The University’s Model United Nation team ranked second best in nation

MELISSA BURGESS
Assistant News Director

The University’s Model United Nations team has achieved its highest ranking ever, landing second place in Best Delegate’s annual ranking. The team has had much recognition in the past, including seventh in the country, later moving to fifth, then fourth, and now the team has moved up two spots to second in North America by bestdelegate.com, an organization in charge of Model UN ranks based on universities’ performances.

In addition to the ranks, the team has beat prestigious universities, including Georgetown, Harvard, New York University and Yale.

FIU continues to be the highest ranked team in Florida and from a public university.

“I am very excited and proud of the program and all the students that worked hard this semester to achieve this ranking. It’s always special when you get tangible results from your hard work. That number two ranking is a direct result of the hard work the Model UN students have put in over this semester,” said Ethan Roberts, the director of the FIU Model UN team.

Although The University of Chicago has ranked number one in the nation for past three years, Kevin Markowski, a junior majoring in international relations and the Head Delegate for Model UN of the fall semester, said that he is determined to put in as much work possible to get the team to number one.

“Being ranked number two in the nation is a great feeling and being above all Ivy Leagues as a public school in Florida is an amazing accomplishment. But I’d be lying to you if I said I was content with this ranking. We won’t stop until we are the number one team in the nation,” said Markowski.

Model United Nations brings together different universities across the United States, as well as hundreds of college students with common goals of furthering international awareness and building consensus.

The program is run by the Jack Gordon Institute of Public Policy, within the School of International and Public Affairs and is offered as a political science course.

It is designed to build student’s public speaking, analytical writing, negotiations, critical analysis and research skills.

Roberts said the main strategy Model UN has for staying at the top requires time, extensive practice and working together effectively as a team.

“We’re very team oriented. Our team is not just one person giving instructions to 30 people. We share our experiences, success and failures,” said Roberts.

To be part of the team, students are required to go through a long process, which entails a detailed application and two interviews, in which the student is tested and screened.

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Kevin Markowski
Junior
International Relations

I learned how to walk into a room, make my opinions heard, negotiate and build consensus and move things forward, all qualities needed for my professional life,” said Bukhair.

FIU Model UN members hope to prove that the university is a powerful global institution and continue to break barriers that usually restrict institutions like FIU.

“In this country, we have these complexities about universities. If you go to Harvard, you expect to win because it’s considered an ‘ivy league’ or a ‘top university’. And the fact that we can overcome those expectations and prove that we can do what they do too, means so much to me,” said Roberts.
Cubans who once feared Trump see him now as their last hope

Sitting on a dusty curb in this Mexican city just steps from the U.S. border, Elianiss Mato Salazar thinks back to when then President Barack Obama visited Cuba 10 months ago.

Like many others, the 32-year-old shopkeeper from Guantánamo was inspired by the president’s speech about change and the bridge he sought to build between the nations. The administration of Michelle Obama’s grace and the couple’s rise to such a high position of power.

But that was before Jan. 12, when Obama canceled the two-decade-old “wet-foot, dry-foot” Cuba immigration policy and ripped Mato from her husband _ who had been allowed to cross into the United States before the policy’s cancellation, which took effect Jan. 1.

It ended her dream of life in the United States.

Mexican drug lord ‘El Chapo’ extradited to US

Mexico’s most notorious drug kingpin, Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman, who gained fame for his daring prison escapes and an interview with Hollywood stars while he was kept back. It ended his dream of life in the United States before the policy’s cancellation, her husband _ who had been allowed to cross into the United States.

Drug lord ‘El Chapo’ extradited to the United States

The City of Hialeah is undergoing an extensive roadway project on Read Road down Red Road since January 2015, and as it extends further downtown, businesses are being affected negatively.

A Simple Mobile business owner, David Bosch, has worked in West Hialeah Shopping Center located in 6871 W 4th Ave for 13 years. He said his sales drop due to the entrance being blocked by the construction.

“I see a problem is that they closed the streets,” said Bosch. “It’s about to be February, and I think that it won’t be done,” he said.

Bosch said that he gets informed through emails about changes of the roadway project, and in that case he has nothing to complain about; however, he said that the construction has been taking longer than expected.

“Customers don’t want to enter here and ruin their tires,” said Bosch. “They rather go somewhere else with an easy entrance.”

Bosch said he hardly gets any customers, maybe 10 a day, and he used to get more before the construction began outside the shopping center.

Another two business owners next to Bosch’s Simple Mobile store also expressed their concerns on the duration of the Red Road Construction.

Lester Hernandez, owner of Martha Pharmacy said he has worked in the building for 14 years but has had his business for about 10 years.

Hernandez also expressed his concerns toward the construction.

“It’s been going on for almost a year, and it’s been really bad,” Hernandez told PantherNOW.com. “It’s been affecting my business but traffic wise.”

He said he has said problems with his customers because they want to drive to his business due to the traffic jam caused by the construction.

“We tell people they got to come this way, they don’t want to come,” he said. “There’s no entrance to the building.”

Marco Campo, owner of Cinderella’s Flower Shop is going through the same situation as Bosch and Hernandez.

“I has affected us a lot but it’s if it’s for the good and progress of the city then I understand,” said Campo.

“I have to get away because I can’t do any sales and now have one customer step inside my flower shop.”

Campo added that construction has caused a decrease on his sales, Campo said that the city has kept him informed of all the changes occurring within his business’ shopping center.

“I’m kept informed of everything,” said Campo. “They say that by next year, around this time, they will be done.”

Campo said that during the middle of the year, all the businesses of the shopping center signed a petition to unblock the entrance to the shopping plaza but were given the results they expected.

“All neighbors and business owners got together to speak to the Hialeah City Hall and signed petitions, but they told us to be patient and wait,” said Campo.

Billiards brings enthusiasts together

For senior psychology major and Billiards Club president, Brenda Bares, the best part of her club is the good company of its members.

According to Bares, the club holds tournaments for local players in and out of the club, and would-be competitors can sign up during meetings or on their own time at the game room.

Contestants in the sport of billiards, those who dazzle other players with their finesse and computer-like angle calculations, and those who have only ladder into and contested held beyond the university.

“We do ACU competitions that are once a year,” said Bares. “That’s for our top two women and men… You’re representing FIU going against other universities like UF, FSU, [and] UCF.”

According to Bares, the club also host monthly Halloween parties and game nights each year in the game room for a more casual diversion over the annual competitions.

Do students interested in joining the club to have be good enough to tick three balls in a row. Not according to Brian Mercado, Billiards Club member and sophomore electrical engineering major.

Bares said that he is even the least bit interested in billiards should come by and even if you are not very interested, come by and give it a shot. You may make some new friends and enjoy a new game.”

Brian, the founding vice-president of the club, and says the most enjoyable part of the club is the combination of playing the game and meeting new and interesting people.

The club meeting involves going down the agenda that any club must take care of: news and events, new members, is scheduled to end on enjoying the game and enjoying the company of each other inevitably comes up.

The Billiards Club meets in the Porter Davis game room in the Graham Center on Wednesdays 4:30 to 6:30 PM and Thursdays from 5 to 7 PM.
EYES ON THE EARTH

AMANDA JUNG

As a society, we are constantly reminded about the rapid population growth that the world continues to experience. We live in a world with seven billion people and counting. Families are expanding and communities are growing. But have we reached capacity yet?

According to Everything Connects, overpopulation is one of the most pressing forces when it comes to the environment. It’s behind “global warming, environmental pollution, habitat loss, the sixth mass extinction, intensive farming practices and the consumption of finite natural resources.”

How many more humans can this world before we run out of resources for everyone? The world certainly does not revolve around us. Without enough water, arable land and fossil fuels, how will it be able to revolve at all?

Energy Future tells us that there was a point in time where the population was able to balance itself. Birth and death rates were able to reach that balance because of the higher mortality rates and lesser quality medical facilities. But we now live in a time with highly advanced technology and overall, a longer lifespan.

So what are the motivating factors behind overpopulation? To begin with, there has been a decline in the death rate.

Energy Future reminds us that when the amount of people that die in a year equals the amount of infants that are born, then the population is bound to balance out.

However, the birth to death ratio is not balanced and therefore is leaving us with more humans.

Next, there have been extreme advances in technology. This is especially true when it comes to medical advancements. Diseases are being defeated, more food is being produced and vaccines are being offered. These are things that were not available back in the day.

Overpopulation is something that with time has affected many aspects of the earth. But one of the biggest concerns is the depletion of natural resources. According to Everything Connects, “fossil fuels, fresh water, coral reefs, frontier forests continue to plummet.”

Even with all the facts written out in front of me, I have thought about this issue long and hard. Although it makes sense that the earth can only sustain so many people with the amount of resources we have available, I do not think it’s the biggest problem the environment is facing. And there is only so much that we can do to fix it.

Places like China have policies that limit the amount of offspring that they can produce. This was an attempt to control overpopulation. But is this a policy that the rest of the world can adopt?

Are we supposed to limit the amount of children everyone can have in hopes that this will help the earth?

According to the New York Times, overpopulation is not something to be worried about. The planet’s carrying capacity has changed. The fact that technology has evolved goes to show that we can take care of the world and its growing population.

However, there are obviously right and wrong ways to do so. With a growing population, this means more people to help take care of the environment and all the problems that it’s facing. More hands to pick up trash from the streets. More minds to learn about how we need to stop eating animal products. And more compassion and love toward Planet Earth.

Whether overpopulation should be on the top of our worries or the bottom, there are so many ways that we can use the people that inhabit this earth to help make a positive mark.

Amanda Jung is a contributing writer for Panther Press. Her column, Eyes on the Earth, is a commentary on current global environmental issues.

The University is greenwashing their recycling program

A pleasantly mild winter day drove my friends and me to eat lunch in the grass between the Graham Center and Owa Elian. After finishing, I tossed my trash in a nearby trashcan, but a bin for my recyclables was nowhere to be found.

As a graduate student in the Biology Department, I’ve witnessed far too much environmental devastation to neglect basic recycling, so I started making my way towards my office in Viertes Haus with recyclables in hand. I walked through OE, past Engineering & Computer Science, and into VH, finally finding a recycling bin outside my own office on the third floor.

I walked past more than a dozen trash cans, but not a single place to recycle. I wish that this was an anomaly; perhaps I took one of the few routes that hadn’t yet received one of the 4,200 recycling bins that FIU boasts owning. It was not.

I’ve encountered this problem while taking many routes across campus with the situation in PG-5 being the worst. Standing in the center of the food court equivalent from Dunkin Donuts, Moe’s and Chick-fil-A, one can clearly see a trash can in every direction (totaling seven) but no recycling in the entire food court.

This is a problem, but not an intangible, inaccessible one like most environmental issues; the resources already exist, including a university wide single-stream recycling system.

FIU declares being “World’s Ahead,” having a sustainability office; a solar house, an app for a curbside program and many other conservation-minded programs but maintains an uncontrolling recycling system for post consumer waste. How is this the case?

FIU’s Office of Sustainability is responsible for the solar house, the nature preserve and a number of green events (like Recycledrainia starting only February), but they do not have any influence on recycling infrastructure or management.

Instead, waste is managed by FIU’s Facilities Management with the food court in PG-5 being managed independently by FIU’s Business Services. I have been informed by FIU staff that programs, staff, and infrastructure vary between buildings which would partially explain the unequal distribution of bins.

Yet I have also seen hundreds of unused recycling bins kept in storage areas, locked zones, and the untraveled peripheries of campus. Instead of utilizing its investment, FIU subscribes to an ad hoc policy decided by each building’s custodial staff and managers.

Representatives from FIU GoGreen have cited costs of bins and increased janitorial work as deterrents to the further implementation of recycling but our current system is unjust to our students, our environment and our conscious university.

FIU needs to better leverage its existing recycling program; we students are ready to expand stewardship down to the most basic level, we just need a better infrastructure to help us do the work.

Jason Howard
Doctoral Student
Biology Department

Letters to the Editor are not written by Panther Press Staff. They are submitted by readers of Panther Press. These views are separate from editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER

SEND US YOUR LETTERS!

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to cayla.bush@fiu.edu or drop by our offices at either GC 271 or WUC 124.

With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. Panther Press will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors of each of the four sections. Panther Press welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials. Send them to cayla.bush@fiu.edu.
CASTING SHADOWS
Exhibit opens at the Frost Museum showcasing post-apartheid society

LISBETTE CASTILLO
Contributing Writer

In a series of photographs depicting post-Apartheid society in South Africa, artist Edward West opened his exhibit on Thursday, Jan. 19, at the Frost Museum. “His point was to document everyday life for these people,” said Ashley Valines, curatorial assistant at the Frost Museum. “His point was to document everyday life for these people.”

In the photographs, West uses a combination of light and shadow in his images. He was also inspired by one of the largest townships in South Africa called Soweto. “It’s the connotation behind shadows,” said Valines. “It’s the things that dwell invisible, things that dwell on the edges of our vision, things that don’t want to be seen or that we don’t want to see — shadow.”

There are very few photographs in this collection where you can actually make out somebody’s features. Under apartheid, to have your face photographed for anything other than your passport or your card was a jail or a death sentence because they could then use that photograph to identify you in any type of anti-apartheid protests. The shadowing of the face is a play on that. “I really love this particular exhibition,” said Maryanna Ramirez, manager of Strategic Initiative at the Frost Museum. “These photographs are striking and stunning.” Ramirez said that one of the things they were trying to do with this exhibit was identify artists who are producing work that really speak to some of King’s messages. “We are trying to bring artists here that are looking at issues of race, diversity, humanity, and social justice,” said Ramirez. On Jan. 19 at 4 p.m., West gave a lecture on his artwork followed by a reception. “It really is a great time for students to listen to a working artist,” said Ramirez. “He is very approachable and wonderful and really is an engaging person.”

‘Little Shop of Horrors’ takes on a modern twist

STEPHANIE CASTRO
Staff Writer

Debuting Jan. 27, 2017 at 8 p.m. in the Wertheim Performing Arts Center, the Theatre Department will premiere their first musical of the year, “Little Shop of Horrors.”

“Hidden inside of a ‘cutesie’(sic) jukebox musical is a tale about how capitalism and greed can lead to the downfall of individuals pursuing what they perceive to be the American Dream,” Pastor said. The production will also exclusively consist of students in the Bachelors in Fine Arts Performance program, making Little Shop the first FIU musical to do so.

In the past, FIU productions have brought singers from the School of Music over to collaborate with the theatre students for musicals. “Broadway Audrey is a lot more high-pitched and I wanted to make her a little more grounded,” said Pantoja. Junior Nora Pantoja, who plays the female lead Audrey, stated that researching information about skid row made it easier to get into character and added to her character’s backstory.

“Broadway Audrey is a lot more high-pitched and I wanted to make her a little more grounded,” said Pantoja. “She’s a woman who’s gone through a lot and has developed a backbone.”

As for the dancing aspects of the musical, assistant choreographer Rachel Willis found ways to make the actors more comfortable with movement. The choreography took two weeks to complete, which included blocking the entire show to see which pieces fit and which ones had to be changed around.

Willis would take notes on blocking, get back to choreographer Crystal Patience, and then rehearse the dance with the actors. “It was the most amazing thing to pull these non-dancers out of rehearsal, give them their steps, and watch them put it together,” said Willis. “They did it flawlessly.”

The duo was never able to practice the choreography together until their last rehearsal. One of her proudest moments was when she practiced a dance with Pastor and Pantoja separately.

“The show can be and is compelling because these actors are delivering truth. The objective is for the audience to empathize and connect with these characters onstage.”

Philip Church
Director
Little Shop of Horrors

Patrick Martin. He described this as an exciting yet challenging task but one he was ready to take on. “I think all five of those characters live inside me. It’s just a matter of expanding them into something larger,” said Ayala. Senior Nora Pantoja, who plays the female lead Audrey, stated that researching information about skid row made it easier to get into character and added to her character’s backstory.

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Orin Scrivello, Bernstein, Mrs. Luce, Skip Snip, and Junior Robert Ayala will be playing five characters: Orin Scrivello, Bernstein, Mrs. Luce, Skip Snip, and Patrick Martin. He described this as an exciting yet challenging task but one he was ready to take on. “I think all five of those characters live inside me. It’s just a matter of expanding them into something larger,” said Ayala. Senior Nora Pantoja, who plays the female lead Audrey, stated that researching information about skid row made it easier to get into character and added to her character’s backstory.

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COLLEGE ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY

The place to get information on university metrics, college affordability, financial aid options and access from President Mark B. Rosenberg & Financial Aid Director Francisco Valines.

Moderated by Raquel Perez

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 8, 2017 | GC 140 (MMC) OR HL 319 (BBC) | 1 - 2:30 PM

STUDENT MEDIA AT FIU | @PANTHERNOW
Behind The Roar

‘Okey’ album gives the ‘magic, antems and intense bass’

Up and coming pop duo Smerz, based in Denmark, have blessed our ears with gentle club music with their debut EP, “Okey.” Smerz, consisting of the duo Henriette and Catharina, just released seven songs that mesmerize us with the beauty of dark twisted pop.

The EP opens with a track titled, “Thrill” which is the highlight of the entire album. Both Henriette and Catharina know how to mesh their voices in the melody of the smooth beat and hard bass.

“Blessed” is about a girlfriend questioning whether or not her boyfriend is in it for the right reasons. She also sings about the length she’ll go to show how much he means to her. The jumping beats and vocals make it a fun sound.

“Because,” the debut single, is the heart of the entire EP. It’s about being in your twenties and being a bit confused. The techno beat with its elevating bass into this modern song capturing that robotic wave. The sprinkles of beats in “You See?” repeated ly with techno whistles and echoes sends you on an electronic roller-coaster. “Girl” is a mini throw down on the dance floor with the lyrics, “I’ll be your girl” being shattered throughout.

With “Craig” you are lost in an urban city with the waves of techno skipping through a crowd of people. The finale of the EP is “Sure” which showcases the harmony and vocals of Henriette and Catharina, the perfect ending. You hear the chunk of their voices in this masterpiece. Smerz may just be getting started in the game, but I see a longevity in their career if they continue to experiment and evolve with their music.

“Okey” gives me the magic, anthems, and intense bass that will grab you and take you on a journey of two women ready to stomp the music industry.

Music Matters is a weekly music column that reviews pop, rock and alternative music albums.

KAYLEEN PADRON
Staff Writer

Panthers at The Biscayne Bay Campus can experience the creative writing process first-hand in this Thursday’s event at the Barnes and Nobles in Wolfe Center. Award winning, best-selling author Ann Hood will be visiting the University on Thursday, Jan. 26 at 8 p.m.

The Creative Writing Program, along with the Wolfe University Book Store and The Betsy Hotel, will be sponsoring the event with special thanks to the bookstore manager, Erica Garvey and Deborah F. Briggs of the hotel. Free food and refreshments will be served following the reading.

The program invites four writers every year to the University to the “Writers on the Bay” reading series. Julie Wade, an assistant professor of creative writing, has coordinated the event along with other students and faculty.

“We who teach and study creative writing have the opportunity to share our passion for the genres of poetry, fiction, and creative writing with a larger audience by bringing a diverse group of writers to campus,” said Wade.

Not only will attendees be able to listen to a reading of one of Hood’s novels, but they will also be able to discuss the creative writing process and ask questions to gain more insight to the technique.

“Writers often speak extemporaneously about their writing process as they preface a work they are going to read or transition between works,” said Wade.

Other well-known authors who have visited the University included James Allen Hall, Pat Conroy, Amy Tan, Scott Turow. Not only has the event been successful for the Creative Writing Program, but it has brought avid readers, students and faculty alike, together.

“I like to think the benefits to the creative writing program and to the larger University community and beyond are mutual ones,” said Wade.

Another event that is sponsored by this program is FIU MFA Alumni Reading at the beginning of every year where previous graduates from the University can share their current published books.

The peak of these events, hosted by the Creative Writing Program, is the presentation of the Lawrence A. Sanders Award to well-known accomplished writers.

This year’s recipient is Pulitzer Prize winner, Jane Smiley. Students can also look forward to novelist Lauren Grodstein on Feb. 23 for that month’s reading series, in the same location and time.

Behind The Roar

What’s your name/DJ Name?
Galina Abdelaziz aka Lady Lina

Major?
International Relations

What do you plan on doing with your major?
After I graduate, I want to go to grad school to specialize in Arab affairs and then I want to pursue my doctorate and become a professor to teach college classes about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Show title, day and time?
The <3 Kid on Wednesday from 10-11 p.m.

How long have you been at the station?
I’ve been at the station for three semesters.

What was the first concert you’ve attended?
Ben Howard in 2014 in St. Petersburg.

First cd you’ve purchased?
From Under the Corktree by Fall Out Boy

If you could meet one artist who would it be and why?
The lead singer of Daughter, Elena Tonra because it’s my favorite band and her lyrics speak the most to me out of anyone I’ve listened to.

Who would you say is the most overrated and underrated artist out there?
Overrated: Israel. Underrated: Palestine

What’s a fun fact about you?
I can speak conversationally in four languages. English, Arabic, French and Russian. I also still have Candy Crush installed on my phone, I’m on level 725.

*LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS SHOWINGS*

**Friday, Jan. 27, 8 p.m.**
**Saturday, Jan. 28, 8 p.m.**
**Sunday, Jan. 29, 2 p.m.**
**Wednesday, Feb. 1, 8 p.m.**
**Friday, Feb. 3, 8 p.m.**
**Saturday, Feb. 4, 8 p.m.**
**Sunday, Feb. 5, 2 p.m.**

Tickets are $20 General Admission, $18 Seniors, FIU Faculty & Staff, and $15 FIU students and are available for purchase at http://go.fiu.edu/littleshop.
Intramural sports a ‘good experience’

BRETT SHWEKY
Staff Writer

With the fall semester in the rear-view mirror, spring intramural sports are about to commence, offering students the opportunity to compete regardless of their athletic ability.

Sports included in this semester with seasons approaching at the end of January are intramural basketball, indoor soccer and racquetball. Team tennis, dodgeball and arena football will begin in March.

Registration for basketball and indoor soccer began on Jan. 8 and will continue until Jan. 25.

There is a $30 registration fee for anyone interested in playing either sport. Regular season for both sports will start on Jan. 30 and run until March 3.

Basketball will be played as a traditional 5-on-5 with two 20-minute halves. Everyone including sororities, fraternities and unified leagues can participate. A minimum of four players, however, is required to create a team.

FIU student Zach Racine said there’s a chance he will participate in 5-on-5 basketball.

“It seems like intramurals are a good way to stay involved with a sport that I grew up playing,” he said. “It just sounds fun competing against one another.”

Teams for indoor soccer will consist of five players each with no goalkeepers, and the maximum roster size for a team is limited to 20 players.

“Soccer is a great way to stay in shape and meet new people,” former intramural soccer player Ashley Stokes said. “From the games to practice, it’s just an overall good experience.”

Racquetball registration will end on Jan. 25, and the season will begin Jan. 29 and end on Feb. 19. There is a $5 registration fee, and games will be held at the MMC tennis center.

To sign-up or to learn more information about FIU intramural sports visit www.imleagues.com.

‘Put your body first’ with MMC’s Lose It program

HEATHER O’DELL
Staff Writer

If you’re looking to make some lifestyle changes during spring semester, you can start with FIU’s Lose It program. The program runs from Jan. 30 to April 14, and participants will go through a fitness assessment, three weigh-ins, weekly group counseling sessions and unlimited group workouts.

“This is more than a weight-loss program,” said Cindy Makita, personal trainer for Lose It. “Lose It is really all about changing our client’s perspectives on exercise and eating well; it’s a change in lifestyle.”

Along with group workouts, participants will have the opportunity to learn about healthier alternatives to foods they enjoy eating with a one-time cooking session.

Sara Holtzman, coordinator of Fitness and Programming, is one of the driving forces behind the Lose It program that provides students and faculty with the resources to become healthier and happier.

“I take suggestions from participants about what kinds of foods they’d like a healthier recipe for, and then we cook some of those together,” Holtzman said. “We also go over portion sizes and easy ways to meal prep plans ahead for eating on the go.”

The workout prescriptions for the program are created by the trainers themselves and with each participant’s needs in mind.

“I like to create a modified version of each workout to embrace intellectual, personal, ethical, spiritual, ecological, and social causes in an atmosphere of academic freedom,” said Makita. “These workouts are geared toward weight loss, but are created so that everyone can participate. It is important to think of my client’s fitness level and having a modified version of each exercise.”

The trainer also said she feels accomplished when she sees her former clients become regulars at the gym.

“Last spring semester I taught 10 ladies that were part of the Lose It program,” said the personal trainer. “Hearing their stories and watching them continue to make progress after the program ended really reminded me why I love being a part of this.”

FIU’s ‘Lose It’ reminds people that it isn’t about the number on the scale or how they look in the mirror, but why it is important to live a healthy lifestyle by exercising and eating right.

“The time, change your perspective,” said Makita. “Build bonds with the trainers and with others on the same journey. It is about time you put yourself and your body first.”
SQUAT SQUAD

Fitness class infuses Zumba dance with boxing-inspired sequences

JULIETA RODRIGO
Staff Writer

It’s time to ditch the boring workouts and join the newest dance party at FIU.

Offered at the Biscayne Bay Campus Wellness and Recreation Center on Tuesdays from 12 to 1 p.m., Strong by Zumba combines Zumba dance fitness with elements of martial arts to achieve a total body workout and improve muscle definition.

Contrary to a traditional Zumba class which integrates dance into a high-cardio workout, Strong by Zumba resourcefully infuses more typical athletic moves into the routine along with dance. Exercises like leg swings, squats, and planks, as well as boxing-inspired punch and kick sequences get students sweating and grooving alongside upbeat music.

The class is creatively driven by the science of Synced Music Motivation, according to the Strong by Zumba website. For them, music is not an afterthought. Rather, the moves are specifically designed first, and music is later reverse-engineered to match the routine.

Edgar Bustos, a junior majoring in hospitality, has been attending the class for several months. He told PantherNOW that he loves the class because it helps release the pressure and the stress from college.

“It’s a great way to find relief,” Bustos said. “It’s awesome for me.”

Instructor Ana Rodriguez believes that a perfect balance between spontaneous fun and repetition is the key to attaining a successful workout.

I was just going to dance, said. “I initially thought I was just going to dance, but [Ana] incorporates extra moves to make you feel the burn and get you sweating.”

The class is a new way to incorporate exercise into one’s lifestyle. If you need some new dance moves or want to reach fitness goals in an enjoyable environment, you know where to find it.

TRAC course helps students improve leadership skills

HEATHER O’DELL
Staff Writer

There is more to being healthy than regularly exercising and nourishing your body with the right foods; mental wellness is important, too.

Mentally challenging yourself can help you realize your full potential and gain a sense of accomplishment, and FIU’s Team Ropes Adventure Challenge course offers just that.

“TRAC is FIU’s Ropes Challenge course and experiential learning center. Students gain a sense of personal achievement by completing challenges thought to be impossible,” said Assistant Director Jennifer Cooper. “I really see students coming out of their comfort zone during their time at TRAC.”

The ropes course offers team building exercises to grant participants the opportunity to overcome their obstacles as a unit. Various student organizations at FIU make attending TRAC as an annual event.

“Attending TRAC is extremely helpful for student government,” said Larissa Adames, advisor for the BBC Student Government Association. “It helps our new members each year gel with the rest of the members. We look past our differences to solve the problems we are faced with.”

In the midst of the course, students are placed in situations that help their leadership and teamwork skills flourish. Cooper said they can also form bonds with classmates as well as meet people that otherwise would only be another face in a classroom.

TRAC strengthens the minds of students and instills leadership in them, thus strengthening the university as a whole, said Cooper.

Students are welcomed to come by themselves, with friends and they don’t need to be part of an organization to participate. The course also accommodates anyone with a disability and is designed to meet the needs of a specific group in regards to focus area and the physical nature of the activities.

TRAC is located at the Biscayne Bay Campus next to the Kovens Conference Center. To attend TRAC, you can sign up online at studentaffairs.fiu.edu/wellness/ropes-course.