 Extended dining hours will benefit University residents

NADINE MATAS Contributing Writer new@fiusm.com

Florida International University has a vast number of eating establishments on campus to accommodate students living on campus. These students usually live on campus for the entire semester, and are sometimes on campus and in their dorms over the breaks. Jose Sirven, president of the Residential Hall Association, says these students are the highest number attending campus restaurants since they are the closest and most convenient places to find food.

Sirven explains “there are students who are on campus 24/7 and work, then need to find a place to eat when they come home.” This is an issue the Residential Hall Association has been attempting to resolve over the last few months.

Sirven, a sophomore majoring in international relations, has been at the head of negotiations with Aramark and the University to extend the hours of operation of the on campus food places.

“We started off with a lot of research and then actually I managed to speak with President Rosenberg about the issue we were facing.”

RHA research showed that a recurring issue students seemed to be facing was the early closing hours for most eating establishments on campus.

Erica Phillips, a senior Asian Studies major, says, “I remember being a freshman and hating that either nothing was open on the weekends or that, if something was open, it would always close super early.”

Sirven explains “after that step we have a meeting with representatives from Aramark, who actually interviewed me asking what we would need.”

According to Sirven, the process was long and difficult, “We had to find ways of getting feedback from the students, once we had that we started sending out surveys and getting as many people to fill them out as possible to show the need for the extension of hours.”

Aramark then came to an agreement with the University and its food providers, as well as the Office of Residential Life and RHA, to extend the hours.

Fresh Food now closes at 9 p.m. on weekends, which Sirven says is a small step in their future plans.

Phillips says, “I don’t go to Fresh Foods as much as I used to because I don’t have the unlimited plan that I had while I was a freshman, but even still I love the fact that Fresh has extended hours.”

Some students don’t even have kitchens in their dorms so they need to find a place to eat.” Sirven says. He adds that “this is only the first step” something he insists on pointing out.

“The goal is that perhaps one day we can get some places to stay open 24/7 for students.”

Sirven says, “Students have different working hours and some come home late at night from their shifts, so it would be good to have a place for them to eat instead of having to make food at that time, especially if they don’t have a kitchen in their dorm or work on weekends.”

RHA is working not only on the project of further extending dining hours, but also on a free transportation system to get the residents easier access to other locations around the university. Sirven says that he and his team are working hard.

“We [it] and the students have been disgruntled, but know we will make this possible one day. There’s definitely a lot more to come.”

RHA addresses resident Wi-Fi complications

MORGAN BENOIT Contributing Writer new@fiusm.com

Florida International University is attempting to tackle the current issue of wireless internet connection within the dormitory halls. Internet connection is a concern for most students on the University campus. FIU is taking this problem into consideration to reach a solution by pinpointing the core cause of the poor connection. The cause could possibly result from the large amount of devices and wireless printers being used. A large sum of students throughout the housing facilities depend upon the internet for course assignments, cellular devices and personal needs.

Without a dependable and consistent internet connection, this can pose as a serious problem for the housing department, hindering the residents. Jose Sirven, president of the Residential Hall Association, discusses the effects of poor connection.

“Some of our students cannot study in their rooms because of the quality of the Wi-Fi connection or lack thereof. Some students are still frustrated with the Wi-Fi.”

Concerned students are instructed to contact the Division of IT so that they can aid with the issue at hand.

According to Joe Paulick, director of Housing, “Wi-Fi in on-campus housing is challenging at all universities. On-campus housing Wi-Fi is provided by the Division of IT. Housing had provided resources to the Division of IT to upgrade Wi-Fi in housing.”

Paulick discussed how a survey was conducted in order to discover the weak points, stating “Division of IT added new access points where weak areas where found. Access points were also adjusted in location to provide better coverage.”

Housing is further reinforcing their actions by partnering with the Residence Hall Association, the governing council of the on-campus community. As RHA President, Sirven has a huge responsibility to serve the residents of FIU.

He describes what his role entails stating, “As RHA President, it is my responsibility to advocate for the 3,200 students who live on campus whose voices can sometimes fall on deaf ears. My amazing team and I work to create a sense of community on campus through programming. We also participate in conferencing.”

In order to continue advocating for the students, he must ensure that their concerns are addressed and resolved to its full extent.

The RHA partnership with the housing department titled “New Year New Wi-Fi," allows students to directly contact the RHA to identify problem areas.

The flyer states that residents are to email RHA with information containing your hall and room number to explain the situation.

Once this is completed, housing will send out a technician to solve the problem.

Certain weak spots on campus are hard to detect through IT, which explains the importance of students reaching out and bringing awareness to where and what their technical issue is. Sirven reports that the new system is being utilized by many students. "It has proven beneficial for the students who have been sending us the emails. We will encourage all of the students who email us to fill out the online IT WiFi Troubleshooting Form.” Other actions have been taken by housing in the process of resolution.

According to Sirven, “Housing has upgraded all of the hardware in all of the buildings, placing a router in each room. We are working with IT to fix the spots where there is no or bad service.”

“Housing uses the Division of IT to give the students Wi-Fi access. I congratulate Housing Director Paulick and the Division of IT for their continued attention and for advocating on our behalf to address the issue,” he says.

Though this may not be an easy task, the housing department and RHA stress that they are aware of what issues need to be fixed pertaining to Wi-Fi and are currently working to provide every resident with reliable access to the internet.
NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Obama to host Southeast Asian leaders at summit
President Barack Obama this week turns his attention to the part of Asia that is not China, meeting with the leaders of the 10 nations that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. About 635 million people live in Southeast Asia. Monday and Tuesday, Obama will host their leaders in Rancho Mirage, Calif. It will be the first time a U.S. leader has hosted a summit for all 10 ASEAN leaders.

Russia hit 1,888 targets in Syria in a week
In the seven days before the announcement early Friday that a cease-fire might go into effect in Syria in another week, Russian forces hit more than 100 times as many targets within the embattled nation as a military coalition that includes the United States. Exactly how the cease-fire proposed at an international conference in Munich would work is still being decided.

Obama likely to look to appellate courts for Scalia's replacement
Kansas-raised and Stanford-educated, federal appellate Judge Sri Srinivasan could next secure the possibly mixed blessing of being nominated to the Supreme Court by a president nearing the end of his term facing a partisan Senate. Srinivasan is not the only potential contender for a nomination that’s certain to spark an election-year fight but no means guarantees confirmation. He is, though, among the apparent front-runners.

Students keen on social issues

TERESA WATANABE
Los Angeles Times 7/16

Today’s American college freshman is more liberal, less religious and increasingly committed to civic involvement and political activism compared with those in previous generations, according to a national survey by researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles. Nearly 60 percent of freshmen said they expected to vote sometime during their college years, and majorities supported same-sex marriage, abortion rights, affirmative action, legalization of marijuana and equal pay for women. They also overwhelmingly opposed U.S. involvement in other countries’ wars.

Collegetv, the findings suggest more students are committed to social justice,” said Kevin Eagan, director of UCLA’s cooperative institutional research program, which has conducted the annual American Freshman survey for 50 years. “That may be because the most committed to a political engagement of any of the previous 49 classes,” says Eagan.

The results released last week showed that one-third of those surveyed said they were “liberal” or “left,” the highest proportion in four decades, while one-fifth described themselves as “conservative” or “far right.”

But their attitudes were markedly different according to race and ethnicity. Although interest in political and civic activism has grown among all students, African-American and Latino students were far more likely than Asians and whites to expect to participate in a campus demonstration. They were also more likely to believe it important to promote racial understanding and influence politics.

For instance, only 6 percent of Asians planned to participate in a protest or felt it important to influence politics, compared with more than twice that share for African-American and Latino students.

The UCLA researchers said the heightened interest in political activism could be the result of students witnessing the recent wave of protests against police shootings of African American men and student demonstrations against campus treatment of minorities at Claremont McKenna College and Occidental College in Southern California, the University of Missouri and elsewhere.

Whether the enhanced political interest will affect the presidential election this year is another matter. Although Barack Obama received a record turnout of young voters in 2008, and won the backing of 66 percent of those under 30 years old, young people still have the lowest voting rates of any age group.

“We certainly see students embracing more of the progressive perspectives,” Eagan said. “But will it actually translate to action?”

“If they organize, protest and show up at the polls, they may have a role in shaping the public discourse on issues related to social inequality, equity and discrimination,” he said. “By contrast, if these students do not follow through on their intentions and goals, the enthusiastic support for seeing addressing social justice concerns will likely diminish, eliminating the potential for a broader impact in politics or American life.”

The researchers surveyed more than 141,000 freshman-year, full-time students who entered 199 colleges and universities in 2015. Despite their overall embrace of liberal views, today’s freshmen are more likely to support restrictions on free speech - a trend that has led to controversial student movements to disinvite commencement speakers, disrupt presentations by those with unpopular views and demand “trigger warnings” before uttering potentially uncomfortable speech.

The UCLA institute plans to release another analysis in June that will provide more detail about how college freshmen have changed over the past 50 years of the surveys.
The struggle between love and friendship

Thoughts on a Page

There is a certain time old battle going on between friends and the main squeeze. Honestly, it can be better for you than your significant other will ever be.

The dating game is one where no amount of experience can make a man or a woman and there’s no cheat code to skip the hard parts. Like maintaining a friendship, it requires a balancing act that would impress a circus. A lot of people tend to drop their whole life for their significant other, pulling a Houdini on their friends and vanishing until the breakup.

Last year, a group of friends in Wales held a funeral for an older friend and the main squeeze. according to the local newspaper, the man was too close for comfort and the friends were all in tears over the loss.

Helen of Troy was considered the face that launched a thousand ships, but it’s not always that easy. We’re now in 2016 and the struggle between love and friendship is more natural than ever. For example, a large portion of the FIU student body identifies as Hispanic or Latino. Issues like immigration are hot topics among political candidates and hit home for many in the University community.

Whether it’s the person of your dreams or that friend till the end, there’s a change as a result of all these. As time goes by, the changes occur in the friendship. One of the best ways to look at it is through the eyes of a young girl who needs the independence most.

Wishing happy birthday to all the friends who are turning 18 on your doorstep.

Catching feelings” is a phrase that seems pretty accurate since no one expects to get them. It can be a ball of a sticky mess that’s difficult to throw away, leaving stains even after being long gone.

It’s not healthy to have your life revolve around one person, because if they leave, then your life can fall apart. This doesn’t have to be said to a certain portion of people reading, but there’s another part saying “why not?” and those are the ones who need the independence most.

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LIFE!

Valentine's Day gifts on display during Phi Iota Alpha and Student Veterans of America fundraiser

JAY VANPARIJA Contributing Writer  

Valentine's Day gifts on display during Phi Iota Alpha and Student Veterans of America fundraiser.

Two rows of chairs were arranged facing each other and people would sit randomly and get to know the person sitting across from them.

Radoslav Bucur, a computer science junior said, “I really enjoyed the activity. It was a fresh concept and a great opportunity to meet some awesome people.”

The Phi Iota Alpha is one of the oldest Latino fraternities, and was founded at FRU during the spring semester of 2011. The brothers of the fraternity are committed to the conservation of the integrity of Latin American character.

Pablo Daprile, an alum of FIU and a former member of the Phi Iota Alpha fraternity said, “I am no longer a member of the fraternity, but I like to see them have a hand every once in awhile.”

The Student Veterans of America, who was also dedicated to the success of this event, is an organization which aims to provide military veterans with the resources, support and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education and following graduation.

Shane Vega, who is currently enlisted in the National Guard and member of the Student Veterans of America, expressed how the organization helps veterans returning from war assimilate into college life.

“We were basically trying to do a bit of fundraising for ourselves and getting everybody to interact socially”, said Jesus Najayo, a member of the Phi Iota Alpha fraternity and a Student Veterans of America social chair.

“This does not happen very often that Greek culture and the veterans come together, so the event is a unique one”, he added.

Omego Phi Beta Sorority also aided the two organizations in order to boost the event.

The gifts ranged from $10 to $25. The articles on sale included fuzzy hats, blankets, and witty quotes which were perfect Valentine's gifts.

The event was held at night in the Graham Center pit, Feb. 11.

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According to him, it can be tough to juggle between the two duties, but that is how you learn to multitask.

The event saw numerous former members of both the fraternities and organizations reunite for a common cause.

“ This is just like old times. Actually when you look at it, it seems like a small reunion”, smiled Juan Hernandez, former president of Phi Iota Alpha.

Students walking by were impressed by the setup, especially due to the time of the event.

This event was a success due to the hard work and determination put in by the participants and it is great to have them uplift the panther spirit of students.

For those into the art of cosplay, the convention hosted multiple costume and cosplay events, including costume contests that let fans show off and decide whose outfits were the best! From the colorful world of comics from DC to Marvel, to the science-fiction gear of the Federation and a galaxy far, far away, there were outfits from every show, film, or franchise that one could imagine.

If unable to attend, there will be plenty of conventions to attend in Florida throughout the year, such as Megacon (May 26-29), and the Florida Supercon, already hosting a large guest list with names from Star Wars, Star Trek and Harry Potter.

Books and Books is a weekly column about literary events, for comments and suggestion, please contact collin.simpson@fiusm.com
**Film festival releases family drama ‘Room’**

**STEPHANIE ESPAILLAT**

**Contributing Writer**

DIIV has released their highly anticipated sophomore album, *Is the Is Are*. The band takes a step back from their debut effort, "Oshin" in 2012, lead singer Zachary Cole Smith suggests that the new album focuses on the importance in lyricism to create powerful vocalist ballads that speak of despair and redemption.

Smith’s new album makes a clear statement that this is DIIV, and that is what DIIV will always sound like.

Smith’s new album makes a strong statement that the band is back with a vengeance.

Despite the extent to which this album makes it, for DIIV frontman Zachary Cole Smith this album was either do or die.

Smith has even suggested that he knew he had to make a great album or DIIV would never be done for.

Is the Is Are’s lyrics set up the album to be perceived as an experience of Smith’s long battle with drugs and writing/expressing the main influence for creating his record.

However, after a troubled period of hardship and struggling with addiction, the record not only brought out a chillingly dark view of his creativity, but also one of the most perfect tracks on the record.

Braving guitars and echo throughout the track as Smith explains the fragility of his life.

The song is known to be his first track as Smith’s frontman; the track’s name gives away a clear indicator of the message, but the lyrics propose the action of being “burred down in a hero shot” only to no longer be able to escape this state.

The record’s strength can be attributed to the unique sound. Smith’s new album makes a clear statement that this is DIIV, and that is what DIIV will always sound like.

Rising talent and Toronto native, Jahkoy drops new single, “Odd Future.” This is the Canamks most down-tempo track and the most R&B he’s sound. Worshiper, producer of “Crown,” (Jay-Z) and “Teen Spirit” (50 Cent), provided the hypnotic groove and laid back kick-drum.

Jahkoy, made the move to Hollywood in order for his “bipolar” sound to reach a whole new audience. “The community and market of music in Toronto isn’t as big as we think it is,” he confessed in an interview with Noisey.

The crooner is a knack for writing and a voice that has the ability to crossover to many genres. Jahkoy has also taken advantage of his geographical position in Hollywood to market his universal appeal.

The vulnerable lyrics and noticeably perfected tunes are what defines this album as well as what we can expect from DIIV in future releases.

**DIIV’s frontman’s addiction explained in new album**

**DARIUS DUPINS**

**Entertainment Director**

**R&B triple threat opens up on single, ‘Odd Future’**

**SICK FLICKS**

Although it first premiered at the Telluride Film Festival back in September 2015, Lenny Abrahamson’s suspenseful family drama Room has been given a wide release in the United States for movie fans all across the country to properly enjoy.

**A week after Jack’s fifth birthday Joy believes he is now old enough to help them escape their desperate and horrifying situation.**

Since the film premiered and its subsequent limited release, Room has been sweeping up awards quicker than they can be given out.

The movie has garnered four Academy Award nominations, and this wider release makes sense as a way to get this low budget film much more exposure leading up to Oscar night.

As Jack struggles to find his way among Hollywood’s more prominent actresses early in her career, Brie Larson takes her role of a lifetime to heights that firmly plants herself as someone who won’t be denied any longer.

The film almost entirely rests on the tiny shoulders of Jacob but he knocks it out of the park with incredible tenderness and emotional range.

The movie as a whole can be broken down in a number of different ways. You may look at it as a classic crime thriller containing all of the conventional ideas of kidnapping, torture, and eventual escape attempts. But when you look deeper into the meaning of the story you start to think about what that word actually means to all of us.

The types of emotions that can be conjured up when thinking about our families can sometimes be overwhelming but there is a comfort that I believe each one of us finds in realizing the true meaning of the word and how it fits into our lives.

Jack knows nothing about the real world up until the age of 5, but then again, which one of us really knew when we were that young?

As far as their situation is, you can certainly make parallels to other types of situations and know you might’ve grown up to escape a “Room” of your own. Through clever storytelling and fascinating character development, the film is finding success because of its connection to anyone still finding a path to true happiness.

Room is now playing at a Theater near you.

**Sick Flicks is a weekly column that provides movie reviews on newly released obscure or independent films. To offer suggestions for David, send an email entertainment@fiusm.com**
PHOTO: MICHAEL TEY
The Beacon - 6 Wednesday, February 17, 2016

SPORTS

SANTIAGO ARCHIERI
Staff Writer
santiago.archieri@fiusm.com

The softball team won their final four games of the Juiceblogz Invitational Tournament, which they hosted at Folsom Field this weekend.

The Panthers went 4-1 overall, only dropping their first game to the nationally ranked Florida State Seminoles.

The action kicked off Friday, Feb. 12, against the Seminoles, in what was a tightly contested matchup for the first five innings.

The game was all tied up heading into the top of the sixth inning, with both teams bringing in unearned runs off errors. In the sixth, another throwing error gave FSU the 2-1 advantage, and it stayed this way heading into the last inning of play.

Florida State then ensued to break the game wide open, scoring five runs and going on to win 7-1. Three errors haunted the Panthers, and Corinne Jenkins, the leader of the pitching rotation, dropped to 0-1 with 3 ERA of the pitching rotation.

The Panthers had no time to dwell, as they had a doubleheader Saturday, Feb. 13. The first game of the day was against St. John's, with Abby Summers starting at the mound.

FIU found themselves in an early deficit at the top of the second, but a 1-0 lead was nothing to be concerned of the afternoon against LIU. Dwyer went on to pitch 4.2 innings with just one earned run. She walked two, but was able to earn the win at the end of it all, her first of the season.

The Panthers dominated the first match of the day, LIU was unable to stop the Panther hitting, which scored in the first three innings.

The lead was 6-0 before LIU finally got a run in. With a 6-2 lead in the sixth, Texeira hit her third homerun of the season as she crushed it over the fences and gave the Panthers a 9-2 lead, which would ultimately be the final score.

The Panthers also had no problem with Valparaiso in the second game of the afternoon. Megan Kugelmann got her first start for FIU, pitching with one earned run and five strikeouts in five innings.

With the game out of hand, the run rule put the game to an end in the fifth inning as FIU went on to win 9-1. Three Panther managed to get 2 hits in the game, while Lauren Williams led the squad with 3 RBI’s.

The Panthers went 2-0 for the day and would end the tournament on a great note. 28 combined runs in a 3 game span is a positive remark for Head Coach Gator Rebhan and his girls, with a 4-1 overall record heading into the next slate of games.

FIU will host the Panther invitational this weekend, as Indiana, Holy Cross, and Delaware will visit sunny South Florida to be a part of the tournament. The first game for FIU will be Friday, Feb. 19, at 4:30 p.m. against Holy Cross, and then at 7 p.m. with the second match against a double header against Indiana.

PHOTO: NICOLE GARCIA

Head Coach Gator Rebhan calls for a mound visit with the infield to set up the defense. FIU won versus St.John's with a score 6-1 about. FIU took the lead just a half inning later after Kaylaune Musa brought in two runs with a single. The Panthers went on to dominate the game, with another run in the second inning, and three more in the bottom of the save for the Panthers. FIU was prepared to close the trend on a strong note against Long Island University. Brooklyn and Valparaiso. Rachel Dwyer, the sophomore pitcher, took the mound in the first game.

PHOTO: MEGAN TAY

Freshman pitcher, Amy Summers pitched a complete game against St. John's limiting them to only one run while striking out four.

Indoor versus beach, two different games

STEF'S SERVE

STEFANO RIVERA

To me, volleyball is one of the most entertaining sports. Whether it’s watching it live, watching it on TV, playing it competitively, or playing with friends, there is never a boring moment.

As many know, there are two places to play the sport: on sand or indoor. I prefer the latter because I enjoy playing on solid ground, although I end up with many bumps and bruises at times. Also, I’ve been playing indoor for about five years now so I’ve become accustomed to the game.

During my senior year of high school at Saint Thomas Aquinas High School, I was fortunate enough to make a “Cinderella run” to the state semi-final game. Although we lost, it was a great experience.

Now, beach volleyball? Well that’s a different story. I’d say I’ve only played in one or two tournaments, and although I never won any of them, they were still enjoyable. What’s not to like about playing beach volleyball? Living in Florida, I have the luxury of legitimately playing on the beach and cooling off in the ocean immediately after.

Believe it or not, there are many differences between indoor and sand volleyball. In indoor, you play with six people on each team. Traditionally, these players consist of four hitters, a setter, and a libero, or defensive specialist. In sand, there are only two players, who don’t have set positions.

Also, there are some rules that are very different. For example, in beach, if you want to set the ball, it cannot rotate or spin. If it does, you will lose the point. When setting in indoor, rotation of the ball is allowed, as long as the setter doesn’t get called for a “carry” or “double-hit”. Having played setter most of my life, I enjoy being able to set the ball almost every rally, justifying my love for indoor.

One of the major aspects of volleyball is attacking, or hitting. Attacking not...
**MEN’S BASKETBALL**

Panthers’ win over UTSA ends five game skid

The Panthers were able to control the tempo of the game even when UTSA was playing a full court press defense and a man-to-man coverage. Even with the Roadrunners’ aggressive defense, point guard Donte McGill was able to slice through the defense and lead the Panthers’ offense with 20 points. For the most part I felt we were in control as a team. We stayed in control and didn’t let their defense get to us,” said McGill.

On both sides of the ball the Panthers were scoring consistently and defending at a high rate. They shot 57.7 percent from the field and had a balanced scoring night by making 15 shots in the first and second half. Their biggest lead in the first half was nine points, but the only time the defense slipped up was when UTSA finished the half on a 13-4 run.

This would end the first half with both teams tied up with 32 points. In the first half, forward Davion Draper got off to a quick start offensively and ultimately played the entire 40 minute game. Draper was ready for that game knowing that Diaz, who averages the same amount of points per game as Draper, was not going to be starting.

“We still keep the same team concept. We probably had to rebound and focus on rebounding a little more and protecting the paint,” said Draper.

Draper did pick up the rebounding slack as he finished with seven rebounds which were second on the team behind Diaz’s nine boards. He complimented his effort on the boards with scoring 18 points.

In the second half, the Panthers’ offense shined. They took a 39-36 lead early in the second half and for the remaining 17 minutes of the game, FIU never gave up the lead and had a double digit lead.

The highest lead they had was 17 points thanks to Diaz playing the majority of the second half. Diaz finished off with 17 points and nine rebounds and in limited minutes he was still almost able to pull off a double-double.

This Conference USA win puts FIU one game under .500 in their conference record and keeps them in the middle of the pack in the standings. The Panthers have the opportunity to still move up in the standings with five games left in the season. Evans stressed the importance of the upcoming three game road trip.

“Keep doing what we did yesterday in practice. Just keep working hard. It’s a good team but that doesn’t equal wins if you don’t put the work into it. We have to put the work in consistently,” said Evans.

Following this win, the Panthers will travel back to Texas for the second time this season, where they will face North Texas Thursday, Feb. 18 and Rice Saturday, Feb. 20. From there they will wrap up the regular season with two games at home.

The final home games will be Thursday, March 3 at 7 p.m. to face UAB, before taking on Middle Tennessee Saturday, March 5 at 6 p.m. to close out the regular season.

**BEACH VOLLEYBALL**

Beach, indoor volleyball differ in strategies

HOOPS, PAGE 6

only requires strength and power, but also strategy. One of the most strategic plays in volleyball is a well-placed tip shot. When playing beach, it is illegal to use “open hand tips.” One way players combat this rule is by using their knuckles or fists while tipping. However, when playing indoor, anything goes, as long as it’s not a “lift.”

These are just a few major rule differences between the two. There are many more rules, however, they are minor and generally apply to only professionals.

Another major difference is the training involved between indoor and sand. Personally, I feel it’s much more difficult to run, jump and dive, three natural movements in the sport, on sand. Just walking on sand is arduous at times, and being in the heat takes its toll on you.

Luckily, I only went through one or two beach workouts while playing indoor. Don’t get me wrong, my coaches were spectacular at training us, but I’d say they went a bit easy on us. I guess that’s another reason why I prefer indoor.

If there’s one thing similar between both sports, it’s the importance of communication throughout the match.

The relationship and communication that setters have with their hitters is one of the most vital aspects of the game. How will the hitter know what the setter will be setting if there isn’t that connection?

If you haven’t played volleyball, I encourage you to go and give it a shot. Whether it’s with a group a friends or not, you’ll enjoy it.

**Staff Serve** is a column centered around beach volleyball. For commentary or suggestions email Stefano Rivera at sports@fiusm.com
Leukemia survivor makes mark on tennis team and in Conference USA

CARLOTTA ORLANDO has overcome many challenges since she was a child living in Italy. The senior from Como was selected to the Conference USA first team as a junior and the C-USA second team as a sophomore. But to make it to the C-USA first team for women’s tennis, Orlando had several hurdles to jump.

“Orlando was diagnosed with leukemia when she was eight years old. She received a bone marrow transplant a few months after the diagnosis and was cancer-free when she was nine years old. The cancer has not returned.”

While she was developing with leukemia, Orlando watched her family play tennis and developed an interest in the sport. When she was cancer-free, she started to practice and it became like an addiction for Orlando.

“All I did from 10 until 18 was play tennis,” said Orlando. “I didn’t want to go on vacations with my family because of it. I only wanted to play tennis.”

As a teenager, she competed in Junior ITF Tennis tournaments around Europe. Her relentless work ethic as a teenager allowed Orlando to climb to 250th on the Junior ITF rankings. In those junior tournaments, she met Nina Nagode, now a teammate on the women’s tennis team.

As signing day for tennis players came, Orlando said it was Nagode who made her decision easier.

“I had requests from Washington, Hawaii and Boston,” said Orlando. “Nina was in contact with Katarina, the head coach, and she told me about Orlando. I didn’t even visit the school, it just felt right. Signing with FIU turned out to be the best decision I’ve ever made.”

Orlando was given a full athletic scholarship and her family paid for her flight from Italy to Miami. When Orlando arrived in Miami, she said her English was “bad” and the first few months were the most difficult in her transition to the states. Orlando said she would write down regulations to help her learn English.

“Getting into conversations wasn’t hard,” said Orlando. “It wasn’t difficult,” said Orlando. “I didn’t want to look dumb, but people at FIU appreciate that you want to learn. I was tutored at the [Student-Athlete Academic Center] for eight times a week. I still use the SAAC, but I’m not ashamed anymore of my English.”

While adjusting to her new life in the United States, Orlando didn’t need to adjust on the tennis court. As a freshman, Orlando went 10-5 overall in singles matches and won her first ever singles match as a Panther, 6-3, 6-3, against Morgan Belcher of Florida Atlantic University.

Orlando improved on her freshman year with a stellar sophomore campaign. She had a 19-0 overall record and finished her sophomore year with six-match winning streak. She made the C-USA tournament that year and went undefeated in C-USA regular season play and she named to the 2013-2014 C-USA Academic Honor Roll.

In her junior year, Orlando again made the C-USA Academic Honor Roll and finished the year with a 2-1 record at the C-USA championships. According to FIU, Orlando “picked up 16 of her 21 victories in straight-sets.” She was also named to C-USA’s First Team.

So far in her senior year, Orlando has struggled with consistency. She needs to build her confidence because as if now, she is scared to have a “mental block” while on the court.

“I had two matches this year that make it hard to stay motivated,” said Orlando. “One loss at the UCF Quad Tournament I could match point several times, but lost and the same happened here a few weeks ago versus Troy. When I’m not confident in myself, things feel like they’re out of my control. A ball that would normally be in when I’m confident will be an inch or two out when I’m not.”

Orlando said she’s scared for her final match of her college career.

“Tennis has always been my life,” said Orlando. “I’m trying to enjoy my last season as much as I can. This team is the best team I’ve ever been a part of. We’re all very close and talented.”

On her days off, Orlando is like any other Miami college student. She likes going to Wynwood to see and watching movies on her days off with the team. “Even though we’re all from different countries, we’re the best of friends,” said Orlando.

“We all like to try to involve everyone on the team with everything we do.”

Orlando is like to pursue a master’s degree in Nutrition and Dietetics once her tennis career comes to an end. She is open to working in either clinical nutrition or sports nutrition.

“I like how food is preventive medicine. I find that very cool and interesting.”

Orlando said she would like to be an assistant coach for the tennis team while she pursues her master’s degree.

“I love this team too much to leave it so soon,” said Orlando. “I want to stick around for as long as I can. Coming here and playing for FIU made me a more mature person and I will forever be thankful for my time here.”

Two south Florida congressmen last week created a new Congressional caucus to focus on climate change that seeks to propose clean energy legislation in the next two months. And despite strong headwinds, the bill may not be dead on arrival.

The new Climate Solutions Caucus could be a much-needed voice against other House groups in that its co-founders, Reps. Carlos Curbelo and Ted Deutch, are from different parties. And they want to keep it bipartisan, with an even number of Republicans and Democrats. It’s probably not a coincidence that Curbelo, a Republican from Florida’s 26th congressional district, and Deutch, a Democrat from the 21st district, represent people witnessing climate change in its starkest terms; their communities, in Miami and surrounding counties, are slowly slipping into the sea.

The formation of the new group, while a baby step in a deeply polarized Congress, may be the beginning of the most serious attempt in seven years to best the bipartisan support for climate policy in the House, which Republicans have controlled since 2011. And with the Supreme Court’s decision this week to freeze President Barack Obama’s Clean Power Plan, the likelihood Congress will have the final say in the arena seems ever more certain.

“Should there be this false orthodoxy may want to ignore it,” Curbelo said. “If you’re a Republican you want to ignore it,” Curbelo said. “That just makes no sense.”

Republican presidential candidates continue to struggle with the topic, caught between a shifting party line and the fact that many who believe in climate change, according to the new-195-nation climate agreement reached in Paris, and the result is a Republican stance on climate policies that mirrors those of North Korea, Syria and Nicaragua. Unlike those three countries, however, the U.S. is a major emitter of climate-altering gases - the second biggest, after China.

Republican lawmakers unmovable by the climate problem itself were given a new reason to act with Obama’s attempt at a workaround, designed to prevent emissions from new coal plants and power generation. Such increased regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency is viewed in some conservative circles as more offensive than a national carbon tax.

“I really want names to find an alternative to the EPA,” Curbelo said, without singling anything out specifically.

And while the Supreme Court’s stay of Obama’s plan (pending resolution of a lawsuit by 26 states) may make Republicans less eager to exchange a carbon tax for the EPA regime, climate change isn’t going away.

Membership in the new climate caucus is likely to remain limited until the goals are better defined. For his part, Deutch said there are no prerequisites as to what it may propose, seeing it instead as a forum where business and community leaders, academics, and others can address legislators, and topics can range from shoreline and city protection to carbon regulation.

A key point of the new caucus is to move past the congressional stalemate that led to Obama’s 2013 Climate Caucus when fellow Democrat, Alan Lowenthal, a California Democrat, took over the Congressional Safe Climate Caucus when fellow Democrat Henry Waxman retired in 2014. Waxman successfully shepherded a massive climate bill through the House in 2009; it died in the Senate. Lowenthal said that a small, balanced group could be the best approach at this point. His group is made up of 50 Democrats and zero Republicans, a membership unlikely to attract conservatives.

This new group may not seem like a big deal, but any movement in the climate debate is a novelty these days. And it does represent real progress: Jay Butera, senior congressional liaison of Citizens’ Climate Lobby, has championed the idea of a caucus since the summer of 2013. “In early phases, it was unthinkable for us to use the word ‘climate’ in the caucus name,” he said.

That there’s now a new Solutions Caucus, Curbelo said, “speaks volumes as to how far we have come in moving the conversation forward on the Hill.”

Can only Congress prevent climate change?

The Beacon – 8

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Wednesday, February 17, 2016

Can only Congress prevent climate change?

ERIC ROSTON

Bloomberg News

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