



## RUSSIA

### US warned over missile defense

Russia sees the planned U.S. missile defense system as a potential threat to its nuclear forces and may review its participation in a landmark nuclear arms treaty, officials said Monday.



## AFGHANISTAN

### 900 militants join reintegration program

Despite Taliban threats against their lives, nearly 900 militants have quit the fight and enrolled in a government program luring insurgents off the battlefield, a NATO official said Monday.



## NIGERIA

### Muslim sect demands troop withdrawal

A radical Muslim sect responsible for killings across the northeastern region demanded Monday that troops withdraw from the region and that the government rebuild destroyed mosques.

## Concerns raised by many over 'violent' political rhetoric

**ALEXANDRA CAMEJO**  
Asst. News Director

Less than 24 hours before she was shot by a gunman in Tucson, Arizona, Representative Gabrielle Giffords, a Democrat, wrote an email to Kentucky Republican Secretary of State Trey Grayson conveying her longing for ways to "tone our rhetoric and partisanship down."

Nearly a month since the Jan. 8 shooting, which left 14 people wounded and six dead, the violent rhetoric that worried Giffords just hours before her near-death experience became a national concern in the political arena.

Suggestions that aggressive rhetoric provoked the 22-year-old shooter, Jared Loughner, to act out generated a heated debate over its use by news media outlets, politicians, and political activists.

The most specific and publicized instance involved a graphic posted by former Vice Presidential candidate, Sarah Palin, on her website placing crosshairs on each House Democrat that voted for health care reform, which included

Rep. Giffords of Arizona.

While it was posted months ago, it sparked a national conversation over the commonplace of violent rhetoric within political discourse and how influential it was to Loughner.

Framing the current political debate within the University's community, the views of both students and faculty appear to emulate the conflicted, national discussion.

"Of course the rhetoric is too harsh. That's putting it mildly. Did it result, directly or indirectly, in the Arizona shooting or other acts of violence? We'll never know for sure," said Maricel Cigales, associate chair of the Psychology department.

Arguments from Democrats and Republicans alike have developed sentiments amongst some that overly divided politics can only lead to danger.

"Partisan politics carried to extremes can poison democracy. The cure is for the electorate to shun the most partisan politicians," said Thomas Breslin, chair of the Faculty Senate and professor of International Relations.

**POLITICS, page 2**

## IN YOUR VASE



ALEXIA ESCALANTE/THE BEACON

Sophomore Judith Vigil, who is majoring in biology, works on a project for her beginning ceramics class.

## Lecture emphasizes stress release

**NICOLAS SARAVIA**  
Staff Writer

Stress, etiquette and competition were some of the topics covered at a professionalism lecture on Thursday, February 3, at the College of Law.

The event, titled "Managing Personal & Professional Crises," and speakers included Michael Cohen,

executive director of Florida Lawyers Assistance, and Dr. Cheryl S. Nowell, director of the Counseling and Psychological Services Center.

Florida Lawyers Assistance was created by the Florida Supreme Court to help attorneys impaired because of drugs, alcohol or psychological conditions. Rather than taking these problems as being "moral issues," the orga-

nization's stance is that they are to be acknowledged as treatable illnesses.

A main issue addressed in the lecture was the stress suffered by numerous law students and practicing lawyers.

"Studies show that students are already stressed before they get

**ETIQUETTE, page 2**

## Identity and security issues of Islam in Europe discussed

**JONATHAN SIMMONS**  
Contributing Writer

Drawing on her expertise and experience as an Iranian living in the West, Dr. Shireen Hunter, distinguished scholar of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, gave a lecture on the issues of integration and identity effecting the Muslim immigrant populations in Europe.

Titled, "Islam in Europe: Politics of Identity and Security," students and faculty alike gathered to listen in at the Graham Center on Feb. 4.

Hunter traced the history of Muslim immigrant communities in Europe from the colonial era, when Muslim men were often recruited to work as laborers in European countries.

The largely homogenous European societies, Hunter emphasized, often pushed Muslim immigrants away, leading part of the Muslim

population to reject European culture as a response to having felt rejected by it, which in turn fed Europeans' frustrations with the immigrants.

"You had this Muslim underclass developing. Constantly, they pose this choice for Muslims – are you French? Or Muslim? Are you British? Or Muslim? They are facing very serious prejudice," Hunter said.

Muslim immigrants, Hunter said, currently bear a responsibility to learn the language and culture of their host countries and become active citizens.

Some attendees felt the lecture was a necessary view of the past and current European immigrant implications.

"It was a great overview of the European situation," said Simona Merati, a Ph.D. candidate in international relations and FIU's program coordinator for Middle East Studies.

"It didn't address only the predictable points, like terrorism, but also possibilities of coming together."

Former German Ambassador, Dr. Volker Anding, who was in attendance said, "I really appreciated her emphasis on the issue of integration which does not mean that somebody should assimilate, but that they should conform with the laws of the land, and with the main cultural traditions."

Flavia Almonte, a senior majoring in international relations, said, "It is important for both sides to get over certain prejudices. It is important that Muslims learn how to integrate in European society, just as it is important for Europeans to learn that Muslims are there, they aren't going anywhere, so Europeans also need to learn how to integrate them."

The roundtable discussion following Dr. Shireen Hunter's

speech was attended primarily by graduate students and professors, and had been billed as a discussion of E.U. and U.S. policy towards, primarily, Iran.

The lecture was followed by a roundtable discussion of EU and U.S. policy in the Middle East, featuring Hunter and her husband Dr. Robert Hunter, former U.S. Ambassador to NATO and a senior advisor at the Rand Corporation. Both spoke at length about the tumultuous recent events in Egypt.

"This is the time where the United States needs to be absolutely clear that we've had it with Mubarak," said Dr. Robert Hunter, "and he needs to go sooner rather than later."

He referred to President Obama's recent comments on the events in Egypt by suggesting that the President is trying "to get the U.S. on the right side of history, even if we're going to pay some short-term

downside."

"One thing critical to us is the Egypt-Israel peace treaty. I have high confidence that any government that is likely to take over in Egypt will preserve that treaty, as it's in Egypt's fundamental self-interest," said Robert Hunter.

Shireen Hunter highlighted the growing tension between the Western society and Iran. Iran's strategic importance and oil supply are a cause for worry for most nations.

"The problem is beyond regime," she said. "Whatever Iran does, everybody else feels uncomfortable." "I don't believe that the threat of war with Iran has gone completely."

"Islam in Europe: Politics of Identity and Security" and the roundtable on EU and U.S. policy in were both sponsored by FIU's School of International and Public Affairs and a part of the Middle East Studies Lecture Series.

## WEIRD NEWS

### Rats! Good for protein and protests in Uganda

A man who ate a rat in front of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in 2005 is threatening to repeat what he says is a traditional form of protest used to bring change.

John Ojim Omoding, 79, told the Daily Monitor newspaper that his grandfather ate a live rat in front of British colonisers in 1947, persuading them to make the eastern Tororo area a county.

Now Omoding wants Tororo promoted to district status and says he may eat more rats in front of Museveni to achieve this goal.

### Marathon Man Ends Streak of 365 in 365 Days

The very thought of running a single marathon is enough to cause most people to break out in a nervous sweat.

Unless you're Stefaan Engels. This weekend the Belgian runner set a world record by completing 365 marathon races in a row. The Belgian athlete -- accurately dubbed "Marathon Man" -- ended his fitness feat in Barcelona, Spain, on Saturday, after pounding roads across Europe and the U.S.

Engels has covered 9,569 miles on foot since setting off from his hometown of Ghent on Feb. 5, 2010.

– Compiled by Alexandra Camejo

# Rhetoric alluding to violence 'unwise'

## POLITICS, page 1

Luis Valdez, former vice president of College Republicans at the University, is saddened by the dispute sparked by both political parties.

"I don't think political rhetoric has anything to do with this. People are already making accusations that it's the rights fault or the left fault. I think it's a sad case of opportunism for people to point the finger at people they don't like," said Valdez.

After several people who knew Loughner, described him as "mentally ill" and "disconnected from reality," frustration sprouted from both sides on the lack mental health support, and how this factor led him, and potentially others, to end innocent lives.

Tucson Forensic Psychologist Dr. Gary Perrin, a professional accustomed with violent crime, was asked the extent to which a mentally

disturbed person could interpret violent, political rhetoric.

Perrin replied, "In these recent days, and I mean the past few years, rhetoric has increased. Words are powerful, and certainly words can make a [mentally unstable] person act in a certain way."

Although violent acts, according to Perrin, are situational, the lack of consideration from politicians to tone down their rhetoric generates heated debate.

"For politicians and others to make public statements alluding to violence as a solution to the problems that ail this country is unwise and irresponsible," said Cigales. "Any intelligent person should know that those sorts of statements have at least the potential to incite hatred and violence. We already have too much of both."

Disagreeing with the sentiments that the rhetoric led to this violent act, Valdez said, "Politically

heated debate is healthy for democracy. You need people who are willing to say what they believe."

Among the University community, some feel that the shooting could have been prevented if someone would have just reported Loughner's disturbing behavior.

"This could have been caught and should have been reported the appropriate way. It boggles my mind that no one spoke to the authorities," said College Democrats Vice-President Donovan Dawson.

Visiting patients in a state mental hospital every week for two years for an undergraduate service project, Breslin understands that the mentally ill need support to ensure that their isolation is lessened. As the majority of mental hospitals have shut down, it has left patients vulnerable in the community.

"In hard times, when the stresses on the mentally ill become greater, support for them becomes even weaker.

Our politicians should be aware that heated rhetoric creates an atmosphere of crisis that can only further disturb the deeply disturbed. Atmospheric matter," said Breslin.

"Will this stop the heated rhetoric? Probably not. People put the mirror on themselves, and I think both sides played to their constituents," said Dawson.

Professor and Honors Fellow Dr. Fred Blevens believes that the majority of Americans aren't swayed by the highlighted rhetoric, but instead worries about the effect it has on the government.

"Most people in this country are not ideologues, and they don't ascribe to the left or the right—they're in the vast middle," said Blevens.

"The frightening part about all of this is not what networks like FOX and MSNBC do to the people but what they do to the agenda setters—that are governing."

# Moll hopes to increase BBC activities

## MOLL, page 8

require the University to raise \$70 million, according to Moll.

The SEAS building would include more interdisciplinary studies, according to Moll.

An example would be a class on how Anthropology and Environmental studies relate.

Also, a larger variety of courses offered at BBC would help those students living near the area so these students would not have to take a trip to the Modesto Maidique Campus.

This would allow students to take

classes closer to where they live.

The performance report Moll designed outlining his goals states another hope is to "increase activities, programs, and courses at BBC that encourage environmental stewardship and support sustainable practices."

The Adopt-a-Tree program provides homeowners residing in the Miami-Dade county area with two trees a year.

If they choose, they may instead donate them to BBC.

According to Moll, a couple hundred trees have been donated thus

far.

In addition to attempting to accomplish these goals for the campus, Moll lectures a Lodging Operations Control course on Thursdays from 12:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. in room 260 of the hospitality building.

The course teaches students how to maximize sales of hotels and reduce costs of delivering those sales and increase revenues by department.

On improving the campus with these goals, Moll said, "Every day, in every way, we are working to make the Biscayne Bay Campus a better place to learn and grow."

## CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 22, Issue 11 of *The Beacon*, in the story titled "Cristobal announces new defensive coordinator," the writer's name is misspelled. The correct spelling is Igor Mello.

Also, in the same issue, the photographer's name for the Men's Basketball photo on page 3 is misspelled. The correct spelling is Rebecca Villafane.

*The Beacon* will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

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ALFRED SOTO

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JASMYN ELLIOTT



### CONTACT INFORMATION

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

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

Fax:  
(305) 348-2712

Editor-in-Chief:  
(305) 348-1580  
jorge.valens@fiusm.com

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

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# Cohen sees negative trend in interactions among lawyers

## ETIQUETTE, page 1

to college and that has not decreased" said Nowell, a psychologist with over twenty years of experience.

A healthy regimen of physical exercise was one of the various suggestions mentioned to ease stress.

"You need to take care physically, as well as emotionally," added Nowell.

Highlighted by Michelle Mason, senior associate dean for Enrollment Management, Student Development and Outreach was the work a good support structure based off family and friends can do to help both lawyers and aspiring lawyers deal with stress on a daily basis.

Another concern brought up by Cohen was the manner in which practicing lawyers

behave toward their colleagues, a trend he says, is seeing a negative change.

"In the years I have been practicing, I have seen a tremendous negative change in the ways lawyers treat each other," said Cohen, who is also a member of the Florida Bar's Standing Committee on Professionalism and the Law Office Management Assistance Service Advisory board.

During the lecture, a student raised concerns for the incorporation of professionalism courses, such as etiquette, in the curriculum of universities offering law degrees.

"Every course you take in law school should have something on being a lawyer, rather than acting like one," expressed Cohen.

Among other etiquette concerns was the competi-

tiveness of attorneys, which Cohen attributed to the win/lose model that lawyers are ranked by.

"There are so many lawyers dissatisfied with the win/lose model," added Cohen.

The lecture received a positive response from students, who liked the speakers approach to public speaking.

"I liked this lecture because it was a conversation, instead of having someone preach," said Barbara Ballart, a third year law student. "It was good to make sure that as students we do not end up committing mistakes and that we are talking about these issues now."

*Nicolas Saravia works as a Beat Writer, covering the School of International and Public Affairs and the College of Law for The Beacon.*



## MEN'S BASKETBALL

# Late lead blown in final seconds

**JACKSON WOLEK**  
Staff Writer

FIU led nearly the entire game until FAU's Brett Royster scored a layup with 4.2 seconds left in the game, ruining any chances of a Golden Panther upset.

FIU fell to rival FAU in a 73-72 heartbreaking loss on the road in Boca Raton on Feb. 5.

"With four seconds to go, having played the game we just played, it never should have gotten to that," coach Isiah Thomas said.

The Golden Panthers came out in the first half firing away from beyond the arc, and after threes from Phil Gary, Jeremy Allen and Dominique Ferguson they found themselves quickly up on the Owls 9-0 just three minutes into the game.

"We work at shooting the basketball every day and we try to make sure our players take shots that they're comfortable with," Thomas said. "During the start of the game they had comfortable looks and they knocked them down."

In the first half, 24 of FIU's 35 points came from beyond the arc, but what was even more impressive was their effort on the defensive end of the ball.

They limited FAU to just 29 points on 45 percent shooting from the field and forced nine turnovers, leading to 15 points off of turnovers. The guard combination of Phil Taylor, who played 33 minutes, and Gary counteracted the tremendous guards the Owls have in Alex Tucker and Raymond Taylor.

Although FIU (9-14, 4-7 SBC) could never push their lead higher than 11, to their credit they never let the lead slip away from them either.

Taylor took control of the game



COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY PRESS

Eric Frederick [left] attempts to block a shot from FAU's Brett Royster [right] in a last-second loss to FAU.

in the last five minutes of the half, scoring nine straight to keep the lead. When it looked like FAU was getting ready to take the lead at 28-27 with 3:38 remaining, the freshman hit a long range three and got fouled on the next three he took which he made one of his free throws to put them up 32-27. The half ended with FIU leading 35-29.

In the second half, FIU maintained a 8 to 12 point lead over FAU

(18-7, 10-1 SBC) for a majority of the time, despite Ferguson getting his fourth foul with 16:43 to play.

After taking 12 three-pointers in the first half, they only managed to take two in the second half as FAU tightened up on defense, making sure FIU did not have any opportunities. The lack of scoring from deep and poor defense halfway through was the cause of seeing their 12 point lead at 9:36 fall to just one at 5:59

remaining.

The outcome would boil down to the last minute of play, when the Golden Panthers once again could not find a way to finish what they started.

The Golden Panthers had a seven-point lead with 1:10 remaining but FAU had them right where they wanted them.

**MEN'S, page 4**

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

*FIU fans have a lot to learn from FAU*

It was "Bury the Burrow in red" at the Oxley Center, one of FAU's many promotional nights as a sea of 2,961 fans dressed in red tailed and attended the rivalry game against FIU.

It always ceases to amaze that the school an hour north from here can draw more fans for a big rivalry game than FIU.

Florida Atlantic, a far superior team to the Golden Panthers

(and many other Sun Belt teams) on the court this season, stole a game that they had no business winning on Feb. 5. In a game where FIU led for 39 minutes and 55 seconds, a game-winning layup by FAU's Brett Royster destroyed any chances of an upset.

### COMMENTARY



IGOR MELLO

After the buzzer sounded, the sold-out arena rushed the court, ringing the "Taylor Victory Bell," another new tradition by the rival school. The Owls may not have deserved to win the game, but their fans certainly deserved a chance to celebrate a big win. Unlike FIU, the school in Boca has their share of faithful fans, whether it's for football or basketball.

That's just not the kind of school spirit you find here in Miami.

**FANS, page 4**

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# Golden Panthers extend streak with win over Owls

**RICO ALBARRACIN**  
Asst. Sports Director

For the Golden Panthers to continue on their current winning streak, they would have to jump over a significant hurdle: A cross-town rival.

FIU overcame the hurdle, as they went into Boca Raton, winning 60-53 against FAU on Feb 6. Jerica Coley recorded her fifth consecutive game double-digit game, as she led all scorers with 18 points while adding four rebounds, four assists, and four steals. Finda Mansare joined Coley offensively with 14 points and seven rebounds. Senior Michelle Gonzalez also added 11 points to help FIU (11-14, SBC 6-5) secure their fourth consecutive victory.

One of the keys to victory for the Golden Panthers was their free-throw shooting, as Cindy Russo's squad were a perfect 11-of-11 from the free-throw line. Along with the free-throw shooting, FIU was able to force FAU (6-16, SBC 3-8) to commit 20 turnovers, which the Golden Panthers took advantage of by scoring 23 points off of the turnovers.

The Golden Panthers jumped out to a 10-3 lead in the first three minutes. The Owls fought

back to make it a three-point game, as the Golden Panthers hung on to a 10-7 lead. FIU would again push the pace the game by going on an 8-2 run, capped by Coley's three-point play with 10:51 remaining to make it 18-9.

The Golden Panthers held a 16-point lead with 6:23 remaining in the half after Mansare hit a jumper. Gonzalez finished the half with free throws to give FIU a 33-23 lead at halftime.

Rival FAU stormed back by opening the half with an 8-0 run, led by a pair of three-point shots from Takia Brooks and April Goins to cut the deficit to 33-31 with 17:25. The Owls took their first and only lead of the game at 13:55, but it was short lived as Mansare gave the FIU the lead once again to spark FIU on a 10-0 run.

The Owls cut the lead to 53-49 with 3:13 to go, but Coley finished off the Owls' comeback when she hit from downtown to ice the game and secure a 60-53 win.

The Panthers will look to extend their winning streak as they host the University of Louisiana-Lafayette (10-13, SBC 3-7) on Wed, Feb 9. The Ragin' Cajuns are currently in fifth place in the West division of the SBC, averaging



KRISTI CAMARA/THE BEACON

Michelle Gonzalez [above] scored 11 points in victory over Florida Atlantic.

**WOMEN'S, page 4**



## SWAMPED ON ROAD



MEGAN KELLY/THE BEACON

Christine Seredni [above] and Giulietta Boha dropped a doubles match against No. 2 University of Florida on the road on Feb. 6. As a team, FIU was swept by the Gators 7-0 and dropped to 1-4 on the season.

## Isiah Thomas a big draw on the road, but not on campus

### WOMEN'S, page 3

Lately, and usually, FIU has struggled to pull a decent crowd to their home games. This season, FIU has averaged 1,152 fans in attendance at the U.S. Century Bank Arena, bad enough to rank last in the conference. That's also less than half of what FAU has averaged in their past three games – and they don't have a Hall of Fame NBA player as their head coach. In most cases, it would be understandable if one were to tell that FAU is having their best season in years and on the verge of clinching the conference – but that doesn't cut it.

FIU fans barely showed up when their football team clinched its first conference crown against Arkansas State. According to reports, 14,588 fans showed up to the Nov. 22 game, but that statistic may have been skewed. While 14,588 people may have bought tickets, that doesn't mean that number of fans attended the game. There were plenty of empty chairs in the student section that night.

Despite being ranked last in home attendance, FIU is currently ranked first in attendance for road games, averaging 3,613 per away game.

The marketing and promotions department has shown

that their promotional strategies have not been up to par, at least compared to other Sun Belt schools.

This season alone, FAU has held a "white-out", "blue-out" and "red-out" nights during home games, including their last home game against FIU. During those three giveaways, FAU has drawn an average of 2,679 fans for each game.

Similar to the rival school, FIU held a "black-out" night against Florida State on Nov. 18. It's been the lone promotional giveaway this school has had, outside of free string bags.

The result of their only promotional night – 4,167 fans, which was a season-high.

If that many fans came to watch FIU that night, then why not have more promotional nights?

It's a shame, but the FIU faithful shouldn't go to games based on promotional nights. When your school has an Isiah Thomas coaching the team, that should be more than enough of a reason to show support to your home team.

So when FAU takes the trip down I-95 south on Feb. 19, the FIU fanatics (if there are any) should at least challenge FAU's attendance for

the first meeting between the two teams this season. This fan base has yet to prove that they deserve a 12-time NBA All-Star as their head coach.

# Golden Panthers have dropped seven of last eight

### MEN'S, page 3

The FIU defense could not hold up as the Owls nailed two consecutive three-pointers to stay alive and with 50 seconds left, FIU had the ball with a three-point lead.

The Owls opted not to foul but rather let FIU run out the shot clock. Taylor missed a three-pointer with the shot clock winding down as DeJuan Wright saw the rebound bobble out of his hands go right to Raymond Taylor of FAU, who was immediately fouled by Gary.

Taylor would make both free throws and with 14 seconds left to cut the lead back to one with FIU ready to inbound. Before FIU could inbound the ball, the Owls decided to foul Gary and send him to the line for two.

Gary, a 66 percent shooter from the charity stripe, missed both free throws. Off the second miss, FAU's Alex Tucker took the ball the length of the court and found Brett Royster for an easy layup giving them Owls their only lead of the game. FIU's last chance – a DeJuan Wright full court heave – was not to be, as the Golden Panthers once again let a game that they could have won get away from them.

Free throws hurt them the most as they shot

11 out of 18 in the game. Even though after the game Royster was quoted saying it was the loudest the arena has been all year, Thomas did not make that an excuse for the poor performance.

"I'd like to tell you that it played a big role, but we've been in places where the crowd wasn't as noisy and we missed them then," Thomas said.

"I'm sure that it's going to a very difficult loss for FIU and Isiah [Thomas] because they had this game and outplayed us for 39 minutes," FAU coach Mike Jarvis said. "I give them a ton of credit for the way they tried to win this game."

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

#### FIU vs. Louisiana

- Time: 7:00 p.m.
- When: 02/10/11
- Where: U.S. Century Bank Arena

## Ragin' Cajuns next foe for Golden Panthers

### WOMEN'S, page 3

65.7 points a game. Mercedes Johnson is currently averaging 15.2 points per game, currently the sixth highest scorer in the SBC, and 6.6 rebounds per game.

Louisiana struggles to find a second threat to get defenses to draw attention away from Johnson, who is handling the offensive load for the Ragin' Cajuns. Louisiana also gives

up 64.8 points a game, which puts them in the middle of the pack in the Sun Belt Conference.

The Golden Panthers will look to pressure Johnson into making her teammates be the ones who win the game. When Russo's team double team players, Coley and Gonzalez thrive in the passing lanes, as both players are averaging two steals a game.

The Golden Panthers will

tip-off against the Ragin' Cajuns at 6 p.m. at U.S. Century Bank Arena.

### WOMEN'S B-BALL

#### FIU vs. Louisiana

- Time: 6:00 p.m.
- When: 02/09/11
- Where: USCBA



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## AND THE CROWN GOES TO...

Top Left: The 2010 Miss FIU winner Stephanie Jimenez, 2011 winner Ana Perez, Homecoming Queen Cecily Arias and Jasmy Garbalosa, Public Relations Chair for Miss FIU, pose after the pageant. Bottom Left: Brianna Ortiz, the winner of Best Interview, performs during the talent portion of the pageant. Right: Mr. FIU winner, Robby Valls and the 2010 Miss FIU winner Stephanie Jimenez present contestants during the show. Photos by Laura Pacchioni.



### IN STITCHES

## Art student gets style inspiration from film and nature



Jennifer Suarez is a recent transfer to the University from New York City and she brought her ukulele and eclectic fashion sense with her from the Big Apple.

#### THE BEACON: WHAT GOT YOU INTERESTED IN FASHION?

Jennifer Suarez: I've always kind of had a bit of a creative background. I went to a fashion high school kind of, I went to DASH, the Design and Architecture Senior High in the Design District. I was a film major but most of my best friends were in fashion and we would go to stores and thrift stores and I just always picked that up. It's a good creative outlet and I always had a knack for it. Also, my parents dress up and have infinite amounts of shoes so my whole family is like that.

#### TB: WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO GO SHOPPING IN MIAMI?

JS: I always pick things up from different places like American Apparel and Urban Outfitters and an assortment of thrift stores like Douglas Gardens, which is like my second home. I got this [handbag] there for five dollars.

#### TB: HOW DOES MIAMI INFLUENCE YOUR FASHION SENSE?

JS: In New York, I tried to dress anti-weather so I dress colorful enough here because you can find it more often in stores. I also play [music] shows, which is an opportunity to dress nicely.

#### TB: WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION?

JS: Birds, friends, movies and magazines. As far as fashion, I really like Wes Anderson films like *The Royal Tenen-*

*baums* where you always find an eclectic collection of colors. I really like old French films. Actually no, old Italian films have really good fashion [too].

#### TB: CAN YOU LIVE WITHOUT FASHION?

JS: I feel like I can say I can live without fashion, but I always find myself destroying my closet and trying on a million things. I'm a creature of habit. [Even when there is no one there], you always try to dress to impress in a certain sense.

*In Stitches is a bi-weekly column on campus fashion. Look for it every other Wednesday.*

#### COLUMNIST



ESRA ERDOGAN

### FASHION STATS

#### Who is she?

- Name: Jennifer Suarez
- Major: Art
- Year: Junior

#### What's she wearing?

- Turban: Vintage
- Tunic: Vintage
- Boots: Urban Outfitters



## STUDENT PROGRAMMING COUNCIL

# Indie artist to perform in GC Ballrooms

**ALEX MACIEL**  
Staff Writer

With the barren pockets of most college students, finding a low cost activity can be challenging. Many get stuck in the same routine of classes, work and boredom. That's why SPC sets out to provide free events for students with empty wallets.

Jared Mahone, a musician from Columbus, Ohio, will take the stand to produce a bluesy and alternative style of music. With his acoustic undertones, he has been called an alternative Jack Johnson by music critics.

His set includes a guitar, beat boxing and singing. He's gained fame from his beatboxing skills. Mahone produces drumbeats, rhythm and musical sounds using only his voice.

Even though he can singularly produce instrumental sounds, the show would not be complete without his creative band. Mahone will be joined by his band on Wednesday for what SPC coordinators says will be a fun show.

"Mahone's musical abilities include creating a range of rhythms that, creatively, can be seen as musical art making him a modern artist," says Stephanie Suarez, Vice President of Programming for SPC.

Mahone's style brings performing to the next level by using a combination of sounds and rhythms.

Jared Mahone was picked through The National Association for Campus Activities, NACA.

SPC and Campus life are behind the booking of Mahone. To them, his talents stood out and landed him a spot at Florida International University as part of his 86 college national tour. Mahone is using the tour to test out his new music and encourages fans to give feedback through his website, [JaredMahone.com](http://JaredMahone.com).

Mahone's music can be found on iTunes. His first and only album is, *ThatCityScape*. Songs include, "Hometown Girl," "Somebody Knows," "Catch My Breath," "Eventually" and "Fast Asleep." It was released in 2007.

Apart from his album release, Mahone was previously undertaking a "Mixtape Project" in 2010. The challenge was to write one song every week for a year. Mahone would then post the songs each week on his website. Mahone says he saw the project as a way to include his fans in his love of writing. From this, his fans can choose the top songs to be included in his next album.

While he did not meet the goal, the project became an ongoing process and he will continue until the 52-song quota is met. Fans can check out

the songs he has written so far and still vote on their favorites on his website.

SPC has designed the concert to be like a "dinner and show" to differentiate it from their other concert events.

This dinner and show is aimed to entertain and provide students with an opportu-

nity to wipe their minds clear with music. Food and drinks are free, and everyone is welcome.

"Everyone is sure to have a great time. Free food will be served, including lasagna," said Suarez.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAREDMAHONE.COM

Jared Mahone has been compared to pop artist Jack Johnson by critics. He is best know for his beat boxing skills.

## SPC PRESENTS: JARED MAHONE LIVE AT FIU

- Time: 6:00 p.m.
- When: 02/09/11
- Where: GC Ballrooms

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

# Gables Diner serves up a homemade-quality weekly brunch menu

I have a confession to make: I am one of those crazies that will gladly eat breakfast for dinner.

It's something about the overall comforting, at-home feeling that breakfast seems to give me that will make me choose eggs and grits over conventional lunch or dinner food any day.

With this being said, it can be assumed that I am always on the lookout for a brunch opportunity, an excuse to eat pancakes for lunch.

Thankfully, an out-of-town guest (and fellow breakfast enthusiast), who we will call Mr. Harris, discovered a local spot and decided to share it with me.

On the way to our destination, Mr. Harris raved about Gables Diner, 2320 Galiano St, a South Florida staple that serves brunch from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Since Mr. Harris was the guest of honor, he insisted that we take full advantage of it during Superbowl weekend, and I was more than happy to oblige. Upon arriving, I was pleasantly surprised to see that the restaurant is small but cozy, with a warm eclectic take on the usual diner set-up with plenty of window seat booths.

On Saturday, I decided to try their take on the classic, all-American breakfast, namely the Stacked Eggs which included two fried eggs, sausage patty, kielbasa slice, French toast and a surprise side of home fries.

When my food arrived, I was happy to see the generous portion and, upon tasting it, very pleased to see that the quality of the food matched up with the quantity.

Oftentimes when I order French toast it has a slightly raw taste, as if it isn't cooked through, and needs to be masked with syrup to be bearable.

Not so this time. It had a light cinnamon-sugar crust, was chewy on the inside, and barely needed syrup. Also, the home fries were well-seasoned and took on the earthy-sweet flavor of the onions and peppers they were sauteed with. Combine with the hickory-flavored sausage and the familiar

taste of a well-made fried egg, this breakfast had a homemade quality that could compete with that of my own mother's cooking.

We returned the next day for more, where I decided to try their Philly Open-Face Omelette, which was loaded with thin strips of tenderloin steak, cheddar and jack cheeses, diced tomatoes, sliced red onions and green peppers. A side of cheese grits completed the meal.

Once again, I was impressed with the homemade quality of their food, the dish made good use of the tenderloin to offset the mild sweetness of the onions with the fresh, slightly astringent taste of the tomatoes and peppers.

Even so, the real star was the cheesy grits. I was a little concerned to see that they were molded into a triangle-in fact, it slightly resembled half of a grilled cheese sandwich. Upon tasting them, all of my apprehensions were dispelled. The outer crust gave way to a creamy middle with the flavors of cheddar melding with a very mild sweetness that reflected the corn-based Southern favorite.

I highly doubt I will eat grits any other way from now on.

As wonderful as the food was, the wait staff at Gables Diner, while prompt, could use a refresher course in customer service. In both instances, the servers didn't even tell us their names and had a gruff demeanor.

Furthermore, they had a tendency to disappear, making it difficult to call them if something was amiss.

Saying that Mr. Harris cleaned his plate on both days isn't enough to tell you how good brunch was. The brunch at Gables Diner was so good that my mother, who is not a big fan of breakfast food, is now a convert. Hopefully, upon trying it, you too can join the brunch movement.

*Food for Thought is a bi-weekly column on food. Look for it every other Wednesday.*

*Reviewers are not compensated or rewarded for favorable reviews.*

### COLUMNIST



JASMYNE ELLIOTT

## THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2011

#### PURPLE DAY @ EC

Come support relay for life through fundraising events on Purple Day!

WHEN: 1-5 p.m.

WHERE: Engineering Center

#### BEGINNER'S SUNSET YOGA



WHEN: 5-6 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Free

WHERE: Organic garden

#### SPC PRESENTS: JARED MAHONE



He has a one-of-a-kind vocal beatbox showcase making his entire show extraordinary.

WHEN: 6-8 p.m.

WHERE: MMC GC Ballrooms

#### SAVE A CHILD'S HEART

WHEN: All day

WHERE: Inside GC and by the Green Library Breezeway

#### CHILL OUT DON'T BURN OUT!

Eat ice cream and learn about the effects of stress and how to handle it.

WHEN: 3-4 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Free

WHERE: MMC HLS II 655

#### SPC: NELLY'S ECHO

WHEN: 4 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Free

WHERE: BBC Panther Square

#### MOVIE NIGHT "AIR-PLANE!"

An airplane crew takes ill and the only person capable of landing the plane is an ex-pilot who is afraid to fly.

WHEN: 6-8 p.m.

WHERE: MMC CP151

#### SGC BBC LECTURES SERIES: COMMON

Lecture Topic: The effects of Hip-Hop on American Society.

WHEN: 7-8 p.m.

WHERE: BBC WUC Ballroom

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2011

#### SAA SWEETHEARTS COMPETITION



WHEN: 12-2 p.m.

WHERE: BBC WUC Loggia

#### SEX CARNIVAL

WHEN: 12-2 p.m.

WHERE: BBC Panther Square

#### BATE-PAPO

WHEN: 5:45-6:45 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Free

WHERE: MMC Piano Room in GC

#### SPC MOVIE SERIES: INCEPTION



WHEN: 3 & 7 p.m.

WHERE: BBC WUC Theater

#### SAVE A CHILD'S HEART

WHEN: All day

WHERE: Inside GC and by the Green Library Breezeway

#### INTERMEDIATE MOON-LIGHT YOGA



WHEN: 6:30-7:45 p.m.

HOW MUCH: Free

WHERE: Organic garden

#### LGBT WORKSHOP

WHEN: 11 a.m.

WHERE: BBC WUC 245

#### BSU SPOKEN WORD AND JAZZ EVENT

WHEN: 9-11 p.m.

WHERE: MMC Faculty Club

#### THE DOUG BICKEL QUARTET

WHEN: 9 p.m.

HOW MUCH: \$5

WHERE: Van Dyke Cafe

#### ARTOPIA

WHEN: 7 p.m.

HOW MUCH: \$15 presale, \$20 at door

WHERE: Moore Building

# Block scheduling lacks flexibility

**KELLY MALAMBRI**  
Contributing Writer

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, most commuting students travel down various traffic-packed Miami roads in order to attend 50-minute classes at the University. After one class is released, the next may not begin for another 2 or 3 hours. Students' long drive home during rush hour may then result in more time spent outside of the classroom than in it on an average day.

On Jan. 31, 2011, *The Beacon* published an article describing students' and professors' disappointment with the University's change from a Monday through Thursday schedule to a Monday through Friday block schedule, which was implemented 4 years ago. Although a change to the schedule was necessary, the short classes that the new block schedule offers affect the University community in a negative manner. The block schedule was put in place to promote efficient classroom use, yet has caused students and professors to inefficiently manage time, and should be revised.

The variety of classes offered before and after the 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. block schedule time frame should be extended in order to assist in the creation of well-rounded students, which should be one of the main goals of any university. In a study conducted by Florida's Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Account-

*In such an urban university setting in which many students work before and after school and commute too and from school, flexible class options must be made available.*

ability, which examined the state's universities usage of classrooms Monday through Friday between 8 a.m and 8 p.m., a peak in classroom usage consistently occurred from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The OPPAGA concluded the peak was due to student work schedules and other obligations. The University, however, conducts the block schedule from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., leaving classes offered during this peak time on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays limited. The lack of variety of classes offered during these hours, which are mainly utilized by students with jobs, internship, or extra curricular obligations, holds students back by limiting them, and more options should be made available.

In the 50-minute block schedule, students are not the only ones limited. Daily routines like taking attendance, booting up equipment and opening PowerPoint presentations take a significant amount of time out of the short 50-minute class, and limit the time professors have to teach. If "time is money," then the University as

well as students paying by the credit hour simply cannot afford to encounter such delays three times a week at the beginning of every brief class.

While it is true that students may enroll in online classes, the University charges an extra \$199 to take them. Such high fees are not affordable by many students who receive financial aid or pay out-of-pocket for school, eliminating this option for many. Because online courses, meant to accommodate those with full schedules, come with such hefty fees and are, therefore, unavailable to many students, it's only equitable that more flexible options, like many various classes offered beyond the 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday, be available to students on campus.

In such an urban university setting in which many students work before and after school and commute to and from school, flexible class options must be made available. The block schedule the University has adopted has proved to be uncompromising.

## Moral decline due to absence of school prayer

**SHEDWIN ELIASSIN**  
Contributing Writer

Prayer in schools has not always been such a controversial topic. In fact, public schools had prayer for nearly 200 years before the Supreme Court ruled that state mandated class prayers were unconstitutional in the landmark case of *Engle vs. Vital* in June 1962. Religion aside, prayer should be implemented in schools simply because it has useful benefits on its own.

Our school systems aren't doing any better since the removal of prayer in schools. In fact, some may say that the situation has gotten much worse, especially in terms of school violence. In 2007, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention found that 5.9 percent of students carry weapons to school with them, 7.8 percent have been threatened or injured on campuses nationwide and 12.4 percent of students have been in a physical fight on school grounds at least once. The most recent studies have found that 5.3 percent of students do not go to school because they do not feel safe.

Since the court outlawed prayer, the nation has been in steady moral decline. Former Secretary of Education, William Bennet, revealed in his cultural indexes that between 1960 and 1990 divorce doubled, teenage pregnancy went up 200 percent, teen suicide increased 300 percent, violent crime went up 500 percent and he maintains that there is a strong correlation between the expulsion of prayer from our schools and decline in morality.

It should be made clear that prayer has positive psychological, physical and emotional influences. Focusing on your emotions by praying can help relieve stress, calm fears and reduce anxiety. When cardiologist Randolph Byrd, did his famous study on the effects of prayer in April 1982 through May 1983, he found that praying on a regular basis can have an enormous effect on the psyche of an individual by stabilizing their mood, giving them a feeling of well-being, improving how they interact with others and positively changing the way they conduct themselves. When it comes to children and how they behave in school, prayer and all these positive effects that it holds can have enormous constructive effects on their outlook and those around them.

The establishment clause is a popular rebuttal for those who are against prayer in schools. It is the first of several pronouncements in the Constitution and it states that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. When the families of New Hyde Park, New York, complained that the voluntary prayer in schools went against their religious beliefs, the prayer in question went as follows: "Almighty God we acknowledge our dependence upon thee, and we beg thy blessings on our parents, our teachers and our country. Amen." They were most concern with who the God was that the children were praying to, who was never specified, nor was any distinction of religion ever made.

It is a paradox for the same government who has its grounds on religious principals from the very beginning to uphold prayer as being "unconstitutional." The original purpose of the clause was to ensure that the government should not declare a state religion. If this is the case there should be no harm in leaving the decision to pray up to local districts rather than deeming it against the nature of the nation.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Pell grant risks loss of full funding

Roughly one third of the student body at FIU depends on the Federal Pell Grant to keep them in school, and millions across the country. As beneficial as it is, such a far-reaching program is not cheap and its cost has become a hotly debated issue as of late.

Because Congress has yet to finalize their new budget, they have been passing a series of continuing resolutions (CR's) which authorize the government to fund their agencies at current or reduced levels until either the resolution expires, or an appropriations bill is passed.

In December, Congress passed a CR that fully funds the 2011-12 maximum Pell award, but it expires on March 4th. Before the current CR runs out, Congress must either pass another CR or come to a deci-

sion on the FY2011 budget.

Unfortunately, since funds for the Pell Grant are not disbursed before March 4th there's a good chance that the new Congress could choose not to include the \$5.7 billion Pell Grant shortfall in whatever spending measure they pass. If that happens, it could reduce the maximum Pell award up to \$1,500.

Let's put a human face to those figures. What's really at stake here, if it doesn't immediately affect you, is whether or not one out of every three of your friends will have books for their classes; whether a student on Pell will be able to spend their time after class studying in order to succeed and get the career they want, or if they'll have to spend that time working another part-time job at the expense of their

grades just to remain enrolled. Or, in some cases, whether or not they'll be forced to give up their dreams of a college education.

This is one of the ways that Congress' push for fiscal conservatism could have a direct and negative impact on you, your friends and your family. Nevertheless, the Pell Grant's critical financial aid is currently on the chopping block, and unless the students in South Florida and across the nation can unite and engage our representatives in Congress it is likely that these funds will be cut.

While the government definitely needs to take a stance and begin reducing our deficit, a grant that is crucial to the very students who will graduate and lead this country out of its debt is not a subsidy we should just sit back and idly

watch get slashed.

Our staff at FIU's Office of Governmental Relations is doing its best to advocate support for the Pell Grant, but we need your help. The students' voices haven't been heard in recent Congressional hearings and that has to change. Contact your representatives, spread the message to your fraternities, sororities and interest groups.

FIU has an opportunity to make a difference that would affect college students across the nation who are depending on Pell grants to assist in funding their education. If you'd like to help this cause, please contact me at [dcintern@fiu.edu](mailto:dcintern@fiu.edu) and let's take an active role in protecting our education benefits.

*Zacory A. Ruiz, Intern, FIU's Office of Federal Relations*

### DISCLAIMER

The opinions presented within this page do not represent the views of The Beacon Editorial Board. These views are separate from editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

### SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts in (500 words maximum) to [opinion@fiusm.com](mailto:opinion@fiusm.com) or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major 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 (500 words maximum) regarding or in response to its editorials, send them to [opinion@fiusm.com](mailto:opinion@fiusm.com)

### VERBATIM

*Super Bowl XLV featured Christina Aguilera's fumbled national anthem, a great game between the Packers and Steelers, terrible commercials, 400 ticket holders screwed out of seats, a horrid Black Eyed peas halftime show, Jerry Jones' mas-sive ego, and celebrities beyond belief seated above the masses.*

*Dennis Bakay  
Writer, Philly2Philly.com*





## CUBA

### Opposition leader urges end to hunger strike

A leader of Cuba's Ladies in White opposition group urged a colleague to end a 10-day old hunger strike she launched to demand freedom for her jailed husband.



## CHILE

### Airliner evacuated after bomb threat

Chilean authorities evacuated passengers and crew from an Iberia airline flight to Madrid, Spain, following a bomb threat Sunday. Police said later they arrested a Chilean woman in the case.



## HAITI

### President confirms 3-month term extension

Haitian President Rene Preval will stay in office for another three months as his country chooses a successor in a delayed election, his chief of staff said on Feb. 7.

# Steven Moll discusses his plans for the campus

**NADRA MABROUK**  
Staff Writer

Although student is still a role Steven Moll plays while at the University, the position he was recently appointed to allows him to set in motion plans to improve the Biscayne Bay Campus and the University as a whole.

"I am FIU. I came here when FIU was two years old as a student, I've gotten my Bachelor's, my Masters and [I'm] working on my PhD. I've taught here for 34 years," said Moll, who was appointed to be BBC's vice provost on Jan. 4. "If there's anything I can do to make this University a better place for students to learn, then I am more than happy to work as hard as I can to make it happen."

Moll would like to enhance the campus and its services through his 2010-2011 performance goals strengthened with his belief that there is always room for constant improvements in every aspect of the campus.

He has organized his top goals in an outline he composed each with "metrics" in order to measure the goal and in how they link to "Hit The Ground Running," a statement University President Mark Rosenberg designed before becoming president in August 2009.

They include goals Rosenberg hopes to accomplish for the University. Rosenberg's goals include a desire to have a strong financial base, become more concerned with the environment on campus and engage the community with the College of Medicine.

Moll is also considering an improvement in customer service



NED CHANDLER/THE BEACON

Vice Provost Steven V. Moll talks to his secretary Crystal McCrea about up-and-coming changes to improve the University's Biscayne Bay Campus and to further the goals of University President Mark Rosenberg

on BBC. Customer service covers people who interact with the students including workers in the Financial Aid office and cashiers. His plan would be to offer more customer service training and professional development provided for the faculty and the staff across the campus.

A BBC customer service survey will be used to analyze the results in order to further enhance improvement. These surveys would ask questions based on what kind of services students received, as they will be allowed to rate the service ranging from poor to excellent. It would ask about services provided in Financial Aid, the Library, including services provided in each major.

"There is room for continual improvement in all areas all the time for constant growth," Moll said.

Another goal is to increase the private contributions made to BBC and to search for more outside sources of funding.

"The support we receive from the state of Florida continues to go down. 60 percent of what it cost to operate a University used to be provided to us," Moll said, "Today it is less than 40 percent. We must get funding privately, otherwise we won't have [any]."

Increasing grant activity would assist the campus. Moll at the moment does not know the precise number of how many grants he would like to receive.

Another goal to help funding involves increasing the number of Circle of Friends members and private donations made. In 2009, the Circle of Friends was designed to expand FIU's

reach into the community and raise necessary funds. The members are from the community and are invited to a series of events organized by the BBC Vice Provost. Their goal is to improve the quality of life on BBC.

The money given through the circle of friends is used to fund events on campus, elective classes, trips, and activities that enhance BBC students' life. Membership begins at \$100.

This would help strengthen financial base for BBC. Increasing the financial base is a top priority goal due to the decrease of the financial assistance state universities are receiving from the state legislature.

"The whole purpose of what we do in setting our annual goals is to continuously improve the University," Moll said.

Moll plans to work with the

Alumni Foundation, community leaders and anyone else willing to benefit the University.

Another priority is to better promote the Quality Enhancement Plan at BBC. QEP is a strategy designed by the University to improve the quality of higher education and enhance student learning.

Moll would like to increase the amount of Global Learning courses offered. This would create a larger variety of courses for the students to choose from and take a greater interest in and for the students to find more GL courses that relate to their individual majors. There would also be an increase in the number of events promoting the concept of Global learning.

A student with an associate in arts from Miami-Dade College transferring to FIU is still required to take two Global Learning courses in their major.

Increasing the number of GL courses offered on campus, promotes QEP, according to Moll.

Moll would also like to eventually place another building on BBC for the School of Environment, Arts and Society. Because the building would have a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification, its ecological footprint would be much smaller. This would make it a "green" building in the sense of how much less energy it actually uses. This building would include classes and offices and would be a subdivision of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Building the SEAS building would

**MOLL, page 2**

# 'Top campus leaders' learn leadership skills at summit

**MATT PORCHE**  
Contributing Writer

The eighth annual Leadership Summit was hosted on Feb. 5 at the Biscayne Bay Campus in the Wolfe University Center. The University-wide leadership conference allowed student leaders, as well as students who were interested in becoming leaders, a chance to network and learn leadership skills.

Throughout the summit, students and faculty of the University held concurrent sessions at different areas of BBC, where students were given advice on different life skills such as becoming effective leaders, handling stress, and creating balance in their lives.

"I think this is a great opportunity for FIU students to be exposed to a number of leadership

topics, issues and learning points all in one event," said Bronwen Bares, associate director for the Women's Center and a member of the summit's planning committee.

Bares also believes the summit is a starting point for the University's emerging leaders.

"We have some of the top campus leaders here at the summit, and this makes this a great place for networking," Bares said.

The student leaders who were hosting the sessions during the summit had to first submit their presentations to the planning committee for acceptance, according to Bares.

Cynthia Salazar, a graduate student majoring in higher education administration, hosted a session about the new faces of leadership.

"I think students will be motivated to continue their educa-

tion and develop skills to become the next leaders of the future," Salazar said.

Beverly Darlymple, who directs the University's Center for Leadership and Services chairwoman of the summit's committee, explained this event brings together student leaders from both campuses to allow them to build on their skills and expand their knowledge as well as community leaders, faculty, and alumni to present the workshops.

University President Mark Rosenberg and several leaders of the University made appearances at the summit, along with this year's keynote speaker, Trish Downing.

Trish Downing earned her master's degree in sports management, and was heavily involved in sports. After a cycling accident in 2000, she was left paralyzed

from the chest down. Although she is now in a wheelchair, Downing continues to compete as a paraplegic athlete, as she is the second female wheelchair racer, and the first female paraplegic, to complete an Ironman distance triathlon. Downing also takes time to motivate students to be leaders and achieve their goals.

At the start of summit, Downing talked to students about overcoming obstacles in their lives.

"Even when I had no idea of what was ahead of me, I didn't give up," Downing said as she spoke about the difficulty she faced when she first began competing as a paraplegic. "One of [the] things I realized is that I have a passion, and if I didn't have a passion for what I do, I wouldn't have made it where I am today. That passion you strive for will give you something to hold on to."

After speaking to the students in the theater, Downing later spoke to students in a session she hosted in the WUC ballrooms, where she talked about being a leader by finding balance in life.

Muffy Barbaran, a junior majoring in women's studies and sociology, attended a session which explained how to make campus clubs more marketable, as she is involved in the Women's Studies Student Association.

"What I learned from [Downing] is to never give up, and to persevere, because you never know what life has to offer," Barbaran said.

"I like how the sessions are interactive and they ask questions. Here, I have learned no matter what background you are from, you can still be a leader," Kerwing Rivas, a sophomore majoring in business administration, said.