process.

Denying Bonds entry into the All-Star game would let players know that taking enhancers in an attempt to becoming the greatest player is a crime, which forbids any avaricious player to play alongside the best in the game.

Blame should not be placed on Bonds

GRAU, page 8

if more childish is that the All-Star game is going to be played in his hometown, during the season he is about the break the most sacred record in all of sports. Babe Ruth built Yankee Stadium and Barry Bonds built AT&T Park. Both swung the bat with ease and made everyone around them look like Single A ball players.

Though they share the same greatness, Bonds will never be as loved as many of the greats who have played before.

If it weren't for him, the Giants wouldn't even matter in San Francisco. People want to see him play; better yet they want to see him break Hank Aaron's home run record.

I can't think of another person, let alone athlete that has been cover more unfairly.

If his name wasn't Barry Bonds, would you vote for a man who has 42 RBI, is batting .303, slugging .607, leading the Majors in walks while doing it with one leg.

Everyone manager would love to have him on their team because he makes the game easier for everyone else.

People rip Bonds whenever they get the chance, but no one rips guys like Roger Clemens or Eric Gagne who have been rumored to on the juice.

Many in the industry believe pitchers were juicing more than batters.

How is it that archaic pitcher like Clemens is still throwing 94 m.p.h. fastball at the age of 44?

The only people who are making a big stink out of nothing are media members who were subject to Bonds' nasty attitude.

To them, this is the only way in which they can get back at him.

Despite having the numbers to

prove he's worthy of being on the All-Star team, pompous media members feel they morally righteous in their quest to protect the game.

Even before he became involved the steroid controversy, he was regarded was one of the best hitters of his era and still could have been a first ballot hall of famer.

Prior to his breakout year in 2000, Bonds had already won two National League MVP awards and hit 445 home runs.

The numbers don't lie so let the man play.

What most people don't realize is that we get the chance to watch one of the greatest baseball players of all time.

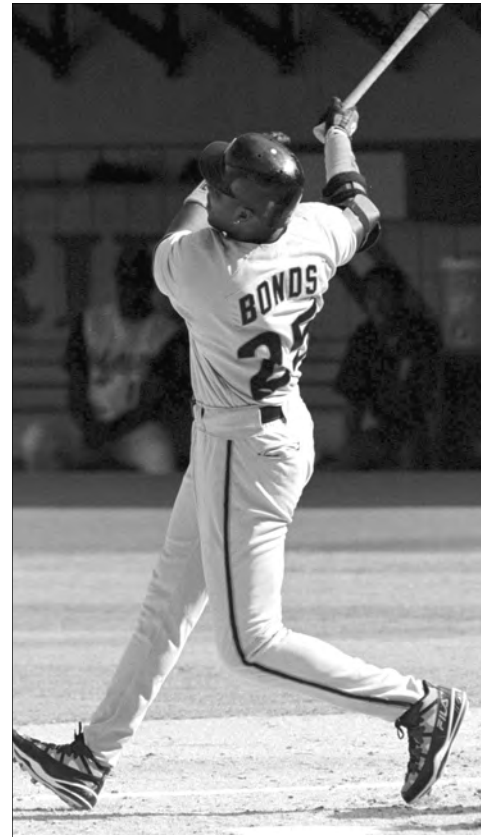
Till the end of time, people will be talking about him with the likes of Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, Jackie Robinson and Yogi Berra. And you'll be able to say that you saw him in person.

Every time I hear someone say they got a chance to see Mantle or Williams play when they growing up, I envy them because it is truly a once in lifetime opportunity.

So when he finally reaches 755, what's going to happen?

Are fans going to cheer, boo, heckle, cry?

All I know is that I've made up my mind and I'm



AP PHOTO

ALL-STAR BOUND: Bonds has swung his way into the All-Star starting line-up.

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A WORTHY ALL-STAR?



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HOME RUN KING: San Francisco outfielder Barry Bonds was selected to his 14th All-Star game and is five home runs away from breaking Hank Aaron's home run record.

Bonds earned All-Star bid; biased media attacks him



Commentary
Charlie Grau
Editor in Chief

So do you love to hate him or hate to love him? Make up your minds already? After voting San Francisco Giants outfielder Barry Bonds into the All-Star game, there has been debate among fans and those in the media whether the future hall of famer deserves to participate in the Midsummer Classic. Isn't that sort of like buying your little sister a present and then taking it back for yourself? It makes absolutely no sense but then again, the manner in which Bonds has been critiqued makes no sense as well. Pete Rose, who admitted to betting on baseball while he was manager of the Cincinnati Reds was voted on the All-Century Team even

though he has been banned from baseball. San Diego Chargers linebacker Shawn Merriman tested positive for steroids and it barely made the front page of any newspaper across the country. Now if it were Bonds, it would be media circus. His name would dominate headlines across the country slamming him as cheater and accusing him of embarrassing the game of baseball. Quite the double edge sword. The All-Star game is all about watching the best players compete at once. Fans want to see the best pitchers strikeout the best hitters in the game, it's a rare occasion and one that should be savored. With that said, Bonds is considered one the games best players this year. What's makes this debate

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All-Star game can regain integrity by banning Bonds



Commentary
Sergio Bonilla
Sports Editor

back of his uniform rather than his accomplishments of the given season is Barry Bonds. His obscure and controversial odyssey to become the official home run king in MLB bought him a ticket to San Francisco to start in the All-Star game. Fans love to see home run races, even one intertwined with steroid use. Fans also love storylines as he might play his final All-Star game in San Francisco where he has played for the last 15 years. So many blind voters hoping to watch the drama unfold rather than electing the most deserving players. Bonds is worthy of an All-Star selection by the virtue of his statistic alone. His 2007 season is formidable as he is batting .303 with 17 home runs and 42 RBI. In addition, he has walked more than any player

Every year there are several deserving players who are not chosen; conversely, select lack luster seasons are overshadowed by reputation and name recognition. A perfect example of a player being voted in due to the name stitched on the

BONILLA, page 7

AD Garcia discusses FIU's plans

CHARLIE GRAU & JOSE MAYA
Beacon Staff

Athletic Director Pete Garcia has made several changes during his tenure at FIU. He sat down with WRGP Radiate FM to answer a few questions regarding the new stadium and the future of FIU athletics.

Q: Do you believe that in three or four years, FIU's football team will have enough support to fill 45,000 seats?

The first phase is very important and it will take approximately a little bit under 20,000 total fans that we can accommodate in there. The other part that is really, really critical to this university is the Student Support Center. That's where everything is going to be housed from enrollment to financial aid to admissions.

We have different phases built into the schedule. We're confident as we improve the product and the team and that means wins. We have over 110,000 alumni in South Florida. We have close to 40,000 students. We need to get our own people to come to our own events.

We're supposed to open the first phase Sept. of 2008 against the University of South Florida. The ultimate goal is to have a 45,000 seat stadium, but we have to have the demand for it. You have to walk before you can run.

Q: Where is the funding for the 58 million dollar stadium coming from?

Our portion of it, which is the first 35 million, was bonds that were sold. What that means technically is that we're going to have a mortgage to pay. In order to pay that mortgage we're using student fees, sponsorships, sweets and club seats and season ticket sales. The bonds are all from the state and bonding agency.

Q: Have you heard anything about making UM vs. FIU an annual thing?

This contract was done by the Associate Athletic Director at UM, which happened to be myself at the time, and it was a two-year contract. It actually ends this year. Anything beyond that will have to be discussed in the future. And they'll have to want to do that. We're willing to play anybody anytime, anywhere. It's never going to be an issue from us.

Former Gator Atkins found dead in aunt's garage

AP WIRE SERVICES

Former Florida and Bethune-Cookman football player Avery Atkins was found dead in his car in the garage of his aunt's home Thursday in what police called a suspicious death.

The 20-year-old player could not be revived by paramedics, Port Orange police Sgt. Wayne Dorman said.

Authorities would not

release further details, and Dorman did not elaborate on why police consider this suspicious. An autopsy will be performed.

Atkins was a freshman cornerback on the 2005 Gators and was projected to start on the 2006 squad, the eventual national champion.

He was released from his



ATKINS

scholarship last summer by Florida coach Urban Meyer because of a domestic battery charge against him.

He joined Bethune-Cookman as a transfer and played in three games in 2006 before being released from his scholarship.

"We are saddened to hear the news regarding Avery," Florida

coach Urban Meyer said in a statement. "We share our grief with the Atkins' family and those close to them."

Atkins attempted to rejoin the Gators this spring, re-enrolling at Florida while paying his own way.

Meyer said at the time that wasn't enough to allow his return.

Atkins was arrested Monday and charged with possession of

crack cocaine.

He also was arrested in June when Daytona Beach police said they found him with cocaine, drug paraphernalia and a concealed weapon. He was charged in May with felony aggravated battery.

Last year, Atkins was charged twice with domestic battery on the mother of his child. He entered a deferred prosecution in both cases.