

## University breaks ground on long-awaited project



BRYAN PALACIO/THE BEACON

President Mark B. Rosenberg (center) and to his left, Vice President of Student Affairs Larry Lunsford and administrators help initiate the construction of the future Student Academic Support Center.

**BRYAN PALACIO**  
Asst. News Director  
bryan.palacio@fiusm.com

After years of planning and delays, the Student Academic Support Center got its official groundbreaking.

Fighting wind and rain on Friday, Nov. 21, university staff and distinguished guests, highlighted by University President Mark B. Rosenberg, were able to bear the weather long enough for necessary

speeches to be given and media pictures be taken.

"This ceremony is evidence of the fact that rain or shine, up or down, over or under, we're going to get it done," said Rosenberg. "That's in our DNA."

The 74,000-square foot Student Academic Support Center, scheduled to open in the spring of 2016, will be the one-stop building for all student financial and academic needs—the first building that incoming students will see and use most throughout

their academic career.

The SASC will house departments such as enrollment services, one stop, financial aid, advising, honors college, graduate studies and study abroad, just to name a few.

"It's going to be the student center," said Jeff Gonzalez, vice provost for planning and institutional research. "It's going to be the one stop for students and a central hub for student life. Given the focus that the institution has on every student

counts, this is a way to help both our students and our prospective students see all that the institution has to make them successful," said Gonzalez.

The \$31 million building, that will be located east of Graham Center next to Barnes and Noble and previously the bus lane, will be state of the art, encompassing features such as Wi-Fi, computers, technology hubs and charging stations for students to be as productive outside the classroom

as they are inside. It will also have four general-use classrooms which will be the home of the \$1.5 million UTEACH program for STEM instruction, and will be outfitted with a robust 250-seat auditorium, slated to be the largest on campus, that will be used for academic services as well as orientation and special events.

With the SASC designed to co-locate departments which work together, it will also increase

**SEE BUILDING, PAGE 2**

## STEM institute changing traditional teaching method

**NICHOLAS OLIVERA**  
Staff Writer  
nick.olivera@fiusm.com

Using two separate grants from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, FIU's Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Transformation Institute has been working to encourage the completion of degrees in the sciences.

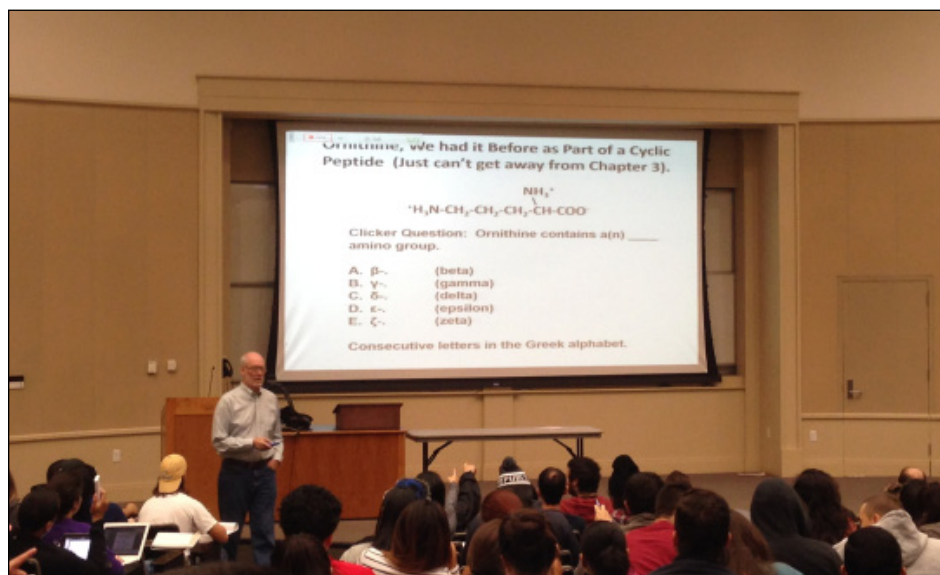
Since 2010, the STEM institute had been going about this process by putting the money from the first HHMI grant of \$1 million towards developing more creative, interactive processes in order to get students excited about science.

With the first HHMI grant, the institute funded efforts for each professor in specific STEM disciplines to transform one of their courses to fit the newer, more exciting mold to attract students to the sciences.

The second HHMI grant of \$1.5 million works towards boosting the encouragement of students in chemistry, physics, biology and now mathematics courses.

Developing these new, exciting methods for teaching meant doing away with the traditional method for teaching—having students come in for a straightforward lecture before going off on their own to figure out what it was they just sat through.

According to Laird Kramer, physics



NICHOLAS OLIVERA/THE BEACON

Biology professor John Makemson teaches a "flipped course" concept lecture at a general biochemistry class. The concept brings lectures and PowerPoint material to be made to STEM students online.

professor and director of the STEM institute, this traditional teaching process is one that tends to discourage university students from pursuing degrees in science.

"If you take a typical physics course, your favorable attitudes towards physics learning will be decreased as a result of the instruction. A simple lecture becomes very dry, and to me that's

not what physics is about," Kramer said.

The common change professors have been making to their courses is flipping them. This means that all lectures and power points (or any sort of instructional materials) will be available to students online.

Before showing up to class, the students will review whatever it is their professor had

assigned to them. This allows students to go into the classroom with a general understanding of what the lesson is, and they can address any difficulties they already know they have with a professor or a learning assistant present.

An example of this "flipped" concept is seen in John Makemson's general biochemistry class.

It appears to be a typical lecture: He stands in between a projector screen twice his height and an auditorium containing close to 200 students. Today's class is a lecture on urea cycle disorders.

He will present a series of questions to his students, such as, what amino acid group does the amino ornithine belong to? The question will be up on the screen behind him, followed by five possible answers labeled A through E. The students have exactly one minute to answer correctly.

A majority of them will sit in tight clusters, each holding an iClicker device. For each question that comes up the students will always end up consulting the person sitting next to them in an attempt to figure out what the answer is.

For the students, these questions are all important. Not only because it is a quick refresher for upcoming class exams, but also because the in-class questions will be graded.

"It's a good buzz in the class. When students are talking to students, the students are doing the teaching for themselves. And attendance hasn't been stronger too," Makemson said.

## NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

### Colleges review security after Florida State shooting

Police officers have become as visible on college campuses as students and professors, as schools respond to the early Thursday morning shooting at Florida State University.

The incident, in which FSU alumnus Myron May injured three students in a campus library before being killed by police, has alarmed students and employees at colleges throughout the state. Schools are now reviewing their own security procedures.

"Incidents like this remind us we can never be too cautious," said Alexander Casas, police chief at Florida International University, west of Miami.

Campus safety has been a high priority for most Florida colleges and universities since the Virginia Tech massacre in 2007. Many schools have added sirens with speakers as well as text, email and social media alert systems. They've also increased the number of counselors to deal with mental health issues.

### University of Virginia suspends fraternities after rape allegations

The University of Virginia suspended all fraternity activities and asked police to investigate a 2012 sexual assault in the wake of a damning Rolling Stone article that suggested the Charlottesville campus failed to protect students from potential sexual predators lurking among the school's Greek organizations.

In a statement issued Saturday, University President Teresa Sullivan said all fraternity activities would be suspended through Jan. 9, 2015, as campus officials discuss steps to prevent assaults on campus.

"The wrongs described in Rolling Stone are appalling and have caused all of us to reexamine our responsibility to this community. Rape is an abhorrent crime that has no place in the world, let alone on the campuses and grounds of our nation's colleges and universities," Sullivan said. She has also asked Charlottesville police to open an investigation of the brutal gang rape described at the beginning of the Rolling Stone piece. According to the report, a girl identified only as Jackie was attacked by several members of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity in 2012, sexually assaulted for hours and sodomized with a beer bottle at the fraternity house.

The victim had repeated meetings with campus officials and told them that two other women also had accused Phi Kappa Psi members of assaulting them, but the campus did not take any measures to warn students of the potential danger, according to the report.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

# Wellness Center to bring HIV, AIDS awareness at RAW Day

**LESLIE OVALLE**  
Contributing Writer  
news@fusm.com

Miguel Piaquadio, a testing counselor for the medical practice Care Resource, said it takes just one person in a sexually active relationship to spread the human immunodeficiency virus infection.

"The recommendation is that if you are sexually active you should get tested every three months" said Piaquadio, "there is no need for a number of sex partners, you just need one person to get the infection."

With World AIDS Day coming up on Monday, Dec. 1, the FIU Wellness Center is putting together one of their famous Random Acts of Wellness days.

This World AIDS Day RAW Day will be dedicated to educate our FIU community about HIV and AIDS and the services open to them by SHS, said Stephanie Caceres, senior health educator and FIU student pursuing a masters in public health with a specialization in health promotion and disease prevention.

This year's World AIDS Day theme is: "Focus, Partner, Achieve: an AIDS-Free Generation," according to Caceres. FIU is doing its part to put this theme into practice.

"We offer Safer Sex Education Counseling, Sexual Health presentations, free condoms, and free HIV testing," said Caceres, "we partner with many organizations to ensure that students are informed of what their risks are and how they can minimize their risks."

According to the Center for Disease Control, human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV, is a

disease that can be easily transmitted through sexual intercourse, sharing needles or syringes or childbirth.

This illness attacks the CD4 cells — or T-cells — which are a type of white blood cell that keep our immune system able to fight infections and diseases in our bodies. Along with attacking T-cells it also duplicates itself to keep causing damage.

"Once the person's CD4 cell count is below 200 the disease is no longer HIV it's now AIDS," said Piaquadio.

Care Resource is an organization that provides HIV/ AIDS research, prevention, care and treatment services to individuals in South Florida. It is South Florida's oldest and largest HIV/AIDS organization and it has teamed up with FIU to provide its services to students and the FIU community.

Ebonie Parris, wellness coordinator of University Health Services said the wellness center's RAW days consist of educational information, surveys and freebies and are planned by Student Health Services wellness assistants.

During World AIDS Day RAW Day, students will be informed of the many free services and resources available to them such as HIV testing and counseling.

They will be receiving information about these resources from student assistants who enjoy participating in such events and are getting experience in their field of interest.

Sofia Pablos-Aguirre, FIU alumna, working on a master's in public health, and wellness assistant who plans these RAW Days enjoys tabling and the communication aspect of RAW Day events.

"I like talking to students and

giving them information that is relevant and can improve their health and lifestyle" said Pablos-Aguirre.

According to Piaquadio and careresource.org, Miami-Dade County ranks No. 1 in the state of Florida in the number of new HIV and AIDS cases.

The Wellness Center provides free HIV testing and counseling, available by appointment during their regular hours on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. said Caceres.

Appointments are best made by calling the Wellness Center the day of in the morning, before 10:30 a.m., recommends Piaquadio. All services are confidential and are not only available to students, but to the whole community.

"Everybody has a right to medical care for HIV/AIDS, regardless of residency or citizenship status," said Piaquadio.

### WORLD AIDS DAY

#### Modesto Maidique Campus

Dec. 1  
10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
GC Pit

#### Biscayne Bay Campus

Dec. 1  
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
BBC Ballrooms or Panther Square

# Student Academic Support Center construction underway

BUILDING, PAGE 1

efficiency and productivity as well as clear up space for other faculty and staff to supplant the vacated locations throughout the campus.

"The Student Academic Support Center will give physical realization of the University's commitment to assuring students think about their career objectives from before their first day at the University," said Kenneth Jessell, senior vice president and chief financial officer. "The goal is to place all entering students in a major that meets their interests while also preparing them for

a productive career."

The creation of the building also doesn't mean

the SASC, in addition to having a completed Parking Garage 6.

received in May 2010, but it took four years, including a price reduction and relocation, until the final \$7 million needed to complete the project were received.

"We actually had a virtual ground breaking two years ago, so that we could keep the project moving forward by symbolically documenting the dream of this remarkable facility," said Jessell.

Although the ceremony was not ideal, similar to the rest of the building's plans, the weather was not enough to derail the plans any longer. "No umbrellas," said Rosenberg. "We can suck it up for one photo."

"We actually had a virtual ground breaking two years ago, so that we could keep the project moving forward by symbolically documenting the dream of this remarkable facility."

Kenneth Jessell  
Chief Financial Officer  
FIU

less space. The intent is that the building will help alleviate the stress of traffic and parking by centralizing it more around "I think everyone is excited about the new building," said Gonzalez. Initial funding was

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

Modesto Maidique Campus:  
GC 210, Mon-Fri 9:00 AM-4:30 PM  
(305) 348-2709  
news@fusm.com

Biscayne Bay Campus  
WUC 124, Mon-Fri 9:00 AM-4:30 PM  
(305) 919-4722  
bbc@fusm.com

Editor-in-Chief:  
(305) 348-1580  
junette.reyes@fusm.com

Advertising:  
(305) 348-6994  
advertising@fusm.com

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## Thanksgiving is for good times, not uncomfortable prying

**KRISTINE PEREZ**  
Contributing Writer  
opinion@fiusm.com

It's that time of year again -- time to pick out an outfit, set the table, and spend all day cooking. The Thursday of all Thursdays is among us, as we prepare to eat our weight in food and endure conversations with distant family -- cue the questions about life we don't have the answers to.

While Thanksgiving is a very important holiday that should be cherished with loved ones, it does not always turn out as well as we wish and expect. Unfortunately, Thanksgiving has become the infamous and dreadful day of the year where the entire family is walking on their toes, trying to one up each other, and attempting to seem like they have their lives together. People tend to force themselves to spend the evening with people they would

rather avoid, all for the gratitude of saying they celebrated Thanksgiving the "right way."

Frankly, none of this would even be an issue if the holiday was spent with people we love, trust, and enjoy -- and this does not always suggest family. Thanksgiving should be spent with people whom we truly want to be sitting next to for an entire night without feeling uncomfortable and unwanted. However, we are usually found in the exact opposite situation as family members we never talk to suddenly have an interest in our day-to-day lives. With great reason, so many young adults are leaning towards the invitation to a "Friendsgiving" rather than the traditional one at home -- as if a Thanksgiving spent with someone other than family requires another name; after all, it is not called "Familygiving."

Those who decide to spend

the holiday in another house should not be blamed or frowned upon because the give and take is far from an actual consequence. While you may be giving up the perfectly cooked turkey, expensive wine, and long table of perfectly set china, you would get a much more gratifying night of genuine laughter and true conversation. Rather than trying to avoid the nosy family member who wants to know why you showed up without a date, you can reminisce with friends and retell the funny stories about why no one made the cut. Instead of explaining -- and improvising -- what the plan for the rest of your life is, friends will want to discuss anything but the future.

Given the opportunity to have a national holiday that entails eating, drinking, loving, and giving thanks, there is no need to feel that there are rules we must follow to celebrate correctly. The

holiday was not created on the basis that it is spent in a specific manner with the same people year after year. Nowhere does it say that the last Thursday of November must be a dreadful one filled with boredom and dismay. If there are any rules at all, they should say to eat as much as you want, laugh as much as possible, enjoy the day to the fullest, and love everyone you surround yourself with.

Thanksgiving is neither the time nor the place for scrutinizing conversations; if someone cares enough throughout the year, they would not have a list of bombarding questions for this one occasion. After a year of hard work, this day off should not be wasted on small talk and awkward encounters when we have the opportunity to rejoice all the things we are thankful for with the people we are thankful for.

## World financial leaders warn of possible global economy crash

**ALAN DI DIEGO**  
Contributing Writer  
opinion@fiusm.com

In a sheerly morose judgment, British Prime Minister David Cameron estimated that the world could be facing another financial fall in the near future.

The world's 20 most economically powerful countries gathered in Brisbane, Australia this past Sunday, Nov. 23, for the annually held G20 Leaders' Summit, where former Leader of the Opposition and current leader of the second European economic titan expressed his worries regarding the global economy's current path.

"The euro-zone economy is teetering on the brink of a possible third recession", he explained. He also went on to cite high unemployment and falling prices as troublesome "red warning lights" that hint at a potential financial meltdown and suggests European leaders to act quickly.

Subtract sub-prime loans and dying banks, and this seems like exactly the same situation the global economy was under just 6 years ago. Unfortunately, Cameron isn't exaggerating, and it's very much evident that the markets that drove growth in the early stages of Europe's recovery are now slowly, but surely, fading away.

However, all of this begs the questions, why haven't European leaders taken action? Why can't Germany's Angela Merkel facilitate trade with Russia, since she has the

best relation with Putin out of all European countries? Why doesn't France's Francois Hollande open new markets with smaller, willingly bordering countries?

Well the answer isn't quite clear yet. But what we do know is that every European country wants to protect their own private interests, and when you're a European country tied to the European Union, you face the burden of having to decide whether you're going to ignore Britain's failing economy, which can affect all of Europe, or put aside your agenda to aid the situation. When your currency is dependent on many other country's currencies, you should care, and a lot.

Even putting lack of collaboration aside, there are plenty of other reasons why this worrying economic forecast isn't being addressed as it should. The plain fact is that there is just too much going on in the world today, and as every economist could agree, there are a wide range of factors that affect an economy.

Instability in the Middle East with an ever-growing and problematic ISIS, ongoing war in Ukraine, and the spread of Ebola, are all issues occupying not just news headlines worldwide, but also the minds of the individuals who need to direct their full focus on avoiding another international financial crisis.

When a European leader needs to attend an economic meeting, suddenly there is an Ebola outbreak in North America and he/she must change plans to attend a mandatory emergency meeting with other world leaders. When Merkel seemed to finally have

convinced Putin to cease fire in Ukraine, suddenly another beheading took place in Syria by a member of ISIS, and she has to rearrange her productive talks with Putin to address the news. These people just never get a break.

Cameron concluded his speech noting that "Working through the agenda at the G20, it was clearer than ever how vital is it that we stick to our long-term plan". Only time will tell. This makes us, as FIU students, think about how the actions, or lack thereof, made by politicians in a completely different and far continent affects us.

Well, for starters, a bad European economy could cause a bad American economy, and as any student who lived through 2007-2008 would remember, we'll experience budget cuts. Being a public university, we could witness departments receiving less funding, perhaps some clubs and organizations struggling to gather donations as people are more hesitant to spend their money. We could see the rise of prices, known as inflation, so your daily \$2.50 Bustelo coffee run in the morning could turn into a \$5.00 agitation. Already pricey textbooks could cost significantly more, and ultimately this could discourage some students from even continuing their studies.

With all this in mind, it's important to stay optimistic as students and remember that this country has endured a great depression, and FIU survived the deep recession in 1982, so there's no situation without a solution.

## THE BEACON | Editorial Campus resources for personal safety

Heading into the holiday season there can be a million things running through a student's mind. A mix of course exams, work and family affairs can impact one for the worse.

With these issues at hand, it was a nice time for Parking and Transportation and the Student Government Council to meet and tour around the school for the Campus Safety Walk. The main focus last year was poor lighting in many areas and it is clear the problem persists.

Each department, including the students and especially those living on campus, need to stress respective party to address the problems so we can not only focus on other issues that may arise, but also prevent them.

If more students were to attend this Campus Safety Walk they would be well informed with more than just poorly-lit areas, but also be enlightened on safety tips mentioned during the walk.

What may be the easiest way to stay safe with a preoccupied mind is simple awareness to all the resources available on campus. Every student should be cognizant of how the Panther Safety Tram works and which number to call in case of emergencies when on campus.

The Panther Safety Tram runs on both Modesto A. Maidique Campus and Biscayne Bay Campus. The tram is a transportation service for those on campus. A student can call to be picked from anywhere on campus and driven to another location on campus.

Another thing to consider is a buddy system in order to avoid being alone. If two friends are leaving campus, a simple buddy system to walk a friend to their car and have the second student drive to the other student's car can prevent a sense of fear and a dangerous situation.

In case of anything, every student should have the University police department's numbers saved on their phones: 305-348-5911 for MMC and 305-919-5911 for BBC. University police might be able to have faster response than 911 when on campus.

Besides physical safety, there is a lot students have to manage at once. Counseling and Psychological Services are paid for when you register for classes each semester. It is available on MMC in the University Health and Services Complex Suite 270, 305-348-2277; on BBC in the Wolfe University Center Suite 320, 305-919-5305; and in the Engineering Center. CAPS also has a 24 hour emergency hotline if the office is not open at 305-348-3000.

The staff consists of psychologists, social workers and mental health counselors. There are individual, group and couple sessions for students in a strict confidential manner. Walk-in or appointment, counselors will help to find the best solutions for issues you may have or identify needs, explain choices, help students to medical services and help to have a safety plan.

Life as a student can be tough, but that does not give reason to be left in the dark without the knowledge of the extensive resources available with significant convenience.

### SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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## Math professor talks about her experience to inspire students

**LESLIE ANGELA BLANCO**  
Contributing Writer  
life@fiusm.com

Ada Monserrat, professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, walked on the University of Cambridge's campus and her heart was pounding—she was on her way to the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics.

"I was going to meet one of the smartest men on the planet," said Monserrat, recounting her August meeting. "No pressure."

She had spent several years prior trying to arrange a meeting with the high profile physicist, but to no avail. There was a good chance she wouldn't be able to meet him; nonetheless, she flew to the United Kingdom, where he was expected to be.

Despite the uncertainty, her prayers were answered when the confirmation call finally came at 7 p.m. — the night before the scheduled meeting.

Monserrat walked into an office and was introduced to the acclaimed physicist, cosmologist and author, Stephen Hawking with an assisted handshake by his personal assistant. She sat next to Hawking and he said, "Hello."

Hawking is the subject of the new

film, "The Theory of Everything," which opened in theaters on Nov. 21. It centers on his life during his collegiate years and his battle with his neurodegenerative disorder, and how he overcame life's obstacles.

Hawking suffers from motor neuron disease, a disorder that affects the cells that control voluntary muscle movement and is related to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Being almost entirely paralyzed, he communicates with the assistance of a speech-generating device.

Despite the difference of cadence in conversation, Monserrat says her brief meeting with Hawking was inspiring and life-changing.

Monserrat and Hawking discussed various topics such as mathematics, space and his personal philosophies. Monserrat, who is also the coordinator of the Mastery Math Lab, mentioned to Hawking about a trip over the summer in which she took the learning assistants of the lab to NASA for a day.

They also discussed the Mars One Project and University student Patrick Ford's participation in it. Ford was chosen as one of the 700 candidates selected worldwide to be a part of the Mars One Project.

Hawking, who has largely



COURTESY OF ADA MONSERRAT

Ada Monserrat, professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, met with Stephen Hawking, whose life is the subject of a new movie.

defined the science of the origin and development of the universe, stated that if it wasn't for what happened to him, he probably wouldn't be able to excel at the rate he did or be the person he is today.

name that she has visited. She has traveled to many places over the years.

"Every three months during breaks between every semester, I travel abroad to a different location, something that is inspiring, whether it

While in the UK, in preparation to meet with Stephen Hawking, she was able to arrange a private viewing of Newton's personal copy of his book "Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica," which is credited for developing calculus.

Monserrat's main goal and reason for her travels is to inspire students and be able to enrich her own human experience in these different places that have significance worldwide.

"There is a whole other world out there that isn't just Miami, that you need to explore and learn about," she said. "I'm just glad I have the opportunity to share my experiences with the new generation coming along so they can be inspired to broaden their horizons. There's so much history and innovative things and ideas that have happened in the past, and in the present that are happening right now that people should be made aware of. Students can see that there is so much more than just Miami, they just need to get out there and see it for themselves."



COURTESY OF FOCUS FILMS

Eddie Redmayne stars as Stephen Hawking in "The Theory of Everything," a film depicting the renowned scientist's life from his days as a PhD student to being honored by the Queen in 1989.

“Hawking believes one should focus on the things that you can do rather than regret the ones you can't. He's an amazing man whose impact on the world will forever benefit mankind. This is a day I will never forget.”

Ada Monserrat  
Professor  
Department of Mathematics and Statistics

"All these messages are to inspire students," she said.

"Hawking believes one should focus on the things that you can do rather than regret the ones you can't," she said. "He's an amazing man whose impact on the world will forever benefit mankind. This is a day I will never forget."

Hawking isn't the first major

is historical or amazing, or captivating to humanity as a whole," she said.

The places that she has visited are Anne Frank's home, the island where Pythagoras lived, the ancient Library of Celsus and the ruins of Pompeii, Italy, to name a few. She was also able to get an audience with Pope Francis in Italy, something that few are able to do.

## Do you need to break the bank to get a good phone?

### TNS STAFF

It might seem as though everyone has an iPhone or Galaxy smartphone. But many customers are eschewing the best cameras and screens - and their top-end price tags - and choosing models that can get the job done at less than a third of the cost.

Sales of high-end Samsung and Apple phones remain robust, but demand for budget phones is growing. About a third of the smartphones sold in the U.S. between July and September cost less than \$200, up from 18 percent a year ago, according to tech research firm IDC. A top-end phone costs \$600 to \$700 at full price, before the subsidies some phone companies offer in exchange for committing to two-year service contracts.

No longer are these cheap smartphones mostly no-frills devices with small screens and slow processors, says Ramon T. Llamas, a research manager for phones at IDC. As the costs of parts drop, phone manufacturers are able to outfit less-expensive models with advanced features once limited to high-end devices.

These phones lack the latest innovations, such as fingerprint

security sensors and heart-rate monitors. They aren't as fast, and their cameras aren't as sharp. But the technology is more than adequate for those who just want to check email, look up sports scores and play video. Many cheaper phones now even offer the fastest wireless speeds on 4G LTE cellular networks, notes Jeff Bradley, senior vice president for devices at AT&T.

"There's a certain status to carrying an iPhone or Samsung Galaxy, as an example, but there are also people who say, 'I want a good, reliable phone, but I'm not willing to spend as much money on that,'" says David Owens, a senior vice president at wireless carrier Sprint Corp.

Joe Liggio, 16, a high school student in New York, says many of his friends have iPhones or Samsung phones, but he's never felt envy carrying his \$180 Moto G from Motorola. He says it does everything he needs well, including texting, taking pictures, playing music and accessing the Internet.

Besides the Moto G, Motorola has a \$129 Moto E as an alternative to its \$500 Moto X. Microsoft Corp.'s Lumia 635

costs \$179 or less, compared with the \$550 its flagship Lumia Icon retailed for at launch. The Nubia 5S Mini, ZTE Corp.'s most expensive phone, retails for \$280 contract-free. ZTE has a few models for just \$100.

The cheaper phone does mean smaller profit. According to IHS iSuppli, ZTE makes about \$130 per Nubia device sold, compared with several hundred for Apple and Samsung devices before marketing and administrative costs. But targeting the budget crowd has made ZTE the No. 5 smartphone vendor in the U.S., according to IDC.

Wait, you say, \$200 is "cheap?" Many consumers in the United States see a \$200 price tag on a typical high-end phone and think that is what the phone costs. But the phone company actually subsidizes about \$450 or so of the total cost and recovers that by charging higher service fees for voice, text and data over the life of a two-year contract. Some carriers are now pushing customers to

SEE PHONES, PAGE 5



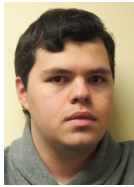
# 'Payback:' a film worth seeing 'for its originality, style and Mel Gibson'



COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

Originally released in 1999 and starring Mel Gibson, "Payback" is an old fashioned, noir influenced revenge film, based on the pulp fiction novel "The Hunter" by Richard Stark. The film is an homage to 1970s crime films, featuring a bad guy as our protagonist and '70s and noir style music.

## CULT CLASSICS



RAFAEL ABREU

Originally released in 1999 and starring Mel Gibson, "Payback" is an old fashioned, noir influenced revenge film, based on the pulp fiction novel "The Hunter" by Richard Stark. The film is an homage to

1970s crime films, featuring a bad guy as our protagonist and '70s and noir style music. Also, depending on which version you see, the film is also tinted blue bleach and uses narration, further making it a throwback noir movie. However, director Brian Helgeland had a different film in mind, one which featured an unsympathetic protagonist (who was made a bit more likeable in

the theatrical version), a somewhat different soundtrack, no voice over narration, and a completely different ending.

Helgeland released his director's cut in 2006, which now results in there being two versions of the same movie: the original theatrical cut and the "Straight Up" director's cut.

In both versions, Porter (Gibson) is out for revenge for being betrayed, and more importantly, wants his share of some robbed money. The sum may only be \$70,000, but Porter is determined to get it no matter what. Throughout "Payback" Porter goes through crooked cops, disposable men, and the top people in organized crime, never once caring about the consequences. The characters he runs into are all great, from a drug dealer, to the crooked cops, to triad gang members, and a dominatrix. Porter himself is a great character, definitely fitting the role of a bad guy (especially in the director's cut); even though we shouldn't really sympathize with him, I think he's a pretty cool guy either way, definitely harking back to those '70 crime protagonists of old.

"Payback" of course works on the technical side of things, providing great direction and scenes, ranging from establishing shots, to action scenes, to even minor things one may not give much attention to. The blue tinted theatrical version doesn't look too bad either, but I much prefer the non-tinted look of the director's cut, which really shows the colors of the world and characters. The music in the film is also good in both versions, but I think the director's cut also wins out here because it

uses no licensed music (theatrical does, which really doesn't surprise me); the score was re-written for this cut and matches the mood all too well. The score of the theatrical cut is good and even a little self-aware, while the score of the director's cut is more low-key, somewhat aware of what it is but still playing it serious.

The voice over narration works for what is arguably a funnier and lighter hearted theatrical version (not to mention the more bombastic score). Yes, "Payback" does have some humor in it, and the film was heavily marketed this way, but do not mistake "Payback" for being very funny. This is especially true with the director's cut, which has no voice over narration and is definitely not light hearted – not that it was ever light hearted to begin with. There's still humor, but it's less frequent. And of course, there are the different endings, which I won't spoil. Needless to say, one's more accessible than the other, but one definitely suits the overall film better than the other.

As can be gathered, I much prefer the "Straight Up" director's cut of "Payback." In fact, the director's cut is the only version available on Blu-ray and DVD (in the U.S. anyway). If you want to buy the original on DVD, you'll have to track down since it's now out-of-print. In truth, I think both versions are good for what they are, but I have no problems forever sticking with the director's cut. I highly recommend the film in general for its originality, style, and Mel Gibson.

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[rafael.abreu@fiusm.com](mailto:rafael.abreu@fiusm.com)

## Quality phones don't always come at premium prices

### PHONES, PAGE 4

pay a phone's full price in installments, such as AT&T's Next plan, but \$27 a month over two years doesn't sound as bad as \$650 all at once.

So who are the main buyers of

these budget phones? The highest demand has been from those with prepaid wireless plans, which are popular among first-time smartphone buyers as well as customers who have poor credit and have to pay the full price of phones up front. But even that is changing.

Doug Kaufman, Sprint's director of device strategy, says that 90 percent of phone sales with traditional contract plans had been for high-end devices, including year-old Apple and Samsung models. That's dipped to roughly 80 percent over the past half-year. Not everyone wants to pay \$27

monthly when a lower-end phone can be had for less than \$10 a month. And with the rise of family plans, parents are getting cheaper phones for their kids while choosing the latest and the greatest for themselves, he says.

Michael Weaver, an executive at the mobile-messaging firm Waterfall

in New York, bought a Motorola Droid Mini for \$50 with a contract, compared with \$200 upfront for a high-end phone. Others "feel like they need to buy (something) that can launch the space shuttle, but they don't use half the features," he says.

## WORLDS AHEAD



Nadia Alharbi, pictured above, hands out Saudi coffee representing Saudia Arabia at the World's fair. Alharbi is a level four student at the University's English Language Institute. Pictured right, Xiaokang Bao, first year healthcare business administration masters student plays traditional songs from his native inner Mongolia. A set of Matryoshka dolls, (top right) also known as babushka or Russian dolls, are placed at the table representing Russia.



ALL PHOTOS BY DIEGO SALDAÑA-ROJAS/THE BEACON



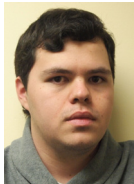
# 'Payback:' a film worth seeing 'for its originality, style and Mel Gibson'



COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

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ALL PHOTOS BY DIEGO SALDAÑA-ROJAS/THE BEACON



## SWIMMING

# Panthers break records at Mizzou Invite

**STEFANO RIVERA**  
Contributing Writer  
sports@fiusm.com

Fresh off its bye week, the women's swimming and diving team looked to use its 4-0 record as momentum for the Mizzou Invite, hosted by the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri from Nov. 20 to Nov. 21. The Panthers finished second overall, just behind the host team, Missouri.

The tournament began with star freshman swimmer Silvia Scalia, who broke the school record when leading off with the 100 backstroke in the 400 medley relay with a time of 53.3. Sophomore swimmer Jennifer Alfani also helped the Panthers with her personal best time of 23.31 in the 50 freestyle event.

Head Coach Randy Horner, was pleased with his team's performance on the first day of the invite.

"We had a solid day today. We gained a lot of experience for our freshmen and had some best times that were good to see mid season. Our depth is what excites me most about today. All of our relays were solid from A to D and that shows our program's growth," Horner said.

On Friday, Nov. 21, the second day of the tournament, the Panthers sat in second place with 182.3 points.

The Panthers set the new school record for the 200 medley relay posting a time of 1:41.78. Scalia, senior Klara Andersson, Alfani, and sophomore Jennifer Deist were able to work together to help break the record.

Senior Johanna Gustafsdottir finished in second

place in the 400 individual medley. With a time of 4:14.86, the Iceland native ended up with the second best time in FIU swimming history.

"I feel like we had a stronger day top to bottom today. The ladies relaxed a bit more and had fun. That's the key to

“

We competed well this week. We beat some very good teams from the Big 10 and Big 12 and that's a feather in our cap.

Randy Horner  
Head Coach  
FIU Swimming

”

swimming fast. It has to be fun, and that's where the team effort comes in," said Horner.

Entering Saturday, Nov. 22, the Panthers were in second place yet again with 414 points.

Panther divers freshman Rebecca Quesnel and sophomore Lilly Kaufmann contributed to the efforts. Quesnel's best score, 248.85, came in the finals and Kaufmann's, 232.40 came in the prelims. Both placed into the FIU record books for their respective events.

Once again, Scalia showed why she won Conference

USA swimmer of the week two weeks ago. Scalia moved into second in FIU history in the 200 backstroke with a time of 1:55.76 in the prelims. She bested her prelim time during the finals, clocking a 1:55.55 time and finished second in that event.

Gustafsdottir showed no mercy in the 200 breaststroke, finishing with a personal record and first in school history for her event.

Junior Valerie Inghels had no problem breaking the school record in the 200 butterfly. Finishing with a time of 1:58.43, she broke the record by nearly a full second. Inghels ended up finishing second in her event.

On the third and final day alone, a combined eleven swimmers and divers ended up in the FIU record books.

Horner was very happy with how his team performed at the Mizzou Invite.

"We competed well this week. We beat some very good teams from the Big 10 and Big 12 and that's a feather in our cap. We have a lot of work to do still to achieve our goals, but this meet was a great mid season evaluation," said Horner

The Panthers proved to be relentless ending up with 586 points edging the University of Nebraska and the University of Illinois from the Big 10, and West Virginia University from the Big 12.

The Panthers don't compete again until they host in-state team University of North Florida on Wednesday, Dec. 17. They hope to use their strong performance at the Mizzou Invite to propel them to a (5-0) record.

## FOOTBALL

# Miami Dolphins collapse in fourth quarter, lose to Denver Broncos

TNS STAFF

Another fourth-quarter lead against a quality opponent.

Another fourth-quarter collapse by the Dolphins' defense.

C.J. Anderson ran 10 yards untouched to the end zone, completing a Broncos rally and sending Miami home with a 39-36 loss that was as painful as it was familiar.

Yet again, the Dolphins could not protect a lead, surrendering 22 points in the fourth quarter alone.

And the offense, which had been so good in the first half, failed when the Dolphins needed it the most. With the Dolphins down by four and driving, a Ryan Tannehill pass bounced off Jarvis Landry's usually sure hands and into the arms of T.J. Ward.

That led to a 2-yard touchdown pass from Peyton Manning to Wes Welker, putting the game away.

Manning finished 28 of 35 for 257 yards and four touchdowns. The Dolphins (6-5) surrendered 201 yards on the ground.

Tannehill did connect with Jarvis Landry for a touchdown

late, Landry's second of the day, but Denver (8-3) fell on the inside kick to survive. Tannehill went 26 of 36 for 228 yards, three touchdowns and the untimely pick.

The big question in the buildup to Sunday's game was how the Dolphins would deal with Denver's rush ends. Their answer on the first drive: run the ball and stay out of third-and-longs.

Miami went 80 yards in seven plays, capped by Daniel Thomas' first touchdown of the season, a 3-yard run.

The Broncos answered with a sustained drive of their own on their initial drive, moving to the red zone before Jamar Taylor dropped Jacob Tamme short of the sticks on third down. Brandon McManus boomed through a 38-yard field goal to put Denver on the board.

The Dolphins, meanwhile, kept the foot down on the pedal. Tannehill capped an eight-play, 47-yard drive with a 1-yard touchdown on a designed run, his first rushing score of the season.

Manning answered right back, connecting with Demaryius Thomas on a 5-yard touchdown pass. Jelani Jenkins' coverage

## GIMME THE ROCK



KRONO LESCANO/THE BEACON

Sophomore guard Ray Rodriguez dribbles the ball down the court in the game against Florida Memorial University on Friday, Nov. 21. FIU won 74-48.

was good. Manning's throw was better.

And here's how the Dolphins answered: they overcame three fumbles, in the same possession, and the loss of left tackle Ja'Wuan James to a stinger, yet scored nonetheless.

Tannehill directed a 10-play, 87-yard drive with a 5-yard touchdown strike to Mike Wallace.

Denver answered right back, and Manning was terrific. First, he connected with Emmanuel Sanders for 35 yards down the left sideline. And then he made it count with a 14-yard touchdown connection with Thomas. The drive took just 1:42 off the clock

and cut Miami's lead to four points at the half.

Just how close was it through two quarters? Both teams finished the half with 212 yards of offense.

The Broncos had controlled the ball for nearly seven minutes to start the second half, and didn't get a point to show for it. Manning gave himself up for a sack on third down, and McManus missed from 33 yards.

Special teams bit the Broncos again, as Isaiah Burse coughed up a punt, thanks to a hard hit by Damien Williams. John Denney recovered the fumble, and the Dolphins were in business deep in Broncos territory.

And the Dolphins dodged a bullet, thanks again to a Denver miscue. Tannehill appeared to throw an interception on third-and-10, but a defensive holding by Ward kept the drive alive. Tannehill made it count by rifling a 5-yard touchdown pass to Landry.

But the Dolphins suffered a double-whammy on their next play. Already without Cortland Finnegan, they lost Jamar Taylor to a shoulder injury. And Manning connected with Thomas in the end zone for the third time. The converted two-point try made it a three-point game with 14:09 to play.



## BASKETBALL

# Women's basketball searching for a win after three game losing streak

REBECCA CHARUR

Staff Writer

rebecca.charur@fiusm.com

The Panthers hosted the Cleveland State University Vikings on Sunday, Nov. 23, in their third regular season game. With this third game of the season, however, also came the team's third loss.

The Panthers came out strong, opening the first half with a 6-0 lead. Cleveland State quickly climbed back into the game and for some time the two teams matched up relatively evenly.

The game was lost in the first half from behind the arch. Cleveland State shot 66.7 percent from the three, knocking down six of their nine attempts from the field. Senior guard Kiersten Green alone hit five of those threes and shot a perfect five for five.



KRONO LESCANO/THE BEACON

Sophomore forward Kiandre'a Pound does a layup against Cleveland State on Sunday, Nov. 23. The Panthers lost 65-73.

“It felt pretty good [to record a double-double] but we still lost the game. We wanted to win, we're 0-3. We've been losing over and over.”

Kiandre'a Pound  
Forward  
Women's Basketball

The Vikings cemented their chokehold on the game in the first half, after holding FIU without a field goal in five minutes. The Panthers went into the halftime break trailing 42-28.

The story of the night, however, was in the performance of redshirt freshman forward Kiandre'a Pound, who recorded her first collegiate double-double with 24 points and 14 rebounds. This influence

was seen particularly in the second half.

Coming out of the break, the Panthers appeared to have gained new life. Pound lead the way, laying in the first points of the half. After the Vikings knocked down another three pointer, a back and forth exchange of baskets ensued. The Panthers, at this point, were able to successfully match and even exceed the intensity that the Vikings had brought in the first half.

With about 15:09 left in the game, Pound hit two free throws to pull FIU within single digits. This sparked a 14-6 run that would eventually pull them within one.

“It felt pretty good [to record a double-double] but we still lost the game,” said Pound, “We wanted to win, we're 0-3. We've been losing over and over.”

Unfortunately, the inexperience of a young FIU team coupled with the dominating shooting performance of Cleveland State from behind the arch proved to be too much.

The Panthers pulled within three one last time after three consecutive baskets scored by junior guard Taylor Shade. Still, even with solid second half performances from Shade and Pound, the Panthers could not erase the lead that the Vikings had built up in the final minutes of the game when they once again pulled away.

“I thought it was a nice effort by a lot of people but you know we did not play smart down the stretch,” said Head Coach Cindy Russo.

Despite opening the game with back-to-back layups, senior forward Tynia McKinzie barely saw any action in the second half, spending the half on the bench.

FIU will continue their four-game home stretch this week with the commencement of their annual Thanksgiving Classic. They are scheduled to play Arizona State University, and University of Toledo or University of Virginia, where they will be on the hunt for their first win of the season.

## HOCKEY

# Panthers rally to force overtime, but fall to Predators in shootout, losing 3-2

TNS STAFF

The Florida Panthers will have to wait at least another year to experience what it is to party like it's 1999.

In Music City, at least, where Saturday they continued a victory drought that extends to the last millennium with a 3-2 loss to the Nashville Predators in a shootout.

Rookie scoring sensation Filip Forsberg scored the winner in the fourth round of the shootout, after the Panthers scored twice in the final minute of regulation to salvage an unlikely point.

The Panthers have not won here since Dec. 11, 1999. They have now lost seven times and tied twice since then.

The Panthers went 2-1-1 on a grueling four-game trip that included visits to three of the top four teams in the Western Conference. They begin a four-game homestand Monday against Minnesota.

The Panthers nearly pulled off a stunner. They were seemingly headed for lackluster defeat before desperation goals by Rocco Grimaldi and Jimmy Hayes in the final minute of the third period forced overtime. The Panthers had mounted little offense in the preceding 59 minutes.

What Florida had to celebrate this night was a

remarkable performance by goalie Roberto Luongo, who almost single-handedly kept them in the game.

Under a relentless Predators assault, Luongo stopped 48 shots. The one that finally got past him just a minute and a half before the second intermission was a freak bank-shot. Colin Wilson flipped it over from behind the Panthers net and it ricocheted in off the back of Luongo, apparently off his helmet.

Nashville seemingly had the game iced with seven minutes remaining when wide-open Matt Cullen took a centering pass out front from Derek Roy and fired it home on a shot Luongo said deflected off a defenseman.

The Panthers have been tough on the West, coming in 5-2-1. But they looked every bit like a team that had just played three tough games in five days in California, which they had, winning twice.

“We're playing really tight hockey, and when we've got 20 guys buying in we get a chance to beat some good teams,” Panthers coach Gerard Gallant said after morning skate.

The sensational play of one gave them a chance, but the Panthers mounted little in the way of offense most of

the night, and Pekka Rinne stopped their first 28 shots.

One of Luongo's toughest saves was on a Predators rush in the second period while the Panthers were on a power play in the second period. Earlier, he gloved a one-timer by James Neal on Nashville's high-scoring top line.

The Panthers' penalty-kill unit did a nice job of helping him hold off a minute and a half of 5-on-3 early in the third period. The Predators are one of the poorer teams on the power-play, but they are one of the best on 5-on-5, and they showed it as they came at Luongo in waves with precision passing that created countless openings to the Panthers' net.

Luongo came in 16-13 with a 2.19 goals-against average vs. the Predators. Most of that was while with Vancouver.

Typical of the last game of a long trip, the Panthers had trouble keeping pace with the energy of the Predators, who were beginning a four-game homestand. The Predators, among the leaders in the West have been tough on everyone in Bridgestone Arena, where they are now 7-1-1.

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## Homesick for the holidays

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MOSQUERA  
NETZKARSCH

Feeling homesick is one of the hardest things a student will experience when away from college. Nobody wants to miss out on the college experience, but being away from family around the holidays sucks.

When leaving the nest and flying into freedom, we leave behind a lot: our loved ones, our friends, our moms who are always there to comfort us on a bad day or our dads who can cook up our favorite meal.

Once you leave for college you must create new traditions with new friends in a new environment. It's your chance to do things your way.

Being around the few things that remind you of home is not the best remedy for homesickness. Your best bet is to make your apartment or dorm

into a home away from home. It's easy to run from the unfamiliar, but the real challenge you will experience is to face your fears and cope with them.

In this case, you could go out and meet new people on campus or in your neighborhood. Making new friends will make it much easier to go through rough times, and you won't feel so lonely during the holidays while you're away from home.

I never cared much for holidays when I lived in Spain because my parents treated them as regular days. I feel we should be grateful for our families every day, not only on Christmas. But in the United States, this is not the case.

There are Christmas-themed decorations and songs in every retailer and grocery store. Commercials on TV show happy families spending time together and feasting at a dinner table. Even though these families are paid actors, it saddens me knowing my family is

### CHANGING NEWS



JUNETTE REYES/THE BEACON

Martin Baron, executive editor of the Washington Post, speaks with moderator Robert Hirsch, managing editor at the Miami Herald about media, journalism, and the future of news in the digital age on Wednesday, Nov. 19. "[We] need to understand how people are consuming information these days," he said.

so far away. It is because of these cheerful holiday ads and jingles during the holidays that I miss my parents, my brother and my pets a little more.

Thanks to Skype and several messaging apps, I am able to stay in touch with my family and talk to them at anytime. This helps me cope with holiday homesickness.

Often times I'll go out with friends and participate in several group exercise classes at the Biscayne Bay Campus Recreation Center. Cooking also distracts me from missing my family no matter what time of the year. I enjoy experimenting with baking and every once in a while I make some really good brownies when I'm missing them the most.

The University offers different opportunities to meet new people before and during the holidays. For instance, on Wednesday, Nov. 26, at 4 p.m. the Multicultural Programs and Services LGBTQA Initiatives is hosting a Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner in Wolfe University Center room 155. This is a great chance

for those college students who have no family to spend Thanksgiving with, to make new friends in school.

Being alone during the holidays can be hard to deal with, but hard times provide the opportunity to grow and possibly have a wonderful experience.

[alex.mosquera@fiusm.com](mailto:alex.mosquera@fiusm.com)

## Students trot for turkey and less fortunate

FIUSM STAFF  
[bbc@fiusm.com](mailto:bbc@fiusm.com)

With the holiday spirit of Thanksgiving in the air, students will get to "trot," for some turkey at this year's 27th Annual BBC Recreation Turkey Trot on Nov. 26.

Hosted by the BBC Student Affairs Campus Recreation Center, students will have the opportunity to burn calories through different competitive races at the campus.

There will be a men's and women's division composed of a three-mile run and a two-mile walk. Participants will meet at the Wolfe University Center Panther Plaza

in front of the WUC building. Those who will run must arrive at 3 p.m. and those who will walk will meet at 3:30 p.m.

First place winners in each category will take home a Thanksgiving turkey and a gift basket. However, the first five runner-up's in each category will also be recipients of the turkey prize. The prizes are limited to one person per household since the competitions are open to the community.

There will be a fruit and water station, and a stretch station on site.

To register for the event, competitors need to register at [active.com](http://active.com) and enter

keywords: "FIU BBC Turkey Trot." There will be a packet pickup on race day at the plaza from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. Students enter free while non-FIU community members must pay a \$5 fee. Participants must be 16 or older.

To assist the less fortunate FIU students, trotters are encouraged to donate to the Student Health Services' FIU Student Food Pantry. Items needed are canned fruits, canned veggies, canned meat, tuna, peanut butter, rice, and pasta or any non-perishable items. Their donation box will be found at the Panther Plaza.

John Harris, a junior biology major,

said that the Turkey Trot will be a great way to burn some calories before a feast.

"I think it's a different way to celebrate Thanksgiving, especially since we all feast on that day," Harris said. "It could be good to take a run before munching on all the food."

Participants are encouraged to arrive on time. Sneakers and comfortable clothing are recommended. For more information, please contact the BBC Rec Center at (305) 919-4701.

## Florida's college grads have lower student loans

TNS STAFF

Graduates of Florida colleges are less likely to be saddled with student loans when they graduate, a new study shows.

Slightly more than half of Florida's students leave school with loans compared with seven of 10 nationally, reported the nonprofit Institute for College Access & Success.

Seven of Florida's 11 public four-year schools reported that just under half of their 2013 graduates borrowed to cover their college costs. New College of Florida had the lowest percentage of students taking out loans -- 39 percent -- followed by the University of Florida's 43 percent, the institute found.

Those who did borrow at Florida's four-year public and nonprofit colleges took out an average of \$24,017 in loans,

nearly \$4,400 less than the \$28,400 national average.

Florida's comparatively low tuition at public universities helps many students avoid or take out fewer loans, said Debbie Cochrane, research director at the Institute for College Access & Success. Each Florida public school sets its own tuition and fees, but prices averaged about \$6,100 for the 2012-2013 school year. That's about \$2,800 a year less than the national average of \$8,893 at a public university reported by the New York-based nonprofit, College Board.

"Tuition is much lower here than what you see around the country," said Sean Snaith, director of the University of Central Florida's Institute for Economic Competitiveness.

The state's Bright Futures scholarships -- awarded to

high school seniors for academic excellence -- also have helped Florida students avoid debt, he said.

Many of Florida's public universities also award scholarships and grants to help students in addition to the state and federal financial aid they receive, said Cochrane, of the Institute for College Access & Success.

FIU, for example, gave grants and scholarships to 49 percent of its incoming freshmen, amounting to an average award of \$3,125 in the 2012-2013 school year, according to federal data.

Meanwhile, FAU awarded 37 percent of its incoming students scholarships and grants that averaged \$2,935 in the 2012-2013 school year.

"That all helps," Cochrane said.