

Helping students in need

Retired Panther pledges \$1 million to LGBTQA program

DESTINEY BURT
Staff Writer

In 1976, being gay and out was difficult. People would get fired for that.

During his 30 years working various positions at the University, Patrick Russell said he felt like it was a “don’t ask, don’t tell” atmosphere around campus.

“That’s not fair. I felt like students needed to be recognized, appreciated and celebrated,” Russell said.

Russell has pledged a \$1 million gift to the Division of Student Affairs’ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning Ally programming.

Today, a reception will be held to honor Russell for his gift to the LGBTQA programs.

“I want to give back to help the students feel comfortable about coming out,” said Russell.

He didn’t want the reason the program didn’t grow to be because of financial reasons, since it is hard to get funding for gay and lesbian students.

“I feel like a financial commitment could make a difference,” Russell said. “I hope it does. That’s why I did it.”

The Student Government Association funds the LGBTQA programs, but Russell thinks that they shouldn’t have to fund everything.

“Hopefully we can start to see some funding from the state. I would like to see that, and maybe this would encourage it,” said Russell.

Russell served as assistant dean of students, director of cooperative education, worked with the National Student Exchange Program and taught freshman experience classes.

SEE GIFT, PAGE 2

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT



PATRICIA SEGOVIA/THE BEACON

Roman Joseph (above), sophomore health services major, participated in the one of the World AIDS Day activities that focused on the importance of the use of condoms. Abstinence is the best way to prevent HIV and using a condom is the second best way to prevent it.

Pre-med students prepare for revamped MCAT

ALYSSA ELSO
Staff Writer

Pre-med students may face a more difficult Medical College Admissions Test once the revamped version is administered in 2015.

According to a Kaplan 2013 Survey, in which 79 medical school admission officers from across the United States were polled, 43 percent expect the revamped MCAT to be more difficult than the current

one. While the remaining 55 percent think the difficulty will remain the same.

“It is too soon to tell how students will do on the new test since no one has taken it yet,” said Dr. Barbra Roller, assistant dean for Student Affairs.

The current MCAT, which is taken by prospective medical students each year, tests students’ knowledge in physical science, verbal reasoning and biological sciences.

According to Kaplan Test Prep, the

new MCAT will feature three additional sections, testing students skills in biochemistry, psychology and sociology. Along with the new sections, the exam will feature new question types and skills that focus on research design, graphical analysis and data interpretation.

Senior pre-med student Alan Marquez is preparing to take his MCAT in January and is relieved to not have the added pressure of preparing and studying for the 2015 MCAT.

“I think the changes made to the MCAT were made with good intentions, but I think it is only going to make the test harder and much more stressful to study for than it already is,” said Marquez.

“More material equals more hours of studying, which pre-medical students can’t really afford since they are busy taking hard science classes.”

Aside from the new sections and the

SEE TESTING, PAGE 2

Panthers abandon passions to pursue profitable career paths

ADRIAN SUAREZ-AVILA
Staff Writer

Elena Martinez can’t help but wish she were someplace else instead of taking notes during lectures on the digestive system.

“I would rather be singing,” said the senior biology major. “Singing is what I love to do, but I don’t think I’ll be financially stable if I followed my passion.”

In a national study of more than 1.2 million 2013 high school graduates, only 36 percent chose a major that was a “good fit” based on their interests while 32 percent selected a major that was considered a “poor fit.”

Given today’s difficult economic conditions, students are oftentimes left to defer plans of following their ambitions in order to major in fields

“To an employer, people are dispensable. If a student pursues a career in something he or she loves and gets fired, then that student can go somewhere else and find another way of doing what he or she loves.”

April Lewis
Senior Academic Advisor
FIU’s Academic Advising Center

that, although don’t necessarily encompass their interests, will lead to profitable careers.

“Once, I thought of becoming a history professor,” said Manny Gonzalez, freshman computer science major. “But you really can’t make much money doing that.”

Several other students interviewed at the University confessed to putting their dreams on hold in

order to pursue studies in areas that may lead them to enjoying financially stable futures, futures that may not be able to provide them with the intrinsic satisfaction they desire.

What should students consider doing when faced with the difficult decision to either follow their hearts or go for the cash?

“Follow your passion,” said April Lewis, senior academic advisor at

FIU’s Academic Advising Center. “To an employer, people are dispensable. If a student pursues a career in something he or she loves and gets fired, then that student can go somewhere else and find another way of doing what he or she loves.”

Majoring in a field one is interested in has its perks.

Research has shown that students who major in subjects they’re passionate about fare better academically.

Although the prospect of practicing a lucrative vocation is an endearing one, some students cannot help but wish to find a middle ground between what they really love to do and what they believe will allow them to make money.

In some cases, students find ways to do just that.

“I love to dance, but I don’t see

myself as a professional dancer because it’s not a stable profession,” said Lina Galeano, a freshman majoring in chemistry. “I want to be a forensic pathologist, but I’m in a dance group here at FIU and it serves as an incentive for me to get my work done.”

For other students, the struggle is not choosing between happiness and money or ways of combining the two. Instead, the real struggle is selecting a major in the first place.

Don’t freak out, Panthers, FIU has your back.

Students having trouble determining what major will best suit their interests should take advantage of the resources provided by the University.

Students who face difficulties in deciding on an academic track should

SEE CAREERS, PAGE 2

WORLD NEWS

Celebrity Chef Nigella Lawson admits cocaine use

Celebrity chef Nigella Lawson admitted Wednesday in a U.K. court that she had taken cocaine a handful of times. But she denied habitually using illegal drugs and accused her ex-husband of spreading that allegation to savage her reputation. Lawson said ex-husband Charles Saatchi, a wealthy art dealer and advertising mogul, had threatened to destroy her if she did not clear his name after he was photographed gripping her throat outside Scott's restaurant in London, a widely published image that was soon followed by a divorce. "He told everyone that he was taking cocaine out of my nose at Scott's when he knows that is a lie," Lawson said, testifying at the trial of two former assistants accused of fraudulently using the couple's credit cards.

US stops disclosing Guantanamo hunger strike tally

A spokesman for the Guantanamo Bay prison says the U.S. military will no longer disclose to the media and public whether prisoners are on hunger strike. The policy change announced by Navy Cmdr. John Filostrat is a break from the past at the U.S. base in Cuba. Prison officials have for years reported how many prisoners are on strike and how many have lost enough weight that they can be force-fed under military guidelines. Filostrat said Wednesday that officials decide releasing the information helps prisoners quote "further their protests" and has no "operational purpose." A mass hunger strike over conditions peaked at 106 prisoners in July. The Miami Herald reports that there were 15 inmates on strike as of Monday, all thin enough to be force fed.

For more world news, check out FIUSM.com.

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 25, Issue 45, in "Student Government Association petitioning for second road access" Biscayne Bay Campus's Student Government Association's Vice President Richard Azimov was said to be in charge of the campaign. However, Christopher Morisset, the SGA-BBC Comptroller, is currently in charge of the campaign.

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

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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

Editor-in-Chief:
(305) 348-1580
brandon.wise@fiusm.com

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

The Beacon is published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the Fall and Spring semesters and once a week during Summer B. One copy per person. Additional copies are 25 cents. The Beacon is not responsible for the content of ads. Ad content is the sole responsibility of the company or vendor. The Beacon is an editorially independent newspaper partially funded by student and services fees that are appropriated by Student Government.

One million dollar pledge to grow Division of Student Affairs's LGBTQA programming

GIFT, PAGE 1

Because Russell was a member of the University when the LGBTQA programs didn't exist yet, he is happy to see how the times have changed and how being gay is accepted more now than it was back then.

Now that the times have changed, it is important to Russell to give back so that LGBTQA students don't feel alone and they can have support.

"I want people to feel safe about being gay. It should be normal to the point of almost boring," said Russell. "But being gay can never be boring, it should be to the point of 'who cares.'"

Gisela Vega, Multi-cultural Programs and Services associate director

of freedom about their sexual orientation. Russell hopes this gift will give

gift will also help increase the number of mentors, safe zone trainings and the workshops the program has.

Now Russell is retired and lives in Santa Fe, N.M., where he does volunteer work.

When asked what made him remain loyal to the University, he replied, "It's called love. I love the University."

-news@fiusm.com

EVENT INFO

What: Reception
When: Dec. 6,
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Where: Faculty Club

"I want people to feel safe about being gay. It should be normal to the point of almost boring."

Patrick Russell
Former Assistant Dean of Students

for LGBTQA, met Russell in the 90s.

"During that time, we worked on many projects for the LGBTQA community when there wasn't an office or a program," said Vega.

The funding will go towards helping LGBTQA students develop a sense

the LGBTQA programs room for growth, making the community more aware and informed.

"The people of the LGBTQA community should always be protected and that wasn't always the case when I was there," said Russell.

According to Vega, the

Medical school admission officers rank revamped MCAT more difficult

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additional study time students will face, the test length will also increase.

According to Roller, when the test was first on paper, it took students eight hours to complete. Today, the test is computerized and is about five hours long, but the new test will revert back to its original length of time – eight hours.

"You could be the most disciplined student in the world, but no one has an attention span that can successfully work that long," said Marquez.

For students that will be required to take the 2015 MCAT, the Office of Pre-Health Advising has begun to help students prepare by encouraging

"The new MCAT may require students to put more time into studying, but it is designed to make incoming medical students more well-rounded individuals."

Barbra Roller
Assistant Dean
Student Affairs

them to take courses in biochemistry, psychology, sociology and statistics early on in their academic career.

"It does not matter where students learn the new information, but if they take these courses, they are preparing for the test and working towards completing their University Core Curriculum," said Roller.

When it comes to the

admissions requirement for students applying to the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, students must currently have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and a combined MCAT score of 25 for regular admission. Students who seek early decision must have a minimum GPA of 3.7 and a combined MCAT score of 35.

According to Roller, the average MCAT score for

medical school applicants falls between 31 and 35, but there is no telling how scores will change once the new test is in effect.

"The new MCAT may require students to put more time into studying, but it is designed to make incoming medical students more well-rounded individuals," said Roller.

-alyssa.elfo@fiusm.com

Students choose majors considered "poor fit" based on interests

CAREERS, PAGE 1

consider the Exploratory program, which allows them to sample a variety of course offerings while receiving guidance from University professionals in order to save them time.

Others can take the University's online assessment, MyMajorMatch, to get a sense of what professional

fields seem to be good fits for their individual strengths and interests, or simply visit the Academic Advising Center to receive guidance.

"We have several tools that students can use," said Lewis. "We want students to explore, find out what will be a good fit and then focus in order to graduate in a timely manner."

Others can also take advantage of the resources provided

by the Career Services office.

"Students need to find something that drives them to wake up in the morning," said Darren Gregory, assistant director of Career Services. "[At the office], we have several resources students can use to figure out what they want in life and we want them to explore."

According to Gregory, the Career Services office offers

tools for students to find internships that match their career aspirations. In addition to this, students can also visit the office to take the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator and the Strong Interest Inventory test to determine professional fields that may be of interest to them.

-news@fiusm.com

Panther wants grading for quality, not quantity

LUIS SANTANA
Staff Writer

You read a paragraph of material for which a professor has asked you to write a five page essay. You're stuck on page two knowing that you've delved into all the meaning that this reading has to offer. You've got three pages left to write. What do you do?

For most of us, we rely on pulling sources from other places or using extremely long quotes to pad our papers, but this shouldn't have to be done.

Why do professors constantly assign essays of ridiculous lengths if they know there's really not that much to write

about? If they know – because I'm sure when they were students they did the same – that students will end up just padding up the essays with long quotes and overly lengthy descriptions.

“
Stop grading us on quantity and start grading on quality.”

I think this arcane style of essay writing breeds rigidity within the work that wouldn't be there if the professor had just

told the student to write as much as they thought was necessary to get their point across.

Imagine if your professor told you “Write until you've said what needs to be said about the work.” It would be helpful for the professor, as they wouldn't have to read through so many layers of padding and it would also be helpful to the students because we wouldn't have to go searching for obscure things to throw into our essay just to fluff it up.

Our essays would also have more meaning. I think a lot of times because of page length requirements our essays become Adam Sandler movies rather than snippets of genius and sincerity.

Of course, this must be tempered in good wisdom by the student as there is no way you will get across the meaning of a passage in a single sentence alone. I'd wager that two to three pages is a good amount of writing for most writing assignments. You could write even more if you find a certain depth in the assigned readings and you feel compelled to do so.

I also don't believe every student is as skilled as the next one in terms of writing; to have to pad the paper becomes even more of a nightmare for them as well.

What I'd like to see is just a simplifying of a silly system. It's about time that professors move

from this age old notion that: if we assign the students a certain amount of pages, they will really think about their work. It's not true. We don't write up to the number of pages because we found depth, we do it because it's simply a goal to be reached. Stop grading us on quantity and start grading on quality.

Disclaimer: To those over-achievers, who enjoy writing twenty pages when five have been requested that I have offended, carry on. You are beautifully masochistic.

-opinion@fiusm.com

Long-distance relationships aren't for the faint of heart

STEPHANIE PIEDRAHITA
Contributing Writer

I remember meeting plenty of people from out of state at my freshmen orientation and the ongoing conversation throughout it was what it was like back home and who they left behind.

The day you finally move away from your family is hard but expected since we all have to leave the nest eventually and just being at a new school is exciting enough to drive homesickness away for a few months.

When you leave your friends, it's a shock that you won't get to hang out until the summer back home, but you can manage. There was one story in particular that grabbed my attention however, about a boy that moved away from New York, a family, a set of friends and a girlfriend.

Being in a relationship and not going to the same school seems ridiculous. Everyone kept asking “Why put yourself through that?” since honestly...why would we? Long distance relationships are not for the faint-hearted.

“
Long-distance relationships require long-term effort.”

Most people know of the disadvantages of LDRs, which is why there are very few out there to begin with. Different time zones, lack of physical contact and having to rely on social media to be the crutch of your relationship are some common downsides to all this. Deep down, there could be fears of losing feelings for that person or even the possibility of them finding someone more accessible.

All this plus the pressure of doing well in school, being social and still having time to remain connected to those back home seems like too much. Again, a normal relationship takes effort but a long distance one requires dedication.

This is the deciding factor: Are you dedicated to this person?

You have to ask yourself how serious you are about them and your future. When a couple decides to do this, they are promising to still be together for at least the next few years maybe even consider marriage if it ever gets to that point.

What I am trying to say here is this: Do not be in a long distance relationship if this person is not the one. This is a decision you take if and only if you feel there is no other person in your area that can make you happier than this person does.

In my head it's as simple as that. Vacations would be more special, months that pass by are months closer to seeing each other and you get excited for the future. Time becomes precious and that's why you should do it. You have to feel like there are no wasted moments to know that you're able to do long distance relationships. So, look hard and long at your significant other and think.

-opinion@fiusm.com

Even busy bees take time to smell the flowers

RAUL HERRERA
Staff Writer

“Civilization V,” one of my favorite video games, has a quote that pops up once you build the Eiffel Tower.

“We live only to discover beauty. All else is a form of waiting,” as said by Kahlil Gibran.

Of course, we all know that this quote is not absolutely true, however, it is quite inspirational.

I am a busy man, just ask my friends. Jobs, schoolwork and club work all ensure that a good portion of my time is occupied doing something. I

imagine that the amount of things I do is miniscule compared to other University students who have tons of activities on their plate.

Then, of course, there is finals week. The hustle and bustle of the semester reaches its zenith as scores of students crowd the library and silently study till their minds cannot retain a single iota of information. Some even exile themselves, not showering or resting until they feel prepared for their exams.

In the midst of this chaos, one forgets to do what the old maxim says: to stop and smell the roses.

As you go about your

day, use the small seconds of time you have to appreciate the beauty that surrounds you. Walk near the School of International Affairs building and take a moment to observe the fish and turtles swim beneath the bridge. Observe the rare and underrated University sunset. Take a glance at the fascinating sculptures spread throughout the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. Sit near the Gold Parking Garage and see the occasional kitten scurry along the bushes. If you frequent the Biscayne Bay Campus, just look outside.

Ponder these wonders. Why are they there? Who

placed them there? Give your mind a slight break and delve into these and other questions.

It is not just these beauties that you can take time to appreciate. There are also things you can value because of their quirkiness. Learn about an FIU urban legend, like the bells or the student who drank Coke instead of Pepsi on-campus.

Okay, so I made up the last one. It definitely should be a thing though. Perhaps you can ponder on how you can add it to the slim compendium of FIU folktales.

Maybe this is all a good

“
As you go about your day, use the small seconds of time you have to appreciate the beauty that surrounds you.”

stress reliever. Maybe it could make you feel thankful for such blessings. Others in the world do not have these little things to appreciate. Thanksgiving may be long gone, but giving thanks, as my friend says, is a lifestyle.

As you rush about preparing for finals and other activities in the

-raul.herrera@fiusm.com

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to 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, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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art basel

Art and music take over Miami

MARIANA DIAS
Contributing Writer

Every first week of December, Miami and its beaches turn into the greatest art hub on the planet, gathering artists, galleries and collectors in a variety of art fairs and exhibitions. The week is marked by the Art Basel Fair, Miami Art week and numerous private or free events and parties.

Even though Art Basel can be thought of as this whole week of artistic madness, it is actually the name of one of the main fairs. The fair was founded in Basel, Switzerland, in 1970 with the intent of gathering international artists, galleries, publishers and collectors in one space. Today, the fair is a platform for new upcoming artists, renowned contemporary works, photography, new media and installations. Art Basel's Miami Edition has been around since 2002 and welcomes thousands of people every year. The fair takes place in the Miami Beach Convention Center and doors open to the public this Thursday. Even though the huge crowd might throw you off, don't worry, there is plenty of cham-

pagne to be sipped and lots of interesting things to be seen.

In the mainland, another major art fair takes place. Art Miami, around for 24 years, is the pioneer art fair in Miami and the event that started it all. The fair showcases modern and contemporary art from 125 international art galleries. It takes place in Midtown, and is adjacent to "context", its sister art fair. "Context" focuses on emerging artists, offering a space for communication and development between artists, galleries and collectors. The combined space of both pavilions is 200 thousand square feet, and will host 190 galleries.

Another prominent fair, now in its ninth year, will take place at Ice Palace Studios in downtown Miami. PULSE focuses on contemporary art, but also showcases video art and performance art.

In contrast to the dozens of art fairs, this week is highlighted by the opening of the Perez Art Museum, in the heart of downtown Miami. The museum, located on Biscayne Boulevard, promises to be Miami's much needed social and cultural hub. Aside

from its gala receptions and VIP opening parties, entrance to PAMM will be free from Dec. 4 to 8 to all Miami-Dade residents.

So what is the place for college students on a budget in this midst of swarming crowds of millionaire art collectors?

No fear, free events are here: The YoungArts Center and the ArtCenter/South Florida will host free exhibitions, Wynwood will unveil its new murals and a gator the size of a football field will be floating on Biscayne Bay. Another event with free admission is the Miami Street Photography Festival, held in Wynwood and offering lectures and workshops.

Ironically, for the luck of college students, this week clashes with one of the most frustrating times of the year: finals week. See Art Basel as a light shining behind a dark cloud of impending doom. Take a break and head out to the streets; you'll definitely find something that will inspire you.

-life@fiusm.com

ART BASEL ARTISTS

GHOSTFACEKILLAH

WHEN: Friday Dec. 6, 2013
HOW MUCH: \$33 pre-sale, 21+ show
WHERE: The Stage Miami, 170 NE 38th St, Miami, FL 33137

NEON INDIAN (DJ SET)

WHEN: Friday Dec. 6, 2013
HOW MUCH: \$20, 21+ show
WHERE: Bardot, 3456 N Miami Ave, Miami, FL 33127

RICHIE HAWTIN

WHEN: Friday Dec. 6, 2013
WHERE: Story, 136 Collins Ave, Miami Beach, FL 33139

ERIC PRYDZ

WHEN: Friday Dec. 6, 2013
HOW MUCH: \$60 for women, \$120 for men, 21+ show
WHERE: LIV, 4441 Collins Ave, Miami Beach, FL 33140

SHOLHMO

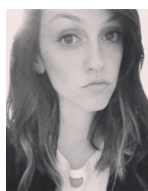
WHEN: Saturday Dec. 7, 2013
HOW MUCH: \$26, 21+ show
WHERE: Bardot, 3456 N Miami Ave, Miami, FL 33127

BOY GEORGE

WHEN: Friday Dec. 6, 2013
HOW MUCH: \$32
WHERE: Mana Wynwood Production Village, 318 NW 23 St., Miami, FL 33127

Musical guidance through Art Basel

COLUMNIST



NATALIE MONTANER

Art Basel, Miami's well-known international art show, is officially upon us and, with all the events being hosted throughout the city, you're going to want to be as prepared as possible. It may be a little overwhelming at first, but with the proper preparation and strategy, you'll be sure to experience the best musicians that Art Basel has to offer.

Without any further ado, here's a select guide of music acts occurring throughout the city to help keep you and your music loving friends on track this weekend:

Dec. 6: Official VH1 + SCOPE Party

Canadian musical duo and twin sisters Tegan and Sara Quin are making their way back to the sandy beaches of Miami for the first time in years as the feature act of the VH1 + SCOPE Party. The event is invite-only (boo!),

but don't fret — you'll still be able to enjoy the performances from Lummus Park's 10th Street spot. The show will also host performances by DJ Cassidy and Brendan Fallis.

The event begins at 8 p.m. at the Scope Miami Beach Pavilion located on the beach at 1000 Ocean Drive. Please note that Lummus Park spans from 5th Street to 15th Street. The event will be best enjoyed at the 10th street location.

Dec. 6 - 7: Look Alive Fest

For those of you not at all interested in the electronic or hip-hop scene, Look Alive Fest may be the event for you. This alt-fest will be hosted at Churchill's Pub and Gramps on Dec. 6 and 7, respectively. Bringing experimental, psychedelic, garage and noise rock (among others), goers will see performances from Pontiak, Guardian Alien, White Mystery, Wolf Eyes, Teepee and more. In short, Look Alive Fest is a going to be a sure-fire good time for those of you wanting to step

HOLIDAY HELP



JAHREL FRANCIS/THE BEACON

Beatriz Newborn, Human Resources relations coordinator (left), and Yesel Rivera, student assistant and sophomore in international relations, help pack up all the toys donated for the President's Annual Toy Drive. At least 1600 toys are donated to at least 10 different non profit community organizations.

away from the typical artsy events that Art Basel brings to Miami.

The Dec. 6 show will take place at Churchill's Pub, 5501 NE 2nd Avenue, and the Dec. 7 show will be located at Gramps, 176 NW 24 Street. Both shows begin at 9 p.m. For more information, students can visit looka-

livefest.com.

Dec. 7: Basel Castle

Produced by Overthrow Collective, Basel Castle is an all-day art festival loaded with live musical performances, exhibitions, live murals, installations and more. As far as music is concerned,

festival goers can expect sets from SBTRKT, Gesaf-felstein, Chance the Rapper, Travi\$ Scott, The Knocks and Brodinski, among others. Bringing in a diverse collection of contemporary art and music, Basel Castle is must for all art/music folk out there. The fun doesn't end there either, with the Basel

Castle Official After Party sets from SBTRKT, Gesaf-felstein, Chance the Rapper, Travi\$ Scott, The Knocks and Brodinski, among others.

The festival begins at 12 p.m. at Grand Central Park, 700 N Miami Avenue. For pricing and more information, students can visit baselcastle.com.

-life@fiusm.com

Campus 'barren as football stands' over Thanksgiving break

COLUMNIST



RHYS WILLIAMS

This past weekend over the Thanksgiving Break, when most of the student population was at home or with friends, some members of the student body were on campus where at least I had nothing to do but clean my dorm room, do some laundry and watch football alone.

Thanksgiving Day was no exception, which gave us three matchups including that of the Detroit Lions beating the Green Bay Packers 40-10 with the early game. The Oakland Raiders traveled to Dallas to face the Cowboys and lost 31-24 and the night game was between AFC North rivals the Baltimore Ravens faced the Pittsburgh Steelers with the Ravens winning 22-20.

However, with almost everything closed for the weekend on campus and lacking a motor vehicle, it was a boring weekend other than that. The washers and dryers of University Towers were basically empty for the entirety of the weekend, which was nice, but the campus was about as barren as most weekends or the stands at football games.

Something I have seen in my years here is that people tend to stay at least at MMC over breaks. Thanksgiving break, or lack thereof compared to some other universities, is too short for people to go home if they don't live in Florida or they don't have the money to go home for a long weekend, myself included as I am not from Miami.

Some students will even be staying here for the winter recess. Students from out of town who get jobs in Miami are sometimes required to stay here for most if not all of the break. I will not be staying here for the winter break but there are people who I know that will be for multiple reasons including the need to be here for work — such as working for the University in some aspect, or working at malls, restaurants or shops around Miami if they can't get time off to go see their families.

One thing that might help keep me here would be the warmth. I know in Virginia it is not going to be a nice 70 to 80 degrees as it is here during December and it is not as fun of a time being in the freezing cold even if there is snow.

I know that when things start

to get warmer everywhere else in March, I will be staying here for a majority of Spring Break and I am sure I will not be alone. Miami is a destination for collegiate Spring-breakers everywhere and I will be welcoming three friends from Virginia for the entire week.

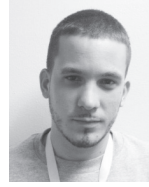
“ Thanksgiving break, or lack thereof compared to some other universities, is too short for people to go home if they don't live in Florida or they don't have the money to go home for a long weekend.

It has come to my understanding though that at a lot of different schools staying on campus for breaks is definitely becoming more common.

-rhys.williams@fiusm.com

Sneakers and the holidays seem to bond quite well

COLUMNIST



RUBEN PALACIOS

Sneakers and the holidays seem to bond quite well.

The major sneaker companies (Nike, Jordan, Reebok, Adidas) all plan to release a number of shoes during December.

And these are not just any shoes, the shoes released during the holidays are the most hyped releases of the year. Quite frankly, people have been waiting for these shoes for almost a year now.

Yeah, that's a great way to build anticipation. Good job, gigantic shoe companies.

What's hot for Nike

Nike will have a busy December as a number of hot releases will hit the shelves of your local sneaker spot. Let's take a look:

Today, Nike will release another gem in Kobe Bryant's signature line. The Nike Kobe 8 will release a model named the "What The Kobe." This is a must buy in the sneaker world. The "What The Kobe" release is something Nike does just once a year with a couple of signature lines. Nike

compiles the numerous other designs and colorways it has previously released of that shoe and puts them into one, simply awesome, shoe. The shoe combines over 30 different colorways. Yes, I said 30 different colorways.

If you can't get your hands on the "What The Kobe's" don't fret, there is more heat dropping this month.

Nike will also release another great shoe on Dec. 23 when the Nike Air Foamposite "Asteroid" drops.

Foamposites are the signature shoes of former NBA great Penny Hardaway. The design on the shoe features a galactic view of how asteroids collide in the great beyond. The sneakers will don red to purple gradient and incorporate the huge colliding rocks.

What's hot for Jordan

Jordan's, quite simply, dominate the holiday season. The sneaker community lives in anticipation of what Jordan brand cooks up for December releases.

SEE SHOES, PAGE 7



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Panthers look to regain momentum versus FGCU

PATRICK CHALVIRE
Staff Writer

The Panthers will begin a tough three game schedule Saturday as they welcome last season's sweet-sixteen opponent Florida Gulf Coast to the Lime Court.

The group failed to hold on to the ball Tuesday night as they gave up 23 turnovers to Nova Southeastern University, en route to a 77-59 loss.

FIU will learn from their loss and head coach Anthony Evans understands that there is more to the game than just wins and losses.

"It's an opportunity to teach," Head Coach Anthony Evans said. "You have to respect the game, you have to cherish every moment when you're on the floor."

The Panthers, led by Senior Tymell Murphy, will have to fix their mistakes if they have any hopes in taking down the Atlantic Sun Conference favorite Eagles.

The Eagles average 67.9 points per game, while the Panthers have been holding their opponents to just under 66 points per contest.

The Panthers will also look to rely on big man Rakeem Buckles. The redshirt senior, in just 11 games, has a total of 113 rebounds. His rebounds are currently ranked

first in the nation and second in Conference USA.

As good as the numbers may be, the loss to Nova seemed to be a wake up call for some.

"We're not good enough to be lollygagging everyday in practice, we gotta do everything hard," Buckles said. "We got to, from now on, we gotta have it."

Buckles is one of several new faces for the Panthers. Redshirt junior Dennis Mavin understands what's needed in order to succeed and hasn't allowed the new system to slow him down.

"It's been a slow progress," Mavin said. "Overall, it's been pretty Ok with me, nothing too major."

Since shocking the country last season and reaching the sweet-sixteen of the NCAA tournament, the Eagles have been on a slump. The Eagles lost their last two games versus North Carolina State and Iona, but coming off a loss themselves, both the Panthers and Eagles will be looking to get back on the right foot.

Aside from their 4-3 record, the Eagles have three players averaging more than 13 points per game. Senior Chase Fieler, who was a part of last seasons Cinderella team, will come into FIU averaging 14.6 points per game.



JASEN DELGADO/THE BEACON

The FIU men's basketball team takes on Florida Gulf Coast this Saturday Dec. 7 in one of the biggest games so far this season.

For Evans, the name of their opponent has no effect on how the Panthers perform. Evans understands that at any moment a team can overcome adversity and perform better than what their record shows.

"You have to play with passion, you can't take anything for granted," Evans said. "Those will be things that I will tell this team in practice from today, until the end of the season, because we have to come out with a certain type

of intensity, whether it's Louisville, FGCU, FAMU whoever. We have to play with the same type of intensity so that we can get better as a basketball team."

-patrick.chalvire@fiusm.com

Panthers finish strong with bright looking future

OSCAR BALDIZON
Staff Writer

After a tumultuous season full of many ups and some downs, the FIU volleyball team wrapped up its season last week in the quarterfinals of the Conference-USA volleyball tournament in Murfreesboro, Tenn. The Panthers finished this season with an overall record of 13-17 along with a 6-8 record within C-USA.

Compared to a 10-20 record last year, the team did improve and made it all the way to the quarterfinals of the C-USA tournament before falling in a tightly contested five set match to the University of Tulsa.

The biggest difference this year was the steadfast leadership of Head Coach Rita Buck-Crockett. Under her management the team was able to find a defensive and scrappy identity this year, which carried them farther than perhaps, expected in C-USA.

For the second straight year Senior Kimberly Smith was a dominant blocking force for the Panthers as she finished with 115 blocks her junior year and improving that to 125 this year. She also improved her overall kills by over 40 points, finishing this season 290 kills for the season. Her presence will be greatly missed next year.

Luckily for FIU fans, Buck-Crockett has been very active on the recruiting front had already signed four new volleyball players for next year.

Briana Gogins hails from Columbus, Ga., and lettered in volleyball all four years while at Columbus High School. The 6-foot-2 middle blocker and 2012 AVCA Under Armour All-American registered 826 kills



BEACON FILE PHOTO

The FIU Women's volleyball team rapped up the 2013 season with a losing record of 13-17 while also going 6-8 during conference play.

over her career with the Blue Devils. She guided her team to the state championship in 2013, while she was also recognized as Area Player of the Year, All-State (GA, AAAA) for two seasons (2012, 2013) and was also awarded All Bi-City First Team accolades her junior and senior year.

Lea Montavon is originally from Switzerland and a six-time junior national champion as a member of VBC Cheseaux, a great team in the highest amateur Swiss league. The 6-foot-2 outside hitter is on the Swiss Junior National team as well and will provide great support up front with her solid blocking skills

as well as an outstanding reach. She will have some big shoes to fill with the departure of Kimberly Smith.

Tia Clay comes to Miami after attending Will C. Wood High School in Vacaville, Calif., where she lettered in volleyball all four years. The 2012 first team all-league recipient registered 425 kills, 62 blocks and 387 digs while with the Wildcats. The 5-foot-11 outside hitter is a four-time scholar athlete, and currently plays club volleyball for Rage Volleyball. She was part of the Dallas Junior Nationals squad in 2013 and was selected to the 2010 Frosh 59, which is an accumu-

lation of the best varsity-playing freshman in America, as well as the Soph 79 the following season. A former student government president, she will bring in great leadership skills and hopefully develop into a nice outside hitter.

Carrollton, Texas native Jennifer Ene tallied two accolades in 2013, being recognized as the most improved and earning first team all-district honors. She attended the 2013 USA Volleyball Junior National Championship in Dallas with her club team, the Texas Titans. The 6-foot-1 middle blocker will be a strong addition to both the indoor and the sand programs for years to come.

Buck-Crockett has brought in a lot of size that will help the Panthers solidify themselves as one of the most dominant blocking and defensive teams in Conference USA.

Another big piece of the team that will be sorely missed next year is Jessica Mendoza. As the floor captain for FIU this season she led the team in digs and was the heart and soul of this team on the court. Constantly keeping the morale of the team upbeat and positive, some one will have to step and fill in some big shoes.

As for the offensive side of the game, all eyes will be on Lucia Castro for 2014. As the only Panther with over 300 kills this season, and the only one to finish in the top 20 of Conference USA, she will be looked to for immediate results next season. After garnering more of a management role on the team this year, she will be looked to for not only results, but as a leader as well for this upcoming season.

-oscar.baldizon@fiusm.com

FIU Football 2013 season report card



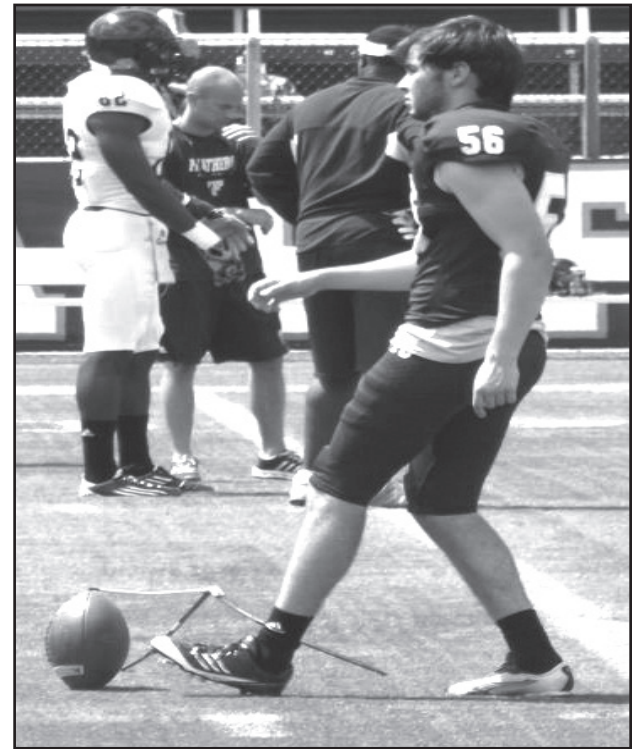
JASEN DELGADO/ THE BEACON

Sophomore running-back Lamarq Caldwell led the team in all-purpose yards with 608 but, had only one touchdown.



JASEN DELGADO/ THE BEACON

Senior defensive tackles Isame Faciane (left) and Greg Hickman (middle) were the leaders on a young team in 2013.



RHYS WILLIAMS/ THE BEACON

Redshirt freshman kicker Sergio Sroka lost his job after a missed 34 yard field goal attempt early in the season.

Offense: F

COLUMNIST



RHYS WILLIAMS

At the end of the day, the most important number in college football is points and FIU scored awful at that. Getting shut out by the University of Central Florida, Louisville, and Middle Tennessee State University doesn't give you points on the field or in my grade book, so they are getting an F.

This equates not only to a low total of 117 points total – acknowledging the fact that the University of Louisville almost scored 72 points in one game against the Panthers – but a tie for last in Division 1A football with the University of Miami (Ohio). At

Player of the year on offense for me would be sophomore running-back Lamarq Caldwell who had the most all-purpose yards on the team with 608.

Defense: D

Having multiple potentially-draftable players on your defensive line usually adds up to some good things, but as I mentioned, in the offensive category they did give up 72 to the Cardinals in a single game. For senior defensive tackles Isame Faciane and Greg Hickman it was a very bumpy and turmoil-filled final ride for FIU, but in my opinion they will be making money playing football next year, so they have nothing to worry about. The defense –

especially the defensive line – knew that they needed to be the strong suit of this team, but it didn't happen. The only reason they are not getting a failing grade is due to a possibly controversial play that won the only game this season against the University of Southern Mississippi.

Player of the year on defense would be Faciane who not only had 11.5 tackles for loss but racked up 2.5 sacks which was second on the team behind Hickman.

Special Teams: C

The saving grace of a single win team was the special teams, even with the ground kicking game being as bad as it was at the beginning of the season. Redshirt junior quarterback Jake Medlock ended up being the primary punter over redshirt freshman Chris Ayers due to his proficiency in the rugby-style punting. However, Medlock may not be returning to FIU next season which would create an entirely new set of issues. True freshman Austin Taylor, along with Medlock, received College Football Performance Awards Honorable Mention

player of the week honors at least twice for their special teams play. Taylor ended up eight for 12 on field goals and made eleven extra points which is decent for not being the starter for the entire season. The "C" that they are getting from me is due to the fact that even though they were pretty decent, they failed to convert in attempts that would have kept a shutout or two away. Player of the year for special teams is Taylor who was the leading scorer on the team with 35 points.

-rhys.williams@fiusm.com

Kobes, Jordans dominate Adidas in upcoming releases

SHOES, PAGE 5

This year, Jordan brand will introduce a completely new colorway in one of its most legendary silhouettes, the Air Jordan 11. The 11's release just once a year, and guess when they tend to release? During the holidays.

For the first time ever on Dec. 21, the Jordan 11 will be dressed in black nylon mesh and patent leather, and will feature a slight touch of gamma blue on the infamous Jumpman logo.

In addition to the Air Jordan 11 release, Jordan will also drop an exclusive Air Jordan 12 model on Dec. 26. The release will be a quickstrike release, meaning that the locations and quantities of shoes dropped will be extremely limited.

The Jordan 12 will follow the color

scheme of the 11's as it will also feature a predominantly black base with a minor hint of gamma blue. The black upper will be suede with the gamma blue on the sole and accents.



I don't want to seem like I'm picking on Adidas here, but come on you have to do better this holiday season.

This model, the Air Jordan 12, is the shoe Michael Jordan rocked during his fifth championship season.

What's hot for Reebok

Reebok will not be overlooked this holiday season, they will release a holiday themed Reebok Question model on Dec. 23.

This shoe was made famous by former NBA great Allen Iverson.

The shoe will don the name "Ghost of Christmas Future." Reebok incorporates a

new design into a legendary model, thus the name referring to the future.

The kicks are based on Dicken's "Christmas Carol," and will feature purple and red coloring.

What's NOT hot

I don't want to seem like I'm picking on Adidas here, but come on you have to do better this holiday season.

The feature sneaker Adidas will release this year pays tribute to former NBA great Dikembe Mutombo. Adidas will release the Adidas Mutombo on Dec. 14.

The shoe, in my opinion, is too bulky and in no way pleasing to look at. The kicks will feature a simple black and white colorway with the Mutombo logo in color.

-ruben.palacios@fiusm.com





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Wolfe University Center will not be renovated in time for spring



MOCK UP IMAGES COURTESY OF SCOTT JONES

The Wolfe University Center remains under construction (below) and is set for March 2014 completion that will resemble the mock ups (left and right).



STEPHANIE MASON/THE BEACON



CARLOS COBA
Asst. News Director

Students that have been waiting for the renovated Wolfe University Center to be inaugurated must wait a few more months.

It has been undergoing renovations since this past summer and was set for spring 2014 completion, but the ribbon cutting will not be held until mid-to-late March because of an “expansion in scope,” according to Director of Student Affairs at WUC Scott Jones.

The scope of the project is the final product expectations. It involves all components of the renovation including lighting, audio, seating, paint work and carpeting.

The renovation has consisted of two phases: the first consisted of demolition and was meant to be completed in October, while the second phase was meant to be completed by December so that the ribbon cutting could be held by the start of spring semester.

However, due to the expansion in scope of phase two, mainly dealing with the ceilings and floors, phase one’s demolition had to be expanded for a month to accommodate and phase two did not begin until Thanksgiving break.

“We’ve expanded the furnishing, carpeting, the ceiling work and we are now painting the entire building,” said Jones, who has held his position since April. “The scope increased, so we needed to increase the timeline in regards to scheduling to make it all look new.”

To Jones, however, worrying about aesthetics is not the only thing on his list.

He wants the purpose of the WUC to be changed and the space to be “activated differently.”

He wants people to feel more comfortable while lounging or studying at the facilities, and emphasizes that

removing the concrete structures and replacing them with glass panes will allow them to see the space and react with people differently throughout the center.

Back when the building was utilized differently as an open-space environment, there was a lot of pre-cast, concrete structures needed for architectural purposes. The exterior corridors served as a navigation pathway into an air-conditioned space, but this changed.

“Once the building became fully air-conditioned, those concrete structures still stood, and that impacted people’s line of sight and their experience of interaction,” said Jones.

The glass panes that will improve the sight throughout the WUC, like Jones says, should all be installed by the end of the year.

According to some students, this is a more bearable part of the renovation process, in comparison to the loud demolition phase over the summer.

But some students still find inconveniences — although less noisy.

“The construction limits our routes when it comes to walking around campus,” said Camilo Londono, senior journalism major. “Last week, the computer lab and game rooms were closed, and now you have to take a detour to go to the library from the bookstore.”

“When I’m running late to class, I think I might be able to use the hallway that leads out to the library but some days it’s closed and some it isn’t.”

Some students find the inconveniences to be minimal and prefer waiting a bit longer for WUC that is thoroughly re-structured.

“Though the construction can be a bit tedious, I think it will ultimately be good for the campus,” said Miriam Arias, senior broadcasting media major. “I don’t have an

issue with the delay of the set date as long as the finished product is good.”

Quality is also a priority of the Student Government Association, who has funded over \$2 million of the \$3 million project.

This makes the WUC’s renovation the SGA’s largest funded project, according to SGA Advisor Rafael Zapata.

“The construction limits our routes when it comes to walking around campus.”

Camilo Londono
Senior Journalism

“In addition to expanding the scope of the project, it is very important to have the renovations done properly,” said Richard Azimov, vice president of SGA-BBC since April.

To Jones, this delay guarantees proper renovations, making the wait worthwhile. Lounge areas will be available in every floor, as well as in between floors, and touch screen technology will be eventually set up in certain areas.

“When folks walk in through the front door, they will have a completely different experience as they walk through, or around, the building,” said Jones. “They will be able to see all the way up to the third floor as soon as they walk in.”

-carlos.coba@fiusm.com

Swimming and diving receives highest rank in program history

LUIS BARROSO
Contributing Writer

The FIU Swimming team is off to what is undoubtedly the best start in the program’s history.

It has been a work in progress through many years as Head Coach Randy Horner enters his fourth season this year as head coach. Ever since Horner’s arrival, the program has gone nowhere but up. He brought a high level of comfort to the swimmers as well as to the new recruiting classes.

One of FIU’s most successful swimmers, Senior Sonia Perez Arau commented about Coach Horner: “He believed in me since day one. When I felt like giving up, he was there to bring me up, ever since I spoke to him on the phone I knew I wanted to swim for him.”

Methods like this are what has landed FIU and Horner many of these recruits to sign with this University.

This season, FIU Swimming and

Diving features athletes with a total of 10 different countries.

This has been a record-breaking season for the University as it has shattered many personal, school as well as conference records throughout the season — the latest display of talent being during the Mizzou Invitational, in which FIU gave the surprise of the event on breaking the top teams of the 12 team invitationals which included teams from the Big 12, Pac 10 and the SEC in between others.

This performance gave the Panthers some national exposure, resulting in FIU’s ranking as number five in the Mid-Major Poll and 39th in the National Poll according to collegeswimming.com, becoming the highest ranking in program history.

FIU is currently third in the Conference USA rankings behind only Rice and East Carolina. The Panthers were led in Missouri by Junior Johanna Gustafsdottir, who broke multiple records on the 200 IM as well as the backstroke on the 100- and

200-meter events.

Along with Perez Arau, who also broke her personal record, as well as the school and conference records, on the 400 IM by more than six seconds. This marked one of the most important tournaments of the season, but a midseason tournament nonetheless.

Horner spoke about the Invitational, saying, “It is an important tournament, but we didn’t really take it as serious, just throw the girls out there to see their improvement and I could not have been happier with the outcome. They stepped up against the competition.”

This is already a successful season for the swimming and diving team, but Coach Horner keeps his hunger for more success when it comes to this group of girls, as he says the girls have exceeded his expectations.

But being half way through the season, there is a lot of progress that can be made.

Even though it has been a record-breaking season, not everything has

been a bright spot, as there had also been many injuries and sickness in the team throughout the season on some of the most important swimmers for the Panthers.

In the diving boards, Sabrina Beaupre and her appearance at the top of the charts is not a really surprising thing for the Panthers, but there is a familiar factor on this FIU diving squad, and that would be Freshman Lily Kaufman, that has worked really well as side-by-side partners with Sabrina to dominate all of the events in which they have participated.

Both Beaupre and Kaufman have captured Divers of the Week honors this season and have been a positive factor for the team.

As the season goes on, FIU prepares to face some new competition in the Nova Invitational next week starting Dec. 14 in Fort Lauderdale.

-bbc@fiusm.com