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LIFE!

380 students work with industry's best at WFF event



ESRA ERDOGAN/THE BEACON

Chefs Rachael Ray (left), Michael Symon (center) and Bobby Flay (right) announce the winner of People's Choice Awards at this year's Burger Bash at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

ESRA ERDOGAN

Life! Editor

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Among the thousands of guests who chomped on burgers, drank cold beers and mingled with celebrity chefs at this year's Burger Bash were 380 stressed out and sweaty students.

The Amstel Light Burger Bash is hosted by Food Network celebrity chef Rachael Ray and a signature event part of the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

The event is enormous both by reputation and man power. Thirty two different hamburgers were prepared by notable chefs, from local to national celebrities, to compete for the People's Choice Award.

Students of the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management were

involved at every turn, from registration to culinary.

"It's hard work, so I give props to the people who make it happen. You have to be a people person, be there for the people and stay organized," said sophomore Rosanna Perez, a hospitality major. Perez's responsibility was to guide the crowd of 3,500 people in and out of the event.

Once guests were inside, they were treated to 32 completely unique burgers ranging from bizarre to devilishly unhealthy.

"[The students] are doing great. They're really committed, very dedicated," said Top Chef All Star Richard Blais of Flip Burger Boutique.

Students on the culinary teams put in 350 hours of kitchen prep time in order to get ready for the guests.

Once the event starts, being

on line can be very stressful. Students are assigned to a task, like flipping burgers or adding cheese.

"We had a great assembly line going. I focused on getting the sauce and pickles on as fast as possible. I felt prepared but I knew I was in for a long day since I was at Rachael Ray's burger station. People love her," said junior Amanda Joffe.

The culinary team backing Bobby Flay has consistently impressed the Food Network celebrity chef. "I've done this event for six years and I always ask 'how many FIU students do we have?' because they work so hard. I've hired many of them over the years," said Flay.

There was a little friendly rivalry amongst the culinary teams.

SEE BASH, PAGE 5

A&S FEE

SGC to deliberate on student activity fees

MELISSA CACERES

News Director

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Students' Activity & Service Fees may see an increase pending on deliberations.

The University Activity & Service Fee committee held two public hearings on both the Modesto Maidique and Biscayne Bay Campuses to listen to the concerns and opinions of students and faculty regarding the proposed increase in the A&S fee this year.

At the Feb. 23 hearing at MMC, several organization leaders pushed for the increase in order to expand their programs while a few students were hesitant to show their support if the money didn't go to areas that they preferred.

"If we do not get the A&S increase, we'll continue to operate," said Larry Lunsford, associate vice president of Student Affairs. "But as we gain 2,000 more students each year, we can't continue to serve them

and fund programs for them."

The A&S fee, one of three fees that students pay for along with their tuition, is used to fund around 60 student organizations and facilities on campus. The committee that will decide

"I came here, not to gain any sort of status and to say I met Lupe Fiasco at a concert. I came here because I wanted to learn."

Angie Luna,
junior
biology major

the increase is comprised of four faculty members and the presidents and comptrollers from the Student Government Council

SEE HEARING, PAGE 2

ENVIRONMENT

Panther Dining offering new sustainable To-Go containers

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Eating at Pollo Tropical has now become the newest way to go green at FIU, as food sustainability takes the next step with the implementation of To-Go Boxes.

Previously exclusive to Fresh Foods, To-Go Boxes are re-usable plastic containers designed to reduce the use of disposable styrofoam containers.

"We are trying to get more sustainable dining option out to the students," said Celia Izaguirre, Aramark sustainability coordinator at FIU. "We wanted to offer more options to students who don't want to use styrofoam and [want to] reduce waste."

While ordering from Pollo Tropical, a one-time refundable deposit of \$4 entitles customers to unlimited use of the boxes at both Pollo Tropical at the Modesto Maidique Campus, and the Grille Works at the Biscayne Bay Campus. According to Izaguirre, customers can return To-Go Boxes at any time and receive their deposit in

return.

Izaguirre also explained that the restaurants take care of the sanitation, taking used To-Go Boxes at the time

eventually you come down [to Pollo Tropical and] we swap it for a clean one," Izaguirre said.

According to Josefina Salazar,



KRISTI CAMARA/THE BEACON

Plastic containers (above) to off-set non-biodegradable Styrofoam waste as part of new environmentally friendly initiatives on campus.

of purchase and serving food in fresh clean ones at every purchase.

"We do the sanitizing so that it's more convenient for students. You can leave it in the car or on your desk and

manager of Pollo Tropical, the restaurant goes through 150 non-biodegradable styrofoam containers every

SEE GREEN, PAGE 2

COMING UP | Life!

Check out Wednesday's issue for Esra Erdogan's glance at fashion highs and lows in her weekly column, Haute Topic.

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NEWS FLASH

LOCAL

Lawmaker resigns over texts to prosecutor

A Democrat lawmaker resigned Friday over suggestive and harassing text messages he sent to a married federal prosecutor using a hidden identity.

Rep. Richard Steinberg of Miami Beach said his resignation is effective immediately and asked for privacy while he deals with his personal affairs. He left the Capitol after The Miami Herald reported the story Wednesday and issued an apology.

“The events of the past week have been difficult for my family, for me and for everyone involved,” Steinberg said in a written statement. “As I did earlier this week, I want to once again, very directly and sincerely, apologize to everyone I have hurt.”

NATIONAL

NYPD’s monitoring of Muslims was legal

New York’s mayor offered a robust defense Friday of a secret police department effort to monitor mosques and Muslim businesses and student groups in several states, following a week of criticism from college administrators and politicians who said the intelligence-gathering pried too deeply into the lives of law-abiding people.

“We just cannot let our guard down again,” Mayor Michael Bloomberg said.

Speaking on his weekly radio show on WOR-AM, Bloomberg declined to discuss details of the anti-terrorism programs, detailed in a series of stories by The Associated Press.

WORLD

Red Cross holds talks with Syrians over wounded

Red Cross aid workers entered a besieged neighborhood in the Syrian city of Homs Friday and are negotiating with authorities and rebels to evacuate all wounded, including two Western journalists, a spokesman said.

The effort to evacuate the reporters — who were injured in a government attack that killed American war correspondent Marie Colvin and French photographer Remi Ochlik — is part of a wider international push to bring aid to people in the areas hardest hit by Syria’s efforts to quash the uprising against President Bashar Assad’s rule.

Hicham Hassan of the International Committee of the Red Cross said Friday that the ICRC and its local Syrian branch have been working in the Baba Amr neighborhood of Homs since Friday afternoon.

The team is “negotiating with both Syrian authorities and opposition in an attempt to evacuate all persons in need of assistance with no exception,” he said, meaning local residents and foreign journalists.

– Compiled by Melhor Leonor

Individuals divided over increase

HEARING, PAGE 1

at Modesto Maidique Campus and Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus.

The increase percentage could be as low as 1 percent; each students’ A&S fee would raise by 50 cents per credit hour which would equal to \$958,000 in more funds. The highest level would be 5 percent; each student’s fee would increase by \$1.81 per credit hour to make around \$2.4 million.

“We should push for a five percent increase as much as possible because every year in Campus Life, we’re pushing the envelope by doing as best as we can with the budget that we’re given,” said Natalia Lopez, SGC-MMC public relations coordinator. “If it increases, that can bring bigger events and bigger names [to perform on campus].”

The Center for Leadership and Service, Multicultural Programs & Services and Homecoming would be the University-wide organizations first considered to receive additional funding, according to Patrick O’Keefe, SGC-MMC president.

Several directors of campus organizations emphasized that the increase would benefit entertainment events

like Homecoming, the inner workings of many structures and departments at the University, and the programs that develop leadership among students.

Ruth Hamilton, executive director of the Graham Center, told the audience that the fee helps the student centers continue to provide services and job experience for students.

“[The] fee has very intentional purposes and provides direct services to the students,” said Hamilton, who added that the facilities get their main funding from A&S fees.

Others felt that events on campus are less of a priority than other areas of funding.

“How can we make it so that the money doesn’t go to campus involvement activities?” said sophomore information technology and communications major, Christopher Knowles. “I know they’re supposed to be good for recruitment, but as a student, I don’t see their worth.”

In response, Bill Beesting, A&S fee committee chair and associate dean of undergraduate education, said that student government representatives would be the ones to pressure for moves like that because “that’s how the democratic process works.”

Angie Luna, a junior majoring

in biology, asked a number of questions to the committee and urged the members of the hearing to stop trying to use its funds to try to measure up to other institutions by getting the biggest speakers and building expensive facilities.

“We have to realize that we’re not UM and we shouldn’t want to be like UM,” said Luna. “I came here not to gain any sort of status and to say I met Lupe Fiasco at a concert. I came here because I wanted to learn.”

O’Keefe was another among the individuals at the hearing who said he is opposed to any kind of fee increase.

“I don’t think that now is the time,” said O’Keefe. “Right now, I think we can suffice with what we have.”

Others didn’t feel the same way.

“If we feel like we’re okay now with the budget, what’s going to happen in three years when we grow to around 60,000 students?” said Robert Jaross, director of Student Media.

This week, the budgets for campus-specific organizations will be deliberated and considered for the additional A&S funds. Also, the committee will come to a decision this week as to whether the A&S fee will increase and if so, by what percentage.

Boxes to reduce Styrofoam waste

GREEN, PAGE 1

week and the initiative is to reduce this amount.

“Styrofoam is not biodegradable and we can’t recycle it at FIU or in Miami,” Izaguirre said. “Currently styrofoam occupies 30 percent of our landfill space.”

Aside from the use of To-Go Boxes, FIU has also put in place many other initiatives to make Panther Dining more sustainable.

“We wanted to offer more options to students who [want to] reduce waste.”

Celia Izaguirre,
Sustainability Coordinator
Aramark

“We are composting our coffee grounds and they end up using them at the organic garden. Aside from composting we are also training our employees on energy and water conservation,” Izaguirre said.

Panther Dining has also put in place reusable “Drink to the Earth” mugs, which upon purchase, give customers discounts on coffee and fountain drinks throughout campus.

According to Salazar, in the past few weeks since the containers were made available, Pollo Tropical has distributed between 40 and 50 To-Go Boxes.

“The program is currently in its early stages. It has received a lot of interest from students and we hope it continues to grow,” Salazar said. “FIU is taking a lot of great steps towards sustainability and Panther Dining is excited to join them.”

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FIU Student Government Association
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Seniors start fresh against Jaguars

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On the night that DeJuan Wright and Jeremy Allen played their final home game in a Panther uniform, both went out with a bang.

Wright had career highs in both points and rebounds, 34 points and 13 rebounds, and Allen chipped in with 21 points, to lead the Panthers to a 81-74 win over the South Alabama Jaguars on senior night.

"I was really happy for DeJuan [Wright] and Jeremy [Allen]. They've given us everything in practice and play," said Head Coach Isiah Thomas. "We're gonna miss them, but they definitely made their mark here at FIU."

With the win, the Panthers will go into the Sun Belt Conference tournament as the 10th seed and will play the Florida Atlantic Owls in the first round.

"You know what type of game that's gonna be. It's gonna be close and it's probably gonna come down to the wire again," said Thomas.

After the game, Allen revealed what the goal was for the team at the prior to the match-up.

"Everyone collectively tried to start out fresh. We tried to come out as a team and go into the tournament with a win."

South Alabama began the game on a 8-2 run, including a Mychal Ammons alley-oop to Javier Carter. FIU climbed back to regain the lead from an Allen drive to the basket with 8:06 left in the half.

The play sparked a 23-12 run, including an emphatic dunk by Wright to end the first half with FIU leading 41-30. Wright was able to score 16 of his 34 in the first half.

"He's just really, really good," said Thomas. "He was able to put it on the floor and drive it. His offensive rebounding was great."

South Alabama was able to bring the halftime deficit to five, trailing 53-48 with 14:01 left in the game. Allen then got the hot hand and hit three three-pointers to extend the Panthers lead back up to 64-50.



KRISTI CAMARA/THE BEACON

The Panthers won their first and last home games of this season.

During the run, Thomas used a smaller lineup, with Deric Hill, Phil Taylor, Allen, Wright and Brandon Moore during the run and it seemed to work.

"I like when Phil [Taylor] plays the two, he doesn't have to dribble as much and it makes us faster," said Allen.

The Jaguars would not go away quietly, scoring in small spurts. An Austine Rubit dunk and free throw cut the lead down to three, 72-69. It would be the closest that the Jaguars would get, as FIU finished the game at the free-throw line and with the win.

Now the focus shifts towards the conference tournament, where the Panthers will be playing on March 3

at 8:30 p.m. in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Thomas was happy that the team can go into the tournament on a winning note.

"It's better going in with a win than a loss," said Thomas. "That's the thing about momentum, you win one game, you feel great. You lose, you feel terrible."

Thomas used the win as tool for the upcoming SBC tournament.

"Coach put on the board '1-0'. We're starting the tournament today and we can build on it," said Allen.

When asked about the first-round match-up against FAU, Wright was simple about it.

"They're our rivals. It's definitely going to be a war," said Wright.

go in regulation.

After South Alabama failed to score and win the game at the end of regulation, the game headed to overtime. Both teams traded two foul shots but then the biggest play of the game came in the form of a Hutlassa three pointer to give the Panthers the lead.

They never relinquished the lead en route to their 58-55 win over the Jaguars.

Jerica Coley led all scorers with 25 points, 12 of which coming from the charity stripe. She also had seven rebounds, three assists and three blocks.

"At the beginning, we started off a little slow," Coley said. "But at halftime, we went into the locker room, huddled up and talked about it. We just really wanted to win."

As to the physical nature of the game tonight where both teams were called for a total of 40 fouls, Coley knew that it

SEE WOMEN'S, PAGE 4

SBC tournament seeding format is very impractical

The Sun Belt Conference may want to grow trees out of their seeds, but the roots are so gnarled it's difficult to tell them apart.

COMMENTARY



JACKSON WOLEK

Instead of having all 12 SBC teams make it this year, there will be only 11, because last place Louisiana Monroe failed to meet the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate. With 11 teams, the Sun Belt decided to take all of them, regardless of how difficult the task of seeding the teams has become.

The seeding goes like this: The number eight seed will face the number nine seed, six vs. 11, and seven vs. 10 on the first day of the tournament.

On the second day, the number four seed will play the number five seed, and depending on which team wins the eight vs. nine game, they will face either the East or West regular season champion (game six).

The same goes for the winner of the seven vs. 10 game (game seven), and the winner of the six vs. 11 game will face the number three overall seed (game eight).

In the semifinals, the winner of game five plays the winner of game six, and the winner of game seven plays the winner of game eight. The finals take the winners of those two games.

If this is at all confusing to you, don't worry, it's perplexing me too.

The Sun Belt can learn a thing or two from the Big South, which has 11 teams in their league, but can take only 10 because Presbyterian has not completed their Division One transition yet.

Therefore, the top six teams automatically make it to the second round, and the last four play each other in the first round to see who makes it to the quarterfinals. If the SBC took 10 teams, Troy would not make the tournament.

If leaving one team out wasn't cruel enough, SBC could be like the 11-team

Ohio Valley conference, which with SIU-Edwardsville ineligible because of NCAA transition, they have 10.

Instead of taking all 10, they take eight, with the top two seeds automatically making it into the semifinals, the three and four seed going straight to the quarterfinals and five through eight playing in the first round.

Thanks to this setup, the Panthers would not make the tournament. That may be just what FIU would need as motivation to do better during the season.

Since FIU is going to make the SBC tournament every year regardless if they win a single-game, the only real reason to do well is to get a better seed. If there was a possibility of not making the tournament all together, regular season games would hold a greater significance.

Not every team deserves a shot to go to the SBC tournament. For example, if ULM had been eligible, they would have made the post season with two wins in the season.

A team like that should not be rewarded with a chance to win the SBC tournament and get an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament, no matter how unlikely it would happen.

Also, the SBC can't go to the extreme of the Ivy League and not have a tournament at all, and just take the team with the best record in the regular season.

A six-team tournament, with the top two teams getting a first round bye, just like how the NFL playoffs are run, is the best option for the SBC to go.

That way every conference game would have much greater implications than it does right now and you would get better competition and hopefully better fan support.

So, while ULM may have messed up a perfectly good 12 team tournament system, the SBC didn't do a well enough job in making an 11 team conference have a better tournament bracket. By being too kind, they made things far more complicated than they should be.

BASEBALL

Panthers and Seminoles split first two games

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The last time the Panthers beat Florida State University in a baseball game, FIU's winning pitcher had not been born yet.

In the first of a three-game series, FIU snapped its 22-year losing streak against the Seminoles after 13 hits led the Panthers to an 8-5 win on the road in Tallahassee, Fla.

FSU was last ranked No. 8 in the country by National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association of America.

On Saturday, however, FSU managed to silence the bats that dominated them the night before, beating them 3-1 despite multiple chances by FIU to score.

FIU 8, FSU 5

R.J. Fondon was not as sharp as his season debut, but he managed to limit the damage, striking out two batters, allowing eight hits, and walking four in 5 1/3 innings.

Senior outfielder Pablo Bermudez and junior Adam Kirsch had their best game at the plate for FIU (1-3) this season after each had three hits in the game, combining for two RBIs and four runs.

After stealing third base, Bermudez, the reigning Sun Belt Player of the Year, scored the first



BEACON FILE PHOTO

Pablo Bermudez led the way for FIU with three hits in the opening game against the Seminoles.

run of the game on a wild pitch in the first inning. Kirsch followed with an RBI single to drive in senior Mike Martinez.

After an FIU error set up an RBI single for FSU in the same inning, junior T.J. Shantz belted a two-run double to give FIU a 4-1 lead.

Sloppy defense in the third inning allowed FSU (3-1) to get back into the game with a two-run double to make it 4-3.

Both teams exchanged a second set of two-run innings, leaving the score at 6-5 as the sixth inning opened.

The Panthers rallied with two outs in the sixth, with sophomore David Vazquez hitting an RBI single to score Kirsch.

FIU tacked on a final run in the eighth inning with a Kirsch double, and then called upon their left-handed closer, Michael Gomez, to

shut the Seminoles' offense down.

Gomez struck out three batters in 2 1/3 innings to earn his first career save and give FIU its first win of the season.

FIU had not won against a top-10 team since 2008.

FSU 3, FIU 1

Though the Panthers escaped the danger of issuing nine walks on Friday, FSU was not going to be

fooled twice, taking advantage of the second straight day FIU issued nine walks, beating the team 3-1.

Redshirt junior Mason McVay struck out a career-high nine batters in just four innings, but issued five walks.

The combination of both resulted in 100 pitches for the left-hander, prompting pitching coach Drew French to remove him from the game early.

FIU (1-4) managed to out hit FSU (4-1) again, but could not string together any hits.

Senior Iosmel "Bala" Leon hit a solo homerun in the eighth inning for FIU, but they could not overcome FSU's Mike Compton, who pitched six innings, allowed only two hits and struck out four Panthers.

McVay walked the bases loaded in the first inning, but escaped the jam by striking out the side. He was not so lucky in the second inning.

After loading the bases again, FSU's James Ramsey hit a single to drive in two Seminoles and give his team a 2-0 lead.

FIU's pitching staff managed to hold FSU hitless until the seventh until Ramsey struck again, this time hitting a solo homerun off redshirt sophomore Albert Cardenas.

Leon homered in the eighth inning to cut the deficit to two runs, but the Panthers were not able to mount a comeback.



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FIU erases double-digit deficit to win in overtime



KRISTI CAMARA/THE BEACON

Jerica Coley [right] led all scorers with 25 points against the Jaguars on Feb. 25.

WOMEN'S, PAGE 3

was going to happen.

"We expected it to be a physical game," Coley said. "There a physical team and it was an important game for both us. We knew it coming in."

Not only did Coley have a great performance but her cousin, Kamika Idom, came off the bench for solid minutes.

Idom finished the game with eight rebounds and five points in 33 minutes of action.

This marks the first 20-win season for the team since the 2001-2002 season where they went 13-1 in the Sun Belt, becoming champions of the conference.

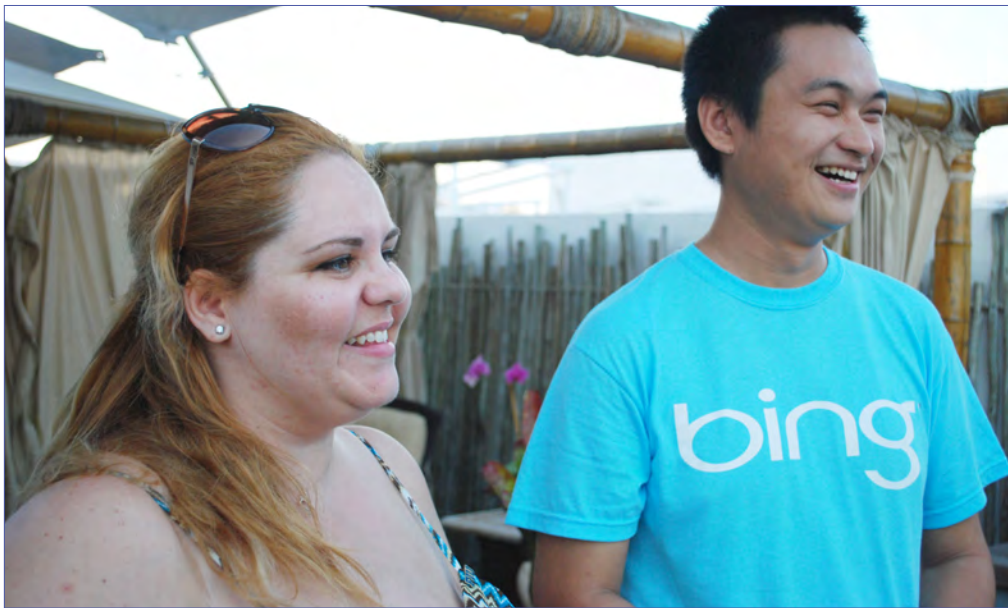
With the win, the Panthers are the three seed from the East division in the Sun Belt Conference tournament where they will face Louisiana Lafayette on March 5 at 12:00 p.m.

Coley feels that this team is on the right track to get to where they want to go: a conference title.

"This is a good momentum booster and we'll be ready to take every game one at a time," Coley said. "Every game will be like this one. Hopefully we'll get to the championship."

WINE AND DINE

Third time is the charm for hospitality student



ESRA ERDOGAN/THE BEACON

Gipsy Velez [left] worked the V.I.P. happy hour event at the Betsy Hotel on Feb. 24. Wen Zheng Guo [right] was one of the student volunteers that Velez directed.



Tweet Beat!

@rachael_ray: Congrats to best dressed burger @GuyFieri, 3peat peoples choice @chefsymon. Runner up @bflay w crunchified buffalo burger- so close.

@chefsymon: threepeat!!!!.... unreal!!!!....#sobe burgerbash

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Although Gipsy Velez would not share every name she has had the opportunity to network with through her experiences at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, you can tell that they are names she's proud to be associated with.

Velez, who is a senior hospitality major with a minor in beverage management, feels lucky to be involved with an event at the level of grandeur of the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

"You have the opportunity to work with the people who are in the industry, which you may not get if you weren't involved in events like this one," said Velez.

This year was Velez's third festival, where she's played a variety of roles. Her first year, Velez was involved in registration.

Often forgotten about, the students who work in registration direct the flow of traffic at events, answer guests' questions and more.

This role allows for a lot of observation, which is perfect for a festival newbie.

Her second year, she was involved in culinary. "I loved culinary. It's a lot of work though," said Velez.

More attuned to her interests is the role she played at this year's festival as a student coordinator.

Student coordinators are responsible for recruitment, hiring and training for the festival.

There were 16 student coordinators overall, and each is in charge of a group of students assigned to different events throughout the festival weekend.

At the V.I.P. happy hour event on the roof of The Betsy hotel, Velez was consulting with festival representatives, monitoring the guest list and directing student volunteers.

The festival allows students of the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management hands on experience that would be difficult to get otherwise during their undergraduate career.

Students are also allowed

the opportunity to work with industry people, from celebrity chefs to event planners, and given a chance to demonstrate their expertise, hopefully to receive a recommendation towards a future job.

"It's hands on. Where else can you work with industry people like we do? Some of the people I've worked with have offered career advice and told me they'd recommend me to other people," said Velez.

The festival isn't the only time of year that students are being offered volunteer positions.

Throughout the year, events like fundraisers and expositions send requests to the school of hospitality for student volunteers.

"Because so many people [hear about the University's hospitality students] they're constantly offering events for FIU students," said Velez, who has had the chance to work for events like Pink Petals and Grovetoberfest.

"I love special events, so what I'd like to be doing is exactly what I'm doing now," said Velez.

"Three-peat" for Chef Symon



PHOTOS BY ESRA ERDOGAN/THE BEACON

Top left: The Meatball Shop's chili cheese burger, a chili flavored patty topped with cheddar cheese and a side of chips. **Top right:** Maria Iragorri, a student of the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management works at one of the burger stations. **Bottom left:** Chef Michael Symon (center) accepts his award for People's Choice Award from Rachael Ray (left). The prize money will be donated to his choice of charity.



Burger Bash event draws \$15 million

BASH, PAGE 1

"Guy Fieri brought a restaurant," said Blais. "I think he bought out an acre of land on the beach."

Fieri's team had an enormous line, both for the burgers and to meet the Food Network celebrity chef. Fieri took home the Heinz Best Dressed Award for his "Straight-Up with a Pig Patty" burger.

For many students working in the hospitality industry, networking is key. An event like Burger Bash allows students to work directly with successful and influential chefs, restaurateurs, distributors, event planners and more.

"I got to meet really talented well-known chefs and was able to ask them questions about their business. It was actually very surprising how down to earth the majority of them are. I was also able to make new contacts within [the school of Hospitality] and in hospitality, networking

is everything. You don't know who the person next to you is going to be in the future," said junior Alfredo Diaz who was working at the little owl's burger station.

Chef Michael Symon of B Spot won the People's Choice Award for the third time with his Porky Burger, a pork and bacon burger topped with pulled pork and slaw.

Before saying goodnight, Ray and event manager Randy Fischer said their thank yous to the chefs and students.

Fischer reminded the crowd that all proceeds from the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, which reached \$15 million, go to the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

"This event definitely assured me that I made the right decision by majoring in hospitality. I loved watching guests enjoy themselves and the food we helped prepare, and that's what I think hospitality is all about," said Joffe.

EDIBLE INFO

Restaurant caters to nightowls

Another late studio session drove me past my hunger threshold at 1 a.m. Where to eat? Some people would say there are not many options in Miami as far as late night eateries.

COLUMNIST



RENE GONZALEZ

I say these people are licking the wrong spoon. I did not want to seem like a total fatty, so I called up a friend and asked if she wanted to join me. She was not exactly up for it until I said these magic words: “My treat.”

Our hunt took us down Flagler Street where I thought we would have a few more viable options.

We ended up at Los Perros, a quasi-trendy Colombian place that makes some interesting burgers and hot dogs.

It is a bit hidden, so if you know where the Blockbuster is on 84th Avenue, you will find it in the same plaza.

Upon entering, we were greeted and told to sit anywhere; we got lucky it was kind of empty. It is a rather good after-club spot to the point it sometimes looks like a club.

If you are not into not-so-great Top 40 house music, you better order your stuff to go. Our waitress was attentive and brought us the menus.

After I asked her about the hours of operation, I realized this is a great place to brush up on my Spanish. Do not expect perfect English, but that is the norm for most places in Miami.

After so much ranting and raving from my Colombian friends, I had to order the burger despite not being much of a red meat eater.

Everything on it is the only way to go; taking stuff off is doing yourself a disservice.

My friend ordered the chicken fingers, and I had to get an order of wings. The wings were only \$7.49 for 10, and both of our entrees were under \$10, too.

Before we got our food, I decided to test for Wi-Fi. Score! The restaurant has free Wi-Fi. You have to create a free account to use it, though, which is a tad annoying, but I see the business sense in this.

Since you have to confirm the account from your email, they now have a working email address for you. As a business owner, I would use this information to learn about my clientele as well as send out special offers to promote the business.

By the time I was fully logged in, our food had arrived. Our order took up the entire table. The burger was an interesting juxtaposition of flavors.

The semi-tart sauce at the bottom mixed with a hint of pineapple glazed up top, and



RENE GONZALEZ/THE BEACON

The Colombian burger mixes both sweet and savory flavors.

with enough cheese to choke a cartoon orange cheetah, the meat was almost secondary as far as the flavor palette.

The wings were nothing spectacular—rather small—but the breeding was interesting.

It was a similar granule texture to the one on the chicken fingers, as opposed to the heavier coated feeling usually associated with wings.

This burger was bomb! I devoured the entire thing with blatant disregard for my stomach, (I am not a habitual red meat eater, so it messes me up every time) and then continued to lick my fingers clean. Who needs a napkin? Not this guy.

There are several locations around town, but this is the closet to the Modesto

Maidique Campus.

In fact, they can deliver your food on campus. Almost every item on the menu is under \$10, and they have some appealing exotic items.

Play it safe with wings, try a Colombian burger or hot dog, or go crazy and get quail eggs and marranitas (four plantain cups filled with pulled chicken, pulled beef, pork bites and Colombian sausage).

Either way, it is a good experience that pleases your tummy and does not mug your wallet. Check out their website: <http://www.losperros.com>.

Edible Info is a biweekly food review column. Rene Gonzalez is on the hunt for late night bites.

GIRL TALK

Conference aims to connect women with role models

CAROLINA SOUTO

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Almost 100 years have passed since women were given the right to vote, and though we have risen above the anchoring images of a housewife and stay-at-home mother, the glass ceiling hovering above the workplace has yet to disappear.

Luckily, cracks are beginning to appear, and the Women Who Lead conference is back at the University, ready to hammer away old notions of success. The purpose of the conference is to enhance the development of leadership for women and to connect students with women who are leaders.

Events are being held at the Biscayne Bay Campus on March 7 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in WUC 221, and at the Modesto Maidique Campus on March 29 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the GC ballrooms.

“One of our goals for this conference is to show women—and men—that women have so many choices in the way they create their career path and leadership path,” said Bronwen Bares, associate director of the University’s Women’s Center.

Miss Holly, two-time winner of Food Network’s

“I’ve been in the shoes of our students who are trying to navigate between who they are, what they want to become, and how to get there,

Monique Catoggio,
Director of Advancement
Alumni and Corporate Relations for the
College of Business Admin.

“Cupcake Wars,” will be a keynote speaker.

“We really try to use this event to connect our female students with role models,” said Bares.

Conference participants will have the opportunity to mingle with women who are leaders in networking events, followed by guest speakers Dionne Stephens and Paige Telan.

Registration is required, but it is free for students and available throughout February.

“I’ve been in the shoes of our students who are trying to navigate between who they are, what they want to become, and how to get there,” said Monique Catoggio, director of Advancement, Alumni and Corporate Relations for the College of Business Administration.

“Being a student and young professional today can be both exhilarating and overwhelming. As such, I hope to impart upon all present my personal philosophy on leadership—defining what it is, defining who we are as individuals, women, and leaders in our own right, and share a holistic leadership model that I feel speaks to everyone,” said Catoggio, also a keynote speaker.

While the conference is centered on women and leadership, there is also much to be gained in practical areas. At the MMC event, there will be two concurrent panel discussions both women and men can learn from by attending.

One will focus on competing in a tough economy, which will be hosted by Shawna McNair, associate director for University Career Services.

Another, hosted by Heidi Von Harscher, director of the College of Medicine, will focus on creating balance. A third panel discussion will focus on how to diversify investments, which will be hosted by Carolyn Runowicz, executive associate dean for Academic Affairs at the College of Medicine.

“I was inspired by many testimonies, and felt motivated to continue pursuing my dreams without giving up,” said Cinthya Salazar, a graduate assistant at the Women’s Center who attended the conference for the first time last year. “I also realized that I may have more things in common with other women than I ever thought of, and that support is always available.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

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MONDAY

SPC PIT EVENT

WHEN: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free to students
WHERE: MMC GC Pit

GRADUATE STUDENT RESOURCE FAIR

WHEN: 12-2 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: MMC GC Ballrooms

“WOMEN AND THE ETERNAL FEMININE” AND “OFFERINGS”

WHEN: Daily
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: Frost Art Museum

BSU IMPERSONATOR

WHEN: 7 p.m.
WHERE: BBC WUC Theatre

GRADUATE STUDENT SCHOLARLY FORUM

WHEN: 12-6 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: MMC GC Ballrooms

RADIOHEAD

WHEN: 7:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: \$45.00 to \$69.00
WHERE: American Airlines Arena

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TUESDAY

FUNDING UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE POPULATION HEALTH

WHEN: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free
WHERE: MMC GC 150

PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

WHEN: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
WHERE: MMC Throughout Campus

“YOGA AND AYURVEDA”

WHEN: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free and open to the public
WHERE: MMC PC 428

THE ROLE OF SHARIAH IN MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES POST-ARAB SPRING

WHEN: 12-2 p.m.
WHERE: Large Courtroom

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CALENDAR@FIUSM.COM

Santorum a viable candidate despite criticism

JOEL DELGADO
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The merry-go-round of Republican candidates taking hold of the spotlight has been dizzying with nearly a dozen different people holding front-runner status and nearly all of them falling from that distinction nearly as quickly as they have risen.

Even so, the erratic ride may soon be coming to a stop, and weary Republican voters may have found their man.

Rick Santorum is the latest Republican to emerge as the “anybody-but-Mitt Romney” candidate, and the timing of the “Santorum Surge” may just work to his advantage.

With the field rapidly thinning, conservatives have very few others to look to, but they may not need to look any further.

Santorum is possibly the best-equipped potential nominee of the four remaining GOP candidates to unite the three key sectors of the Republican Party: Social conservatives, fiscal conservatives and foreign policy conservatives.

He has the strongest record on preserving the lives of the unborn, including constructing and advocating the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003.

His “pro-life” label also extends beyond

“
It is this kind of dialogue,
which takes place all across the political
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our nation faces today.”

the womb in going out of his way to fight for funding to battle AIDs in Africa and leading the way in finding solutions to poverty in this country, boldly walking out his compassionate conservatism.

More intriguing is that Santorum’s favorable rating among Republicans is higher than the other candidates.

A recent ABC News poll showed strong favoritism among conservatives and Republicans and rising marks among a key bloc of voters in a general election: Independents.

In a head-to-head matchup with President Barack Obama, the latest polls show that it is almost a virtual dead-heat with Santorum. Momentum is on the senator’s side.

The latest Rasmussen and Quinnipiac

polls, both released on Feb. 22, show President Obama holding just a three percent advantage (46-43 percent and 47-44 percent, respectively) over Santorum.

All the trends are all pointing upward for the former senator from Pennsylvania, who has thus far ran a mostly positive campaign, steering clear of the mudslinging that has unfortunately marred the Republican primary.

OUT OF LINE

The opinion piece written by Brooklyn Middleton that was published on Feb. 24, ripping the personal character of Santorum, was an unfortunate rant that exposed her own intolerance and disrespect for those who do not share her views.

In her hate-filled diatribe, Ms.

Middleton failed to mention that while Santorum does privately oppose the use of birth control (I disagree with the senator on that point), he has said publicly time and time again that he will not try and ban birth control if he were elected president.

“Just because I’m talking about it doesn’t mean I want a government program to fix it,” Santorum said in a primary debate in Arizona on Feb. 22.

It is also unfortunate that Ms. Middleton would resort to name-calling in order to make a point.

It is this kind of dialogue, which takes place all across the political spectrum, that stunts intelligent discussion and debate on a number of topics that our nation faces today.

How do we go about getting the economy back on its feet? How do we begin to build strong families in America again? How do we handle the threats that face this country and its allies? These are discussions that need to take place, with civility, among all Americans.

So maybe Ms. Middleton can take a page out of Santorum’s playbook and focus on the issues with conviction and respect instead of slapping labels on others.

Our political system would be better for it.

To read Brooklyn Middleton’s article, please visit www.fiusm.com.

Select sports teams losing points in student attendance

EDUARDO ALMAGUER
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Late last year, FIU hosted the Sun Belt Volleyball Tournament for the first time in a decade.

At the time, I was the team’s beat writer. The University had just advanced to the semi-final round of the tournament for the third consecutive year, and its match against Western Kentucky was minutes away from starting.

I gazed out onto the crowd and was shocked. The U.S. Century Bank Arena was barren.

The box score showed that 335 people attended that game, but that number had to be skewed, unless they counted actual volleyballs as people.

Here was one of the more successful programs in FIU about to take on the best team in the conference, and the arena wasn’t even a tenth full.

A showing of 335 people meant that for every six people, there were 94 empty seats.

This attendance issue isn’t something relegated to the volleyball team. It’s something that plagues just about every single FIU team, and it’s an absolute shame.

I analyzed the home attendance records of the volleyball, football, baseball, women’s soccer and women’s basketball team.

Only football showed favorable attendance from FIU fans. The rest of the group had appalling numbers.

Before I lambast the University’s student body, let me begin by applauding them.

Football came in second overall in the Sun Belt Conference when comparing percentages of home stadiums. FIU averaged 18,700 fans in a stadium with a capacity of 23,000. Out of every five seats, only one would be empty.

“
The fact that not a
single other program can eclipse
the 30 percent mark in attendance
is absolutely outrageous.”

Now it’s time for the ugly stuff. FIU Baseball, the team that won 40 games in 2011, led the conference in almost every offensive category, made it to the championship game in the SBC tournament, and returned to the regionals, ranked seventh in the conference in home attendance.

Arguably the best team in the conference had a turn out rate of 29 percent.

Though the average attendance in the SBC for baseball was 39 percent per home stadium, ULM, the worst team in baseball last season ranked third overall.

The women’s soccer team, the squad that won the Sun Belt Conference Tournament had an average of less than 300 fans show

up to a field that holds 3,000. That averages to about 18 percent attendance compared to a 24 percent conference average.

The women’s basketball team this season has been even worse.

Let us not forget that this is the team that showcases Jerica Coley, the athlete that is number two in the nation in points per game, and a lock to be the SBC Player of the Year.

How many fans occupy that 5,000-seat arena on average for their games? 423. For every 100 seats, only eight had a butt occupying them.

I’m neither blind nor disoriented. I know we live in Miami. I know that there are a lot of attractions that capture a college student’s attention instead of a women’s basketball game on a Saturday evening. I know that the Sun Belt Conference isn’t something we can go pounding our chest about when it comes to competitiveness. I know that FIU, a commuter school, is less than 40 years old, still a ways away from being considered anything close to a dynasty.

But, I look at it from the athlete’s eyes.

I’ve covered a few of them and not once have they complained about it, but I know deep down that it can’t be fun playing in front of more plastic than flesh.

When you win a game, only a handful of people are there to see it, and when you lose the game, it scares off those that showed up to begin with.

It’s fantastic that the football program has seen such a boon to its attendance, but the fact that not a single other program can eclipse the 30 percent mark in attendance is absolutely outrageous.

The FIU spirit is trapped in the Cage and it’s not getting out any time soon.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (500 words maximum) to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year. *The Beacon* reserves the right to edit for space, content and clarity.

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SOUTH BEACH FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

Students get a taste of the industry at the Village

BARBARA CORBELLINI DUARTE
Staff Writer
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As the palm leaves gently swayed against the sky, the Feb. 25 morning sun set upon the Whole Foods Market Grand Tasting Village on what would be a day filled with international sights and tastes.

The tasting village was one of the premier events at this year's South Beach Wine and Food Festival presented by FOOD & WINE and host-sponsored by FIU.

Attendees walked along Ocean Drive towards the white sands of South Beach where tents were lined up.

As entrance lines shrank, masses of people entered the village to try the festival's selection of diverse options of dishes and drinks, and one could hear excited exclamations such as, "This is like Disney for adults."

Attendants went through three different pavilions that presented more than 30 options from different restaurants offering food tastings, and over 30 choices from wineries and wine makers from all around the globe.

According to Manuel Cedeno, senior student of public relations,



BARBARA CORBELLINI DUARTE/THE BEACON

Pearl South Beach Restaurant and Champagne Lounge offered Peruvian dish, Pupoal Olivo to attendants at the Whole Foods Market Grand Tasting Village on Feb. 25.

between 150 and 200 FIU students were working on this event from a variety of majors.

The Chaplin School of Hospitality and Management held a tent in the main pavilion of the event; their students were serving flanke stake and coleslaw sandwiches.

"It's a lot of work but it's fun," said Julie Goncalves, junior student of hospitality major, while placing some

sandwiches in the front of the tent.

"We are loving it. We are loving the crowd as well," said Goncalves.

According to Nydia Sandino, senior hospitality major, working as restaurant exhibitor assistant, over 3,000 people were expected to have walked through the village.

"We assist every restaurant, every exhibitor. This is what I want to do when I graduate. I want to work on

event planning," Sandino said.

Tanya Srivas, senior hospitality major, working in the Fiji tent, is an opportunity to meet the industry greats.

"You never get to meet the famous people," she said. "I was at the airport. I passed every single one of them, [...] all the celebrities that you see on TV."

A dozen chefs gave live culinary demonstrations on site, including

Sunny Anderson, Guy Fieri, Rachael Ray, and Geoffrey Zakarian among others.

Andrew Zimmern made the audience laugh by even giving a piece of his grilled octopus to one of the cameramen on the stage.

"It must be horrible to be doing close ups of food all day and not get a bite," Zimmern said.

The dark cloud that loomed over the afternoon shores of Miami propelled attendees to try the specialties of the North and South Grand Tasting tents, which were covered.

Wine tasting tents offered over 150 wines from different parts of the world, including Spain, Austria, Germany, France, New Zealand, California, Chile, Argentine and Italy.

Chef Gabriele Ferron, owner of a rice company in Verone, Italy, worked at the Tiramisu Restaurant tent.

Rickeeta Wax, hospitality graduate student, who worked as a supply associate, reinforced the chance that students have to make contacts at the festival.

"I think this festival is important for hospitality students of any type of business so they can know who is out there and network very easily."

ENVIRONMENT

Joint conservation programs with Cuba to be discussed

EUGENIA NIKITINA
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Fernando Bretos, a marine biologist and a strong advo-

cate for the conservation of our ocean's resources, is scheduled to speak on Feb. 28 at the Luna Star Café in North Miami. The event begins at 7 p.m.

The discussion will focus on the importance of the decade long collaboration between the American and Cuban marine science communities and how it has

shed light on the significance of the resources shared by the two countries.

The event, sponsored in part by a grant received from the National Science Foun-

dation, is a part of the Eat, Think, Be Merry Science Café Lecture Series hosted by the School of Environment, Arts and Society.

"The idea behind the ETBM Science Café is to create an informal dialogue between scientists and the community to encourage conversation and debate," said Elaine Pritzker, coordinator for SEAS. "Rather than the traditional academic lecture, ETBM Science Café is a casual, interactive forum in which scientists share and discuss cutting-edge research with members of the community."

Bretos is a research associate at The Ocean Foundation, which aims to build scientific collaboration between Cuba and the United States.

Most of the work is conducted in partnership with the University of Havana's Center for Marine Research.

"[The program] establishes enduring, locally-supported marine research and conservation programs, contributes to major advances in the scientific understanding of Cuba's natural resources, achieves meaningful, long-lasting conservation for Cuba's marine ecosystems, and in the process, helps build capacity for Cuba's marine scientists," Bretos said.

The Ocean Foundation has

several projects, which include: Project of the Northwestern Coast, Project: Garden of the Queens, Sea Turtle Research and Conservation Projects and Trinational Initiative for Marine Research and Conservation in the Gulf of Mexico and Western Caribbean.

All aim to gain a better understanding of ocean resources, help conserve the marine environment, and establish long-term collaborative relationships between marine science communities.

Bretos has worked in Cuba for 14 years. According to Breto, the biological, geographical, and cultural links between the US and Cuba unite the two countries more than they divide.

Bretos aims to engage and inform the community about his work in hopes that they will understand the importance of the marine resources, which seem to be an undervalued resource in the eyes of the public.

"The embargo prevents a lot of information exchange between the two countries," said Breto. "While Science is an avenue of exchange that is permitted by the US and Cuba, we need to expand our contact with Cuba in order to share important conservation tools and lessons and more effectively manage our shared marine resources."

Student Government Council - Biscayne Bay Campus
Lecture Series Presents

Adrian Grenier

The Teenage Paparazzo

Wednesday, March 7
WUC Ballrooms

Florida International University
3000 NE 151st St., North Miami, FL 33181

Doors open at 6:00 PM
Event starts at 6:30 PM

*Free showing of "The Teenage Paparazzo"
March 5th & 6th • 4 PM & 7 PM • Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre

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