

SPORTS

Cristobal: “Best class in Sun Belt history”

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National Signing Day for college football is where a championship run could begin. It's where the pieces that you have been assembling all throughout the year in recruiting become assembled into a finished puzzle, ready to suit up for their schools.

“We're going to find a way to get after the best guys we could possibly find regardless of the competition. We just no longer view ourselves as the little brother school,” head coach Mario Cristobal said.

At Miami Jackson Senior High, it was 5-foot-11, 185-pound wide receiver De'Andre Jasper who signed his letter of intent to become a Panther despite rampant rumors that Cristobal might leave the school just two days before.

To his coach, Nigel Dunn, Cristobal staying not only says a lot about him, but even more about



SHAWN STEVENS/THE BEACON

Mario Cristobal believes that this recruiting is the best the school has ever had. The Panthers received 19 in-state recruits and four from the state of Louisiana. Of those recruits, six of them were signed to play linebacker.

the program and the where it's headed.

“It says a lot about the program

itself,” said Dunn. “The fact that he would turn those down to stay

at FIU, and I still believe that FIU

is a better situation because of the talent pool here and the fact that now you have a school in Miami

that has their own stadium. I don't think it was that bad of a deal to do that, I thought it was a smart move.”

Jasper had 11 other schools that offered him scholarships. One of them ironically being Marshall, who played against FIU in the Beef 'O' Brady's Bowl. Although Marshall may have come out on top in that game, it's the Panthers who were able to come out on top on the recruiting trail.

“Them winning the bowl game and beating FIU wasn't really that big of a deal, because we have a new season coming up,” Jasper said. “I know we're going to be strong this year, and I feel like this is a big program on the rise,” Jasper said.

He finished his senior season with 27 catches for 421 yards and seven touchdowns, ranked 12th in class 5A for Miami-Dade schools. He also made second team All-Dade for the Athlete position.

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PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

Adjustments made to shuttles and parking lots

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Bill Foster, executive director of the Department of Parking and Transportation, sat down with Student Media to talk about the Golden Panther Express' status, new Panther mover routes, elimination of Panther Hall parking lot, the Parking Garage 6 site and changes to the CATS shuttle schedule.

BUS SHUTTLES NOT AFFECTED BY COACH AMERICA BANKRUPTCY

Coach America, which contractually operates the University's bus shuttles from the Modesto Maidique Campus to the Biscayne Bay Campus, filed for bankruptcy protection early January 2012.

The bus company, the second-largest motor coach fleet in the nation, is “restructuring,” according to Foster.

“Coach America is not going out of business, from what we hear. They were in touch with us immediately and told us that we were gonna hear it and give us a heads-up should it not go the way they expect it to go,” said Foster. Foster assured, however, that the transportation between both campuses would

not be interrupted.

“They have cancelled some of their smaller contracts, and we're aware of that. We are not included in that list and we do not anticipate being included in that list,” he said. “If Coach America was to go out of business, they would have to give us 30 days before they could go out of business. Within that period of time, we would find [another] company.”

PARKING TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE NEW PANTHER MOVER ROUTES WITH SGA

Within the last four months of 2011, Panther Mover, the University's shuttle between the Panther Garage and Primera Casa, transported more than 70,000 people around the MMC campus, according to Foster.

The free service, which operates Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., performed better than expected, Foster said.

Foster is planning to meet with the Student Government Association soon to discuss possible Panther Mover routes and additional signage to provide students, faculty and staff

SEE PARKING, PAGE 2

FUNDING

Lack of PECO funds stalls campus building progress

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New science labs, parking garages and building projects are stalled as PECO funds are drying out.

Governor Rick Scott has asked schools, colleges and universities to give back up to \$250 million unspent appropriations in an attempt to reallocate resources and save the PECO fund.

PECO, short for the Public Education Capital Outlay, consists of revenues from the collection of gross receipts tax on utilities, like electricity, and telephone landlines.

The primary source of financing for the program is through the sales of bonds through the money collected from the gross receipts tax.

These revenues are now

in decline.

School districts across Florida receive PECO funding to construct and expand new facilities, perform maintenance and to renovate and repair existing facilities.

PECO plays a crucial role for universities in Florida as it is the only guaranteed source of construction funding.

It is expected that for the next couple of years, little to no money will be available for major construction projects.

Concerned at the amount of the debt the state is facing, Scott has decided to veto many PECO construction projects in last years budget while asking Florida colleges and universities to put on hold previously authorized projects.

This totals to about \$250 million worth of projects.

For the 2010-2011 school year, FIU received \$34,874,604 from the PECO fund.

The University Board of Trustees requested this money for the purposes provided in the proceeding chart.

The funding would be appropriated for equipment, funding and construction of these projects.

For the 2011-2012 school year, \$7.6 million was requested (\$1.6 million for utilities/infrastructure/capital renewal/roofs and \$6 million for a satellite chiller plant expansion, which was vetoed by Scott), in which only \$1.6 million was awarded.

Every year, FIU's facilities planning department along with the finance and administration department

SEE PECO, PAGE 2

COMING UP | Sports

Check out Monday's issue for a recap of the men's and women's basketball games against Florida Atlantic University.

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NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

Police in riot gear close down Occupy Miami site

Police wearing riot gear swept through the downtown location where Occupy Miami has been entrenched for more since the fall, making at least one arrest.

The Miami Herald police on Tuesday night ejected protestors and tore down tents at their camp site. The operation was mostly peaceful.

The Herald reports six Occupy Miami protesters refused orders to leave. They stayed inside a barricade of plywood and old mattresses. Police detained the six briefly but they walked away when offered the opportunity.

Police say one protester was arrested after he refused to move when ordered. His name was not released.

Occupy Miami leaders told the newspaper they would spread to other camps around the county.

NATIONAL

Wall St. futures head higher on manufacturing data

U.S. stock futures are getting a boost from solid manufacturing data from around the world as attention turns toward the state of the U.S. economy in the run-up to a crucial jobs report.

Dow futures are up 94 points at 12,671, while the broader Standard & Poor's 500 futures are up 10 points at 1,318. The Nasdaq composite is up 14 points at 2,478.

Figures released Wednesday show that China's manufacturing sector is growing steadily and Europe's is performing better than forecast. That gives investors hope that U.S. manufacturing figures will show the world's largest economy continues its recovery.

WORLD

Reforms in Myanmar may spark refugee return

The pastor stood before more than 300 young Burmese refugees gathered for morning prayers in a weathered, jungle church.

"There's a time for war and a time for peace. Sixty-three years is long enough for killing," he told them. "Hope to see you all soon in our beautiful land."

Simon Htoo's buoyant words would have been unlikely just a few months ago, but surprisingly rapid reforms and cease-fires under way in Myanmar are opening the prospects for the return of one of the world's largest refugee populations — some 1 million Burmese huddled in frontier camps and hideouts across five countries.

— *Compiled by Lauren Rovira*

Student Academic Support building put on hold, short by \$10 million

PECO, PAGE 1

submits a five year strategically planned capital request to the state that addresses University growth and development, along with the capital needed to provide the right amount of resources for students and the University in general.

The intent is to match FIU's plans according to what is approved by the BOT with the hope of obtaining the necessary funding.

It has been estimated that the University will not be receiving desired funding until the 2014-2015 school year.

"I hope this does not mean tuition hikes for students," said senior psychology major, Anthony Gallardo.

For the 2010-2011 school year, \$31 million was requested for the building of the Student Academic Support building, but as of 2012 FIU is short \$10 million to finish its construction.

Kenneth Jessell, vice president for finance and administration and chief financial officer, said that contracts

have already been signed with the architects, engineers and construction managers although FIU does not have the last bit of funding.

The purpose of the Student Academic Center will be to provide students with a one-stop location for all their administrative needs and student services.

The plan is to cross train staff so that everyone would be able to assist students, no matter what their needs were.

Based on changes in construction costs and on revision of the original plan, it is expected that this 70,000

square foot building will start being constructed in the next couple of months.

It will be located east of the Graham Center.

"FIU should find a way with existing budget limitations and cutting of funds to make sure students receive the best resources," sad Alex Rosales, an FIU alum.

The University is currently working with the Board of Governors to work with cash flow and delay bills far enough in order to get the money needed to continue its projects.

PECO FUNDS 2010-2011

Utilities/Infrastructure/Capital Renewal/Roofs:	\$6.2 million
Public Safety Building Supplement:	\$1.2 million
Social Sciences – Phase I completion:	\$4.1 million
Stocker Astrophysics Center:	\$3.9 million
Student Academic Support Building:	\$17.6 million

PG6 to add 2,000 parking spots, location still to be determined

PARKING, PAGE 1

a better opportunity to take advantage of the service.

The Panther Safety Tram, which provides a shuttle service within both campuses Monday through Thursday from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. and until 11 p.m. on Fridays, transported more than 12,000 people within the last four

months as well, according to Foster.

"All in all, we're pretty pleased with [the programs]," he said.

PANTHER HALL PARKING LOT TO BECOME CONSTRUCTION SITE IN 30 DAYS

Lot 12, the parking lot in front of Panther Hall, will become unavailable to students, faculty and staff in about 30 days, according to Foster.

"Housing is building the next phase of housing on that lot. That whole parking lot will go offline and will become a construction site. There are 211 student spaces in there that will be taken out," he said.

"The housing kids won't be so excited. All we can do, though, is tell them where the available parking spaces are."

Recently, Parking and Transportation attended a town hall meeting hosted by the Student Government Association to discuss the

changes.

However, the department will be hosting another town hall meeting to have a discussion and question-and-answer period with housing students, faculty and staff.

The date has yet to be announced.

The construction on Lot 12 is expected to end in 2013.

PG6 SITE NOT BEEN DECIDED

Students looking forward to the construction of PG6, a new parking garage similar to PG5 which is supposed to add around 2,000 parking spaces, will have to keep waiting.

"We're still in discussion as to where that would be [built]. We do not have a decision yet as to what site," Foster said.

Foster said that the delay in construction is partly to do with upper administration.

"Upper administration makes decisions based on the way they see the University is going to grow. Presi-

dent Mark Rosenberg has an extremely aggressive growth plan, and so he has to keep that in mind with everything, including parking and transportation," he said.

In an interview with Student Media in October 2011, Foster said it would take two to three years to build the new parking garage.

CATS SHUTTLE SCHEDULE CHANGES

Parking and Transportation is implementing a schedule change beginning Feb. 6 to its CATS shuttle, which transports students between the MMC campus and the Engineering Center.

Students who take the shuttle at 7:50 a.m. from MMC to the Engineering Center will now arrive earlier, as the schedule has been changed to 7:40 a.m. instead.

The schedule change was executed because of complaints the department received from students that were arriving 10 minutes late to their 8 a.m. class.



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studentmedia
at florida international university

SIGNING DAY 2012

SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED

FIU maintains focus in recruiting tri-county area

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With recent controversy surrounding the Mario Cristobal and the Rutgers coaching scenario, Jeremiah McKinnon was a bit nervous when the situation arose at first.

"I called him as soon as I heard just to make sure he was staying," McKinnon said. "Then I realized when he made his decision that I shouldn't have worried about it because I know he's committed to the program."

When asking Ms. McKinnon (Jeremiah's mother) whether Cristobal's decision would change her son's mind on attending FIU, she stated that he had made his decision for what was best for him and his family and that was FIU.

The three-star recruit started his football career at the age of three for the Miami-Optimist Richmond Giants. He then expanded his game to Miami Southridge Senior High School. Jeremiah McKinnon has kept his talents in Miami and signed to FIU.



RICO ALBARRACIN/THE BEACON

Jeremy Smith (left) and Jeremiah McKinnon (right) both signed with FIU despite offers from BCS caliber programs.

McKinnon was a multi-purpose player at Miami South Ridge, playing almost every skill position available. He returned kicks and played quarterback and receiver. His primary position is defensive back, which is what FIU recruited him as.

"At first I was relying on my physical and athletic ability to make plays," McKinnon said.

McKinnon looks to succeed formidable FIU players such as T.Y. Hilton and Anthony Gaitor, who now plays for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.



JOEY CRUZ/THE BEACON

"Gaitor called me about a week ago to congratulate me," McKinnon said. "He told me that as soon as the Super Bowl was over, he'd be back on campus to work with me in the gym and on the field." His defensive backs coach states he is relieved that McKinnon

has players that he can look up to because they faced many of the same experiences he will face.

McKinnon's sisters and mother are very proud of him and the choice he made to stay

SEE MCKINNON, PAGE 4

FIU SIGNEES	
NAME	SCHOOL
Davison Colimon, LB	Suncoast
Josh Glanton, LB	Haines City
Diegout Joseph, DE	Freedom
Michael Wakefield, DE	Valdosta (Ga.)
Denzel Conyers, LB	St. Pete Boca Ciega
Jordan Davis, S	Tampa Alonzo
Jeremiah McKinnon, CB	Southridge
Jamie Willis, LB	Haines City
Marques Cheeks, DE	O. Perry Walker
Darrian Dyson, DE	Edna Karr
Leonard Washington, DE	Edna Karr
Patrick Jean, LB	Treasure Coast
Leroy Owens, OLB	Palatka
Deante Wilson, CB	Mainland
Fudol Brown*, DL	North Carolina Tech
Byron Attaway, TE/DE	Camden County
Trenton Saunders, OL	The Benjamin
Edens Sineace, OL	Palm Beach Central
Jeremy Smith, WR	Flanagan
Favian Upshaw, QB	Astronaut
Lamarq Caldwell, RB	Tampa Bay Tech
Nick England, WR	Collins Hill
Adrian Jenkins, WR	Jefferson
Johnnie Durante, ATH	Krop
Raymond Jackson, ATH	O. Perry Walker
De'Andre Jasper, WR	Miami Jackson
Delmar Taylor*, OL	Navarro JC
EJ Hilliard*, QB	Miami Northwestern
Chris Ayers, K/P	South Broward

*Early enrollee

BASKETBALL

Panthers conclude its two-game road trip at FAU



JONATHAN SEGAL/THE BEACON

FIU will look for revenge in Boca Raton against rival Florida Atlantic on Feb 3.

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The mood after a close and controversial 66-64 game between FIU and Florida Atlantic on Jan. 21 could not have been any more polar opposite.

For the Owls, smiles and jokes filled the press room from Owls' Raymond Taylor, Jordan McCoy and Greg Gantt. Winners in five of the last seven meetings, Florida Atlantic (9-12, 5-3 SBC) seems to be getting use to beating its rival from Miami.

"Fortunately, we have been on the winning end of a lot of these games," Taylor said after the game on Jan. 21. "Hopefully if we keep this on, it's not going to be a rival too much longer."

For FIU (5-15, 2-6 SBC), shock, frustration and disbelief that a questionable foul call by the referee with 0.6 seconds remaining in the game propelled its rival to another victory. For the Panthers, they will get their second opportunity to defeat the Owls on Feb. 4 in Boca Raton. For the Panthers, their last win at FAU Arena occurred in 2009,

with a 58-53 decision.

CONTAINING MCCOY

Jordan McCoy appears to save his best offensive games for FIU. Last season, McCoy notched his career-high 19 points against the Panthers. In the last meeting against the Panthers, his 18 points and 11 rebounds proved to be the difference as starting forward Kore White sat out most of the game due to a hamstring pull. At 6-foot-6, McCoy is an undersized forward, but his skill-set has given FIU problems.

"My best attribute is my quickness," McCoy stated after the Jan. 21 meeting. "Against slower bigs, I just try to work the inside position and use my strengths to my advantage." In order to neutralize McCoy, who enters the matchup scoring less than five points per game on the season, the Panthers have to limit him from getting offensive rebounds and easy put-backs.

NO PLACE LIKE THE ROAD

Although the Panthers have a losing record on the road, according to head coach Isaiah Thomas, the team has played its

best basketball on the road this season. "We give good effort," Thomas said. "We play better on the road." Four of the Panthers' five victories on the season have come away from U.S. Century Bank Arena. At home, the Panthers have struggled, posting a 1-6 record. The Panthers have two remaining road games on the season, a trip to Arkansas against Arkansas-Little Rock followed by Arkansas State in mid-February.

EYES TOWARDS MARCH

The Sun Belt Conference tournament is a month away. Currently the Panthers are in close proximity of obtaining the number seven seed in conference tournament. Instead of looking at the big picture, Thomas wants his team to focus on one practice at a time in the final month of the regular season.

"Lets just show up and keep trying to keep getting better," Thomas said he expressed to his team. "When you go to the conference tournament, everyone starts at zero and if we can get our confidence back, offensively, we can be a dangerous team in the tournament."

TRACK & FIELD

FIU looks to take a bite out of the big apple in next meet

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FIU's Cross Country and Track and Field team has been dominating the track for their last two events (Jimmy Carnes and Gator Invites), and they're in high spirits to continue on that momentum in the big apple.

The team will travel to New York to compete in the New Balance Collegiate Invitational on Feb. 3 and 4 p.m. at the Armory's New Balance Track & Field Center. The Panthers will compete with over 130 teams this year.

"Considering that over 100 schools will be participating, this is a great opportunity for the athletes to show their talent, be successful and eventually do well at Conference and Nationals," said head coach Eric Campbell.

He was very proud to speak about his athletes and their abilities, who according to Campbell, are top-20 in the nation.

Not only was Campbell proud of the athletes, he also wants them to maintain their fitness.

"I want the team to stay healthy, remain injury-free and keep their fitness level high," Campbell said.

Benia Gregoire (Throws), Marissa McElveen (Jumps), T'Keyah Dumoy (Sprints), Wilner Marcelin (Hurdles) and Christopher Lickfield (Throws) will highlight the team in the invite on Feb 3.

"The athletes are unbelievable, and our freshman recruits from three years ago are picking up," coach Campbell said in regards to their performance so far this season. "We are favorites to win."

"Training is excellent and I'm hoping to get stronger," said state record-holder Benia Gregoire, who registered a throw of 22.07 meters (barely over 68 feet) at the Orange and Purple Winter Classics on Dec. 3.

Marissa McElveen, two-time All-Sun Belt performer was optimistic about her capabilities in the Long Jump.

"I hope to get the best results this year out of all competitions, as this will motivate me to achieve good results," said McElveen, who walked



SHAWN STEVENS/THE BEACON

Benia Gregoire will lead the FIU women in throws at the New Balance Collegiate Invitational in New York on Feb. 3.

away with a jump of 6.12 meters (just over 20 feet) at the Gator invite.

T'Keyah Dumoy was also optimistic about next Friday's meet, saying, "I hope I hit the 23-minute mark," in her 200-meters event. Dumoy clocked a time of 24.71 seconds at the Gator invite on Jan. 22.

At the Jimmy Carnes Invitational, Wilner Marcelin clocked a time of 7.42 in the 55-meter hurdles, landing him in third place.

"I want to improve [in the New Balance Invitational]," Marcelin said.

Christopher Lickfield, who participated in the

men's shot, registered a throw of 14.95 meters (just over 49 feet) at the Jimmy Carnes Invite. "I feel pretty good going into this event (Feb 3), and I hope to gain more experience," said Lickfield.

With such positive responses from both coach Campbell and his athletes,

the FIU Cross Country/Track and Field team is not just physically prepared but mentally as well.

He also expressed confidence in his selection of athletes.

"Seeing that only the elite will be participating, I expect them to do very well," added Lickfield.

Jasper, Durante chose to stay home at FIU

SIGNING DAY, PAGE 1

Jasper will get a chance in practices to go against first team All-Dade defensive back Johnnie Durante from Dr. Krop High. Durante made seven interceptions this year for Krop, four of them returned for touchdowns, all while recording 20 tackles.

In the beginning of the season, Durante says he had no scholarships or recruits asking him to play at their schools. At his official signing of the letter of intent to become a Panther, he had four Payday bars in front of him, to represent the four years he will be at FIU.

For Durante, he says he always wanted to go to Florida State, but that it was FIU who gave him his first offer. Out of the four other schools that sent him offers (Florida Atlantic, Indiana, Georgia State and South Dakota), Durante visited FIU first on Jan. 6 and made his decision soon after.

"I chose FIU because they stepped up to the plate first and I owe that in return," said Durante. "I got all these big time offers after the fact, but the question is where they were two months ago."

According to Durante, Cristobal told him that he was the best player he ever recruited, which is saying a lot coming from a man who once recruited potential third round pick T.Y. Hilton.

Durante, who could be used on both sides of the ball, says his goal is to break Hilton's records. According to Durante, Cristobal wants him to be happy at whatever position they put him at. But Durante claims he has kick and punt returner duties "on lock."

"He had himself I believe almost six touchdowns this year on kickoff returns alone," said Cristobal. "He's another one of those guys who I think we're going to be talking about for a long time."

McKinnon, Smith and Jean lead Cristobal's signing day class

MCKINNON, PAGE 3

at FIU.

"Jeremiah is a momma's boy and wanted to stay near her," Jade McKinnon said. "I let him make his own choice and cheered him on as well as supported him."

His mother and sister stated that FIU is where he felt most comfortable because it was closer to home and he has friends who play on the team, as well as his cousin Richard Leonard.

"I'm very excited and I don't plan to red-shirt my freshman season," McKinnon said. "I want to make an impact as soon as I can."

-JOEY CRUZ

While sitting in front of his family, friends, schoolmates and football team, Jeremy Smith vocalized his decision. "Go FIU!" said Smith. Smith, a senior wide receiver from Flanagan High school, has committed to be a Panther for the next four years.

Head coach Mario Cristobal had nothing but praise when speaking of Smith.

"Not only is he one of the fastest kids in the state, but he's one of the fastest in the country," said Cristobal.

The three-star recruit, according to Rivals.com, turned down offers from prominent schools, such as Kentucky, Bowling Green and Sun Belt Conference rival Middle Tennessee.

Smith committed to FIU even with the rumors of Cristobal. When Cristobal

turned down the job, Smith knew it was the right decision.

"He turned that down because we're on the road for success," said Smith. "We're building a program that can't be stopped."

As a senior, Smith caught eight passes for 183 yards and three touchdowns and rushed for 230 yards on 25 carries with three additional touchdowns, including a spectacular performance against West Broward, in which he accrued 130 total yards with three touchdowns in a 42-0 win. Smith's senior garnered him an Honorable Mention on the All-Broward County team.

When asked about whether Cristobal's decision to stay or go would have influenced his decision, Smith was emphatic about it. "It wasn't gonna shake my decision. I was gonna stay with FIU all along," said Smith. "If he would've left, I would've said 'It's his loss,' but he decided to stay so all is well."

-RICO ALBARRACIN

On National Signing Day, some highly touted recruits weigh their options up until the very last second. Most never seem certain on where they want to go until they are forced to make a decision. But who can blame them, after all, they are only 18 years old.

Patrick Jean, a linebacker from Treasure Coast High School in Port St. Lucie, was committed to Louisville for nearly three months before National Signing Day. But on Feb. 1, Jean had a change of heart, rejecting Louisville to become a

Panther. "I'm close enough to where my mom can come to the games. I would have no problems with my dad, brother and sister as well." His head coach in high school, Irvin Jones, thinks that his family had the biggest influence on him changing his decision.

"His parents had a big influence on him as far as staying close to home," Jones said. Jean will bring a 6-foot-3, 200-pound frame to FIU, along with a strong work ethic, his coach says.

"He is a worker," Jones said. "We walk out of school sometimes on the weekends and he is out there with his parachute and working out on his own. Their biggest problem is going to be trying to keep him out of the weight room."

Jean was named Honorable Mention All-State as well as Scout.com Top-50 Player in the state of Florida. Other than Louisville, Jean had offers from University of South Florida, Cincinnati, Kansas, Florida Atlantic, Purdue and Western Michigan.

As for his teammate in high school, Travares Copeland, who decided to choose West Virginia over FIU, Jean thought that they were going to be together down in Miami. "For a minute, I thought he was going. I guess he pulled a quickie and went to West Virginia."

Copeland had his decision down to FIU, West Virginia and Rutgers as soon as last week, but eliminated Rutgers after head coach Greg Schiano decided to accept the head coaching job with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

-BRANDON WISE

SPOTLIGHT ON...

BRINGING THE NOISE

Alum turned Heat announcer

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Miami Heat fans attend the basketball games for the “Heat experience,” but they might overlook an important member on the sidelines. He’s amongst the crowd, cheering for our team and encouraging fans. Miami Heat’s public address announcer and University alum, Michael Baiamonte, brings “the noise.”

Known as The Voice and as one of the most recognizable voices in the South Florida sports market, Baiamonte has stuck with the team through injuries and triple doubles. And he is excited for the great things the team is going to do this season.

“I’m always expecting great things for the Heat,” said Baiamonte. “I am looking forward to being a part of it— a very small, but very fun part of the home games.”

Regardless of how small of an impact Baiamonte believes he has on the game, his signature phrases like, “Stand up and make some noise for your Miami Heat,” “Too many steps,” or “Dos minutos (two minutes)” really draw the crowd in. His enthusiasm is contagious throughout the game.

“The team wanted me to come up with some idea of a call to action, something to ask the fans to do in order to recognize and greet the team. I thought [of things that]



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL BAIAMONTE

Baiamonte started sports announcing as a hobby until he scored his current gig as the official announcer for the Miami Heat.

fan base — Hispanics.

“[At a production meeting], the idea came up: ‘Can we interject a little bit of Spanish into the game?’ The best thing we could do was to keep it simple as possible for everybody, whether you speak Spanish or you don’t speak Spanish.

I said, ‘Well, why don’t we try ‘two minutes.’ It’s a very common call; everybody knows it in the game of basketball. Let’s do it in English and then I’ll repeat it in Spanish and we’ll see if people pick up on it.”

“It’s funny because, probably more often than The Voice now, people will come up to me and say, ‘You’re the Dos Minutos guy.’”

When asked how many nicknames he has had over

he went on to the University and was the first basketball announcer for the male team in 1981.

Before fully dedicating himself to sports announcing, Baiamonte figured that a traditional degree was best and that he could do sports announcing on the side. While he tried juggling sports announcing for the University and his day job at the insurance business, he made his big break with the Miami Heat.

“When I started at FIU, I didn’t have any idea whatsoever that I’d be where I am 30 years later.”

Fully devoted to being the Heat’s public address announcer, he also volunteers his services to United Way, Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic and Miami Children’s Hospital.

“The thing is, I enjoy doing it,” said Baiamonte. “I am very, very, fortunate to work in South Florida. The South Florida community has been great to me as an announcer and it just feels right to be able to do something to help the community because they really support me.”

With a job like that of a public address announcer, things are hectic, challenging and exciting. There is a time for work and a time for play, but Baiamonte has the best of both worlds— literally.

“My favorite thing has always been the interaction with the fans. Sitting at one of the best seats in the building and watching some of the greatest players in the world play is not so bad either,” said Baiamonte.

“When I started at FIU, I didn’t have any idea whatsoever that I’d be where I am 30 years later

Michael Baiamonte

might sound good, that would be easy to say, but not be a lot of words.”

The reaction Baiamonte got the first time he said “Stand up and make some noise,” was not the reaction he receives today.

“The first time I did it, no one did anything. Nobody stood up, nobody made noise, nobody did anything, but the organization liked the way it sounded.”

The phrase “Dos minutos” is dedicated to a huge Heat

the course of 21 years, Baiamonte laughed.

“Yes, I have a few,” he responded. “Depending on what fan base you have, some might not be very nice. The Knicks fans, for example, may not have [nice names for me], but that’s okay.”

His nickname, The Voice, was actually bestowed on him while studying business at the University from 1981 to 1986.

Beginning his sports announcing at Gulliver Prep,

COVER TO COVER

Stephen King novel explores time travel

Frank Dunning slaughtered his wife and two of his kids with a sledgehammer. He left one of his kids crippled for life. Decades later, his surviving son, Henry Dunning, wrote about his story in an essay he was working on to gain his G.E.D.

COLUMNIST



KELLY MALAMBRI

After reading his article, Dunning’s teacher, Jake Epping, went back in time to do something about the fateful night when the murders occurred.

However, Epping did not only go back in time to help the Dunning family— he wanted to change much more.

After finding out that his local burger joint owner, Al Templeton, had found a way to travel back in time, the 35-year-old high school teacher was convinced by the dying man to try to save the world by preventing the Vietnam War by saving the life of John F. Kennedy.

In his best-selling 2011 novel, “11/22/63,” Stephen King explores the concept of time travel through Epping’s story. Throughout his book, King suggests that no one can change the past, but history can be slightly altered.

For example, Jake Epping faces every possible obstacle in his path to save not only Kennedy, but Dunning, sudden bad health, citizens determined to get in his past and the past itself, working to maintain “the order of the universe.”

The novel also fearlessly addresses the many conspiracy theories that have been created because of stipulation in the killing of JFK. In the book, Templeton states that he is 95 percent sure that Oswald did the deed. Jake Epping attempts to verify this information before going after the suspected murderer.

In his afterword, King writes that,

after doing much reading on the incident, he is between 98 and 99 percent sure that Lee Oswald did in fact murder JFK and he prepared for controversy before the novel was released. The facts and details in the novel are based off of his research. This allows the reader to be transported to 1958— when Jake Epping steps into Templeton’s time warp.

While the novel is excellent, like almost all of Stephen King’s books, it is not a light or short read by any means. The novel is most certainly a time-consuming read. If you are a fast reader, it is a great pick.

Otherwise, I suggest saving this one for the summer or for a time when you are sure you will have a lot of free time. The novel’s ending is bittersweet. Jake Epping does change the past, but not without consequences.

When Epping realizes the reality he has created is worse than the one that would have existed if he left things alone, the novel twists yet again as Epping goes back in time once more.

Without giving away more of the story, readers will be satisfied by the way Epping’s story, especially his love interest with Sadie, a woman he met when he traveled back into the 1960s, concludes. The ending manages to find the perfect balance of leaving the reader happy for Epping while not being predictable.

Overall, the novel is a stunning piece of investigative history work and is instructive. I learned much about the Kennedy and Oswald situation that I was never aware of but should have known.

It is a novel that should be saved for when the reader (and in many of our cases, busy college students and professionals) has time to learn.

Cover to Cover is a biweekly book review column.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.STEPHENKING.COM

Stephen King’s new novel explores the JFK assassination.

REEL TO REEL

“Albert Nobbs” never discovers its true potential

Glenn Close, who has been delivering stunning performances for three decades, has taken a big risk with her latest role in the film, “Albert Nobbs.”

COLUMNIST



JUAN BARQUIN

Set in the late nineteenth century, the film focuses on Albert (Close), the reserved butler who works at the Morrison Hotel. Since the age of 14, Albert has kept a big secret: he is a woman under wraps.

With the hotel in need of renovations, Nobbs shares her bedroom with the house painter, Hubert Page (Janet McTeer), for a night. Unable to hide her disguise from him, Albert’s secret is revealed to Hubert, who reassures her that she has nothing to fear.

After years of saving money underneath the floorboards and a boost of confidence from Hubert, Albert’s dreams of opening up a tobacco shop and finding love begin to seem a little



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

Glenn Close took a big risk in her latest role as Albert Nobbs, a butler with a big secret.

less impossible.

“Albert Nobbs” has been something of a pet project for Glenn Close. Oftentimes, men pose as women for comedic purposes, but a woman portraying a man is rarely done.

Her performance as Albert does not command

the screen as she tends to do in her film and television work. Instead, she adopts a subtle and meek personality that fits her character just right.

While Close does a decent job as Albert, Janet McTeer is the true scene-stealer. Her portrayal of

the confident painter does a better job at grasping the audience’s attention than the lead actress’ portrayal of Albert. This may be attributed to the outgoing personality of Hubert.

Aside from these performances, the film leaves little else to care about.

The supporting characters barely develop, if at all, and that doesn’t add much to Albert’s journey for an identity.

Mia Wasikowska has had better roles than the dull Helen, who is the object of Albert’s affection. The inclusion of Aaron Johnson is the most pointless of them all—he doesn’t serve to do much more than take off his shirt and look annoyed in most scenes.

The screenplay, co-written by Close and John Banville, doesn’t help the film much either. It doesn’t dive into the history of Albert and, with a character that has been willingly cross-dressing for decades, one wants to know the reasons behind this drastic choice.

Rodrigo Garcia, whose work on “Mother and Child” proves that he fits well in intimate tales of women, drops the ball on this one. His slow style just doesn’t work well with the film.

Many people, including the Academy Award voters, have hailed the performances of the actors, but

the true stars of the film are the make-up artists who have earned a well-deserved nomination this year. Martial Corneville, Lynn Johnson and Matthew Mungle manage to give both Janet McTeer and Glenn Close enough masculine features to pass them as men. That is something that deserves recognition.

There is a certain TV quality to the film that keeps “Albert Nobbs” from achieving greatness. It may be a personal project to Glenn Close, but, much like a few other films this year, it is not any better than the average Oscar nominee.

“Albert Nobbs” is currently in theaters and showing at AMC Sunset Place 24, Coral Gables Art Cinema, Paragon Grove 13, Regal South Beach Stadium 18, Frank Theaters Intra-coastal 8 and AMC Aventura 24.

Reel to Reel is a weekly movie review column. Juan Barquin is an intern for the Miami International Film Festival. Email at life@fiusm.com.

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SGC-MMC COMMENTARY

Senate rife with confusion during audit discussions

An odd and perpetually disconcerting staple to attending and trying to keep up with a Student Government Council meeting at the Modesto

Maidique Campus is the confusion and the way in which a conversation of ostensible coherence can go on without making any sense until, after a while, it becomes clear that the speakers only thought they were talking about the same thing, but in fact were discussing either two different things, or the same thing, but with two misconceptions of its function or purpose.

So went the discussion regarding the audits of student organizations at the SGC-MMC meeting held on Jan. 30.

The audits, in which a student organization reports how much money it was given

for the fiscal year, what it has spent so far and what it plans to spend, is, according to SGC-MMC Vice President Sanjeev Udhvani, are only a supplement to the process of determining how much money an organization will be given year-to-year.

"The audits are a way of keeping an eye on what certain organizations are spending," Udhvani said, to make sure money is being spent on the projects for which it was allocated and "to spot any red flags early on."

Last year, audits were not discussed with the Senate. So, with the Senate feeling left out, SGC-MMC President Patrick O'Keefe, SGC-MMC Speaker of the Senate Donovan Dawson and Udhvani decided to bring the audits in for discussion on the Senate floor.

Discussion alone, though, meant only to inform on February's budget deliberations, which will be carried out by the speakers,

“Discussion appeared to be unfolding as though senators were being pressed to decide on the budgets right there.”

comptrollers, vice presidents and presidents of either campus and SGC-MMC Speaker Pro Tempore Samir Patel.

In reviewing the budget and most of the fall expenses for Sorority and Fraternity Life, confusion stalled discussion. While Patel asserted, to settle a debate sparked by miscommunication, that fall audits were clearly a bad idea, Udhvani reassured the Senate of the audits' value and necessity.

Discussion appeared to be unfolding as though senators were being pressed to decide on the budgets right there, basing

their decisions on the figures presented.

The Senate seems now to be as assertive as it was in its best moments during the fall, but given the spectrum across which their respective duties are scattered, it seems the Senate leadership at each meeting take for granted that the entire Senate is on the same page about every subject and task.

Clearly, they aren't, and I don't think there would be any shame in giving the senators a quick summary of what they are being asked to do, or the manner in which they are expected to respond, to the docu-

COLUMNIST



ALEX SORONDO

PRESS RELEASE

Generation Opportunity engages college audience

Washington, DC – (1/30/12) – Generation Opportunity, a rapidly growing organization with over two million Facebook fans that is mobilizing young adults across the nation through a strategy based on social media and ground operations, has conducted its latest grassroots tour through Florida to help mobilize the Sunshine State's young adults.

This marks Generation Opportunity's fourth trip to Florida in less than a year.

Previous trips included visits to areas around Tampa, Coral Gables, and Miami to listen to and sign-up young people concerned about how the poor economy and lack of jobs are limiting their ability to find work, gain critical skills, and pursue their dreams.

"Young adults in Florida are very open with their views about how the country is headed in the wrong direction and how the poor economy and lack of jobs have already had a negative impact on their dreams, plans, and careers.

In Florida, young adults are tired of having their lives put on hold because of the bad policies coming out of Washington and the lack of economic opportunity – they

are eager for a change in the status quo in order to improve their daily lives," said Paul T. Conway, President of Generation Opportunity and a former Chief of Staff of the United States Department of Labor.

"Young Floridians think elected officials in Washington are completely out of touch with the financial realities they deal with everyday. They know that having a rewarding job, a paycheck, and more economic opportunities give people a better chance to gain critical skills, pay off debts, and realize dreams than any election-year promise or federal program ever will."

Field staff from Generation Opportunity conducted a tour of college campuses in the Fort Lauderdale and Miami areas, which included stops at Broward College, the University of Miami, Florida International University, and Nova Southeastern University.

In addition, the grassroots team engaged young people at a variety of public events including a Miami Heat game held at American Airlines Arena, the ING Miami Marathon, the Homestead Championship Rodeo, and a parade in Homestead, Florida.

Based on conversations with young professionals, college students and other young adults they listened to and spoke with, the Generation Opportunity team found that young adults in Florida are most concerned with the poor economy and lack of jobs, the increasing level of federal spending, national debt, and issues that impact American competitiveness.

In 2011, Generation Opportunity joined nearly 1,500 Hispanic business leaders in Miami, Florida, as a participant in the 32nd Annual U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) National Convention and Business Expo, where young people also cited the lack of jobs and the mounting national debt as top concerns.

-Generation Opportunity, a non-profit, non-partisan 501 (c)(4) organization that seeks to engage everyone from young adults, to early career professionals, college students, young mothers and fathers, construction workers, current service men and women, veterans, entrepreneurs, and all Americans who find themselves dissatisfied with the status quo and willing to create a better tomorrow.

Penmanship, a dying art despite supportive study

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It is essential and inevitable for a digital society, such as ours, to advance.

As societies move forward, it is also inevitable that certain skills are lost in time. As a digitally advancing society, penmanship is one skill that is noticeably on the verge of being forgotten, and not for the better.

Dr. Laura Dinehart, an assistant professor at the College of Education, believes otherwise.

Dr. Dinehart conducted research "to see if there was academic value to good penmanship," a skill that is not only on the brink of being forgotten in our digital society, but also on the verge of having no academic value in Florida schools, seeing as it has even been considered to drop cursive from the curriculum.

Much in favor of penmanship, however, Dr. Dinehart's study of the handwriting skills of 1,000 second-grade students reported that "students with good penmanship tend to get better grades."

In research funded by the Children's Trust and soon to be published in the Journal of Early Childhood Education and Development, Dinehart reported that the link she made of those students' "grades and academic scores back to the information gathered from them when they were still in pre-kindergarten" showed that "students who received good grades on fine motor writing tasks in pre-k had an average GPA of 3.02 in math and 2.84 in reading," while "those who did poorly on the fine motor writing tasks in pre-k had an average GPA of 2.30 in math and 2.12 in reading."

Moreover, students who performed better "on the fine motor writing tasks in

pre-k scored in the 59th percentile on the Reading SAT in second grade (just above average) and in the 62nd percentile on the Math SAT," as opposed to students who performed poorly only scoring "in the 38th percentile...and in the 37th percentile," respectively.

Since I am generally keen on preserving

“It appears as though the relationship between penmanship and academic achievement is simply a correlation without any direct indication of causation.”

the skill of penmanship, these research results only add more to my conviction that penmanship is an important skill.

This is just the early beginnings of research on the importance of handwriting, but it is a good start for the advancement of penmanship.

For now, it appears as though the relationship between penmanship and academic achievement is simply a correlation without any direct indication of causation.

This should not be discouraging, however, because it is through this relationship that research can be further expanded to discover what it is between the two that causes direct success for students.

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Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts in (500 word maximum) to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor-in-chief, management, and the editors of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials, send them to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com

STUDENT LIFE

Are you a member of a campus or University?

JAYNE GOMEZ
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Whether students see themselves as Biscayne Bay Campus students or as FIU students varies from situation to situation.

Some students identify themselves depending upon how many credits they take at each campus. Those who have only taken classes at BBC may tag themselves as “BBC students.”

According to the Office of Planning & Institutional Research, there were 19,166 student credit hours with a full time equivalent at Modesto Maidique Campus and 2,998 SCT-FTE at BBC in the 2010-2011 school year.

Janice Carrillo, junior journalism major, taking three credits at BBC and six online, considers herself a BBC student.

“This is the only campus that I’ve been to and I like the fact that there’s less people at BBC and the campus itself is very relaxing,” she said.

Izy Torres, a senior and journalism major taking six credits at BBC and nine at MMC, agreed.

“I classify myself as a BBC student in all aspects. The fact that after a class I can sit in front of the bay is amazing,” Torres said. “BBC is very relaxing and even though there aren’t too many people and there isn’t a large variety of food, I wouldn’t trade it for any other campus.”

Lauren Boyle, a junior and marketing major, splits her time evenly between the two campuses: three credits at BBC and three at MMC said she prefers the activities and food offerings at MMC.

“I identify myself as an FIU student because even though I have taken a couple classes [at BBC], I think this campus is extremely boring compared

to [MMC],” Boyle said.

When it comes to campus specific positions in the University’s Student Government Association, applicants must take at least 50 percent of their courses at the campus at which they want to run for office. To be considered eligible for office at BBC’s Student Government Council, for example, a student must take half his or her course load at the campus.

SGA is divided into two governing councils for each campus, each one of which with three respective branches of government: executive, judicial, and executive.

The same 50 percent enrollment comes into play when SGA elections comes around. Students can only vote on candidates from one of the two campuses, with their votes counting towards where they take the majority of their classes.

Yet when it comes to the majority of credits being taken online, according to Rafael Zapata, advisor to SGC-BBC, “it becomes a little bit trickier.” How to classify online students is being researched and debated by SGA’s University-Wide Council.

On the other hand, some students who have taken classes at more than one campus have never thought of classifying themselves as only BBC or MMC students—they think of FIU as a whole.

Kevin Soler, a junior and journalism major, taking six credits at BBC and three at MMC, never considered the difference.

“To be honest, I have never thought about it. I don’t think it makes sense to classify myself according to a specific campus,” Soler said. “Even though I take most of my classes at BBC, I’m part of FIU and I’ll always feel like that.”

TESTING THE WATERS



ANDRES BEDOYA/THE BEACON

Alex Perez, a senior marine biology major, measured dissolved oxygen and pH levels in water and seaweed samples taken from the Biscayne Bay, as part of a long term ecological monitoring project conducted by the School of Environmental Arts and Society.

CAMPUS LIFE

Leadership summit to assist students in developing professional traits

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The ninth annual Student Leadership Summit is being held on Feb. 4 at the Biscayne Bay Campus in the Wolfe University Center.

This leadership conference will include both students from the Modesto Maidique Campus and BBC, and will allow students to gain skills and network through different activities.

There will be different breakout sessions students can go to throughout the day such as clarified values, healthy behaviors and satisfying lifestyles.

“I expect students to enhance their leadership skills and to have fun at the conference” said Sabrena O’Keefe, assistant director of the Women Center and Center for Leadership and

Service at BBC.

O’Keefe is also looking forward to hearing from James Robilotta, this year’s keynote speaker.

“The key note speaker is really fun because his speech is practical and he also does improvisation comedy so I think he will keep the students energized throughout the day,” O’Keefe said.

There are a lot of students that seem very excited about the conference. Pham Tan Tam, a junior hospitality management major, shows enthusiasm as the conference approaches.

“Since I got here at FIU, I have only been involved in [Academy of Leaders] to help me with my leadership skills,” Tam said. “But to know that there are other such events like the leadership conference to help me improve is just great.”

Newcomers and past partic-

ipants are also getting anxious for the conference.

“I attended for the first time last year, and this is the type of program that companies would pay thousands of dollars to send their employees to for leadership and we [students] get it for free so I think this conference is awesome and fun and I advise students [to] go” said Chrystelle Edma, a sophomore public relation major.

Like previous conferences, high school students will also be part of this conference and participate in the day’s activities.

O’Keefe hopes that, as in previous conferences, the students have fun and learn from the staff and activities.

“I think the students will be motivated to continue develop their skills to become the next leaders of the future,” O’Keefe said.



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