

OTHER OPTIONS



EDDIE ZENG/THE BEACON

ON THE HOUSE: United Students Against Sweatshops member Pablo Avendano (right) offers alternative soft drinks to freshmen Gregory Minosian (far left) and Sebius Santos (left) to promote the group's Killer Coke campaign geared at terminating the University's exclusivity contract with the Coca-Cola Company.

Part-timers to get health care benefits

XAVIER VILLARMARZO
Staff Writer

Lisa Edmunds has been an adjunct professor for the English department for 10 years.

In that time, she has not had any form of health insurance.

"I have had previous health problems, so nobody wants to insure me as an individual unless I pay huge – over \$500 a month – monthly premiums," said Edmunds, who is also a single parent. "I need to buy into an employer sponsored program."

Now she can.

The University is set to announce that temporary and part-time (OPS) employees will have access to health insurance for the first time in FIU's history.

University officials estimate that there are somewhere between 1,500 and 2,000 part-time or temporary employees, including adjunct professors, custodial workers and programmers for PantherSoft.

OPS employees will be allowed to select from one of three providers – Vista, Preferred and Care Access – and pay for coverage for themselves and any other dependants.

"We have made a significant effort to offer benefits to our employees overall," said Vivian Sanchez, the University's chief financial officer.

Mercy Rodriguez, assistant director of human resources, led a committee comprised of members from various academic and administrative divisions in early November.

The committee selected what it believed to be the three best providers from a list of eight and had the selections approved by Sanchez.

"I think it's something we've always had in mind," Rodriguez said. "There is a need for health insurance and I'm very happy to work on this project."

The University asked that each of the companies provide a direct call center specifically for FIU employees and also have a

representative from each of the three companies present on campus at least once a month.

Employees will also be able to keep their insurance even if they leave the University.

"If you want to sign up directly with somebody or you want to ask questions to somebody in person, you'll know that, every month, these people will be here physically to be able to deal with your issues," Sanchez said.

All three companies have verbally agreed with all the University's requests, but no contracts have been signed and nothing has been made official.

If any company decides it cannot provide everything the University asks for, it will be dropped, Sanchez said.

The finalized plans are set to be released April 1 on the human resources website.

The website will give employees general information and allow employees to compare each of the offered plans.

It will also provide a link so employees can enroll online.

Sanchez expects the University to offer the three health care providers to employees by May 1.

Music professor Alejandro Caballero, also an adjunct professor, was glad to hear the news.

"If they do that then that'll be really good. And if I get hired again for next semester that'll be very good," Caballero said.

Caballero has his own insurance because he is also a mortgage broker, but he says he would be willing to switch if the University provides a better plan.

Rodriguez and Edmunds believe this will give temporary employees more incentive to stay.

"I am proud to see the University offer this option to adjuncts and other employees who are feeling the insurance squeeze, even if I have to take on yet another part-time job to afford it," Edmunds said.

Research may turn sugar into fuel

KATHERINE RUIZ
Contributing Writer

Joining world leaders' efforts to develop alternative fuel sources, FIU's Applied Research Center has teamed with sugar producer Florida Crystals Corporation to begin a pretreatment process of converting sugarcane bagasse into ethanol, an alternative fuel.

Ethanol could be used one day to fuel the entire country, as well as parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. What this means is that hopefully one day the United States will be producing gasoline domestically.

The partnership between the University and the sugar company took place days before President Bush traveled to São Paulo, Brazil, where he announced a new partnership to promote the use of alternative fuels to reduce the Western hemisphere's dependence on fossil fuels.

The two largest nations in the hemisphere, Brazil and the United States,

Harlan Sands, Executive Director of the ARC

"[Students] will get to participate from the beginning, right through the finished product and understand how science interfaces with private industry to come up with a better product."

signed a memorandum March 9 to share fuel technology and promote its use by other nations in the region.

According to George Philippidis, associate director and principal investigator at the ARC, the main goal of this project is to make Florida one of the key players in producing ethanol as a supplement to gasoline.

"Right now in the U.S., we are making about 5 billion gallons of ethanol a year, primarily out of corn," Philippidis said. "However, there is simply not enough corn to make enough ethanol to replace a significant amount of gasoline. Therefore, we are looking for alternative ways."

Although corn is the primary means from which ethanol is produced, experts say that corn can only supply 10 percent of future gasoline demand in the United States. This limitation is what encouraged researchers to find other crops from which to produce fuel.

There are other challenges, including limited land to grow the crops and scarcity of irrigation water.

"Cellulosic ethanol is what we are pursuing," Philippidis said.

Cellulosic ethanol is a type of ethanol that is produced from a great diversity of biomass including urban

FUEL, page 2

Students will trek across state for charity

YOLANNE ALMANZAR
Contributing Writer

Alex Ravelo's and his fraternity brothers' year-long efforts to raise money and awareness for people with disabilities is set to culminate into two bike rides around the country this May.

"Gear Up Florida" and "Journey of Hope" are cycling events that are part of the Pi Kappa Phi's national philanthropy organization Push America, started by one of the fraternity brothers in 1977 that stresses disability awareness, volunteerism and fund raising. Ravelo, the president of Pi Kappa Phi at FIU, is excited to be participating.

"It's about doing something extra. This is bigger than just one person," Ravelo said.

Ravelo, along with Bradley Davis, Andres Escobar and Richard Waithe, will represent their chapter at "Gear Up Florida." The 800-mile trip will start May 13 in Miami and end two weeks later in Tallahassee.

Phillip Hamilton and Anthony Varona, the Push America chair at FIU, will be participating in "Journey of Hope," a cross-country bicycle trek that begins July 10 in San Francisco and ends Aug. 12 in Washington, D.C. During these trips, Pi Kappa Phi hopes to make friendships across the country. They plan to stop at local organizations

CYCLISTS, page 3

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

MONDAY • MARCH 26

Panther Rage General Meeting: 4 p.m., GC 140
SPC-BBC General Meeting: 4 p.m., WUC 159
College of Law's Karaoke Night: 8 p.m., Gracie's Grill

TUESDAY • MARCH 27

Honors Council General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC 150
SOC General Meeting and Elections: 5:30 p.m., GC 150
SPC-UP General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC 140
SPC Karaoke Night: 7 p.m., Gracie's Grill
IVFC "Know Why You Believe" Group Discussion: 12:30 p.m., WUC 245
The Film Circle Discussion and Meeting: 6 p.m., WUC 100

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 28

SGC-UP General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., GC 150
Panther Power Meeting: 1 p.m., WUC 157
SGC-BBC General Meeting: 3:30 p.m., WUC 155

THURSDAY • MARCH 29

GSA Gradsellers: 6 p.m., Gracie's Grill
Humanities Club Meetings – Film Night: 7 p.m., WUC 100
College of Law Bowling Night: 8 p.m., Bird Bowl
Delta Epsilon Iota Academic Honor Society's Medical Networking event: 6 p.m., GC Faculty Club
Undergraduate Economics Association's meeting: 6 p.m., PC 331

FRIDAY • MARCH 30

ENGAGE Leadership Workshop: 11 a.m., GC 305
Academic of Leaders Session: 3 p.m., GC 305
SPC Film – The Pursuit of Happiness: 7 p.m. & 10 p.m., GC 140
Frost Art Museum exhibition: MFS Exhibition 2007. 8 p.m., Frost Art Museum

SATURDAY • MARCH 31

Torch Awards Ceremony: 6:30 p.m. cocktail reception, 7:30 p.m. awards presentation, GC Ballroom, tickets \$100 each

SUNDAY • APRIL 1

SPC presents Wrestlemania 23 Live!: 6 p.m., Gracie's Grill

- Compiled by Reuben Pereira

NEWSFLASH

Provost announces new College of Education dean

Provost Ronald Berkman announced March 14 the appointment of Luis Mirón as the new dean of the College of Education.

In past years, Mirón has directed multiple public policy and school reform studies and has taught at various universities, including UC-Berkeley, Loyola University and Tulane University.

His research has garnered more than \$1.6 million in funded grants and contracts, and his published work focuses on urban school reform, educational equity and educational leadership.

Mirón replaces Judith Blucker, interim dean, who has provided more than 30 years of leadership to the University in various capacities.

Mirón will join the FIU community June 1.

- Compiled by Maria Chercoles

Sugar fuel research in progress

FUEL, page 1

and agricultural waste, and other sources like cellulose. This technology has been in the making for over 15 years.

Now FIU's plan is to use sugar waste materials, like bagasse, and extract the ethanol from it. Bagasse is a waste byproduct of sugarcane, produced in tons every year at FCC, the number one producer of sugar in the United States.

"If we can make the process more efficient, then ultimately we can save the amount of fossil fuels that we burn," said Harlan Sands, executive director of

the ARC.

The ARC has generated \$2 million for the effort, \$1 million coming from a state grant and another \$1 million contributed from the sugar company. With that, the ARC plans on bridging the gaps in technology and making this process commercialized so they can begin building plants and producing ethanol to fuel the country.

This project is considered a great opportunity for experts at the ARC and for FIU graduate and undergraduate students to participate hands-on in helping to bring a big change to the country.

"[Students] will get to participate from the beginning, right through the finished product and understand how science interfaces with private industry to come up with a better product. This fits in with everything we do here at FIU," Sands said.

The horizon for the project was three years.

However, both Philippidis and Sands agree that it will most likely accelerate quicker than what was initially predicted for the study.

"I think you are going to see a lot of progress very quickly," Sands said.



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Students bike for charity

CYCLISTS, page 1

to interact with people with disabilities while giving out grants to these groups.

Kyle Thomas, director of Marketing at Push America, participated in "Journey of Hope" as an undergraduate student. His experiences motivated him to continue working with the organization to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

"It was by far the best summer of my life, and I didn't want it to end," he said.

Cyclists are preparing for the trip with regular visits to the gym and outdoor bike riding. Varona started training last August and is now biking 200 to 300 miles a week. All six of the men are also responsible for raising the funds - ranging from \$600 to \$5,000 per person - to participate in the event. The money is raised through corporate sponsorships and individual donations.

Pi Kappa Phi as a group has been raising money for Push America throughout the year. The fraternity has worked together on events such as the Gentleman's Auction, where the fraternity's members are auctioned off for a date, and Hug a Pi Kapp, where people donate

to get a hug.

One of this year's upcoming fundraising events is the Miss Push America Pageant scheduled April 7 and open to any interested FIU female student, according to Hamilton. Last year, the fraternity raised over \$8,000 in proceeds from these events and other donations; in the past six years, they have donated almost \$60,000 for Push America.

Money raised for Push America funds is used for construction projects throughout the country that strive to build accessible environments for people with disabilities. Members of Pi Kappa Phi provide the labor for these projects.

In October 2004, Hamilton volunteered in Georgia during the Give-A-Push Weekend at Heartbeats and Hoofbeats, an organization that provides physical therapy using horses.

During the day, Hamilton and other fraternity members tore down acres of fencing around the horse stables to be replaced. At night, they would have dinner with the disabled children and families.

"Volunteers actually see where the money is going and who it's helping," Thomas said.

Varona hopes to expand

his fraternity's local involvement next year.

Plans are being made for a wheelchair basketball tournament, a Push America gala, and an increase in the fraternity's volunteer hours at the Possible Dream Foundation, an organization in Homestead that supports people with disabilities.

Anyone interested in making a donation to Push America can visit www.pushamerica.org.

A DAY IN THE LIFE



CHRIS CUTRO/THE BEACON

THE WEST WING: Former White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card presents the lecture "A Day in the West Wing" March 15 at the Graham Center Ballroom. Card was also the 11th U.S. Secretary of Transportation under President George Bush.

SGC-UP Notes

March 14 Call to order: 3:35 p.m., Adjournment: 4:26 p.m.

Vice President's Report (Providence Okoye):

- March 28 meeting at the Center for Engineering and Applied Science on the second floor in the Panther Pit.

Speaker of the House's Report (Rocio Perez):

- Monday meeting cancelled. Candidates meeting held at same time. No meeting next Monday due to Spring Break.
- Student-Faculty forum April 3 at the CEAS. No smoking signs will be installed soon on the second floor.

Student Services (Gretel Hebbert):

- Met with Victor Citerella, Associate Vice President and Nick Dicacco, Senior Director for facilities about turning on the lights at night and fluorescent lighting. Sodium lighting is not safe for students. He told me immediately no, that it was not efficient and that sodium lighting was cheaper to upkeep. I also asked about power outlets. They will have an engineer out there in two weeks.

Student Union (Michael Jadoo):

- Gracie's Grill will be open until 6 p.m. MTW.
- Chili's lost interest in opening in GC.

Elections Board (Judene Tulloch):

- Following positions have extended applications because of lack of applicants: Architecture, Arts and Science, Education, Grad, Housing, Public Health, Social Work Justice, Nursing and health sciences. Due 5 p.m. March 15.

Panther Rage (Ryan Alli):

- New constitution changes approved this week. Major changes include a reduction in number of E-board members from 14 to 6.

Student Programming Council (Micaela Ancewicz):

- Spring concert will be April 16.
- Charlie Murphy is headlining spring comedy show.
- Benefit concert will be held April 14.

Absences:

- Alfonso "Alfie" Leon (President), Linda Arellano (Clerk), Arthur Meyer (At-large), Jennifer Ruiz (At-Large), Alan P. Rivera (Business), Mikana Maeda (Architecture).

-Compiled by Angelina Troff, Beacon staff

News Talk

Tune In

11 AM

Fridays

WRGP 88.1 & 95.3 FM

THE BEACON



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Staff Spotlight

Cathy Akens

Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs

Administrator finds joy in helping, leading students

JESSICA SOLIS
Staff Writer

Cathy Akens spends her days looking out for students and their needs by discussing student affairs with other administrators and attending student organization meetings. According to this assistant vice president of student affairs, she wouldn't have it any other way. "Part of my interest is in working with students and having an impact on their learning experience here, but it's also rewarding to be in this environment where education is emphasized," Akens said.



AKENS

While studying public relations at the University of Toledo in her native Ohio, Akens became increasingly interested in helping students. Her work in the university's advising office, and her position as a resident assistant led her to eventually change career paths after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in communications from the university in 1987. "I started to find that those opportunities were what I was enjoying most about my experience in college, even more so than what I was studying," Akens said. Akens then earned her masters degree in college and university administration in 1989 from Michigan State University.

Upon arriving at FIU in 1993, Akens was appointed associate director of housing and residential life. According to Akens, interacting with students was what she loved most about her job.

"I'm fortunate to work in a university environment where people are here because they want to develop themselves," she said. In 2001, while working in the Office of Residential Life, Akens earned her doctorate in education after being encouraged by people who "saw potential in my leadership abilities."

In May 2002, Akens was promoted to assistant ombudsman for student affairs while still overseeing Housing and Residential Life. In 2006, she was appointed assistant vice president of student affairs.

Aside from her current position, Akens also teaches college student development theory in the higher education graduate program at University Park. As a professor, Akens said she has acknowledged that many things haven't changed since she was in the classroom.

"I can still connect to the many demands that students have," Akens said. "Trying to find time to get some sleep, trying to find a sense of balance and to get everything done. That was certainly my experience as

WRITE AWAY!

YALIMAR PANEL/THE BEACON

WRITING STRATEGIES: The School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the Biscayne Bay Campus opened their writing center to students March 1. The center, which is located in room 303 of Academic II, will serve as a place for SJMC students to develop their writing style. **READ OUR STORY MARCH 29.**

a college student." According to Ron Thompson, assistant director of residential life, Akens is more than just an administrator: she is a leader. "Relationships are at the core of who she is, so when you watch her lead, there's a certain relationship approach that's clearly present," he said. Gisela Vega, the current associate director of residential life, worked with Akens for 10 years. "When students talk to her, they feel like they matter and that they're important to FIU," she said. Sophomore Danny Anzueto, a

resident assistant and the president of BBC's chapter of Stonewall, has worked with Akens and said she is not only considerate with co-workers, but also gets the job done. "Usually when you hear about something getting changed, or something becoming better [on campus], her name is usually attached to it," Anzueto said. Akens's ability to connect with students has helped her beyond the office. In 2000, three UP residence hall leaders died in a car accident. As students mourned the loss of their friends, Akens helped organize

counseling sessions. Akens also likes to relax and unwind by going to concerts, traveling, and splurging on ice cream. "I think professionally it's important to find some sense of balance," Akens said. "When you are working on a career, work can really consume a lot of your time if you don't have other hobbies or other things you enjoy doing." Akens wants to be remembered by her desire to help students. "Ultimately, I see my role as teaching others," Akens said. "I want people to say, 'I learned something from her.'"

Student club considers wine tasting an art form

CARLA ST. LOUIS
Staff Writer

Marlon Toro, a student majoring in hospitality management, has become somewhat of a wine connoisseur, a benefit he said he has found through the Friends of Wine club. "I work at a restaurant whose atmosphere is very competitive. Among my staff, I stand out more because of my [knowledge] of wine," Toro said. It is not unusual for a member of the Friends of Wine club to spend an evening tasting from a bottle of Monopole's white wine harvested from the Argentine region of La Rioja during a typical meeting. These meetings - which Mark D'Alessandro, the club's vice president, describes as "an amalgam of lectures and sensory evaluations," are held every Wednesday at 5 p.m. The location of the meetings are always to the right of the Wine Laboratory of the Beverage Management Center in the Hospitality Management Building at the Biscayne Bay Campus. In this laboratory, members of the club congregate to practice what they call a refined art form: wine tasting.

The club, which boasts 20 members, is sponsored by the Student Organizations Council. The club is advised by Patrick J. Cassidy, a professor of the School of Hospitality Management. Besides having a chapter within the BBC community, Friends of Wine also holds many other sectors globally. According to D'Alessandro, the club originated in France, and is actually recognized internationally by fellow wine aficionados as *Les Amis du Vin* which translated means "friends of wine." D'Alessandro said the club's purpose is to cultivate a fine understanding and respect for wine. "The essence of the club is to foster the appreciation of wine and food. We do this by emphasizing the history and dynamics of wine that is being tasted so that it can be properly evaluated," D'Alessandro said. The club regularly tastes from two to six bottles of wine per meeting. For this reason, the club includes a nominal charge of \$3 per participant each meeting. Despite Friends of Wine comprising of many Hospitality Management students,

current club president and Hospitality Management major, Hanna Cannon explained that the club is opened to anyone. "As long as you're 21 and older, you can join - or even sit in - at a meeting," Cannon said. According to Cannon, non-FIU students are permitted to attend meetings; however, they must be a guest of an FIU student. The club conducts strict identification checks in order to confirm that members are of drinking age. Beside strict age confirmation, Friends of Wine implements another tool within meetings and tastings to discourage inebriation. Spirits are distributed in 'spit cups,' small cups which hold an ounce or less of wine. After slogging the beverage in their mouths, the tasters dispose it into the containers. Friends of Wine has been a part of FIU's community sporadically for the last 20 years. After its latest hiatus, the club was resurrected by a group of Hospitality Management students during Fall 2006. According to Cannon, the club experienced many changes before finally disband-

ing indefinitely. "Because of students' hectic schedules; executive members graduating, and other members leaving, Friends of Wine disbanded - for a while," Cannon said. Despite wine being served regularly at club meetings, D'Alessandro emphasized that debauchery never ensues during club meetings. "It should be noted that 'tasting' does not always mean 'drinking.' What I mean by this is that a wine can be completely evaluated without swallowing it, and since meetings are held on school premises, the goal is to appreciate wine in a civilized manner, not one akin to a fraternity party," D'Alessandro said. Currently, Friends of Wine does not have a chapter at University Park due in part to the lack of demand. "If we get a lot of response from UP then we'd discuss [establishing] it," Cannon said. Anyone who is interested in joining Friends of Wine can contact D'Alessandro at mdale002@fiu.edu.

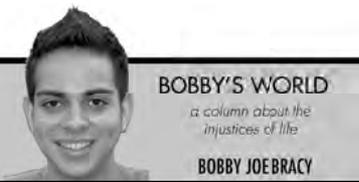
There were no SGC-BBC notes this week due to midterms.

OPINION

C. Joel Marino Editor in Chief • Christopher Necuze Production Manager • Chris Cabral Opinion Editor

Cannabis Quandary

Medical marijuana misunderstood



BOBBY'S WORLD
a column about the
injustices of life
BOBBY JOE BRACY

Angel Reich, an Oakland mother of two, suffers from a brain tumor as well as scoliosis and a variety of other ailments. She uses marijuana daily to help cope with the pain of the lateral curvature of her spine. Rather than vomit when she sees food, Reich can enjoy a meal if she smokes. Marijuana relieves her chronic pain but it doesn't leave her doped up and incapable of doing basic chores. She has two kids – there's a lot to get done everyday.

Marijuana can help, but a lot of people are bent on making you believe the stigmas and attitudes against it because if marijuana actually became legal, a lot of people would go out of business.

Producers of synthesized drugs are out of luck. Morphine, for those who don't know, is highly addictive when compared to other substances; tolerance and both psychological and physical addictions develop very rapidly with those who take this painkiller.

People who take morphine often report insomnia, visual hallucinations and nightmares; it also makes your skin itchy. Others aren't lucky enough to even live. Morphine kills them because they happen to have a low tolerance for the chemical toxicity of the drug.

Unlike other drugs, people don't die from a marijuana overdose. In fact, toxicity studies show that the amount you'd have to consume for marijuana to be toxic is so large that it is impossible to smoke that much. Chronic marijuana smoking may develop respiratory or heart problems, but these risks are no greater

than the ones with "legal" drugs, such as alcohol and cigarettes.

Furthermore, cigarettes have been responsible for 435,000 deaths in America each year—18.1 percent of the total deaths each year—and alcohol has been responsible for 85,000, according to the latest figures from the Journal of the American Medical Association.

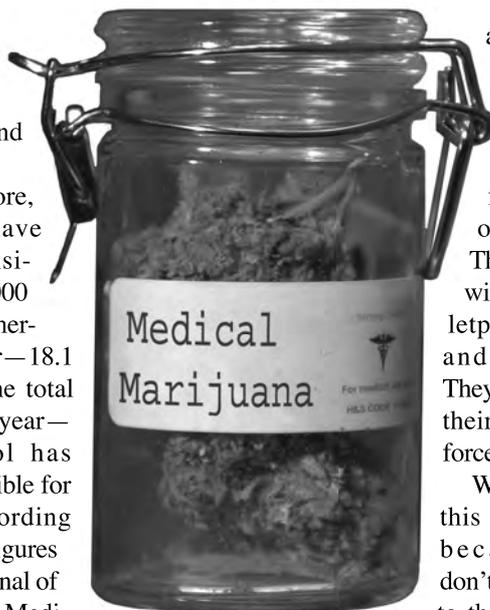
The numbers for marijuana-related deaths according to the Center for Disease Control suggest that marijuana is no more responsible for human deaths than any other death in the gamut of ways to die.

Marijuana has taken the biggest heat for being a "gateway drug." However, nothing about the drug specifically makes you want to run out and buy heroin or crack.

The small correlations do not suggest causation, but rather a curiosity of the social nature of marijuana. Sociological studies by the University of Cambridge have found that people who use marijuana are more likely to know people who do other illegal drugs, but that it does not mean the drug itself makes people want to try harder drugs: a classic slippery slope fallacy.

Our government refuses to acknowledge the life that Angel Reich has now. Our laws have made this mother a criminal.

The courts thus far have refused to back down from allowing federal



GRAPHIC BY JON ROBERTS/THE BEACON

agents to kick down the doors of our homes for this war on drugs. They storm in with their bulletproof vests and hounds. They come with their guns and force.

We allow this to happen because we don't put a face to the problem: we put a stigma.

This allows us to send in the dogs after our own people.

Angel Reich's appeal was struck down earlier this month. "I'm not going to let them kill me," said Reich. She plans to keep using the drug in spite of the court's ruling. Her case may reach the Supreme Court, but precedent seems to be in favor of ruling against the sick and dying.

The judiciary is not in the position to make law for us, since our government still classifies marijuana as having no medical uses whatsoever.

The solution is to recognize the benefits of medical marijuana and reject the propaganda that the pharmaceutical, cotton, petrochemical and cigarette companies want you to believe.

Our state legislature needs to put pressure on federal law by allowing the use of medical marijuana.

Write that bill. Pass that bill, and turn it into law – seriously.

-Look for "Bobby's World" every other Monday in the Opinion section of *The Beacon*.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ann Coulter's bigoted comments rightfully decried

Dear Editor,

I'm afraid that *Beacon* staff writer, Jose Martinez, misses the point in his most recent article, "Press unfairly judges Ann Coulter for insensitive remarks." At issue is not Ms. Coulter's right to free speech, but her right to spew hate speech.

It is true that many media outlets did condemn her remarks, but there was just as many who defended her. If there was, as Mr. Martinez wrote, a systematic effort to prevent this woman from expressing her opinions, we would have heard no more from her. However, some

months ago, she accused the 9/11 widows of enjoying their husbands deaths.

Contrary to what Ms. Coulter has said after the fact, fa--ot is indeed a form of hate speech. And as with all vitriolic language, it serves no purpose other than to label and denigrate a group of people.

Indeed, her comments prompted the Chairman, David A. Keene, at the event in which Ms. Coulter spoke to issue a press release stated, "The American Conservatives Union and the Conservative Political Action Committee do not condone or endorse the use of hate speech."

I'd like to think that as a society we're all a bit more

enlightened than we were in years past; but Ms. Coulter reminds us that bigotry is still prevalent in this country.

Additionally, based upon the venue in which Ms. Coulter spoke and the applause that followed her comments, bigotry appears to not only be alive and well, but also substantially funded and politically connected.

Chris Nielsen
Senior
Travel and tourism
management

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should marijuana be legalized?

- Yes – But only for medical purposes.
- Yes – It should be legalized completely.
- No – No, but using it shouldn't carry harsh penalties.
- No – Put all users in prison!

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?

Should FIU renovate the football stadium?

- Yes – football should be a top priority!

41%

- Yes – Our stadium is ugly.

13%

- No – I hate football - Cricket is where it's at.

6%

- No – We don't need to. It's a waste of resources.

41%

Total participants: 254

HAVE AN OPINION? WE NEED YOU!

**Come to GC 210, WVC 124 and
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OUR GENERATION:

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Students torn on accurate labels for today's youth culture

SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

Generation Y, Millennials, Reagan Babies, Echo Boomers, iGeneration – when it comes to labeling, the generation of current college students seems to be having the proverbial identity crisis.

If Generation X acquired its name by being difficult to define, the one after it has posed even more problems for sociologists.

Even the generation's time span is controversial. Some claim it covers the range of those born from 1978-1998, while others shift it over to 1982-2000. If the broadest span is used, 1978-2000, the population reaches up to 76 million in the United States alone. It is established that we are plentiful, but the question remains: what defines us?

Generation Y is perhaps

one of the most frequently-used terms; it originated in 1993 in an article used in an issue of *Advertising Age* and was used to refer to those born from 1984-1994.

The name's downside, however, is that it seems to be dependent on Generation X and could also be taken to mean "Generation Why?"

Maria Garcia, a junior majoring in international relations, agrees that her generation has departed from the one before it and therefore needs its own title.

"Generation X was either completely cynical or idealistic," Garcia said. "I think we jump from one to the other on a daily basis."

The term "Echo Boomers" has been used because this era consists mainly of the offspring of Baby Boomers, and also represent the largest demographic since that population surge in the 1940s and 1950s. Yet it too defines this generation in terms of its predecessor. For these reasons, today's generation has shown preference for the term Millennials, which has grown even more popular because it shows independence.

“We do have a conscience. [But] our generation is pretty much self-centered, inclusive and self-serving.”

– Junior Maria Garcia

How many people in the college-age group view the world is naturally wrapped up in major events of the 1980s and 1990s.

Events such as the collapse of the U.S.S.R., the Oklahoma City bombings and the Columbine shootings shaped this generation.

Though not a specific event, perhaps nothing has defined our time as much as technology, earning youths titles such as the Net Generation or even the MyPod Generation – a fusion of MySpace and iPod.

Garcia agrees on technology's influence.

"The Internet has really redefined the way we communicate, since the mid-90s," Garcia said.

Because of this, Ricky Pollo, a doctoral student majoring in sociology, thinks that perhaps we should be called the "Whiz Kid Generation."

"They know how to use all the gadgets," Pollo said. "If you don't know how to use a VCR, find the youngest kid that knows how to read."

Much of one's definition of this generation also depends on how one

GENERATIONS, page 7

Thick skin necessary to take criticism



HOW TO...
a humor column
Alicia Bustamante

The elephant is one of the most beautiful and noble creatures. Pachyderm – the type of animal an elephant is – means thick skin, so if you told an elephant it didn't look good in plaid, it probably wouldn't even hold it against you.

Humans, however, are not pachyderms. The near-fatal incident I had with a paper cut once proves that. Metaphorically speaking, though, the situation worsens. People have difficulty giving criticism and even worse at receiving it. However, that doesn't make the act invalid. Without it, people wouldn't constantly second-guess their choices in fashion, careers or even mates – and we all know a country filled with confident, autonomous decision-makers is not what the Founding Fathers had in mind.

You have to assume that by now, most youths have grown up with a chip on their shoulders. Don't worry. It's not so much that parents don't have time to foster healthy self-perceptions, it's just that they don't care. Keep in mind that the generations before us are blue-collar, war-time producers. The fact that you may not be good at something is viewed as laziness versus a natural ineptitude. Enough phrases like "I saw little Suzy give her mom *two* macaroni necklaces" will make anyone hypersensitive after a while. I never could get past eating the paste.

With that said, you have to assume everyone's a little sensitive. So when your boss tells you "Step on the gas, girlie, those frappuccinos aren't going to make themselves," your first reaction can't be to scream out "The warheads are coming out as fast as they can, general!" I mean, if only because your boss is 26 and the reference would be lost on him.

Having slower reaction time, in general, could be to your benefit. It's almost a filter if you use a few seconds before speaking to think: "Okay, what was this person trying to say before it came out as venomous word-vomit?"

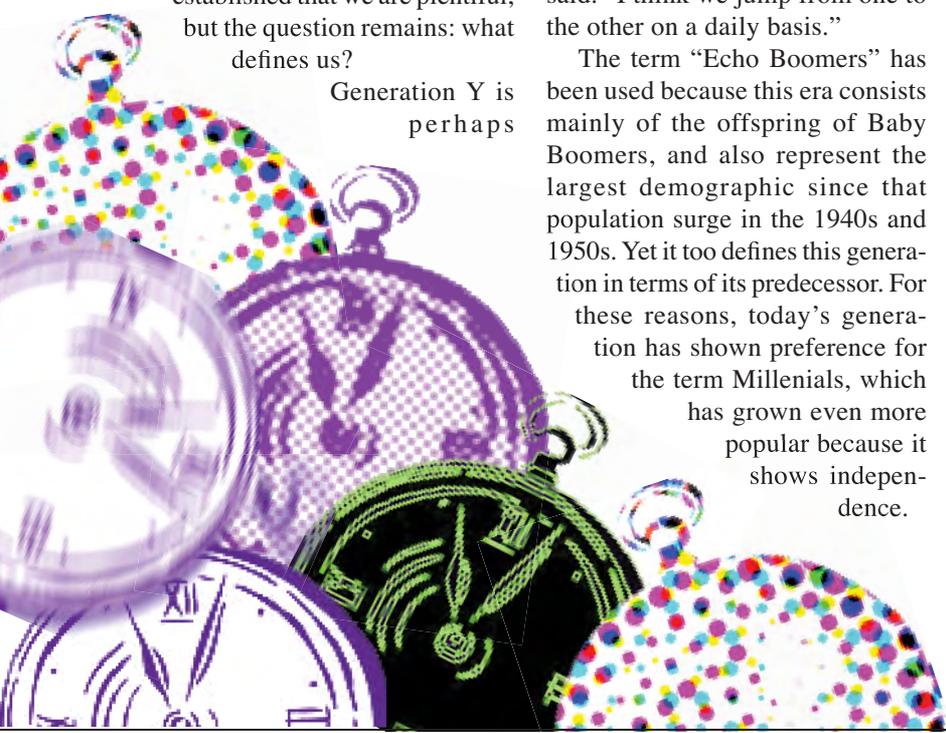
If you're aware of the nature of criticism enough to know how to react, in turn, you must have the tact to dish it out. For one, you can't talk down to the person. You'll get a better reaction if you don't end your phrase with "understand, tiger?" and then pat them on the head. Especially when that person's a biker – I won't elaborate.

As a rule of thumb, you should also try to be direct when giving criticism. Don't stall or fumble over your words or you'll be taken even less seriously when you say "I think I ...err... have a problem ... with ... umm ... what were we talking about?"

Also, if you want your criticism to be taken seriously, keep it as constructive as possible. Sneaking in even the most innocent of "you jerk" will blow your argument. Just get in, make your point, and get out.

The best way to take criticism is with a grain of salt. Granted, if it's from people you care about, you're going to take it more seriously than from let's say an out-of-touch aging hippie who wouldn't know comedy if it squirted him in the face with seltzer water ... not that I would know. In that same vein, you may want to be careful with the feelings of those you care about. Because in the end, we may not share the thick skin factor with our elephant brothers, but we do share one thing – we never forget. Good luck.

- Find out how to cope with all of life's quirks with this column every other Monday.



'American Dream' ideal transcends legislation

VERONICA SUAREZ
Contributing Writer

Crossing the Rio Grande at 5 years old did not seem like the American Dream for alumnus Christian Jarquin. There was fear of coyotes, risk of robbery and risk of *La Migra*, the immigration police. Jarquin's mother, who took him across the U.S.-Mexican border, could not acquire visas in her native country Nicaragua because of the political situation. So they crossed the border *mojados* – without legal documentation.

But for Jarquin and his mother, who were fleeing a war and revolution in Nica-

ragua, reaching freedom and the promise of a better life was worth the risk.

"This country is a blessing," Jarquin said. "It's a gorgeous, wonderful, great nation that has embraced my family. But at first it was very scary because my mom didn't speak the language. She had no legal papers to work here. She had to work in the tomato fields and earn whatever they wanted to pay her because she had no papers."

Jarquin's mother was one of the estimated 10 to 12 million illegal immigrants who live in the United States and take underpaid jobs or work "under the table." According

“While I do agree that English is extremely important to learn, the American Dream is for everyone to share.”

– Christian Jarquin

to a report developed by the Pew Hispanic Center, illegal immigrants as a group tend to be less educated and have lower incomes than other sections of the U.S. population.

In spite of these obstacles, Jarquin earned and received scholarships after qualifying for permanent residency under the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act law signed by former President Clinton in 1997. Although there

are certain laws that aid some groups of immigrants to achieve permanent residency, there is no comprehensive law that aids all illegal immigrants to gain access to citizenship. In contrast, the House of Representatives passed a bill last year that proposed illegal immigration to be treated as a felony rather than as a civil penalty.

Immigration law professor, **IMMIGRATION, page 7**

Assimilation key to understanding immigration problems

IMMIGRATION, page 6

Troy Elder, argues that this kind of legislation "criminalizes not only the illegal aliens" but also people who try to help them: including lawyers, Catholic charities and social groups. The bill also ignited the immigration marches of last year where millions of immigrants protested in major city streets such as Los Angeles, Chicago and New York for their human rights. Some immigrants held banners that read: "We are not criminals."

"The message was that 'we're here, we're your neighbors, we're a part of the fabric of this nation; we're working hard and we want to be treated with dignity and respect,'" Elder said about the participants of the immigration marches.

He argues illegal immigrants contribute to our society. Illegal immigrants pay taxes through identification numbers issued by the Internal Revenue Service. In order to work, some illegal immigrants buy fake social security numbers and identification cards. But most importantly, he argues illegal immigrants work in jobs that Americans do not want to do.

"The undocumented population would not be here if there were [no] jobs for them," he said. House cleaners, gardeners and home-health aids are just some of the kinds of jobs illegal immigrants do "that keep [the] economy running."

The debate on illegal immigration, however, is rooted more on emotion than on logic, according

to Guillermo Grenier, a sociology professor and expert on immigration. He said those who oppose illegal immigration are afraid of perceived changes to the national identity of the country. Most immigrants come from Latin America and Asia, and according to Grenier, these groups of people are less likely to assimilate to American culture.

"The folks fighting immigration are saying assimilation no longer occurs. Assimilation is no longer an option for these immigrants," Grenier said. He stated immigrants instead integrate into American culture. In some parts of the country, like Miami, immigrants don't have to learn English even though "research shows unless you learn English you are doomed to low-paying jobs." Grenier indicated

that people like Samuel P. Huntington, an author and Harvard professor, argue that immigrants who are bilingual benefit more economically than native-born Americans who are monolingual.

An advocate of America's national identity, Huntington criticizes Mexican-Americans in particular for not assimilating into American society. In an article named "Jose, Can You See?" published in the periodical *Foreign Policy*, Huntington discusses the American Dream.

"There is no Americano Dream," he wrote. "There is only the American Dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican-Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English."

As for American dreams in

English and Spanish, Alumnus Christian Jarquin was not only able to graduate from FIU magna cum laude but also earned an opportunity to work for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Jarquin thinks the American Dream is an opportunity for individuals and society.

"To me, the American Dream is the opportunity to earn an education and work to benefit not only my family but our society," Jarquin said.

In response to Huntington's view of the American Dream, Jarquin does not think the American Dream is exclusive. "While I do agree that English is extremely important to learn, the American Dream is for everyone to share, because we are all a nation of immigrants."

HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AMONG FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE GENERATIONAL LABELING

GENERATIONS, page 6

views history.

Authors Neil Howe and William Strauss have written extensively on how generations show that history is cyclical, with certain basic patterns rhythmically repeating themselves.

From this theory, the authors claim that the Millennial generation is imitating the GI Generation of 1900-1925, showing courage, patriotic faithfulness and

conservative moral values. They reason that the Millennials are rebelling against the Boomers by resembling this much older generation instead.

Many Millennials themselves, like Garcia, would disagree.

"We do have a conscience," Garcia said. "[But] our generation is pretty much self-centered, inclusive and self-serving."

But Safietou Kane, a Ph.D. student majoring in sociology, claims that "Me

Generation" and "Selfish Generation" would be accurate descriptions of today's youth.

"There's something commercial about this generation," Kane said.

Pollo believes that this generation is not quite known for the conservative morals like Howe and Strauss claim.

"Moral liberalism," Pollo said. "That's one that has really made an impact on this generation."

In contrast to Howe and Strauss, Kane

views this generation's strength not so much in its patriotic courage, but in its global thinking.

"There's something fast about us: adaptability," Kane said. "[Our] borders are very fluid."



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REVIEWS (YOU CAN USE)

MUSIC Arcade Fire - Neon Bible

REINIER HERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

Indie-rock band Arcade Fire became media darlings in 2004 after the release of their debut album, *Funeral*. They received continuous airplay on indie stations, received a nearly perfect review from the influential *Pitchfork Media* music website and even graced the cover of their native Canada's edition of *Time* magazine.

The band, touted as the "saviors of rock" by publications and organizations like *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and the Associated Press, had quite the reputation to live up to with their sophomore effort.

After months of leaked tracks and speculation that the band would be unable to repeat their success, Arcade Fire have silenced the naysayers and delivered a worthy successor with *Neon Bible*, released March 6.

Unlike *Funeral* whose lyrics were nostalgic and familial, *Neon Bible* finds Arcade Fire in an angrier and more caustic place: criticizing religion, the entertainment industry and America.

All of this angst is propelled by the album's instrumentation: a combination of standard rock and classical instruments, including an entire Hungarian orchestra and a church organ.

Ironically, the organ is used to great effect on the beautiful, but lyrically scathing "Intervention," which condemns the church and its grip on society, while also lamenting the plight of soldiers in war.

Several of the songs on *Neon Bible* fit this mold of social and political unrest, but the strongest would undoubtedly be the Springsteen-esque "(Antichrist Television Blues)."

The narrative deals with a father begging God to make his daughter a



famous singer in order to escape poverty and the pitfalls that go along with fame. Challenging both the entertainment industry and religion, it might be songwriter Win Butler's finest lyrical offering.

"No Cars Go" is another standout track, which is actually a completely re-recorded version of a song found on their self-titled EP, complete with a full orchestral arrangement. This song is the most energetic song found on the album and, due to its nature, also the most reminiscent of their older work. The song slowly builds speed and ends with a wonderful crescendo that would seem appropriate as an album ender, but actually precedes the true closer, "My Body is a Cage".

Returning to their introspective roots, "Cage" deals with insecurity and self doubt and probably has the single best use of the church organ found on the album. Jaws will literally drop as the music and lyrics suddenly cut off mid-chorus, only to be met with a massive roar from the pipe organ.

To say that I was stunned is an understatement, ready to call "No Cars Go" my favorite before hearing this truly epic composition.

Faced with probably the highest expectations ever placed on an indie band, Arcade Fire have persevered and come back with an album as powerful and memorable as their debut.

GAME Virtua Fighter 5

LUIS H. GARCIA
Staff Writer

In 1993, "Virtua Fighter" debuted in arcades and gave birth to 3-D fighting games. As the industry has grown, the game has held its ground against other competing franchises and now, Sega and developer AM2 debuted "Virtua Fighter 5" as the PlayStation 3's first fighting game, continuing the tradition of delivering top-notch game play with solid graphics.

"Virtua Fighter's" basic system has not changed much. The game still uses only three buttons: "punch," "kick" and "guard." But with just those three buttons, you have plenty of options available to fight your opponent. Controls are smooth, responsive and easy to learn. New to VF5 is the offensive movement to further gain the position advantage on your oppo-

nent and press the offense.

With 17 different fighters to choose from, each with a vast arsenal of moves at their disposal, there is plenty of variety for players to find what works for them. Even though the game is simple to pick up, learning to master the intricacies of VF5 can be a challenge, especially for newcomers to the series. While the game's training mode is helpful, the excellent tutorial from the previous VF is missing, which can be seen as big loss for some, but there are still many outside sources to look up and refine your skills.

As for the game's content, there's honestly not much. You have the standard arcade mode where you fight several fighters and then watch the credits. In the Quest mode, you create a profile for your fighter and fight through different arcades, increasing your rank and earning prize money to customize your character with different clothing, and accessories.

Other than the two-player versus mode and

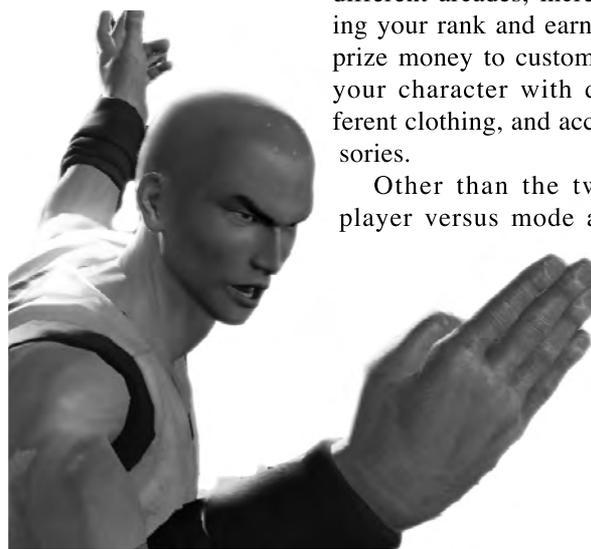
the ability to record your matches and watch them at your leisure (a great way to study your play and improve), there are no other extras.

Graphically, the game is beautiful. All the fighting arenas are visually impressive and very detailed. The fighters themselves look excellent from the texture of their clothing to their muscle definition and with the customize feature, the characters can be personalized with all sorts of accessories and costumes. It can be satisfying to visually alter your favorite fighter to your own liking. The soundtrack that accompanies the fighting is done very well and, while some of the sound effects date as far back as the first VF, they still get the job done in adding to the overall experience.

Sega's latest VF once again continues to create an excellent fighting arena that delivers everything in spades.

Some might see the game as a barebones package, but the focus of "Virtua Fighter" has always been about delivering a quality fighting game for players to test their skills against others - that's what matters most in a fighting game.

Also worth noting is that Xbox 360 owners can look forward to VF5 in late summer, so there will be no shortage of competition on whatever platform.



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Multicultural programs aim to unite minority students

BEN F. BADGER
Staff Writer

Once known as Minority Student Services, the Multicultural Programs and Services office – located on the University Park campus in the Graham Center, room 216 and on the Biscayne Bay campus in the Wolfe University Center, room 253 – aims to offer help to non-mainstream or “minority” students in various academic areas.

Tutoring is one of MPAS’ most important functions, offering tutoring in uncommon areas where students may sometimes have difficulty finding a tutor, such as calculus and organic chemistry, according to Jeffrey McNamee, the MPAS associate director.

“We take care of the subjects you normally don’t see,” McNamee said.

Students interested in becoming tutors through MPAS should complete the tutor application on the MPAS website and submit it with their SASS report or transcript to Jeannette Cruz, the MPAS associate director, in GC 265.

According to McNamee, most of the MPAS tutors are upperclassmen. MPAS also has two computer labs for student use located in GC 216 and 265.

Other than tutoring, MPAS also provides several scholarships such as the MPAS and Golden Drum Scholarships. Both scholarships revolve around high academic performance at FIU as well as in high school.

The two can be renewed for four years at FIU. MPAS Scholarship grants \$1,000 toward tuition a semester and Golden Drum Scholarship grants \$1250 a semester. Applications are available on the MPAS website.

MPAS also funds one other scholarship for transfer and international students, the Sage Scholarship.

“They don’t have a lot of opportunities for scholarship,” McNamee said. “And \$500 can be a lot of money for a transfer or international student.”

A silent auction will be held March 29 at the WUC ballroom at 6 p.m. to raise funds for the Sage Scholarship. The scholarship is in its fourth year of operation.

Tutoring and scholarships are not all MPAS has to offer.

The office also provides advising for various student organizations such as the Black Student Union and On Point Poetry.

“Our advisor [Sonya Robinson] is very supportive,” said Mara Moline

the president of On Point Poetry. “We sit down and come up with ideas and she also helps me with my own ideas. The MPAS office is a family-oriented place.”

With the ever-growing, diverse population at FIU, MPAS has created new departments over its lifetime. The newest addition to the MPAS office is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Ally (LGBTQA) office.

Only in its second semester of operation, Graduate

“We take care of the subjects you normally don’t see.”

– Jeffrey McNamee

Assistant A.J. Costa runs the office.

“We collect and provide resources for our LGBTQA students,” Costa said. “The LGBTQA office is planning two big events for this semester.”

The Day of Silence will be held April 10 from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the GC Pit.

During the event students pledge not to speak at all to bring awareness to the oppression that LGBTQA individuals are forced to endure.

Following the Day of Silence will be the Breaking the Silence Ceremony and Celebration in the Housing Quad. At that time, students

who pledged to remain silent will be able to speak and join in on the party.

“Providing programs, events and education for the LGBTQA and straight students is very important,” Costa said.

Students with questions or concerns about LGBTQA issues, can speak to Costa privately in her office or via e-mail. (Costa can be reached at lgbt@fiu.edu)

All communications with Costa are confidential.

While the free tutoring is aimed at tutoring “non-mainstream” students, no FIU student will be turned away.

The MPAS tutoring office is located in GC 267 and students can schedule tutoring appointments by stopping by the office or calling 305-348-4109. (Office hours and a complete list of available tutoring as well as a complete calendar of events is available online at <http://www.fiu.edu/mpas>)



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Dolphins offense needs overhaul to be successful

DOLPHINS, page 12

The defense will be fine for next season and a shakeup of personnel is what the offense needs to play at the same level the defense has for years.

Miami also heads into the NFL Draft with the most selections they've had in a long time.

And even though the team has not seen much success in the draft this decade, the more you play, the more chances you have to win - as old casino logic goes.

In the NFL, teams can

go from abysmal to prototypical in one or two seasons, sometimes with very little changes, which is obviously what the Dolphins are trying to do.

Considering that the Dolphins are still trying to stockpile picks, it may be possible that the Dolphins might want to acquire a higher pick in the draft - they currently hold the No. 9 pick.

To make a bold prediction, the Dolphins are going to trade up to the No. 3 or No. 4 spot and select Georgia Tech super freak wide receiver Calvin

Johnson.

That would make total sense for a team desperately seeking a second receiving threat to complement Chris Chambers.

And who wouldn't want a 6-foot-4, 239 lb. player with a 4.39 second 40-yard dash run?

Even though that move may be a bit of a long shot, it makes a lot of sense and could make this off-season a success for the Dolphins.

And nothing the Dolphins have done this off-season seems to be doing any of that.



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Giovannoni combines athleticism with academics

GIOVANNONI, page 12

She wanted to be able to have the opportunity to be able to continue swimming and going to school, and in her home country that would not be possible since soccer is by far the most popular sport.

Other sports took a "backseat," so she would not have the privilege or the opportunity to get an education and be an athlete, since accommodations were only made for soccer athletes.

Despite Sara's contributions to the Italian National Team, it was still all about soccer.

Giovannoni's experience with the Italian National Team gives credence to her continuing improving performance throughout her swimming career.

Last season on Feb. 25, 2006, she set a school record time of 1:05.81 in the 100 breaststroke.

The next day, she set the record for the 200 breaststroke with a time of 2:17.40 and subsequently made the NCAA "B"



JESSICA MARSHALL/THE BEACON

ELITE SWIMMER: Sophomore Sara Giovannoni is the first FIU swimmer to be invited to the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships. She finished 18th in the event.

Standard time.

She would go on to beat her record in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:04.99

and her record in the 200 breaststroke by nearly two seconds, touching the wall at 2:15.68, which also made the NCAA "B"

Standard.

Finally this season leading up to her performance in Minneapolis, she posted three second place finishes at the Sun Belt Swimming and Diving Championships in the 200 individual medley, and 100 and 200 breaststroke.

Giovannoni's attitude is a positive one, as evident in her stats and performances; she is continuously working earnestly to improve.

"I feel very good, and I feel that I have the potential to do even better for next season," she said. "I will continue to work even harder and hopefully I will make the Finals next year."

This attitude is also evident in her academics as the industrial engineering major has maintained a 4.0 GPA during her stay at FIU.

As for her love of swimming Giovannoni said, "When I am swimming I feel free. Sometimes I may have some flashbacks of things that happened in my life, but most of all I feel free when I swim. I feel like I am discovering myself. It is just

Distance runner's records result from work ethic

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at the end of her sophomore year, she was given the opportunity.

"It took some time, but when he gave me the opportunity, I really took it," she said.

Reategui ran the mile for the Golden Panthers, posting the team's top time of 5:14.28 and placing fifth at the Gator Invitational on Sept. 16, 2006.

This great achievement gave her the trust she really needed from the coach and

for herself.

"The team was struggling in cross country, but by the end of the year the team was getting better. We were having better times as a team and as individuals," she said.

FIU placed second as a team at last year's Sun Belt Conference Cross Country Championships.

With the help of Reategui and her teammates, FIU got its best season after six years of participation in the Sun Belt Conference.

At the end of the 2006 season, Reategui had a lot of things going on in her life.

Family issues were affecting her grades and her concentration in track. She had to move out of her parents' house, and lost focus in her academic and personal life.

It was a hard time for her but one thing was for sure, she never quit.

She posted her personal-best time of 18:08.91 in the 5000 meters (5K), good for a 31st place at the Auburn

Invitational on Sept. 30.

"It was a hard time, but you know, everyone told me 'We believe in you.' My boyfriend helped me a lot, and gave me back the confidence that I needed. Here at FIU, all my teammates are a family, we are all a family, and we take care of each other, in and out of the track." Reategui said. "I love my teammates and the FIU staff."

At the start of the 2007 season, Reategui was focused again and back on track.

She started to improve her time at the 5K and also as a mile runner.

This season she broke her previous personal record in the mile with a time of 5:07.94 - good for second all-time at FIU - at the Stephen O'Connell Center in Gainesville.

But it was on Feb. 10 that Reategui achieved her biggest accomplishment in her career at the moment.

While running the 5K event at the 2007 Husky Classic in Seattle, Reategui broke FIU's 5K record with

a time of 17:52.23 - beating it by over 12 seconds. The record was previously held by Rebecca Rodriguez with a time of 18:04.46 in 2001.

"Oh my God, I was so happy," Reategui said. "I was very excited, and I have to give the credit to my teammates, because we support each other and we care about each other. We all believe in one another."

No matter what has happened, she keeps going on, strong and focused.

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Runner always had sight on finish line

CHRISTIAN GUILLÉN
Contributing Writer

It was at the age of 12 when junior track and field athlete Paola Reategui first got interested in boxing.

Considered by many as a violent and predominantly masculine sport, Reategui ignored all the stereotypes and continued her newfound passion with the support of her parents.

A year later during an early morning jog, Reategui was challenged by her mother to run along a few runners up the hill.

This challenge changed her life forever.

Just after her run up that hill, Paola joined the local running club, "Miami Runners."

Later, she joined the track and field team at G. Holmes Braddock Senior High School. This decision marked the beginning of her career as a track and field athlete.

"I decided that what I liked most was running," Reategui said. "Thanks to boxing and the support of my parents, I said to myself, 'I am going to do this for the rest of my life.' And that was what I did in school."

Reategui injured her leg just two weeks before the state championships, but her desire to compete didn't diminish.

She ran the last two races of her high school career, finishing 11th in the 1-mile run and 12th in the 2-mile.

"It was so frustrating," she said. "You know it's your last year and you know you want to do your best. And someone telling me that I cannot go to the state championships was very heartbreaking."

Her track and field career began with the "miler" (the 1-mile run) and by the end of her senior year, she was doubtful of running her last state competitions for Braddock.

After graduation, various universities offered Reategui scholarships, but FIU's offer was what she was really looking for.

Reategui started to run officially for FIU's track and field team last year. She was placed as a distance runner after her times in the mile were not that competitive.

She saw this rejection as a challenge



COURTESY PHOTO FIU ATHLETICS

ALL-TIME RECORD: Junior distance runner Paola Reategui set the all-time FIU 5k run record. She also finished second alltime in the 1-mile run.

and started working hard in practices.

Day by day, Reategui improved her 1-mile time and asked assistant coach Carlos Salvat if she was able to become a mile

runner once again.

It took some time to convince him, but

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Swimmer invited to major championship

CLAUDE PHANOR
Contributing Writer

FIU sophomore swimmer Sara Giovannoni continues to set and break records.

She broke her own school record and finished 18th in the 200-yard breaststroke on March 10 at the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships at the University of Minnesota's University Aquatic Center.

Giovannoni put up a good showing and said she was very excited and happy to be there.

was a strong media presence, cameras flashing everywhere, lights, it was amazing and somewhat overwhelming, but I was just very happy to be there," Giovannoni said. "The weather was a little cold, which



Sara Giovannoni, sophomore swimmer

It was awesome. There was a strong media presence, cameras flashing everywhere, lights, it was amazing and somewhat overwhelming, but I was just very happy to be there.

I was not used to coming from Miami, but it was great."

She is the first swimmer

in the four-year history of FIU's swimming and diving program to reach the NCAA Championships. She touched the wall in 2:14.38 to improve on her previous school record of 2:14.81.

"Sara was phenomenal," coach Noemi Zaharia said. "She did great, but her just

being at the NCAA Championships is a tremendous accomplishment as a sophomore. This is a huge stepping stone for our program."

Giovannoni has plenty to be thankful for, as she has achieved a lot in such a short amount of time.

It was not too long ago [back in early 2004] that she had to make the tough decision to leave her home country of Italy in order to continue to pursue growing interest in swimming.

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Dolphins are not making smart moves this off-season



Commentary

Xavier Villamarzo
Copy Editor

With the NFL draft looming ever so closely and free agency fully underway, Miami Dolphins fans are wondering what the heck their team is doing.

Even though the Dolphins have shown they are willing to spend whatever it takes to win, they seem to be spending in the wrong areas of need.

Don't get me wrong - adding former Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker Joey Porter should definitely make the defensive front even stronger, but the Dolphins' linebacker core is one the team's strongest suits.

New head coach Cam Cameron, brought in for his talented offensive scheming, seems to be getting rid of last year's most productive players.

Randy McMichael, despite developing a severe case of butter fingers last year, is still one of the best tight ends in football.

Yet he was replaced by a guy you've probably never heard of before - David Martin (yeah, exactly. Who?).

Martin is considered a good route runner and pass catcher. But how is that an upgrade from the most productive tight end in Dolphins history?

The team also traded fan-favorite and perennial over-achiever Wes Welker.

By trading away Welker - to the division rival New England Patriots no less - the Dolphins lost their most productive receiver from last season and their best return man in over a decade.

Even if the Patriots gave up too much, Welker is more reliable than two draft picks - a second and seventh rounder - that may take a long time to develop.

Also, there is no question the Dolphins' offensive line is in dire need of help, yet they've made no noise and have actually worsened in that front by losing players such as guard Jeno James.

It is at this point in the off-season where Dolphin fans are vulnerable, because they have to put full trust in their new leader.

They hope he knows what he's doing, regardless how attached fans have become to certain players like Wekler and McMichael.

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