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## Women's basketball faces North Texas at SBC Tournament

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FIU Hospitality and Tourism Management students worked their hardest to make sure that SoBe's Burger Bash was cooked perfect.

#### AT THE BAY PAGE 3



At SoBe's BubbleQ, students gained invaluable experience and scholarship opportunities.

#### OPINION PAGE 5

Why Wal-Mart's practices don't violate laws and is simply pursuing the main interest of capitalism.

#### LIFE! PAGE 7

Activism Awareness Week: The ladies of Lambda Theta Alpha tackle political activism and social awareness.

#### LIFE! PAGE 7



The Beacon Reviews: The Vagina Monologues are a celebration of women and femininity culminated in a series of rousing monologues.

#### SPORTS PAGE 8



Men's basketball enters the Sun Belt Conference Tournament in Hot Springs, Arkansas as the No. 11 seed.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Organic Farmers Market, March 3, 12 - 3 p.m.** Enjoy local, organic food for sale at the weekly farmers market held by the Central Fountain at MMC.

**The Evolving Japan-US Security Partnership, March 4, 3 - 4 p.m.** The International Relations Honors Society presents this lecture by Dr. Paul Kowert in GC 314.

**FIU Softball, March 4, 4 p.m.** The Golden Panthers take on Eastern Michigan.

—More events can be found in our Monday and Friday issues of Life!.

#### WEATHER



**WEDNESDAY**  
Mostly Sunny/Wind  
LOW: 46 HIGH: 71



**THURSDAY**  
Sunny  
LOW: 43 HIGH: 70



**FRIDAY**  
Sunny  
LOW: 44 HIGH: 67

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# SoBe style

## Famous chefs bring TV recipes to life

LEONCIO ALVAREZ  
Staff Writer

The Food Network stars aligned at South Beach this weekend as the Ninth Annual Food Network South Beach Wine and Food Festival took over the sand.

FIU's own School of Hospitality and Tourism Management has played an integral part during the weekend ever since the festival's humble beginnings, and this year was no different.

Back-to-back events brought together "foodies" from all over the globe, but mostly just those with a liver and stomach ready to go into overdrive.

Some of the most talked-about chefs were found at the Fountainbleau's Best of the Best on Feb 26. The anteroom of the hotel before the main event showcased an array of wines and champagnes and different foods that paired exquisitely well.

Under-utilized meats like duck, short-rib, oxtail and pork belly might foster hesitation in some, but when cooked so perfectly as tonight, there was no space for a second thought.

"My favorite was the duck ravioli [from Scarpetta], it had a very different taste I wasn't used to. Different is good," said Alex Martinez, a senior and business major who said he was there "for the food, not so much the drinks."

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For more Wine and Food  
Fest coverage, check out  
pages 3-5.

#### SGC-MMC

## GSA seats discussed to increase

PHILIPPE BUTEAU  
Staff Writer

Confirmation of the final elections board member was the prelude to debate regarding the "restructuring" of the Graduate Student Association by its former vice president at the March 1 Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus senate meeting.

SGC-MMC President Anthony Rionda said at the meeting that by May 1 there will be a change to GSA but emphasized that "GSA will not be dissolved."

Rionda requested that the senate consider amending the SGA constitution to add two additional graduate senators to the two they already have, bringing the total number to 32. This change, if passed, will go into effect next year after the upcoming elections.

Rionda said the point of this restructuring is to make GSA more functional, and he brought up the increased graduate funding as an example.

"If it's not functional to increase graduate funding from \$45,000 to \$100,000 then OK, it's not functional," Rionda said sarcastically.

When the floor was opened for questions, Svetlana Tyutina, former GSA vice president, addressed not only her concerns but also points Rionda brought up during his speech.

She started by saying graduate

SGA, page 2

# Law school places nationally for second time

MEENA RUPANI  
Staff Writer

The College of Law recently placed fourth in the American Bar Association's Negotiation Competition National Finals. The national finals took place in Orlando, Fla. this year and FIU competed along with 214 other law schools.

This is the second consecutive year that the University has made it to the national finals and has ranked in the top five, according to the law school Web site.

The team representing the law school this year included law students Marielys Llerena and Bryan Jones. Previous competitor Nicole Grimal coached the team.

According to Jones, in order for his team to reach the national finals,

between 40 and 50 people first competed in the intramural finals at FIU. Jones initially did not place in these competitions but his partner Llerena placed second.

"The judges did not pick the teams for the regional competition based on who won at the intramural competition, but based on who were the best competitors for the negotiation team," Jones said.

Following this, two teams competed in the regional finals in Tallahassee.

"During the regional finals, the teams were given cases dealing with employment law. We were given information about a fictitious client and were told to defend them against the prosecuting company.

Myself, along with Marielys, represented an employee that had HIV

**We were proud  
to represent FIU  
in the finals and  
hoped to represent  
our school well by  
ranking high.**

Marielys Llerena, Graduate  
College of Law

who had his benefits cut due to his medical condition. Our goal was to try to get those back for the employee," Jones said.

Jones and Llerena's team placed first in the region during the championship round which qualified them to move on to the national finals, according to Llerena.

Jones and Llerena's coach for the national finals was Nicole Grimal, who placed third at nationals last year.

According to Grimal, she took up the responsibility of coaching this year because the previous coach Ashley Vandercar had recently graduated.

Grimal commented on her experiences as both a competitor and a coach.

"This year was quite different for me. Prepping for these competitions requires the students and coaches put in 200 or more hours of work over the course of six months," Grimal said.

She added, "To coach, I not only had to use my negotiation

ABA, page 2

# Panther Dining experimenting with new hours

**ALEXANDRA CAMEJO**  
Contributing Writer

As FIU's Panther Dining Services anticipates new changes and developments, the extension of opening hours for several dining locations is hinted to be just a taste of what students can expect in the future.

Breezeway Café and Subway are the two first locations on the Modesto Maidique Campus to undergo trial basis hour changes for the Spring semester.

Instead of normally closing at midnight on Mon-Thurs, Breezeway Café will close at 1 a.m. and close at 11 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday instead of 9 p.m.

Subway will now close at 4 p.m. on Saturdays as opposed to 3 p.m.

It is through the culmination of efforts from business services and the student body that these changes have been taken into effect.

Jeff Krablin, assistant vice president of

business services, assures that the department is currently conducting traffic studies of all the dining locations throughout the campus to determine more changes.

"These studies will be ongoing and changes to operating hours will be made based on these findings together with customer feedback, impact and cost analysis data," Krablin stated.

It is the hope of Krablin and the entire department that these hours will continue to attract the entire FIU student body – both residents and commuters.

Susana Guerra, assistant director of marketing and communications, reported that 600 transactions took place within the first week alone during the extended hours.

FIU resident Paula Hurtado is one of the students who claims to be benefitting from the longer opening hours at Breezeway Café.

"I have such a busy schedule between

sports and schoolwork, that it's really hard to be able to come to the Café. These hours have been a long time coming and I'm finally able to come home with the Café still open," Hurtado said.

Other students who live off-campus, such as freshman Ana Rivas, often use FIU's dining locations throughout the weekend.

"It would be awesome to know that I don't have to worry as much as to whether Subway will be open or not on Saturday and instead focus on my chemistry test that's on Monday," Rivas said.

Although the monetary cost to keep these venues open is not approximately known, business services hopes that these changes will continue to develop and benefit the student body.

Panther Dining and Business Services are constantly trying to hear the opinion of the student body through several mediums.

Michael Oestreich, Panther Dining's Marketing Programs manager, points out that repeated requests for longer hours from focus groups, mailing lists, town hall meetings and FIU's Dining Style Survey, have contributed to the implementation of these new hours.

These types of research studies, such as the Panther Dining mailing list and Dining Style Survey, are available at [www.pantherdining.com](http://www.pantherdining.com).

By signing up for these services students can also gain access to coupons and promotions provided by Panther Dining.

Students are being strongly recommended to sign up and voice their opinions – for it was through the urging of the students that changes for the dining locations were researched and executed.

As changes are being made throughout MMC, business services will continue to strive to improve the experience of students throughout FIU.

## Restructure plan met with conflict

SGA, page 1

students were left out of and not made aware of the plans to restructure GSA.

"We are bringing money that supports the University, so it's very important that we know what is going on with our organization," Tyutina

said.

Furthermore, she argued against the restructuring saying that it is not a solution and the plan being put forth won't make GSA more functional.

She also said during the year she spent as GSA vice president she did not see any graduate senators at GSA meetings.

"So apparently [SGA is] trying to solve [its] problems, by dissolving GSA because you can't force senators to attend the meetings," Tyutina said.

Though Rionda responded to Tyutina's concerns, he saved most of the discussion on GSA's future for an upcoming town hall meeting with GSA that will take place next Friday, March 12.

David Trujillo, senior hospitality major, was appointed and unanimously confirmed as the fifth and final elections board

member during the senate meeting four weeks away from elections.

When questioned about SGA's past elections Trujillo said it isn't an issue with how SGA operates them, but rather the candidates themselves.

Trujillo said candidates not following rules set by the elections code is a recurring issue during elections, and a priority for the elections board is to ensure that candidates follow the code.

"I think everything's fine as far as how SGA runs things, we just have to make sure all the candidates are aware of the rules," Trujillo said.

Trujillo added his qualifications for the position are the work he's done as president of the Student Alumni Association and sitting on the executive committees of Dance Marathon and Relay for Life.

## Grimal 'content with the results'

ABA, page 1

knowledge, I had to listen to the practice rounds and then offer advice to all six students. A very different role than competing."

Lastly, Grimal explained why she preferred to be a coach this year over competing again.

"I also really like competing as well, but it's tough to do both at the same time, so I decided that this was my year to coach and give back to next year's team," Grimal said.

All three key competitors in the national finals along with the guidance of Professor Walter expressed how proud they were about the results of this year's competition.

"It was nice because FIU does not have the national

reputation that a lot of the schools have. I think that the main joy in it was getting to show people that FIU can compete with other schools," Jones said.

Llerena shared a similar sentiment.


"We were proud to represent FIU in the finals and hoped to represent our school well by ranking high. When we moved from the preliminary rounds into the semi-final round we were very excited since we were guaranteed a ranking in the top 16 teams," Llerena said.

Coach Grimal was also happy with the end result because all of the hard work had paid off.

"The night between Friday's preliminary rounds and Saturday's semi-final and final rounds, Bryan, Marielys, Professor Walter and I were all up to about 2 a.m. preparing the next day's negotiations – we gave it our best effort, particularly with a very difficult semi-final round and final round problem, so I was very content with the results from that point of view," Grimal said.

Professor David Walter who guided the team throughout its journey to the national finals expressed how it felt to reach the national finals for a second time in a row.

"FIU has truly represented Florida and Florida law schools well in this competition. In fact, FIU has repeatedly defeated teams from all the Florida law schools over the past three years to win the Southeast Region and advance to the ABA National Finals," Walter said, the co-director and associate professor of Legal Skills & Values.



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## BubbleQ puts a swanky spin on backyard barbecue staples

**MAUREEN NINO**  
Asst. News Director

The smoky smell of simmering meat and barbecue filled the air as guests were welcomed to the ultimate beach barbecue.

Guests eagerly took hold of their complimentary Riedel champagne flutes as The South Beach Wine and Food Festival's Perrier-Jouet BubbleQ got under way. The event, held on Feb. 26, was presented by Allen Brothers and hosted by Emeril Lagasse and friends.

The menu could please even the pickiest palate with 29 meals and four desserts. Chefs representing nine U.S. cities and two international locales put a high-end spin on BBQ, serving their incarnations of beef, fowl, lamb, pork and seafood complimented by an open bar sponsored by Champagne Perrier-Jouet.

Guest and Food Network grand prize winner Kathy Grant and husband Aaron from Aiken, South Carolina dressed in their BBQ best as they shuffled from table to table with overflowing champagne glasses and wide smiles, waiting in line for their next meaty culinary experience.

"It has been so much fun," she said.

According to Valerie Pett, junior and hospitality management major, students had the opportunity to learn hands-on from the chefs.

"There is a lot of interaction with the chefs. They take the time to teach you to do things their way," she said.

About 150 students were split into "prep shift" and taught how to efficiently prepare the mass amount of food including 2450 lbs of assorted ribs, 1160 lbs of pork belly, 60 lbs of bacon, 632 lobster tails and 560 steaks.

Several students found the opportunity to be a helpful experience.

"In school there is a lot of theory and this gives us practical experience," Laura Manon, junior and hospitality major, said.

Chef Michael Moran, culinary coordinator, agrees and believes the festival will help students advance in their field.

"The students do not help, they are doing the work," he said as students hustled from station to station creating meals during the festival.

Accompanied by his wife and friends, University President Mark Rosenberg said the event benefited

students not only through networking but also experience.

"This is a great experience for the students in a real world experience to get practice," Rosenberg said.

According to the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management Dean Joan Remington, the school expects to receive over \$2 million from the festival proceeds which will be used for student scholarships and toward new construction for a building fund that will include an advanced kitchen and preparation area for students.

"For every hour the students work at the festival they get paid a certain amount, which is placed in their Panther account and is put toward their tuition or books and is considered a scholarship opportunity," said Susan Gladstone, activation director at SBWFF and instructor of event management.

According to Gladstone the amount varies every year but there is no limit on how many hours may be worked.

"We are the only university that has a festival of this kind of world-class nature with such student involvement," she said. "There is nothing like seeing, feeling, tasting and being there to know what it is like."



ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

A server hangs off a chandelier while serving champagne to guests at SoBe's BubbleQ on Feb. 26.

## South Beach burger bash is the perfect start to food-filled festival

**JASMYN ELLIOTT**  
BBC Managing Editor

Like the best burgers, the kickoff party for the South Beach Wine and Food Festival was both rare and well done.

Hundreds of foodies gathered on the shores of South Beach to attend the Amstel Light Burger Bash, held on Feb. 25 and hosted by Food Network star Rachael Ray.

During the festival, 27 chefs showed off their versions of the ultimate burger, hoping to win the highly coveted honor of "People's Choice Burger of the Year." Among these chefs: Food Network superstars such as Masaharu Morimoto and Bobby Flay to local chefs Michael Mina of Bourbon Steak and Mark Zeitouni of The Standard Hotel Miami.

Combine such a delicious competition with a live band covering classics by Journey and Earth, Wind, and Fire, Food Network chef sightings, and an open bar, and revelers were treated to the best of all beach barbecues.

As the crowds mingled with burgers and booze in hand, the University's hospitality management student staff were hard at work making sure the chefs were prepared to feed

the hungry masses and those in attendance were having a great time.

Despite their grueling work, several students working the festival for the first time were in high spirits. Kayoung Joo, a junior in the program and a first-time festival worker, could not stop smiling.

"I really am excited," she said. "I've never seen anything like this before."

Linette Cairo, a first-year grad student in the hospitality program managed to comment as she hurriedly plated burger samples for Chef Michael Schwartz of Michael's Genuine Food and Drink, a local restaurant.

"It's amazing; it's like a rush," she said.

Jennifer Allen, a first-year grad student, kept the crowd hydrated by handing out sodas along with Zaphyra Francois, a freshman.

"Everybody is really happy," said Allen. "I was a little nervous at first, but everything is going smoothly."

I was able to meet a lot of new people," said Francois. "Food, drink, music – why not?"

Stephanie Dominguez, a senior thought the festival was "really good."

"It's good networking for a lot of us; we were able to meet a lot of chefs," she said.

Some students were saying goodbye to the festival.

"It's my last festival," said Ayelen Ferrer, a senior. "I'm really happy to be here; in fact, I will be here all weekend."

Sunny Anderson, host of the Food Network show "Cooking For Real," had nothing but accolades for the University's hospitality students.

"All of their work is amazing," Anderson said. "Their set-up was seamless."

Although the chefs were competing, Anderson pointed to the real winners of the festival.

"Anytime when food and drink is involved, I am happy. But, scholarship money for students? Now that's hot! This is a great opportunity for them," she said.

Iron Chef Michael Symon, owner of B Spot Burgers in Woodmere, Ohio, ultimately took home the prize of "People's Choice Burger of the Year."

As the night wound down, one thing was clear.

"It's amazing," said Loraine Tejada, a senior working behind the Idaho potato french fry bar. "It's getting better and better every year."

## Grand Tasting Village a 'spring break for cooks'

**SOBE, page 1**

In this room, the Fountainbleu's own restaurants Hakkasan, Scarpetta, Gotham Steak and Blade Sushi demonstrated why the hotel deserved to host the event. The crispy duck salad with pine nuts and coconut tapioca topped with a mango passion fruit sauce and toasted coconut had a lot of people coming back for more, including myself – to be exact, it was five.

Inside the main ballroom awaited the real deal. As a sign of what was to come a complimentary wine glass was offered for you to hang around your neck. A grand selection of wines awaited to be tasted, some of the most memorable being the Pinot Noir from Adobe Road Winery and the Cabernet Sauvignon from the Far Niente Wine Estate in Napa Valley. Braised short-ribs over a parsnip puree and sour cherry compote from Wish Restaurant in Miami Beach continued to demonstrate our city's strength in the food arena.

Hospitality management major Lauren McKown helped out Mark Fuller from Spring Hill restaurant in Seattle with his rare king clam dish.

"It's actually called geoduck, pronounced 'goosey duck,' and they have it back at the restaurant in Washington. It's a seafood restaurant specializing in shellfish," McKown said.

McKown explained her involvement with the festival.

"We were here at 8 a.m. ready to prep everything, but all the details are worked out months in advance," she said. "It's been hard work, but I'm happy I did it."

On Feb. 27 and 28, most of the fun was outside. Tents lined up on 10 St. to 13 St. on

Ocean Drive for the Grand Tasting Village and inside, as Food Network star Paula Deen later put it, "was Spring Break for cooks." Just like Friday night, unlimited food and drink were available and local flavors dominated.

The FIU Hospitality tent offered some of the best food out there, including mouth-watering flank steak sandwiches on *fiocatta* bread and strawberry *crème brulees*.

Jen Miller, a second year graduate student, was on the scene giving patrons a taste of FIU's very own beer and wine brewed right on campus.

"We offer three undergraduate and one graduate course in beer brewing," said Miller, who plans on opening her own brewery. "This beer is the perfect combination with the steak sandwich."

Three different stages were set up where some of the most well-known celebrity chefs presented their culinary skills for 45 minutes each.

Sandra Lee opened up her cocktail clinic stage with three different mixed drink recipes. One of them: a lemon drop martini that included lemon vodka, lemon juice, triple sec and grapefruit juice.

Other familiar faces that took the stage were Michael Symon who made homemade pasta and Anthony Bourdain and Eric Ripert who had a seafood challenge against each other judged by Guy Fieri and Robert Irvine.

Yet again South Beach was the perfect place to celebrate all kinds of drinks and everything edible. All the hard work put in by so many paid off at the end of the weekend.

Students and chefs alike are already planning for next year's 10th anniversary.

**LEFT:** Bassist of Private Stock rocks out at Burger Bash presented by Rachael Ray, held on the white sands of the Ritz-Carlton Miami Beach.



**RIGHT:** Students at the FIU School of Hospitality and Tourism Management booth grill Chicago steak Angus for their Flank Steak Sandwich.



**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Michael Psilakis prepares ceviche at Wine Presenter's The Best of the Best held at the Fountainbleau Hotel.



# Students, celebrity chefs join forces for weekend food bash



**ABOVE:** One of 30 different burgers prepared by top chefs and FIU students being served to enthusiasts at Burger Bash, the kick-off celebration to SoBe. The chefs competed in multiple categories including Best Dressed Burger, Best Side Dish with Idaho Potatoes and The People's Choice.

**LEFT:** Eric Ripert (left) and Anthony Bourdain (right) compete in a 15-minute cook-off at the Grand Tasting Village on Feb. 28.



Junior Gus Murillo grills short ribs for the Chefs on the Loose booth during BubbleQ on Feb. 26.

## GETTING SCHOOLED

# College visits are a must-have on seniors' to-do list

I guess you can call me a jetsetter now. In a column last semester, I advised readers who are potential graduate students to take the initiative to visit colleges to get a better idea of their programs. At that time, I had visited one university before sending my first choice college application.

Now, as spring break draws near, I am in the midst of planning more trips to other schools before I hit my commencement on April 27. So far, I have been accepted to two institutions, but I am still waiting to hear from three others, as well as financial aid packages for all five.

April 15th is the big day, by then I should have a good idea where I'll be attending graduate school in the Fall. As of right now, I have no clue of where I'll be.

To help make this decision, however, I have opted to head to Boston this weekend and visit one of my top three schools, Emerson College, and speak to reps about their program.

This semester, frankly, has been an anomaly for me; I never travel. But by April, I will have traveled to five cities, and the majority of these trips will deal with graduate school in some facet.

I realize that visiting these schools is ridiculously important - these places are where I could be for months, and possibly, at one point, the rest of my life. I also realize that the

planning process and even traveling itself is extremely tiring.

*Kayak.com* has become my best friend. The Web site allows me to find price trends for airfares, so that I can compare travel dates and see fluctuations.



IRIS FEBRES

For example, this coming weekend, a trip to Boston from Miami International Airport would cost over \$300 if flying out on Friday; the same date from Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport would be about \$50 less.

My plans come on the heels of mixed news from *The Los Angeles Times*; the newspaper reported that the nation's airline industry would experience "modest increases in revenue" while demands increase this year as we come out of a recession. Because of this growing demand, airlines are likely to increase airfare prices.

Fantastic! But perhaps I'm overwhelmed because I am simply not used to flying. For two weekends straight, I flew. The first was a cross-country trip for leisure, to visit my boyfriend I hadn't seen in four months, and the second was an academic trip to Washington D.C. with my fourth-year honors seminar.

But after a break of a week, I'll be back on a cramped plane in economy class to visit another graduate school.

Let me mention that these opportunities come at a price: I've missed classes (and will miss more). I've gotten sick (but hope-

fully I won't get sick again). I've spent a lot of money, checking in bags and buying from tourist stops. Now I know better.

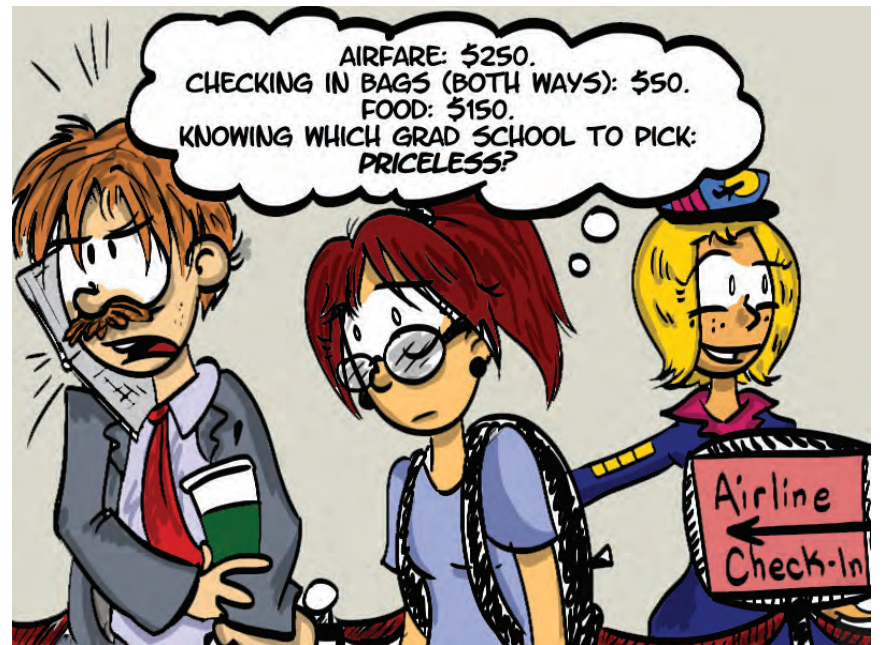
If you're planning on visiting schools, make sure you economize as much as you can. As soon as you receive an acceptance notice, immediately pick a date for travel. Airfares almost always increase as time passes, so it's

best to lock in a low price while you can.

That's the mistake I made. Instead of sitting down with a calendar and marking times and checking prices, I've simply said, "Let's go!" and I have been caught in a whirlwind.

Then again, that's the result of playing the waiting game with these schools. And I'm still waiting.

## UP IN THE AIR



# Wal-Mart's take on working practices is justified

DEAN WILLIAMS  
Staff Writer

The Web site for the Voice for Working America provides visitors with a brief synopsis of the Wal-Mart corporation. It summarizes that Wal-Mart operates more than 3,000 stores, employs over 1 million U.S. workers and is the largest grocery retailer in the United States.

The 2008 Fortune Global 500 named Wal-Mart, relative to global revenue, the world's largest corporation. Yahoo! Finance estimated revenues for the retailer at \$404 billion, while Google Finance valued the corporation's assets at \$163.5 billion.

Wal-Mart has given much to society. An article published by the *Washington Post* in September 2005 noted that in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Wal-Mart not only donated \$20 million in cash, but provided 1,500 truckloads of free merchandise, food for 100,000 meals and the promise of a job for its displaced workers.

In October 2005, *MSNBC.com* news services reported that Wal-Mart pledged to implement

several environmental measures, including spending \$500 million to increase the efficiency of its truck fleet by 25 percent over three years, and reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent in three years in order to increase energy efficiency.

As noted by a *Wall Street Journal* article published in April 2006, each week, about a third of the U.S. population, or 100 million individuals, visit the corporation's U.S. stores. Wal-Mart has certainly lived up to its motto, "Save Money, Live Better."

A joint study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that the lower class population in the U.S. benefits the most from the existence of retailers such as Wal-Mart.

Complimenting this fact, an article in Reuters via the *New York Times*, highlights the corporation's price level reduction resulted in savings of \$287 billion for consumers, roughly equaling \$2,500 per household, a 7.3 percent increase from 2004, when savings were roughly \$2,329 per household.

Wal-Mart has had a positive impact on the economy. A study "The Economic Impact of Wal-Mart" by consulting firm Global Insight, found that from 1984 to 2004, Wal-Mart's growth resulted in a 9.1 percent reduction in "food-at-home" prices (as measured by the consumer price index).

Overall prices were 3.1 percent lower than they could have actually been. The study continued my noting that Wal-Mart created more than 200,000 jobs in the U.S. during this time period.

In June 2006, Professors Russell Sobel and Andrea Dean from the West Virginia University published a study entitled "Has Wal-Mart Buried Mom and Pop?"

After examining the view that Wal-Mart harms small businesses, Sobel and Dean suggest that while Wal-Mart's low prices force some "mom and pop" businesses to close, it also sets in motion the process of creative distribution through which opportunities for other types of small businesses emerge, concluding that the corporation has a positive impact on small businesses sector of the U.S. economy.

*They may come, but under no illusion of what the American dream is: a meritocratic, capitalistic society.*

The corporation has made increased efforts to address the compensation of its employees. A March 2009 article in the *Wall Street Journal* indicated that the company paid \$993.6 million in bonuses to its full and part-time employees, an additional \$788.8 million in profit sharing and 401(k) contributions.

On Feb. 8, the *New York Times* published an article entitled "Immigrants Claim Wal-Mart fired them to Provide Jobs for Local Residents."

The contention rests not only in the title of the argument, as it would be unfair for Wal-Mart to hire immigrants when Americans are in need of employment.

The article further notes that West Africans claim to have been fired due to race prejudices, when in fact, there are West Africans

at the same store who have been promoted to supervisory positions at that very store. Additionally, and more pointedly, the same article contends that the immigrants were fired because of their inability to meet the work requirements as mandated by the store's new management.

Wal-Mart is definitely a profitable successful business that other companies should aspire to become.

The Statue of Liberty's tablet reads, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tossed to me..."

They may come, but under no illusion of what the American dream is: a meritocratic, capitalistic society.

## DISCLAIMER

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## SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Got a problem with parking? Want to give kudos to faculty? Or do you just have something to say about FIU? Send your thoughts in to [opinion@fiusm.com](mailto:opinion@fiusm.com) or drop by our offices at either GC 240 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

## WINNER/LOSER

**Winner:** Fans of Jay Leno. Whoever they are. Leno returns to hosting "The Tonight Show" this week after hosting "The Jay Leno Show," for the past six months on primetime. Leno replaces Conan O'Brien, who left NBC in protest of the switch. Hooray for lousy jokes.

**Loser:** Playstation Network, the free online network that connects Playstation 3 gamers to online matches, crashed on Sunday afternoon. A glitch with the internal clock of the system is being blamed by Sony for the failures. Another reason why it's time to get an XBOX360.

## QUOTATIONATION

*"The tsunami destroyed almost everything on the seafront (and) the center of the town was completely destroyed."*

Mayor Hugo Tilleria on devastation in Constitucion, Chile

## AA Activism awareness

### Sorority events to raise funds for homeless children, minorities

AMANDA BATCHELOR  
Staff Writer

This semester, the ladies of Lambda Theta Alpha, Latin Sorority Inc., have changed things up by devoting their time to a cause that is often overlooked – political activism and social awareness.

“Activism Awareness Week was the idea of one of my sorority sisters,

Veronica Bernace,” said Rayda Rojas, vice president of LTA’s Gamma Pi chapter. “When she became a sister, she saw that we didn’t do as much as we could for more political activism and social awareness. Becoming a new sister in 2007, she saw that she can change this, along with our then President Stephanie Fyock who is currently in Ecuador in the Peace Corps, and our chapter’s support.”

In 2008, Bernace thought of the

idea of AAW.

In Spring 2008, these ladies hosted their first AAW focusing on Darfur, Sudan.

Then, in the Spring of 2009, they chose immigration as their focus. This week, they have selected “At Risk Youth” to be their topic of discussion.

“As minorities, it is especially important we are informed citizens and put our numbers to good use. We’ve raised over \$600 for two charities and hope to raise even more this year,” Bernace said.

The first event, held on March 2, was a Gallery Night at the Frost Art Museum Café. Photographs, taken of youth in the community who live in shelters and want to express their feelings about being labeled and being homeless, were on display. There was a live jazz band and refreshments were provided.

“We’ve partnered with StandUp

For Kids, an organization that helps homeless and street kids improve their lives,” Rojas said.

The second event, to be held March 3, will be a showing of the movie *Dangerous Minds* in GL 100 at 9 p.m., which portrays teenagers dealing with real-life problems such as peer pressure and gang violence. After the movie there will be an open discussion.

On March 4, there will be a Stroll Competition in GL 100 at 9 p.m. This is a staple event for AAW. They use the traditions of the Multi-Cultural Greek Council and the National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations who step, stroll and salute to showcase their tradition while competing and raising donations at the same time.

“I am most excited about the ‘Stroll at Your Own Risk’ event,” said Maria Lopez del Castillo, chapter president of LTA. “We have more than 10 teams

competing from different universities and it’s going to be even better than the previous years.”

All donations received throughout the week will be given to StandUp For Kids. Many other organizations are excited for this event as well.

Of course, the men of Lambda Theta Phi, Latin Fraternity Inc. will also be in attendance during the week.

“We are definitely helping out with their week,” said Jorge Rivera, a junior and brother of LTP. “We are participating in their step/stroll/salute competition they will have Thursday.”

“We hope, if anything, that our AAW this year makes everyone stop and think about what youth in our community and everywhere else around the world go through and how we must be not only positive role models but give these youth a second chance,” Rojas said.

#### THE BEACON REVIEWS: THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

## Powerful monologues celebrate strength, femininity

MARIA MURRIEL  
Staff Writer

At around 8 p.m. on Feb. 26, the Women’s Studies Student Association President Guadalupe Juarez stepped onstage to welcome a buzzing full house. She introduced Eve Ensler’s *The Vagina Monologues* opening night in the Green Library’s auditorium to an expectant audience made up of all ages and genders.

In the atrium and the lobby, members and helpers of the WSSA served refreshments and sold white and brown Vagina Pops to patrons still arriving. The funds collected went to charity and there was a table set up with informational pamphlets.

For roughly the next two hours, FIU students played out stories of first times and first good times, listed a variety of nicknames given to the vagina, and recounted tales of sexual slavery and mistreatment.

Starting off the night on a humorous kick, Veronique Nydam performed “The Flood,” an embarrassingly charming monologue about an elderly woman’s misfortunes with men and her supreme fear of physical arousal. “The Vagina Workshop” followed, brought to life by the delightful Sarena Bahad. There, she learned – through sweat, possibly blood, and definite tears – to love her vagina and the unimaginable pleasure it brought her, all while sitting on a little blue mat in a room full of other pleasure-less women.

These monologues had a recurring theme of self-disgust at first and, later, self-discovery. Women, having grown up in a society that told them their genitals are unsightly, smelly and undesirable, developed a deep dislike for their vaginas. Then a soul searching of sorts came in and they learned to love and accept every part of their bodies.

The mood changed with the introduction of “The Memory of Her Face,” which told of women who were mutilated by wars and viciously abused by family members. After the ladies in the first somber piece of the evening silenced the

crowd with their emotive performances, the intermission kicked in and a riot followed.

As people scrambled back to their seats, Gabriele Swingler took the stage and put them all to attention when she yelled, “My vagina is angry!” Her forceful performance of “My Angry Vagina” was the first to pump the crowd into a screaming fit of laughter and whooping. When she returned later with “Reclaiming C--t,” the lovely rabble-rouser got the whole room shouting “C--t!” as she egged them on before leaving the stage.

In what seemed like a wave of hilarity, Martha Maria Lopez became “The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy.” She came onstage wearing a lawyer-meets-dominatrix getup and progressively stripped down to her corset as she told of a woman’s journey to moaning for money.

Her character, a paid woman pleaser, had gotten moans down to such a science that she could recite all the different types.

Lopez twisted and shouted as she impersonated a Jewish woman, a college student, an African-American woman, a “militant bisexual”

woman, and countless other women – all moaning to their specifications. With every new moan, the roaring laughter from the crowd got louder, wilder and more hysterical. And when the Surprise Triple Orgasm Moan came, you could almost hear collective sniffls because the crowd laughed so hard, they started to cry.

When the uproar quieted, it gave way to a monologue performed by Carolina Perez, written by Ensler herself. “I Was There In the Room” was the beautifully narrated impression of a woman who witnessed natural birth. By the time Perez finished, a powerful feeling of devotion had swept over the crowd.

“A Teenage Girl’s Guide to Surviving Sex Slavery,” this year’s spotlight monologue, was a piece dealing with rape and sexual slavery in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The point-by-point guide highlights the terrors that women and girls survive every day and hopes to make



BURKE HILL/THE BEACON  
Nathalie Levy performs at the Vagina Monologues on Feb. 26 in GL 100.

the world aware of the cruelty and injustice that women are subjected to.

Curtain call brought every actress back onstage and had the audience’s applause for a good five minutes. The success of this year’s performances may be a sign of growing awareness and interest in the women’s rights movement as a whole. Either way, the Women’s Studies Center at FIU is doing its part fervently.

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## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# TOURNAMENT TIME

## FIU set to face North Texas to open SBC tournament

**JONATHAN RAMOS**  
Sports Director

The FIU women's basketball team defeated North Texas in both of their meetings this season by an average of 13 points.

So when the Sun Belt Conference announced its championship seeds and schedules on Feb. 28, the draw gave fans plenty of reason to believe the Golden Panthers could advance past the first round of the SBC tournament.

FIU (14-15, 9-9 SBC) will face North Texas (8-21, 5-13 SBC) on March 6 at 2:30 p.m. when the tournament kicks off in Hot Springs, Ark. If FIU can beat North Texas, they would advance to play No. 2 seed Middle Tennessee on March 7 in the second round of the tournament.

The Golden Panthers nabbed the No. 7 seed after South Alabama won a tie breaker for the No. 6 seed based on regular season results. South Alabama and FIU had identical 9-9 conference records. After winning six consecutive games, the Golden Panthers lost their last two contests to MTSU and Western Kentucky

to end the regular season. The tournament is single elimination.

### OLD FRIENDS

As seniors Monika Bosilj, Marquita Adley, Ashley Traugott and Cherisse Buddy played in their last home game on Feb. 27 vs. WKU, a few former Golden Panthers were in attendance.

Laquetta Ferguson and Jasmine Jenkins were among those who were honored at halftime of the contest against the Hill-toppers. They spoke on the state of the program and their current doings.

"It's better than last year for sure," Ferguson said of the team. "It's going to take time because they have to play with each other a little more."

Jenkins was also pleased to see the Golden Panthers rebound from a 2008-09 campaign in which they won five games.

"I think they're getting better, and I know they went on a six game win streak at one point," Jenkins said.

Ferguson, a 2008 All-Sun Belt Conference first team performer, was impressed with sophomore Rakia Rodgers.

"She's doing pretty good," Ferguson

said of Rodgers, whom she played against while Rodgers was a freshman at Hofstra in 2007. "She's always been athletic, and she's a good defensive player."

Jenkins spoke about the breakout season of Elisa Carey, who played behind Jenkins last season.

"She's starting to play within herself and figuring out what works for her and everything," Jenkins said. "It's really good to see."

Ferguson, who is third in FIU history in 3-pointers made, will play basketball in the spring for the Miami Rain, a semi-professional team in the Women's Blue Chip Basketball League. Jenkins is working on her certification to be a personal trainer.

### STRONG DEFENSE

FIU, ranked third in the SBC in scoring defense, allowing just 62.4 points per game to opponents this season, continued their stingy defense against WKU. Despite the close 64-61 loss, FIU held WKU five points under their average. The effort came one game after a humbling 101-58 loss to MTSU on Feb. 25.



CHRIS ADAMS/THE BEACON

FIU head coach Cindy Russo [right] discusses game-time strategies with assistant coach Joanne Aluka-White [left].

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

# Golden Panthers to face Denver without Otero

**JOEY CRUZ**  
Staff Writer

FIU will play Denver in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference men's basketball tournament in Hot Springs, Ark. on March 6. FIU is the No. 11 seed in the conference with a 7-24 record overall (4-14 SBC).

"All we have to do is win four games," FIU point guard Phil Gary Jr. said. "And if we do, we're making the NCAA tournament."

The road for FIU in the tournament foresees bumps along the way. If the Golden Panthers were to beat

Denver in the first round, they would take on Middle Tennessee in the quarter-final round. The semi-final round would include North Texas, Louisiana-Lafayette, or Louisiana-Monroe.

The top four seeds in the SBC are Troy, North Texas, Middle Tennessee and Western Kentucky.

Notably, FIU has beaten two of the top four seeds (MTSU and NT) at least once this season.

"Coach just tells us that we have to play hard for 40 minutes," Gary said.

### MISSING LINK

Golden Panther forward J.C. Otero injured his knee with 8:30 left during the Western Kentucky game on Feb. 27. FIU spokesman Paul Dotson had no update on the status of his MRI taken on March 1.

"We can't replace J.C.," Gary said. "He does everything for us, he's our best rebounder and best post scorer. I'm even going to have to get down there and get rebounds."

FIU is already a small team with Otero (6-foot-7) in the line-up. Without his presence in the low block, the Golden Panthers must adapt to their lack of size entering the most important time of the season.



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