

4-14-2009

## The Beacon, April 15, 2009

Florida International University

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## Student club raises environmental awareness

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## Pitcher fights ailment, rejoins old mentor

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### SPOTLIGHT

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Take a study break with an '80s themed Midnight Breakfast.

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COLUMN: Can decreasing our nation's strength increase our safety?

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Junior transfer benefits from familiar surroundings.

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Academy Award winning gay activist to speak to students.

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Baseball drops finale to MTSU en route to series loss.

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Cuba has entered the spotlight once again as questions surround its embargo.

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Column: Pirates present University with nautical threat.

#### OPINION PAGE 4

Homosexuality is not a malady that must be treated, contrary to what a few UK psychiatrists say.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Robert Frost Poetry Festival, April 15:** Think You Can Write? Well get ready to be shut down by the best of the best, Robert Frost is his name and words are his game, obviously we are not poets. This event is happening at Key West Heritage House & Robert.

**FIU Music Presents: Symphonic Music Performance, April 15, 2 p.m.** Get carried away, far away from your finals, with these tunes played by your peers at Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center.

**Music Saves Lives – Meeting, April 15, 3 p.m.** Get a cause! Join this club, meeting at GC 305.

**Miami Latin Gay Film Festival, April 16, 7:30p.m.** Enjoy the most specific film festival ever created at Colony Theater.

**Alvin Ailey America Dance Theatre, April 16, 8 p.m.** Fed up with end of semester paper writing? Get off the computer for a moment and get entertained by dancers at Adrienne Arshnt Center for the Performing Arts.

For the complete calendar, please see page 6 or visit [FIUSM.com/calendar](http://FIUSM.com/calendar).

### WEATHER



**WEDNESDAY**  
Isolated t-storms  
LOW: 66 HIGH: 86



**THURSDAY**  
Partly cloudy  
LOW: 66 HIGH: 85



**FRIDAY**  
Mostly sunny  
LOW: 67 HIGH: 79

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### SGC-UP

## Monetary fund donations enabled under revised code

DAVID BARRIOS  
Senior Staff Writer

Revised versions of the Student Government Financial and Elections Codes were passed during the April 13 meeting of the Student Government Council at University Park Senate.

The new version of the Financial Code, passed unanimously, requires all events paid for by Activities and Services fees to be free for the student body unless they are Student Government Association sponsored concerts or events.

Robert Chung, SGC-UP comptroller, presented the changes to the bill during the meeting. He also

announced the SGC-UP Finance Committee still had \$6,000 left from a budget exceeding \$25,000 for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

"This is the kind of oversight and accountability we've all been looking for. I'd just like to thank all Republicans in SGA for this fiscal conservatism," said David Dial, senator for the College of Nursing.

Elections Code revisions included the permission of monetary funds to be donated to SGA candidates during elections. In the previous version of the code, students were unable to receive monetary

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## KEEP ON GOIN'



CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

**FOR A GOOD CAUSE:** Pikes hold a 24-hour bike ride for Anthony's Light Foundation on April 13 at the Graham Center Pit. Dion Von Moltke (left), Alan Faidergold (middle) and Maarter Kersters (right).

## Fees raise financial concerns

DIANA JORDAN  
Staff Writer

Students and the University community were invited to attend the Activity and Services Fee public hearing April 13, in order to voice their opinion regarding the possibility of an increase in the fee.

The A&S Fee Committee held the forum in the Graham Center Ballrooms.

The forum was conducted in order to help touch base with students regarding the new fee

increases that will be implemented for those who began attending the University from Spring 2008. The majority of students who attended the forum felt the increase comes at an inopportune time considering the recent increase in several other costs they incur, which according to most, are paid out of their own pocket.

"I have to find a way to pay 15 percent of my tuition on my own and, if fees continue increasing, that will obviously become harder," said Vanessa

Garcia, a freshman health services administration and business major.

Other University fees and economic woes students are facing were addressed as well. When the topic of the technology fee arose, Student Government Council at University Park President Arthur J. Meyer said he was the only person to not vote for its increase because although "an increase in fees is needed to sustain campus life,"

FEE, page 2

### BASKETBALL

## Huge splash as NBA legend takes reins

JONATHAN RAMOS  
Asst. Sports Director

Athletic Director Pete Garcia has hired eight new coaches in 12 sports since arriving at FIU in 2006. Most notably, Garcia has plucked football coach Mario Cristobal and baseball coach Turtle Thomas from the University of Miami and Arizona State, respectively.



THOMAS

After reassigning former men's basketball coach Sergio Rouco to another position in the department, Garcia has reached into the National Basketball Association to fill his most recent vacancy. And by grabbing Isiah Thomas from the New York Knicks' front office, FIU made a splash April 14 with the addition of the former NBA coach. Thomas, a basketball

THOMAS, page 8

### THE FIFTH UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

## Presidential contract terms reviewed

JULIO MENACHE  
Staff Writer

The Presidential Search Committee unanimously approved six-figure contract terms for the new University president.

The vote was taken during an April 13 teleconference between committee members with various University administrators such as Chief Financial Officer Vivian Sanchez, as well as members of the press.

The approval was assigned three days before the official deadline for sending in applications for the presidential post.

Committee members approved contract terms for a base salary of \$500,000, with \$180,000 in perks, bringing the new executive's salary to \$680,000.

Before the committee voted on the compensation package terms, members heard remarks from Chairman David Parker, as well as Compensation Chair Betsy Atkins.

"We've tailored the results of the study, with discussions with Greenwood Asher, as well as market conditions to FIU," Parker said.

The University recently hired a firm to head a

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## Possible fee increase met with mixed student reactions

### FEE, page 1

he argued, “elected officials need to look at these fee increases in another light and understand the repercussions. We need to make them understand where we’re coming from.”

Several students then voiced their concerns over economic increases in general by explaining that although \$1.50 increase per credit may not seem astronomical on paper, in reality, the total adds up.

“One of the main reasons I came to FIU was because of its relatively low tuition,” said Fernanda Garcia, a junior

human resources major. “Now to take classes in the summer, however, I need to pay somewhere in the high \$800s, which I’m paying out of my own pocket.”

Other students explained they have had to reduce the amount of credits they will take in the summer in order to schedule more time to work to save money for the Fall semester.

The question and answer session also touched upon students’ doubts and hesitations as to whether fees are allocated wisely and whether any difference in campus life can be seen with a fee increase.

Art Herriott, a chemistry emeritus and Honors College professor then provided an administrator’s point of view.

“One of the difficulties this University has had with student life is the fact that everyone is a commuter student,” he said, adding that the University “has worked hard throughout the last 15 to 20 years for student life to improve and has seen an enormous change.”

In his opinion, these kinds of expenditures on student activities have given the school more life and spirit and, he said, are necessary in order to compensate for University students not typically remaining on campus after class.

Some students, however, such as Vignesh Doraiswamy, a senior and biology and religious studies major and SGC-UP senator, feel that the increase in fees is necessary.

“Unlike the technology fee, the student Activity and Services Fee will benefit students directly,” Doraiswamy said. “In the end, it will provide for a better educational experience and it is a \$25 sacrifice everyone can make. All it takes is refraining from buying that new pair of shoes.”

The Fee Committee will make its decision public on April 17.

## Women fraternity pairs up with Autism Speaks

### MEENA RUPANI Staff Writer

Alpha Xi Delta-Theta Xi, one of the oldest women fraternities, announced its new philanthropic partnership with Autism Speaks. This is the nation’s largest autism science and advocacy organization, according to an Alpha Xi Delta press release.

The April 2 announcement outlined various events that the women fraternity will hold in conjunction with the organization.

In the United States, it is estimated that one in every 150 children will be diagnosed with autism, according to the Autism Speaks Web site.

This rate is rising by 10 to 17 percent annually. To prevent the gradual increase of this disease, the organization is dedicated to raising awareness, funding research, prevention and treatment.

According to a press release sent by fraternity headquarters, “the fraternity and its more than 135,000 members across the country will work to raise autism awareness and financial support.”

Sandra Perez, a junior English major and the vice president of programs for the Alpha Xi Delta chapter at FIU, is also in charge of the community service events.

“There are high chances of our children having autism, therefore we need to give back now to those being affected. This organization helps in providing awareness, researching for a cure and making the lives of those that are affected by this disease as comfortable as possible,” Perez said.

One of the events that the Alpha Xi Delta chapter is planning in order to raise money for their new cause is a football tournament that is

**This organization helps in providing awareness, researching for a cure and making the lives of those ... affected ... as comfortable as possible.**

Sandra Perez, vice president  
Alpha Xi Delta-Theta Xi chapter

scheduled for June 13.

According to Perez, this event is open to women and men. There will be teams made up of five individuals competing for the Fuzzie Football Champion title. The event will be held in Tropical Estates Park.

“Last summer alone this tournament rose more than

\$7,000 for The Learning Experience School, a local school that deals with children that have autism,” Perez said.

In addition, Melissa Sabatier, president of the Alpha Xi Delta chapter, explained that this chapter will participate in Autism Speaks’ most famous event, Walk Now for Autism.

“Alpha Xi Delta’s large membership base will offer Autism Speaks a means to mobilize additional volunteers,” said Sabatier, a graduate student in the Higher Education Program.

The chapter will also continue to work with other organizations to assist children with autism.

“We are also going to continue working hands-on with organizations such as Good Hope Equestrian Center, that provides activities for children with autism,” Perez said.

The partnership with Autism Speaks is one that Perez hopes to continue in the years to come.

Perez, who plans to oversee many more events that pertain to autism, wants to make her sorority’s dedication to Autism Speaks known.

“The Alpha Xi Delta-Theta Xi chapter at FIU will support Autism Speaks 100 percent,” Perez said.

## NEWS FLASH

### LOCAL

#### Pilot dies mid-flight, passenger lands plane

A passenger was forced to land an airplane after the pilot suddenly died mid-flight.

The plane, a King Air jet, was destined for Jackson, Miss., as it disembarked from Marco Island. However, due to the pilot’s death, the plane was forced to land in Fort Meyers.

The passenger, who was certified on only single engine aircraft, was assisted by air traffic control and a friend of the controller who was certified on the aircraft.

The cause of death of the pilot is unknown at this time.

#### Miami-Dade County officials consider “Obama Avenue”

Miami-Dade County commissioners consider renaming a stretch of road in Opa-Locka after our 44th president.

The Honorable Barack Obama Avenue would stand as the dual designation of Pervis Avenue from Veterans Way to Oriental Boulevard.

The vote was proposed by commissioner Barbara Jordan, and is set to be heard on May 5.

-Compiled by Jorge Valens

## Select associations given extra funds

### SGC-UP, page 1

donations but could receive items from organizations and businesses.

The new code also requires University-wide e-mails be sent to students if technical difficulties occur with online voting during elections.

“It will allow potential candidates from not being locked out of elections due to financial difficulties. Also, since there are still limits to

the amount of money raised, it’s not like people can take advantage of this,” said Chris Cabral, senator for the College of Art and Sciences and one of the authors of the bill.

College of Law Senator Jeffrey Molinaro introduced an appropriation bill to provide \$725 to the Sports and Entertainment Law Society to aid in sending officers of the club to the 2009 Sports Lawyers Association Annual Conference.

Two other appropriations

were also passed during the meeting.

Dial presented an appropriation to give \$1,200 to the Caribbean Student Association for transportation costs for the Florida CSA Annual Conference.

Lower division Senator Krishan Aurora introduced a similar appropriation bill to award \$2000 to the Future Business Leaders of America for registration costs for a business summit in Anaheim,

Ca. during the Summer term.

Last Monday’s meeting was the final meeting of the 2008-2009 SGC-UP Senate for the semester.

Incoming senators will take their seats on May 1 along with SGC-UP President and Vice President-elects Anthony Rionda and Mykaelle ‘Myka’ Figueiredo.

The April 15 SGA meeting will be a joint session of the executive and legislative branches.

## Salary to be higher than national average

### SEARCH, page 1

national compensation study to compare the compensation of 22 “benchmark” universities comparable to FIU. The salary took into account performance and retention bonuses, housing perks, deferred compensation and moving costs, among others.

The results found that the institutions’ presidents made between \$534,000 to \$816,000 in total salary, with the median pay of \$680,000.

“We’ve come up with a richer, more comprehensive term sheet, tailored to our unique needs,” Parker said during the meeting. “We have room for negotiation.”

According to Parker, negotiations for the final candidate will begin at \$582,000 and work its way up to the median.

Parker and Atkins said the deal also takes into account the varying levels of experience between candidates, as well as complications such as buying out the contracts of certain candidates.

“I think this approach is very sensible ... it is comprehensive and gives us the flexibility to pay competitively to attract someone, and not necessarily be arbitrary and overpay,” Atkins said.

Outside observers of higher education have noted that the new president would be making more than the national average.

According to Paul Fain of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, a newspaper that follows issues facing universities, the national average for base salaries for univer-

sity presidents is \$427,000, \$73,000 less than FIU’s new president would be making.

But Fain said that because of Florida’s high cost of living, the contract comes as no surprise.

“Florida is different, it’s not Iowa. I could understand why the University goes above the average in order to attract the best people.”

According to *The Chronicle*, the number of university presidents earning more than \$500,000 increased by 53 percent during the 2007-2008 school year.

## THE BEACON

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## TAKE BACK THE NIGHT '09



NATHAN VALENTINE/THE BEACON



**SELF-AWARE:** Sergeant Steve Fagan of FIU Public Safety, taught the "Self-Defense 101" class in the Fitness Center at BBC on April 6. (Top) Alexandra Valla and La-Toya Mathew, hospitality management seniors, engage in a maneuver with Fagan's assistance. (Middle) Ludovica Virgile, staff, holds Daniella Denis, a master's student, in a wrist lock.

## Students back to the '80s

**PARADISE AFSHAR**  
BBC Life! Editor

With many students spending late nights studying for exams during finals week, the Biscayne Bay Campus Office of Campus Life and Orientation is bringing students back to the '80s.

"We want to bring back all the cool stuff from the '80s and bring you back to when you were a kid," said Lorie Bellot, a graduate assistant who works for Campus Life.

The breakfast will take place in Cafeteria Loggia, the space located behind the Wolfe University Center, on April 20. The event starts at 10:30 p.m., with breakfast being served at midnight and scheduled to finish at 2 a.m.

Traditional midnight breakfast fare such as eggs, pancakes, coffee, bacon and juices will be provided.

"Everything comes with the works ... The pancakes with strawberry syrup, whipping cream and chocolate chips," Bellot said.

To go with the decade theme, the music played will all be from the '80s and will range from pop and rock songs to television theme songs from shows such as the "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles." Bellot

said that impersonators of '80s stars such as Michael Jackson and the actors of the show "Miami Vice" may also make guest appearances.

"We want to keep a few surprises," said Bellot. "We are going to have arts and crafts projects like when you were a kid."

While the arts and crafts projects are not going to be unveiled until the day of, there will be rhinestones, mood rings and "a montage of all things eclectic."

In addition to the crafts, there will be free massages, zumba classes and classic Nintendo games such as Mario Kart and card games like Uno.

"I liked it because of the food and games they had set up," said junior Joe L. Mintz, a mathematics major, referring to last year's event. "There are many different kinds of foods, in addition to activities, massages and more, so everyone will find something they like."

Along with the food and fun, the midnight breakfast is a study break at its core. To help aid students in taking finals, Campus Life will provide blue books, highlighters, pens and other school supplies for free.

"It's a fun event for everyone to come and hopefully bring that optimistic feeling into their finals," Bellot said.

## Milk's award-winning screenwriter to lecture

**BENNY VAKIN**  
Contributing Writer

Academy Award winner and gay activist Dustin Lance Black broke down into tears when he first watched *The Times of Harvey Milk*, a documentary about the life and assassination of San Francisco's first openly gay elected councillor.

On April 16, Black will talk to students at the Biscayne Bay Campus in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre at 6:15 p.m.

"I thought, 'I just want to do something with this, why hasn't anyone done something with this?'" Black said to David Lamble of the *Bay Area Reporter* during an interview published Feb. 21, 2008.

In February 2009, he won the Oscar at the 81st Academy Awards for Best Original Screenplay for *Milk*, the movie he wrote inspired by Harvey Milk, the openly gay politician who rallied the gay community during the 1970s in an effort to bring equal rights to everyone regardless of sexual orientation.

The lecture, sponsored by the Biscayne Bay Campus Student Government Council Lecture Committee, Office of Campus Life & Orientation and the Office of Multicultural Programs and Services, is free for students, faculty and staff.

"I think it's really good that he's going to be coming," said Daniel Anzueto, senior psychology major. "I was pleasantly surprised when the Lectures Committee chose him. I'm excited to meet him."

Anzueto, who is also vice president of Stonewall 2 BBC, a student club and BBC Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Queer Questioning Straight Ally, also believes Black's visit will allow Stonewall 2 BBC to pass along its message to more students.

"It will help get our message out to the FIU community and the community at large about equality," Anzueto said. "Not a lot of people know who Harvey Milk was and part of Stonewall 2 BBC's mission is education."

Black, born in 1974, is an openly gay activist who grew up in San Antonio, Texas in a Mormon household.

Questioning his sexuality after finding himself attracted to a neighborhood boy when he was seven, Black said he had felt dark thoughts, was shy and at times, suicidal.

He only accepted himself after graduating high school, he said, and graduated with honors from the University of Cali-

fornia, Los Angeles.

During his college years, Black came across the documentary *The Times of Harvey Milk*, and sought to motivate others in a positive way, admitting to change as a whole rather than a change solely toward gay rights.

"I wanted to maybe inspire the younger generation to start becoming activists in a grassroots way," Black said in an interview with Michelle Castillo from the *UCLA Daily Bruin*, published Feb. 19, 2009. "There's a lot of stuff that still needs changing — not just gay rights."

In 2008, Black also wrote *Pedro*, the documentary about the life of AIDS activist and MTV's "The Real World: San Francisco" reality television personality Pedro Zamora, a Cuban-American openly gay activist who discovered he was

HIV positive at age 17.

Since then, Zamora spread awareness about HIV and AIDS, going around the country to speak about his life, and teach others about the virus.

Zamora died in 1994 at age 22 from HIV complications.

Part of the funding for the lecture also comes from the Miami-Dade Community Foundation, which supplied a portion of the \$5,000 in grant money to help bring Black to BBC.

"With the Oscars just recently occurring, and Dustin Lance Black having one of the finest award acceptance speeches, we just thought that he would be of great interest to a lot of people," said Brittany Brewster, SGC-BBC Lecture Committee chair. "It's just a great story."

The lecture is also open to the general public with a suggested donation of \$20 to benefit the BBC Excellence Fund, a foundation commonly used to fund University needs, including leadership activities and scholarships.

After the lecture, *Milk* will be shown in the theater and attendees who have not seen the film will have the chance to do so.

Freshman journalism major Mauricio Diocis said he will be in the audience on April 16.

"I can't wait. For someone so young, he has achieved so much in such a brief period of time," Diocis said. "I stand behind him 100 percent."

For more information on this event, call the Office of Campus Life & Orientation at (305) 919-5804.

**THE BEACON**  
A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

Thank you for reading  
Mondays, Wednesdays and  
Fridays

## READ THIS NOW!

### *Nuke today, gone tomorrow*

Whenever I see a car with a peace sign bumper sticker or one of those nifty "Coexist" logos made out of various religious symbols, part of me is filled with veneration and is glad that someone believes the world can be a better place, despite the odds against utopia ever occurring.

The other part of me, however, curses the person for being a naive liberal, and thinks of the quote from the movie *Forgetting Sarah Marshall* about wishing for all religions getting along:

"They are completely conflicting ideologies and does not make you a citizen of the world, it makes you full of sh\*t!"

I am having a similar conflict in my mind about President Obama, fresh back on American soil after touring more of Europe than Borat, who delivered a powerful speech on disarmament in Prague, where he unveiled his policy of ridding the United States, and by proxy, the world, of all nuclear weapons.

"There are those who hear talk of a world without nuclear weapons and doubt whether it is worth setting a goal that seems impossible," Obama

**The problem is that the more verifying we do these days, the harder it is to trust.**

said.

Nukes are one of those interesting paradoxes that make sense while baffling the mind. I certainly never wish to see another nuclear weapon set off on this planet, but the thought of my country giving up its arsenal is unsettling.

Why? Because the point of having nuclear weapons is to prevent them from ever being used, by one of the coolest political theories in diplomatic history (not to mention one of the few things everyone remembers from AP World History): Mutually Assured Destruction, which can be summed up in the phrase: You may be strong but I am stronger, so back off.

"A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be

fought. The only value in our two nations possessing nuclear weapons is to make sure they will never be used. But then would it not be better to do away with them entirely?"

These wise words were uttered by the late President Reagan, but they give me the same sort of internal idealist versus realist conflict as Obama's recent Prague address. Reagan was a bit of both; after all, despite his goals of disarmament, one of his greatest (albeit questioned) legacies was his commitment to intergalactic missile defense, and in terms of foreign affairs, he coined a very cautious term: "Trust, but verify."

The problem is that the more verifying we do these days, the harder it is to trust. While our nation's leader is talking about reducing our strength, North Korea is pumping up its efforts to get stronger, having recently attempted to launch a missile that could reach Japan, as well as a record of testing nuclear weapons since 2006.

The idealist sees the most powerful nation in the world, which has enjoyed complete primacy for decades disarming itself as setting an example for other nations to follow, eventually leading to a nuke-free world.

The realist, on the other hand, sees the same disarmament as an opportunity for another country to take over.

I would imagine that at least a couple of world leaders are laughing at Obama right about now. Nukes are an American trademark; after all, when was the last time Vladimir Putin said that the KGB would start taking steps to reduce the number of political poisonings in a year?

And while nukes' results are thankfully unknown, it may very well be responsible for the relative peace since.

It all seems misguided, though: Why are we focusing on getting rid of a weapon that has not wreaked any havoc since World War II?

Even if we could somehow get rid of all the nuclear weapons, there would be just as much violence in the world because soldiers would be using the same weapons they currently are and terrorists are still going to be recruiting suicide bombers.

But at least there would be no nukes.

COLUMN



ERIC FELDMAN

CUBA SERIES : ONE OF TWO

## DREAMS OF FREEDOM

### Cuba embargo has its pros, cons

JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ  
Staff Writer

It has been the talk around the table on weekends when my family unites. There is the rice with beans, pork, a flan for dessert and Cuba-America politics to help the digestion.

For five decades the United States has implemented sanctions, condemned Fidel Castro's regime and imposed an embargo that, to an extent, still exists to this day.

I believe that the end of the embargo would provide an opportunity to inform Cuban nationals about their natural civil rights and the atrocities that the Cuban government has done and continues to do, such as the Black Spring, in which 75 political opponents were imprisoned and sentenced up to 25 years.

This issue has been the root of many debates between Cubans inside and outside of the island, and even U.S. senators who visit the island. Those in favor of the embargo hope that strict economic sanctions will cause the demise of the Cuban government and demoralize it internationally. They demand civil rights inside the island for the Cuban government to respect the International Declaration of Human Rights, which Cuba signed in 1948.

Critics of the embargo argue that 50 years have proven that it is a useless strategy to end totalitarian regimes. To complicate things a bit more, for the past decade Venezuela has served as the former Soviet Union, providing oil in exchange for Cuba's bright and most talented doctors.

There is no right or wrong answer to the question of the embargo; it has forced Cuba to recognize the importance of an alliance with the U.S. The country has suffered economic

challenges since the fall of the Soviet Union in the 90s and continues to feel the effects of recent hurricanes. Agriculture, mainly, has been what has suffered. The government has stopped receiving large quantities of financing from Cuban-Americans who visit the island or send remittance.

It was believed that after Castro bestowed his power to his brother Raul Castro in 2006, Cuba would finally see some changes. Raul has proven to be an excellent replica of the ailing leader that publishes his reflections in the country's newspaper, *Granma*.

"The fact remains that the situation in that country, as it relates to the freedom of its own citizens, does not seem to have changed with the departure of Fidel Castro from the presidency," said Jeffrey Davidow, the White House adviser for the upcoming Summit of the Americas.

But the embargo has failed to end Raul Castro's absolute power. They are still the captains of a very decaying ship.

The ease of travel restrictions recently implemented by President Obama has caused great commotion. It is estimated that close to three million Americans will visit the island under the new law. Family members can now visit the island once a year, stay as long as they wish and spend up to \$179 a day.

Andy Garcia said at the Roots of Hope conference at the University of Miami, "The necessity for freedom is non-negotiable, we all have the dream of a free Cuba."

The end of the embargo should take place only if the Cuban government releases its political prisoners and promises to respect the most important right of all, freedom of expression.

## Homosexuality is not an ailment

MATTHEW RUCKMAN  
Staff Writer

A poll recently conducted in the United Kingdom reported that a significant number of psychiatrists have treated and were willing to treat their patients for homosexuality. Essentially, they are attempting, at the behest of the patient, to make them straight.

The report stated, "The researchers questioned more than 1,400 mental health professionals on whether they would attempt to change a client's sexual orientation, if requested to do so. Although only one in 25 (4 percent) said that they would do so, one in six (17 percent) reported having assisted at least one client to reduce their gay or lesbian feelings, usually through therapy."

From the outside, this seems horrifying. There is no real data on how helpful and safe such treatments could be. This cabal of psychiatrists is practicing, for all intents and purposes, behavior modification on homosexuals; and it has a very uncomfortable similarity to human experimentation.

One of the professors conducting the poll even notes, "There is very little evidence to show that attempting to treat a person's homosexual feelings is effective and in fact, it can actually be harmful."

As French playwright Molière said, "Nearly all men die of their remedies, and not their illnesses."

That much is obvious though. In a black and white world, mostly everyone understands that singularly

treating homosexuality as something to be cured is wrong. Homosexuality is probably innate and there from birth, though nobody is sure.

A cure for homosexuality would be the psychiatric equivalent of having a lobotomy.

But the people who are approaching these therapists are not just homosexuals. They're unsure bisexuals, reconciliatory homosexuals and maybe confused heterosexuals.

They are the borderline, the shades of gray in the area of gay. It's about the homosexuals who might be straight and the heterosexuals who might be gay. Their sexual admixtures and the affecting social conditions are not always easy to throw a label on, and their positions are not always concrete.

In this, maybe the therapist can

help - with the "other stuff." The purpose of therapy has always seemed - to me - to counsel you in order to guide you through a process of accepting yourself, establishing things that you may want or need to change, and verifying whether you are able to change them.

If a homosexual wants to decide ultimately if they are gay or not, therapy may help do this, or at the very least deny who they are more thoroughly.

The larger tragedy looming over all these patients is that they even feel compelled to go to therapy because of their sexual orientation. They have no disease and are seeking a cure to what is very obviously a social disease - intolerance.

Unfortunately, no cure exists for that ailment.

### COMIC RELIEF



CHRISTOPHER M. RODRIGUEZ/THE BEACON

## GREEN GROUP

### Club promotes environmental action

**LAUREN AGOSTO**  
Staff Writer

Going green isn't the latest craze - it's been the main focus of a small group of students on campus for more than ten years.

Students for Environmental Action first began in the late 1990s, disbanded for several years after that and returned in Fall 2008. Since its return, the organization implemented a single stream recycling program on campus, which allows paper, plastic, glass and aluminum to be disposed of in the same bin.

"We provide different opportunities for students to engage in environmental action, for example by going dumpster diving or having events open to FIU students to raise awareness for students who don't know about issues that are going on in our environment and how they can take that into consideration when furthering their careers," said Stephany Alvarez, co-president of SEA. "It's important for students to get involved now so they can learn how their actions are affecting our environment and how they can make a difference in their field, even doing little things like using recycled paper."

The main goals of SEA are to create awareness about environmental issues, locate resources and events for active involvement and promote a healthy environment at FIU.

"This is the first green initiative club at FIU. It has been the first to show FIU students that going green is actually one of our priorities right now at FIU and also at a national level," said Karen Pannocchia, graduate advisor for Students for Environmental Action. "We do have students involved with that and they can do something about it."

SEA hopes to use FIU as a leading example to the rest of the nation and

the world. They are currently working toward implementing energy conservation in all of the buildings on campus, developing better commuting options for students, putting in solar panels and finding other ways to efficiently power FIU.

"As many of us had to become

**“It's important for students to get involved now so they can learn how their actions are affecting our environment and how they can make a difference.**

**Stephany Alvarez**  
co-president, Students for Environmental Action

familiar with budget deficits and program cuts, by reducing our expenses, we could allocate more money to actual education purposes, professors and programs, thus making FIU better in every aspect: not only academically but also by becoming a great example to the rest of the community," said Carolina Cabal, secretary of SEA.

On April 6, the first day of Earth Week 2009, FIU's Students for Environmental Action held its "Focus on Green Energy Day" at the University Park campus. Its main purpose was to inform students about the harmful consequences of the energy sources currently being used like coal, nuclear energy and oil. Some consequences of the widespread use of those resources are pollution, depletion of the ozone layer, climate change, destruction of natural habitats and major health problems.

The organization is trying to implement a "Green

Fee," a fee of about \$0.75 - \$1 per credit enrolled in. A committee comprised mostly of students and some faculty and administration members will manage the funds brought in by the Green Fee.

"Better energy efficiency in buildings, the acquisition of solar panels and photovoltaic cells,

bioconversion of wastes into energy, plus many other technologies, will help FIU excel in the now-national effort of achieving energy independence from nonrenewable, dirty and dangerous sources," Cabal said.

In order to find out students' opinions, SEA has been surveying FIU students to find out what they think of the new Green Fee. According to Cabal, the surveys have shown an overwhelming support of the fee.

The group also participated in Powershift 2009 in Washington, D.C., where students from all over the nation united to lobby Congress for climate change policy and action, which proved successful with Congressman Henry Waxman and Congressman Ed Markey introducing the American Clean Energy and Security Act, a landmark climate and energy bill.

"We can't wait to meet more new people: the more we are, the more hands that can work together to achieve a just, clean and more positive world," Cabal said. "Please unite our efforts. Let's change the world, starting with our school!"

*For more information about Students for Environmental Action, please contact seafiu@gmail.com.*



## Pulse



### Promises to yourself are the first to go

**EDDITH SEVILLA**  
Asst. Life! Editor

As the weeks and months of this Spring semester diminished, my weight did not.

At the start of the semester, I vowed to lose 30 pounds - 15 of which I had gained since the onset of my relationship with my boyfriend Charlie.

I asked you, my readers, to join me as I embarked on this journey. I wrote about Web sites, exercises, health and more to keep us motivated. I read health articles, went to health fairs and even worked out at the University Park Campus gym - not a pleasant experience to say the least, but that's a story for another day.

And through it all, life happened. Between the demands of my job, schoolwork and my personal problems, losing weight took the back burner.

There are no excuses for this. But then again this is not a column on how sorry I am for not meeting my own expectations. Rather, it is a personal account of my struggles with losing weight while my partner shed the pounds.

Charlie unknowingly embarked on this journey with us. And as my will to resist chocolate collapsed at the mere sight of it, he remained strong.

At first, he jogged two miles daily or whenever life permitted. Eventually he was running three miles per day.

A few weeks ago, I took Charlie's invitation to go on a three-mile jog. Now let me tell you, if all you're used to is an occasional two-mile jog in the evening hours when the sun is down, a jog over mounds during the sweltering heat of the midday sun is not a good idea.

But I did it. And halfway through, I was regretting my decision. Eventually we ended up walking and the next day I was quite sore.

At work I have an inventory of healthy snacks, all thanks to my boyfriend. I snack on almonds, granola bars, Healthy Choice soups,

water and more.

While both Charlie and I have enjoyed these treats, my sick obsession with chocolate drove me to the vending machine time and time again for a mouth-watering Crunch bar. I ate whatever I wanted and Charlie watched what he ate. I ate midnight snacks while Charlie refrained from them.

To say the least Charlie has lost 18 pounds since the start of the semester. On the contrast I gained a few pounds. (OK, I gained three,

but it's still weight.) I have been counting down the days to graduation for almost two months now.

This time next week, I will be five days shy from my graduation ceremony - a thought that thrills me, but at the same time makes me feel like a failure for not losing

**And through it all, life happened. Between the demands of my job, schoolwork and personal problems, losing weight took the back burner.**

the weight I vowed to lose.

In my desperation, I started the three-day fruit flush diet last Friday and ended it on Sunday. I drank a protein shake every two hours on the first day, followed by a bottle of water every hour, ending with grilled chicken and salad.

On the second and third day, everything was the same, except the protein shake was substituted for fresh fruits. The diet promises to make you lose 9-10 pounds in three days; I lost three.

Now, in the diet's defense, I have a condition that doesn't allow me to eat so lightly and thus I ate more than was allowed.

Did it help me jump-start my diet? Not really. What's keeping me motivated these days is graduation, what I will wear and the graduation pictures I will come back to 10 years from now.

COLUMN



EDDITH SEVILLA

## CABRALITICS

# Pirates: a threat to peace on campus

**CHRIS CABRAL**  
Staff Writer

With all the talk about the economy in the news these days, America and its leaders have forgotten about the biggest threat facing the U.S. today: pirates.

After years of being glamorized and glorified in film and television by the pirate sympathizers at Disney, our ocean dwelling enemies have struck us once again. Impressionable Somalis, likely influenced by the *Pirates of the Caribbean* films, have taken to the high seas to steal, kidnap and engage in various other shenanigans – deadly shenanigans.

In these times of economic tribulation, rarely is the question asked: Are Disney films turning our children into murderous buccaneers? And are our leaders doing enough to protect us from our Johnny Depp-loving, blood-thirsty kids?

These are questions our leaders have been all too eager to ignore. In the first few months of his presidency, Barack Obama has focused almost exclusively on the economy, healthcare and foreign policy. Not once has he patrolled the waters off our coastline to beat back the hordes of pirates no doubt waiting to pilfer our valuables, ransack our homes and reclaim the rum of their captain, Morgan.

While Obama has been wise to stock his cabinet with veterans of sea combat – including Hillary Clinton, who killed three pirates off the coast of Bermuda in 1983 – he has still left our country vulnerable to attack. As former Vice President Cheney has warned us, the impending closure of the detention center at Guantanamo Bay has emboldened our enemies who know that once our island military base is closed they can once again rule the sea.

Florida International University is especially vulnerable. One of our campuses sits at the shores of Biscayne Bay, with virtually no protection from pirate siege. Biscayne Bay Campus is likely a very tempting target for pirates, who would no doubt appreciate the nice scenery and quality dining options.

Close inspection of the coastline near BBC finds no warships or sentries overlooking the water, and its student government council is currently completely without a navy. A fleet of determined pirates could no doubt overtake the Wolfe Center in a matter of minutes.

Unsuspecting students would be pressed into service of their new overlords and BBC would become America's third largest pirate-controlled University campus.

While SGC-BBC's vice president was reluc-

tant to comment about the growing pirate threat, University Park SGC President Arthur Meyer was happy to share the details of his administration's maritime security policy.

"We have our own Golden Panther SEALs patrolling our parks and lakes," Meyer said, alluding to the team of swimming assassins who lurk throughout campus for our protection.

The SEALs' movements are so stealthy that many students are completely unaware of their existence.

*The Beacon* asked one student how he felt about the well-armed military force that silently watches our every move, prepared

to subdue any pirate at a moment's notice if one should threaten a student, administrator or faculty member.

"What are you talking about? What the f\*ck?" said Douglas Reilly, a junior theatre major.

While the Golden Panther SEALs (GPS) are heavily armed and dangerous (to pirates), Meyer assures that his security policy is environmentally friendly. Meyer noted that the highly trained squadron of deadly warriors is taught to respect campus wildlife.

"Be aware that they are under strict orders not to harm the ducks," Meyer said.

While the pirate threat is currently under control at FIU, it has been steadily growing over the past few years. According to the International Maritime Bureau, pirate attacks soared dramatically in 2007.

What else happened in 2007? Disney released the hit movie *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*, the third film in a trilogy focusing on these ship dwelling killers.

Coincidence? Perhaps. Yet there can be no doubt that the films glorify these buccaneers. Pirate life in the films is portrayed as "fun" and "adventurous," ignoring the real life problems of their sinful lifestyle, like scurvy and venereal disease.

Thanks to the pirate apologists at Disney, our children are being raised to admire these depraved miscreants.

Hopefully, if our leaders remain vigilant and if more concerned Americans work to raise pirate awareness, we can ensure that Biscayne Bay Campus remains safe, children will abandon their dreams of a life of piracy and Disney will finally release an accurate pirate film: *Pirates of the Caribbean 4: The Curse of the Inflamed Genitals*.



CHRIS CABRAL

## ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK



ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

**PLAY ON:** Phi Sigma Sigma hosted Rock-a-thon on April 13. Campus organizations formed teams and paid \$70 to play with all the proceeds going to help the National Kidney Foundation. The organization that raises the most funds is matched by Phi Sigma Sigma to donate to their own charity.

## THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

### WEDNESDAY • APRIL 15

**WHAT:** Music Saves Lives – Meetig  
**WHEN:** 3 p.m.  
**WHERE:** GC 305  
**CONTACT:** 305-348-2285

**WHAT:** Indian Students Association – Elections  
**WHEN:** 4 p.m.  
**WHERE:** GC 140  
**CONTACT:** 305-348-2285

**WHAT:** La Lupe: A One Woman Show  
**WHEN:** 7:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Colony Theatre  
**CONTACT:** 305-674-1026

**WHAT:** Robert Frost Poetry Festival  
**WHEN:** Call  
**WHERE:** Key West Heritage House & Robert  
**CONTACT:** 800-275-5397

**WHAT:** FIU Music Presents: Symphonic Music Performance  
**WHEN:** 2 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center  
**CONTACT:** 305-348-0496

### TUESDAY • APRIL 14

**WHAT:** Truth for Life  
**WHEN:** 12 p.m.  
**WHERE:** GC 340  
**CONTACT:** 305-348-2285

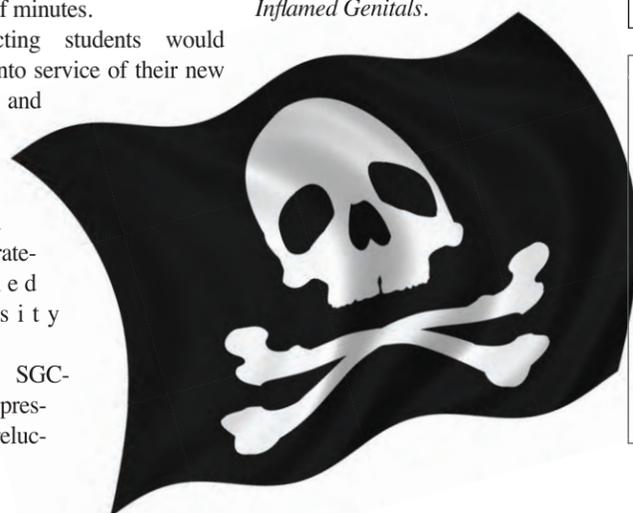
**WHAT:** FIU Music Presents – Classical Music Performance  
**WHEN:** 8 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Herbert & Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center  
**CONTACT:** 305-348-0496

**WHAT:** Alvin Ailey America Dance Theatre  
**WHEN:** 8 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Adrienne Arshat Center for the Performing Arts  
**CONTACT:** 305-949-6722

**WHAT:** Audio Lobo  
**WHEN:** 10 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Bougainvillea's Old  
**CONTACT:** 305-669-8577

**WHAT:** Miami Latin Gay Film Festival  
**WHEN:** 7:30 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Colony Theatre  
**CONTACT:** 305-674-1026

- Compiled by Mariana Ochoa



## JOIN OUR STAFF!

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.

# FIU welcomes sixth hoops head coach

THOMAS, page 1

legend who made 12 NBA All-Star games in his career, will coach the Golden Panthers in the 2009-10 season.

"We are very excited to have such a legendary athlete and proven winner in Isiah Thomas to lead our men's basketball program," Garcia said. "There is no doubt that Isiah will give FIU a tremendous opportunity to take the basketball program to the highest level."

After a 13-year career with the Detroit Pistons that included two championships, Thomas coached the Indiana Pacers from 2000-03 while compiling a 134-115, before getting an opportunity to lead the Knicks en route to 56-108 clip as head coach and general manager.

In five seasons with the Golden Panthers, Rouco had a 55-94 record, including a 13-20 campaign this previous season. Despite a 2005 Sun Belt Conference tournament semi-final appearance, the Golden Panthers never made a significant postseason run in the next four seasons under Rouco.

"We appreciate the five years Sergio Rouco gave to FIU as its men's basketball head coach, but we feel that it is now time to move in a different direction," Garcia told *The Miami Herald*.

Thomas endured controversial times during his tenure in New York.

In September 2007, he and Madison Square Garden were sued for sexual harassment by employee Anucha Brown Sanders. MSG and the Knicks were ordered to pay \$11.6 million for the incident, and Thomas

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF ISIAH THOMAS

- Most Outstanding Player of the 1981 NCAA Basketball tournament for National Champion Indiana Hoosiers
- Second overall pick, 1981 NBA Draft
- Twelve-time NBA All-Star
- Two-time NBA Champion
- 1990 NBA Finals MVP
- National Basketball Hall of Fame Inductee, 2000
- Executive Vice President, Toronto Raptors 1994-1998
- Head Coach, Indiana Pacers, 2000-2003, record 131-115
- Head of Basketball Operations, New York Knicks, 2003-2008
- Head Coach, New York Knicks, 2006-2008, record 56-108

was not found personally liable. He was not asked to pay for the damages though. In October 2008, Thomas was rushed to the hospital after an apparent overdose of sleeping pills, but it was not considered a suicide attempt.

Thomas will have a fresh start with the Golden Panthers and have a chance to build off FIU's first postseason win since the 2005 run.

With the team returning SBC Freshman of the Year Freddy Asprilla and a few key contributors, Thomas will be asked to build

a program that has not had a winning season since 1999-2000, when it went 16-14 under Shakey Rodriguez.

Thomas anticipates the task.

"Coming back to the college game has always been a dream of mine, and I didn't want to pass up an opportunity to go somewhere where we can build a basketball legacy together," Thomas said. "A lot of people don't know that FIU is one of the 25 largest universities in the country, with a tremendously strong alumni community standing behind us. Most important, I think

we can get good players from across Florida and around the country to buy into our plan to make this a top-tier basketball program. I'm committed to growing something here, and strongly believe that over time, we'll put a team on the floor that everyone at FIU can be proud of."

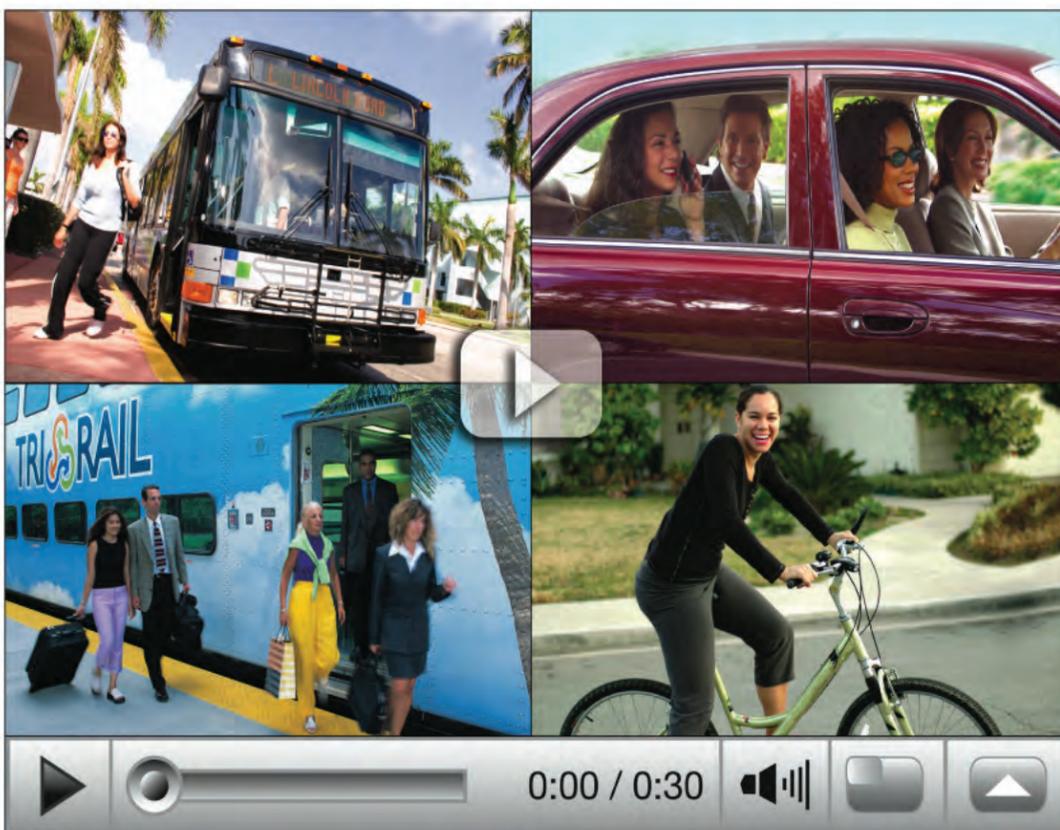
Thomas, 47, became part owner and executive vice president for the expansion Toronto Raptors in 1994. In addition, Thomas purchased the Continental Basketball Association in 1998, and he owned the league for two years.



DARREN CUMMINGS/AP PHOTO

**WHAT A SURPRISE:** Isiah Thomas, in becoming the FIU head coach becomes the first Hall of Fame player to become a college head coach, after enshrinement.

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY REBECCA BURTON  
CHRIS GREEN/THE BEACON

## Pitcher Cassady reunited with mentor after rocky detour

**LEILANI LAUREANO**  
Staff Writer

After two years of battling epilepsy at Presbyterian College, junior pitcher Paige Cassady transferred to FIU to play for head coach Beth McClendon, the pitching instructor she met nine years ago.

Now, Cassady is back under the tutelage of the only coach who understood her.

"She has taught me everything when it comes to pitching," said Cassady. "I owe her a lot."

McClendon helped Cassady battle health issues for several years. Cassady was diagnosed with epilepsy and had three seizures while at Presbyterian. One of the seizures occurred during a game, while

Cassady was pitching.

"The doctors gave me medicine for the epilepsies, which made me depressed," she said. "Then they gave me anti-depression medicine. It was a rough two years."

Cassady said she did not enjoy her time at Presbyterian, not only because of the health issues, but because the coaching staff didn't understand her.

"The coaches did not know how to push me," she said. "They pushed me in a way that I would take it personally, and it did not make me a better pitcher."

But McClendon knows how to motivate her. Cassady said her new coach understands her health problems, but doesn't take it easier on her.

"Coach knows how to push me," Cassady said. "She knows I will not give up and quit."

Cassady's father had arranged one-on-one pitching lessons with McClendon when she coached at Stetson University from 2000 to 2002. Cassady was in middle school when she had her first pitching lesson with McClendon, and they have kept in contact ever since.

Knowing that Cassady was unhappy at Presbyterian, McClendon believes her pitcher is much happier being a Golden Panther. She's closer to her home in Orlando than Presbyterian, which is in South Carolina.

"Cassady feels a lot more comfortable here," McClendon said. "She has more in common with these girls, and she is a great teammate."

While at Presbyterian, Cassady did have success pitching, though. She was the team's ace and was named to the All-Big South Conference Team in 2007. But McClendon believes becoming a Golden Panther has been a bit harder on Cassady physically.

"FIU is more competitive than Presbyterian," McClendon said. "We are more athletic, and Cassady did not know what to expect, but she is a very hard worker."

Since the seventh grade, Cassady has been close with McClendon, and when her one-time pitching instructor moved to Houston to coach the University of Houston, she visited her often.

"Her parents used to send her and her little sister to me in Houston in

the summer for my pitching camps," McClendon said.

Cassady does admit that McClendon makes her nervous, though. She does not want to disappoint her coach and mentor.

"The hardest part is that coach knows what I am capable of, and I do not want to let her down," she said.

Cassady has hardly disappointed the Golden Panthers with a 3.92 ERA, and McClendon said she's grateful for having Cassady on the team. She said Cassady is a great addition to the team, on and off the field.

"Cassady is a daily example of how to work hard and how to be a great teammate," McClendon said. "She is a strong leader and has a bright future."

## Golden Panthers drop series finale; New Orleans next

**SERGIO BONILLA**  
Asst. Sports Director

Down 11-2, the Golden Panthers had little hope of coming back.

They hit themselves back into the game against Middle Tennessee University State Blue Raiders, but they fell short in the last game of the series.

The Blue Raiders defeated the Golden Panthers 13-9 on April 12 at Murfreesboro.

For the first time this season, the Golden Panthers lost a three-game series.

They lost to the team that was sitting directly above the Panthers in the Sun Belt Conference standings coming into the series. FIU's record stands at (20-12, 9-6, Sun Belt) and MTSU is (24-8, 13-5) on the season.

Starting pitcher Corey Polizzano could not make it through three innings as he gave up eight

runs, seven earned.

Blue Raiders' starting pitcher fared better than Polizzano, but he did not have an easy five innings of work. He gave up three runs and walked five Golden Panthers.

The Panthers scored in six of the game's nine innings.

Brett Wilson had an ugly win and an ugly win is better than a pretty one any day of the week. He was struggling in the first and then got the reverse pick to get out of the inning," head coach Steve Peterson told *goblueraiders.com*. "We just have to be better out of the bullpen. Woods did a good job but we have to get help in the bullpen before we bring him in."

Each team had to use five different pitchers to finish the deciding game of the series.

Both teams had several hits, but the Blue Raiders had six hit go for extra bases.

For the Blue Raiders, Drew Robertson was a

triple shy of the cycle. Nathan Hines and Grant Box had two hits each and Zach Hudson had a two-run homer.

"Hudson has been struggling but I was very proud of the way he came out and played today after a bad day yesterday. I thought Box had a big hit and then Drew put the game away and had a couple of other big hits for us today," Peterson said, according to *goblueraiders.com*.

Ryan Mollica led the Panthers' offense going 3-for-4 hits and four RBI. Tyler Townsend went just 1-for-5. Junior Arrojo hit his first career home run as well.

### DIFFERENT SEASON

Despite dropping two of three games on the road to the No. 2 team in the conference, the Panthers' progression from last season is evident.

Last season it took the team 56 games to reach

the 20-win mark. It took the Panthers just 31 games to accomplish the same feat this season.

The most telling statistic is the team difference in team ERA. Last season the team's ERA was 7.12, through 32 games, the Panthers' ERA is 4.96, which is No. 1 in the conference.

Newcomers Scott Rembisz and Tom Ebert have brought stability to the top of the pitching staff. They boast the two best ERAs in the Sun Belt Conference.

### DROPPING

The most significant outcome of the series is how the Panthers went from the third spot to the fifth spot in the conference standings. Troy University and the University of Louisiana-Monroe currently hold the third and fourth spots, respectively. Troy is 10-5 and ULM is 11-7. The Golden Panthers face New Orleans, the last place team in the Sun Belt from April 17-19.