ABIGAIL OLSON AND MARTINA BRETOUS
Panther Press Staff

President Donald Trump nominated the University's current dean of the College of Law for labor secretary.

“We just spoke, and he’s going to be, I think he’ll be a tremendous secretary of labor,” said Trump announcing the nomination earlier today.

University President Mark B. Rosenberg says the honor gives the college the visibility it deserves.

“When you get any of your faculty members or deans appointed to senior positions at the national level, it’s great recognition for the University. It’s a confirmation of the purpose-driven mission that we have and in this case, it’s outstanding recognition for our College of Law,” Rosenberg said to PantherNOW.

Since 2009, Acosta has overseen large growth in FIU’s law program and has contributed to the program’s increase in rank, according to Rosenberg.

“We always were doing well in bar passage, but three years in a row as number one, confirms the quality of the College of Law and he has helped to consolidate the respect in the community and so that employers want to hire our college graduates,” said Rosenberg.


During a press conference with local media, Rosenberg had nothing but praise for the nomination.

“What he particularly brings to the Department of Labor is that he is very goal-oriented. When he sets a goal, he makes it happen,” said Schulze. “Any organization [under Acosta] runs very smoothly. He’s a very, very good leader.”

President Trump nominated Acosta is that he is very goal-oriented. When he sets a goal, he makes it happen,” said Schulze. “Any organization [under Acosta] runs very smoothly. He’s a very, very good leader.”

Trump’s nomination of Acosta follows Andrew Puzder’s decision to remove himself from consideration for the position amid controversy regarding his hiring practices and personal life.

As for who will replace Acosta if he is appointed, Rosenberg says it happened so fast that he hadn’t had time to think too much about it.

“We’re not even thinking about that now, we’re just very happy about Alex. Obviously, there’s a confirmation process and we know he’ll be successful there,” said Rosenberg. “The College of Law is very strong right now, there’s capable leadership there and so, we’ll be looking at what our options are in the next couple of weeks.”

“It’s going to be hard to replace Alex,” said Schulze. “The dean role is very important. The Dean steers the law school.”

BISCAYNE BAY

Rosenberg discusses BBC

BARBARA ANDRADE BRITES
Contributing Writer

In order to facilitate discussion between President Mark B. Rosenberg, students, faculty and staff, the University hosted a town hall meeting at the Biscayne Bay Campus Monday, Feb. 13.

The town hall was facilitated by SGC-BBC, Student Affairs, opened the ceremony and presented SGC-BBC Director of events, Dianne Morales, who then introduced Rosenberg.

“We are here because we care and we believe and understand the importance of higher education,” Rosenberg said.

Rosenberg began by announcing for the first time on BBC a new financial aid initiative called Golden Promise. The initiative will start with the early fall 2017 class. Rosenberg said that the Golden Promise is going to guarantee enough funds to cover 100 percent of tuition and fees for freshmen who are Florida residents and have an expected family contribution of zero.

“This will provide a grant that covers 30 credit hours per year for all four years; therefore, there is no reason, financially, for a student to say that he or she can’t afford FIU,” Rosenberg said.

Rosenberg also talked about how they are actively working on a strategic enrollment plan to increase the availability of UCC courses in order ensure that students are able to graduate on time.

“We are going to do everything in our power to get students graduate in four years,” Rosenberg said. “It’s not required to graduate in four years because we understand how difficult it can be for some students, but we will do our best to have courses available for everyone so if they can, they finish on time.”

TOWN HALL, PAGE 2

Moving on up

Dean of College of Law nominated for secretary of labor

ABIGAIL OLSON AND MARTINA BRETOUS
Panther Press Staff

FIU has a destiny to fulfill. FIU students and faculty — we always say that they’re World’s Ahead and this is just another example. Dean Acosta is a person of substance; he’s thoughtful, he’s got integrity and he’s being recognized for that as a nominee to be Secretary of Labor, Rosenberg said.

President Mark B. Rosenberg talks to students and media about Alexander Acosta’s nomination as labor secretary.

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Vol. 1 Issue 6 Monday, February 20, 2017

New turnstiles at GL a good start’

CEYLIN ARIAS
Staff Writer

Entering and exiting the Green Library will now have an added measure of security for faculty, staff and students.

The Library, located on the Modesto Maidique Campus now has turnstiles installed; students, faculty, staff and alumni will now be required to use their FIU OneCard in order to enter and leave the library.

“Many universities across the state, including the University of Miami and Florida State University have long had them in their libraries. Not only do they provide an additional level of security, but provide more accurate information on library usage, which in turn helps the library better meet the needs of its patrons,” said Ashley Garcia, junior account manager for library operations.

After March 19, GL will be open 24 hours a day five times a week as part of a pilot program, according to the provost and executive vice president, Kenneth G. Furton.

Some students, such as Mariana Hernandez feel more secure with the new change.

“To be honest, I always thought of FIU not having turnstiles as being high-risk,” said the junior political science major. “You never really know who comes and leaves the library when it’s a free-for-all with no system implemented on how to keep track of everyone that sets foot in the library.”

Though some students readily object to the construction of turnstiles because this new change would require students to remember to bring their OneCard every time they wish to use the library, Hernandez ensures that such implementation could not overwhelm the cons.

“It’s scary because there could’ve been a

LIBRARY, PAGE 2
Turnstiles installed in green library for added security

Remember to bring their OneCard every time they wish to use the library. Hernandez ensures that such implementation could outweigh the costs.

To be honest, I always thought of FIU not having turnstiles as being high-risk. You never really know who comes and leaves the library when it’s a free-for-all with no system implemented on how to keep track of every individual that sets foot in the library.

From there, they will be asked to provide a driver’s license or other government-issued photo ID. Once permission is granted, FIU-affiliated individuals will be allowed all hours that the Green Library is open. Temporary access will be allowed for only one week.

For non-FIU affiliated individuals, the individual’s driver’s license or other government-issued photo ID will be registered into PantherSoft and they will be granted access privileges for one semester.

If the individual does not hold a driver’s license, a temporary card will be issued with access for one semester. Access for non-affiliated community members will be allowed only until 9 p.m.

Garcia suggests that such construction could in fact help prevent a campus shooting from taking place.

“Unfortunately mass shootings like the Virginia Tech shooting occur on campus grounds frequently and it’s something we have to live with. There was actually an incident a couple of years ago where a university had turnstiles installed and as it turned out, the turnstiles was able to prevent an attack. So for me it’s in but they couldn’t and that was a good thing,” Garcia said.

Currently, there are no turnstiles at the Glenn Hubert Library at BBC, but that does not mean there are no future plans to install turnstiles there.

“The setup of the Glenn Hubert library is very different. In the Green Library there is a little path in the middle both in the left and right of the library. The path was very easy to install the turnstiles in whereas at the Glenn Hubert library if you walk in there’s a wide space,” Garcia said.

Garcia ensures that the lack of turnstiles at BBC is not because they do not care for the safety or interests of the students at the Biscayne Bay Campus. He hopes they will be able to use this new experience with hopes of learning and building from this in order to initiate full plans for construction at the Hubert library.

Town Hall addresses concerns about dining and transportation

Town Hall, page 2

I am at school all day and there are no other options for me — maybe the University could order small batches from restaurants or do something because I am spending all my money on Uber Eats,” Kristina Spalding, junior majoring in Public Relations, said.

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High Velocity

Marcus Berggren

The electric car first saw the light of day in the 1880’s and became popular in the late 19th and early 20th century. Fast forward to 2017 and it seems as if it’s a completely new phenomenon.

In Europe, the market for electric cars is significantly well-established compared to here in the U.S. Even though Americans can pride themselves with an in-house innovator — Tesla — the obsession with cars that completely disregard the environment remains.

If you stroll around the FIU parking lots you might spot the occasional Tesla or z-Car, but for the most part “eco-friendly” doesn’t seem to be a requirement for students when they purchase a new car.

Now don’t get me wrong, I’m not a strong advocate of electric cars. In fact, I would label myself as somewhat of a cynic. The reason is not because I hate the environment, but there is an abundance of “alternative facts” surrounding the electric car. It’s also too flawed to be a viable option for mass transport any time soon.

My biggest issue with the electric car isn’t the concept itself. Instead, it’s with the people associated with it — the ones who seem to think that batteries grow on trees; that is not the case.

The electric car has thrown technology zealots into the diverse world of automobiles. One month ago, I moved here from Sweden, which is the third most eco-friendly country in the world per the Environmental Performance Index and gas is about four times as expensive compared to Miami.

What I have quickly realized is that urban sprawl requires everyone to have a car, and in typical American fashion, they’re the size of regional airports. The environment isn’t second nature to Americans like it is to northern Europeans.

The reason for the electric car not having become as trendy in the U.S. is because it doesn’t fit the profile of most Americans. That must change. FIU is part of a demographic which many manufacturers are interested in; the want to decrease the average age of car buyers but out of the 50 or so students I asked, not a single one was interested in electric cars as a concept. Granted, many mentioned Tesla. Since FIU has 54,000 students this is by no means a representative figure, but a recurring factor was how little everyone knew about electric cars.

Comments such as “they’re all ugly” and “they’re so slow” led me to believe that the manufacturers are extremely bad at marketing and should head straight for the Ryder building.

The thought that all electric cars are ugly is subjective; however, the fact that most electric cars are quick is something the objective. The Tesla Model S 100D does 0 to 62 miles per hour in 2.4 seconds for instance.

Although, what a lot of students knew was that electric cars aren’t as environmentally friendly as they might be portrayed.

The most environmentally sustainable automotive manufacturer for the past decade according to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. The several downsides to the electric car as of now include range anxiety, high cost and to some extent, a lack of knowledge. The range anxiety stems from electric cars having relatively short ranges compared to their internal combustion engine equivalents and moreover, it takes time to charge an electric car.

This has an impact on the essence of motoring — freedom. The high cost relates to numerous economic phenomena, but it’s a matter of the electric car finally making its debut; not everyone being willing to jump on the innovation bandwagon.

I certainly think that the reformation of mass transport is something a society must consider when it has reached a certain level of development. For example, Germany wants to ban all diesel and gasoline-powered automobiles by 2030 while the entire idea of an electric car baffles the African continent in its entirety.

To come to the point, the electric car as a notion is slowly but surely gaining traction. With Tesla leading the charge, major car manufacturers have decided to really invest in alternative propulsion methods. As time progresses and the fledging generation has more purchasing power combined with technological improvement, it’s merely a matter of time before changing our ways becomes a necessary evil. Even though the U.S. is an economic powerhouse, the country cannot stagnate the development of electric cars.

Europe leads by example. Your move, America.

Marcus Berggren

Panther Press

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Black History Month more than ‘political concession’

I write in strong objection to the misrepresentation of my views in Volume 1, No 3 of the Panther Magazine published as a special issue for Black History Month.

As the Director of African and African Diaspora Studies, I strongly believe that Black History Month is of vital importance and this reflects the official position of the Program. This was not communicated in the several instances where I was referenced. In the article titled “Heroic Heritage” the impression was given that I was somewhat not supportive of Black History Month. The quote attributed to me that Black History Month was a “special accommodation” was taken entirely out of context.

Its placement on the front page was extraordinarily damaging. My intent was to provide an example of a particularly racist understanding of Black History Month as merely an undeserved political concession to black people who had nothing to contribute to the modern civilized world.

Even more egregious was the assertion on page 2 that “Hintzen believes that persons of African descent are moving from a stage of traditional savagery to a stage of civilization.”

This was mentioned in the interview as an example of pervasive racist beliefs that make Black History Month so necessary and important because of its role in challenging, rejecting and rejecting as racist myths these unfortunately popular understandings of black history and black people in general.

Black History Month is necessary and imperative precisely because it provides a space of struggle against pervasive anti-black racism.

The narrative of black emergence from savagery to civilization is one of the most cruel, dangerous and devious examples that justify and normalize anti-black racism by those European thinkers who laid the groundwork for the evils and violence of white supremacy.

The purpose of Black History Month is to chronicle in the public arena the history of black people and their contributions to civilization and to the development of the modern world.

It serves to position from editorsials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and/or members of the University community.

Percy Hintzen
Director
African and African Diaspora Studies

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Have something on your mind? Send an email to opinion@fiu.edu. Be sure to include your name, major and year and a photo of yourself. Letters must be less than 400 words and may be edited for clarity and length. Panther Press will only run two letters a semester from any individual.

Panther Press – 3
PantherNOW.com
Monday, February 20, 2017
Contact Us
Michelle Marchante
Opinion Director
JULIANE SUNSHINE
Staff Writer

BBC will host Writers on the Bay once again Feb. 23, 2017 at 8 p.m.

The event will feature author Lauren Grodstein who directs the master fine arts program at Rutgers University-Camden. Grodstein will read from her published books, and has a new book coming out March 2017.

The event is free to all students and it is a chance to hear and ask questions to a published author.

Third year, Creative writing graduate student Jamie Eubanks has attended Writers on the Bay before.

“I have been to a couple each semester. It is usually a nice event, there are snacks and mingling. It’s nice because you can just hang out and get to know people. Eventually you get to sit down and there is a writer, usually a novelist or poet, they talk about what they do and then they read from their work,” said Eubanks.


Grodstein is a friend of fictional professor Lynne Barrett here at FIU.

During the spring and fall semester Writers on the Bay holds a reading series each month and the faculty members rotate and invite an author to the reading series, creative writing program assistant Marina Pruna explained.

“One of the things I think Writers on the Bay does is bring good authors to the FIU community and more broadly to Miami. It is also one of MFA ways of involving the current MFA students in the world of publishing, reading and its way for them to learn more to the craft of writing,” said Pruna.

This event will be held in the Wolfe Center on the first floor, the recommend time to arrive is around 7:45. p.m. so, students have a chance to get something to eat or drink.

“Students get to rub shoulders with really important authors that they may or may not have worked with before and a lot of them make relationships with the authors that may extend forward. It does a little more than just bring in authors,” said Pruna.

The next reading series Panthers can expect will be in March and it is a once a year award given by the Lauren Sanders Foundation.

This year Jane Smiley, the Pulitzer Prize winner, will be attending, she is most known for her book called “A Thousand Acres” which was also made into a movie.

Students can find more information online by going to https://englishing.fiu.edu/creative-writing-events, call the English department or go on their Facebook where you can message further questions students might have.

Students gathered in the Graham Center Pit on Monday, Feb. 13, to participate in the Caribbean Students Association’s Affairs of the Heart date auction. Portions of the proceeds from the event were donated to Relay for Life.
Film Initiative Underground
Film club brings variety to spring semester

CAROLINE LOZANO  Contributing Writer

An exciting, popcorn-filled semester awaits students at FIU’s Film Initiative: Underground. Their overall mission is to bring film into the lives of students on campus. And they certainly have an interesting variety of films planned out for audiences to watch.

Each month’s screenings pertain to a particular theme previously established by last semester’s e-board members.

“For example, this month is civil rights. Next month, we have filmmaker focus and in April, we’re doing the theme of loneliness,” club President Robert Solomon said.

February will feature showings of “Do the Right Thing,” “Malcolm X,” and “12 Years A Slave.”

Every week, audiences can also participate in choosing the films that will be shown.

“... The audience votes on which films they want to watch based on a selection,” Solomon said.

Audience vote selections for February are “In Heat of the Night,” “Boyz n the Hood” and “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner.”

After a typical screening, discussions can range from technical aspects like cinematography to the film’s relation to the theme. Crew members of Film Initiative try to select films they feel are unique or instructive.

“Films are chosen mostly because they fit the theme but also because the organization feels that you can take something from or that the audience can learn something from it and they stand out in some sort of way,” said Solomon.

March’s filmmaker focus will enchant admirers of Akira Kurosawa as his critically acclaimed films “Ikiru,” “Throne of Blood” and “Seven Samurai” will be screened and discussed throughout the month.

The main goal of the Film Initiative: Underground for this semester is to enrich the screening experience for audience members.

“We have a popcorn machine that is on the way so there’ll be free popcorn at the Film Initiative: Underground for people that stay to watch the movie or even if they want to show up and say “hi” or maybe if they asked for free popcorn nicely,” Solomon said.

All students are welcome to join in on the experience as everyone’s ideas and discussions topics based on the films are encouraged. Whatever you’d like to point out about a film, whether it’s a running theme or a beautiful shot, there’s no stopping you.

“We’re here for them [students],” Solomon said. “Whatever they’re interested in, we don’t mind talking about it.

For anyone interested, film screenings take place on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. in the Green Library 100B.

RELAY, PAGE 4
8000 people participated and fundraised $117,000.

“We are very excited to see the turnout this year as the executive board, committee, teams and participants have worked very hard to make this year successful,” Delgadillo said.

Relay for Life’s organizers highlight the importance of raising awareness for the event, stressing that anyone can participate.

“This is a community event and everyone is welcome to come and support and have fun,” Delgadillo said. “We not only like to include students and faculty that attend FIU, but also families and friends that are in the area that are willing and looking forward to spending time at the event and helping the fundraising efforts.

The mission of Relay for Life, to raise awareness and funds for cancer research and a cure, is one shared by many students.

“Cancer is so complex that we need to be able to fund researchers, scientists, and associations in order to give them a chance at finding a cure,” junior finance major Samantha Lola said. “Every dollar is taking one step forward.”

Besides fundraising, students at the University can help the ACS by participating in such activities as Road to Recovery, Look Good Feel Better, and Reach to Recovery, which collect funds for programs that help cancer patients in their treatment, recovery and transition to cancer-free status easier.

Like Relay for Life, the focus is ultimately on raising awareness and providing resources for those who suffer from cancer and their support networks.

As stated in Relay for Life’s FIU website, this opportunity is important to not only honor cancer survivors and remember people we have lost, but also to raise funds and awareness to help save lives.

For information and support for cancer patients and caregivers alike, call the ACS hotline number at 800-227-2345,

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FRESH BAKE

CHRISTOPHER RODRIGUEZ

The second week of February had much to offer including a playful take on Valentine’s Day blues, a veteran band nearly falling asleep at the wheel and an Atlanta rapper looking for his place in the burgeoning trap scene.

Here are the noteworthy releases that should be added to your playlists.

1. Thundercat- “Friend Zone”

Thundercat may have always seemed the traditionalist in a typically wonky scene of L.A. beatmakers, adding his bass guitar wizardry on the sidelines of songs by the likes of Flying Lotus and Kendrick Lamar. But on the latest single from his upcoming album “Drunk,” he seems determined not be taken seriously.

Over a loose funk-inspired number with wobbling basslines and frantic keys provided by frequent collaborator Mono/Poly, Thundercat tells his significant other not to call him and that he’d “rather play Mortal Kombat anyway.” He even borrows a certain Lamar lyric to emphasize his need for space. The tongue-in-cheek affair is only bolstered by the fact that it was released on Valentine’s Day.

2. Little Dragon- “High”

On her first release since 2014, singer Yukimi Nagano gets the band back together for more of the R&B-inspired electro-soul we’ve come to expect from a Little Dragon release.

The song drifts down softly with ambient bass and a faraway electronic whir that sounds like a satellite signal. Nagano offers up her fantasy as if whispering in a lover’s ear: “Over the North Star/Sleepless to far/Together we are...” Her vocals often blurred at the edges as she floats over a gentle melody that escapes us entirely as the repeated “high” slowly fades away.

3. Bernice- “Don’t Wanna Be European”

Bernice, the project of Toronto based producer Robin Dann, releases this first single from an upcoming concept album that revolves around the friendship between a girl and a bear. In the midst of bubbly electronic textures, Dann sings about loneliness as the world comes in around her: “Don’t send the guns after me,” she pleas, later adding “I don’t wanna be anywhere else.” Her voice comes through in layers, a reflection of the two characters she inhabits. Just as the production begins to surrender to interruptions of white noise, she switches perspectives.

“I wanna be the kids making out under the moon who got only love in mind” reflecting a deep-seated human desire that rises above the song’s occasionally head-scratching concept.

4. Father- “Hands”

“Hands” opens up what may very well be a busy year for Atlanta rapper Father. A figure from the more surrealistic leanings of the trap genre who bred contemporaries IlVoeMakonnen and Key!, Father opens with a disarmingly simple repetitive approach.

“Hands on sight, on sight” he lazily raps, nonchalantly calling out haters over the spare electro inspired beat. He breaks into a spitfire delivery in the second and third verses, throwing out confident and deceptively winy one-liners that merit a chuckle (“I’m the star! This is your favorite show/TV on the radio.”). He even borrows a certain Lamar line (“Sometimes Always”) in this and other upcoming releases. Father looks to set himself up as the leftfield figure we need in the exploding Atlanta trap scene.

5. Jesus and Mary Chain- “Always Sad”

The second single from their upcoming album Damage And Joy (their first in 19 years), the Scottish dream pop forefathers are still brooding, but ever more self-conscious. Within the swirl of hazy guitars, lead singer Jim Reid sounds as detached as ever when he says with a sigh “Guess I’m always sad.”

Reid is balanced out here when he is joined by guest vocalist Bernadette Denning who channels a languid teenage fantasy (“You ain’t like those other guys.”) The duet is reminiscent of their 1994 Hope Sandoval collab “Sometimes Always,” but here, Denning and Reid lack the urgency that made the other rise above its simplicity. While the band still sounds cohesive as a unit, the tongue-in-cheek intention doesn’t always stick.

Fresh Bake is a weekly column that reviews new music releases in various genres. Christopher Rodriguez also hosts a weekly radio show on The Roar, where he plays latest releases.

BEHIND THE ROAR

Fabienne Fleurantin hosts the Claw and Growl on The Roar Student Radio.

What show are you hosting?

I’m hosting the Claw & Growl show right now. There’s four of us: Melissa, Liz, Abbey and me.

Mostly, we talk about politics and what’s going on within FIU, issues that are affecting students on campus so it’s really a cool thing.

Day and Time?

Mondays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

How long have you been a host?

I have been doing it for a semester so far and this is my second semester. I like it a lot. I was very nervous because I’ve been a writer at PantherNOW for almost a year and a half now ... I’m a journalism major and I want to take care of myself and Delgado talked about the difference between sexual assault and rape, I learned a lot from her ... We also talked about porn and expectations. It was really fun and it was a great conversation.

What would you say is overrated and underrated?

Overrated: iPhone. I’m a Samsung girl. Underrated: Millennials.

“Behind The Roar” is a series where we get to know the DJs and hosts at the radio station, The Roar.
University tennis team recruits highly-ranked athlete for fall

ALEX DEL VALLE
Contributing Writer

Signing Day for high school seniors to decide where they will play tennis at the collegiate level is April 15.

The Tennis Recruiting Network released a winter rankings list of the top women’s college recruiting classes through Jan. 4, based off point totals.

In the latest rankings released on Monday, Feb. 6, FIU’s women’s tennis team was ranked No. 25 in the nation by TRN. FIU is the only team in the top 25 with only one recruit; every other school had at least two.

The Panthers added Ioana Minca to the team, an international athlete who is currently ranked No. 25 in the world. The Pitesti, Romania native is also the highest ranked junior player in her country.

Minca has competed in Junior Grand Slam tournaments, including the Australian Open, Wimbledon, U.S. Open and French Open.

For Head Coach Katarina Petrovic, this is the highest ranked player she has ever signed.

“She is the top junior player in her home country of Romania and has had an accomplished career,” she said. “I am really excited to have Ioana join our program.”

Along with her individual successes, winning over 100 singles matches and about 50 doubles contests, Minca represented her country in the European Junior Championships.

Already with a 4-1 record this season, this added news is a great sign of things to come for the Panthers’ tennis program.

“We are continuing to build something special here,” Petrovic said, “and her addition will make our team stronger.”

FIU Student Media’s rebranded website is still bringing up-to-date news coverage, regular sports updates, what’s new in student life, music and talk shows, photo galleries and more.

Baseball coach approaches season with a ‘new philosophy’

HEATHER O’DELL
Staff Writer

Head Coach Mervyl Melendez is now the fourth head coach in baseball history, and bringing 17 years of coaching experience to FIU, he is looking forward to a successful season.

“It’s all about changing the philosophy of the team,” said Melendez. “It always takes time for a team to adjust to a new coach, but I feel like we have connected very well and the practices have been running great.”

Along with connecting with the players, Melendez emphasized the importance of energy.

“Energy is vital when it comes to any sport,” said Melendez. “I’m not talking about physical energy; I mean passion on the field. When a team plays with passion, nothing can stop them.”

Not only have players noticed a difference in how the practices are run, but also in their performance as individual players.

“I play with a different mindset now,” said Irving Thomas, the shortstop for FIU’s baseball team. “It’s all about teamwork this season.”

Melendez is looking forward to see how the seniors play this season. Being their last year playing at FIU, he hopes to see how well they have excelled.

“Seeing seniors play is always a joy to me,” Melendez said. “They are the most experienced players on the field; Everyone looks up to them. They really do have the authority to set the mood for the team. I’m expecting big things from them.”

With a fresh face on the field and a new motivation within the team, the Panthers expect a successful season.

“Energy is vital when it comes to any sport. I’m not talking about physical energy; I mean passion on the field. When a team plays with passion, nothing can stop them.”

Mervyl Melendez
Head Coach
FIU Baseball
Athletes are constantly balancing practices and classes to work toward making their future a brighter one. And even with a busy schedule, some athletes still make time to enjoy the campus life experience.

For junior infielder Eddie Silva, he is able to experience the FIU campus culture by supporting other FIU athletes. The sports management major said he recently attended FIU’s softball season-opener on Feb. 10, where he watched the Panthers shutout the Georgetown University Hoyas 4-0.

“It’s always a good way for athletes like us to experience the campus life here at FIU,” said Silva. “We go out to the games to show support to our fellow Panthers and also getting to be with the fans and help cheer on the University is always a good time.”

Back in September 2016, Head Coach Mervyl Melendez and the rest of the baseball team welcomed back former players and held the FIU Baseball Alumni Weekend. Alumni players were given a tour of the newly renovated ballpark and facilities. Following the tour, alumni players participated in batting exercises and a home run derby.

“Baseball alumni games and other types of events of this sort are great for student-athletes,” said sophomore and business administration major Jeremy Aguire. “It gives players a chance to enjoy their time on campus. They’re constantly putting in time on field or in the classroom, so they deserve events like this where they can enjoy themselves and one another.”

The Panthers are looking to junior infielder Eddie Silva to help the team kickoff the season on the right foot.

Silva maintained a strong sophomore campaign and was able to come up big for the Panthers when he went 8 for 13 while compiling three RBIs in a three-game series against Marshall in 2016.

The sports management major finished the season with a .293 batting average, 65 hits, 29 RBIs and a team-leading 18 doubles.

Silva said his personal goals for the beginning of the season is to break his record. “Of course I would like to hit the ball over .300,” he said. “I’d like to hit the ball a little farther this season compared to last, and also just help the team win as many games as possible.”

The former Archbishop McCarthy Maverick played in two state championships his sophomore and junior year in high school. His team beat both Monsignor Edward Pace High School, 4-3, in 2012 and A. Crawford Mosley High School, 5-2, in 2013. During his senior year, the Pembroke Pines native was batting .506, hit five home runs, and tallied up 31 RBIs. Silva was able to claim the Hitter of the Year award and also was named the winner of the Gold Glove in 2014.

Although Silva said he was heavily lured by Arizona State University and Virginia Tech, he chose to play ball for FIU instead. “Florida International was the best option,” said Silva. “The University is close to home, and to have my family and friends be able to come to all of my games is always great.”

“You’re always looking forward to this baseball season.