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## The Beacon, February 24, 2010

Florida International University

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## SPOTLIGHT

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### OPINION PAGE 4



Lauren Conrad, star of MTV's *The Hills*, spoke to FIU students on Tuesday. Take a minute to laugh, then read exactly why this was pointless.

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### LIFE! PAGE 5



Panel Panel: Check out Marvel's monkey assassin.

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When Andrew Mattox isn't suiting up for the football field, he is gearing up for track and field.

### SPORTS PAGE 8

Women basketball's six-game winning streak will be put to the test as they brace for a visit from MTSU.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**FIU Take-Over the Miami Heat Pep Rally, Feb. 24, 12 - 2 p.m.** Get pumped up at the Wolfe University Center, and a chance to meet the Heat dancers.

**Women's Basketball, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.** The Golden Panthers take on Middle Tennessee at the U.S. Century Bank Arena hoping to maintain their winning streak.

**Men's Basketball, Feb. 25, 8 p.m.** The Golden Panthers take on Middle Tennessee at the U.S. Century Bank Arena.

—More events can be found in our Monday and Friday issues of *Life!*.

### WEATHER

**WEDNESDAY**  
T-Storms  
LOW: 55 HIGH: 77

**THURSDAY**  
Mostly Sunny  
LOW: 48 HIGH: 67

**FRIDAY**  
Mostly Sunny  
LOW: 55 HIGH: 68

### CONTACTS

Editor in Chief ..... 305-348-1580  
chris.necuze@fiusm.com

MMC Office ..... 305-348-2709  
news@fiusm.com

BBC Office ..... 305-919-4722  
bbc@fiusm.com

Tips & Corrections ..... 305-348-2709  
tips@fiusm.com

Advertising ..... 305-348-6994  
advertising@fiusm.com



Robert F. Kennedy Jr. spoke on raising awareness on the need of alternative energy on Feb. 17 in the GC Ballrooms.

## Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. speaks to students about alternative energy

**MARIELLA ROQUE**  
Contributing Writer

Attorney Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. came to FIU to raise awareness about the need to invest heavily in alternative energy technology as opposed to coal and oil burning, thereby reducing our dependence on fossil fuels to supply energy.

"Nature is the infrastructure of our community," Kennedy said during his visit on Feb. 17.

The lecture was funded by the Student Government Association, which spent \$27,500 to bring Kennedy as a guest speaker. SGA also had a private reception with

Kennedy preceding the lecture.

Kennedy is a co-host on the radio talk show "Ring of Fire" on Air America Radio and founder and chairman of Waterkeeper Alliance, an umbrella organization supporting programs that work toward "keeping" the national waterways clean.

He is also a nephew of former U.S. president John F. Kennedy and the son of U.S. Senator and Presidential Candidate Robert F. Kennedy.

Kennedy spoke about the advantages presented by the use of geothermal energy.

The ignorance of the Amer-

ican people when it came to global warming was one of Kennedy's concerns.

He blamed it on "the media's bias in reporting the effects of global warming," stating that the media's "only interest is... their own pocketbook."

Kennedy also disagreed with the Obama administration's funding of research into alternative nuclear power technology – dubbing it Obama's "moment of insanity."

The previous day the president had promised a conditional \$8.3 billion loan guarantee to support

**KENNEDY, page 2**

SGA

## Councils unite for solutions

**PHILIPPE BUTEAU**  
Staff Writer

Six senators from the Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus joined 22 senators from SGC at Modesto Maidique Campus on Feb. 22 for the first of two joint sessions this semester.

Discussed during the meeting were plans for changes to the SGA constitution and the problems and potential solutions in SGA.

Nickolay Chikishev, SGC-BBC lower-division senator and speaker of the senate, suggested lowering the total number of senators for BBC from 21 to 18.

Chikishev and Zahra Arbabi Aski, lower-division senator, proposed reaching this number by reducing the amount of lower-division senators from four to two and senators at large from three to two.

Chikishev said this wasn't about less representation but about better retention.

He said later that SGC-BBC would look to their history in determining the final number of senate seats.

Chikishev said the number of senate seats isn't proportional to the amount of students at the campus because BBC has 8,000 students with 20 senators and MMC has 32,000 students with 30 senators.

"I think someone just came up with that number off the top of their head," Chikishev said.

Aski emphasized that only the

**SGA, page 2**

## Honors College beautifies city of Sweetwater

**MELISSA CACERES**  
Staff Writer

The city of Sweetwater, with the help of the FIU Honors College, will take part in a city-wide project to help enhance the community and assist its residents.

The FIU Honors College-Sweetwater Partnership, managed by Student Enrichment Coordinator Cecile Houry, gives Honors College students the opportunity to engage in a variety of hands-on projects throughout the Sweetwater community, ranging from tutoring children to serving as interns at the mayor's office.

"I think this is going to be very long term and large scale," Houry said, who is in charge of the program.

Preparation for the partnership began over a year and a half ago after the concept was mentioned by the Honors College community advisory board.

The college's "adoption" of Sweetwater then came to develop into an extensive community service program that now engages in more than nine different projects that are meant to strengthen leadership skills as well as integrate the University more fully within the city.

"The idea behind it was that we wanted to have a coherent Honors

College project that all honors students could be a part of," said Lesley Northup, the interim dean of the Honors College. "Instead of just doing little things like Relay for Life and beach cleanups, we can get them to concentrate on something that would have a valuable and noticeable impact on a community. So choosing Sweetwater then was a no-brainer because they are our community."

The partnership is divided into separate sections of the community which include the governmental team, education team, and senior partnership group. Starting in the fall of 2011, a Green team will be added which focuses on environmental initiatives such as planting trees

around the neighborhoods.

"Often when you start a new thing you find that it's very hard to get it off the ground, but this has been going great from the beginning and more Honors College students are getting excited about doing things over there," Northup added.

With the governmental team, eight students currently have unpaid internships within the mayor's office in different services that include social services, economic development and finance.

According to Northup, "they were delighted with the idea that FIU students would want to do stuff, and

**HONORS, page 2**



## NEWS FLASH

## NATIONAL

**Suspect confesses involvement in failed terrorist attack against U.S.**

Najibullah Zazi, a terrorism suspect arrested in September accused of conspiring to detonate bombs in New York has pleaded guilty.

According to CNN, Zazi appeared in court on Monday and pleaded guilty to conspiring to detonate explosives in the U.S.

In an appearance before a federal judge, Zazi admitted his role in the conspiracy, saying "In spring 2008, I conspired with others to join the Taliban, to fight along with the Taliban against the United States."

**Toyota accused of negligence on accelerator testing**

Leading Democrats on the House Energy and Commerce Committee accused Toyota of dismissing the notion that computer issues could be at fault for sticking accelerator pedals, and of making misleading statements concerning repairs.

According to the *New York Times*, since last fall, Toyota has recalled more than eight million vehicles worldwide in two separate actions related to complaints about accelerator pedals that can become stuck, making it hard to stop the vehicle.

The comments, from Henry A. Waxman, the committee's chairman, and Bart Stupak, a subcommittee chairman, came in an 11-page letter to James E. Lentz III, the president of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A.

The *New York Times* reported that the letter was released on the eve of the committee's hearing into the Toyota recalls, one of three scheduled.

## WORLD

**NATO air strike leaves 25 dead in Afghanistan**

A U.S. air strike is drawing criticism after being responsible for the deaths of at least 25 civilians, and wounding a dozen more.

According to the *Washington Post*, the Afghan cabinet condemned on Monday what it called an "unacceptable" attack and asked NATO troops to "coordinate with the Afghan security forces" before any operation.

The top American commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, held a conference Monday morning with task force and regional commanders across the country to remind them about the need for "judicious application of fire."

– Compiled by Gabriel Arrarás

# Citizenship classes, landscaping part of project's intended goals

**HONORS, page 1**

particularly delighted that they were honors students because they knew the quality of students that they were getting."

"It's a great opportunity for kids and I'm really glad that they did this because it's hard to get out there by yourself with no one to back you up," said sophomore honors student Kathleen Pfahlert, an international business major who is currently working with the city's finance department.

"With the Honors College behind you and having someone there to help you get your foot in the door, it makes it a lot easier."

Students under the same government-centered team will also orga-

nize six to seven citizenship classes by March 3, for Sweetwater residents going through the process of becoming U.S. citizens.

Through the educational team, elementary school children are visited by five Honors College students during after-school hours in order to play games of basketball.

The participants have also received free tickets to attend athletic events at FIU, like the women's basketball game that took place Feb. 17.

Targeting academics at the same time, Honors students offer tutoring to kids as well through aftercare programs like Read2Succeed and L'il Abner Mobile Home Park Tutoring.

"Some have been coming every week now and we've gotten to know

them," Houry said. "We have kids from Pre-K who have parents who don't speak English very well to a girl who comes who is 17 for [help in] algebra. It's really rewarding."

Senior citizens at the community senior center receive benefits from the program as well through visits from the members of Gamma Epsilon Phi, the honors society for Honors College students.

During the Fall of this year, they will be provided lessons, by the members, in managing e-mail accounts on the Internet.

According to Houry, the partnership will be expanding its student involvement within the next semesters and adding environmental projects that aim to beautify the city.

## Councils discuss staff downsizing

**SGA, page 1**

amount of lower-division senators is what they want to reduce.

"Four lower-division senators is literally too much for Biscayne Bay," Aski said.

Other constitutional amendments brought up were the impeachment process opting to use a three-fifths vote versus the current one-third, the ratification of amendments: how long it takes for amendments to go into effect and why the vice president of student affairs has to sign amendments and defining "senate leadership."

Though retention was

meant as a discussion topic to improve SGA retention as a whole, it focused on SGC-BBC.

The retention problem at SGC-BBC, according to Chikisev, was a combination of pay, scheduling and time problems. He also said that they feel a pressure to appoint people to positions.

"We have no one on our council, we need to appoint people," Chikisev said.

Because of that pressure, he said SGC-BBC needs to improve its screening process.

Alex Garcia, a senator from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, suggested that retention could be improved if there was more incentive. He said people would stay if they were paid more often, but Chikisev said SGC-BBC senators were paid their \$1,100 yearly salary.

The joint session came about from resolutions passed by both student government councils. The SGC-MMC resolution was passed Nov. 23, 2009 with 19 in favor, five opposed and no abstentions.

The joint sessions will be twice a semester, according to Helena Ramirez, SGC-BBC senate speaker.

## Reactions mixed on lecture's focus

**KENNEDY, page 1**

the building of two nuclear plants in Georgia.

His adamant criticism of the coal and oil industries focused on wasteful spending and poor decisions at the top corporate levels.

He emphasized the need for a totally new and comprehensive approach to the way this country invests in its future.

Students had varying reactions to Kennedy's lecture.

"His level of extraordinary conviction convinced a lot of the FIU students that it is never too late to start combating global warming," said junior Janiel Vargas.

Ben Badger, Jr., press secretary for the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus, agreed.

"[Kennedy] was both entertaining and enlightening, he presented many facts and insights that simply go unnoticed in the great energy debate."

Some, however, weren't as enthusiastic.

"I don't agree with his view on global warming and he didn't answer the essential question which is: how much in taxes will we be stuck paying if we drop the coal and oil industry?" said freshman Trang Phamhoang.

After the lecture, SGA awarded Kennedy with a framed copy of a resolution passed by the SGC-MMC senate in honor of Kennedy's deceased uncle, former Massachusetts Senator Edward Moore "Ted" Kennedy, commending him for "his integral role in passing more than 300 pieces of legislation."

Kennedy also received an FIU handbag filled with various Campus Life paraphernalia.

Immediately following the event, Kennedy was asked to do a book signing for his 2007 book *Crimes Against Nature*.

"The man's genuine personality is certainly worth admiration in my book," Vargas said.

## THE BEACON

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SGC-BBC

## University-wide council discusses financial matters

JASMYN ELLIOTT  
BBC Managing Editor

The University-wide council met on Feb. 19 to approve and deny funding for various campus offices, organizations and amenities out of the \$9,634,960 budget.

Although the meeting was scheduled to take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the number of items being considered and the discussions that ensued extended the meeting until 7 p.m.

The executive boards from both campuses were present and SGC-BBC Comptroller Robert Chung acted as the meeting chair.

Both Rafael Zapata, assistant director of Campus Life and Jose Toscano, assistant director of SGA were present to help guide the councils they advise while Director of Campus Life Craig Cunningham, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Cathy Akens, and Director of Budget and Personnel Matilde Gramling offered their expertise.

One of the most heated debates ensued when the discussion to fund the marching band came up. Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus President

Anthony Rionda was quick to begin a motion to fully fund the \$130,000 requested, despite a call for discussion.

“There is no point in debating it,” said Rionda. “We have debated it backward and forward.”

SGC-BBC Vice President Christin “Cici” Battle pointed out some reservations.

“Explain your passion,” said Battle. “Yes, we should fund the band – however, there are some things that need to come in place for students.”

SGC-BBC President Sholom Neistein agreed to vote only if proviso language was added to the motion. Ultimately it passed unanimously with proviso language that stated that this was a one-time allocation and the vice presidents from both councils must be involved in leadership-based decisions.

Furthermore, they expect other departments to contribute funding in the future, although they did not specify which departments.

Another major cause for contention was the funding going toward SGA itself, namely its internship program. A motion to revamp the internship program into a campus-specific model was ultimately shot down. However,

not all were enthusiastic about the decision to fully fund the SGA Intern Retreat at \$10,500.

“We’re spending \$40,000 on a retreat already,” said SGC-MMC Vice President Mykaelle “Myka” Figueiredo. “This is a waste of money.”

According to Toscano, not all of the money goes to the retreat.

“It is actually for the year-long program,” he said.

According to Toscano, an estimate of \$3,800 from the \$10,500 will be used for the actual retreat while remaining funds that are not used for retreats go toward training workshops, T-shirts and other materials.

Major budget cuts were also a part of this meeting. To begin with, MMC’s Graham Center only received \$2,153,00 of the \$3,000,000 requested. Additional requests such as 17 flat-screen televisions, restroom remodeling, and a permanent dance floor were denied.

According to Gramling, neither GC nor the Wolfe University Center is doing well in regards to revenue, which is “drying up due to the economy.” Ergo, proviso language added to the passed motion states that the funding

for a proposed art gallery, computer lab, and game room must come out of their approved allotment.

Story Corps/Writing for Change, a campus organization that combined community service and creative writing, was unanimously denied their request for \$4,000 due to its lack of presence in the University.

“If you can tell me what they do, then maybe I’ll consider [funding them],” Figueiredo said.

Rionda suggested that the organization should be referred to the Council for Student Organizations as a club instead.

Furthermore, the funding toward University-wide distribution of *The New York Times* has been cut.

“I am against the *New York Times* program because we are not in New York,” Rionda said.

To replace the program, the University will make an effort to advertise the online edition of Times and possibly create a similar, and ultimately less expensive distribution partnership with *The Miami Herald* or *The Sun-Sentinel*.

-Additional reporting by Sergio Montealegre.

## Scholarships’ ultimate aim is giving back through Caribbean, Mexican students

KATHERINE PORRAS  
Contributing Writer

The Latin American and Caribbean Center at the University present the Florida Caribbean Institute and the Florida Mexico Institute scholarship awards. The FCI and FMI provide financial aid to international students from the Caribbean or Mexico.

On the LACC Web site it states that a student must be a citizen from the Caribbean in order to be eligible for the FCI Award. To be eligible for the FMI Award the student must be a citizen from Mexico. The international student is also required to have a F1 or J1 visa.

A J1 visa is an exchange visitor program and the F1 visas are given only through academic institutions.

According to Astrid Arrarás, director of academic programs, the FCI and FMI waivers are a very popular financial assistance tool but many students still do not know about it.

“Last year more than 100 students applied for FCI and around 50 percent received the award. We had around 30 applicants for FMI and all of them got it,” Arrarás said.

The FCI and FMI awards are merit based. Both the FCI and the FMI require a minimum 3.0 GPA.

Samuel Ogilvie, a senior and English major from the island of Grenada and recipient to the FCI Award, explained the award was not a scholarship but instead a waiver. “What it does is it takes care of the international fees. We pay out-of-state tuition which is like 6 times more than in-state tuition.”

Lucio Vázquez, a Mexican graduate student acquiring his Masters degree in investigative journalism, said it was an extraordinary aid.

“It helps us to cover the extra fees in order to pay like [Florida] resident students,” Vázquez said.

Along with a high academic standing, Ogilvie said they are required to return to their country

after graduating. They are expected to work there for the same amount of time they received the waiver.

“If you received the waiver for one year, you must work in your country for one year,” Ogilvie said.

Vázquez explained that the

purpose of the FMI is to strengthen the links between Mexico and Florida.

“I plan to return to my country and work on the social issues neglected by the mass media,” Vazquez said.

The deadline for both awards is

May 3, 2010.

If you have any questions regarding these programs or if you want a copy of the requirements, you may contact Astrid Arraras at 305-348-2894 or e-mail her at [arrarasa@fju.edu](mailto:arrarasa@fju.edu).

### JOIN THE CLUB



TOMAS LOPEZ-MELIS/THE BEACON

Sergio Guzman (left), a senior philosophy major, and Patrick Burke (right), a senior in hospitality management, promote the new Golden Brewers beer brewing club. Starting in a couple of weeks, the club will be teaching students how to brew their own beer twice a month in the hospitality management building.





## CABRALITICS

# Dear District 25: It's just not working out

In an unexpected turn of events, U.S. Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart has decided not to run for re-election in District 21, clearing the way for his brother Mario to run for the same seat.

Of course, Mario is already in Congress, representing nearby District 25.

Mario has heroically decided to move into his brother's district, in attempt to ensure that the 21st District stays within the control of his beloved family and the people of District 21 aren't forced to go without a Diaz-Balart representing them.

Some have criticized this move as a cynical attempt to preserve Mario's political career, since his current district has rapidly moved into the Democratic column.

According to the Miami-Dade department of elections, while District 21 (Lincoln's district) still has about 18,000 more Republicans than Democrats, District 25

now has about 2,500 more Democrats than Republicans.

Despite this seemingly impressive evidence that this is nothing more than a selfish political move, Mario's critics are not seeing the whole picture.

Mario is merely putting himself in a position to succeed.

For years, the younger Mario has represented a Republican district, and according to *National Journal*, he voted more conservatively than his brother in 2008. He clearly is not very good at representing Democrats. It would be better if they just agreed to go their separate ways.

Of course, the people of District 25 won't be given a chance this year to decide whether or not Mario should represent them.

But, Mario clearly thinks their opinion doesn't matter so much anymore, seeing as how they are a bunch of Democrats anyway. His district has changed, and that

changes the dynamics of their relationship. It's not the same district it was when they started seeing each other.

So Mario isn't abandoning his district; he's breaking up with them before they have the chance to break up with him. It's for the best, really.

He just doesn't want to put himself out there in 2010 only to get rejected - that would just be too much for him to bear.

He's not just doing this for himself though. He's clearly thinking of the best interests of the people of District 21. For years they have been represented by a Diaz-Balart. They can't just be expected to be represented by a member of another family, just like that.

You can't just go from 15 years of Lincoln Diaz-Balart to someone else just like that. They have to be weaned off the Diaz-Balarts slowly. They can't have Lincoln anymore, so they might as well have Mario.

### COLUMNIST



CHRIS CABRAL

“Mario isn't abandoning his district; he's breaking up with them before they have the chance to break up with him.”

Both are relatively conservative, and they even look a bit alike. Perhaps Mario is hoping they won't really notice the difference.

I commend Mario's decision to move to a district that is more likely to appreciate him.

For years Mario has been seen as riding his brother's coattails. Now all he has to do is ride them a few miles away from where he currently lives.

Sure, he's actually serving as one district's representative while seeking to represent another, so in a way he's basically cheating on his current constituents.

But Mario is still young. He

can't be tied down to just one district, he still wants to play the field. District 25 was cool and everything, but it wasn't "the one." He has needs that need to be met, and the need to get re-elected is chief among them.

I for one applaud the Diaz-Balart's move to put his feelings and family ahead of the people of his current district. Hopefully now they can both move on.

The people of District 25 can elect a Democrat and Mario can move to a district that better meets his needs until something better comes along. Mario's just not a one-district kind of guy.

# Reality show star Lauren Conrad not deserving of praise

DEAN WILLIAMS  
Staff Writer

The premiere of MTV's reality series "The Real World" provided a foundation upon which virtually all television networks adopted reality television into their programming. Whether it's NBC's "Big Brother," Fox's "American Idol," Bravo's "Real Housewives" or ABC's "The Bachelor," one cannot deny the fact that reality television has paved the way for many ordinary Americans to become celebrities.

MTV, however, still remains ahead of the curve as it pertains to reality television, with shows such as the more notorious "Laguna Beach" and "The Hills" which both have something in common: Lauren Conrad.

Yes, *that* Lauren Conrad who spoke to FIU students at the Graham Center bookstore on Tuesday, Feb. 23. She was scheduled to discuss domestic abuse to students.

Conrad's appearance to discuss this issue is inappropriate but not for the obvious reasons.

"The Hills" documented Conrad's life as a student at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, her beginnings in the fashion industry with *Teen Vogue* and then *People's Revolution*, and her rocky relationship with Laguna Beach cast member Jason Wahler.

Shallow television perhaps, but one cannot dismiss Conrad's intelligence in spreading her name.

Conrad's fame is an example of the new phenomenon: viral celebrities like Tila Tequila among others who don't really do anything to gain their fame and become entrepreneurs.

Conrad started The Lauren Conrad Collec-

tion, debuted at the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week in Los Angeles in the spring of 2008. She took a hiatus from her clothing line, but launched "LC by Lauren Conrad" in the fall of 2009.

In the summer of 2009, Conrad published her first book, *L.A. Candy*, loosely based on her life. *Forbes Magazine's* Celebrity 100 list, published in June 2008, estimated that Conrad earns approximately \$1.5 million annually from her clothing line, television appearances and product endorsements.

If anyone doubted the power of reality television, Lauren Conrad is a fine example of it.

The Avon Corporation launched "mark," a line of products targeted toward young women. In the winter of 2007, the corporation named Conrad as its first spokesperson, no doubt due to her status as a television personality and her compatibility with the audience that Avon sought.

The m.Powerment by Mark is a means through which the Avon Corporation empowers young women to stand up against domestic violence, teaching them to not only recognize the warning signs of an abusive relationship, but how to avoid abusive relationships altogether.

Conrad made an appearance at the FIU Bookstore, signing mark newspapers and selling products, from which 100 percent of the proceeds are donated to agencies with programs to educate young women about domestic violence.

My criticism isn't of MTV or the Avon Corporation, but of Lauren Conrad's image. Her portrayal on both "Laguna Beach" and "The Hills" reflects the life of a well connected,

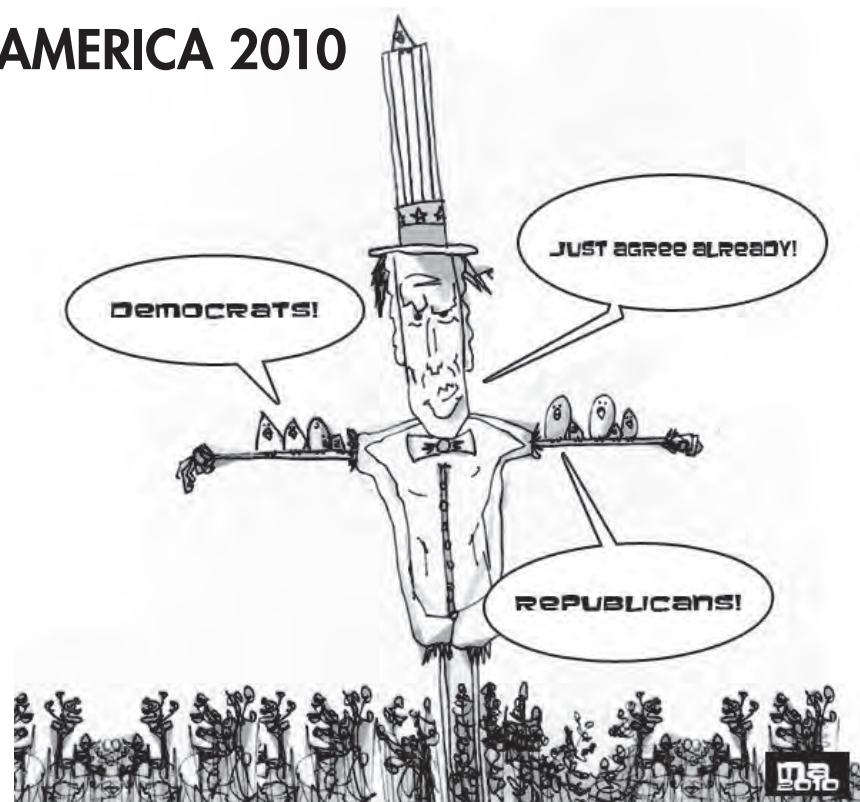
middle class young woman whose personal dramas earned her money and fame. Some of the "television personalities" on these reality series, especially Lauren Conrad, are seemingly unaffected by the economic downturn.

What the Avon Corporation has sought to accomplish with its product is noble, but the representative they have selected doesn't embody the philanthropy of the project. How

are Lauren Conrad's experiences in her relationships more compelling than that of Rihanna's, for example?

Not only did Rihanna endure domestic violence, but she has shown how to overcome it. Now that's a spokesperson and role model that girls and women can look to and know that an individual can and does live after domestic violence.

## AMERICA 2010




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Got a problem with parking? Want to give kudos to faculty? Or do you just have something to say about FIU? Send your thoughts in to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 240 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

### WINNER/LOSER

 A well-known individual, won a bid for original copy of "Action Comics 1," on Monday. It was the first comic book to introduce the iconic character Superman. Released in 1937, it's considered the first comic book with a superhero in it. Pricetag: \$1 million

 Canada. America's younger brother to the north can't seem to match America's performance at the Olympics. America is in first place and currently holds 24 medals during the competitions, held in Vancouver. Canada is tied for fifth, with just 9 medals.

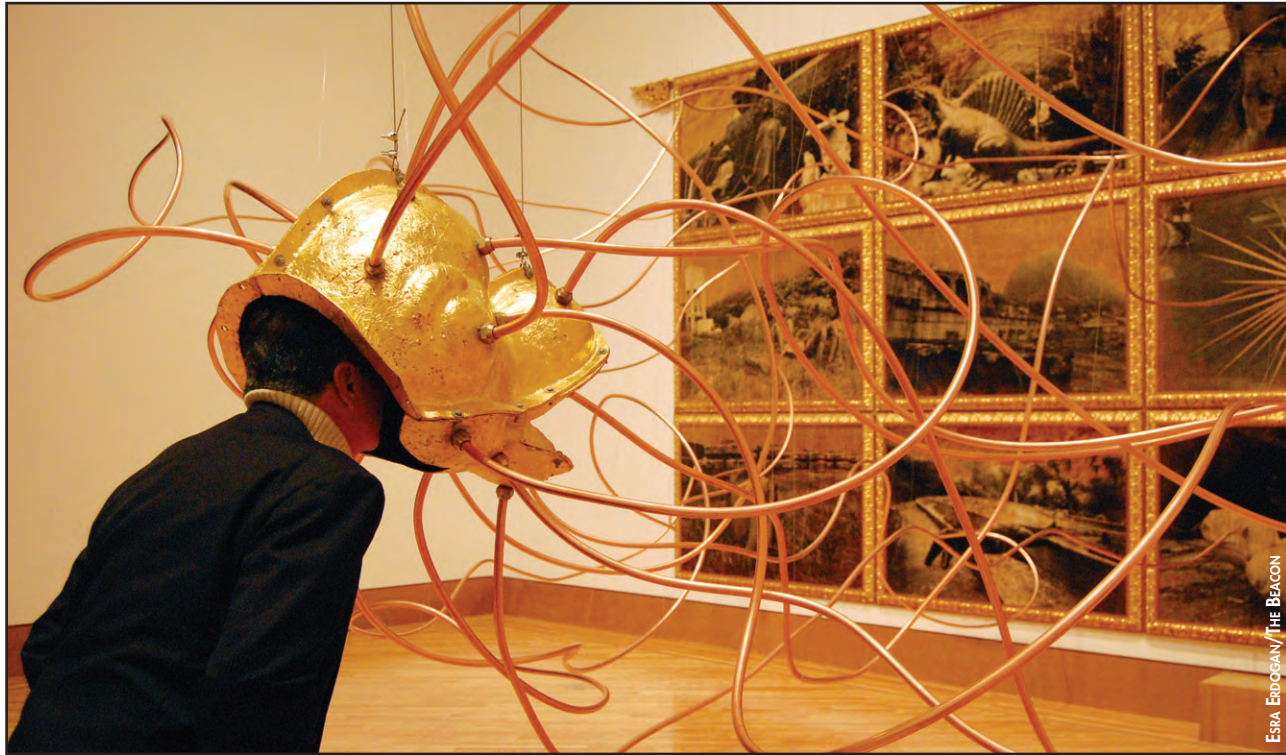
### QUOTATIONATION

"We'd be living in a fool's paradise if we said we were going to catch the Americans and win."

Chris Rudge  
CEO of Canadian Olympic Committee



# NATURAL SELECTIONS



Yao Jui-chung's photo installation *Heaven*, refers to one's dreams and desires. The exhibit is on display through May 16.

## Exhibit merges natural world with tradition

**ADRIANA RODRIGUEZ**  
Staff Writer

*Taiwan Discovered: In Place and Time*, the new exhibit at the Frost Art Museum, succeeds at providing FIU with the opportunity to see art that differs from the usual frescoes and portraits.

The exhibit, which opened Feb. 19, offers a unique look at the emerging Taiwanese art scene.

Against the beautiful, clean backdrop of the Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum – its architecture could stand on its own as a work of art – the collection makes a statement on the beauty of art derived from objects that surround us

in ordinary life.

The walls in the main entrance of the exhibit are lined with works by Tsung-chen Chang. Chang chooses rocks based on their texture and color and slices them to reveal an image that you would never think came from a rock.

Images of villages, trees and mountain ranges are put together in the slices, obviously with a little help from your imagination.

Words of advice: Don't read the titles of his work until you analyze the image for a while. It will spoil the fun.

There seems to be a rock theme in Taiwanese art and it is carried on by the work of Chao-Pang Hsu.

Pictures of Taiwan's unique and beautiful geological characteristics are enhanced and altered to escalate them to another level of beauty.

The photos of streams, rocks and trees are bright and colorful and add a nice contrast to the more subdued colors of Pei-Ying's work.

By digitally altering the photos, visitors are able to see the incredible detail in nature.

Huang Pei-Ying goes against the idea of traditional sculpture. Instead of working his artistry into the usual suspect, stone, he chose a stack of books.

For "India Buddha Boston," Pei-Ying stacked Boston White Pages phone-books and carved the front

side of the books to recreate the bust of the Indian Buddha.

The sculpture is almost unbelievable and, since you cannot touch any of the art, you are left with feelings of doubt about the possibility of a bust that looks so much like stone.

In case you really can't believe the bust is carved out of books, the back side reveals the spine of the books.

The main event in the exhibit is the overwhelmingly large installation piece, "Heaven" by Yao Jui-chung.

"Heaven" explores the idea of interconnectivity between all beings. Tubes stem out from a gold piece that resem-

**TAIWAN, page 6**

### PANEL PANEL

## *One-shot fails in attempt to incorporate silly humor*

Absurdism is a deeply contemplated philosophy that, boiled down to its basic meaning, contends that human life has no meaning. Closely rooted to nihilism and other depressing schools of philosophy, you may be confused as to why this all connects to comic books.

I've noticed that there is a lot of humor out in the world that tries to use absurdism to its advantage. In lieu of an actual punch line, there's something random that surprises and, hopefully, produces some laughs. It comes off as the tool of the inexperienced and can be seen everywhere from "Saturday Night Live" to Web comic strips such as *White Ninja*.

If you don't know how to write something that makes someone laugh, the safest bet is to write something ridiculous that is impossible, and someone out there will think you're a genius.

The specific instance I am trying to refer to this time would be Marvel comic's special one-shot issue of *Hit Monkey: The World's Greatest Assassin*. For those who haven't seen or heard of this issue coming out, I can explain the premise easily – but not the reason for it.

He is a monkey, and he happens to kill only other assassins.

To find out why exactly a monkey would want to kill anyone at all, you would have to read the issue, but I'll honestly admit that it's not worth finding out.

Once you come to terms with the fact that you're going to be reading a very silly issue, you would think that being prepared would be enough to get you through the issue.

Yet within the pages, you find that the entire origin of *Hit Monkey* is told with a straight face. The entire story is extremely solemn and serious, completely disregarding that its main character is a monkey holding guns.

Though the idea of telling this story with reverence is slightly amusing, I couldn't get too far in without wanting to put it down, because I simply did not care about the monkey or his monkey friends.

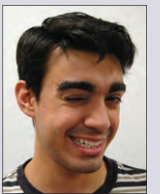
If you do a bit of searching, you'll find that *Hit Monkey* ties into the most recent issue of *Deadpool*. Sadly, I don't think this really gives this one-shot a reason to exist. One can get through *Deadpool* fine without the help of extra background stories.

If you like animals or assassins or the rare combination of both, this issue might be perfectly made for you.

If you're like me and are simply trying to wade through the mass of ridiculous zombie, robot and ninja stories, you may want to pass *Hit Monkey* up. I'm sure you'll have no trouble forgetting it ever happened.

*Panel Panel* is a weekly comics column written in tandem by Sean Gonzalez and Pablo Penton. Look for it every Wednesday.

COLUMNIST



SEAN GONZALEZ

## Documentary spotlights food industry monopolies



**RONALD CALDERO**  
Contributing Writer

Eating your vegetables may not be so good for you after all – at least the ones available to you at your favorite supermarket.

What exactly is the problem with supermarket carrots? That's what the environmentally and socially conscious documentary, *Fresh*, will be explaining to FIU students on March 3 at 6:30 p.m. in GC 150, free of charge.

More importantly, the film will show that there are people already working on a solution, and how you can join them.

*Fresh* touches on the issue of the over-industrialization of our food; the fact that the entirety of the United States' production is controlled by three or four major corporations, and that they would rather mass produce hormone-fed chicken as cheaply as possible than deliver quality poultry.

**FRESH, page 6**



# Artists borrow from geological inspirations

TAIWAN, page 5

bles a helmet with a small portable DVD player inside playing a video that you probably saw back in high school when you were learning about how information is transmitted through the brain.

The tubes attach to a series of photographs that are quirky and surreal.

The center photograph is of a crawling baby and the tube attached to his diaper. I'm not sure if Jui-chung is trying to say humanity is connected to a baby's butt, but it's a funny notion.

Pictures of people, animals and dinosaurs and broken statues make up the rest of the photographs with the tubes coming from their foreheads, mouths, eyes and chests.

The piece connects humor to a bigger theme: the connection that everything, living and non-living, has.

The William R. Kenan, Jr. Grand Gallery is dedicated to the work of Tseng Yu-chin.

Yu-chin's art is all about multimedia and the effects of media on society, mainly children. The photos and video showing children in an unconscious state on a school bus and in class are probably the creepiest things ever.

So, if you are still scarred from watching *The Grudge* or *The Ring*, do yourself a favor and don't go into that room.

The exhibit will be open until May 16.

# Film explores accessible organic alternatives

FRESH, page 5

This, and many other factual horrors of this industry, were the focus of 2008's Academy Award nominated documentary *Food Inc.*, and while *Fresh* revisits this sad but true scenario, its message is one of hope.

This film hopes to show you that the grass can indeed be greener on the other side.

Produced and directed by Portuguese filmmaker Ana Joanes, *Fresh* is a 72-minute documentary showcasing the people that are taking control of their food back from the big corporate suits by growing fruits, vegetables and even raising pigs and cows in community-based organic farms.

You will be introduced to all-natural cowboys in Virginia, supermarkets in Kansas stocking their shelves with local produce, and a three-acre organic garden in the middle of urban Milwaukee.

Now, you may think this movie is just a nod to the organic trend that is getting more popular among health enthusiasts and the businesses that cater to them, but it really goes beyond that.

*Fresh* is not only about going organic, but going sustainable as well.

FIU alumnus Stephan Nesvacil, 51, is the man behind the screening of the film at FIU. While working on his thesis on modern agriculture last year, he found out about the documentary and, thanks to a grant from FIU's Agro-Ecology Program, he acquired a license to show it on campus. He explained the concept of food security or sustainability.

"The current model for food distribution in the U.S. is to grow it wherever it is cheapest and then ship it to wherever it is to be sold. You can see a future where oil will reach such a price that it will make this scheme no longer profitable to these corporations," Nesvacil said.

Add to that the fact that because

crops and livestock are grown in such an unnatural way, more chemicals must be pumped into them each year to maintain yields, and you get a practice that cannot possibly continue forever.

"By decentralizing food and growing it locally, we are securing our food sources and, by doing it organically, we are doing so in a sustainable way," Nesvacil added.

This is the message that both Stephan and the co-director of FIU's Agro-Ecology Program, Mahadev G. Bhat, wish to transmit to students through this documentary.

Bhat hopes the film will raise awareness of this very important issue among FIU students, most of which have no idea what's going on with their food.

Mike Paez, 23, said that, while he did know something about the industry's damaging practices, he didn't know about any alternatives.

"I think it's important for this food sustainability message to get out there, because it at least shows a step in the right direction," he said.

If you want to start going organic, you need not look too far.

Members of the University's Garden Club set up shop every Wednesday, from 12 to 3 p.m. behind the Green Library at the Modesto Maidique Campus. Everything they sell is organic, and most of it is grown in the club's own garden.



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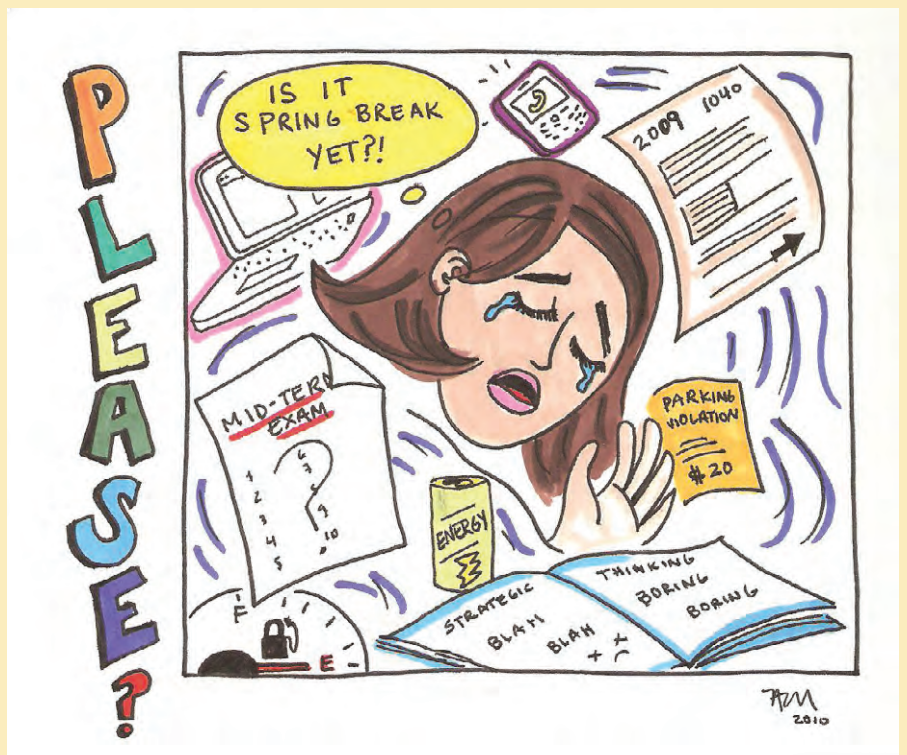
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## Diversions



1			2		8	
6			4			9
			7		4	6
	2			4	5	
		1			7	
	9		6			2
9	5		3			
2			9			8
	7		6			5

To solve the sudoku puzzle, every row, column and 3x3 box must contain the numbers 1-9 only once. Check your answers in Friday's issue. Difficulty: Hard



# Golden Panthers hope to peak with two games left

**MEN'S, page 8**

to FIU's success with two 20-point games in the last four. Russell has been coming off the bench most of the season, solely for defensive purposes before his recent offensive outbursts.

"We need all the scoring we can get," Gary said. "And Tremayne is really helping us out as of late."

## RECENT STRUGGLES

Thomas must limit the crucial mistakes he discusses in order to even have a shot at contending in the East Division of the SBC.

Reoccurring issues like Gary's knee tendinitis are small obstacles in their road to the conference tournament.

"I don't want to stop playing," Gary said. "Especially when my team needs me."

Junior Nick Taylor has lately been starting at point guard as Gary recovers, recently jumping freshman Steven Miro on the depth chart.

"Phil is still a little slower defensively because of the knee issue," Thomas said. "Right now he is more effective scoring off the bench."

Another concern for FIU: leading scorer Marvin Roberts has been slowing down as the season comes to a close. Other than the Troy game on Feb. 13, where Roberts scored 27, he has been shooting lower than his season averages in the last eight games.

"I think it's more of his shot selection," Gary said of Roberts. "But Coach is always telling him to shoot so it's more an issue of him getting

used to Coach's system."

## TOURNEY TIME

FIU has the misfortune of playing in the competitive East Division of the SBC, where every team has at least seven conference wins and four out of six teams in the conference have at least 10 wins.

In the weaker West Division, only three teams

have over seven conference wins.

"If we get hot right now and win three or four straight come conference time, we have a chance to make it to the NCAA tournament," Gary said. "We can win the next two games and jump to fifth or sixth place and get a good seed."

The Golden Panthers will host MTSU on Thursday, Feb. 25 for the second time this season, looking to start the coveted streak.

# Spurned freshman looks to prove his doubters wrong

**MATTOX, page 8**

In addition to breaking the national high school record for the clean-and-jerk, Mattox joined the U.S. Olympic powerlifting team.

He was also a member of a local paintball powerhouse.

Mattox got guidance from his family along the way, including his father.

"My drive came from my dad constantly saying that what I had achieved was not good enough, in a good way," Mattox said. "The kind that pushes you to become better. My parents have always wanted the best for me."

When it came time to choose a college destination, Mattox only had the option of going to Arkansas State on

scholarship for weightlifting.

He opted for the chance to play two sports and walk on at FIU.

Mattox said he was mystified when he didn't receive more offers. According to schools that were interested in him, like Georgia Tech, Mattox (6-foot-1, 270 lbs.) was too undersized to warrant a scholarship offer.

"I use it as motivation, and I wanted to prove the other teams wrong," he said. "It made me work that much harder."

## MY DREAM

"My parents wanted me to play football, and my dream is to possibly play in the NFL one day," he said. "The thing that attracted me to FIU was the diversity that it has, along

with the possibility of playing two sports."

While playing two sports can sometimes create issues for student athletes, Mattox has embraced the possibility with open arms.

"Playing football and doing track gives me the best of both worlds," he said. "Football is much more team oriented than track and field, which is almost completely reliant on the individual. It's a good mix year round."

Mattox hopes to graduate from FIU with a degree in sports fitness, and to one day open a business or even possibly coach football.

Before then, however, Mattox will look to threaten records in both sports during his career.

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## MEN'S BASKETBALL

# Team looks to finish on high note

**JOEY CRUZ**  
Staff Writer

Nearing the end of a rough season in which the Golden Panthers have compiled a 7-22 record and a last place 4-12 clip in Sun Belt Conference play, FIU seems to be making strides as the regular season comes to a close and the Panthers get ready for tournament play, according to FIU head coach Isiah Thomas.

"We're definitely playing better and starting to nail shots," Thomas said. "Hopefully once tournament time comes we can limit the small mistakes we are making."

In the Golden Panthers' last four games, they have lost by single digits and have been relatively competitive, despite losing all four.

Essential Golden Panthers late in the season include J.C. Otero, who in the last two games played, has put up double-doubles.

"His nickname is Mr. Double-Double," FIU point guard Phil Gary Jr. said. "We expect him to get at least 10 rebounds a game."

Tremayne Russell has also been contributing

**MEN'S, page 7**

## MEN: FIU VS. MTSU

- What: FIU vs. Middle Tennessee
- When: Thursday, Feb. 25
- Time: 8 p.m.
- Where: U.S. Century Bank Arena

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

# Clark looms large as FIU puts win streak on the line



PHOTO COURTESY ESPN.COM

Alysha Clark of MTSU leads the Sun Belt in scoring and rebounding and is on the 2009-10 Naismith Trophy Watch list.

**STEPHANIE GABRIEL**  
Asst. Sports Director

The FIU women's basketball team has been something of a surprise, with success late in the season and six straight wins dating back to Jan. 30.

Their next opponent, however, has been impressive the whole way through.

In fact, the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders have just one loss in the Sun Belt Conference this season, to Arkansas-Little Rock on Jan. 9.

Since then, Middle Tennessee (20-5, 15-1 Sun Belt) has won 11 straight games, and will look to extend that streak against the Golden Panthers (14-13, 9-7 SBC) in tonight's matchup at the U.S. Century Bank Arena at 7 p.m.

Although the Sun Belt Conference's East Division is nearly set heading into the conference tournament, the Golden Panthers will get a chance to see how they stack up against first place MTSU today and in a Feb. 27 game vs. second place Western Kentucky at home to close the season.

There is also the possibility of moving in to second place in the division if they win both games and WKU drops their last two games of the season.

Before that, however, the Golden Panthers must try to stop the Middle Tennessee machine.

Earlier this season, Middle Tennessee beat FIU by 32 points. In the devastating loss, FIU gave up 34 points to Jackie Pickel and 22 points and 13 rebounds to the conference's leading scorer, Alysha Clark.

Clark, a senior forward, has dominated the conference this season with 29.4 points per game and as of Feb. 22 is tied for first place in the SBC for rebounding with 11.3 per game.

"She is a player that is going to score anyway, but she can't win by herself," said FIU point guard Michelle Gonzalez.

The Golden Panthers are aware of the task that lies ahead of them, as they will try to defend the top scoring offense in the conference (80 points per game), but seemingly have confidence that they can handle it.

"[Clark] is just going to score, she's good," continued Gonzalez. "But if we can stop the guards, that would be a good plan. I think we have an opportunity to win."

Pickel and Brandi Brown are both averaging nearly 14 points per game on the wing to complement Clark, who is a candidate for the Lowe's senior class award.

Most of Gonzalez' confidence stems from the improved defense that FIU's post players have shown late in the season, according to Gonzalez.

"We're going to concentrate on the guards because my post players are playing really good

defense," she said.

The frontcourt she refers to includes junior Elisa Carey, who leads the team in rebounding and scoring with 9.5 and 13.8, respectively.

According to Carey, consistency will be the key to beating the Blue Raiders, something FIU has not had since the 2007-2008 season.

Freshman Finda Mansare has also been productive lately in FIU's frontcourt, averaging 7.7 ppg and 5.3 rpg. The Hungarian native has been a starter for head coach Cindy Russo the past seven games and has compiled a 49.4 field goal percentage. In FIU's most recent victory against Florida Atlantic, she totaled a career-high 20 points and grabbed nine rebounds.

The freshman will most likely be matched up against Clark throughout the game, in a measuring stick contest for the Golden Panthers.

## WOMEN: FIU VS. MTSU

- What: FIU vs. Middle Tennessee
- When: Wednesday, Feb. 24
- Time: 7 p.m.
- Where: U.S. Century Bank Arena

## TRACK & FIELD

# DOUBLE TROUBLE

## Mattox tackles both football, track and field

**TOM DEAN**  
Staff Writer

Andrew Mattox has a penchant for breaking records.

As a high schooler, the FIU sophomore held the national high school record for the clean-and-jerk as a weightlifter.

"It's my biggest accomplishment to date," Mattox said of the record. "But I'm not satisfied."

Habitually, Mattox has continued that legacy for the FIU track and field team, where he has already decimated the freshman shot put record.

Coming out of high school, however, Mattox could not claim one Division I offer for track and field or football, which he starred in at Spruce Creek High in central Florida.

He is on his way to earning one.

In the short time he has been at FIU, he has become a two-sport athlete between the FIU football team and track and field. In track, he narrowly missed the overall shot put record by .37 meters, and played in five games for the football team in 2009, recording 10 tackles as a walk-on.

Mattox has impacted a young track and field team heading into the Sun Belt Conference Indoor Track and Field Championship on Feb. 26.

## DECORATED

Mattox moved from Indiana in seventh grade to Daytona, where he would later attend Spruce Creek. At Spruce Creek, he won a slew of awards for his athletic achievements in weight lifting and football, including Athlete of the Year for Volusia County and Runner-Up Athlete of the Year for all of Central Florida.

BEACON FILE PHOTO

**MATTOX, page 7**

