

Students, alumni join SOS Venezuela movement

JEFFREY PIERRE
Asst. News Director

Thousands of demonstrators, including students and alumni, waved the yellow, blue and red of the Venezuelan flag in Doral on Saturday to speak out against ongoing human and social rights violations taking place in Caracas.

The protest was a part of more than 150 demonstrations

“This began as a student protest but has now become a social protest.”

Alfredo Machado
Senior Marketing Management

held worldwide on Feb. 22.

The violent Venezuelan protest and demonstrations are part of a series of global social movements that have culminated during the anti-government protests in three disparate countries and in three different regions.

While Venezuelan demonstrators are demanding better security, an end to goods shortages and protected freedom of speech, protesters in Thailand are calling for the ouster of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra coinciding with demonstrators in Ukraine looking for the government to forge closer ties with Europe and turn away from Russia.

Alfredo Machado, a senior marketing management major and vice president of the Venezuelan Alliance at FIU, helped organize the Doral demonstration.

“This began as a student protest but has now become a social protest,” Machado said. “Here in Miami, it’s hard because we all have family in Venezuela. When you see what’s happening in your country, you have to do something.”

The country has faced severe social unrest since Feb. 12. At least eight people have been killed and more than 100 injured. The protesters say they want better security, more freedom of speech and an end to shortages. They oppose the socialist government of Nicolas Maduro, who took the reins following the death of Hugo Chavez in March 2013.

Students from state universities including University of Florida and Florida State Univer-



MARISOL MEDINA/THE BEACON

Students and alumni gathered in Doral on Feb. 22 as part of an SOS Venezuela rally.

sity joined Machado and the Venezuelan Alliance in support.

“There were Cubans, Colombians, Nicaraguans and even Americans coming together,” Machado said. “It doesn’t matter where you are from, you can’t see human rights violations and not do anything.”

Machado says that although

students and activists may be separated by distance, they can still play a significant role by spreading the news of what is happening to the students in Venezuela.

Vicky Principe, a journalism senior and activist, agrees.

“We can’t underestimate the power of spreading the word,”

Principe said. “We can’t go and risk our lives to protest like people back home but we can talk about it and create awareness. We’ve become the media. We don’t have anyone to inform the people because we’re

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No talks for college athlete union despite national push

RAUL ALVAREZ
Contributing Writer

As of 2011, the University’s football team brought in a total of \$25,201,564. That means that after only nine active years, the program made as much money as Drake did when he struck success in the hip-hop business.

FIU’s superstars — the players — did not see a dime of that in the form of a salary. College football players are not paid in wages, but rather in stipends, scholarships and room and board.

But the National College Players Association has filed a petition in Chicago with the National Labor Relations Board requesting an election to form the first ever union for college athletes: a movement publicized as a way for college athletes to

be recognized as University employees and paid as such.

Several members of the Northwestern University football team have supported the petition with quarterback Kain Colter spearheading the move. If Labor Board certifies the group, it will be called the College Athletes Players Association.

FIU’s players are not joining the movement, however.

“Yeah I’ve heard about it, but only from what’s on ESPN,” said Jordan Budwig, an offensive lineman at FIU. “Nobody here is talking about joining or forming a union. From what I know, it’s something that private schools are doing.”

While the movement has been publicized as a one for pay, the president of the National College Players Association said the point is to improve conditions for student-athletes overall.

The association has outlined 11 goals including raising schol-

arships, paying for sports-related medical expenses and eliminating restrictions on legitimate employment and opportunities for commercial benefits.

National Labor Relations Board Regional Director Peter Sung Ohr kicked off a hearing on Feb. 12 to determine whether the players have a legal right to union representation under the National Labor Relations Act.

A spokesperson for the Chicago regional office said in a statement that Ohr will rule on the decision within the next month. The United Steelworkers union is covering the NCPA’s legal fees.

Goals also include minimizing brain trauma risks, increasing

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Monologues give voice to vaginas, gender issues

COLUMNIST



CRISTINA GARCIA

A fun fact about myself: I love vulvas. I’m the sort of girl that will draw vulvas in the sand to review anatomy with friends and family. I have a vulva wallet and a vulva necklace. I love everything about them, from politics to art.

My love of vulvas stems from my background in Women’s Studies. I’m not a freak, just your local heterosexual sex-positive Muslim feminist preaching the gospel of the clitoris.

Needless to say, I was sitting in the

audience for the Saturday showing of “The Vagina Monologues,” chocolate vulva-pop in hand in support of my home team: the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies.

“If your vagina got dressed, what would it wear? If your vagina could speak, what would it say?” wrote Eve Ensler, the American playwright and activist, in one monologue.

I knew the answer because it was the third year I’d seen the play: panda pajamas and my vulva would ask directions to the nearest bookstore or library. But the first time I was posed this question, the answer wasn’t so clear. I had to do some soul searching.

Many sexy sounds filled the auditorium that night — moans, groans, laughter — but the sexiest sound of all was the sound of women comfortable in their own skin.

The play centered around women’s relationships with their vaginas. Many important topics were addressed such as body image issues, sexual assault, sexual health, sexual politics, the stigma around women’s sexuality and society’s expectations of our vaginas.

According to Zakiya Becca, a junior communication arts and women’s studies major, not all Panthers welcomed the play.

“While tabling in [Graham

Center], a couple girls complained about vagina props. They said they were degrading women and giving the wrong ideas to predators and men,” the actress said. “They attacked us three times until we complained to GC.”

However, the whole play is about giving women a voice about their experiences.

“One cast member, she was wearing the vagina costume, addressed them and said that the play was directed for victims, that she was a survivor of sexual assault and a psychology student and she saw nothing wrong with it,” said Becca.

Cast member Audrey Aradanas, a junior women’s studies and political science major, said her monologue, “Because he liked to look at it,” was very close to home.

“I didn’t pick it, but I got Bob. It’s actually funny because it’s actually like my life, like my boyfriend,” she said. “It’s about a woman who obviously knows about feminism, but still doesn’t love herself. Loving your body is very important, but she doesn’t do that until she finds this weirdo who helps her.”

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WORLD NEWS

Ukraine issues arrest warrant for missing leader

Ukraine's acting government issued an arrest warrant Monday for President Viktor Yanukovich, accusing him of mass crimes against the protesters who stood up for months against his rule. Russia sharply questioned its authority, calling it an "armed mutiny."

Yanukovich himself has reportedly fled to the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea, a pro-Russian area in Ukraine. Calls are mounting in Ukraine to put Yanukovich on trial, after a tumultuous presidency in which he amassed powers, enriched his allies and family and cracked down on protesters. Anger boiled over last week after government snipers killed scores of protesters in the bloodiest violence in Ukraine's post-Soviet history.

Greek prison hospital inmates protest conditions

Inmates held in Greece's only prison hospital are refusing food and medication as part of a protest campaign against their severely overcrowded living conditions.

The hospital in the Korydallos prison complex west of Athens is designed to hold 60 men but currently houses more than 200, rights groups and prison staff said Monday. Most are HIV positive and many others suffer from communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, hepatitis and scabies. Protesters posted statements on Facebook and Twitter saying at least 178 of the inmates have been refusing prison food for the past week, while those among them who are HIV positive have been refusing to take antiretroviral drugs in an attempt to draw attention to their plight.

CORRECTIONS

In Vol. 25, Issue 67 in the article titled "Australian Pavillion architect to speak on 'sublime' designs," it is the Austrian Pavillion. In the article titled "We should all just update 'Caesar,'" Regginal Baril's last name was incorrectly spelled Aril. And in the photo titled "Speak no evil," the student in the photo was mislabeled as male.

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

Panthers participate in local rallies for national movement

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censored. So now it's our job to inform the public because this about basic human rights."

Natalia Tovar, a senior international relations and political science major, helped organize the SOS Venezuela Bayfront Park event that took place on Feb. 20.

"We are trying to be the voice of our country, our job as Venezuelan and US citizens is to be the voice of those in Venezuela, we need to let the world know what's going on," Tovar said.

Principe, a Venezuelan native, says the people of Venezuela want justice and the basic choices that come with freedom. With the worst inflation numbers on the globe, a

battered economy, high murder and crime rates and a country left beaten post-Chavez, Principe says people, especially students, are fed up.

"People are tired of not being able to walk down the street without being scared because they might get killed. People are tired of not being able to even buy milk for a newborn," Principe said. "We've been through it for 15 years and it got to a point where just we're tired."

Statewide protests have highlighted the growth of Florida's Venezuelan community.

More than 250,000 people of Venezuelan origin call the United States home, according to the Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project. Forty percent live in Florida.

At the University, Venezuelans

“People are tired of not being able to walk down the street without being scared because they might get killed.”

Vicky Principe
Senior
Journalism

are the second largest group of international students on campus with 286 studying at the University from abroad according to the Associated Press.

Additional reporting done by Ezita Rodriguez

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Chaplin shows skills at wine tasting

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He said he has seen the festival get better and better in the countless years he has attended.

"This year there were about 38 to 39 different restaurants providing samples so we have students helping the sponsors, fulfilling different positions, providing paper towels, water and other supplies," Qureshi said.

"There are even students directing people to the different tents," he said.

First-time attendee at the festival Mo Ghumrawi, a senior international relations major, said getting the opportunity to come was one of the best decisions he's made, though it was a little overwhelming at first.

"I'm glad I got to come

and try a new experience, plus it's always great to see new things students are doing," Ghumrawi said. "This is my first time trying the FIU beer and it's delicious!"

Sponsored by MasterCard, Food Network, KitchenAid, Marriott, Goya and countless others, the Grand Tastings Village featured Castello burgers, Del Monte fruit platters, Anolon cookware and liquor as far as the eye could see.

"The festival is a great way to experience Miami and the food scene all at once," said Wine and Food Festival veteran and University alumni Monique Gonzalez, who studied Mass Communications and Spanish.

"This is the place parents can get away and

relax," her husband, Xavier Gonzalez, said. "We only wish they'd open the Grand Tasting tents sooner!"

Meanwhile, celebrity chefs Ming Tsai, Emeril Lagasse, Martha Stewart and others performed on stages in other tents outside.

"We put a lot of work into this event," said Mike Hampton, dean of the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

"For the people attending it's all fun and games, but there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes. Some students were here since four and five in the morning and will be here until 2 a.m.," Hampton said.

Ashley Reed and Nicole Dudley, two interns for Southern Wine and Spirits,

say that understanding the management side of the festival is the key to its success.

"To see how it's organized and all the different moving parts coming together is really important," said Dudley. "It's definitely a lot smoother than last year's."

This year, the South Beach Wine and Food Festival raised nearly two million dollars that will benefit the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. The number keeps growing.

"We've really stepped up our game," said Reed. "Next year, hopefully, we'll be running the show!"

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National College Players Association requesting union for college athletes

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graduation rates, protecting educational opportunities, prohibiting universities from eliminating a scholarship due to injury, establishing safety guidelines, prohibiting punishment of an athlete who has not committed a violation, guaranteeing athletic release if a student wishes to transfer schools and allowing athletes to transfer schools one time without punishment.

The grey area is whether players are employees of their universities or just student-athletes.

The NCAA insists that college football players are student-athletes instead of employees, meaning that they are not entitled to the labor rights which workers enjoy under the National Labor Relations Act, including the right to form a union.

Goals also include minimizing brain trauma risks, increasing graduation rates, protecting educational opportunities, prohibiting universities from eliminating

a scholarship due to injury, establishing safety guidelines, prohibiting punishment of an athlete who has not committed a violation, guaranteeing athletic release if a student wishes to transfer schools and allowing athletes to transfer schools one time without punishment.

“Nobody here is talking about joining or forming a union.”

Jordan Budwig
Offensive lineman
FIU Football

Professor Lorna Veraldi, who teaches media law and ethics at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication,

expressed skepticism over this kind of union.

"They would have to enforce union discipline and make sure that nobody goes off and bargains deals on their own, which could mean student athletes having to give up scholarships," Veraldi said.

CAPA, in this case, would have to ensure that its athletes do not lose what they cannot gain back through the union, or the plan will fail.

According to Veraldi, unions do not form easily. She noted a hostile environment toward unions for the past 50 years and said it would need to muster financial support, combat threats from employers and overcome laws that disadvantage unions.

"I'm curious to see how it would be structured," Veraldi said. "Unions are only strong if the individuals involved put their individual interests aside and stick together."

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Netflix in the classroom: technology distracts students

LUIS SANTANA
Opinion Director

Sitting in my class the other day my eye was caught on a television drama with subtitles being played in the front of the class. No, it wasn't a teaching supplement our teacher was using; rather it was a student watching this instead of listening to the lecture being given. I sometimes have a tough time focusing, so I twisted myself in the seat to look at the other PowerPoint screen that the teacher was projecting.

I shouldn't have had to do

generations about this problem, asking them "What did you do in class when you were bored instead of checking your phone or opening your laptop?" Most of them laugh and say they had to just pretend they were interested in the lesson that was being taught and try not to nod off. They had no way of distracting themselves, and were probably better off for it.

It's especially problematic for other students, as your distraction becomes a distraction for us. Instead of being focused on the lecture and interacting with the

any other time of the day, why does it have to be during class? I know not every lecture is interesting, but every lecture does have something that you can learn from it.

It also seems like these days, we have so many things with which to distract ourselves in any sort of situation. Feeling awkward at a party? Just pull out your cellphone and act busy. Don't want to focus on a boring lecture? Take out your laptop and pretend you're taking notes while doing something completely different. The problem with all this is that we're losing touch with what is and isn't real life. We are melding the digital universe with the corporeal reality.

I've seen the advances we have had because of technology, and every article I've written for the Beacon has been written on a laptop but I also realize the need to disconnect. We can't spend every moment of our day staring at a screen, nor can every uncomfortable moment be diffused with staring into a screen.

Life is meant to be lived no matter how awkward or strange or boring. So instead of focusing on your digital life, focus instead on the lecture and learn things that'll be important for your reality.

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Swing by more outdoor study areas

ARIEL WEINSTEIN
Staff Writer

From the moment I stepped on campus, I fell in love with the fountain by the Graham Center.

If you know the fountain I am speaking of, you would also know that around the fountain, there are swinging chairs that are comfortable, beautiful, and peaceful.

The only thing wrong with these swinging chairs, is the fact that there are not enough of them.

From early in the morning, to late at night, every swinging chair is taken. People love to study, do home work, hang out, and just relax in the chairs.

I personally believe the University should install more of these wonderful outside resting and study areas.

Lets face it, ever since starting college, we haven't been able to spend as much time outside as we would like too. With papers to write, tests to study for, emails to respond to, phone calls to make, job applications to fill out, work outs to force ourselves into, we don't have the time we wished we had to just be outside and enjoy our natural surroundings.

These chairs allow us to take care of all of those responsibilities, while at the same time, providing a breath of fresh air, a serene background sound of the fountain flowing, and beautiful scenery to enjoy.

Although the library is a very studious and helpful place, I really don't think anyone would rather be stuck in a building reading, when they

could be outside reading.

I feel the University would make such a beneficial investment if they added more swinging chairs to campus.

Just like exercise, fresh air is so important to the health and well-being of humans. There are many aspects of campus that I feel people are entirely unaware of, appreciate, or even notice exist.

I feel the University would make such a beneficial investment if they added more swinging chairs to campus.

I am in no way saying these parts of campus are a waste of money, but I feel the University would be making a better investment decision if they spent the time and money on adding these chairs to campus, because people would use them more.

There was a time at the very beginning of spring semester when I saw there were chairs being added to the other side of the shrubbery by the fountain, however within a day, they were gone again.

They did look a bit out of place, but at the same time, I feel almost everyone would agree that these chairs are worth the time and money to be a part of campus.

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You can look at Instagram any other time of the day, why does it have to be during class? I know not every lecture is interesting, but every lecture does have something that you can learn from it.

this. I shouldn't have had to sit uncomfortably just because someone's trying to catch up on their TV show, especially in a classroom. And I think this brings light to the much bigger problem of the encroachment of technology in the classroom and in our daily lives.

I've talked to people from past

professor I'm watching your latest Vine post or seeing what you like and don't like on Tumblr.

I also have to beg the question: Why are you watching a video in a classroom for which you are paying a bunch of money? Wouldn't it behoove you to pay attention and get your money's worth? You can look at Instagram

Simplification: making your life easier

JENNIPHER SCHAFER
Staff Writer

When people want to take steps to simplify their lives it is often the misunderstood concepts which make the task seem impossible. Simplifying doesn't mean going without everything the modern world has to offer. It is simply a way of prioritizing needs and wants and then acting in accordance with that understanding. Sure some people may still want to live off the proverbial grid, but most of us just want to lessen the stresses that come with our ever-evolving technology and social demands.

It can start with something as simple as going through your closet and really thinking about the clothing in there. If you haven't worn it in six months to a year it is likely you won't wear it again. Gently used clothing is greatly appreciated at thrift stores and homeless shelters for those in need. If you need the money you can also try consignment shops or a yard sale. Donating will give you a stronger sense of community though and will make you feel better. To get new clothing try going to local boutiques for classic or highly unique pieces and supplement them with thrift store finds. You'll save money where it counts, boost the local economy, help a charity, and have a lower carbon footprint for your wardrobe.

I know we're all busy with classes, homework, and even important research, but try to cook at least one meal on your own a week. If you have roommates who are agreeable to this maybe you can take turns in the kitchen. If you live at home with your family you can bet they'd appreciate the help even if you're just assisting someone else in the kitchen. Try using locally grown ingredients when possible. Farmers'

Simplifying doesn't mean going without everything the modern world has to offer.

markets are becoming more popular and offer very cheap alternatives to grocery store chains. The best part is many now accept credit cards and offer organic products at prices which are simply unbeatable in the large stores. Locally grown food

also reduces your carbon footprint.

If you like reading but still prefer the feel of a good book in your hand thrift shops and used bookstores are a great way to build your library without depleting forests. Lending libraries are also a wonderful tool. Every six months or so look through your collection and see which books you may be ready to let go of and donate them or sell them. Good condition first editions of popular novels can gain quite a profit sometimes on sites like Amazon.com.

Walk with your phone in your pocket. Limit your time on Facebook, Tumblr, and Twitter. I know limiting time on Tumblr is often an exercise in futility but it can be done. Limiting television is also a good idea. Go for a walk outside with your favorite music playing. If you're more adventurous try going a day without internet as long as it doesn't interfere with your schoolwork or your job.

Here on campus there are groups who get together for drum circles and yoga meditation as well. Finding others who are also trying to simplify can help you along the way.

Simplifying your life is more about changing what is important and striving to relax than moving to a commune and giving up your iPad.

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Wonder Reception at BBC

ARIEL WEINSTEIN
Staff Writer

Almost every childhood involves some sort of superhero, or comic book. Whether it was Superman, Batman, Captain American, or whoever was the current superhero of one's childhood, these characters made kids happy and made them look up to someone.

Now, the University has created an event that will bring back that piece of childhood.

On Thursday, Feb. 27 from noon to 2 p.m. at WUC 155, the University Comics Club will be hosting an event called Wonder Reception, which will be sponsored by the BBC Student Programming Council.

Wonder Reception is the club's biggest event of spring semester 2014, however in fall 2013, the club hosted a successful event called Comic-Con.

"We had vendors from different parts of South Florida, bringing students closer to comics and memorabilia. In addition, thanks to the Dezer Museum, we had the Bat-Cycle from Batman 1966 TV series on display" Fernando Ottati said.

The spring event is free and open to University students, staff,

faculty and alumni, as well as the surrounding community.

Because there is so much excitement from students and staff alike, it is expected that it will be a full house in attendance.

This event is a rare opportunity to honor one of the most renowned Wonder Women comic book artists, Jose Delbo.

Ottati is the treasurer of the FIU Comics Club and the event planner for this particular reception. He explains how the club is meant to keep the spark of excitement for comic books and superheroes alive.

"We have been on trips to Conventions and Comic book stores and now it was a perfect time to have a lecture on campus, especially during such an exciting time as SPC's Affair of the Arts Week" Ottati says.

The event will include several activities. One of these activities is a question and answer session with Delbo. There will also be a raffle of a Wonder Woman DVD set from the TV series and the comic book "Wonder Woman 253", drawn by Delbo.

In addition, there will be a video presentation emphasizing Delbo's career, and an award ceremony to follow.

This event will also be giving out free giveaways, such as club buttons.

In addition, attendees will be able to go home with a picture holder and their polaroid picture taken with Delbo immediately.

Ottati, an artist himself, came up with the event when he met Delbo at a comic convention, and invited him to the University's BBC campus.

Ottati puts a lot of emphasis on the fact this event is the first of its kind, and potentially the only time an opportunity like this will occur.

"This is an once in a lifetime opportunity to be in the same room with a legend from the comics world who not only drew Wonder Woman, but also Batman, Superman, Spider-Man, Transformers and Thundercats, among many others" Ottati said.

Not only will this be a fun event, but a time for people to recognize the work that goes into comics.

"I want people in attendance to appreciate all the hard work that comic book artists like Mr. Delbo put into their craft in order to deliver quality work to audiences," Ottati says.

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LIFE IN LAW

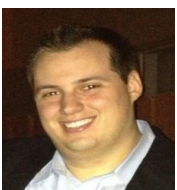


JOHNSON ATIS/THE BEACON

George Zimmerman's Attorney, Mark O'Mara, spoke to law students about law and the justice system. He also talked about the notorious State of Florida v. George Zimmerman case and why it was important for him to win, despite the nature of the case, because it was his duty to win.

Slow release weekend allows for hidden gems

COLUMNIST



FRANCISCO RIVERO

After the All-Star weekend and all of its All-Star selections of shoes it's safe to say that the pockets around the shoe world are very thin this weekend. So the name of the game is save, save, save and with no big time releases upcoming this weekend now is the perfect time to pick up some nice but affordable footwear.

KD's bright and affordable

My number one shoe of this upcoming weekend has to be the KD 6 "Liger", selling for only a retail price of \$130. The Liger is a shoe that has the color of a big time release but the price of a modern Nike.

The Liger is a low-top shoe that has a variety of colors such as green, blue, red, black, yellow and orange. The Liger contains bright colors, color transitions, animal print and a unique silhouette that compile to make the shoe amazing.

The Liger is the perfect shoe for that "balla on a budget" or anyone who has loved bright colors on shoes but never could afford the prices of the bigger releases. The Liger will be released this Saturday, March 1.

Nike Dunk High Camo hidden treasure this weekend

The second shoe that's on my hit list this weekend is the Nike Dunk High "Camo" selling for a retail price of \$120. Normally Dunks are nothing out of this world, in fact many have been released since I began

the Sneak Peek issues however, this week Dunks really caught my eye.

This weekend's Dunks are no ordinary Dunks; Nike has teamed up with 510 skateboarding to create a Nike Dunk for skateboarders. The Camo is a high-top shoe that has a military color way through the entire shoe while having the color orange located on the laces.

The fact that Camo has a nice color pattern to its design while also containing features needed for skateboarders makes this Dunk not only unique but a must buy for any first time shoe collector. The Nike Dunk Camo will also be a part of this Saturdays releases.

Sneaker head shoe of the week

For the sneaker head that did not buy any of the All-Star weekend shoes or just has the money to add yet another piece to

their collection, then the Nike Foamposite "Metallic Camo" is the shoe for you.

Selling for a retail price of \$250 the Metallic Camo is by far the most expensive shoe this weekend and the most limited. It is a mid-top shoe with a lime green bottom while the main base of the shoe is a metallic grey color. In fact for the past recent releases the foamposite as seen a mix of patterns and multicolored markups. This model however was in stark contrast to the original group of foams.

Every shoe collector knows that despite the color of the Foamposite it is a must buy simple because it is a shoe that helped the sneaker game reach the point it's at today. The Metallic Camo's will also be releasing this Saturday.

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Reel Big Fish hooked a really big audience

CLAUDIO ZELAYA
Contributing Writer

It's weird to think that this night almost didn't happen. After a tiring day of school, working, and dealing with my allergies, the last thing on my mind was hopping into a concert pit for the night. However, I sucked it up and drove myself and a friend to see Reel Big Fish at Revolution Live.

The show was held outside in America's

Backyard which I've never been in. When it comes to size it's more or less the same as if it were inside, but it looked way better! A wooden balcony, a bar right in the middle, a BBQ going on the side, and nice stage that was close enough to the audience to really give that family feel! There was even an FIU flag hanging from the rafters!

First up were local natives, BUSHWOOD. I felt really bad that I've never

heard of them seeing as though they live down the street. However, I was in for a delightful surprise.

It was a very calm and relaxing set filled with funky reggae that would act as the climb for a night filled with adrenaline. The crowd wasn't the most active during this set, but there was a good group head nod of approval going on in patches of the crowd.

Their singer, Steve Voronkov, consistently made

sure the audience was having a great time throughout the set by sparking small conversation between songs. The real kickers for me were the sax solos of Curt Windom! They were so powerful and passionate that cheers quickly followed every time he took center stage. At some point, he made his way into the crowd. They were a great opening act and I've made sure to look up their newest CD, Tidal Wave.

Next up, surprisingly not long after BUSHWOOD got off stage, were more South Florida natives, Askultura. Wow, I've never seen so many people on the stage at once. I'm talking about band members. There were a good ten to eleven people on the stage for this set.

Their songs were really fast paced and definitely fit the ska genre and the crowd ate it up. I really couldn't hear them announce the names of the songs as

I could barely hear their vocalists' singing due to what I suspect were some technical difficulties or more evidence of my going deaf. Either way, these guys put on a solid set that prompted chants for an encore! They really livened up the mood in preparation for the headlining act, Reel Big Fish.

Reel Big Fish came

SEE CONCERT, PAGE 5

Season two “House of Cards” proves worthy

MICHAEL COLLADO
Contributing Writer

The first scene of Netflix’s “House of Cards” first episode shows Frank Underwood (Kevin Spacey) killing a dog. In season two, “House of Cards” dares to push Frank from antihero to fully fleshed villain. The result: “House of Cards” season two may very well be the most dismal 13 hours on television.

Every episode’s monotonous score and its slow fades only complement its dispiritedness. And yet, “House of Cards” is as every bit as thrilling as it was in season one.

“House of Cards” premiered its second season on Feb. 14. It’s a political thriller developed by Beau Willimon, most notable for writing “The Ides of March,” and adapted from a British series of the same name that features the most barbarous antihero on television, Frank Underwood.

Last year’s television landscape was oversaturated with antiheroes. The Walter Whites, the Don Drapers, the Hannibal Lecters, and to a lesser extent the Hannah Horvaths have consumed the pop culture conversation with their ruthlessness.

But Frank isn’t a terminal cancer patient seduced into building his empire, nor is he a cannibal serial killer. Yet somehow, the events that transpire on “House of Cards” are less believable than the debris of two planes crashing down on Walter White. He’s just a self-serving egomaniac.

And that’s OK. “House of Cards” is cartoonish. It’s a cold and sadistic depiction of those who run the Capitol.

Season two begins where season one left off. Frank is poised to become vice president, and Zoe Barnes is digging into the death of Peter Russo. A murderer is a heartbeat away from the presidency. But Frank can’t wait that long. Soon,

everyone is backstabbing everyone. It’s “Dallas” for the bleak and dreary.

What in real life must be a boring back-and-forth of conversations, “House of Cards” injects a sense of welcome mischief. Season two brings in some newcomers, the best of which is Jacqueline Sharp (Molly Parker) as Frank’s successor and sometimes-unwilling puppet.

The second season also breathes a bit more; if there is one thing “House of Cards” does well, besides its commitment to being grim, is giving glimpses inside the lives of its peripheral characters.

You might empathize with them, but nothing is as satisfying as Frank coming out the victor.

Though if there is but one issue with season two, it’s the lack of consequences Frank faces. Everything feels too easy. You might actually yearn that Frank gets some due comeuppance toward the end of the season.

Even with the additions, “House

of Cards” is still playing with its original characters. Here, the most notable is Claire Underwood, played by Robin Wright who won a Golden Globe for the role last month. Alongside Frank, Claire is every bit as cold and calculating, but at least reveals emotions that make her human. It’s because of this that she’s a much more charismatic element to the show. Where season one had both Underwoods doubting each other, this season is about them working together to take their throne.

And though you might think it crass to root for Frank, nothing will stop you from reveling in every step Claire decides to take. Together, they’re the best mustache-twirling power couple on television.

“The Americans,” a show on FX about a married couple who are also Soviet spies, premieres its second season this week. And ABC’s frothy soap “Scandal” begins the latter half of its third season this week, too. HBO’s “Veep,” a relentless comedy,

but one about a vice president vying for power, returns sometime this spring. All display their own version of the political antihero. “House of Cards” is after something much more sinister.

It’s difficult to pinpoint exactly what makes “House of Cards” so compelling. It’s a spectacle in highbrow form, a fantasy of what happens behind closed doors in Washington. Perhaps we enjoy watching politicians rummaging through murderous muck, watching Frank Underwood use everyone as his chess game pawns, as an escape, a contrast from the stalemate of Washington politics. Even if it follows a villain ripped from a comic book, “House of Cards” is a pulpy thriller.

And its ability to dig under the flesh is unparalleled.

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Reel Big Fish continue their Don’t Stop Skankin Tour

CONCERT, PAGE 4

out to an introduction theme that resembled that of a Hollywood film. Chants broke out a good twenty minutes before they came out so the crowd was livid as the wait had finally come to an end.

Now, this is where a lot happened.

I’ve seen them live before so I needed to get closer to really enjoy the show and this is where I discovered that some really interesting people go to ska shows. I saw a variety of people in the pit from a kid wearing a sweet Deadpool mask, an older man wearing a Rey Mysterio get up, an even older man wearing a suit like he’s my dad and just came from his firm in downtown, to a really buff man who I could swear looked like the Thing before his skin was altered.

The pit went nuts as they started playing

some ska hits. I can’t lie, I didn’t know all the songs, but I learned the lyrics as they were playing to really get into the set. As soon as the pit spread to where we were standing, I lost my friend for a good forty minutes. I don’t know if he got hurt, if he fell in love in the pit, or even if he left. He vanished in the pit, but let’s pretend he had a blast.

The horn section of the band was phenomenal and their singer, Aaron Barrett, made sure to hype them up. Thankfully they played a couple of the newer songs I was familiar with from their latest album. They were “Don’t Stop Skankin” and “I Know You Too Well To Like You Anymore.” I might be exaggerating when I say this but I promise that I saw a good twenty people crowd surf in just “I Know You Too Well.”

I really enjoyed this song because it included the woman who sang on the track

who I, unfortunately, forgot the name of. It also transitioned into another hit, “She’s Has A Girlfriend Now.” This part of the set really put my training as Batman to the test. The crowd got way too intense as people were flying all over the place. I got so tired of it that I just chose a spot to plant my feet and pushed a whole row of people away.

The Thing was also passing crowd surfers to the security with one hand while still singing along! Note to self: Reel Big Fish fans definitely lift. They also catered to older fans by playing songs like “Somebody Hates Me”, “Sell Out”, and “Beer.” People were begging for “Beer” the whole night, no pun intended.

Personally, I loved when they played “Take On Me.” Oh, I found my friend at this point. It turns out he didn’t last two minutes in the pit. Throughout the show, the

members made sure to crack some jokes to keep the mood going by joking about how long they’ve been playing, asking people to bring them BBQ while they play, to uttering the worst words a band could ever tell fans: “here’s a new song.”

Of course the second they ended their “last song”, chants for an encore quickly filled the venue. They came back and ended their show on a high note to really tear the place down! To end my night, I shook hands with the Thing and the office worker we’ll call Mr. Suit to signify a job well done as fans and great night with Reel Big Fish on the Don’t Stop Skankin Tour.

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Vagina monologue exemplifies sex positive attitude

VAGINA, PAGE 4

that she was a survivor of sexual assault and a psychology student and she saw nothing wrong with it,” said Becca.

Cast member Audrey Aradanas, a junior women’s studies and political science major, said her monologue, “Because he liked to look at it,” was very close to home.

“I didn’t pick it, but I got Bob. It’s actually funny because it’s actually like my life, like my boyfriend,” she said. “It’s about a woman who obviously knows about feminism, but still doesn’t love herself. Loving your body is very important, but she doesn’t do that until she finds this weirdo who helps her.”

Aradanas also commented on the negative feedback the play was getting.

“One lady said we shouldn’t perform the monologues, but this is a reality — stuff that happens. One in three women are sexually assaulted. If we tell people, educate them, it will eventually improve,” she said.

Guadalupe Juarez, an executive director of the play, said she’d like the University to take a source of empowerment from the night.

“It goes back to body image and lack of self-confidence. If we lack that, it’s harder to be empowered,” said Juarez. “It gives women a voice. It shows them to speak your mind and be comfortable with who you are.”

Looking around the room that night, I saw different levels of comfort. Some women, like myself, were at peace with the material and laughed comfortably. Others ducked their heads in embarrassment.

Juanita Olivio, the sophomore theatre major that performed “The woman who loved to make vaginas happy,” showed the utmost confidence as she showcased different styles of

pleasure moans.

I asked her if she had wanted that part specifically because I knew the sort of guts it took to perform this role. This monologue was about a lawyer turned sex worker detailing why she only worked with women and how she loved to give women pleasure. At the end, the piece requires the actress to showcase a long list of different types of moans.

“It was actually the furthest part from my mind. I wanted to be one of the group of women or perhaps ‘Because he liked to look at it,’” Olivio said.

Olivio acknowledged the difficulty of the part and said,

“if in some small way I can help someone overcome small prejudices, I have to give part of me so they can also feel empowered.”

Marco Ramirez, an alumnus that attended the event, was surprised to hear people were against the monologues.

“Everybody puts penises on everything, but not vaginas. We’re generally limited to Georgia O’Keefe,” he said. “I understand if people don’t want to see it, but it’s good to talk about it. The whole point is we don’t talk about vaginas.”

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BASEBALL

Sweep of Stony Brook adds to hot start

ALEJANDRO SOLANA
Staff Writer

The Panthers opened up a three game series on Friday, Feb. 21 against the Stony Brook Seawolves. Going into the game, FIU was off to a hot start having swept Rutgers in their opening series of the season and were undefeated with five total wins.

The opening game of the three game series would be the closest game of the weekend as far as the scoreboard would show. The Panthers came away with a 6-2 win improving their record to 6-0 on the season. The 6-0 start for FIU marked the ninth time an FIU baseball team has started its season with six wins and no losses.

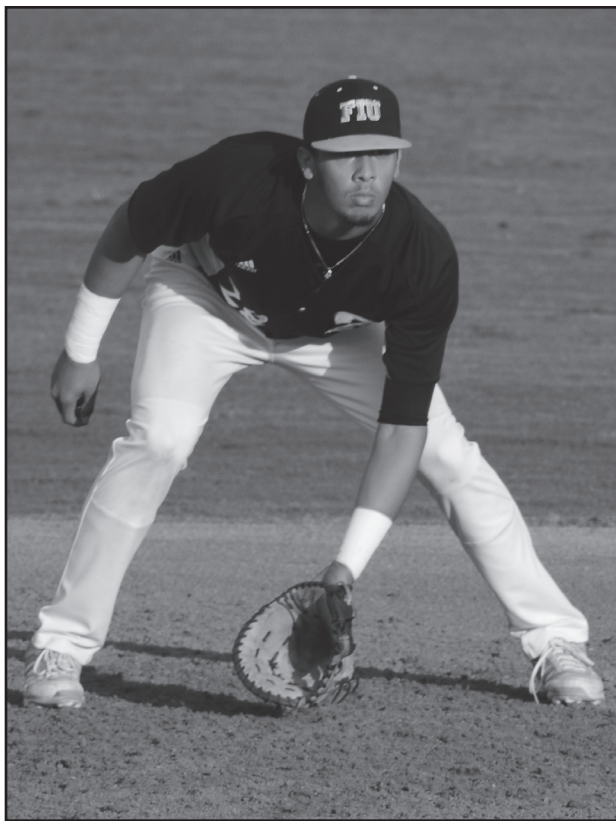
Junior Mike Franco had the start for FIU, striking out nine batters over five innings while giving up only four hits, en route to his first win of the season.

The Panthers were able to record their first home runs of the season after Louis Silverio and Julius Gaines, both Juniors, went long for FIU.

FIU's leadoff man, senior Tyler Hibbert, had two hits on the night while also stealing two bases giving him a team leading six stolen bases on the year. Silverio, one of the players who had hit a homerun earlier for the Panther's, also had another hit on the afternoon giving him two in total.

FIU scored one run in the first off an RBI double from sophomore Edwin Rios scoring Hibbert, three more in the bottom of the third after Gaines went yard with two on, and two final runs in the sixth when Silverio hit a jack that traveled over the center field wall pushing their lead to 4 runs. The Seawolves' only two runs came in the top of the fourth inning, one of which came from a throwing error.

The FIU bullpen had another promising showing as senior Albert Cardenas and freshmen Gunnar McNeill each contributed for four innings between the two, securing the win for the Panthers in the opening game of the series.



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Sophomore Edwin Rios helped the Panthers unbeaten streak continue with an RBI double against Stony Brook.

Saturday night shutout

The second game of the weekend series between FIU and Stony Brook saw Junior Mike Ellis take the mound for the Panthers who won the game easily, shutting out the Seawolves 10-0.

Ellis went for 5 1/3 innings, striking out seven total Seawolves batters, giving up only three hits on the afternoon and improving his record to 2-0 on the season.

Once again the Panthers managed to score in the first inning, bringing home three runs to start the game after RBI's from junior Josh Anderson, Rios, and junior L.K. Thompson.

It was in the seventh inning that the Panthers really took over the game after sophomore Antonio Rodriguez had a pinch-hit bases-clearing double while they were loaded, bringing in all three runners pushing the lead to double digits, 10-0, where it would remain.

Rios had a huge night for FIU after struggling early on in the season. Rios finished the night 4-5 bringing in three runners. Aramis Garcia, the senior catcher who was somewhat quiet in the first game of the series had two hits and two runs on the night.

With the win, the Panthers improved to 7-0 for the first time since the 2010 season (won the Sun Belt championship) and just the second time since the 1991 season.

Bring out the brooms

In the final game of the series, FIU had a chance to remain unbeaten and improve their record to 8-0, marking the first time the team had done that since the 1982 season.

Outstanding performances by Anderson and Garcia lifted FIU to their best start in school history in over 20 years, securing a sweep for the team and finishing off a great series for the pair.

Anderson, who has been on a tear as of late, continued his hot streak with the bat going 4-5 on the day, finishing with six RBI's, a monster homerun, and two runs scored. Anderson was only a triple away from hitting for the cycle. Garcia, who is usually the team's starting catcher

SEE BASEBALL, PAGE 7

SOFTBALL

Panthers early-season dominance continues after 3-1 weekend

YOSVANNY RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

The softball team went 3-1 this weekend, sweeping the Dartmouth Big Green 2-0 and splitting 1-1 with

the University of North Florida Ospreys.

The Panthers (11-3) split day one, first defeating the Big Green, 3-1, before coming just short of a win against the Ospreys, 2-1, in

game two.

Game one saw senior pitcher Mariah Dawson take to the pitcher circle. Dawson went five innings allowing just one earned run on three hits while striking out five for her first win of the season.

Dartmouth would send out the reigning Ivy League pitcher of the year, Kristen Rumley, to pitch against the Panthers.

FIU took the lead in the bottom of the third inning when junior infielder Krystal Garcia (2-for 3, 2RBI) drew a leadoff walk. She would steal second two pitches later and reached third on a sacrifice hit from senior Nicole Rascon. Garcia would go on to score thanks to a wild pitch by Rumley.

The Panthers would add some insurance runs in the fourth inning when Garcia belted a two-run homerun over the left field fence. The home run is a team-leading third on the season for Garcia.

"She's a great player that's why I recruited her," Head Coach Schumann said. "I actually had signed her at the place I was at before I came to FIU. I knew she had a lot of potential, had a rough year last year I think she was just trying to adapt to Miami and FIU and being away from home and you know she's finally relaxed and she's just playing well right now so hopefully she could continue to ride that."

Garcia who last season for FIU totaled a disappointing .215 batting avg. is hitting at a team high .424 clip this season. Garcia is also leading the team in home runs, slugging, doubles, and RBIs. Her recent success caused Schumann to mover her up from the bottom of the batting order to the number two hitter.

"I love it I get more at-bats and helps me boost up my batting average and it gives me more chances to get RBI's and get people

over," Garcia said. "I just worked really hard to get back to where I was."

Junior Shelby Graves came into the game in the sixth inning in relief of starting pitcher Dawson. Graves pitched a perfect two innings striking out all six batters she faced to seal the victory for FIU.

In game two FIU went with their ace, sophomore Corinne Jenkins. Jenkins went three and one-third innings allowing just one earned run on three hits and striking out four. She would receive a no-decision.

FIU would score early but not often. In the home half of the first Senior Bre Kaye led the inning with a walk. She would then steal her team leading sixth stolen base to give FIU a runner in scoring position. Junior Rebekah Sanchez would drive her in with a single up the middle. That would be FIU's only run of the game.

Graves relieved Jenkins in the fourth, inheriting a

bases loaded situation with just one out. The Panthers were able to escape the inning, surrendering just one run after the turning a double play. However, that was just enough to win the game as the Ospreys defeated FIU, 2-1.

FIU would come back strong in day two, defeating both Dartmouth and North Florida in consecutive games.

In game one Graves pitched her second complete game of the season allowing two runs on five hits while striking out six. The win improves her record to 5-1 and is now tied with Corinne Jenkins for the team-lead in wins.

The Panthers would get all the runs they needed in the first inning when Krystal Garcia delivered a three-run bases clearing triple with two outs. The three RBI give Garcia a team leading 14 on the season.

For the full article head over to fiusm.com.



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Junior Krystal Garcia is batting a team-high .424 while also leading the Panthers (11-3) in home runs, doubles and RBIs.

FEATURE

Rugby fights for national title

VERONIKA QUISPE
Staff Writer

The FIU men's rugby team came one step closer to the national championship as they defeated Florida State 29-19 on Saturday in Fort Lauderdale.

This game determined whether or not FIU stayed in the conference play. Since FIU won, it was awarded three extra points that secured its number three spot in the conference. University of Central Florida leads with 13 points followed by Florida State University with 12 and FIU with ten.

"It was a big win for us, we had a lot on the line. It was ecstatic, everyone knew how much this game meant to us, it was a win or go home," Team Captain Kyle Gilbert said.

Agustin Laphitzondo was awarded Player of the Game after scoring three tries.

FIU had lost to FSU earlier in the season 33-10. However, this time the Panthers came back strong and with new strategies.

"The same people started but they started in different positions, we reviewed the tapes and we figured out what was best for everyone and clearly it worked," Gilbert said.

Last game against the Seminoles, the Panthers were forced to travel without their full team.

"This time our forwards and backs came together for strong plays. Last time we played them they didn't beat us, we beat ourselves. We didn't play our best," Gilbert said.

A big issue FIU had in the past was weak backs. Thanks to junior George Evora they were able to strengthen their backs and create better strategies for a win.

"George opens up a whole other level. That really helped us a lot," Gilbert said.

The South Independent Rugby Conference Championship weekend hosts the best two teams from the south and the best two teams in the north to play in a tournament style bracket.

"You're fighting for a bid for the

national championship," Gilbert said.

This season the Panthers are hungry for a national championship. Some freshmen have gained experience from last season that has helped them put FIU at number three. Practices have been stricter and training is at a more serious note.

Freshman Barrington McNutt started in the fall and proved to be a strong asset to the team.

"Well now it's different starting with the fact that I know how to play the game. Some of us started with a rough idea on how to play and that reflected in games," McNutt said.

Earlier in the season FIU defeated, the number four seed, University of South Florida 41-24.

"We usually have a good game against USF because we always use the same strategy. We put on a lot of the stuff they can't cover, such as our forwards," Gilbert said.

FIU now enters a three-week rest.

"We scheduled these three weeks on purpose so everyone can feel healthy and well practiced, and we want to beat USF in high numbers. We're trying to work on our mauls and our backs for all future games," Gilbert said.

All eyes are on UCF for chance at the championship. The Panthers will be practicing a new strategy called a rolling maul, which is uncommon in college plays.

"This play is very technical and we tried it against FSU and it worked very well, so we'll continue working on it," Gilbert said. "Our forwards are going to work on line outs."

The Panthers' motto of 'controlling their own destiny' has kept them going for yet another strong season. "It's all about a championship now, Florida isn't even a predominant rugby state so the fact that we have a chance to compete at national level is pretty cool," Gilbert said.

FIU plays USF on March 22 in Tampa and UCF on March 29 at 2 p.m.

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Panthers remain unbeaten

BASEBALL, PAGE 6

but was playing first baseman on Sunday, also had a great day at the plate hammering in two RBI's, scoring three runs on just two hits after being walked twice also.

Freshmen Cody Crouse had his second start of the season, going four innings allowing only two hits and zero earned runs. Crouse at one point in the game struck out three straight Seawolves batters. Freshmen Chris Mourelle was awarded the W after relieving Crouse in the bottom of the fifth, giving up two hits and no runs.

FIU scored yet again in the first inning, making that their eighth straight game with a run in the first (every game this season thus far). The run came when Garcia was walked and Anderson ripped a double to left center bringing him in.

The Panthers did find themselves trailing 2-1 after 3.5 innings coming from three fielding errors in the inning. None of the runs scored by the Seawolves were recorded as earned runs.

It wasn't long before the Panthers regained the lead, as in the bottom of the third FIU was tacked on three more runs after Josh Anderson fought his way through an eight pitch at bat and belted the last one he saw over the left field fence, barely missing the scoreboard. With the home run, the Panthers' lead 4-2.

The score stayed unchanged until the bottom of the 6th when Garcia hit a single to left-center with the bases loaded bringing in two runners.

Another Anderson double shortly after gave FIU an 8-2 lead, his second double of the afternoon. Anderson, who was just

one double shy of tying an FIU single season record for doubles with 22 last season, already has a team leading six this year through eight games.

The Panthers added one more in inning six and later three more in the bottom half of the eighth extending the lead to 12-2 where it would remain until the final out of the game.

Next up for the FIU baseball team is a one game series on Tuesday, Feb. 25 when they will host Florida Memorial at 6 p.m. from FIU Baseball Stadium.

The Panthers will then travel up to Jupiter, Fla. where they will play an exhibition game against the Florida Marlins.

FIU Student Media was denied access to players following the games.

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Coley leads in C-USA win

STEVEN ROWELL
Staff Writer

FIU's losing streak came to a halt at four games after holding off the Marshall University Thundering Herd 77-66 on Feb. 22 at Lime Court.

The Panthers improved to 12-14 and 6-7 in Conference USA. Senior guard Jerica Coley had a double-double by halftime as the senior went into intermission with 23 points and 12 rebounds before finishing the contest with 35 points and a career-high of 15 rebounds. That marked double-double number six for Coley this season.

With the zone defense of Marshall constantly trapping Coley, FIU's ball movement attacking the gaps of the zone constantly resulted in open shots for players such as junior guard Zsafia Labady, junior forward Arielle Durant, and sophomore guard Taylor Shade. While Labady and Durant struggled to knock the open looks they got, going 2-14 combined, Shade capitalized shooting 6-14 and finishing with 17 points including two consecutive three-pointers

midway through the second half.

"First half we missed a lot of good open shots, but the second half we made a few more and that was a big deal," Coley said.

Junior forward Tynia McKinzie provided a couple of key lay-ups down the stretch to keep FIU ahead and finished with 10 points.

Marshall ranking near the bottom in C-USA in rebounding, FIU exploited that and had their way on the offensive boards converting 20 second chance points and grabbing 19 offensive rebounds especially in the first half where at times it seemed like FIU was getting offensive rebounds on virtually every possession.

"A big deal we always talk about trying to get a lot of rebounds and the last two games I think we got outrebounded, so coach really stressed about it so we wanted to come out and make sure we got on the boards," Coley said.

While Marshall sits last in the Conference at 2-11 in C-USA, the Thundering Herd didn't look like it. Marshall came in as one of the worst teams in C-USA in field goal

percentage at .368 and points per game at 61.9. For the game, Marshall shot 43.6 percent and kept the game close throughout.

"They haven't won a lot, but they always play people like that. It was hard fought. I think we did a nice job down the stretch and played some better defense," Head Coach Cindy Russo said.

Junior guard Leah Scott contributed with 13 points, senior forward Suporia Dickens with 16 points including 4-6 from long range, and freshman forward Chelsey Romero who had her way in the second half in the paint en route to 21 points before fouling out.

FIU led the entire game, but never really got much separation while Marshall didn't come all the way back. FIU did go on a 9-1 run late to claim the first double-digit lead of the game at the 3:32 mark making the score 68-58.

Next up for the Panthers: a trip to Charlotte, N.C. to take on the University of North Carolina at Charlotte on Feb. 26. Tip-off is set for 7 p.m.

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Hospitality sizzles in South Beach

Chaplin students show what they got at wine tasting

ALEX BLENCOWE
Staff Writer

With the sun shining bright, warm sand beneath your feet and the finest breeze Ocean Drive has to offer, the South Beach Wine and Food Festival brought locals, tourists and cuisine connoisseurs together for the Whole Foods Grand Tasting Village this past Saturday.

Although the heat was unbearable, the mint and lime champagne, Indian Pale Ale, fine wines and shaved ices served could quench any thirst.

For first-time attendee Angela Delgado, 45, seeing FIU students at work making delicious chicken and slaw sandwiches and serving the various beers from the Brew Lab was a wonderful experience.

"I've only been to two or three tents so far, but it is interesting to see these students passing out the spice rubs and beer," Delgado said. "The Indian Pale Ale

is definitely the best."

In one tent, Barry Gump, eminent scholar of the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, served wines of all kinds while Professor Robert Probst served bread, beer and chicken sandwiches in another.

The chicken was seasoned with hospitality management senior student Jenifer Bound's award-winning "Holy Smokes" Badia dry spice rub.

As Bound passed out samples of her original spice rub, Mohammad Qureshi, associate dean of the Chaplin School, and Hector Morales, executive chef for Badia Spices, spoke to sponsors, participants and friends.

"We try to do things as simply and as [well] as possible, but when you are really organized, that is simplicity at its best," said Morales.

SEE WINE, PAGE 2



ALEX BLENCOWE/THE BEACON

Crowds lined up to try all the food and beverages the FIU tent had to offer at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival this year.

Migrate or Die: lecture offers perspective on Amazon

MARIANA NAVA
Contributing Writer

Few people give a second thought about plants, but an upcoming lecture series might just change that.

As part of its Speaking Sustainable Lecture Series, the School of Environment, Arts and Society has organized an event called "Global Climate Change and Tropical Forests: Adapt, Migrate or Die," which intends to shed some light into the current situation in the Amazon tropical rainforest.

"The purpose of all our Lecture Series is to give people the opportunity to hear from our researchers at FIU because we have so many researchers who are doing really interesting and groundbreaking work," said Elaine Pritzker, program manager of SEAS.

At this event, Kenneth Feeley, assistant professor of the Department of Biological Sciences, will share his research about the migration of trees in the Amazon forest due to the climatic conditions that are affecting them.

Mainly, he will discuss the reason why migration is considered the only option trees have had to survive, realities of the imminent climatic changes and deforestation and how the people can contribute and help to protect

what is left.

In an interview with Comcast Newsmakers, Feeley says that there has been too much attention focused on the Arctic, when other regions are suffering due to the climate shifts.

"We are trying to shift that focus to the tropics, to the rainforests, the jungles where actually most of the species on the planet grow," said Feeley.

"We have so many researchers who are doing really interesting and groundbreaking work."

Elaine Pritzker
Program Manager
School of Environment, Arts and Society

His research explores the fatal situation that plants, especially trees, are going through when they cannot tolerate the climate changes, which they fight by shifting their distribution.

However, if they are not able to do this shifting, they might get very close to extinction.

He also points out that millions of people from the tropical countries of the world depend on these forests for a living, to capture and purify the water, among other things.

If these tree species do become extinct, these people will lose a natural resource that is essential to their lives.

"As the species drop out, we are going to have some species that will fill their place," said Feeley, "but we are going to lose a lot of our unique and special species, and all that will just make climate change worse and worse."

All these effects are due to the cycle that global warming is causing, said Feeley.

"In ten years, we can start to see some of these changes, and the change we are measuring is relatively small, but it is actually very fast when you think about what is happening," said Feeley.

This upcoming lecture is on Wednesday, February 26, at 7 p.m. at Deering Estate at Cutler, on S.W. 72nd Ave. Miami, in the Visitor Center Auditorium. It will be free and open to the public.

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Panthers ready to dive into conference championship

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Staff Writer

When we talk about swimming, this is the point in which expectations are met, where athletes soar over the pressure and success is measured, or you could also crumb under the bright lights under you. This is the Conference USA Championships, it is the final checkpoint of the season, it is where the ladies shave completely, put on their space age technology fast suits that are only used by this time a year, and swim fast.

The date has been set for this today, Wednesday, Feb. 26 in Atlanta, GA a facility that for four days will witness the best swimmer athletes of the C-USA, lights will shine extra bright during those four days, by having the spotlight on a pool full of dreams and hopes, hopes to advance to the NCAA Championships as well, the ultimate challenge in college sports and Division-I swimming.

"Everybody is 100 percent healthy and good to go, just in our rest phase now and ready to go on Monday," Head Coach Randy Horner said.

This has been a successful season so far for the Panthers by

only dropping one dual meet during their run, but this is where all of those times and races really matter.

"Conference Championships is the focus of the season, everything we do for the past 12 months is culminating in this stage, be able to reach some peak performances and hopefully be able to move on with a handful of kids into the NCAA Championships," Horner said.

There are many swimmers to look out for in the FIU roster willing to make a run for the NCAA Championships. Senior Sonia Perez is already a lock to go to the NCAA as she is ranked 13 in the mid-season point, she also is recipient for some of the C-USA Swimmer of the Week awards this season.

Junior Johanna Gustafsdottir also owns a very good chance to return to the NCAA Championships as she has done for her first two seasons here at FIU as a freshman and sophomore, with her time mid season, she would probably get in, but she can probably set a better time on the conference finals to reach her third consecutive appearance in as many years to the big stage.

Senior Sabrina Beaupre also has a big chance coming into this week to make it into the nationals, she is already qualified into the Zones Diving Regionals, which is a week after the Conference

Final, and that's where she will earn her spot. Beaupre has never lost a conference event during the three years she has been in this program, she has conquered the one-meter as well as the three-meter dive her freshman, sophomore and junior year in the SBC.

"As her record of being undefeated is on the line now in a tougher division and now through platform diving, but she is diving better than she has in her past four years, has been looking good and I think she's going to compete real well," Horner said.

Another swimmer that can hit the podium this week can be junior Klara Anderson, the reigning champion on the Sun Belt Conference Championship on the 50 free for the Panthers.

"It's a lot faster the depth of the field with nine teams here, which raises the level of competition and taking better times to reach finals and consolations. It will take a perfect week for us to finish on top, but a top three finish is the goal with this new elevated conference," Horner said.

Teams to look out for in this new C-USA can be the defending champion Rice, Eastern Carolina, Western Kentucky as the reigning Sun Belt champion, along with North Texas and FIU.

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