

Tuition revenue to improve financial aid, advising

REBECA PICCARDO
Staff Writer

State universities will experience a 1.7 percent tuition increase for the 2013-2014 academic year, an automatic inflation adjustment triggered by Gov. Rick Scott's veto of a 3 percent increase.

The increase will equal a \$1.75 increase per credit hour, or an extra \$21 a semester for a student enrolled in 12 credits.

Florida state law requires that resident undergraduate tuition per credit hour increases at the beginning of each fall semester at a rate equal to inflation. Although it is illegal to reject the automatic tuition increase, Gov. Scott is lobbying for universities to cut tuition rates by the same percentage to prevent tuition hikes for students.

University officials said, however, that the additional

revenue is needed to compensate for the losses generated by the downturn in the economy and state budget cuts.

The automatic tuition increase is also being triggered because larger tuition has been written into previous budgets approved by the Board of Governors.

Due to an annual work plan meeting, members from the Board of Governors were unavailable for comment by press time.

"The state seems to be restoring money that was cut before and may be providing some additional money beyond that," said Vice President of Governmental Relations Steve Sauls in an interview with Student Media. "Some of that might be a small tuition increase."

Ken Jessell, senior vice president and chief financial officer of the Board of Trustees, said the University estimates the

JOB FAIR



ROBERTO JIMENEZ/THE BEACON

8th Annual Federal Government Statewide Conference hosted by FIU's Career Services.

increase will generate approximately \$1,600,000 in additional revenue.

There will be more funds for financial aid and employment at the university at a cost of less than \$2.00 per credit hour.

"The University has to be able to maintain itself," said Francesa Rosario, junior jour-

nalism major. "[It] has to charge accordingly and tuition fees must reflect the state of the economy."

However, not all students agree with how tuition is affected by the economy.

"I don't think the tuition should increase with inflation because salaries don't increase with inflation," said Jessica

Pascual, sophomore criminal justice major.

Students are concerned about automatic tuition hikes on top of all the other expenses.

"Tuition hikes really affect college students," said Vianca Picart, junior criminal justice

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Court strikes down Defense of Marriage Act

REBECA PICCARDO
Staff Writer

Last Wednesday proved to be a major victory for the gay rights movement in the United States, when the Supreme Court had a 5-4 ruling to take out a section of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which denied federal benefits to same-sex couples.

Although last Wednesday proved to be a major victory in favor of gay rights, not all members of the LGBTQA community agree with the importance given to the marriage issue.

"We, as a LGBTQA community, should question why access to basic human rights, like health care, should

hinge upon marital status in the first place," said Bobby Joe Bracy, Jr., a second-year law student.

Justin Santoli, a sophomore in elementary education and the president of the FIU Stonewall Pride Alliance club, said, "marriage is only one component of the gay rights movement."

According to Bracy, there are other issues that affect young members of the LGBTQA community, such as the rising HIV infection rates, which have not given enough attention recently due to the push for same-sex marriage.

According to Santoli, regardless of age, the DOMA ruling is a huge stepping stone in changing public opinion.

The Supreme Court's ruling also declared that the

2008 Proposition 8 was unconstitutional and called for the resumption of gay marriages in California.

The ruling does not require that states recognize same-sex marriages performed by other states, however.

Although the DOMA ruling advanced gay rights in some states, it causes uncertainty for same-sex couples in other states, including Florida, which do not recognize same-sex marriage.

"We're only talking about Section 3 of DOMA," said Cyra Choudhury, associate law professor, in an email. "What the ruling did not do is require states to extend full faith and credit to foreign same-sex marriage."

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University misses its Fresh Foods Company

AILYS TOLEDO
Contributing Writer

Students and patrons will have to go about their summer days at the University without Fresh Foods.

The dining location is receiving a top-to-bottom renovation, scheduled for fall 2013 completion.

Together, the University, Aramark and Fresh Foods Company recognized the desire for a more social gathering on campus.

"The more open and inviting atmosphere will encourage social interaction and foster collaboration between students

and faculty," said Felecia Townsend, director of business and services.

When Fresh Foods was first built in 2002, it was located at the end of the Graham Center, next to the Panther Dining and Orientation offices. In 2004, the entrance of the restaurant was remodeled and relocated during the renovations of GC into the Atrium.

Since the minor change in 2004, the restaurant is now undergoing a total interior and exterior makeover.

The process of the renewal is divided into three phases.

Phase One will expand

Fresh Foods into Panther Dining's and Orientation offices previous locations and will install new seating, including booths and a lounge area. New stations and equipment will produce menu items like gluten-free and vegan food options.

Townsend said Fresh Foods offers a personalized, innovative dining experience customized for the University community.

"I am celiac and finding places to eat that offer a good and healthy variety of gluten-free meals is hard, so I'm happy that such a well-known place is investing in the FIU



ANDRES CARDENAS/THE BEACON

Workers continue to complete renovations to the Fresh Foods Company, which are set to be complete by fall 2013.

community's health," said Vanessa Salcedo, senior architecture major.

Fresh Foods has added new items to its menu to cater to students and pro-

mote their health, while

FOOD, PAGE 2

WORLD NEWS

Progress in peace talks

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said he is optimistic about narrowing the gaps between Israel and Palestine after visiting the region last week. Kerry is working on a “package” that may include release of Palestinian prisoners in Israel and large amounts of international aid to the Palestinians. Israeli agreement to allow Palestinians to launch new development projects in the West Bank and a Palestinian pledge to halt their campaign of seeking recognition of their independence are also expected.

Civil war results in big losses for Syria

A Syrian government minister has reported that two years of fighting and civil war has left the country with \$15 billion in losses to the public sector with damage to over 9,000 state buildings. Former Syrian Planning Minister Abdullah al-Dardari recently estimated the overall damage to Syria’s economy at \$60-\$80 billion.

Allies respond to NSA spying allegations

Key foreign allies have lost confidence in the Obama administration and have threatened investigations and sanctions against the U.S. over reported secret surveillance programs that installed listening devices in European Union offices. According to German reports, the NSA planted bugs in the EU’s diplomatic offices in Washington and infiltrated the building’s computer network.

For more world news, check out www.FIUSM.com.

Tuition set to increase 1.7 percent

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major. “We have so many things to pay for already, and higher tuition makes things even more difficult.”

However, part of the increase in funds will be applied to financial aid, which will counteract the tuition increase in some cases.

“Half of the increase will be allotted to need-based financial aid,” said Jessell.

The average increase after applying the need-based financial aid is \$10.50 per semester. Some students will pay the full \$21.00 but the students with the greatest financial aid need will pay \$0, according to Jessell.

“I don’t see how a \$21 increase per semester is so horrible, especially if part of it will allow for more financial aid,” said Rosario.

Seventy percent of the incoming revenue towards financial aid is used for need-based aid, according to Director of Financial Aid Francisco Valines.

The 70 percent of need-based aid will fund the University grant of \$2,000, the upper division grant of \$2000, the leverage grant of \$2,000 and the graduate need grant of \$5,000.

The remaining 25 percent is split: 10 percent for academic based scholarships and 15 percent for administering the aid programs.

“The other half will be used to hire additional advisors to better serve our undergraduate students,” said Jessell. “This will help them plan schedules and ensure they are taking the correct courses to assist them in graduating as quickly as possible.”

While students may be pessimistic about the 1.7 percent tuition increase, the University said it intends to use the revenue from the tuition increase to help put the money back into students’ pockets by providing financial aid and improved advising.

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Marriage laws unclear in Fla.

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Gov. Rick Scott intends to continue enforcing Amendment 2, the same-sex marriage ban that was approved by 62 percent of voters in 2008.

“Governor Scott is right in that Florida will not have to recognize marriages from other states that are against its own public policy,” said Choudhury.

It is unclear how the DOMA ruling will affect same-sex couples living in states like Florida, where there are still same-sex marriage bans, which further divides equality states from discrimination states.

“The only clear immediate winners in the DOMA repeal are same-sex couples who were married in an equality state and who remain there, or go to another equality state,” said associate law professor Jose Gabilondo in an email.

According to the associate director of the LGBTQA Initiative at FIU, Gisela Vega, there are still some benefits that are valid at a federal level and can affect couples living in states like Florida.

Immigration is one of the cases which consider same-sex marriage valid at a federal level. This means that a couple can claim residency for their non-citizen partner now that DOMA has been struck down.

According to the Miami Herald, for immigration purposes, same-sex marriages are valid even if it is

not recognized in the state in which you reside.

Aside from immigration, it is uncertain still whether same-sex marriages will be considered valid at a federal level for other benefits.

“If you get married in an equality state and then return to Florida, it’s not clear yet how many federal rights you’ll have,” said Gabilondo. “Certainly some, but maybe not all.”

Federal benefits will be determined on a case by case basis in states like Florida.

“There are so many families out there—so many couples—that aren’t being recognized,” said Gisela Vega, associate director of FIU LGBTQA Initiatives.

According to law professor Howard Wasserman, although DOMA does not directly change anything in Florida, indirectly it is

one more case in favor of gay rights that has opened the doors to constitutional challenge.

According to Choudhury, the next steps for Florida would be to repeal Amendment 2 and make the DOMA ruling apply to couples everywhere.

“I know that Florida is mobilizing,” said Vega. “I hope our students will mobilize, and spread the word that there is discrimination in our state.”

However, Bracy is doubtful that FIU’s students will organize against injustices after the arrests that took place at “Occupy FIU” last year.

In the meantime, according to Gabilondo, the focus will return on individual states to defeat the same-sex marriage ban.

“The states are the next front,” said Gabilondo.

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Fresh Foods Company renovates venue, menu

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allowing them to dine on a budget.

“Various meal plans have been created to encourage the FIU community to eat the fresh, healthy dishes at Fresh Food, and to save at least 10 percent each time they dine,” said Townsend.

In the meantime, students are missing their Fresh Foods.

“I prefer going to Fresh Foods during my lunch hour because it’s healthy and filling,” said Dalvys Perez, senior library technical assistant of Green Library Acquisitions. “But now that it is closed until the fall semester, I’ve had to explore other, less healthy options for lunch which I don’t like to do.”

The renovations have also affected schedules and routines in GC, specifically in regards to a mandatory evacuation held last Friday.

The building experienced a water

shutdown which is necessary to complete the plumbing improvements as part of the Fresh Foods renovations.

“We request[ed] a mandatory evacuation to replace a leaky water shutoff valve, providing new lines to service the new food stations,” said Alberto Delgado, senior project manager. “We are not anticipating another shutdown.”

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Economics: Diversifying the student body

MOISES FUERTES
Staff Writer

In wake of the Supreme Court's vacancy of the Fifth Circuit's decision, which upheld race-conscious admission to universities as constitutional, universities will now have to tackle the big question of whether or not a student's race truly diversifies the school. In turn, they must also be willing to go to court to prove that selecting students based on race does indeed diversify the student body.

While the Supreme Court may not find it effective to diversify the student body based on race, diversifying based on economic standing, in my opinion, is vital.

In 2011, the rate of non-Hispanic white children living in poverty was 12.5 percent, according to the United States Census Bureau. African-Americans, Asians, and Hispanics are the minority in the United States. But this trend is changing for the Hispanic and Asian communities, which, according to the Associated Press, could become the nation's majority by 2043. Even with these gains, 22 percent of all children live in poverty in the U.S., according to Greg Kaufmann's "U.S. Poverty: By the Numbers." In the same article, Kaufmann says that within that 22 percent, 39 percent are African-American and 34 percent are Latino.

What this data shows is that economic standing, particularly

for the poorest in the country, will change over time – today's minorities won't be tomorrow's.

Even though race to some degree is tied to economic standing, the poorest in the country should certainly be given priority over the rich and middle class in university admissions.

By making sure that a certain number of students are from the poor population in the U.S., the university acquires those students' point of view and incorporates it into the University.

Those students will participate in the student body, in their courses and in the school's organizations. These students will intermingle with the rest of the student body and through discussions these students will share their point-of-view and outlook on life.

What this does, University-wise, is twofold.

On one hand, it will diversify the student body by injecting different ideas and ideals based on differing economic histories of the student body. On the other, it will ensure that the poor acquire degrees, paving their way toward eventually becoming part of the middle class, which is vital to capitalism.

In this way, universities will not only diversify the student body, but exemplify democracy and the American dream.

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Law updates changing definition of marriage

MOISES FUERTES
Staff Writer

On June 26, 2013 the Supreme Court ruled Section 3 of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional.

Section 3 of DOMA defines marriage as a legal union between one man and one woman, and legally defined "spouse" to be used only if it was describing a person of the opposite sex in a marriage – "husband" or "wife."

How times have changed.

Since DOMA passed in 1996, gay rights activists have fought for equality persistently. Overall, there has been an enormous growth in tolerance and overall acceptance of same-sex relationships since the 2000s. Today, 13 states and the District of Columbia have legalized same-sex marriage.

With the ruling on June 26, the gay community has received an enormous victory. Even though striking down section 3 of DOMA doesn't legalize same-sex marriage throughout the United States, it does equalize same-sex marriage in terms of spousal benefits in states where same-sex marriage is legal.

"It seems pretty clear that legally married same-sex couples where one member is employed by the federal government are entitled to spousal benefits, just the same as any other married couple," said Dylan Matthews of The Washington Post. In the same article, Matthews mentions that it will probably be trickier for other spousal benefits, particularly if the same-sex married couple lives in a state where same-sex marriage has not been legalized.

Although laws will have to be clarified – especially since the Supreme Court neglected to answer the broader point on U.S-wide same-sex marriage – the fact that such an important section of DOMA was found to be unconstitutional is no small victory for the gay community.

There is a strong comparison between the marriage equality movement and the civil rights movement, and for good reason. Both of these movements have a foundation in equality for all. If history is any indication, equality will come one step at a time. For the LGBT community, this happens to be a huge one because it validates their plight.

Democracy is a wonderful thing.

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THE BEACON | Editorial

University's plans sailing ahead of students

Move over, Biscayne Bay Campus students, you may soon share your campus with Royal Caribbean performers and entertainers. According to a plan by the University, they are to take over Bay Vista Housing.

While this is a tentative plan that has yet to be finalized, The Beacon is concerned about where this plan is taking BBC.

This comes at a time when the University has expressed interest in promoting student life at BBC. The Student Government Association allocated \$2.5 million to help promote student life at BBC by renovating Panther Square. The funds used were intended for emergency purposes.

These goals are contradictory and we are guessing that the latter will take a backseat to the University's \$2.2 million business deal.

No housing and non-students on campus? So much for fostering student life at BBC.

Having this foreign program on campus will perpetuate student suspicions of a lack of unity, spirit and sense of home at BBC. It will further diminish the "college experience."

The experience has become show up for class and get out of there before the traffic gets any worse.

Royal Caribbean performers will not be the only non-FIU persons on BBC. Maritime and Science Technology Academy students may be using the campus as well as there is an expansion plan which entails bringing MAST students to FIU in order to give those high school students taking dual enrollment courses at MAST the opportunity to experience college life.

The University hopes that when these MAST students are ready for college, FIU will be their top choice to finish their degrees.

With all of these changes, The Beacon believes that student life is getting pushed out instead of being included.

Student life on a college campus is vital to both happiness and excitement that surrounds the University.

Whether it is a Greek organization meeting, the astronomy club or student government, students need somewhere to go once their classes end that besides their home.

Give students more of a reason to hang out on campus. During the week, students already have to share the basketball court, tennis courts and swimming pools with elementary school children enrolled in summer camps.

If students have to go off-campus to do these sorts of things, then why stay for anything other than classes and homework?

We think the students at that campus need to be invested in more, especially with one of the university's largest programs at BBC, Hospitality.

Students are investing enough money into their education and we think that it's time the University reinvested that money into keeping students on campus. Help student organizations out by investing more money in them to give them more options when it comes to staying active and involved on-campus.

It's the only way to achieve these lofty goals.

Sen. Rubio's English requirement is hypocritical

CARLOS COBA
Contributing Writer

Sen. Marco Rubio, the Cuban-American and Miami-born congressman of Florida, has been leading the passing of a bill that simultaneously legalizes 11 million undocumented immigrants and strengthens border security.

According to Rubio's official website, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013, also known as S.744, "contains the toughest border immigration enforcement measures in U.S. history. It is based on six required security triggers that must be achieved before the newly legalized are allowed to apply for green cards."

However, there is one colossal stipulation that Rubio's website fails to mention: the English requirement amendment that the senator is trying to introduce to the bill.

Under the requirements of the bill as it is currently written, those millions affected

by it only have to take English classes to be able to change their status. If the amendment is passed, no undocumented immigrant may become a citizen unless he or she passes an exam, thus proving their fluency in English.

To even propose this provision to the bill is blatantly hypocritical on the part of Rubio, given that he talked to millions of people in Spanish in order to get their vote. It seems that whatever the law was back in 2010 when Rubio was elected for Senate, did not seem to trouble him as much as it does now.

Fortunately, the English requirement amendment has not had much success in the Senate. According to a Boston Globe article by Noah Bierman, published on June 24, the requirement was not included within a passed amendment to the bill that focused on border security.

The case might be different in the House, as Bierman points out, since the current majority of the House is Republican.

Without a doubt, the Republican Party is

not too eager about the process of legalizing millions of immigrants with the stroke of a pen, which goes to show that Rubio probably added this counterproductive amendment to the bill to appease fellow Republicans. It would not be surprising if they passed this requirement, which would definitely not make it any easier for illegal immigrants to become legal residents.

I am an immigrant, son of an immigrant; my mother did not have an easy time learning English because she was so busy being a mother. That is the biggest issue: immigrants make efforts to learn English as quick as they can, but they are busy working and providing for their families. It's not fair to deny someone legal status just because they can't pass an exam; there are ways for immigrants to show that they are trying to improve their English.

Rubio's hypocrisy has surprised me for once and I'm sure others also feel that way.

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Students help community create a mural

JESSICA VALERIA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

For the past nine months, residents of Liberty City teamed up with FIU staff and students to create a metaphoric mural, which is now illustrated on a 40-foot wall close to the Full Gospel Worship Ministry on N.W. 15th Avenue.

What was once a forgotten and faded mural of the realities of life in Liberty City by African-American heroes is now a beautiful "Tree of Life." The new mural incorporates bright and warm colors that bring more life to the community. Since the 1960s, a lot has changed in Liberty Square; poverty, crime and a simmering rage have all slowly risen. This is the first of many steps they are taking to reconstruct this neighborhood and take it back to what it used to be.

The project grew out of the communication facilitation work that Charlene Eberly, assistant director of the Communication Arts Studio, and her colleague were doing last summer with the Liberty City Trust.

"We hosted a tour of the community and on the tour we passed the wall, which was faded and in disrepair," said Eberly. The idea of a mural was then proposed and one of the advisory board members, Judge Raphael Steinhardt, stepped up and offered to pay for the project.

The Senior Judge of Florida, Miami native and father of a fellow Panther made a call and got the wall repaired. Then, the Art and Art History department contributed by holding a series of focus groups with the local residents and the children who use the Liberty Square Computer Center, whose wall the mural adorns.

After discussing different ideas for the mural, one child asked, "What about a tree?"

From there, the artists developed the design: the "Tree of Life." And, like a living tree, it is designed to "grow." Leaves can be added in endless layers so the tree just gets bigger and more colorful.

"I love that it isn't too perfect; it has drip marks and crooked lines - like life. You can see the hands of the artists and the non-artists. Everyone has his or her own leaf and they all have a place on the "Tree of Life," Eberly said.

Kristy Wright, a graduate student in the Master in Global Governance program who works part time at the BBC Communication Arts Studio, really enjoyed working on the mural project.

"I had never been to Liberty City, but now I have left my mark on it," said Wright.

The most rewarding part was working with the kids, Wright said. Their excitement from having their



STEPHANIE MASON/THE BEACON

Residents of Liberty City teamed up with the University community to create a "Tree of Life" mural to inspire growth and improvement for Liberty City.

work permanently demonstrated in the community was beautiful to see and will be her inspiration to do something like this again.

In the future, they plan to host

another painting day and get more FIU students to come out and add their leaves, as there is plenty of room. For now, the success of the mural is there to represent not only

the FIU community, but also the prospect of growth and improvement in Liberty City.

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Theater Department spices up summer with festival

DANIEL URIA
Staff Writer

With MMC not quite as busy during the summer, some may expect on-campus activities to slow down as well.

But the Theatre Department has taken the opportunity to spice things up a bit with their Alternative Theatre Festival.

Running every weekend of the Summer B session, this festival provides an opportunity for the department to "do some things that we wouldn't normally do during the semester," said Stephanie Sandoval, one of the direc-

tors involved in this year's Alternative Theatre Festival.

"It's a crazy bachelorette party gone wrong," Sandoval said of her play, "Bachelorette," which opened this past weekend and will also run on July 4, July 5 and July 6. The play's risqué subject matter exemplifies the true alternative nature of the festival.

"There's sex, there's alcohol, there's drugs; there's mayhem, basically," said Sandoval. Based on the opening performance, Sandoval claims students can expect "a lot of laughs and a lot of 'oh my goodness' moments."

She also encourages students to stop by to prepare themselves for a hopefully slightly less wild night.

"It's very fast and fun, and it's something to do for an early Friday or Saturday night and you still have time to go out later," she said. "It's a great pit stop for your night."

Next up is "Reverse Psychology," a play directed by Marina Pareja, who took a cue from the play's title in encouraging students to come and check it out. "Don't come see the play, don't come and enjoy, don't come and laugh," she said,

in hopes that students will in fact do the opposite.

And for those that do, "Reverse Psychology" provides an interesting and relevant look at romance. "This play is about relationships in the most basic sense," says Pareja, "And the effect that people can have on each other." "Reverse Psychology" will be previewed on July 10 and runs the weekends of July 11 through July 13 and July 18 through July 20.

Then comes a play that is being fully produced and performed for the first time at FIU the weekends of July 25

through July 27 and Aug. 1 through Aug.3 with a preview on July 24.

"The play brings the impossible to the stage," said Director Michael Yawney. "If you took a dozen telenovelas and ran them through a blender, you would end up with 'A Thousand Years.'"

The play, written by Kenny Finkle, who was on hand to help with the production, tells the tale of a woman who takes a thousand year journey to be reunited with her hospitalized husband.

"She faces imprisonment for

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Students bringing comic book club to life



HOLLY MCCOACH/THE BEACON

JESSICA VALERIA RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

With about 300 clubs at our University, it doesn't seem like we would have room to add one more.

But FIU has recently opened Comics Club, an organization where students interested in comics can join and share what they love with others.

According to advisor and creator Fernando Ottati, the process for opening the club was "extremely smooth as the Student Organization Council and its advisor, Ivy Siegel-Mack, made it very easy."

According to Ottati, it only took five steps to create the club and as soon as the flyer was up, Ottati said he had members filling out the application eagerly.

His inspiration to open the club came from his passion and knowledge of comics. Besides being a graphic artist, he is also an illustrator. Prior to joining the Campus Life staff, Ottati held a conference titled "Comic Books on Film" that discussed the art of graphic novels, comics and their transition to Hollywood blockbusters.

In order to join the club, you need to have an interest in comics, superheroes

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University to host “crazy” Alternative Theater Festival

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murder, a tsunami, airplane crashes, amnesia and other disasters as she climbs mountains, crosses deserts and visits the far reaches of the universe all in an effort to find her husband,” said Yawney. He also claims that “A Thousand Years,” along with the rest of the festival plays must be seen to be believed.

“This summer’s plays are the ones that go too far for most theaters. The subjects, styles and stories are some that cannot be shrunk down to iPad size. You just have to be there,” said Yawney.

The festival will conclude on

the weekend of Aug. 8, Aug. 9 and Aug. 10 with a special production of Glengarry Glen Ross. This production will serve as a special alumni reunion featuring the entire 2002 cast reprising their original roles.

The Alternative Theatre Festival is known for pushing the boundaries of what is usually shown at FIU. “We tend to go for more comedic, avant-garde or fringe plays,” said Pareja. “This season is one of the most ambitious.”

“The festival is a lot of fun,” added Sandoval. “It’s a lot of wildness going on, on stage. You’re going to be laughing and having a

good time.”

Along with these plays, there will also be special events such as a July 4th cookout in the Performing Arts Center Rotunda and the South Florida League’s bed for “Get in Bed with the Arts” on July 25. All performances will begin at 8 p.m. at the Black Box Theatre located in the Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center on the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. Tickets cost \$10, cash or check only, and the alumni shows are University fundraisers with a suggested \$20 donation at the door.

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Toledo in Seville: My Study Abroad Experience

Before I decided to study abroad, I had a mindset of what college was about. As a commuter student, attending

COLUMNIST

IN HER WORDS

AILYS TOLEDO

college is part of a daily routine. I wake up for class, drive to school, stay a few extra hours to have lunch with a friend or do some studying in the library and then go home. Every semester brings a new variation in the schedule, but nothing new in terms of experience. This realization came about after last spring semester and it left me with an unsettling feeling. I wanted more out of my college experience. I wanted something that I could take with me for the rest of my life.

I first learned about the School of Journalism and Mass Communication Seville Study Abroad Program after reading a section of the SJMC Wire, which is a weekly email subscription I receive from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. It was a very short description, barely providing any information about the program, but it was enough to spark a great deal of interest in me.

I remember sitting in my cubicle at work and glancing over my shoulder to make sure no one was around so I could start researching more about the

program. It didn’t take me long to find a complete overview of the program through FIU’s Study Abroad website. The only problem was that the trip was two months away and I was getting a very late start into the program. I printed the web pages anyway and desperately waited until 5 p.m. so I could rush home and show my parents.

My parents are experienced world travelers. Together they have traveled to over 15 different countries around the world. My mom works in the criminal courthouse in downtown and my father is retired; whenever they plan a trip, it is not a last minute haul like I was doing. International trips are also very expensive, and this study abroad trip was no exception. The overall cost of the trip did not include airfare or the money I’d need for personal expenses, so making the dream into a reality would be no easy feat, especially if I was going to ask my parents for financial help.

I presented them with the information I printed out. I remember approaching them as if I was presenting a pitch for big-time executives of a company. It probably goes without saying that they were not completely on board with this opportunity.

“Such last minute decisions never go as planned,” my mom said. “This is money that we don’t have right now,” my dad explained. I left our little meeting

feeling discouraged and quickly erased the possibility of going from my mind.

About two weeks later, I was on my way home when I got an urgent call from my mom saying everything was fine and asking me to come home straight after work—she had a surprise for me. When I got home, I saw the same printed web pages from the trip and a check with the cost of the trip.

My mom hurried down the stairs and said to me, “Your father and I think this would be a great opportunity for you and if you are still interested in going, we want to help you.” It was entirely because of the help and support of my parents that I was able to have this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

The few months that followed were a combination of nerves, excitement, and intense planning. From attending orientation meetings, getting my passport renewed two days before the final deadline to submit all paperwork, to actually boarding the plane the day I was set to leave, I felt like I was watching someone else get ready for the opportunity. Nothing sunk in until I actually arrived in Seville and my journey began. My hope is to share this journey with you as I relive the memories, the lessons, and the unforgettable experience of my study abroad trip in Spain.

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How to deal with commitment issues

Q. Dear Nick,
How can I deal with a guy who is scared of commitment words like “boyfriend,” but obviously wants to date me?

V.H.
Junior
Biology Major

A. Dear V.H.,

We live in a fast-paced world where we are constantly asked to place labels, make commitments and “seal the deal.” Many people use words like: dating, going steady, hanging out, going out, getting serious, boyfriend, partner and husband. These labels help us to make sense of our world and allow us to understand where we fit into the dating equation. You might want to consider starting to date your man without labels or expectations and get to know him on a friend level. Many times this takes the pressure off defining the relationship and allows you to get to know each other as people. Many people define relationships in different ways. Once you and him have been “dating” or “hanging out” for some time, you may want to ask what you will use to define your interaction or how to introduce him to your friends. His aversion to labeling may not be his avoidance of commitment; it may just be his feeling that the label doesn’t mean anything. Good luck with your relationship and enjoy each moment as you experience it!

Be Well,

Nick



Nick Scheidt, M.S. is a Doctoral Psychology Intern at FIU Counseling and Psychological Services. He is a Clinical Psychology Doctoral Candidate from Carlos Albizu University. Once he completes his internship at FIU, Nick plans to work as a Psychologist, Writer, and Professor.

Do you have questions you would like to Ask Nick? Send an email to: Nscheidt@fiu.edu

Comic book club uniting as a “community”

COMIC, PAGE 4

and everything that relates to them. This includes superhero movies, graphic novel discussions and conventions.

The club’s mission is to promote “a community where the appreciation for comic books, graphic novels and superhero movies is encouraged,” according to Ottati.

In this club, members will be able to share their passion for comics

and superheroes through discussions, workshops, activities, events, lectures, movie screenings and trips to conventions and comic-related locations.

Some of these events and activities are already in the works.

President Jeffrey Sodusta described a few, such as taking a trip to the Florida SuperCon (an annual conference that celebrates Comic Books, Animation, Sci-Fi and Pop Culture) and hosting comic

trade trivia nights.

The club will also be hosting their first on-campus event, “Superman Fan Night,” which will be “Man of Steel” themed.

For future plans, the club is hoping to make trips to the best comic book store in South Florida, as well as a car museum that showcases different Batmobiles in Hollywood, Florida.

Sodusta encourages students to join even if

they have never been part of a club or if they have been active in others.

Even if you don’t have years of experience in the comic book world, this club welcomes you.

Irvin Lira, the club’s own vice president, just started getting involved with the comic craze. “I recently got into comics. More specifically this year,” said Lira.

Being a participant in this club has shown Lira the fun and culture behind

comics.

Lira hopes to promote the culture and make it aware to different students around campus, as “it’s something exciting and very enjoyable.”

With all the superhero movie releases, it’s a great time to open a club like this.

As for the feedback from our Panthers, Ottati mentioned it has been amazing.

The club began advertising in summer A and

they already have about 20 members.

The club just held their second general meeting and the suggestions keep on coming.

If you are interested in joining or learning more about “The Club where Superstudents are Born,” you can contact them at fiucomicsclub@gmail.com.

-life@fiusm.com

Panthers take the high road; moving on up

PATRICK CHALVIRE
Staff Writer

Amidst the struggles of having to face a postseason ban, the men's basketball team will also face a new foe in Conference USA.

According to the NCAA team rankings, Conference USA is ranked 11th in Division I, while the Sun Belt conference, where the Panthers' used to play in, is ranked 18th.

Coming off a season for the history books, the Panthers' will have to continue off that success, minus a coach and two starters who attributed to that unexpected season.

New coach Anthony Evans knows the struggles that are brought upon being a head coach, but understands the switch in conferences brings on new challenges for everyone, including himself.

"You're trying to lay that foundation," Evans said.

"Moving into Conference USA it's going to be different, there is going to be more challenges. All of us are going in with a new mindset, it's a new league, it's not the Sun Belt."

Old faces, new teams

FIU's assassin from behind the arc, Malik Smith, followed in the footsteps of former coach Richard Pitino and decided to finish his basketball career at the

University of Minnesota.

Smith wasn't the only Panther to leave what was once called home.

Guards Deric Hill and Juan Ferrales joined forces, dropped down to Division II and took a drive East to become teammates at Barry University.

Hill started off the season coming off the bench, but ranking 16th nationally in steals per game helped boost him to a starter position midseason.

Neither Hill nor Ferrales were offered scholarships, which led to the switch in venues.

"They [Barry] offered me and I didn't want to wait," Hill said.

"So I just took it. Barry just got a winning coach. They want to win, that's what they told me when they were offering me. It just made me want to go."

The trio aren't the only ones tagged as former Panthers. Rakeem Buckles, who missed all of last season due to NCAA rules after transferring from Louisville, may also head to Minnesota to join Pitino and Smith.

"There is some interest for Rakeem to go over to Minnesota," Evans said.

"It's something he wants to do. You want to be at a place where you feel comfortable with people you like. He came here for coach Pitino and he's going to Minnesota, he wants to join him."

Low grades may hurt Panthers in the long run



ROBERTO JIMENEZ/BEACON FILE PHOTO

The Panthers are preparing for their first season under new Head Coach Anthony Evans as well as their first season as members of Conference USA.

Last year's GPA for the basketball team were unavailable, but if the GPA for the 2011-12 school year has anything to say for it, the Panthers may need to spend more time hitting the books than hitting the court.

According to Phil Moses, director of the Student-Athlete Academic Center, the GPA for the Men's basketball team for the fall and spring of 2011-12, were 2.18 and 2.00 respectively, such numbers that are also looked at

by the NCAA in regards to the APR.

Not only do the scores range in the low category, but according to Moses, low grades and APR points were lost due to juniors and seniors, rather than freshman and sophomores.

Evans understands what low scores can do to a team, and though he was not at FIU during the time of the aforementioned GPA, he does know where to go next and knows the group of men he currently has.

"I've only been here a short time," Evans said.

"My experience with the people who are here, Joey De La Rosa, Tymell Murphy, they're motivated to be good basketball players, to be good students, to graduate and to do something with themselves. That's all I can focus on. Only thing we want to do is move forward in a positive way."

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Four new Panthers ready to take the stage

STEVEN ROWELL
Contributing Writer

This past season, the women's basketball team recorded a 20-win season and reached the WNIT for the second consecutive year. Following another successful season, Head Coach Cindy Russo added four new players to her squad for the upcoming 2013-2014 season.

Russo, who has mastered international recruiting during her tenure, brought in two players from overseas in Janka Hegedus from Budapest, Hungary and Nikolina Todorovic who hails from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Russo also brought in two players from the Sunshine State in Karrah Johnson and Kian-dre'a Pound.

Russo likes the mindset that these players bring into FIU as they feel they can contribute right away in their first season.

"These are four freshmen coming here and expecting to play and have that confidence," Russo said. "That's what I like about this group, because some kids when they are freshmen they are willing to sit back and take a look type of thing and are not sure they are ready."

Russo was asked if the four new freshmen will get playing time during their first season with the Panthers.

"I will look at that, but until we get on the floor, you just never know, but I am really optimistic that they can be contenders," Russo said.



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Head Coach Cindy Russo, left, signed two international players in Janka Hegedus and Nikolina Todorovic to FIU for the upcoming season along with Karrah Johnson and Kian-dre'a Pound

At 6 feet tall and hailing from Sebastian River High School in Vero Beach, Fla., Pound led her team to four district titles, and also won the state championship for class 7A in 2012. The incoming freshman averaged a double-double with 18.7 points and 10.8 rebounds per game. She also adds defense to her game as she averaged 2.5 steals and 1.7 blocks per game.

Johnson, a graduate from Lake Highland Prep School in Orlando, Fla., is coming off a senior season where she averaged a double-double with 11.0 points and 10.0 rebounds per game. Johnson was awarded Offensive Player of the Year honors in her sophomore season, and was an FABC all-start in her senior year. Johnson left Lake Highland Prep School as a 1,000 point scorer.

Todorovic played on the Bosnian National team and was a key contributor to seven straight titles in different categories. At 5 feet 6 inches tall, Todorovic averaged 25.0 points, 6.0 assists, 5.0 steals, and 4.0 rebounds per game for Gymnasium Banja Luka where she was team MVP for each of her four seasons.

Hegedus played at Eotvos Jozsef High School in her home country where she averaged 16.0 points per game. She also led her U16 Division B squad to a European Championship in 2010. The Hungary native stands at 6-foot-1.

Along with superstar Jerica Coley, who is entering her senior season, Russo returns 10 other players as the Panthers hope to reach the NCAA Tournament this coming season.

With the new recruits, the biggest issue according to Russo is depth.

"We have a strong selection of players, we are deep, we are strong and we will try to use as many [players] as we can," Russo said. The biggest thing though is being mentally tough."

The expectations Russo has for the new players are have nothing to do with the numbers they put up but more on the mental side.

"I am more of a mental coach and I believe that if a player is coachable, listens, and is disciplined you can win a lot of games," Russo said. "That's what I will be looking for in them and also their work ethic and responding to what he asks of them."

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Quarterback getting mentally ready for year

RHYS WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

When you become part of a historic football program, such as the one at Miami Northwestern Senior High School, you have to live up to that hype that is created. Sophomore quarterback E.J. Hilliard experienced the hype at Northwestern first hand.

“Any person that is familiar with the Miami Northwestern football program, knows that you have to be great and deal with a large amount of pressure while playing there. There is history to live up to,” Hilliard said.

“There are always guys who came before you that paved the way and were top notch athletes. That only makes it harder for you as an individual because you have something to live up to. You only go there to try and

live up to the hype and take on the challenge of trying to be better than the guys that came before you.”

Hilliard and Teddy Bridgewater, his former teammate at Northwestern and currently at University of Louisville, came up with a solution to remedy the high expectations that come with being the man behind center at Northwestern.

The duo came up with an acronym that would help them while on the field and while experiencing hardships in everyday life. They came up with “G.U.M.P.,” which stands for “Great Under Major Pressure.”

“Teddy and I took time to remember the great job that our parents did raising us and guiding us on to the right path as young teenagers in an environment filled with negative pressure, violence, and paths you don’t want to go down because there

are ones that do not lead to success,” Hilliard said.

“Knowing that my father walked the path before me, being a football player from the inner city – who had the ability to manage staying on the right path throughout high school – and Teddy’s mother being a strong individual woman who battled breast cancer really helped us initiate the idea.”

Why, though, did Hilliard and his former teammate Bridgewater take on the creation of a new term of life?

“We took on the responsibility and burden of term because we were the QBs, the leaders of our football team. Guys looked upon us to lead them, to come through when it counted the most and to bail them out of situations that were presented,” Hilliard said.

“Our parents are actually the initiators, caretakers and



BEACON FILE PHOTO

E.J. Hilliard has been working hard this off-season, trying to stay prepared and motivated.

inspirations of the term that we coined.”

Hilliard went on to add that when a person has the ability to get through an adverse situation, it has the chance to give whatever person gets through it an almost euphoric sensation.

“I take pride in it and what it stands for, I want this to be a brand and an inspiration for all student athletes. Not even just athletes but anybody that had or currently has challenges or obstacles that they are currently facing or just has any little bit of adversity in their life,” Hilliard said.

“We all want to be great, we all want to be the best we can be, because honestly we all face adversity and we will forever face challenges and obstacles in our lives.”

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Injuries plague Panthers at season’s end

DANIEL BREY
Contributing Writer

Players weren’t the only ones injured during the Panthers baseball season. Their record was hurt, too.

“We had the injury bug on us the whole year,” catcher Aramis Garcia said. “It was hard to develop a consistent pitching rotation with everyone getting hurt.”

Injuries to ace Mike Ellis and closer Michael Gomez undoubtedly contributed to a team Earned Run Average of 5.03, which ranked second to last in the Sun Belt Conference which led to the firing of pitching coach Drew French after only one year at FIU.

If the team ERA was not terri-

fying enough, the Panther defense was even worse.

FIU ranked dead last in fielding percentage and led the conference in errors committed.

If pitching and defense wins championships, the Panthers are far from one.

Garcia and Rios become backbone for FIU

Although the amount of negatives largely outweigh the positives, FIU could be optimistic about a couple of things: the first being the performance of Garcia.

Garcia, a Johnny Bench Award semifinalist, which is an award given to the best catcher at the

collegiate level, led the Panthers with 11 home runs and finished eighth in the conference with 51 runs batted in.

What is most impressive about Garcia is not his ability to hit homeruns in a league now dominated by the small ball, but his willingness to compete.

“It was a frustrating year no doubt,” Garcia said. “But we will continue to work hard in the offseason to prepare for next year.”

The second positive for this Panther team was the recruiting class, which featured local high school players such as Killian’s Mandy Alvarez and Coral Gables’ Dillon Maya, and also included freshman standout Edwin Rios.

Finally and most impressive of all this season was the play of first baseman Rios, who ended the season with a .332 batting average, 20 doubles, nine home runs and 52 runs batted in.

Rios led FIU in almost every statistical category, including errors and was voted Second-Team All National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA) Freshman All-American.

Rios, although limited in some aspects of his game, demonstrated at just 19 years of age exactly what his skill set contains.

Looking forward to Conference USA

After struggling in a small Division-1 conference this season, FIU will now transfer over to Conference USA, which contains far more competitive teams such as 2003 College World Series Winner Rice University.

FIU will need to improve their pitching staff which ranked second to last, walks allowed which FIU had the most in the Sun Belt, defensive play ranked dead last and in the Sun Belt conference and most importantly, health in order to be remotely relevant this upcoming season.

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Protests target Confederation Cup match in Rio

ENNY BARCHFIELD
Associated Press

More than 5,000 anti-government protesters marched Sunday near the Maracana stadium before a major international soccer match, venting their anger about the billions of dollars the Brazilian government is spending on major sporting events rather than public services.

Sharp clashes broke out several hundred yards away from the stadium before the game began, as a minor scuffle between police and a few protesters escalated.

Officers quickly quashed the unrest, unleashing a barrage of tear gas canisters and stun grenades, scattering the crowd, but not before some protesters retaliated

with Molotov cocktails and powerful fireworks.

Though smaller in size, the march was the latest in a wave of protests that has spread across this country in recent weeks. Many are calling the protest movement the biggest seen here in decades, with more than 1 million people having taken to the streets nationwide on the night of June 20.

The demonstrations have dwindled in size and frequency.

Still, the atmosphere was tense outside Maracana on Sunday. Some clusters of protesters tried to break through the security perimeter police set-up around the stadium, but were pushed back and not able to get past authorities.

President Dilma

Rousseff has suffered the brunt of the political damage. The first national poll conducted after the protests ignited showed a steep drop in her approval rating and throws in doubt what had seemed an easy re-election next year.

Rousseff decided to not attend Sunday’s final match of the Confederations Cup football tournament, which pits Brazil against Spain in what’s seen as a warm-up for next year’s World Cup to be hosted in Brazil.

Other top government officials and even football legend Pele are also skipping the match in a major embarrassment for a government that had hoped to use the World Cup and the 2016 Olympics in Rio to showcase Brazil’s arrival as a global power.

“People are angry with Congress, angry with the terrible hospitals and worse schools,” said Tania Nobrega, a 56-year-old psychologist protesting near Maracana in Rio. “But they don’t want Dilma’s head. People are sick of the status quo here, and that means they’re fed up not only with the (ruling Workers Party) but also with all parties.”

The demonstrations began earlier this month over a 10-cent hike in bus and subway fare in Sao Paulo before morphing into a nationwide movement denouncing a range of problems such as government corruption, poor education and health care.

The sudden outrage has bewildered the country’s political class.

Several city and state

governments reversed the hike on public transportation fares that sparked the first protests, but the demonstrators had moved well beyond that issue.

On June 21, Rousseff delivered a prerecorded prime time speech on TV that did little to calm the

protests. She then convened a June 24 meeting with protest leaders and all the governors and mayors of capital cities, in which she announced \$23 billion in new transportation investments. She also said she would import foreign doctors to work in

underserved areas while promising a five-point plan to focus on public services and corruption.

The president is expected to deliver to Congress early this week her proposal for a national plebiscite letting citizens vote on political reforms.



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Rising loan interest rates to affect students, economy

ANDREA SANMIGUEL
Contributing Writer

Subsidized student loan interest rates will increase to 6.8 percent, doubling from the 3.4 percent rate students currently pay.

Subsidized loans vary for students who have very low income and unsubsidized loans are for students whose families can help pay for their education, said Francisco Valines, director of Financial Aid.

Loans have maintained a 3.4 percent interest rate for about four years. A student will pay an additional \$1,000 over the life of a loan.

The jump will affect seven million people who will take out a loan this year, but will not impact students who already have loans -- currently 20,000 at the University, according to Valines.

"The increase will be counter intuitive to the economy and the emphasis that Congress and the president claim to place on education," said graduate student and current unsubsidized loan holder Anthony Sirven. "It provides a negative incentive for students pursuing an education to rethink their decision."

The hope is that the government is going to come up with

some kind of compromise or long-time fix so that we don't have to worry about this, said Valines.

However, Sirven predicts this will be a permanent change if no further action is taken.

"I looked at my options and realized that I have no other alternative if I want to get my education," said Sirven.

Granted, options are available for the struggling borrowers. The University has asked for the services of Gabriela Mendez as default prevention coordinator, who specializes in helping students with questions they may have about their student loans.

"I advise all the students to borrow conservatively, follow up with the amounts borrowed and the agencies servicing their student loans," said Mendez. "The key is to be informed and reach out in case of economic hardship."

The University provides funding available for those who qualify and file their FAFSA on May 1 of every year. It also encourages students to apply for scholarships, which are listed under the University's One Stop website.

Besides this, FIU encourages students to contact the school and the Student Government Association in regards to debt issues.

"SGA provides students with a legitimate, representative governing body with substantial resources dedicated to advocating for the interest of the students," said Oliver Diaz-Neda, SGA director of External Relations.

Student leaders advocated for a short-term solution with a focus on student need as opposed to partisan politics.

SGA has presented delegations, Congress members and their staff with statistical data on how a student loan interest rate hike would drastically affect our student population.

SGA has worked for years on the state and federal level through delegation trips, initiatives such as Aim Higher, letter writing campaigns and petitions to increase our visibility profile to those who represent us in Congress and in state legislature, said Diaz-Neda.

SGA and the Financial Aid Office advise that students educate themselves on the issues and reaches out to their respective representative or senator to push for the changes they desire.

"The best thing for students to do is to be aware of the issues so that decisions like this can be monitored and controlled," said Valines.

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Chorale courses harmonize between both campuses

VINSON PRESSLEY
Staff Writer

The shower is no longer the only place where you can hit the high notes of your favorite songs.

Starting this fall, students will be able to bring their interest to sing to a musical environment.

University Chorale with class sections MUN1340, MUN3343 and MUN5345 will be held at the Biscayne Bay Campus on Tuesdays from 7 p.m. to 9:45 p.m. in the Wolfe University Center Room 100.

Both courses are one credit each and will be taught by University and Master Chorales Director, Mary Adelyn Kauffman. Students will be exposed to classical as well as contem-

porary music during the course.

The course will be open to all members of the FIU community and no experience or audition will be required to participate in the ensemble. Students can sign up now since the courses are already in the catalog.

Kauffman said those students who sign up for the ensemble will be taught the technical aspects of music, such as how to read music, how to breathe correctly and how to produce sounds, so they will not be required to have extensive knowledge about music on the first day of class.

Although not much experience is required to participate in the ensemble, hard work is. According to the Division of Vocal/Choral Studies Coordinator Robert B. Dundas, entering the

world of music requires several hours of work a week.

"A lot of rehearsing, practicing and performing are an integral part of music," said Dundas.

The purpose of the ensemble is to give members of the FIU community who may not be music majors or have extensive knowledge about music a chance to pursue an interest in singing, as was mentioned by Kauffman. People want to sing but hesitate to do so due to lack of training, Kauffman said.

"Most people who say 'I can't sing,' just don't sing because of lack of experience," said Kauffman.

Dundas brought up the idea of creating a similar ensemble that was already at the Modesto A. Maidique

Campus to BBC and is very optimistic about these two courses.

"I have been pleasantly surprised from the positive feedback [from students and staff]. It is always been a good response," said Dundas.

Dundas mentioned the benefits of joining the ensemble as it will provide a "full rich experience" and give students an alternative to singing in the shower as well as sharper one's knowledge of music.

"I have a powerful belief in the power of choral music. It's hard to be in a bad mood when you're singing," said Kauffman.

"Everybody loves music and secretly loves to sing," said Eleanor Salinel, a freshman communications major who sang in a choir for two

years while in middle school. Salinel said she really likes to sing because it allows freedom of expression and stress release.

"It comes freely [and] if you have stress, just sing it out," she said.

If the courses are successful, there could be a possibility of bigger projects to come.

According to Kauffman, there will be a concert at the end of the fall semester that will include members from the ensemble courses as well as students who are music majors and are in the choir. This concert is scheduled for early December.

Kauffman is driven by one goal: "I want to get everybody singing."

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Program studies wetlands from space, begins global conversation

VICTORIA GARCIAS
Contributing Writer

There are theories that we came from the ocean; whether we did or not, the ocean is still a part of us.

Everyday we grow and live by surrounding waters hugging the Floridian state. But what do we have to do with these waters? And what do they have anything to do with us?

The answers lie within NASA's Water-Science of Coupled Aquatic Processes in Ecosystems from Space program.

WaterSCAPES' mission is to discover the connections between humans and the environment.

The program seeks to answer questions regarding how earth is changing and what the consequences are for life on earth. NASA and the program are researching wetland's water issues, climate and ecosystems to help answer these questions.

WaterSCAPES Director Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm recently spoke in a lecture in the beginning of the summer term titled "WaterSCAPES: Exploring Coastal Wetlands from Space" which informed students about the program and its research.

WaterSCAPES not only uses remote

sensing observations, but also incorporates mathematical models to support its findings on water cycles, vegetation, biomass dynamics and biodiversity. Although most of the research is done out of the Florida Keys and Everglades, Miralles-Wilhelm and his team are expanding their research to other parts of the world with similar ecosystems.

"What WaterSCAPES does which is really cool is that they study wetlands from space," said Elaine Pritzker, coordinator of the School of Environment, Arts and Society. "What is neat is that [Fernando] is a part of a larger effort to understand what is going on in our ecosystem and how we are a part of this larger system that is changing."

Pritzker said the program has also began work with people in South America.

"It started this sort of global conversation in our hemisphere by looking at how our wetlands and communities are interacting," said Pritzker.

Miralles-Wilhelm said in the future he wants to strengthen the relationship between NASA and wetland environments.

"Taking South Florida as an

example, [I want to look] at broader questions of climate, population, land use and other changes," said Miralles-Wilhelm.

The WaterSCAPES research program

is located at Biscayne Bay Campus and is open to student involvement.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID LAGOMASINO

Scenery during a fly over the Everglades going south towards Florida Bay.