

Student organization to raise awareness on Muslim shooting

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In light of the slaying of three Muslim students near the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus, FIU's division of the Muslim Students Association will be hosting events throughout the week to raise awareness on the incident.

The MSA hosted events on Monday, Feb. 16 and Tuesday, Feb. 17, in the Graham Center at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus, passing out flyers and informing passersby on the details of the shooting.

The notion that Islamophobia can negatively impact the lives of Muslims living in the United States and how it damages the reputation of the relations the MSA tries to protect was also discussed.

Adnan Samma, a senior studying economics and international relations and a

member of the MSA, said that the tabling events are also geared toward informing students on Islamophobia and the negative effects that it can have on the perception that people develop on Muslims.

Samma added that the MSA at the University does its best to promote the image of Islam to non-Muslims and dispel the misconceptions the media provides today to the public regarding Muslims.

The secretary of the MSA, Nandee Shabazz, a junior studying political science and international relations, believes that it's important to address the issue of the media's portrayal of Muslims.

Shabazz feels that the media is desensitizing the issue, adding that when media outlets make mention of Muslims or Islam, issues regarding terrorism are usually discussed.

She mentioned that with the media's commonly negative

AHEAD OF THE GAME



BRIAN TRUJILLO/THE BEACON

Senior infielder/catcher Krystal Garcia (right) warms up with freshman infielder Hailey Tillapaugh (left) before the game against the University of Memphis on Friday, Feb. 13. **For more, see SOFTBALL, page 6.**

portrayal of the religion, when people hear of the recent killings of Deah Barakat, Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha, and Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha they may not come to consider the possibility that the victims

were innocent, and instead develop the notion that they were looking for trouble, considering that they may be involved with radical activities, the types that the media covers as taking place abroad or throughout the

country even.

As Adnan stated it, Muslims are a minority in the United States, one with a history spanning back to the early origins

SEE MUSLIMS, PAGE 2

Student Government Association gains new member

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The Student Government Council at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus has added a new member to its Senate.

In response to a vacant seat for the position of College of Arts and Sciences senator, students Vincent Rodriguez and Adrian Ulloa stepped up to assume the title.

Rodriguez, an economics major and a veteran of the United States Marine Corps., said that he hoped to bring the professionalism gained as a result of his experience as a Marine to a position in the SGC.

Informing those in attendance that he had taken the liberty to read through the Student Government Association constitution and attended the last four Senate meetings, Rodriguez felt that he was ready to hit the ground running, as he put it.

He admitted that he had met with SGC-MMC President Alexis Calatayud and another

member of SGA over the past few weeks in order to start working on his duties for the position. He hoped to use his potential appointment as an Arts and Sciences senator as preparation for the upcoming elections.

Among the issues that

a question-and-answer session.

Alian Collazo, lower division senator and chair of the student advocacy committee, was interested in knowing about Rodriguez's other involvements, to which Rodriguez answered

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These examples show what an SGA senator should be, which is someone that's constantly advocating for students, that knows it's not about [themselves] but the students

Adrian Ulloa
Deputy Chief of Staff
SGC - MMC

”

he wishes to target is student graduation rates, mentioning that he wants to work toward ensuring students graduate in a timely manner.

Upon completion of Rodriguez's speech, Charles Perretti, Senate speaker and graduate senator, entertained a motion for a suspension of the rules to initiate

saying that he was not involved in any other extracurricular activity.

Others were interested in knowing about Rodriguez's strategy for communication.

Tomas Alcala, College of Architecture and The Arts senator and speaker pro tempore, citing that the College of Arts and Sciences is the most

expansive college in the University, wanted to know about Rodriguez's plans to reach out to so many constituents.

Once Rodriguez was done speaking, Adrian Ulloa, a sophomore public administration major, took to the podium.

One of the current deputy chiefs-of-staff for the SGC Cabinet, Ulloa said that with a potential appointment as an Arts and Sciences senator he would receive the opportunity to continue advocating for the interests of the student body.

Ulloa's list of involvements range from being a resident assistant to a peer advisor, and member of SGA working toward improving the peer mentor program.

“These examples show what an SGA senator should be, which is someone that's constantly advocating for students, that knows it's not about [themselves] but the students,” Ulloa said.

During the question-and-answer session, Rhett Williamson, graduate senator and chair of the Graduate and Professional

Student Committee, wanted to know why Ulloa was interested in leaving his position as deputy chief-of-staff to join the Senate when the semester is almost over.

Ulloa answered saying that he felt that the work done as a senator will provide him more opportunities to develop the skills needed for his long-term career goals, adding that he feels he can have a more direct impact on the student body as a senator.

He believes that already having knowledge of the workings of SGA will give him the opportunity to get straight to work if appointed as a new senator.

Once the candidates left the room the discussion commenced.

Alian Collazo, curious about Ulloa's work ethic, asked SGC-MMC Vice President Tiffany Roman-Biffa to comment on Ulloa's status in the Cabinet.

According to Roman-Biffa, Ulloa was very committed to his role in the Cabinet. She added that she believed he was interested in assuming

a position as a senator during this term in order to prepare for the upcoming elections.

Nico Pasquariello, honors college senator, admitted that he was torn between both candidates, Ulloa being a personal friend and Rodriguez a Marine, a fact that resonated with him.

For several senators, the looming issue was the vacancy that would be left in the Cabinet if Ulloa were to be elected as a senator.

Williamson said that in the interests of there only being a few months left in the semester, he believed it best to leave Ulloa in his position in the Cabinet and gain a new member, as opposed to elect Ulloa and leave a vacancy in the Cabinet.

Williamson believed that Ulloa could have the same impact on the student body by remaining in the Cabinet.

At the end, the Senate welcomed Rodriguez as its new Arts and Sciences senator, with 14 senators having voted for him. The remaining three senators abstained from voting.

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

In Ukraine, deadly shelling continues hours before cease-fire begins

Lethal shelling continued to rock towns in war-torn eastern Ukraine late Saturday, in the hours before a Sunday cease-fire began.

Seven Ukrainian troops were killed and 23 wounded in attacks by pro-Russia separatists, according to Ukrainian National Defense and Security Council spokesman Andriy Lysenko. Twelve separatist fighters died

and 40 were wounded, one of their military commanders said.

In marathon negotiations in Minsk, the capital of Belarus, leaders of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine worked out an agreement Thursday that would halt fighting at 12:01 a.m. Sunday in eastern Ukraine. But in the hours leading up to the cease-fire, at least two towns were ravaged by shelling.

Mexico denounces police killing of unarmed migrant worker in Washington state

President Enrique Pena Nieto lashed out Friday at what he called the “disproportionate use of lethal force” by police officers in Washington state that led to the death of an unarmed Mexican migrant.

Pena Nieto joined lawmakers in condemning the death of Antonio Zambrano Montes, a 35-year-old orchard worker who was slain by police officers in

Pasco, Wash., on Tuesday. Video of the incident shows an unarmed Zambrano with his arms in the air slumping to the sidewalk after police officers open fire from a short distance away.

“I have ordered the Foreign Secretariat to offer support to the family ... and to carefully follow the investigation into this lamentable and outrageous act,” Pena Nieto said.

Beijing now drinking from vast water project environmentalists decry

Drinking water is flowing to Beijing from China’s controversial south-north water project—enough to fill 20,000 Olympic-size swimming pools in the first six weeks, the city reported Friday.

But concerns continue to swirl about the project’s environmental and human costs even as Beijing taps into a new water source nearly 800 miles away.

The central route of the south-north water project is China’s largest public works undertaking since the Three Gorges Dam, and it’s similarly contentious. It consists of a 400-foot-wide canal, aqueducts and other water works that stretch 798 miles to Beijing, starting at the Danjiangkou Reservoir in Henan province.

Campus events to share awareness for recent shootings

MUSLIMS, PAGE 1

of the nation with the Transatlantic slave trade.

Like most minority groups, according to Adnan, Muslims have a history of being oppressed.

He referenced the George Zimmerman case, calling attention to the fact that the case involved the death of Trayvon Martin, a minority.

For Adnan, the MSA tries its best to promote the beliefs of the Islamic community and tries to coexist with Christians and members of other religious faiths in the nation.

Some students shared their views.

Joshua William Seidler, a junior majoring in Japanese area studies, believes that raising awareness is one way of helping prevent these incidents from happening.

“Like most stereotypes, the way that people are viewed is not really accurate,” he said. “Not everyone is like every single person of the same race or the same religion.”

According to the Haaretz Daily Newspaper, the authorities in Chapel Hill have not yet been able to find evidence definitively pointing that 46-year-old Craig Stephen Hicks committed a crime based on hate towards Muslims.

While the victims’ family members stress the idea that Hicks acted out of hate, for now the FBI is working on a “parallel preliminary inquiry” to conclude whether or not any laws regarding hate crimes were violated.

It is reported that although North Carolina does not enforce any statutes concerning hate crimes, it does enforce those involving ethnic intimidation, which include hanging nooses, or setting fire to sites of religious worship.

The tabling event will continue today, Wednesday, Feb. 18 from 1 to 3 p.m. in GC.

On Thursday, Feb. 19, the MSA will continue working on its awareness campaign for the week in the GC Lawns to collect funds for Project Downtown and the efforts that Barakat worked toward to provide dental care to refugees

in Turkey.

A non-governmental organization, Project Downtown aims to provide aid to the homeless.

Keeping with Barakat’s philanthropic efforts, the MSA will be delivering dental packages to the homeless in the Downtown area.

Barakat worked tirelessly to raise money in the hope of providing dental care to Syrian refugees in Turkey, according to CNN.

As of now, the Syrian Dental Relief page, which was set up by Barakat and Ali Heydari on YouCaring.com, has been able to raise over \$426,000.

Adnan says that while the campaign to raise awareness on the shootings will not be a direct focus of the MSA’s Islamic Awareness Week during the first week of March, the issue will nonetheless be paid attention to.

That week’s events will be working towards eliminating the misconceptions of Islam.

“The University is a very changing environment where students are enlightened and are able to conduct procedures where change can be [implemented],” said Adnan in relation to the events’ importance.

Shabazz stressed that it’s important to be educated on these types of issues, mentioning that in today’s society change doesn’t regularly happen.

“If we want things to change [then] it has to come from us,” she said.

Commenting on the recent shootings, Shabazz said that it’s imperative to let everyone know that the community is not going to stand for injustice anywhere.

She believes that as humans we have a duty to stand up for one another.

“We’re all human, and what happens to a Muslim should affect the way a Christian or a Jew or an Atheist thinks because no matter what their religion is, they’re human also.”

To coordinate this week’s events, the MSA is working with Students for Justice in Palestine, a campus organization for Palestinian rights, and the Arab Student Union.

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Obama administration claims that the internet will be free

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Obama's administration has been fundamentally about change and for the most part has had a positive outcome. The cycle of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants that dominated our government has finally been broken - leaving plenty of room for improvement. This time, however, change includes limitations concerning net neutrality.

After months of advocating for utility regulation of the internet, President Obama got his way. According to the White House website, Obama plans to put forth net neutrality; creating an open and free internet. The word "free" is advertised as if its going to be donated to the public-- a tactic to attract supporters, but what it's really going to cost us is our freedom in.

The FCC plans to introduce the presidential directive, beginning on Feb. 26. The public is yet to find out details about what this entails.

After reading the president's statement on "an open internet," I still find myself with several questions. His

plan makes me suspicious because of the ambiguity of his statements. "Increased transparency" sounds a bit like NSA's warrantless surveillance-- but without reason.

Under what premise is the government advocating the modification of a system that has been effectively running since the Clinton administration? Clinton and his administration felt that the internet should not fall under a utility and should be deregulated by the government. However, government recently has claimed that the internet is not equal (or available) to everyone and that under this new directive, everyone will have the same access and speed. How they are going to achieve this "net neutrality" is not clear to me.

Previously, the internet did not fall under the 1934 telephone utility regulations. With Obama's new directive, the internet will be considered a utility; therefore, it will be regulated as one. I like the internet as it is - a free flowing stream of ideas, products and global communication.

It doesn't need to be censored or monitored by the government. When the government did have control of the

internet, it was only for official use. It wasn't until the internet was in the hands of the private sector that it was available to common people. The internet is in retrograde and back in the hands of the government, despite the remarkable advancements the Internet made while privatized: from dial-up internet to Wi-Fi and mobile hotspots.

The industry flourished through investments made by the private sector and continues to progress. With these new policies at bay, who knows what will happen to the internet. Many of us who enjoy making podcasts, blogs or other websites might end up restricted and with less opportunities than before.

For instance, Verizon and many other phone companies provide popular apps like instagram, whatsapp and twitter for free; under the new directive this will be banned because it 'favors' those websites over others. This is only going to diminish connectivity and penalize companies, that try to bring its consumers free applications. At the end, it will mainly impede the regular consumer and not the big corporations it is targeting.

Pitbulls: lovers or fighters?

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The only difference between disruptive animals and disruptive human beings is that humans are able to argue their innocence.

For many cities, the controversy surrounding pit bulls has lead to an outrage of debates and legislation. Being able to legally own a pit bull depends on city law, as the issue is not statewide. The problem comes from a high number of human fatalities caused by aggressive pit bulls.

Those against owning pit bulls argue that the breed is aggressive to the point where no amount of training can subdue them. Oppositionists argue that it is not the fault of the owner but the genetics in the breed.

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), "While a dog's genetics may predispose it to behave in certain ways, genetics do not exist in a vacuum. Rather,

behavior develops through a complex interaction between environment and genetics."

The development of animals is very similar to the development of humans.

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Dogs, like humans, should be evaluated as individuals rather than as a collective breed.

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Variables such as setting, interactions and birth conditions can contribute to personality development, not just genetics. Dogs, like humans, should be evaluated as individuals rather than as a collective breed.

Independently of these factors, the major influence is their human owners.

Pit bulls were originally bred as fighting dogs, able to take down animals of larger size and stature. This trait makes them appealing

to people who use the dogs for violent purposes. Because many pit bulls are involved in dogfights, they are often conditioned to react aggressively towards

other dogs. However, they are trained to react positively toward humans.

The ASPCA says, "Even those pit bulls bred to fight other animals were not prone to aggressiveness toward people. Dogs used for fighting needed to be routinely handled by people; therefore aggression toward people was not tolerated."

Even with breed as a factor, there will always be cases that do not adhere to the majority.

Although they are less frequent, other breeds have instances of aggressiveness. Chihuahuas, for example, are notorious for imprinting on their owner and reacting defensively toward strangers. There are also pit bulls that consider themselves lap dogs.

Because there is so much concern over the aggressiveness of pit bulls, an actual solution should be implemented.

Laws that ban the pit bull breed do not solve the problem; they just let others deal with it. Society should not give up on pit bulls because they carry a negative status. We should work toward reversing their stigma.

Today, people are far more forgiving toward popular issues. Rage-filled celebrities can sell out areas and cheating politicians can generate legislation. There is no reason pit bulls should not receive the same pardon.

If society gave up on every troubled individual, the world would be far less populated.

THE BEACON | Editorial Argosy statue barricade causes safety concerns

As students, we've learned not to get too attached to sculptures that decorate the grounds on FIU, especially after Marty's Cube was lifted from its spot near the Deuxieme Maison last May.

Now it seems that FIU faculty and students must learn to not to be scared of them as well.

The green barricade surrounding red sculpture or named "Argosy" by the artist Alexander Liberman, on the traffic circle on the 16th Street entrance of the University has left growing concerns for safety and traffic conditions for the pedestrians and drivers around it.

The barricade, along with the tarp on the fence, is tall enough that it restricts drivers from being able to spot or notice pedestrians or cars coming from the other side, which is worrying given it's a roundabout.

This makes it all the harder to navigate around it and all the scarier for pedestrians who are trying to cross the street.

The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum's curator of collections, Debbye Kirschtel-Taylor, said she was informed by the conservators handling the maintenance for "Argosy" that the renovations should end sometime this week.

The renovations started less than a month ago, but students still complain about the speed of cars even though the signs on the tarp warn drivers to slow down.

As if there wasn't enough going on around the 16th Street entrance, there's a giant electronic marquee that directs those entering the school and informing them about upcoming events, workshops or guest speakers FIU has planned.

The screen is large, distracting and requires concentration if one were to try to read it.

Drivers already have media-screen issues. According to a federal study 660,000 drivers nationwide use their cell phones or other electronic devices at any given daylight hour.

The renovation of the red statue is now a running joke among the student population on how our University is under more construction than our own highways.

There is an unsaid understanding that sometimes our venture onto campus includes walking under hard-hat zones or next to construction vehicles and that the remodeling or construction will help students in the long run.

However this art piece has become a hazard even with the warning signs posted on the tarp, whose purpose is to protect drivers and the conservators working inside of the fenced area, who are working on renovating the sculpture.

One of the renovations include its repainting, which requires a specific type of paint resilient enough to be used on ships and bridges.

Therefore the tarp serves to protect vehicles from the paint and it also protects the paint on the sculpture from the debris on the road.

But for those driving on the roundabout it serves as an inconvenience.

If the tarp itself were even just a little more transparent or a lighter color, it would allow drivers to see the cars and pedestrians, instead it leaves them blind to incoming traffic.

"Argosy" will soon look shiny and new but until then, we advise students to drive slow and be aware of surroundings, even if that means a new sculpture, hard-hat-area or traffic detour.

With all the construction and renovations being done, it's clear that FIU is "building a better tomorrow," but what about today?

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF AHIRA CASTILLO CHANG

Top: The Chinese new year has the traditional lion dance in which two performers operate festive costume to liven up the crowd and celebrate the year of the sheep. **Bottom Left:** Chinese gala shows multi-cultural performances. The women in pictures performed the Chinese umbrella dance, just one of the many different performances featured. **Bottom Right:** Asian Studies and Modern Languages department organized chinese new year gala in the College of Business Complex on Feb. 12th. These women in picture performed the lantern dance.

A Chinese New Year Gala experience

COLUMN



RAFAEL ABREU

Students saw a nearly full house at the College of Business Complex for the Chinese New Year Gala, an event put up by the Asian Studies and Modern Languages departments, that included lantern dancing, fan dancing and the lion dance, among other surprises.

I enjoyed all that was put in front of me (I was also in the second row), but the lion dance caught my attention the most.

Featuring three lions being controlled by six people, it was a visual treat with their intricate design, facial expressions and movement.

At one point the performers, accompanied by thunderous live music, started going all around the room, which no one expected.

The quieter moments involved swords and the Er Hu, a two-stringed instrument similar to a violin (though an actual violin was used for one of the performances with the Er Hu).

I liked these performances for their movements and beauty, the sorts of

things that find something wonderful in soft and simple-looking movements.

An audience member performed a song by the UK group, Transition, sung in Mandarin, one of the only performances of the night done by someone from the audience.

Some of the performances (like the lion dance) were memorable and unique, like when a duo beat-boxed: one sang, the other dropped beats. I found this performance original and creative, one of my favorites of the night.

I also liked the instrumental performances, most of them consisting

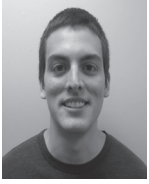
of a single person playing the instrument with music accompaniment. It was a nice and simple type of performance, one which showed up multiple times throughout the night.

I had no idea what I was in for when coming to the Gala, but I was glad I had gone after witnessing all of the multi-cultural performances. It was a good showcase for performers but also a great celebration of the new year (of the sheep).

The parties involved did a great job making it all come together.

Big L's death; a look back sixteen years later

COLUMNIST



ANGELO LOPEZ

On February 15, 1999, Lamont Coleman was shot nine times and later died in a drive-by shooting in his native town Harlem, New York.

Better known by his stage name Big L, his death was a major blow in a decade of major blows in hip-hop.

In the span of five years - 1996-2000 - the genre lost young MC's at the pinnacle of their lyrical prowess such as Big L, Biggie Smalls and Big Punisher also known as Big Pun. I would be negligent not to mention Tupac Shakur among the notable deaths of the period, but one would also be remiss to consider him a lyricist on the level of the aforementioned rappers.

Those five years recorded some of the worst deaths of transcendental talent.

Like Big Pun "Capital Punishment", Big L only completed one album, "Lifestylez ov da Poor &

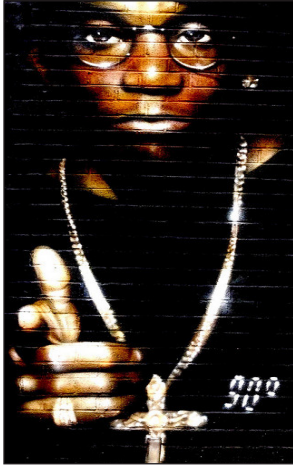
Dangerous," before his untimely death. That album is to this day hailed as a masterpiece, and rightfully so.

It is one of those few albums you wish you can completely erase from your memory, just so you can experience listening to it for the first time all over again. And it's a process you would like to repeat again.

What stands out in "Lifestyles" is Big L's mastery at telling stories and painting vivid pictures, usually of how ruthlessly he was running the streets.

Aside from his one studio album, his supreme talent is seen on his appearances on the "Stretch and Bobbito Show." The internal rhyme schemes he wove together, all the while telling a cogent story, is amazing to savor.

On his 1995 appearance on the show, he displays this quality for minutes on end. A line that sticks out is "I'm known for yokin' Japs and beating 'em with smokin' gats, leaving token blacks with broken bats and open caps."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DJAMIL MOSTEFAOUI VIA CREATIVE COMMONS

Lamont Coleman grew up in Harlem. At age 24, Coleman died from multiple gun-shot wounds just a few block from where he grew up.

Two stanzas, five words that rhyme consecutively, next to five words that rhyme consecutively.

I have never heard another rapper approach that level of skill.

Another special quality of Big L's that I don't hear people compliment often enough was his humor. His

humor was only for those who had the stomach for it. There are many comedians out there that have put out specials that aren't as funny as a Big L track.

Like much about this genre, there is a good amount of hypocrisy to criticize.

In the "Lifestyles" album the track "Street Struck," a call to the youth to avoid taking the wrong path in life, is included when every other track is about Big L glorifying exactly that.

While it is fun to speculate how the genre would be different with Big L, the sad truth remains that his life was cut short well before its time and the audience were robbed of an immense talent. Whether or not he would've remained a spectacular lyricist, we the audience were robbed of seeing his career progress and more tragically, Coleman was robbed of his life.

While the sadness of that fact is permanent on this side of the grave, we can still at least celebrate his life and career.

Alabama legalizes gay marriage

PRIDE GUIDE



MADARI PENDAS

Alabama has become the state No. 37 where gay marriage is legal. This was a difficult battle, often pinning federal and state mandates against one another. The legalization came as a surprise because of the state's conservative and pugnacious nature. One-third of the residents identify as evangelical Christians and seven out of ten oppose same-sex marriage. In 2006, they passed a gay marriage ban with 81 percent of the vote.

Chief Justice of Alabama's state supreme court, Roy S. Moore, had been violating federal orders and telling probate judges to not issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. In 2003, Moore had been removed from office for refusing to remove a statue of the Ten Commandments from the state judicial building.

Alabama has always been a vocal advocate for state sovereignty. In 1962, then governor George Wallace stood in front of the University of Alabama auditorium in order to stop integration, despite a Supreme Court mandate.

During his inaugural address, Wallace said "In the name of the greatest people that have ever trod this earth, I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny, and I say segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever."

This bellicose attitude echoes the current struggle for marriage equality. Moore had ordered judges to uphold the state's current ban of gay marriage. His office said it remained in effect despite the Supreme Court's rulings. However some judges have already begun issuing marriage licenses regardless of their governor's stance.

Alexander Orta, a senior English major, said, "it shows real progress is being made in the most ass-backwards region of America."

For the full story go to fiusm.com.

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SOFTBALL



TOP PHOTOS BY BRIAN TRUJILLO/THE BEACON

BOTTOM PHOTOS BY MEGAN TAIT/THE BEACON

Top Left: Senior outfielder Rebekah Sanchez warms up before playing the Tigers from the University of Memphis. **Top Right:** Freshman infielder Jessica Hallett pitches during the warm-up prior to the game against the Tigers of Memphis. **Bottom Right:** Junior pitcher Corinne Jenkins dominates on the rubber against Long Island University, Brooklyn this past weekend during the FIU Invitational. **Bottom Left:** Senior outfielder/pitcher Shelby Graves takes command at the plate going two for three against the Tigers with the game winning RBI single in the bottom of the sixth.

Softball finishes FIU Invitational 3-3

ALANNAH ALFONSO
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A freshman pitcher made her debut at home this weekend, recording the first three strikeouts of her career.

Rachel Dwyer closed the final two innings of the Panthers' loss to Purdue University on Sunday by striking out three Boilermakers.



The Panthers opened the season with a 3-3 split at the FIU Invitational.

Senior Shelby Graves, with a 1-3 record, got her first win of the season against the University

of Memphis on Friday in the first game of the tournament and dominated, going 2-for-3 and driving in the game-winning RBI single in the bottom of the sixth.

Freshman Ashley Belans also hit her first-career grand slam in the bottom of the fourth inning against the Long Island University, Brooklyn Blackbirds on Sunday.

FIU split two with the Memphis Tigers 3-5, then ran into trouble and lost two games against Purdue 6-4 which went 5-0 in this tournament, but came back with two wins against LIU 1-9.

Junior catcher Aleima Lopez drove her first home run of the season against the Tigers.

Junior Dominique Grossman made some impact plays in the outfield with a hurdling catch over the fence in right field to rob Tigers' Brooke Lee of a home run. FIU took the win 3-2 over Memphis.

Junior Corinne Jenkins, with a 5-3 record, got the loss against Purdue later that day pitching five innings. The fifth inning was tough for the Panthers as the Boilermakers scored seven unanswered runs.

The Panthers fell to the Boilermakers 8-1.

Jenkins took on Memphis on Saturday with a complete game loss. Despite the loss, she pitched a solid five-hit game with 5 strike-outs.

Costly errors that led to two unearned runs in the third inning are what cost the Panthers a 2-0 loss.

FIU then took on the Blackbirds with Graves on the mound but was relieved after one inning by sophomore Brianna Bartuccio, who got her first win of the season and held the Blackbirds to just one run.

Two LIU errors in the second brought in runs for the Panthers. Senior Krystal Garcia reached on a throwing error by LIU's third baseman Angie Vasquez.

Graves took a hit for the Panthers to get two on base while Lopez grounded out to move both runners over.

Sophomore Stephanie Texeira ended the game with an RBI single that run ruled LIU 12-4 in the fifth.

The FIU softball team closed out the final day of the FIU Invitational and split a pair of games against Purdue and LIU.

Graves got the loss, going six innings and later giving the ball to Dwyer in the seventh.

Lopez was feared by the Boilermakers baserunners as she threw out her second runner attempting to steal this season.

The Panthers struggled to get any offensive momentum during the game and Purdue scored one final run in the top of the seventh to get the win 8-0.

FIU later conquered the LIU Blackbirds 2-1.

Jenkins added another complete game win with three strikeouts and held LIU to three hits all game.

FIU takes the show on the road next week where they will participate in the Eastern Michigan University Madeira Beach Spring Invitational.



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BASEBALL

Baseball opens strong, gets ranked No. 23 in process

COLUMNIST



JACOB SPIWAK

The best time of the year started up again over the weekend, as the FIU baseball team finally opened their season with a 3-game series against the University of Tennessee Volunteers.

FIU took two of the three games against the Vols, and for the most part I was impressed with what I saw. UT came into the weekend ranked No. 25 in the country, but the Panthers were still able to take the series. This was enough for FIU to inch their way closer to being nationally ranked, being one of the “other teams considered” in this week’s rankings.

The most impressive aspect of FIU’s game this past weekend was their pitching. Aside from Saturday’s game (in which the Panthers were blown out 9-2), FIU’s pitchers kept UT from getting any rallies going and ultimately led the Panthers to two wins.

Leading the charge was junior Danny Dopico, who is playing his first year at FIU after previously attending Sienna College and Broward College.

In Friday night’s home opener, Dopico prevented UT from scoring after striking out 6-of-7 batters he faced (including four in one inning).

Dopico was awarded with the



KRONO LESCANO/THE BEACON

Freshman infielder Eddie Silva slides into home base against the University of Tennessee Volunteers during the 3-game opening series from Feb. 13-15. **For more photos from the series, see fiusm.com.**

win in this game.

On Sunday, Dopico was brought in to close out the game, and he did just that. Dopico threw two shutout innings and earned his first career Save to clinch the series over the Volunteers.

The 2014 Conference USA Freshman of the Year Chris Mourelle

also shined in his first start of the season, holding UT to one hit and zero runs in five innings. If the Panthers can get that sort of production from their Sunday starter moving forward, I don’t envision them losing too many series this season.

Other pitchers such as Friday starter Cody Crouse and relief pitcher

Brandon Diaz also looked very impressive in their season debuts.

Looking at the other aspects of FIU’s game, they certainly weren’t as impressive as the pitchers. Offensively, some players definitely shined. Shortstop Julius Gaines, First Baseman Mitchell Robinson, and Third Baseman Josh Anderson were

among those that looked really good at the plate over the weekend.

As a team, however, the Panthers hit for a pedestrian .216 batting average, with just a .324 on-base percentage. In the three games against UT, FIU was only able to score nine runs. Credit some of that to the UT pitchers, who are all SEC talents that play on a ranked team. Regardless, the Panthers will need to be better with the bats moving forward.

The FIU defense was by far the worst part of the weekend series, as they committed 11 errors. 7 of these errors came in Saturday’s loss, and were the driving force in breaking the game open in UT’s favor. Hopefully it was just due to being rusty and the issue will work itself out, but if it continues FIU could definitely get into some trouble as the season moves on.

FIU impressed not only myself, but also the nation with their series victory over the Volunteers. With a strong showing this week in the Coastal Carolina Tournament, the Panthers will more than likely find themselves ranked higher in the Top 25, then what they currently sit at, which is No. 23 in the Baseball America Poll.

However, parts of their game definitely need improvement if they want to be a serious contender this season.

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Black in America tour takes over Biscayne Bay

NICOLE MONTERO
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The shooting of unarmed 18-year-old Michael Brown, captured headlines late last year. Brown's case along with several other cases of black men dying at the hands of police officers, sparked a national debate about race, policing and a hashtag - #blacklivesmatter.

Black Lives Matter is a political campaign aimed at raising awareness of the oppression of the black community. The movement began as a reaction to the acquittal of George Zimmerman, the Sanford, FL man who shot unarmed teen Trayvon Martin in 2012.

The BBC Student Government Association plans on continuing the dialogues of race and policing by bringing an award-winning journalist to tell personal stories at the Wertheim University Center Ballrooms.

Soledad O'Brien, journalist, news anchor, producer, documentarian and TV personality, is coming to the BBC to examine these issues and the protests against police brutality as part of her Black in America tour, a series that brings diverse members of the community together to speak about how policing has affected their lives.

"Black in America is about Americans talking about the uncomfortable issue of race, about opening the floor to new perspectives,

problems and the powerful experiences of regular people," said O'Brien through her website, "This is a forum for the conversation America is ready to have – why do so many black Americans fear the very people that are supposed to protect them?"

According to Larissa Adames, BBC-SGA coordinator, the lecture will include a panel discussion between five experts, including a local panelist that can shed light on the controversies in Miami.

"It's a hot topic that's going on nationwide," Adames said. "We thought it would be a great opportunity to have students be a part of this conversation and be more aware of the current events going on in our community."

Shawna Daniels, a junior philosophy major, is excited to be able to listen to O'Brien's analysis of the situation. She thinks that the incidents in Ferguson prompted many protests that helped spark the Black Lives Matter campaign.

"I've heard that she's going to be interviewing students before the lecture and I think it would be really interesting for me to get to talk to her about it," O'Brien said, part of me is glad that the Ferguson case happened because of all the changes it brought, but the actual way it happened just sucks. I'm glad she's coming because we need this. FIU needs this," Daniels said.

In 2013, O'Brien launched Starfish

WORLD OF JOURNALISM



WALTER RIVERA/THE BEACON

Gustavo Faleiros, manager of the Earth Journalism Network and founder of InfoAmazonia based in Brazil, speaks at Media Party Miami on Friday, Feb. 13. Media Party Miami showcased digital innovation within Latin American and Hispanic media in the United States and took place at the Kovens Center on the Biscayne Bay campus.

Media Group, a multi-platform media production and distribution company dedicated to uncovering and producing stories that take a look at issues of race, class, wealth, poverty and opportunity – all explained through personal stories.

"She really does a little bit of everything," said Kaytien Franco, marketing assistant for Campus Life at BBC.

"She goes out to the streets herself and interviews people in these neighborhoods. She also interviews policemen, so she gets both sides of the story."

The University is the last stop on O'Brien's tour.

"I know that her tour is called Black in America because it's named after her documentary, which was recently released," Franco said. "And that documentary is great because it ranges on issues of race and the whole thing going on now with 'I Can't Breathe.'"

Alejandro Acosta, senior journalism major, is particularly glad that O'Brien's interview will involve both sides of the story.

"I just think it's important to talk to both sides– not just the victim's," Acosta said, "we, as a community, need to be less ignorant when it comes to racial prejudice. And these prejudices don't just happen to Blacks

– it happens to Hispanics and to Whites and to many other groups of people. I hope that that is captured in her lecture," Acosta said.

For Franco, the discussion will touch upon, "... an interesting, touchy subject."

"O'Brien has gone out there and done her research. And she's bringing a topic that a lot of people might find controversial. It's important to bring this kind of thing to campus and allow people to get their point across and share their experiences," Franco said.

O'Brien will be coming to the WUC Ballrooms on Feb. 25 at 6:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

BBC hopes to grow student population

CAMILA FERNANDEZ
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With the lack of a greater student population growth at the Biscayne Bay Campus, students and faculty are faced with a disadvantage.

To address student and faculty concerns, the BBC Student Government Council hosted their 9th Annual Town Hall Meeting with University President Mark B. Rosenberg.

During the town hall, it was discussed that the absence of a larger student population has become a major issue for campus growth. It is hoped that once there is student housing at BBC, there will be more students on campus.

According to Rosenberg, there have been delays in terms of new housing construction.

Over 200 students who once resided in the previous Bay Vista Housing had to leave by May 1 of last year, leaving BBC without any housing available for students.

Construction of a new privatized housing was expected to be completed by Fall 2015. However, it is now expected to be completed by August 2016 if and only if they get approval on Thursday, Feb. 19 from the Florida Board of Governors.

"We [had] some delays, but we're pretty sure that we're going to get approval to build our new residence hall overlooking Biscayne

Bay... The hole is already in the ground by the way, in case you haven't noticed," Rosenberg said.

Many successful campus operations were also highlighted during the meeting as well as the national recognition of science, technology, engineering and mathematics involvement at the MAST @ FIU Academy.

Despite the lack of students, the campus has become more student centered, said Jazmin Felix, President of the BBC-SGC. This is due to last year's addition of the Panther Plaza and the Panther Square, as well as a new Starbucks and Subway dining facility.

"When we started this year, the goal was to make BBC more student-centered and more unified and I think fall was the kickoff for that," Felix said.

The Chaplin School of Hospitality and Management was

congratulated for its many accomplishments in internships and student successes.

According to Rosenberg, this upcoming South Beach Wine and Food Festival, taking place from Feb. 19 to Feb. 22, will provide hundreds of internships to hospitality students.

Recently, Eddie Zeng, a graduate student at the school of hospitality, was awarded with a \$5,000 scholarship at the 2nd Annual FIU and Badia Spice Competition thanks to his winning creation of a seafood-type spice.

His spice called "Biscayne Bay" will be sold with a five percent of all global sales to go right back to the school of hospitality's funding.

"Our students can compete, and they do compete," Rosenberg said.

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication was also commended due

to its partnership with the MAST @ FIU Academy and their Eyes on the Rise sea level project. The project was recently aired by the Worldwide Public Broadcasting Television (WPBT) and YouTube.

In terms of the Royal Caribbean state-of-the art facility that opened by January of this year, it is expected to soon benefit students at the College of Architecture and the Arts and the Chaplin School of

Hospitality and Tourism Management in the area of research.

The facility includes a 300-seat theater, 20,000-square-foot costume-making and storage facility and 10 other rehearsal studios.

"Over time you will see significant impact opportunities, research opportunity. [It is] the most unbelievable partnership. I promise you it's going to happen," Rosenberg said.



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