Palestinian Right to Education Tour comes to FIU

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Students for Justice in Palestine are providing FIU students with an opportunity to gain more perspective on the Israel/Palestine conflict with an event called “Palestinian Right to Education Tour.” The event will be Tuesday, April 12 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in GC 150.

The event was made possible by the National Organization of Students for Justice in Palestine, according to Rapid Sakib, president of SJP.

Sakib, a senior majoring in biomechanical engineering, says the guest speakers are “students from Palestine that branch out to different schools and different regions to talk about the struggles they go through as Palestinian students in Israel and Palestine.”

According to Sakib, the students are selected by the NSJP which has a process in which they select 14 students from Palestine to come to the United States to speak to students in different universities across the country. Each university and region is granted two guest speakers.

SJP hosted the same event last year and, according to Sakib, the organization received positive feedback from the attendees.

“I think that if you have the Palestinians themselves and students, they can relate to us because we are also students that have the same goals,” said Jus Amin, a sophomore majoring in chemistry. “When you have actual people coming here, it humanizes the situation in another way.”

The lecture is meant to reflect not just the situation of the conflict happening between the nations, but how it affects the population, mainly those pursuing an education.

“Most of the times, when we talk about Israel and Palestine we always focus on the crisis and the conflict,” said Amin. “We fail to recognize they have a culture. They care about their education their community and society has to go through as well. They have similar desires and similar aspirations so I think the most important thing is it humanizes the conflict a lot more.”

Sakib mentioned that 50 people attended the event last year and they hope to have more this time. He mentions one of the speakers from last year, Emad, informed his experience with education in Palestine.

“Emad was really into airplanes and he wanted to study aeronautical engineering, but as a Palestinian student they don’t allow you to pick any ‘air’ or ‘aeronautical’ things,” said Sakib.

“Their majors are kind of limited because if we give them all these options then the Palestinians can expand for themselves. They are limited in that space,” Amin said.

“He’s studying mechanical engineering now. But when he was talking about it you could sense how disappointing it was for him because he’s really into airplanes and all those things,” said Sakib.

Carlos Garcia, a sophomore theoretical physics major, points out that it is very different for the Palestinian students who come from the conflict over seas to the system, with emphasis on the university system here, in the United States.

“If they’ve never come to the United States, that’s an experience on its own,” he says, “coming to a college campus which happens to be more liberal; it could be a huge swap from what they are experiencing in Palestine in college than what it could be here.”

Sakib adds, “Our worry here is just to survive classes but their worry is not just their worry is how they’re constantly targeted.”

During the event, students will be informed on the social issues taking place in the region, according to Sakib.

“Obviously they face racism in Israel. But the racism that’s going on in the United States is different than what’s going on in Israel and Palestine,” Sakib says, “All Palestinians I see as activists. They [the speakers] are around the ages of 21 and 19 so our students can easily relate to them.”

Sakib is expecting some kind of contention while hosting the speakers.

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The traditional art of calligraphy in China offers a visual syntax for communication through a combination of aesthetic and spiritual precision, but for Chinese abstract ink brush artist Lan Zhenghui, he uses traditional black ink to reflect emotional expressionism in this art.

Lan presented his lecture “Splashing Ink” at FIU on Thursday, April 7 at the W+R Painting Studio and exhibited his installation “902.”

Lan Zhenghui is a critically acclaimed Chinese contemporary ink artist, who was one of the first artists to experiment with ink based conceptual art installations. He is known for his large-scale abstract ink paintings and departs from Chinese ink traditions through his raw individualism, emotional explosions and physicality.

Lan, an assistant professor in place at Asian Art and Pip Brant, an associate professor for Fiber Art and Painting organized this cultural initiative to bring the famed artist to Miami.

“In addition to his lecture, Lan presented a demonstration of his method of the way he creates art, but also explained the resources he uses to make his installations.”

Staying true to Chinese painting tradition, he uses only black ink and water on Xuan paper taking freedhand brushstrokes of traditional Chinese painting but infuses new monumental levels of body motions and expressiveness found in modern painting.

“I grew up in Chinese culture and rice paper and ink are the most authentic materials used in art. Plus, I have been pushing forward expressionism of ink painting, having the world understand it and like it. I focus on it now, without considering being decentralized to other materials,” said Lan.

“Lan was so inspiring when he demonstrated the way he used ink and emphasized his body movement. As well as how he applied the brush to the paper while simultaneously explaining how that helped express his message,” said Crystal Rodriguez, a junior majoring in Advertising and Graphic Design.

Lan said that his art is inspired by Western Art and Chinese tradition but also by his own background. He was born in Sichuan China in 1959 and graduated in 1987 from one of China’s most prestigious art programs in Hangzhou.

University joins national initiative for sexual assault awareness

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Across the nation, sexual assault awareness is becoming a more widespread issue that many Universities are facing.

FIU is participating in the nationwide initiative to raise awareness by hosting the 12th annual “Take Back The Night,” a sexual assault awareness campaign that will take place on campus.

For the month of April, many different student organization, programs and faculty departments, are coming together to host many events throughout the month which will lead up to the main event, TBTN on Thursday, April 14.

“April is the month of sexual assault awareness, that is why we are actually doing this. To promote [awareness] of sexual assault on campus,” said Amy Rodriguez, graduate assistant at the Women’s Center.

According to Rodriguez, the history of TBTN can be traced back to 1877. It has been noted that the event initially took place when women first protested the issue in the streets of London, England during the night-time.

“We are going to be touching on topics that are really important on campus [that] bring awareness to those issues,” says Rodriguez. “We have a committee, and what we do is reach out to as many departments possible [in order] to collaborate with us in TBTN pre-events.”

One of the main pre-events was “Abstract ink artist hosts lecture on Chinese art”

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One of the main pre-events was "RIDE FOREVER"
Pakistan students speak at University

Tour, page 1

Pakistan students speak at University

Iceland prime minister resigns following protests over Panama Papers

The first political casualty of the offshore investments scandal known as the Panama Papers occurred Tuesday, April 5. Prime Minister Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson said he was stepping down following the largest anti-government protests in modern times in Iceland, a sign of the public anger over his family's offshore holdings. Iceland's fisheries minister announced that Gunnlaugsson had stepped down, according to state broadcaster RUV. In a statement late Tuesday, Gunnlaugsson's office said he "has not resigned" and was merely stepping aside for "an unspecified amount of time" and would remain as chairman of his ruling Progressive Party. It said the party's deputy leader, Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson, would take over as prime minister. Whether disgruntled Icelanders would allow Gunnlaugsson to return to the post in the future was far from clear.

More than two-thirds of Americans think the country is moving in the wrong direction, the highest in nearly four and a half years, a new McClatchy-Marist Poll found.

Fully 68 percent of adults think the country is on the wrong track, while just 27 percent think things are moving in the right direction. The last time such an overwhelming number of Americans had negative opinions of the country's direction was November 2011, when 70 percent thought that America was going the wrong way. The numbers are

Marginal yet worse than the poll narrowed to registered voters, with 71 percent sure on the country's path and 26 percent content. The pessimistic view of the nation's direction, which spans racial, gender, age and economic lines -- comes despite signs of an improving economy. Employers added 215,000 positions last month and the unemployment rate was five percent. But that's not enough to quell voters' concerns.

"It's the wages," said Lee Miringoff, director of the Marist Institute for Public Opinion, which conducted the survey.

"Hearing more about the struggles and what they go through. First off, we all appreciate the freedom we have here as students. And then we can't just ignore it for granted and not look at the other end and injustices that are going on," Sakib says. "For Palestinians it's not a luxury. To some of them it's a luxury that they don't get while they are walking to school." Amin and Sakib also pointed out that there are some liberties in the United States that students here take for granted.

"The freedom to speak in general," Sakib states, "The fact that we have a club here called students for justice in Palestine or Dream Defenders, you can't have something like that in Palestine. Amin adds, "Just the fact that you can go to school and be safe. I just have to worry about my classes and what I'm going to do tomorrow."

"If I'm in danger just because I'm getting an education and knowledge is power. When that's taken away from you systematically you're being oppressed in other ways that people can't see because they're not in that system," Amin says.

She said, "For FIU, even people in clubs that try to advocate for social change don't know about the conflict or are just neutral about it. If you have people in those positions feeling that or believing in that you can just imagine the bubble that the average student is stuck in."

"We're stuck in our own bubbles and nothing affects that so from when we have that we try to bring awareness to the student population" Garcia shares his experience at the SIP meeting he attended as well. "When I was at the booth that everyone was gathered around there was somehow oppressed. Black and Muslim, Muslim and dark skinned, Hispanic. ... Just people who have gone through struggles who are trying to fix problems.

The most common misconceptions, according to Sakib, were brought to light while promoting the event when another student told him "I feel like you don't believe that Israel has a right to exist."

"The person thinks that by siding with Palestine there's an entire group of people doesn't have the right to exist. We are Students for Justice in Palestine not students against Israel," said Sakib.

Garcia adds, "It's like when people talk about 'black lives matter' and someone says 'all lives matter.'"

"All lives do matter but right now we are focusing on black lives. It's like taking someone else's movement. By doing this we are trying to challenge someone else's view point. When you grow up and you are taught one perspective it's kind of hard to get out of that," said Garcia.

"We also want students to understand that although there are issues that seem like they don't exist in this century they are still present in other parts of the world."

"In Jerusalem you have segregation in buses," he says. "And the hospitals in Israel, they don't let Palestinian nurses mingie with Israeli or Jewish patients. They offer money until they [Palestinian refugees] leave. So if they don't leave they enclose them in these areas and take away almost all their rights."

In an FIU e-mail blast is informs that "Shaed and Abdul Molsen are the students who will visit FIU on April, 12 to share their experiences as students living through Israeli occupation and colonization."

"They are going to present on something talking about their experience and then we will open the floor to Q&A," Sakib says, as well as, encourages students to "come out and hear what the Palestinian students have to say."
THE LEVELER

AUBREY CURR

Incidents at The University of Missouri involving blatant racism in the fall of 2015 have initiated activism and protests across the nation. As professors, some feel their lectures and course content may be too triggering to be taught freely. “Safe spaces” are compulsory, according to Dan Capote, president of the Stonewall Pride Alliance, who opposes the school of thought that safe spaces stifle ideas.

Capote says there are “four benefits” SPA provides: developing community, leadership qualities, diversity and activism. He likens the four hour long SPA meetings to “coming out of a war zone.” People must be relaxed and then you can start your work. “When you deal with [the closet], you deal with people [who aren’t] confident with self-expression,” Capote said.

Each attendee has the option to introduce himself/herself and declare the pronouns s/he prefers. He believes that colleges should invite guests of different outlooks and if there is conflict, “you should have an argument.” But you shouldn’t silence them by saying, “You can’t come because I’m too sensitive to hear what you have to say.” That’s not the way we learn either.”

There is a difference between a physical safe space and an intellectual one... An intellectual safe space, however, is equivalent to disregarding important, albeit difficult, conversations.

If a student must leave the classroom, that’s okay. But we shouldn’t halt an entire dialogue because of an uncomfortable student. There are uncomfortable issues that require more than one outlook to solve and we must meet them with open arms and open minds, whilst keeping students emotionally and physically safe from explicit harassment directed at them, if we are to move forward.

The Leveler is a column on global social justice and political commentary. For suggestions or comments, please contact Aubrey at aubrey.carr@fiusm.com.

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Avoid muscle soreness and fatigue by stretching

As a trainer I often get asked how to get rid of muscle soreness. There are few ways to take care of your pain.

First of all, instead of only resting your sore muscles, you can perform light physical movements to increase the blood flow in the affected areas to relieve pain. Stretching will significantly aid you, liberating those stubborn muscle tissues.

If your entire body is sore, take a yoga class. This will stretch your muscles, easing and aiding any soreness of your muscles.

Muscle knots are specific areas where the connective muscles or tissues have cramped. In other cases, it can be the specific area where there are immobile scar tissue either from injury or overusing a muscle group. These painful tissues form in the ligaments, muscles and tendons which blocks the circulation - resulting in muscle inflammation, unbearable pain and can even hamper your mobility.

It is important that you do not disregard soreness in your muscles or muscles knots. Avoiding the situation and to continuing to workout will make it even worse and eventually cause damage in your muscle tissues.

We have all heard of the heat and ice patches you can purchase at the pharmacy, but another way is to relieve muscle soreness is taking hot and cold showers. Take a five minute shower and interchange every 20 seconds between hot and cold. The cold water will numb your pain and the hot water will increase your blood flow. The major factor that makes this hot and cold therapy effective is pure science.

The muscles in our bodies will contract in cold temperature and will expand in hot temperature. Therefore your muscles will expand and contract every time there is a temperature change - eliminating any muscle soreness or pain.

Taking a pain reliever will help but if you want to take a more holistic approach for sore muscles - use Curcumin, an ancient Indian spice. Curcumin is a powerful anti-inflammatory that reduces inflammation in your bodily muscles. Believe it or not, drinking the proper amount of water will help you heal from soreness as well.

Studies have shown that runners who were dehydrated had more soreness versus the runners who drank water throughout the race that experienced less fatigue.

Water is responsible for body temperature regulation and also muscle and heart functions. Even a two percent decrease in hydration level will affect your maximum strength and any athletic performances.

A massage is another alternative for muscle relief. A massage will release all knots in your muscles and help increase blood flow throughout your body.

If you have stubborn knots and severe muscle pain, get yourself a professional massage and you will feel a lot better.

According to the American Massage Therapy Association 75 percent of the individuals surveyed claim their primary reason for receiving a massage in the past 12 months was medical - including pain relief, soreness, stiffness or spasm, injury recovery, migraines and injury prevention.

If a massage is out of your budget or not covered by health insurance, try the foam rollers.

Foam rollers are often found at the gym; ask your front desk attendant. You can slowly roll over your targeted pain zone back and forth to relieve your pain. You can also use a tennis ball: put full body pressure on the pinpoint of where your muscles knot is, place the tennis ball at that pinpoint and slowly start rolling or rotating that ball around with the target area. The pressure from the tennis ball will help you get rid of those muscles knots.

I always tell my students that prevention is better than cure. You need to specify your weaknesses: target and counter -attack them before it affects you.

I often see people leave the gym without stretching or completing a whole workout session without drinking water. Not drinking water leads to severe fatigue and even nausea.

Take your time after working out, if you are in a rush then finish your exercises early and leave about 5 minutes for a proper stretch.

Make sure you eat a light, healthy snack before you workout, always remember to stretch and remain hydrated to prevent muscle soreness.

Motivation Monday is a weekly column covering fitness and health. Nihat is a certified trainer. For comments or questions email Nihat at nihat.strider@fiusm.com

DECADENT DECADE
Aesthetics & Values Exhibition celebrates its 10th anniversary
Eating breakfast provides benefits to health

“I don’t have any time for it.”

“I’m not hungry in the morning.”

“I’m not a breakfast person.”

These are the statements that are commonly made by individuals in response to the questions like, “Did you eat breakfast today?” or “Why didn’t you eat breakfast today?”

In our time-crunched, obligation driven, society, the importance of the most important meal of the day is not prioritized.

For some, breakfast might simply be a morning cup of coffee, including a slice of toast or a piece of fruit and maybe a bowl of yogurt. Is that an adequate amount of food to meet the body’s needs and control the waistline?

In 2013, the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition published a study that concluded, consuming breakfast led to beneficial alterations in the appetite, hormonal and neural signals that control food regulation.

The data suggests that the addition of a protein-rich breakfast is a justifiable strategy to improve satiety and reduce food motivation.

20 overweight and obese late-adolescent girls participated and completed a study. It’s important to note that none of these girls were on any medication that influenced appetite, food intake regulation or metabolism.

The participants followed one of three breakfast patterns: continuation of skipping breakfast, consumption of a normal 35g protein breakfast or consumption of a high 35g protein breakfast. Additionally, the girls were provided with specific breakfast meals and they were allowed to participate in the study at their home for six days.

“On the seventh day, they reported to the University of Missouri’s Brain Imaging Center to complete a 10 hour testing day that included an assessment on their perceived appetite and satiety and collecting samples of their blood completed during the day, while also monitoring neutral activity of the brain. While at the testing center, the participants were provided with a 290-calorie dinner and were instructed to eat as much as they could, within a 30-minute time frame until they were comfortably full. They were also provided with a cooler of snacks that included cookies, cakes, granola bars, chips, snack-size ice cream, etc. that they were able to eat at their pleasure, after they completed dinner. The participants in the study that adhered to their regular pattern of skipping breakfast exhibited higher levels of hunger during the early- and late-morning hours and early afternoon than of those that consumed the normal and high protein breakfast.

Furthermore, there was more brain activity, response to food stimuli, in the meal without protein as when compared to the high protein meal. The participants that skipped breakfast, along with those that consumed the normal protein meal consumed more of the unhealthy, calorically dense snacks after dinner than those participants that consumed the high protein meal. This data supports the notion that an individual is likely to consume more calories in the evening when breakfast is skipped.

Consuming a protein rich and nutrient dense breakfast is very important in avoiding unhealthy snacking and unwanted weight gain. Sadly, its significance is easily overlooked and often taken for granted among many in our society, especially within the adolescent population. The overweight and obesity rate, simply put, is alarming and dangerous. If we want to win the fight against these conditions, we must be intentional about doing it for ourselves, set good examples for our families and become dedicated to support our friends, family and communities.

It starts with what’s often referred to as the most important meal of the day. Before you leave your home tomorrow, remember that breakfast truly is, the most important meal of the day!

SDA Health is a weekly column written by members of the Student Dietetic Association. The column focuses on healthy eating and living. For more commentary or to suggest topic, email life@fiusm.com.
Outside of wins and losses, attendance is FIU football’s biggest problem. The University reported an average of 13,634 people per game in 2015 - one of the worst among Division I schools in the country - and if you went to a game last year, you might think that’s a generous number.

Some in the community blame the students for staying at their homes or at the tailgates during the games, but that’s unfair.

The blame lies with FIU Athletics for having the solution in front of them the whole time and still not figuring out how to make football games worth attending.

Sure, some of the circumstances surrounding FIU make it difficult to go to games.

It’s no secret that Miami doesn’t produce very loyal sports fans to begin with and most FIU students don’t live on campus. Every school has its problems, however, and most still manage decent attendance. Why don’t FIU students choose to overcome these problems?

The answer could be obvious: FIU won’t draw enough and watching them lose is not worth fans’ time.

If you ever spent a day a player as the pool in South Florida, you might know what it’s like to leave a college tailgate early to go watch the Panthers. Remember when you and all of your buddies would agree to go in the water “three,” but then only one of you would jump while the rest stayed on land and laughed?

Yeah, I’ve left a tailgate early to get a good seat for an FIU football game too.

I felt tricked, sitting alone in the stands watching my team get beat by Bethune Cookman for the second year in a row while everyone else stayed behind to party in the parking lot.

I imagine the rest of the students who showed up didn’t feel great about their decision either.

Panther football is in a year where they can’t afford poor attendance; the lack of fans is not only embarrassing, but also merits consequences from the NCAA.

If a school does not draw an average crowd of 15,000 per game every other season they risk probation or demotion from Division I FBS play.

Getting people to games is something the University needs to fix now.

FIU is well aware that the problem exists and is currently trying to fix it, but free hot dog vouchers and beach party decks can’t take the place of winning bowl games. Winning would be the quickest way to keep FIU out of trouble with the NCAA.

People will always hop on the bandwagon of an underdog team like FIU. They would probably draw large enough crowds to avoid penalties and stay in good favor with the NCAA for at least a couple more years.

The problem is that the increased attendance from one winning season wouldn’t stick. FIU fans materialized out of thin air when T.Y Hilton rewrote FIU’s record books, but they all left with the Ghost. What would make the same thing happen to FIU if it’s not a real, consistent fanbase? Is it even possible?

The answer is yes. The reason people don’t go to games is that there is nothing to invest in. There is no tradition at FIU that bonds the fan to the school to build loyalty.

However, I am not saying that it doesn’t exist. FIU Athletics, as a whole, has little to no tradition because they try to reinvent the wheel every season.

Afraid of remembering last year’s failures, our major programs market themselves as a new product each year, creating a dichotomy between student and team.

Why does the chant “Paws Up” still exist if no one ever does it? Why is Pete Garcia still our University’s athletic director even though he is universally hated by every fan FIU can? Regular people become lifelong fans because of the connection they share with a team, but that transformation doesn’t occur when you can’t even get your team’s attention.

Students should demand that FIU create a sense of sports culture and tradition on campus. It’s not like FIU hasn’t had their fair share of memorable moments - they just choose not to remember them. Where are the stories of Hilton and Mike Lowell, FIU’s most prominent former stars?

How many students even know that the Jacksonville Jaguars’ starting strong safety was once a Panther?

Wait, we actually had a two-time NBA champion and a coaching legend’s legacy head up our basketball program recently?

FIU needs to stop being the brand-new team that you could create in a video game franchise mode and start acting like a school with history.

Do what other college programs do: sell your big name alumni, market your players, tell their stories and create connections. If the connections don’t happen organically, then fake them until they seem legit.

The University has the population it needs to be a respectable sports school. All they need to do is give the students a sports culture worth being a part of.

Panther Pride: why it doesn’t exist, but easily could
Canadian teams have followed in a drought lately and a lot of the playoffs, but they've been Maple Leafs were always in its history and three times since 1997. Although Canadian TV networks will continue to cover the playoffs as much as before, not having a local team to cheer on will have some Canadian fans gravitating to one of the active teams. The Panthers, with their collection of young players and established stars such as Jagr and Roberto Luongo, could find themselves the beneficiaries of the Canadian postseason blackout. This week, both the Toronto Star and Globe and Mail did stories speculating how the Panthers could become “Canada’s Team” in the playoffs as they did during their run to the Stanley Cup Final in 1996. One Montreal radio host is pushing the Panthers as a natural for Canadiens fans to root for considering so many flock to the Montreal area. The Panthers would welcome all newcomers. “It could be us, the underdog team, for sure,” Panthers coach Gerard Gallant said. “There will be a lot of Canadian fans watching the playoffs, obviously, because they love hockey. We’re a good story, a good franchise. You can talk about Jagr, how the team hasn’t been in the playoffs a whole lot. It would be awesome.” Said Smith: “Any team that has Jagr on it is going to create a buzz. The more people following us, the better.”

The Panthers are celebrating their rare appearance in the postseason, however. Florida has been to the playoffs just five times in its history and three times since 1997. “Growing up in Toronto, the Maple Leafs were always in the playoffs, but they’ve been in a drought lately and a lot of Canadian teams have followed that,” Keely Smith said. “It will be a little weird, but it’s far from South Florida, so I’m not going to worry about it too much. Our main goal was to get to the playoffs, and now we have different goals.”

Give America’s pastime another ‘Chance’

JAKE’S TAKES A s t e a m s a r o u n d M a j o r L e a g u e B a s e b a l l begin their s e a s o n s d a r i n g O p e n i n g Week, the same problem is evident in most ballparks: there are way too many empty seats. Whether it’s because of the freezing cold weather throughout the north or the apathy that many seem to have about baseball for some reason (I’m looking at you, Miami fans), the excitement that I have for baseball to be back seemingly hasn’t been shared by others.

Last week I wrote a column about Opening Day, and why the lack of a youth audience for the MLB is our generation’s fault rather than theirs. Current MLB commissioner Rob Manfred is following in the footsteps of his predecessor Bud Selig by making rule changes and helping establish MLB’s online presence in order to appeal more to a younger demographic.

As if baseball wasn’t doing enough to rejuvenate the current product, the Chicago White Sox are working on a unique deal that could bring in a whole new audience to a team that desperately needs better attendance numbers. Chicago recording artist Chance The Rapper, who sports a Sox hat and represents his hometown community, and will be able to help the White Sox generate a lot more attention from kids who may not have been fans of the team before.

This huge step made by the White Sox is yet another sign that the MLB is marketing itself to attract a younger and larger demographic. More teams around the league should look into doing something similar to the Sox, as this unprecedented deal is already generating more nationwide attention that the team otherwise would have never gotten.

The digital age has given young people a desire for instant gratification, so a slower-paced and more strategies driven sport like baseball no longer gets the respect it deserves. But if teams reach out to millennial role models like Chance The Rapper to help promote the sport, it’s only a matter of time before more young people start to care.

I was raised to love baseball starting at a very early age, so it frustrates me that fewer and fewer young people have the attention span to enjoy a nine-inning game of baseball. Rather than getting mad at the problem, however, we should look for a solution, and I think the Chicago White Sox are onto one that could prove to be very effective at solidifying the future of baseball.
Take a moment and think about your gracious mother. Perhaps she’s a hardworking woman who comes home to greet you, exchanging words about her day then asking about yours. She gives you the letter she received in the mail and asks you to read it because she’s still learning English. You open it and are forced to tell her that she will be deported, effective immediately. There is no way for her to stay with you.

I don’t know what that’s like, but on Thursday, April 7, I got to witness this in the Tunnel of Oppression. BBC’s Campus Life hosted this event in the WUC Ballrooms with one goal in mind: to change the perspectives of those who enter.

The whole concept for the Tunnel of Oppression began at Missouri State University, and other universities around the country started to implement it on their campuses, like FIU. The Tunnel of Oppression is an interactive, campus-wide diversity program in which actors are put on scenarios for participants to experience. These scenarios cover different types of diversity and social justice, as mentioned on the Missouri State Tunnel of Oppression Facebook page.

From the moment I signed in, I was automatically given a label to stick to my chest that read “douchebag” and a bottle of water.

A group of other students and I were then led through a series of rooms in complete darkness, where the only light they shined was from our tour guide’s flashlight. With caution, the tour guide steered us through a series of rooms where we sat down and watched a video showing images of different people from various backgrounds and the experiences they were confronted with.

We ambled through a room where images of unattainable and unrealistic beauty standards were plastered on every wall, then, we witnessed the faces of those who were affected by it.

In the next room, my group and I gathered around a homeless woman, who happened to be in a deal with a cop. We learned how prominent homelessness is in colleges and how it occurs. I stood there numbly as we read statistics detailing the amount of sexual assaults that plague individuals of every race, gender and sexual orientation.

Remember that bottle of water I mentioned earlier? We were asked to drink it and in exchange, it was replaced by unsanitary and unfiltered water to represent the reality of those who were affected by the contaminated water in Flint, Michigan.

For that moment in time, I got to experience someone else’s truth. The Tunnel of Oppression is also about someone else’s sentiments, their anguish, their pain, their experience - and it was impactful.

I was labeled a “douchebag” when I began this journey. It led me to believe that I actually was one because there was someone in our group who was drunk - I later found out they were an active - but I didn’t help them.