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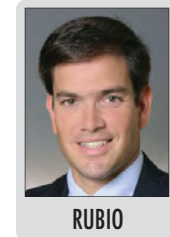
OLIVER MACDONALD/THE BEACON

SMOKING: Andre Dawson cooks hot dogs on a barbecue at the Student Programming Council's Foam Party last week. The Party was organized to welcome incoming freshman for the summer, but the event itself was open to everybody. See page 3 for the full story.

Fla. House Speaker will teach in the Fall

PAULO O'SWATH
Staff Writer

Florida House of Representatives Speaker Marco Rubio has joined FIU's Metropolitan Center as a Visiting Distinguished Service Professor. He will teach two political science courses in the 2008-2009 academic year.



RUBIO

"We are excited about the contribution that Speaker Rubio will make in teaching and research," said University

President Modesto A. Maidique in a press release.

Rubio will teach a course entitled Florida Politics and the 2008 Election along with Dario Moreno, associate professor of political science and Director of the Metropolitan Center.

"I am very, very excited about this," Moreno said. "This is a golden opportunity for all of us to see a public servant and learn from them directly."

In addition to his duties as co-instructor, Rubio will also be responsible for course and lecture development as well as student evaluations, according to the press release.

Another major responsibility will include working on research for the Affordable Housing Project where he will assist with recommendations and also develop a proposal for a demonstration project.

"I am honored to work with students and faculty at FIU," Rubio said in a news release.

Rubio added, "I love politics and government and this opportunity will enable me to be a part of the public policy conversation in Florida. It will definitely be a learning opportunity for me."

Rubio will teach another course in the Spring alongside Moreno called Miami Politics.

"We are looking forward to having Speaker Rubio join our team," Moreno said. "Rubio's insights will give students and researchers a different perspective of the state political process."

In addition to teaching at FIU, Rubio will also continue to practice law in Miami with the law firm Broad and Cassel, according to the release.

Rubio holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Florida and a law degree from the University of Miami.

BUSTED FOR BIAS

FIU loses discrimination lawsuit

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO
News Director

University President Modesto A. Maidique reaffirmed the University's commitment to diversity in a July 24 newsletter – just six days after a Miami-Dade jury ruled against FIU in a discrimination lawsuit.

The jury ordered FIU to pay former employee Sean St. Louis \$2.5 million for racial discrimination during his accounting department's dismantlement in 2004.

"We take allegations of this nature very

seriously," Maidique said in a statement responding to the verdict. "The University plans to appeal the decision."

In 2003, FIU had undergone several federal audits investigating the misappropriation of federal grant money in the Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technologies, where St. Louis worked.

Evidence of mismanagement at high administration levels led to drastic changes in the make-up of the accounting section.

The University created new offices and positions, hired a chief financial officer, re-

organized departments and dismantled others and fired at least 20 HCET employees, according to a *Miami Herald* article published on Aug. 15, 2005.

Maidique's weekly newsletter stated the case had been previously presented to the state's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a court-appointed arbitrator, both of which found no evidence of discrimination.

The July 18 verdict, however, cites

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Students seek to register new voters

JULIO MENACHE
Staff Writer

As November creeps closer, students diligently campaign for the candidates of both the Republican and Democratic Parties vying for presidency.

These students wake up early, come to FIU and set up information tables in between fraternity and sorority rush tables. Members stand in the middle of the Graham Center with voter registration documents at hand and ask each student who pass by if they are registered to vote.

These groups face a daunting task: getting college students – a group that has historically

been apathetic to politics – to vote.

There is some good news, however. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, while voter turnout for college students has decreased 16 percent since 1972, it increased for the second major election in a row by more than 11 percent. The organization, which researches voter trends among American youth, notes that college students are more liberal than older voters when it comes to issues such as the Iraq war.

Chris Cabral, current president of the FIU College Democrats, said that issues such as the Iraq war and disappointment with the Bush administration makes it almost too easy to attract

young voters to the Democratic Party.

"It's the failures of the Bush administration that have brought young voters to the Democratic Party, and has made them very eager to vote Democrat," Cabral said.

The barrier-breaking campaign of Barack Obama as the first African American to clinch the Democratic nomination has captivated the attention of many FIU students. Cabral pointed to Obama's strong youth support, which led to his victory in the Iowa primary.

"He has inspired young voters by speaking about issues relevant to them, such as

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Pending lawsuits could cost FIU

LAWSUIT, page 1

... as a “motivating factor” in FIU’s decision not to rehire St. Louis after the Contracts and Grants department’s employees were fired and offered the chance to reapply for new positions. None of the former employees currently work at FIU.

The department in which St. Louis worked as associate controller had predominantly black employees, as well as one white and one Hispanic employee, according to Erika Deustch Rotbart, St. Louis’ lawyer.

Chief Financial Officer Vivian Sanchez’s office referred questions to the Office of Media Relations after repeated calls. Media Relations declined to comment.

According to St. Louis’ statement, St. Louis met with administration from Human Resources around Oct. 1, 2004, and was told verbally and in writing that he was “terminated from his position” and that his entire department was “abolished.”

At the meeting, former Director of Human Resources Paul Michaud informed St. Louis that FIU “needed to look for employees of a higher skill level to work in the department,” the statement reported. He was reassigned to HCET to conduct auditing around Oct. 4.

That month St. Louis reapplied for several positions, including his own, which had been moved to a different department under a different title.

He was not rehired. Thus, St. Louis “was forced to take the necessary steps to ensure the financial security of his family after seeing all of the writing on the wall,” and was forced into “termination and/or constructive discharge from FIU on or about Nov. 26, 2004,” the statement said.

Deustch Rotbart said St. Louis’ termination is a result of FIU’s “pattern and practice of discrimination” against its black employees who have been systematically denied the “same treatment, benefits, compensation and other opportunities” given to whites and Hispanics.

“He is a classic example of [FIU’s racial discrimination]. When he left he was making \$76,000 a year. The Hispanic woman who replaced him is making \$86,000 in less than 18 months,” Rotbart said.

St. Louis’ department faced four federal audits carried out by the Office of Audit Services and the Department of Health and Health Services in 2003.

Both parties found that out of \$27.8 million in Department of Energy grants, only \$3.3 million were properly spent on research in HCET in a span of seven years, according to the Aug. 2005 *Miami Herald* article.

Rotbart recognized St. Louis’ involvement in the University’s accounting scandal and said that during his employment, St. Louis was vocal about his reservations concerning HCET and its inappro-

... priate use of grant money.

“I am extremely uncomfortable with these accounting practices,” St. Louis wrote to his superiors, according to the article. “While it is not my intention to hinder Dr. Ebadian’s research, I cannot close my eyes to what is going on. Based on the transactions that come across my desk, I am sure the problems are more extensive than what is listed in the audit findings.”

St. Louis’ frustrations with HCET’s actions led him to the U.S. Justice Department.

“St. Louis claims he fell from favor at FIU after cooperating with investigators from the U.S. Justice Department, directing them to files that bolstered their case against HCET,” according to the *Miami Herald* article.

St. Louis filed a charge of discrimination on April 4, 2005 with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Florida Commission on Human Relations, said St. Louis’ statement, and the EEOC issued St. Louis a right to sue on Dec. 6, 2005.

The ordeal ended with an \$11.5 million settlement with the federal government. Additionally, the Office of University Compliance was created.

Top administration was also replaced and the Division of Sponsored Research and Training, HCET and the Office of the Controller were all reorganized.

During the reshuffling, St. Louis’ position was renamed Associate Director of Post-Award in the Division of Sponsored Research. The Contracts and Grants department in the Office of the Controller was subsequently closed.

According to St. Louis, FIU had advertised his position as far back as Sept. 6, 2004 under a different title and that interviews for his replacement were conducted as early as Jan. 2004.

A Jan. 2004 Office of the Provost memorandum, signed by Maidique and former Provost Mark B. Rosenberg, explained that “these [auditing] problems have resulted in part from inadequate operational compliance by unit leadership, and in part from a gap between programmatic growth and infrastructure and administrative systems at the University.”

However, Rotbart maintains that none of the firings, including those of the five lower-level employees she is representing in another discrimination case, had to do with disciplinary reasons stemming from the HCET scandal.

“[FIU] told them it was not for disciplinary reasons. If they had done something wrong they certainly weren’t saying it in their [termination] letter,” she said.

She expects the discrimination lawsuit for the five employees will result in the same or even better results than St. Louis’ because they cannot say they were involved in FIU’s accounting problems.

MAKING NOISE



COURTESY OF FIU’S CIVIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

WOW: The Wall of Wind at FIU’s Engineering Center produces hurricane-strength winds for research purposes. Visit www.fiusm.com for the full story.

Youth shows interest, for a change

YOUNG VOTERS, page 1

... affordable college education and universal healthcare,” Cabral said.

John McCain supporters have noted that while the current president’s approval ratings are low, Democratic-led Congress has an approval rating even lower than the President’s. According to Young Republicans at FIU, while many students identify with Obama, there is still a strong youth movement for McCain and other local Republican politicians, such as U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

“There has definitely been an increase in youth participation [in McCain’s campaign] and more efforts have been made for young voters,” said Juan Carlos “Juanky” Robaina, who is the current South Florida coordinator for Students for John McCain.

Keith Fernandez, an FIU student who is working with the Ros-Lehtinen campaign, has noticed a rise in youth participation in the congresswoman’s run for re-election.

“The youth [is] getting involved at every level; a good portion of our events are young people,” Fernandez said.

Fernandez estimates that nearly 40-45 percent of the people who attended Ros-Lehtinen’s Kick-Off Party on July 19 were young people. Fernandez also added that the oldest member of Ros-Lehtinen’s campaign staff was still in his late 20s.

“While Obama has produced a lot of enthusiasm for the youth of America, many students are still enthusiastic about McCain,” Fernandez said.

With the new elections comes the domination of a new medium: the Internet. Both Republican and Democratic candidates have used the Internet and social networking sites, such as Facebook, to connect with their youngest supporters.

What is also unique to the 2008 elections is the use of YouTube, which allows campaigns and ordinary citizens to post videos about their favorite candidate or about their opponent.

Campus Survey* Will students head to the polls?

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Voting	10	3	9	12
Not Voting	2	0	4	0
Obama	4	1	2	4
McCain	4	1	1	5
Undecided	2	1	6	3

* 40 students polled

SOURCE: PAULO O’SWATH/THE BEACON

“The Internet has helped this generation become the most informed generation in American history,” Cabral said.

Aside from the Internet and voter registration drives, groups supporting Republican and Democratic candidates are also canvassing – going door to door, asking for support or giving out information about a candidate. Many students also spend time phone banking and hosting social events with candidates, such as bowling parties. Some groups on campus, such as the conservative Leadership Institute and the liberal Democracy for America, advocate causes on campus and help students make their own grassroots

campaign. While these groups are focused on getting their candidate into office, both sides agree that this needs to be the year the youth will finally stop being typecast as uninterested and finally come out to vote.

“Why vote? Because our future depends on it. No matter whom you vote for, get your voice heard,” said Jason Alonso, president of Democracy for America.

“There’s no other way to put it: If you don’t vote, you’re stupid,” Robaina said. “What right do you have to complain if you didn’t vote?”

THE BEACON

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Personal trainer course welcomes all shapes, sizes

KISHORE SAWH
Staff Writer

It may be a bit late to realize a summer six pack before the season is over, but don't give up: this is Miami, and beach days are not going away any time soon.

Biscayne Bay Campus' Recreation, in partnership with the National Exercise Trainers Association, may hold the key to your success with their upcoming Personal Trainer Certification program. For those looking to fulfill their stale New Years' resolu-

tion of having a beach body or to just have a healthier life-style, this may be the chance to do so.

"Becoming a personal trainer is a great way to earn extra money and stay in shape," reads the program flyer floating around campus.

It is a sentiment shared by Warren Shaw,

assistant director of campus recreation who is a key person for this agenda.

Shaw, an FIU alumnus who garnered his master's in Sports Management in 2001, makes it a point to address a possible concern.

"These classes are open to any and anyone – no specific fitness level needed. All you need is some time ahead to study the book to be able apply what you have learned during the class," Shaw said.

Andrea Reynoso, the only BBC Fitness Center staff member enrolled in the program, is still motivated to take the class despite her small stature.

"It's always something that's been interesting to me. It's good to help yourself stay fit and help others stay fit - also good to be health conscious," said Reynoso, who is a sophomore double majoring in physical therapy and athletic training. "I don't need it as a job. It's a good knowledge base and it's convenient. It's right here."

Aside from convenience, Reynoso also thinks that, in today's world, the extra certification looks good on a resume.

The course is accredited by National Exercise Trainers Association, which has graduated over 120,000 thousand fitness professionals since its in-

ception in 1977, according to its Web site, ndaitea.com. The association is currently approved by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, among other professional standard organizations, and are considered leaders in their field.

According to Shaw, this was among the primary reasons for FIU choosing NETA to partner with, as well as their willingness to do the class at FIU while offering students a significant discount.

The course will be held August 23 from 8 a.m to 5 p.m and August

24 from 8 a.m to 3.30 p.m. It is an intensive two-day course that will entail classroom as well as hands-on time.

The class will offer health and fitness assessments, exercise programming for healthy adults, exposure to cardiovascular and strength training equipment, dynamics of communication and leadership skills, and an exercise science refresher, according to www.netafit.org.

A written exam will be held at the end of the course. If passed, a National Certificate valid for two years will be granted.

The cost for the entire course will be \$299 for FIU students and staff, and up to \$370 for all others.

A maximum of 25 people can register, so those interested should register sooner rather than later.

Personal training classes are just the tip of the iceberg of what NETA offers.

"We may do other types of classes with them [NETA] if this one does well," Shaw said.

NETA also has Pilates instructor classes, as well as Yoga and group instructor training.

Shaw also revealed that it is a desire of Campus Recreation to have a personal trainer on staff as it is a frequent request.

"It would be great for an FIU student to be one of our personal trainers," Shaw said.

So as another incentive, there might be employment opportunities available to those interested that become qualified.

To find out more about the Personal Trainer Certification Program, call the BBC Recreation Center at (305) 919-5678 or visit <http://www.netafit.org>.

These classes are open to any and anyone – no specific fitness level needed. All you need is some time ahead to study the book to be able apply what you have learned during the class.

Warren Shaw, Asst. Director
BBC Recreation

SUMMER DAYS



JOSH TANDLICH/THE BEACON

WATER SPORTS: Camp kayak instructor Mike Haysn pulls kayakers from the bay after a day's lessons at BBC's summer camp.

Student crowd soaks up fun, food at annual foam party

ANA PEREZ
Staff Writer

Water, foam and a barbecue under the stars – this is the way that many students ended a long week of classes.

On July 25, Biscayne Bay's Student Programming Council, along with Panther Power and the Black Student Union, provided students with a fun-filled night of wet and wild entertainment at the annual foam party.

Ryan Lyttle, SPC President, was pleased with the outcome.

"I expected it to be as big as it was," Lyttle said. "The turnout was awesome; the best part of the party for me would have to be when I did my rounds at 11p.m. and saw that everyone was having a good time."

The lawn in front of the Bay Vista housing complex resembled a night club. Student guests from University Park Greek societies were even present, including Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., and Kappa Alpha Psi, Inc. Other South Florida community members attended, including local high school students.

According to several students, the party was well executed and the food was tasty,



OLIVER MACDONALD/THE BEACON

GOOD CLEAN FUN: FIU students having a good time at SPC's annual foam party.

sufficing for the entire night. Events included water fights and dance-offs.

Zakina Ogbourne, graphic artist for Campus Life and Orientation, thought it was a successful event.

"There was a lot of people there, so it was good for new people living in housing," Ogbourne said. "It was also a good community event, and everyone seemed to be having a good time. There were a lot of things to do."

Even though the party was scheduled to end at midnight, revelers were disappointed that it ended so promptly.

"The cops cut it off at 12 on the dot, but people weren't ready to leave," Ogbourne said.

SPC is currently preparing for future events in the fall, including the homecoming dance and step show.

They will also have a comedy show, a few parties and Hispanic Heritage month events.

"The FIU community needs to know that without them, none of our events can be successful," Lyttle said.

For more information on upcoming campus events, call (305) 919- 5280.

JOIN THE FUN! ... NOT TO MENTION THE MAYHEM

The Beacon is always looking for talented and dedicated individuals to join the staff. Apply in GC 210 or email kassandra.pool@fiusm.com.

THE BEACON | Editorial

Adherence to goals has consequences

A little less than a century ago, the RMS Titanic made the fatal mistake of believing itself invincible in an attempt to make history. FIU has a lot to learn from this catastrophic cruise which demonstrates that stubborn determination to reach a goal can end up sinking you. Several times in recent memory, FIU has had to deal with image-damaging consequences as a result of irresponsible expansionism, the most recent of which a \$2.5 million ruling against the University brought by a former employee who was let go from his position in 2004 when his office, the Contracts and Grants Department, was disbanded resulting from misappropriation of federal funds within the Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technologies.

According to an August 2005 *Miami Herald* article, the HCET was a main factor in the University receiving a top ranking from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The foundation is a highly prestigious designation, now shrouded from controversy due to the allegations of fraud stemming from such actions as using grant money earmarked for research for other expenses, such as the hiring of consultants.

This type of mismanagement is akin to more recent FIU embarrassments such as the NCAA policy violations committed by Athletics and a general attitude among administration which puts the manifest destiny of the school, such as the College of Medicine accreditation. Such endeavors are

at the expense of maintaining what we already have, notably a slew of degree programs within the College of Education that supplies many teachers to the Miami-Dade and Broward school districts.

The \$2.5 million in punitive damage must be paid to former employee Sean St. Louis after a jury ruled that racial motivations played a role in the University's decision to not rehire St. Louis after his position was eliminated.

The cut was made for changes to the way FIU handles money, partly by creating new offices aimed at accountability, and hiring a Chief Financial Officer in the form of Vivian Sanchez.

Despite the fact that many of the new positions were filled by Hispanics, and many of the lost jobs were previously held by black employees, both the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and an independent court-appointed arbitrator did not find any basis in fact for such an allegation, according to University President Modesto Maidique in an e-mail newsletter. This, along with the facts of the case, call into question the legitimacy of the hefty amount awarded to St. Louis by the jury.

What is more readily apparent is that the entire situation is the result of FIU ignoring an iceberg warning, and that we do not have enough lifeboats to save us from the icy waters of this litigation. It is imperative that FIU appeal this decision before a costly precedent is set in future cases, and that greater care is taken in preventing future debacles.

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHTS

Olympics bring injustices to light

JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ
Staff Writer

Cultural genocide, human rights violation and censorship. These words may define third world countries in Africa or Nazi Germany in the 40s but surprisingly enough it is taking place in one of the fastest developing countries in the world: China.

According to a CNN article on July 4, in protest to the human rights violation, world leaders like Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Czech Republic President Vaclav Klaus will not attend the opening ceremony in Beijing. On the other hand, President George W. Bush announced that he will be attending the event.

This is an embarrassment to the United States, which is the leader of the free world and human rights. FIU graduate in Biology and Free Cuba Foundation activist John Suarez said "The 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany served to legitimize the Third Reich before an international university and helped solidify their power in Germany. The 2008 Olympics in Communist China threatens to do the same for the Chinese dictatorship." To him it is a shame for President Bush to attend the Olympics since FDR did not attend the Nazi Olympics and Jimmy Carter boycotted the 1980 Olympics in Moscow after the Soviet Union decided to invade Afghanistan. He kept U.S. athletes home. In response, the Soviet Union

boycotted the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

To understand the controversy surrounding these games, it is important to know that in 1949 Communist China invaded Tibet. Ten years later an uprising was crushed which sent Tibet's spiritual leader the Dalai Lama to exile in India, where he still remains the spiritual adviser of Tibetans. He has recently accused the Chinese government of ethnic genocide against the Tibet people. Violent protests in March of this year have claimed the lives of 140 people, although the Chinese government claims the figures are smaller.

China won the right to host the 2008 Olympics with the condition that it would improve human rights. However, it has continued to incarcerate protestors and activists. China has cracked down on dissidents, limited the access of foreign and local journalist and has increased censorship of the internet.

The Dalai Lama has followed Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent resistance against the Chinese occupiers for the past 50 years. He understands that through these means Gandhi was successful at driving the British out of India. He has become the symbol of Tibetan independence and civil rights. In the year 1989 he won the Nobel Prize for Peace. He has criticized violent protests and said he would quit his role as leader of Tibet in exile if violence gets out of control. He is not

calling for separation from Tibet, but rather autonomy to save the Tibet culture. Like he mentioned, "We must not develop anti-Chinese feelings. Whether we like it or not we have to live side-by-side." He does not support a boycott of the Beijing Olympics since these actions could hinder negotiations with China. He believes that China deserves to host the Olympics since it is the most populous country, as long as human rights are protected.

Although his peaceful means are admirable, a boycott of the Chinese Olympics and its sponsors will send a message of disdain to the Chinese government. Protestors see this moment as the opportunity to shed light on the human rights violations that are taking place in China. With the Olympics initiating in less than a month, it may be too late to change its location. Although it may be a difficult task, there are other ways to promote human rights, solutions include avoiding purchasing Chinese products, especially mementos of the Olympics. Other actions include not watching the games and boycotting sponsors of the games. Celebrating these games will send a message to the Chinese government and the world that silencing civil rights is a permissible action. Boycott of the Olympics have been used in the past to keep aggressive governments in check. Like the Dalai Lama said, "Brute force, no matter how strongly applied, can never subdue the basic human desire for freedom."

Biggie said it best: "Mo' money, mo' problems"

ERIC FELDMAN
Opinion Editor

Taking up the cause of raising the minimum wage is one of the biggest political ploys in history. What better way to show that you are a man of the people than to get behind a microphone and declare that you feel that your constituents should have more money. And considering that in 2004 Florida voters ratified an amendment to the state constitution that raises minimum wage by the cost of living every year, we seem to be buying into this fraud. Also, July 24 recently marked the first federal minimum wage hike in almost ten years.

Two obvious reasons stand out as to why minimum wage hikes do not cure poverty: A large number of workers earning minimum wage are teenagers working to pay for their own luxuries during high school and college, rather than bill-burdened middle-agers; and a higher minimum wage only affects those workers who are actually making minimum wage. Those with a house and a family who are making a couple dollars more than the legal minimum will not get a raise since they are already making more than mandated. The 3-year-old minimum wage amendment may seem like stale news, but its effects are being felt heav-

ily today. On July 20, the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* published an editorial by Kristen Lopez Eastlick, a senior policy analyst at the Employment Policies Institute, which stated that mandated wage hikes destroy job openings for teenagers and unskilled workers, especially of the minority variety.

"One of the reasons for this drastic employment drought is the mandated wage hikes that policymakers have forced down the throats

"A higher minimum wage only affects those workers who are actually making minimum wage. Those with a house and a family who are making a couple dollars more than the legal minimum will not get a raise since they are already making more than what the benevolent government demands.

of local businesses," said Eastlick in the article. She cites research from the University of California at Irvine, which indicates that unemployment within certain groups rises 8.5 percent for every 10 percent increase in minimum wage, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which shows that Florida's unemployment rate

has risen by 40 percent in the period that its minimum wage has been raised three times, and research from the University of Georgia which shows that minimum wage hikes hurt workers without a high school diploma more than the general population - four times more, to be exact.

When I started my first job in high school, the starting wage of all new hires was higher than the state's minimum wage. However, after

two subsequent increases, the company now only pays what the state requires it to: \$6.79. Of course, new hires benefit because they are getting paid more than I did three years ago, but the financial strain that these increases is putting on businesses is also apparent. However, with each increase in the minimum wage, new-

ly-hired employees are making closer and closer to what more seasoned employees earn with a couple of wages under their belts since the payroll dollars are not there to give everyone a wage increase when the government mandates a higher minimum.

Remember, minimum wages do not increase the standard of living for most Americans, only the ones who actually make minimum wage, which according to statistics, is not many. According to a July 24 *Sun-Sentinel* piece, Workforce One reports that very few job openings are for minimum wage positions. The main justification for a higher minimum wage is to help workers cope with the higher cost of living. It is ironic, then, that said cost soars even higher when a wage hike occurs.

According to economist Ben Bethune, as reported by the Associate Press, the increase in the minimum wage could push food prices even higher by raising the pay for agricultural workers. Bethune also said that the impact on the economy may not be too bad, though, because increases in productivity mean that employers can get more work done with less people, keeping labor costs, and thus prices in check. So, prices will go up a little, but not too much, because less people will be working.

Thank you, minimum wage.

Yasumicon celebrates everything anime

KASSANDRA POOL
Staff Writer

If you see Super Mario walking around University Park, don't look around for any green warp pipes or goombas.

If he didn't jump off your TV screen, that can only mean that Yasumicon is back for its sixth year.

The three day anime convention kicks off this Friday, Aug. 1 at 7 p.m. in Gracie's Grill. Admission for the first event is \$7 and it includes dinner and musical performances by local

the Anything Goes Anime Club. According to Junior Ben F. Badger Jr., Yasumicon's president, the event is one of the largest student events at FIU with last year's attendance reaching up to 2,700 people.

"The 2,700 [people were] a mixture of students, alumni, community members and even some people as far away as Tampa, Georgia and even California," Badger said.

This year, the group expects anywhere between 3,000 to 4,000 people to come out for the weekend and enjoy an array of entertainment and

tured free Japanese snack samples and commercials from Japan were shown.

"We had prepared 100 of the snack packs we were giving out and nearly all of them were gone by the end of the panel. The room was completely packed and everyone loved the commercials we played," said Elyse Coleman, vice president of Anything Goes Anime.

The group began planning the event about a year

ago when Yasumicon wrapped up around the same time. From printing flyers to going to comic stores, the club has been heavily promoting the event for the past month or so in the hopes of making it bigger and better than the previous year.

With more panels and more room reservations, students and guests can enjoy a variety of activities. Most events will take place in Graham Center rooms 140, 150, 243, the GC Ballrooms and the Green Library room 100.

If attendants want to see some action, they might look forward to the Adrian Empire demonstration. The club takes pride in recreating renaissance era armor and weapons and fighting with each other. No need to worry though, the members of the club fights with dull weapons and in armor, so no one gets hurt.

Brandon Potter is the guest of honor at this years Yasumicon. Potter's credits include the voice of Shanks in Funimation's "One Piece," as well as Sven Volfield in "Black Cat," Barrett in "Glass Fleet" and many more. He is also one of the directors from Funimation.

On Saturday, Aug. 2, the convention will be open from 11 a.m. to midnight and on Sunday, Aug. 3 it will open at noon and will run until 6 p.m. The event is being sponsored by Funimation, Bandai-Entertainment, Viz-Pictures, Right Stuff, ALC Publishing, Tate's Comics, Noobie Games, Monster and Full Throttle among others.

"Yasumicon is simply a great way to have fun. We are a family show and encourage everyone to attend, even if you're not into Anime and video games, you will be able to have fun at our convention. It's a safe way to kick back and relax," Badger said.

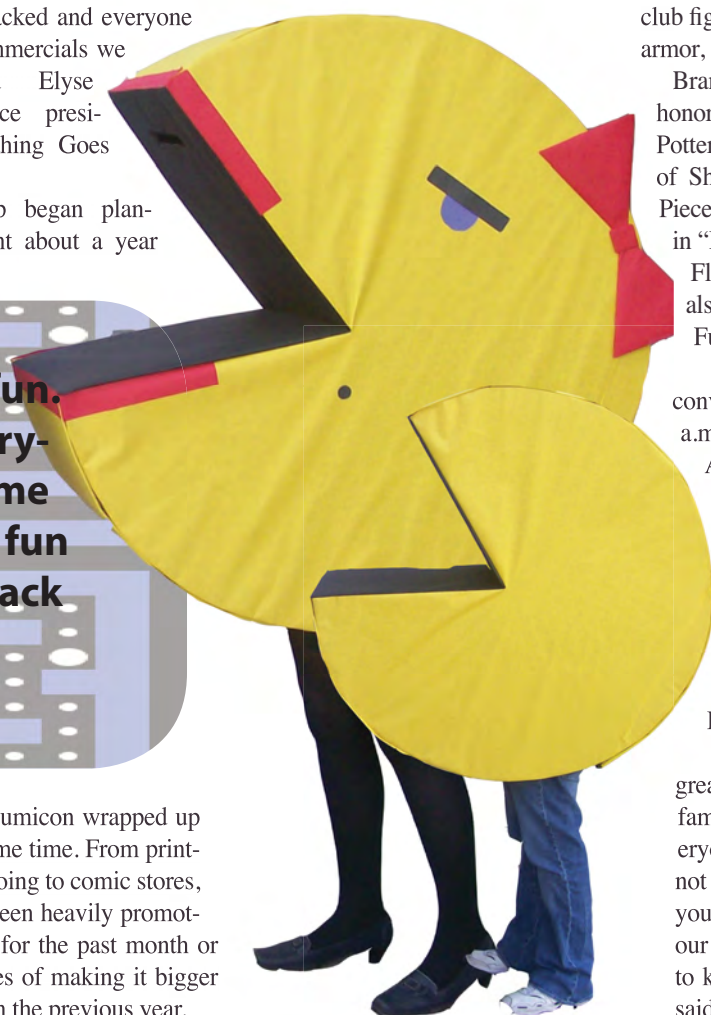
Yasumicon is simply a great way to have fun. We are a family show and encourage everyone to attend, even if you're not into Anime and video games, you will be able to have fun at our convention. It's a safe way to kick back and relax

Ben F. Badger Jr.
President of Anime Club

artist Benjamin Bear and his wife Jaylyn Coffin. There will be giveaways and prizes for the person with the best costume, and the remaining two days of the convention are absolutely free.

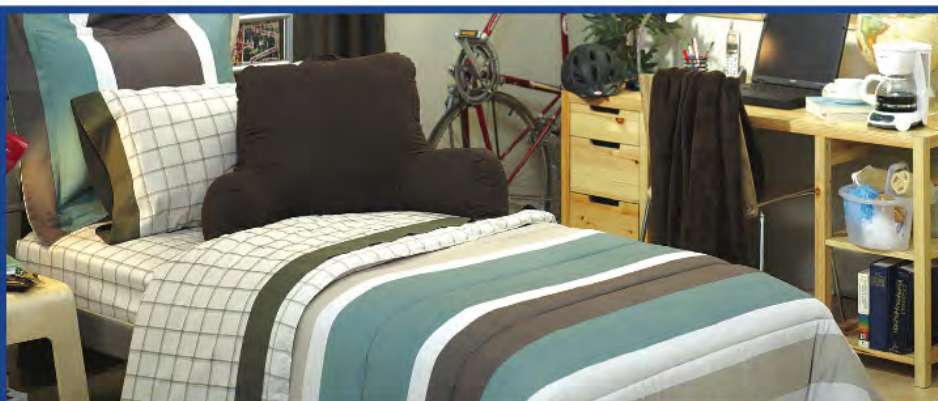
Yasumicon is coordinated by panels. Panels are small lectures given to guests explaining what various anime related concepts are. There will be panels such as retro anime, parents guide to anime, teaching in Japan, snacks and a lot more.

Last year, the snack panel featured free Japanese snack samples and commercials from Japan were shown.



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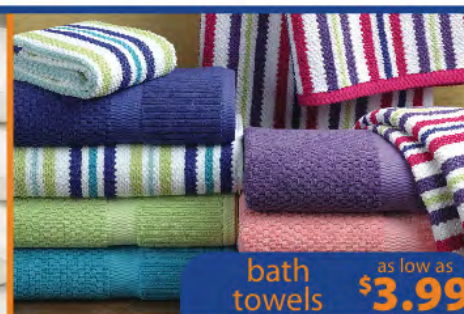
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Primetime success leads "Office" star to the big screen

STEVEN MESA
Contributing Writer

After conquering primetime television as Dwight Schrute, the sycophantic assistant to the regional manager on NBC's "The Office," Rainn Wilson is setting his sight's on the big screen.

Wilson, an Emmy-nominee, plays the former drummer of an 80's rock band who gets fired before the band makes it big in *The Rocker*, which comes to theaters Aug. 20.

Wilson was looking for something to do after last year's hiatus from "The Office" when the script for *The Rocker* came to him.

"It has great broad comedy and, at the same time, it had a lot of heart," Wilson said in an interview with *The Beacon*.

The Rocker is Wilson's first time as the lead in a motion picture and he has a great supporting cast that includes Jeff Garlin ("Curb Your Enthusiasm,") Will Arnett (*Blades of Glory*,) Jason Sudekis ("Saturday Night Live") and Christina Applegate (*Anchorman*).

"One thing that was great was that the filmmakers put together the greatest comedy ensemble you can ask for," he said. "There

are a lot of actors in small roles, which really makes the movie more of an ensemble comedy."

Wilson and his character in *The Rocker* share a similar goal that they both achieved: becoming a celebrity in their late thirties and late forties.

"I barely scraped by in my career and it picked up speed a little bit," Wilson said. "With my roles in "Six Feet Under" and "The Office," I found myself suddenly becoming a celebrity."

Wilson had some harsh words for some legendary rock bands like Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, as well as many metal bands of the 80's.

"I know most of the girly rockers can kick my ass, no matter how much mascara, eyeliner, blouses and leopard prints they wear," Wilson said. "It seemed like it was heavy metal aimed specifically for girls and women."

Following *The Rocker*, Wilson's next role is as a college professor in the sequel to the 2007 summer blockbuster, *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*. The *Transformers* role will be Wilson's first blockbuster, and it may just push him past his current status as comedy bit player and into the next level



AP PHOTO/CHRIS PIZZELLO

PINBALL WIZARD: Rainn Wilson takes the stage as a character from the musical *Tommy* at VH1's Rock Honors The Who.

of popularity.

Besides his upcoming role in the *Transformers* sequel, Wilson has also written a script called *Bonzai Shadowhand* for Oscar-nominated director Jason Reitman

(*Juno*).

"It is a very dark comedy with a great role for me in it as a down-and-out ninja living in the San Fernando valley in a halfway house," Wilson said.

THIS WEEK IN MIAMI

WEDNESDAY • JULY 30

WHAT: Slipknot, Disturbed
WHERE: Cruzan Amphitheatre
WHEN: 2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$25

WHAT: Return To Forever
WHERE: Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$50

THURSDAY • JULY 31

WHAT: The Soundtrack of your Summer Tour
WHERE: Mizner Park, Boca Raton FL
WHEN: 5 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$25

WHAT: Mark Knofler With Jessica Hoop
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$20

FRIDAY • AUGUST 1

WHAT: Projekt Revolution Tour
WHERE: Cruzan Amphitheatre
WHEN: 11 a.m.
HOW MUCH: \$25

WHAT: Miami Libre
WHERE: Adrienne Arsht Center
WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$40

SATURDAY • AUGUST 2

WHAT: Rock The Bells
WHERE: Bicentennial Park
WHEN: Noon
HOW MUCH: \$55

SUNDAY • AUGUST 3

WHAT: George Michael
WHERE: Bank Atlantic Center
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$50

WHAT: Bow Wow
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$30

MONDAY • AUGUST 4

WHAT: Catch 22 with Supervillians
WHERE: Culture Room
WHEN: 7: p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$13

WHAT: Lochai World Erotic Art Museum
WHERE: South Beach
WHEN: 11 a.m.
HOW MUCH: \$15

TUESDAY • AUGUST 5

WHAT: Executive Fitness Boot Camp
WHERE: Bayfront Park
WHEN: 6:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10

WHAT: Academy of Movement Arts
WHERE: Ocean Bank Building
WHEN: 5 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$34

WEDNESDAY • AUGUST 6

WHAT: Coheed & Cambria with Secret Machines
WHERE: Revolution Live
WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$20

FRIDAY • AUGUST 8

WHAT: Ron White
WHERE: Maxwell C. King Center for the Performing Arts
WHEN: 8 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$30

WHAT: Sound Abyss with Dear Dad, Yours Truly
WHERE: The Wallflower Gallery
WHEN: 10:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$5

SATURDAY • AUGUST 9

WHAT: The Sneak Preview with The Falling Alarm
WHERE: The Wallflower Gallery
WHEN: 7 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$10

WHAT: Aquarium Behind The Scene
WHERE: Anne Kolb Nature Center
WHEN: 2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$1

SUNDAY • AUGUST 10

WHAT: HippieFest Feat. Burdon & The Animals with Jack Bruce
WHERE: Pompano Beach Amphitheatre
WHEN: 2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$20

WHAT: Sundays At Fairchild Tropical Garden
WHERE: Fairchild Tropical Garden, Old Culter Rd.
WHEN: 11 a.m.
HOW MUCH: FREE

- Compiled by Rosalyn Delgado



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The **BEACON** is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, don't be shy. Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.

RIDING HIGH



COURTESY PHOTO/AP IMAGES

CHAMPION: Carlos Sastre after winning the 2008 Tour de France on July 28, 2008.

Taylor's absence gives newer players a chance

DOLPHINS, page 8

season in 1972. But coming off an embarrassing 1-15 season and a franchise record six straight years out of the playoffs, the Dolphins seem far from making that kind of historic turnaround.

For now, they are simply anonymous.

Brown and running back Ricky Williams are the closest things Miami has to a leader.

But Williams has a history of flaking out — including suspensions for drug violations and an early retirement — and Brown is coming off a season-ending knee injury last October. The pair might also be two of the quietest players in the locker room.

“Football is the ultimate team sport and if everyone comes in and takes care of their business nobody really stands out,” Brown said.

The new Parcells-led regime has overseen the biggest organizational shake-up in decades, with 45 new players among the 81-man roster when training camp began.

But the marquee trades that sent Taylor to the Washington Redskins and Thomas to the Dallas Cowboys has left the biggest void. The duo had

been the faces of the franchise since Dan Marino retired in 2000.

They were the guys who took the podium — through good times and bad — to speak for the team, who led some of the biggest charitable organizations in South Florida and who teammates counted on to grind out wins.

“I’d be lying if I said it isn’t strange,” cornerback Will Allen said of the team without Taylor and Thomas. “But at the same time, I’ve been in this league long enough to know that it’s a business and that’s the way things work.”

Their on-field contributions will be tough to replace.

Taylor averaged more than a dozen sacks the past three seasons, and Thomas was almost a sure bet to gather at least 150 tackles a year. Now they have been swapped for guys who have not earned a permanent locker, or even a name on the back of their jersey.

“We have guys that are working hard and they are making plays as football players,” Crowder said. “They are going to take their spots but they aren’t going to replace Jason Taylor or Zach Thomas by no regards.”

Academic center adds tutors, athletes' grades improve

ACADEMIC CENTER, page 8

despite the bigger staff.

“It needs to be more strict about timing and scheduling,” she said. “Sometimes there would be one tutor for English and they would available only on Mondays.”

Zarraluqui says student-athletes must turn in a progress report weekly to their assigned tutor. This is the method the tutors use to keep tabs on their students’ performance.

APR Specialist Garcia is in charge of keeping FIU’s APR scores up to par by assessing incoming transfer students’ possible effects on APR and working alongside the SAAC.

NCAA bylaws state that sports programs must obtain at least an APR score of 900 or they will face scholarship losses. For two consecutive years, the football, baseball and men’s basketball teams scored less than 900.

As a result, those three teams will be unable to participate in postseason play if they do not score at least 900 next year. If the same teams do not score 900 the following year, they will be banned from Division I and the Football Bowl Subdivision.

Former FIU baseball head coach Danny Price was at the helm for 28 years during the period in which the SAAC did not have the number of resources it has today.

“They offer summer school now for athletes.

That never happened before,” Price said. “There is so much more help available than when I was coach.”

Of the student-athletes enrolled in summer 2007, 95 percent graduated.

All-time hits leader former FIU baseball player Brian Pullin played under coach Price and graduated in Spring 2007. During his college career, he saw the center’s progression.

“My last year, the academic center had so many resources,” said Pullin. “At that point I already knew what I was doing, but that extra help would’ve helped me out when I was younger.”

FIU’s initiative to bolster the center’s resources produced results when the Athletics program graduated the highest number of stu-

dent-athletes this past spring. The student-athletes posted a higher GPA (2.90) than the rest of the general student body.

As the center searches for a new Director, Athletic Director Pete Garcia says the revamped SAAC are the main reason for the record number of graduates.

“It is evident that having the right resources in place with the right people has paid dividends for our Athletic program,” he said. “Because of the commitment we have secured from everyone, beginning with our student-athletes, the results we have accomplished are no surprise. And we expect to continue to do well because academics will never be compromised at FIU.”

Postseason experience, recruits hope to keep team a contender

SOCCKER, page 8

impossible a week before.

The Golden Panthers lost to the Thundering Herd during the regular season by a 2-1 score on Sept. 28.

They fell short of their miracle run in their final round against the Tulsa Hurricane.

After trailing 1-0, two consecutive goals by senior Bruno Barbosa and Juan Guerra put FIU up 2-1.

However, the defense couldn’t sustain the lead in the last ten minutes.

Two late goals by Todd Goddard and Eric Burkholder, respectively, resulted in a devastating 3-2 loss.

The Golden Panthers lost to the Hurricane in the regular season on Oct. 31 by a massive 6-0 deficit, but this loss was felt a lot harder.

“[The last ten minutes] were really bad. We really thought that we had it and it was really hard because we were winning but

they were putting a lot of pressure on us. I don’t know, I guess that’s soccer. When the whistle went, we realized we had it but we let it go,” Caporaletti said.

“We weren’t over confident; we knew they were going to come with everything and they were pounding us for the last 30 minutes that we were up and they were able to get the two goals,” Jair-Cabas said.

The loss was especially tough for Eketebi, as the team he guided all season was so close to culminating a historic run.

“Nobody’s happy after a loss. It was a tough season; I mean we were ten minutes away from going to the NCAA Tournament.”

Last season’s struggling offense will be fueled by the top three scorers returning and the addition of a solid recruiting class.

The new players bring optimism to the team for the upcoming season that begins next month with an exhibition match against UNC at Chapel Hill, N.C.

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THE BEACON

A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

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our summer issues.

Back-to-school issue Aug. 25
We’ll see you in the Fall!

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FIU upgrades academic center's resources

SERGIO BONILLA
Sports Editor

Student-athletes' performance in the classroom from 2003-07 has lost the Athletics department a total of 17.75 scholarships the past two years. Low academic standings have put three programs in danger of postseason banishment and expulsion from Division I and the Football Bowl Subdivision.

In order to prevent severe penalties, FIU added a number of resources to the Student-Athlete Academic Center this past year.

Along with the goal of helping student-athletes graduate, preventing the termination of athletic programs is a new task the center must undertake. FIU increased the center's operating budget from \$62,000 to \$195,000, purchased 20 personal computers and 25 laptops for stu-

dent use and doubled the number of tutors from seven to 14.

"The SAAC is the lifeline of the Athletic department," Academic Progress Rate specialist Monique Garcia said.

Garcia is one of the new compliance officers hired by FIU to help the University meet the APR score needed to meet NCAA standards. The APR takes into account an institution's academic performance over the previous four academic years.

The APR is calculated by giving points to each team based on the number of players in good academic standing and on the number of players who remain in the institution.

President Modesto A. Maidique and Athletic Director Pete Garcia were instrumental in the SAAC receiving more resources and oversaw the hiring of new staff members.

Such a position is the Director of the Student Athlete

Academic Services, who is charged with managing the center and supervising four advisers,

Student Athlete Academic Center Added Resources

- More than tripled center's operating budget
- Increased the number of tutors from 7 to 14
- Purchased 20 PCs and 25 laptops

a Learning Specialist, an office manager and the tutoring staff.

Former Director of SAAC Shirelle Jackson no longer works at FIU and Assistant Director Dannielle Rivero is acting as the interim director in her absence; Rivero declined to comment.

The center's tutors offers general and subject-specific tutoring, but tutoring in the basic subjects like Math, English and Sciences is the SAAC's primary focus. Business Calculus, Statistics and Accounting are examples of the advanced courses also available for student-athletes.

Tutors at the center include professors, graduate students and undergraduate students.

One of the Economics tutors added during Fall 2007, senior Christina Zarraluqui, says that there are ways the center could be more efficient

ACADEMIC CENTER, page 7

THE IMPROBABLE RUN



FERNANNO GARCIA/THE BEACON FILE PHOTO

BREAKING LOOSE: Junior forward Juan Guerra was instrumental in the team's postseason upsets. He was the team's leading scorer.

Championship hopes end in last 10 minutes

LUCA MESSINA
Staff Writer

When the men's soccer team walked off the field in Birmingham, Ala. last Nov. 18, there was a strong feeling of disappointment but at the same time, there were reasons to stay positive and reflect on what was an improbable championship finish.

The Golden Panthers finished the regular season at a 3-13-2 before pulling off two consecutive upset wins in the Conference USA Tournament before losing a heartbreaker to the No. 1 seeded Tulsa 3-2, a game that FIU lost in the last 10 minutes.

"It's obviously tough to lose in the finals," head coach Munga Eketebi said. "We had a poor season but finished strong, and I told the guys to remember the feeling they had when the game ended and remember it when you're training in the off-season."

Besides pulling off two surprising vic-

tories, the offense suddenly clicked as scoring goals became more of a normal occurrence.

The team scored just 15 goals in 18 regular season games but scored eight goals in three postseason contests.

"I think it was a problem of us not being fit in the beginning and then towards the end we became more fit and were able to support ourselves," said sophomore Steven Jair-Cabas of the scoring drought.

When asked why the team lacked the proper fitness Cabas responded, "It was mostly not being responsible and taking care of business during the summer."

Eketebi agreed.

"The team did not come in as fit as it should have been. We seemed to find a way to lose and it was difficult to reverse the trends early on," he said. "During the postseason our fitness level picked up and I told the guys all year long that we were not as bad as our record indicates."

The disappointing regular season that

saw the team win three games was not a complete failure as the team was fortunate enough to land a spot in the postseason tournament as the No. 7 seed.

Their first round match up was against a No. 2 seeded Southern Methodist University team that was nationally ranked during the regular season and defeated the Golden Panthers in their first meeting 2-0 on October 20.

A shocking 2-1 victory was capped off when junior Christian Caporaletti scored the go-ahead goal in the 74th minute.

"After the first game we really pumped ourselves up and got ourselves on track," Caporaletti said.

The momentum certainly carried over into the semi-finals round as FIU defeated Marshall Thundering Herd 3-2 after junior Juan Guerra [who was unavailable to comment] scored in the second overtime to propel his team to the Conference Finals, a destination that seemed almost

SOCCER page 7

No-name Dolphins searching for star player

ANTONIO GONZALEZ
AP Wire

The billboards line the highways in South Florida, advertising "A New Beginning" for the Miami Dolphins with photos of the first-year regime of head coach Tony Sparano, vice president of football operations Bill Parcells and general manager Jeff Ireland.

There isn't a player's face on the cover of the team's media guide, either, or a proven leader on the field. After trading away Pro Bowlers Jason Taylor and Zach Thomas in the offseason, the No-Name Dolphins are searching for a superstar.

"We must not have a lot of talent if we have the GM and the head coach on a billboard," linebacker Channing Crowder said, laughing.

About 500 fans attend Dolphins training camp daily, many sporting aqua and white jerseys that are almost entirely Nos. 99 (Taylor), 54 (Thomas) and 13 (Dan Marino). Or simply put: men who are no longer playing for Miami.

Sparano even joked at the start of training camp that the first time he saw the marketing campaign, he nearly drove off the road. His roster might be just as startling.

The competition to replace Taylor now includes unproven players Charlie Anderson, Quentin Moses and Rob Ninkovich. At middle linebacker, unknowns like Edmond Miles, Kelvin Smith and Kelly Poppinga are vying for Thomas' old spot. Regardless of who earns the jobs, the Dolphins are likely to lose Pro Bowl-caliber production.

"I'm not going to be Jason Taylor," said Moses, who had 1.5 sacks in seven games in his rookie season. "Jason was Defensive Player of the Year and probably a Hall of Famer. We're all working hard and trying to get better as a team so we can do what those guys did."

Of course, this is an organization that produced the famous No-Name Defense that surprised the NFL with the league's only perfect

DOLPHINS, page 7