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Students react to New York Senate gay marriage bill

DEBORAH SOUVERAIN
Asst. News Director

New York: If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere; and now gay rights activists are hoping the same can be said about same-sex legislation.

New York became the sixth state, along with the District of Columbia to join the movement in championing for gay rights. New York State Governor, Andrew Cuomo, signed the bill into law on June 24th, making New York the largest state to legalize gay marriage.

The marriage bill's fate was uncertain under the new republican-led senate and approved 33 to 29.

Just two years ago, under the Democratic controlled senate, a gay marriage bill failed; however, the success of the new bill reveals several senators had a change of heart.

Twenty-nine Democrats and four Republicans voted yes on the bill, which will take effect 30 days after it's



PHOTO COURTESY OF AP IMAGES

The law signed by NY Gov. Andrew Cuomo led to a celebration during the annual Gay Pride parade in Greenwich Village.

signing; making it possible for gay and lesbian couples to wed as early as the end of July.

For many this new legislation is a step toward universal marriage rights.

"New York is a monumental gain for the nation-

wide push for Same-sex marriage. Seeing as how New York was one of the birth places of the LGBT revolution/movement I think it is very fitting to have them join the ranks of [same-sex marriage]progressive states," said Giovanni Correale, a

senior psychology major, who is President of FIU's Stonewall Pride Alliance, an organization dedicated to supporting the needs of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender students of FIU.

For others, the initia-

tive towards equal marriage rights seems a day late and a dollar short.

"It is 2011 it shouldn't be a great debate whether or not we will allow everyone the same rights. Gay rights have been put on the back burner because we are such a small

minority group compared to other groups, such as blacks and Hispanics. Our rights aren't as prioritized as other people's rights are," said Jesse Sanchez, journalism senior and Entertainment reporter for NTN24 News.

New York's legislature is the first to bypass civil unions or domestic partnerships and simply allow traditional marriage rights for same-sex couples.

Now that New York has joined Freedom To Marry, a campaign to win equal marriage rights nationwide, attention has been called to President Obama to state his stance on the issue, who recently expressed that marriage is a state issue and should be left to the state.

Freedom To Marry's "I Do" campaign, recently garnered 115,000 signatures for a letter that was sent to Obama asking him to take an active position on the issue and persuade other states to join suit.

GAY MARRIAGE, page 8

High hopes for newly filled University IT position

ANALIA FIESTAS
Staff Writer

FIU now has a new Vice President and Chief Information Officer for the Information Technology Department. According to a memo to the University community, Provost Douglas Wartzok announced that after a complex national search, Robert Grillo, who is the assistant vice president for the Division of Information Technology at FIU, was selected for the important position.

"This new position is an exciting opportunity to be part of many great things to come here at FIU. I'm looking forward to collaborating with so many areas and implementing leading technologies that will enhance the educational and research experience for our students and faculty," said Grillo.

There were a total of 120 candidates, according to Wartzok. However, "only six were invited to our campus for interviews."

Among those candidates were Mehran Basiratmand, from Florida Atlantic University; J. Brice Bible, from Ohio University; Homer

Coffman, from the University of Southern Mississippi; John P. Kearney, from McMaster University and Ramon Millan, from Pfizer, Inc.

Grillo has a Bachelors from Florida International University and a Masters in Finance from Nova Southeastern University, according to the Provost's memo.

Irma Becerra-Fernandez, professor in the College of Business Administration and vice provost for Academic Affairs, was a great part of the selection process.

"I am delighted to have served as the chair of the search. It was a strenuous process to all of the members of the search and screen committee, as we spent many hours deliberating," said Becerra-Fernandez. "One day we worked from seven in the morning to about seven at night interviewing candidates via conference call. We had breakfast, lunch and dinner together to make it happen!"

Grillo began his career at FIU years ago, in 2003. He was in charge of managing and leading the enterprise-wide Financial Management Systems implementation. The following year, it was

"I'm looking forward to collaborating with so many areas and implementing leading technologies that will enhance the educational and research experience for our students and faculty."



Robert Grillo

Information Technology, Vice President and Chief Information Officer

his responsibility to implement Campus Solutions. He was also appointed director of the PantherSoft and Administrative Software unit supporting the academic, research and administrative use of enterprise-wide software.

"We [FIU] are leaders in using IT to improve the efficiency of university operations. That leadership has been maintained by Mr. Grillo, who introduced mobile applications for student enrollment during his time as Interim Vice President," said Wartzok.

Prior to belonging to the Panther family as a staff member, he worked for PeopleSoftL-

atin America and Caribbean and Andersen Consulting LLP, now known as Accenture.

Vice President Grillo has emphasized that he has many plans for FIU.

"Our technology services will continue to be enhanced for students, faculty and staff this coming fall 2011. There will be additional mobile device functionality for student enrollment, remote desktop support, redesigns of our shopputs.fiu.edu user interface and additional software applications to our virtual lab environment, elabs.fiu.edu," he said.

He said that The Division of

Information Technology's strategy will be to support the University's academic, research and administrative areas and to help fulfill the president's World's Ahead strategic plan.

Grillo also said that he worked well with former CIO Min Yao in creating the foundation of FIU's technological environment.

"The next steps are to expand and create new services and ensure a robust infrastructure to support the growth of the University in the years to come," said Grillo, who added that the university that taught him a lot of what he knows today.

COMING UP | Opinion

Check out *Borderless with Brooklyn*, Opinion's newest column on global interaction and its effects on human rights.

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NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

FIU FBLA-PBL Breaks Records at National Competition

FIU Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda (FBLA-PBL) received 11 awards at the 60th Annual National Leadership Conference. June 23-27th. FBLA-PBL is known as the oldest and largest business organization in the world.

As a result of our success we became one of the only chapters to receive the most recognition in the nation. The competition included over 400 chapters/universities in attendance. FIU became the university to take home the most awards in Florida, outranking our Florida rival schools such as University of Miami and the University of Florida.

NATIONAL

Treasury confirms deadline for raising debt limit

Congress has one month to raise the nation’s borrowing limit or the government will default on its debt, the Treasury Department said Friday.

Treasury officials confirmed the Aug. 2 deadline in a monthly update that assesses the nation’s borrowing situation. The United States reached the \$14.3 trillion limit in May. Higher revenue and accounting maneuvers have allowed the government to keep paying its bills in the interim.

President Barack Obama and Congressional Republicans are engaged in tough negotiations over resolving the issue. Republicans are demanding deep spending cuts as a condition of increasing the limit. But Republicans will not support tax increases, which Democrats say must be part of a deal.

WORLD

Chavez reveals he is fighting cancer after surgery

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez revealed that he is fighting cancer after having a tumor removed in Cuba, raising uncertainty about Venezuela’s political future even as he assured his country he expects to fully recover.

There is no obvious successor to the charismatic Chavez within his political movement, and his illness may also affect his leadership within the ALBA alliance of leftist Latin American nations.

Chavez said he had two operations in Cuba, including one that removed a tumor. The president said the surgery was performed after an operation nearly three weeks ago.

– Compiled by Melissa Caceres

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unions to keep fighting set aside of pension funds toward retirement

BRENT KALLESTAD
AP Staff

Despite an unfavorable judicial ruling on their first stop, union leaders representing teachers and other public employees say they have just begun their fight against a new Florida law taking effect Friday that requires workers to contribute 3 percent of their pay to retirement.

On Thursday, Circuit Judge Jackie Fulford rejected the union’s request to set aside those contributions into a separate account until the courts have a final say.

She wrote that she had to assume that if the law is eventually struck down the state would comply with a court order to return the contributions, although there is no statutory mechanism for such a refund.

“This hearing is only the first battle in what will be a long legal war against this anti-worker legislation,” said Alphonso Mayfield, president of the 19,000-member SEIU Florida Public Service Union. “Our focus remains on trying to overturn this unconstitutional income tax on public employees.”

The lawsuit, which is likely to end up before the state Supreme Court, names Gov. Rick Scott as a defendant in his role as chairman of the State Board of Administration, which oversees the \$131.5 billion pension system’s investments. The board’s other two members, Attorney General Pam Bondi and Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater, also are defendants.

The unions contend the new law violates public employees’ contract, property and collective bargaining rights under the Florida Constitution.

The new law requires teachers, state and county workers and some city employees to contribute 3 percent of their salaries to the Florida Retirement System.

As a result of Fulford’s decision, the pension fund began deducting 3 percent from the pay of 560,000 public employees on Friday. The contributions are expected to save the state and local governments \$806 million in the first year as their contributions to the retirement system have been reduced.

“This is a minor setback and cannot be viewed as a determination that our claims are not just,” union lawyer Ron Meyer said Friday.

During Thursday’s hearing, Meyer argued that the contributions should be separated to ensure employees would get their money back if they prevail in their legal challenge.

They cite a 1974 law that did away with employee contributions and declared pension rights are “contractual in nature.” Meyer acknowledged that the Legislature can change the law for new hires but argued it still applies to existing employees.

Florida union leaders argue that their members have taken lower-paying jobs in exchange for better benefits including fully funded pensions.

Scott had urged the Legislature to require contributions of 5 percent, contending it’s a matter of fairness since employees in the private sector and in other states already contribute toward their pensions.

University fundraisers appointed

KATRINA BRUNO
Contributing Writer

Keeping with its “Worlds Ahead” commitment, the FIU Division of University Advancement recently welcomed two fundraising professionals, George Corton and Marilyn Stern Emas, to the golden panther family.

With raising funds and resources essential to the progression and growth of the University, Corton and Emas have recently accepted positions as Assistant Vice President for Development. Together, they will be responsible for overseeing fundraising efforts for the schools within the University.

“We have so many students, especially on the graduate level, but [also] on all levels, that need access to education and it shouldn’t be money that stops anybody from going to school,” said Emas, who mentions that scholarships are their top priority. “So [our job is] how do we provide and create partnerships with private philanthropy to help that happen.”

Emas comes to FIU from the Sylvester Comprehensive Center at the University of Miami, where she participated in efforts that raised and collected over \$130 million to support the cancer center research mission.

She served as executive director for two years and was also the chair of the National Association for Cancer Center Development Officers, which she describes as a “spectacular, professional and personal experience.”

Emas attended the University of Florida, both for undergraduate and graduate school, where she obtained her masters degree in Education Administration.

She has spent most her career as a professional fundraiser. “I used to walk around the cancer center and be motivated seeing patients on a chemo drip, and here I walk on campus and see students,” said Emas. “I think FIU is the ascending institution in South Florida, and I’m glad to be part of that ascension. That’s why I want to be here.”

George Corton, who works alongside Emas, is an FIU Alumni with a degree in political science. Most recently, Corton served as the senior director of Development at the University of Miami School of Business Administration, where he assisted in efforts that raised over \$12 million.

His efforts at FIU may be seen by just taking a walk down one of the hallways in the College of Law, as he is responsible for obtaining building dedications and rooms named throughout the school.

After interning for an FIU program in Washington DC, he realized he loved working for the University and began his journey as the head of the Council of 100. Now recognized as the “President’s Council,” it focuses on bridging the gap between the academic world and corporate America.


“Fundraising is building real relationships with a purpose. The purpose is to advance the mission and vision of this university no matter the school you represent,” said Corton. “I believe every dean has a grand vision of what it means to be worlds ahead and I think it’s our job is to find and manage the resources to do that.”

“FIU is educating the people who are going to live in, work in and build up South Florida. For the most part, people come from South Florida to come to FIU and they stay in South Florida. South Florida needs to support its growth,” said Emas. “I believe fundraising is investment and we have to articulate that to donors. We are not asking for charity, I think we ask them to invest in a mission.”

Each college in the University helps determine what its fundraising needs are. The main question is, according to Emas, “What do you need and how are we going to do this together?”

The more difficult question is the amount FIU is hoping to raise. Currently, Corton and Emas are setting goals with the schools deans and colleges based on their individual needs.



“FIU is going to be at the forefront for its success and that’s what we are here for,” said Corton, “to find those people and secure the resources to make it happen.”



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SOFTBALL

Search for new coach marks new era for program

When schools like Louisiana State are plucking up coaches from your school, something is clearly going right.



JOEL DELGADO

And even if it is for coaches in non-revenue sports like softball, it speaks volumes of the school that got raided. In this case: FIU.

And it also speaks high values of the job that former Coach Beth Torina did in four years turning around the Golden Panther softball program, which was on the decline when she arrived on the season.

Just before Torina came on board, the Golden Panthers had finished the 2007 season 12 games below .500. Three seasons later, the improvements were self-evident as she helped build a winning mentality at FIU.

Whoever will take her place will inherit a club that finished 17 games over .500 and went to the

NCAA tournament for the second time in history. And they also picked up the first ever win at the tournament in program history.

The shoes are going to be much bigger for Torina's successor than it was for her. And that is an especially good thing for FIU.

Torina was one of the new wave of coaches brought in by Athletic Director Pete Garcia to help turn around programs that were struggling to compete. And like many of her colleagues, she was immediately successful in doing so in a fast amount of time.

But now as she departs for the Bayou, she becomes the first hire of the Garcia era to leave FIU. And this could be just the beginning as other FIU coaches may begin getting offers from conferences with greener pastures.

The challenge now will be to find a coach that can sustain the growth and progress that Torina helped foster.

In terms of importance to the survival of an athletics program in general, softball does not rank as high as football or men's basket-

ball. But how the coaching search is conducted in this particular case could end up foreshadowing future coaching searches in other FIU programs.

NEXT STAGE

Torina moving to the SEC is actually the heralding of a new stage in FIU's attempt to reach athletic relevance at the national level.

Since Garcia arrived and began shuffling the deck, the aim had been to start building a solid foundation and to start having these sports programs grow.

Now we are starting to see many sports at FIU beginning to get closer and closer to having that solid footing, showing signs of increased strength and the ability to compete with schools from more prominent conferences.

After years and years of building on sand, it appears that coaches such as Torina, Mario Cristobal and Turtle Thomas among others have found a rock for the Golden Panthers to build and stand on.

The question now becomes

whether or not they, or whoever may end up taking their place, will be able to build on that rock.

SEARCHING FOR MORE

The kind of qualities that Beth Torina had made the Golden Panthers successful in the past few years and whoever comes in will need to have all those qualities.

They will need to be able to go out and find quality talent that will help the team win ball games. Earn the trust of the players and coaching staff. Make real-time decisions during games that will help put the team in the win column.

But they will also need to have something more. Something that will be able to not just sustain the winning atmosphere that was created, but to build on it and make it flourish. Torina was on the verge of something special with this team. We are seeing that as well on the gridiron and on the baseball diamond.

Now the program will need someone to finish.

The team needs someone who

can walk into the living rooms of blue-chip recruits and get the deal done. They need a coach with an impressive résumé and with past success that can duplicate here in this corner of the country.

Torina will become that coach. And the bottom line is that FIU now needs the kind of coach that Torina appears destined to become.

So how we see this search conducted may be an indicator of what's to come when other schools come calling and dangling offers to FIU head coaches.

And we will be watching.

GRAN TORINA



BETH TORINA

W-L: 129-111

SBC Coach
of the Year
(2008, 2010)
NCAA
Tournament
(2011)

NFL

Attempts to end lockout begin again in Minnesota

DAVE CAMPBELL
AP Sports Writer

Roger Goodell and DeMaurice Smith took their new buddy act on the road Wednesday, creating a buzz among rookies in Florida then returning to Minnesota for talks to try and end pro football's labor impasse.

The NFL commissioner and the players' boss took questions from rookies at an orientation symposium in Sarasota, Fla., where recent draft picks were glad — and relieved — to see their two surprise guests.

"Guys are hurting for money right now," said quarterback Christian Ponder, a first-round pick by the Minnesota Vikings. "It's a crazy time, especially with the uncertainty of when we're going to start and get some money in our pocket."

"It's big for them to come together. I thought that was pretty cool," he said. "It looks like they have a pretty good relationship." Smith and Goodell certainly seem closer than when the lockout began in March. Whether that will translate into a new collective bargaining agreement is the big question. Training camps are scheduled to open in just over three weeks with the Hall of Fame game on Aug. 7.

The latest round of negotiations between the two sides — the fifth since they began hopping from city to city for clandestine meetings — kicked off Tuesday in Minneapolis with Goodell, Smith, their attorneys and staffs in the room but no owners or players. People familiar with the situation said owners and players planned to join Goodell and Smith for talks Thursday and Friday. The people spoke on condition of anonymity because details of the discussion are not being released.

The location is significant because Minneapolis is where the players filed an antitrust suit against the owners and the sides tried and failed to strike an agreement through court-ordered mediation under U.S. Magistrate Judge Arthur

Boylan.

Smith invited Goodell to the orientation session for rookies — put on by the players' association after the NFL canceled the event — and the pair flew down to Florida on Tuesday night. After a joint breakfast Wednesday, they talked for an hour with 155 rookies.

"We felt it was important to be down here with the players," Goodell said. "This is an important few days. We're going to get back to work."

Owners and players are seeking a deal that would divide revenues for the \$9 billion business — the biggest hurdle to clear — and guide league activities for years to come.

Goodell and Smith didn't have a direct answer when asked by the rookies when the impasse will end so they can meet their coaches and start their careers. Still, their joint appearance was seen as a positive sign. "That's really the significance of this," NFL Players Association spokesman George Atallah said. "There's a lockout happening now, but we've got to look forward and consider the necessity to have a positive working relationship with the league." Ponder said Goodell urged the rookies to be ready, whenever the lockout is lifted.

"The biggest thing he hammered home is we really have no idea when this thing is going to end," Ponder said. "But us rookies have to prepare for it. It's going to end at some point. As rookies it's our job to be prepared. Yeah, we've missed some practices, but we can't change that."

Smith said both sides are "continuing to work hard" to keep the 2011 season intact. He called the question-and-answer session with rookies "important to ensure our young men appreciated how important we think these few days are. I'm thrilled Roger could come down with us and talk to the rookies in a very good, direct way."

This spring, current players were joined in their legal fight against the league by a group



BRIAN BLANCO/AP PHOTO

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell [left] and head of the NFLPA DeMaurice Smith address the media as they look to end a lockout that is threatening the upcoming season.

of retirees led by Hall of Fame defensive end Carl Eller, who has been actively trying to organize and unite retired players in a quest to secure better benefits and medical care from the league. Eller and his attorneys were part of the court-ordered mediation sessions — six days, in all — in Boylan's chambers in April and May, and Eller met with Goodell and some owners in Chicago earlier this month.

Shawn Stuckey, one of the attorneys for Eller's group, said the retirees, while trying to be patient, also have been disappointed to not be more involved, citing the ruling by U.S. District Judge Susan Richard Nelson that the two cases be combined.

"We want football, and we want this to come to an amicable resolution," Stuckey said. "We

don't want to be in the way of an agreement. We're well within our rights to object and say these mediation sessions are not consistent with what Judge Nelson ordered. However, we feel one of the best ways to get a resolution is to let the active players reach a resolution, and then we can reach a resolution on our issues."

Stuckey indicated, however, that Eller's group doesn't want to be left out.

"If the active players and the league are serious about getting football under way soon, they've got to start negotiating with the retirees. Even the slight chance that the season could be delayed should be sufficient enough to motivate those guys to work with the retirees, if they're serious about actually getting football played and getting it played fast."

BASEBALL

Behar begins journey in Marlins farm system

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

Former FIU catcher Jose Behar recently got drafted in the 30th round of the MLB draft on Jun. 6, by the Florida Marlins. Since then, life has not quite been the same.

After the season ended for the Golden Panthers in the first round of the NCAA tournament, all that was left for Behar to do was prepare for the upcoming draft. He did that by getting himself mentally prepared by trying to stay away from baseball as much as possible the

days leading up to the draft. On the day of draft, he spent it fishing with one of his best friends. But when night came, he just couldn't keep away from the computer. "At around 7 p.m. I started looking at draft boards just to see if any of

my friends were on there, but I didn't really expect to see my name," said Behar. By the 26th round, he found himself more interested in the Miami Heat basketball game then the draft board, but he would take glances at it every now and then.

Then at the 28th round he got that call he had been waiting for.

"I got a call from the Marlins scout and he asked me real quick if I would be okay with playing in the Gulf Coast League in Jupiter," Behar said.

When he told his mom who he just got off the phone with, she said that her gut was telling her that he would be going in the 30th round. She was right, because when the 30th round came up, he got the call from Brian Kraft, a scout for the Marlins, telling him he had just been selected.

Being chosen by the Marlins meant he didn't have to go far from home to play continue playing baseball since he had lived in Miami his whole life having gone from Killian High to Miami-Dade and then finally FIU. For the former Golden Panther, it seemed

like the Marlins were in the cards the whole time.

Things took an unexpected turn for Behar when he arrived for his first practice with the Gulf Coast League Marlins in Jupiter, which is also known as rookie ball.

"A minute after practice, the coaches came up to me and told me to pack my bags because I was going to New York to play for their short season Single-A club the Jamestown Jammers," Behar said. "If I told you I wasn't scared I would be lying to you I was a little nervous."

Although spending close to two weeks in Jamestown, he only played one game for the Jammers, going hitless in four at-bats in that game. He is now back with the Gulf Coast League Marlins again but says that the experience he gained from seeing what the next level looks like will help him in rookie ball.

What also has helped Behar is his time spent at FIU playing against some of the top competition in college baseball and playing with great teammates and coaches.

"In reality, as much as you don't want to admit

that they were right, they definitely prepared me for everything I know here and I can't thank them enough for what they did to me," Behar said about the coaching staff at FIU.

In the short amount of time that Behar has played in the minors he has found out that there is actually more discipline in college, and that there is not as big of a gap in competition as many people would like to think.

"I feel like there are a lot of kids who could play here that haven't gotten a shot," said Behar. "I have some friends who are trying to get a free agent contract who could play minor league ball, but they are not seen by the right person."

Getting drafted is just another step in the process of becoming what Jose Behar has always dreamed of doing, playing in the major leagues. He will now have to go through the minor league system and work his way up.

But when the Marlins arrived in South Florida in 1993, his grandparents told him he would play for them someday.

He's getting close.



COURTESY OF ALEX HERNANDEZ

Jose Behar [above], a Miami native, is excited to be a part of the Marlins organization and is starting out in the Gulf Coast League.

SWIMMING & DIVING

New recruiting class comes in at No. 23 in the nation

RICO ALBARRACIN
Asst. Sports Director

After finishing fourth in the Sun Belt Conference Championships, the Golden Panthers were in need of talent to compete in the conference next season.

Swimming & Diving Head Coach Randy Horner went out and found 12 student-athletes, half from the United States, to give the FIU the 23rd ranked recruiting class in the nation, according to collegeswimming.com.

"It is an honor to be recognized by collegeswimming.com for our recruiting class," Horner said.

Among the incoming class is Sonia Perez Arau, a transfer from the University of Bridgeport. The Barcelona native won the 100m in 2007 and 200m in 2008 back in the Spanish Junior Championships.

"Sonia is going to be a great addition to our team," Horner said. "Her experience internationally as well as last season on the NCAA national stage will be an asset to our program as we grow this season."

Bringing depth to the breaststroke swimmers is Jean Madison from Lees Summit, Mo. Madison attended Lees

Summit West High where she was an all-American and all-state swimmer. Madison placed third in the 100m breaststroke at the Missouri State Championships.

"Jean really solidifies our strong breaststroke recruiting class," Horner said. "I expect her to make a significant impact in the Sun Belt Conference, immediately."

One swimmer that will help FIU right away is Valeria Popova from Kiev, Ukraine. Popova swims the Sprint Freestyle and Butterfly and finished first the in 50m free in the University Championships in Kiev this past April. Popova was third at the Ukrainian Championships in the 50m fly in May.

"Valeria is a very hard worker and trains with Youth Olympic Champion and Ukrainian Champion, Darya Zevina," Horner said. "We are excited to pick up where Coach Zevina left off and continue to develop Valeria into a top flight collegiate sprinter."

Popova feels ready to contribute right away, although she feels she can improve greatly.

"I believe that I did not achieve my potential," Popova said. "I want to be a champion. I need the right guid-

ance of the coach that will make me the best I can be. I know that I can swim very fast and I will achieve it."

The Panthers signed Klara Andersson, from Helsingborg, Sweden. Andersson competed at the Swedish Nationals and the Swedish Youth Nationals since 2006. She is ranked in the top 20 in Sweden in the 50m breaststroke.

"Klara is an exciting swimmer to bring to our program," Horner said. "She has continued to drop time every meet in the past year and her potential is limitless."

The recruiting class joins sophomore diver Sabrina Beaupre and junior Chelsie Kidd. Beaupre was named the SBC Diver of the Year, after winning the SBC Diving championship. Kidd swam the 200 back in 2:03.89 after breaking the record in the prelims.

With the talent that Horner has recruited, and the championship athletes already on the team, Horner believes this can make FIU contenders in the SBC.

"Coach Gayo and myself are extremely happy with the quality of young ladies we are bringing to FIU this fall to continue building a championship program," Horner said.



FILE PHOTO/THE BEACON

Golden Panthers swimming and diving team will look to make gains in Sun Belt competition with a new wave of recruits coming from around the country and the world.

2011-2012 RECRUITING CLASS

- Sonia Perez Arau
- Jean Madison
- Carolin Rademacher
- Valeria Popova
- Klara Andersson
- Johanna Gustafsdottir
- Nadia Farrugia
- Courtney Vander Schaaf
- Destine Godfrey
- Danielle Meara
- Alice Horton
- Hannah Mitchell

CALIFORNIA DREAMS

Katy Perry's performance ignites fireworks

BIANCA KHAN
Contributing Writer

Glitter, inspiration and cotton candy are the only words that can sum-up the Ft. Lauderdale leg of Katy Perry's California Dreams Tour.

Welcomed to the stage after DJ Skeet Skeet and Robyn, a Swedish pop songstress that has been climbing the charts, the whimsical tale of a girl searching for her lost cat led the audience through the two hour concert.

Confetti floating down the BankAtlantic Center, the soft scent of cotton candy filling the air and the hit pop tracks buzzing through the atmosphere all set the mood for the night.

Katy Perry acted out her set list as a sort of Broadway musical full of upbeat choreography, provocative outfits and sexual innuendos that the college crowd understood while the younger crowd dismissed even if it left their parents frazzled.

Performing her high ranking hits like "Firework," "I Kissed a Girl" and "California Gurls," attendees were intoxicated by Katy Perry and the delicious images that accompanied her on and off stage.

Between approximately every song, a video interlude explained her progress in the search for her cat, ironically named Kitty Purry.

The audience was truly



PHOTO COURTESY OF VILLARD SIPA/AP IMAGES

Katy Perry thrills her fans with her songs of self-acceptance accompanied by lead guitarist Patrick Matera at the BankAtlantic Center on June 7.

engaged by the amusing breaks rather than awkwardly waiting for Perry to spring back on stage. Even when she toned down for songs like "Pearl," viewers remained on their feet in high spirits.

Sophomore Nancy Montesdeoca, a public relations major, fell for Perry's pop tracks after seeing her in concert at the Vans Warped Tour in 2008.

Seeing her this summer only reinforced Montesdeoca's adora-

tion of the pop music sensation.

"I definitely do not regret my time at the concert," said Montesdeoca. "It was worth every penny and more!" But Perry means more to the 19-year-old than just a few good songs.

"Katy Perry is definitely an inspiration, she is a great example of how far a person can go in life by simply following their dreams. She excites me for the future."

Adriana Pena, a 20-year-old

nursing major, feels that Perry has "changed [her] life forever." Adriana has seen Perry twice in concert, the last time at a smaller venue in Ft. Lauderdale in 2006 where Perry's "performance was nowhere near as glitzy, but still as touching to watch. It's not often you get to see a pop sensation who has so much spirit it rips through the crowd."

Pena continued, "Katy Perry has taught me that I can grow old without having to grow up.

I know I can be whoever I want when I'm older without losing myself with age."

Solidifying Perry's ideologies were her playful outfits adorned with swirling candy mints accompanied by empowering speeches that singled out each audience member, reminding them that being oneself is the most enriching aspect of life.

Mirroring Pena's support of

PERRY, page 6

Texas native embraces offbeat "Miamian" culture

ASHLEY MARIE LAPADULA
Staff Writer

The unfamiliar surroundings, foreign language and strange habits of a new city can all contribute to culture shock. Florida is a state with a diverse existent population known for its melting pot of different cultures, each unique in its own respect.

Culture becomes the telescope through which we perceive and assess what is going on around us. So it is no surprise that for some outsiders, moving to Miami can become an intense experience.

Jesse Connor, 21, a recent graduate of the University's School of Journalism and Mass Communications, says moving from Texas to Miami, although difficult, was well worth the transition. She had always wondered what it would be like to move out-of-state and into a new city.

Her academic credentials, including a competitive ACT score along with an exemplary extracur-

ricular background, allowed her to become a part of the community.

After successfully graduating from Woodrow Wilson High School in 2007, she packed her belongings and moved to Miami hoping to embark on the beginning of an exciting journey. "It wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be to make friends," said Connor.

"I am a very sociable girl and I love having a great time. I had been here for a few months and decided to join a sorority. That helped me really connect and meet great friends to show me around."

Connor began to feel the differences between Dallas and Miami. "I remember the first time I went out, my friends told me we were headed to Mr. Moe's in Coconut Grove.

I was hesitant at first," said Connor. "I found myself thinking: why are we going to a relative's house on a Monday night?"

After going out with her

friends, she realized, "Mr. Moe's was not what I expected, in fact, it far exceeded my expectations."

Besides becoming acquainted with the Coconut Grove nightlife, she expressed her surprise in adapting to several intricacies of Miami's social life.

"People really dress up to go out around here" said Connor. "Back home, I usually kept it simple by wearing nice jeans to go out. In Miami, it's all about cute dresses and pumps."

She quickly noticed the cultural differences in personal interactions, especially with the greeting styles associated with the Latin culture.

"I remember going out and noticing my Miami friends saying 'hi' to each other with hugs and kisses. Back in Texas 'hi' was usually more than enough. Even those small details took some time to get used to," said Connor.

Over the next four years in Miami, Connor grew to appreciate many of the shocking culture qual-

“Back in Texas ‘hi’ was usually more than enough. Even those small details took some time to get used to.”

Jesse Connor, Alumni

Graduate of School of Journalism and Mass Communications

ities that define the area, making her experience at the University forever a part of her life.

"The students at FIU are very friendly," said Connor, laughing. "Except in the Blue and Gold Garages. I have never seen anyone more serious about getting a parking space than here at this campus."

As for the language barrier, she has become almost completely fluent in Spanish.

"I am still trying to figure out what 'Palacio de los Jugos' is and if I can order something other than juice there," she said jokingly.

She went on to say, "People defend the 'Three Kings': Lebron, Wade and Bosh, as if they were relatives of theirs. I am not complaining, GO HEAT!"

The impact of culture has a significant impact on the behavior of individuals. In general, a person's perceptions, attitudes, motivations and values all add to the culture shock they experience while in a new place.

The essence of a culture is not its tangible cultural elements but how the members of the group understand, use and recognize them.

REEL TO REEL

“Transformers: Dark of the Moon” full of action, short of cinematic substance

I am going to be honest, I was hesitant in watching “Transformers: Dark of the Moon.” I couldn’t believe there was going to be a new Transformers movie

COLUMNIST



RICO ALBARRACIN

being released, especially after the backlash surrounding “Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen.”

“Transformers: Dark of the Moon” is the third, and most likely the final film in the franchise.

The majority of the cast is back, sans Megan Fox, for a battle between the Autobots and the Decepticons. With “Dark of the Moon,” Michael Bay brings world history into the story, involving the 1960’s Space Race, when robot ship crashed on the dark side of the moon, with robots on the ship.

Shia LaBeouf returns as Sam Witwicky, liaison to Optimus Prime, Bumblebee and the Autobots. The problem for Witwicky is that he cannot tell anyone he had a part in dealing with the robots, who are working alongside the United States when the

Decepticons fulfill a plan to take over Earth, it is up to Witwicky, Optimus and the rest of the Autobots to save the world.

I went on Tuesday night, the night before the opening, for a 3D screening and let me say this: I had fun watching this movie.

Seeing the robots smash one another in different ways was cool. Enough eye candy for both men and women to enjoy.

With that said, the plot was pretty weak. A secret government conspiracy, the Decepticon’s plan to enslave the human race and bring their home planet of Cybertron to Earth; it sounds solid on paper, but ultimately has plenty of holes when shown on film. There is a moment in the film where, as an audience member, I asked myself, “Why don’t the Decepticons finish them off?” You will ask yourself the same thing when you see it.

Terrible acting contributed to the poor quality of the plot. LaBeouf is the same loud, obnoxious guy from the first two movies, except now he is looking to be a “somebody.” I never felt bad for LaBeouf’s character, although the movie tries to push me to feel bad for him. Frances McDormand is

new to the franchise, playing CIA agent Charlotte Mearing, in charge of the Autobot initiative. She is fierce, but never a fun character to watch. It seems as though McDormand is there to steal any fun the movie is having, and she does it well. Patrick Dempsey plays a car collector who has a hidden agenda, ultimately, a role that seems to be big but never lives up to the potential. Tyrese Gibson, Josh Duhamel and John Turturro are back, but do not receive enough screen time to merit commentary.

Then, there’s Rosie Huntington-Whitely. When Bay decided to fire Megan Fox for calling him a Nazi, I had hopes for an upgrade in acting of some kind. When it was announced that it would be Huntington-Whitely, I cringed. The Victoria Secret model had no acting experience and is not even prettier than Fox. Going into the movie, I expected her to totally bomb, she did not disappoint, well, she did. Huntington-Whitely made any interaction with someone into a dull moment. She couldn’t bring the emotion of fear from the robots and just managed to look dumb. It looks like the Razzies, the awards for worst movies of the year, has a

nominee for Worst Actress.

Getting past the acting, the editing on a few scenes was a bit rough. There are certain moments when you’ll notice robots appearing out of nowhere. The special effects are very good for the most part, especially in 3D, but the film drags with a running time of over two and a half hours.

With the bad out of the way, let’s look at the positive features. The action scenes are a lot of fun. Bay found new ways for the robots to destroy each other. The last hour of the movie is just packed with action, including the destruction of the city of Chicago.

I will admit, “Dark of the Moon” is not a great movie in the sense of award winning quality, but it is a fun summer blockbuster. I think the biggest reason people are criticizing Transformers is that they are expecting an Oscar-worthy movie. In the words of a friend of mine, “It’s a movie about robots, not Hamlet.” If you go to have fun, you’ll enjoy “Dark of the Moon,” if you expect more, don’t watch it.

Reel to Reel is a weekly column. Look for it every Wednesday this summer.

Fans were ‘helplessly attracted’ to Perry

PERRY, page 5

Perry was Steve Montoya, an undecided freshmen. Claiming to have been “dragged along to the concert by some friends,” he later felt that it was not a drag at all.

Initially finding himself “helplessly attracted to her,” he realized her free spiritedness captivated him even more. Montoya entered the California Dreams Tour hesitant and unwilling, but left uplifted by the positivity Perry radiated onto each of her “sparks” in the audience.

Despite the overwhelming amount of bright pink and the blaring music allowing viewers to freely dance about, something as basic as a pop concert had the capability of changing personal views and allowing University students to embrace their true selves.

With so many of our peers feeling like “plastic bags drifting in the wind,” Katy Perry’s music genuinely “ignites the light,” making everyone feel like a firework.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Miami food trucks offer a unique dining experience

Food truck meet-ups are quickly becoming a popular hangout for people of all types. Usually a family-friendly event, nothing beats smelling

COLUMNIST



JASMYNE ELLIOT

various dishes in the air and traveling from truck to truck sampling the best they have to offer, oftentimes with local bands playing upbeat music to set the pace.

The trucks themselves are often a mix of Indie favorites and established restaurants and brands, all of them offering their best to hungry devotees and rarely for over \$10 a dish.

The most recent meet-up I attended was held on June 17 at the Palmetto Bay Village Center. What a scene it was! In the courtyard, food trucks of all cuisines made a neat square around their customers, a perimeter of deliciousness if you will.

I would estimate that over 100 people were there when I arrived with more showing up as the night went on. As much as I would have loved to sample every single truck, I was only limited to a precious, albeit yummy, few.

To kick things off, I decided I’d better get my vegetables out of



JASMYNE ELLIOT/THE BEACON

Hungry customers wait in line to get a taste of Cheese Me’s famous Kobe Beef Sliders.

the way, and the Mac’n Soul Food truck had just the thing: fried green tomatoes.

True, this wasn’t the healthiest option (an organic food truck was nearby, after all) and it also wasn’t their signature dish of macaroni and cheese, but my inner Southern girl couldn’t help herself, and no one’s macaroni and cheese can top my mom’s recipe, so why bother?

\$4 bought me a modest helping of this Dixie delicacy and it was amazing. Fresh from the fryer, the

juicy, tangy tomatoes melted in my mouth as soon as I bit through the crispy cornmeal crust.

I would imagine that even the pickiest eater wouldn’t mind eating their veggies like this.

CHEESE ME’S KOBE BEEF SLIDERS

The Cheese Me truck is famous for its gourmet take on the simplest of all meals: the grilled cheese sandwich. Using artisan breads and

cheeses (where else can you get Gruyere on pumpernickel) alongside the original stuff (white bread and American cheese will forever be delicious) combined with an impressive slider menu, Cheese Me has gained quite a following.

My brother (Hi Justin!) was kind enough to let me try one of his Kobe beef sliders from Cheese Me. One of these will forever make you a burger snob.

The burger itself was impossibly tender and very juicy even though it

was cooked well done. The slightly sweet Swiss cheese was the final touch that took it over the edge. Sorry White Castle, you have been dethroned.

THE RED KOI’S STEAMED SHRIMP SHUMAI

The Red Koi’s truck was actually the representation of an established Thai and sushi lounge located on Miracle Mile in Coral Gables. Their sit-down menu is quite pricey, but an order of their steamed shrimp shumai (dumplings) with ponzu sauce only cost \$4.

If you ever see this truck, be aware that everything is made to order. Translation: it takes forever. However, the quality of the food is worth it. Freshly steamed and with a bit of tart ponzu sauce to offset the fresh sweetness of the shrimp, this dish has inspired me to save my pennies and make a special trip to try out the real deal.

I wish I could go on, as even with the few I tried, I have much more to tell you. However, I only have so many words. What I will say is be on the lookout for the next food truck meet-up. You will not leave disappointed-or hungry.

For a schedule of food truck meet-ups, visit miamifoodtrucks.com.

Food for Thought is a Bi-weekly food column. Look for it every other Wednesday

Movie tickets not worth the expense

GISELLE RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

This summer has been full of awesome movies and it is looking like they are just going to get better. The big names and action-packed trailers are enough to make anyone a little giddy, so it sucks that most of my friends and I are not going to be able to make it to the theater this summer.

Major movie production studios are doing their absolute best to get people from the college and young adult age bracket into theaters, spending millions of dollars on movies they think are going to appeal to us. From the slightly campy, but wonderfully cast, “Cowboys and Aliens” to the final installment in the decade-long “Harry Potter” franchise, the movies this summer are sure to be a rousing good time.

Unfortunately, with the price of admission hovering at \$10 and reduced “student” prices seemingly a thing of the past, it is almost impossible to budget for what will

amount to a \$20 night.

In 2010, with the success of 3D films, such as James Cameron’s “Avatar” and Tim Burton’s “Alice in Wonderland,” movie theaters across the country universally bumped their prices by a margin of about four percent. Ticket prices for the supposedly less expensive 2D movies jumped as well.

According to the Motion Picture Association of America, ticket prices since 2000 have gone from an average of \$5.39 per ticket to close to \$10 each in 2011. That is a huge jump in price in the short time of a decade. With an inflation rate of about 30 percent, the prices should have only gone up to about \$7.00.

It cost me \$20.00 to see a 7:30 p.m. showing of “Green Lantern.” It was a Thursday night, but I did not get a student discount option and there was no 2D showing available; the cinema forced me to pay the highest ticket price just for the pleasure of seeing a movie.

It is a great experience to see a film on a giant screen with surround sound and 50 other like-minded people who gasp and yell at the screen at the same time you do. However, the huge jump in prices and my tiny college income do not dovetail in a way where that is possible for me.

We are already seeing the results of this as movie theaters churn out giant, big-budget films and then wail and gnash their teeth when their billions of dollars are not recouped. The answer, however is not to raise prices again in an attempt to make the small quantity of viewers pay for the movie’s entire cost, but to lower the price so more people can come in. In this case, the better deal would be quantity of viewers over the quality of their pocketbooks.

While I would much rather go to the theater to see “Captain America: The First Avenger” on a two-story screen, until prices go down or I have more money, I am going to have to wait until it comes to my Netflix Instant Queue. Sorry, Captain.

THE BEACON | Editorial

Too many students, not enough advisors

Over the years, our diverse editorial board has had interesting experiences with the University’s academic advisors. Most of the time, we leave their offices in a state of confusion; our questions are not answered and our path to graduation seems even longer.

Unfortunately, the poor academic advising infrastructure does not properly accommodate all students. Efforts to improve the advising infrastructure include the hiring of 18 new advisors in April, 2011 and the addition of an online degree auditing system. Although efficiency has slightly improved, an adequate system still does not exist.

The current student-advisor ratio is a problem that exists in several of the University’s schools. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences has 1,307 students with only one undergraduate advisor and one bridge advisor. A bridge advisor splits his or her time between graduate and undergraduate students, occasionally leaving all 1,307 undergraduate students to only one advisor. Similarly, there are 6,515 students and six advisors in the College of Business Administration, which makes each advisor responsible for over 1,000 students. With these circumstances, we believe it is difficult to provide the best services.

One of our editorial board members is enrolled in the School of Business Administration. She had to schedule her appointment a week in advance and the advisor only was available to meet for 10 minutes, the standard time allotted for each appointment. After her meeting, she was still unsure if she was on the right track for the four-year plan. Clearly, the infrastructure of advising in the College of Business Administration cannot support the number of students currently enrolled.

In contrast, one of the best student-advisor ratios at the University is with the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. With 1,833 students, there are three undergraduate advisors and one bridge advisor. The student-advisor ratio is 459 students to one advisor.

The University implemented the online auditing system to facilitate advising, however we find it unreliable and difficult to use. We, like most students, feel more confident meeting with an advisor than independently creating a graduation plan without the guidance of an advisor.

We believe that advising is one of the most crucial services a university offers. The poor academic advising currently available to students at the University is in need of reform. Only hiring an additional 18 advisors and implementing an online auditing system is not sufficient. The University needs to continue hiring additional advisors to keep up with the rising student population. As the school continues to grow, this academic advising issue will only get worse if the University does not take further action.

COVER TO COVER

Depression era novel an uplifting classic

Stepping into a world of magical, freakish and unknown wonders is something University students encounter everyday. Between learning new things and meeting strange and wonderful characters, it is an experience everyone can relate to.

These events, coupled with the tragedies of everyday life, are parallel to those created by the imaginative mind of Sara Gruen in “Water for Elephants.” The dangerous and ultimately uplifting novel, “Water for Elephants” is the perfect book for the college student.

Using extreme hyperboles and romantic metaphors, the novel sweeps readers into the world of the circus during the Great Depression in the United States. The adventure begins when Jacob Jankowski’s parents pass away and he walks out on his veterinary finals at Cornell and ends up working for the Benzini Brothers’ Greatest Show on Earth, a world in which chaos and tragedy are a regular occurrence.

Jacob goes on to fight constant battles throughout the book, as any student can relate to on a daily basis. He battles for what he believes in, even after getting shot down over

and over. He battles for friendship and he fights for love. He battles fear and depression. In his eventual triumph Jacob will inspire readers of this realistic fiction story to reach for exactly what is right for them.

During the Great Depression in the circus world, it was not uncommon for circus workers to be thrown out of a moving car in their sleep when their bosses no longer had the means to feed them. The characters struggle finding work, money and sometimes even food, like many do in our own time of recession.

After all the chaos, the Benzini Brothers’ Greatest Show on Earth comes crashing down, Jacob returns to school and finishes his finals. This time, instead of carrying the great burden of his parents’ death, Jacob carries along with him a wife, a child, an elephant and eleven horses. After witnessing a world in which all differences are accepted and everyone can share some sort of grief, Jacob’s story begins again as he ventures off into another new world.

The novel is a trying tale of redemption, one that any college student can relate to well. With her beautiful diction and magical yet real tone, Gruen is sure to sweep you away in her breathtaking and incredibly relatable masterpiece.

“Cover to Cover” is a biweekly book review column.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Reject animal cruelty

I am writing to express my utter disgust with FIU and the recent FIU Alumni Fishing Tournament that included among its “accomplishments,” the prolonged torture and catch of a 1,000 pound Mako shark. I have been at FIU for two years and had never heard of the tournament until coverage of the shark catch aired on local news recently.

I find this event abominably cruel to animals, but the treatment of the shark by FIU alumni members on videotape was especially appalling and shameful. A video showed several men straining to force a large shark onto their boat-craft while the animal fiercely resists and struggles alongside the boat to free itself. The report stated that this struggle played out for four hours before the shark either gave up or was too wounded/weak to fight back.

The treatment of this shark was cruel and unacceptable, and should not be tolerated or ignored because it is just a “fish”. Fishing may be a popular sport and pastime worldwide, but that does not diminish its inherently brutal nature. Like other vertebrates, fish and sharks experience physical pain and

distress. Studies have scientifically proven that hooking causes them considerable pain, suffering and injury.

It is completely inhumane to engage in a four hour battle with an animal this is struggling with pain and fear, and the men onboard should have demonstrated some conscious discretion to release it. Just because fish cannot vocalize or show pain in ways that are familiar to us does not mean they don’t suffer.

If FIU prides itself as a 21st century school that is “Worlds Ahead” in its vision, ethics and conscientiousness, then it should end a charity event that is founded on barbaric, primitive treatment towards animals. FIU does not need to hold events that encourage ignorance and insensitivity toward animals. Student scholarships should be funded by charity events that promote goodness and expanded ethical attitudes, including deeper consideration toward lower animals, even if it’s only a fish.

The animal Alumni Fish Tournament is nothing more than an occasion for empty bragging rights and it does not serve FIU’s core values of awareness and ethics.

- Janay Lang, Senior, English



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EDITORIAL POLICY

Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors of each of the five sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials. Send them to opinion@fiusm.com.

SGC-BBC looks to fill vacant council positions

JONATHAN SZYDLO
BBC Managing Editor

As the 19th Biscayne Bay Campus Student Government Council comes into session for the 2011-2012 academic year it is faced with the challenge of filling the 22 vacant positions on the council.

SGC-BBC has been attempting to spread the word of the available council positions via email, Twitter posts, Facebook updates, and posting signs throughout campus.

According to Larissa Adames, the SGA clerk at BBC, these recruitment efforts have been successful. “Usually when we put up the posts we get a couple of emails or calls, asking about the positions,” said Adames.

Representatives of SGC-BBC have also been attending orientations for freshman and transfer students in an effort to recruit members for the council.

Rafael Zapata, SGA Faculty

Advisor, said that bringing new FIU students onto the council presents certain qualifications issues for new appointments, but there are certain standards that are looked for in the individual applicants.

“If a [freshman] student comes up and says they’re interested and that they want to add experience to what they already have from high school [with different student organizations], and have some type of résumé, and are interested in the lower division seat, then we might consider them for the council,” said Zapata.

Zapata added that the same standards apply to transfer students.

“When we go to transfer orientations and a student was involved in student government at Miami-Dade Community, for example, there is always going to be a transition going from one student government to another, but they still have the skills necessary to be on

the council,” said Zapata.

SGC-BBC also offers internship positions to allow new students to adjust to the operating procedures of FIU’s student government councils. The internship positions serve as a stepping stone onto the council, yet is not a requirement to be on the council.

Yet, when comparing the returns of recruitment between freshman and transfer orientations, Farah Yamini, SGC-BBC College of Arts and Sciences senator, admits that “transfer orientations don’t go as well [as freshman orientations], though.”

There are three types of positions currently up for appointment; Cabinet, Senate, and Judicial. Cabinet positions are selected by the SGC-BBC president or chief of staff, and then approved by the senate, senators are subject to a live interview at senate meetings and then voted upon by the senate, and justices are selected by the Chief Justice with

SGC-BBC VACANT POSITIONS

- Executive Assistant
- Press Secretary
- Elections Board Commissioner
- Special Events Coordinator
- Special Projects
- Marketing Coordinator
- Director of Governmental Relations
- Director of External Relations & Outreach
- Director of Internal Relations
- Business Administration Senator
- Education Senator
- Arts & Sciences Senator
- Hospitality Management
- Journalism & Mass Communications
- Nursing & Health Services Senator
- Housing Senator
- Lower Division Senator (3)
- Graduate Senator
- Justice (2)

appointment being approved by the senate.

SGC-BBC isn’t the only council plagued with vacancies. As reported in the June 28 edition of *The Beacon*, the Modesto Maidique Campus council is also looking to fill their vacant council seats.

With both councils seeking to fill their respective vacancies, the need for a two council system comes into question. However, Zapata feels that the current system is the best due to the individual dynamics that make up BBC and MMC.

“This comes up every couple

of year. We feel confident that the best system that we have right now is the one that we have in place because it gives representation to both campuses because they are both so unique and 30 percent of the student body makes up BBC,” said Zapata.

FIU and Telemundo join in partnership

MARIA COSSIO
Contributing Writer

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication ignited a leading edge collaboration with Hispanic media giant Telemundo Telecommunications Group.

With FIU being the largest Hispanic serving institution in mainland US, and one of the top three universities to award Hispanics with undergraduate communication degrees, some might wonder why FIU and Telemundo didn’t team up earlier.

The academic partnership aims to equip FIU’s Hispanic SJMC students with the tools they will need to thrive in the world of mass media communications.

Students will be exposed to media production departments such as News, Digital, Research and Communications beginning with morning lectures by some of Telemundo’s leading experts.

The two-semester course will be divided into two sections; the first semester will be a traditional in-class learning environ-

ment while the second semester will allow students to get hands-on experience in the media industry.

Towards the end of the second semester, students will be expected to have enough knowledge to perform the job of a real life professional.

According to SJMC Dean, Dr. Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver, the inaugural enrolling group kicked off the program with eight students.

This first group of students began their course work in the program at the start of the 2011 summer semester, and will last through the fall.

“The internship is just the beginning of it,” said Kopenhaver. “It’s going to evolve into something much bigger.”

The partnership began as a mere vision by the President of Telemundo, Don Browne, and Kopenhaver, who wanted to create an extraordinary learning experience for Hispanic students going into the media industry. After putting together

SPC WELCOME WEEK



CARMELA ZUMBADLO/THE BEACON

Michael Aquino, sophomore, and Emmanuel Jerome, sophomore, [from left to right] watch Freshman Shelomith Dorin and Sophomore Sean Russell [bottom] play Jenga during SPC event “Say Hello to SPC.”

the program’s learning curriculum, SJMC received \$300,000 to establish the Hispanic Media Futures Program.

“They are being prepared for a broad range of jobs. They can go anywhere else and work, but what this program does is that it is designed to train Hispanics so that there will be more in news rooms, public relations agencies

and advertising agencies than there are now,” said Kopenhaver.

Telemundo Telecommunications Group is laying down the foundation for Hispanic students to take leading roles in the media. The program is meant to prepare Hispanic students to immerse themselves in the media industry allowing them to develop their verbal and written Spanish

language skills in preparation for the competitive job market.

The new partnership is expected to trigger greater student interest and develop into future projects such as an academy for Hispanic communications studies, which will provide research and analysis of the Hispanic media market, serving as a bridge for students into the media industry.

Student reactions to passage of gay marriage laws

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Many are hoping that New York will be the ignite reform for same-sex marriages.

“I hope and feel that because of New York’s size and influence that it will get other states to jump on board and get the ball rolling with same-sex marriage laws,” said Correale. “Soon enough there will be a push for it but

the battle has been fought for over 40 years and needs to cross the finish line.”

For many this is simply an issue of equality. It is apparent that times have changed especially considering that republican senators, who are traditionally more conservative, made legalizing gay marriage in New York possible. But for many inequality still lurks in the air.

“We can’t deny classes of people rights

simply because they are not in a “normal” relationship anymore than we can deny an inter-racial couple from getting married. We, including lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people, give the government the power to protect our rights... not bar us from them,” said Correale.

According to Merriam-Webster, marriage is defined as: the state of being united to a

person of the opposite sex as husband or wife in a consensual and contractual relationship recognized by law. Sanchez hopes one day to see a different definition.

“I think marriage should be defined as a union between consenting individuals,” he said, “who love one another regardless of their race, religion, sexual orientation or disability.”