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Bright Futures raising criteria, dropping students

ALYSSA ELSO
Staff Writer

If the upcoming changes to the Bright Futures Scholarship Program were in effect now, 74 percent of FIU students would not qualify for the scholarship.

The change to Bright Futures has prospective students, like Monsignor Edward Pace high school junior, Amanda Borimonoff, worried that she'll be a part of that percentage.

"My parents are counting on me to receive Bright Futures so that I don't have to take out loans, but I have never been a great test taker and now I have to work even harder to get the scores Bright Futures is asking for," Borimonoff said.

Starting in the fall 2013 semester, Bright Futures will require high school students to score higher on the SAT and ACT exams in order to receive the state-funded scholarship.

While the minimum high school GPA requirement will remain 3.0, starting in fall 2013 the minimum ACT score will increase from 21 to 22 and the minimum SAT score will increase from 980 to 1020. By fall 2014, the minimum ACT score will jump to 26 and the minimum SAT score to 1170.

Miami-Dade will fare much worse than any other county in the state, and poor and minority students across the state will be the ones most affected.

According to an analysis performed by J. Robert Spatig, assistant vice president for admission, recruitment and enrollment planning at the University of South Florida, Miami-Dade county will be affected more than any other county in the state, along with poor and minority students.

Funded through the Florida Lottery since its launch in 1997, Bright Futures has made college more affordable for middle-class families and has persuaded Florida's most promising students to remain in state for college.

The new change will cause a drastic drop in the number of college freshmen eligible to receive Bright Futures, as an analysis performed by J. Robert Spatig, assistant vice president for admissions, recruitment and enrollment planning at the University of South Florida discovered, as he compared current student data from all state universities with the newer Bright Futures requirements.

"Last year 7,680 incoming students received Bright Futures," said University Provost Douglas Wartzok. "Of our current students, 74 percent would not have qualified for Bright Futures, had this new requirement previously been in effect."

After comparing the analysis with the University's figures, Wartzok confirmed that by fall 2014, 74 percent of Hispanic students, 81 percent of African-American

students and 65 percent of white students will not qualify for a scholarship.

Currently, students who achieve the basic-level Bright Futures Scholarship, also known as Florida Medallion Scholars, are awarded \$75 per credit hour, while students who earn the more difficult Florida Academic Scholars award get \$100 per credit hour.

According to Wartzok, the University is currently working with Financial Aid to come up with a solution that could potentially minimize the impact the loss of Bright Futures will have on students, but realistically it will not be as rewarding as a Bright Futures

Scholarship.

While students and parents alike may not be pleased with the new changes, assistant professor of History and African & African Diaspora Studies, Alexandra Cornelius-Diallo is disappointed that a scholarship program that has helped so many students receive an education would suddenly shut them out.

"It is a disappointing decision for all students, some students will elect to attend a more affordable college like Miami-Dade and some may even elect to leave the state," said Cornelius-Diallo. "This change could also discourage students from receiving an education altogether, simply because they cannot afford

it, and without a college degree they will have a more difficult time obtaining a high paying job. All in all, the outcome will not be great."

Two Democrats have filed a bill to prevent thousands of students from losing out on Bright Futures scholarships, but its chances of moving forward are slim, as neither bill has been scheduled for a hearing.

"Current students at FIU will not be affected by the changes to Bright Futures, but come fall 2013, 15 percent of students will not qualify for the scholarship with an even greater percentage unable to qualify by fall 2014," said Wartzok.

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Lifting for the troops



ROBERTO JIMENEZ/THE BEACON

Freshman Kevin Viera, english major from the Sigma Chi Frat house, participates in a weight lifting competition and tries to bench press a cool 275lbs, in an effort to raise money for US Troops.

Law students fighting for animal rights

VICTORIA RONDEROS
Contributing Writer

By the looks of it, it seems like law students believe that animals need rights too.

The Student Animal Legal Defense Fund is a College of Law organization that consists of both university students and members of the community.

The organization's mission statement says it, "strives to provide a forum for education, advocacy and scholarship aimed at protecting the lives and advancing the interests of animals through the legal system, and raising the profile of animal law."

The SALDF is part of the Animal Legal Defense Fund. The ALDF is a nationwide organization helps bring awareness of the issues to the nation and fights for animal rights. There are over 100,000 members in the ALDF.

"We want to get the word out there," said Kimberlee Martin, third-year law student and co-founder of the organization. "There's a lot of people who don't really know what goes on in the animal rights field."

"We really want to involve the student community and the community members. We've had a lot of success with getting

people in the community to come to FIU and come to our events," said Ashley Gruber, third-year law student and co-founder of the organization.

There are about 30 university students and about 60 community members, according to Martin. The group organizes and hosts events in the law school and around the community to help bring awareness to current animal rights issues.

Although Martin and Gruber are both advocates for animal rights, they are not studying or practicing animal law, due to the fact that the College of Law does not provide an animal law course. They, however, hope to change that for future law students.

"We have to get a certain number of students that say that they would be interested in taking it before the school will pay it," said Martin. "So, we're trying."

Gruber and Martin established the SALDF in 2011. According to them both, getting the organization to this point has not been easy.

"When we started, no one wanted to give us money for anything, and it was like we were begging for money or begging people to come. And now, it's good for people to finally realize that we went from nothing to something," said Gruber.

Both Gruber and Martin have admitted that balancing an organization and law school can be tough.

"I tend to do this more than my school work," said Martin.

Both Gruber and Martin are graduating this semester. Martin will be practicing criminal and human rights law and Gruber will be practicing immigration law.

Currently, they are both holding elections for SALDF's new officers. It hasn't been easy for them, however.

"It's hard for us, you know, to get people involved, attend events, and now give positions and fill them with responsibilities. Kimmie and I have taken on a lot of roles [because of that]," said Gruber.

They hope SALDF will have a successful future.

"I want them to continue on with the animal law course, 'cause now this year, instead of focusing on trying to get the class, we tried to focus on more of a gathering, especially law students, and so we need them to keep that up," said Martin.

"We're hoping that we put like, the fire into them, to keep it going," said Gruber.

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Tennis heads to tournament

STEVEN ROWELL
Contributing Writer

The latest tennis team win could not have come at a better time for the Panthers.

A 5-2 win against Florida Atlantic University that snapped the team's longest losing streak in 30 years was crucial in gaining momentum right before heading to the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

"It makes us very optimistic especially because we beat our rival and it was senior day," Head Coach Katarina Petrovic said. "It is definitely good for the confidence especially for the new girls on the team."

Petrovic cites the ability to perform in doubles and staying healthy as being key for the team in hopes of having a successful tournament run.

SEE TENNIS, PAGE 7

WORLD NEWS

Troubled South Africa debates impact of white rule

Few South Africans have the moral stature of retired archbishop Desmond Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate who campaigned against apartheid and now laments the crime and inequality that plague the nation two decades after it cast off racist white rule.

“We can’t pretend we have remained at the same heights and that’s why I say please, for goodness’ sake, recover the spirit that made us great,” Tutu said. “Very simply, we are aware we’ve become one of the most violent societies.

Maduro takes narrowing lead into Sunday vote

Red-shirted backers of Hugo Chavez’s chosen heir transformed downtown Caracas into a raucous festival on the final day of campaigning for the weekend presidential election, flooding the streets Thursday in the hundreds of thousands to dance, drink beer and set off ear-splitting fireworks.

No bond for US couple accused of kidnapping kids

The Florida parents charged with kidnapping their boys after losing custody and fleeing to Cuba by sailboat have been ordered to remain in jail without bond.

Joshua and Sharyn Hakken made their first appearance before a Tampa judge on Thursday morning. They’ll face a judge during a pretrial detention hearing on Monday on charges of kidnapping, child neglect, false imprisonment, burglary and interference with custody.

For more world news, check out www.FIUSM.com.

2012-2013 SGC-MMC ELECTION RESULTS

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SGA election results annouced

BRANDON WISE
News Director

With a remarkably small voter turnout this year, the 2013 Student Government Association elections have come to a close. Only 1,061 students cast votes for the Student Govern-

ment Council’s presidency at both the Modesto Maidique Campus and Biscayne Bay Campus -- 2 percent of the reported 46,000 students currently enrolled in classes.

Last year’s election brought 8,848 votes to the presidential election. That was 19 percent of the student population.

Jose Toscano, interim director of Campus Life, noted that the decline in votes was due in part to less access to voting portals.

“It was a change from the previous year where we had iPads, people could vote from home on my.fiu.edu,” Toscano said. “This year we had it a little different with the locations where students could vote, with one at housing, one at [the Engineering campus], and one at Graham Center. Bringing students to those areas, I think that brought down the numbers.”

The position of president and vice president went unopposed at both campuses. After both former presidential candi-

dates were disqualified, Pablo Haspel and Alex Castro, Liane Sippin was the only qualified candidate left who was able to run for the presidency.

She was originally part of the Haspel ticket, but due to issues with the location of his classes and major, Haspel was disqualified.

Sippin served as an At-Large Senator and Speaker pro tempore last year.

According to Toscano, this is the fourth time in his nine years that the election has gone uncontested at MMC.

At BBC, President-elect Fu Zhou Wu and Vice President Richard Azimov received 200 votes to take over office in SGC-BBC. Wu was formerly the director of lectures in the executive cabinet and Azimov was formerly the comptroller in the executive cabinet at BBC.

“I am very excited for this opportunity that you all gave to me,” Wu said. “Being an interna-

tional student, I never thought one day I would be able to represent you and your student government council as president, when four years ago I did not speak any English.”

Azimov told the crowd after the announcement how thankful he was for the voters and to get ready for next year.

“First of all I want to thank all of you, all the students, who have participated in the [ongoing] process. You have proved to yourself that as students you do have rights, you do have the power to choose who you elected into our office next year,” Azimov said. “We need to know how we can enhance your experience here at FIU. You’re the reason why all of us are here today standing on this stage.”

Sippin was unavailable for comment as of press time for this story.

Additional reporting by Stephanie Mason.

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and nor do we.

Bright Futures raises the bar way too high

VINSON PRESSLEY
Staff Writer

Tougher requirements are going to occur to the Florida Bright Futures Program over the next few years, which may reduce the number of students able to receive the scholarship.

According to an article in The Miami Herald, changes are being made to the Bright Futures Scholarship Program which includes raising the minimum ACT test score from 21 to 22 starting next fall and 26 in 2014. The minimum SAT score requirement for Bright Futures will go from 980 to 1020 by this fall and will hike up to 1170 in 2014.

Although the minimum GPA requirement will remain at a 3.0, I don't think setting tougher requirements to get a scholarship is a productive way to help more students who have the drive and passion for learning.

I thought the idea was to help hardworking students who wish to pursue a higher education and get into college, not find ways to turn students down.

Other variables should be considered when determining who gets a scholarship, not just a test score.

When I took my ACT or SAT, I didn't receive top-notch scores, but I made it to college and I've been able to achieve success.

I received the High Achievers Award last year, I'm in the Honors College and I've made Dean's List every semester. I don't believe a student's capability to be successful in college should rest on a single test score. There are just too many variables that can skew the score.

On exam day, maybe you missed the bus, were incredibly tired, experienced a breakup, got robbed by a dude wearing a clown suit while riding a unicycle – I don't know but it seems like on the most important day of the year, everything can go wrong.

Maybe you're just not good at taking exams.

I had a friend who was by far

one of the smartest people I've ever met but she said she was terrible at taking standardized tests.

She said her mind was designed to generate multiple solutions to a single problem. When she was limited to just four choices, she had a difficult time.

Despite her trouble with standardized tests, she received a scholarship from the Posse Foundation, which is one of the most competitive scholarships out there.

A test score shouldn't be raised to eliminate possible talent; areas such as community service, involvement, and leadership roles should also be consid-

ered. In the end that matters too.

When you're going through an interview or looking for a job, they're not going to care that you mastered a standardized test, they're going to ask for experience, leadership skills, a strong work ethic, etc.

The best way to demonstrate you have those qualities is through real-world experience, not sitting down in a freezing room, early on a Saturday morning, taking a test.

Bright Futures, rethink this move and find a way to give more students a chance to go college, not take it away.

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Are we interested in knowing what's in our food?

CARLOS COBA
Contributing Writer

No other nation in the world uses genetically modified organisms to support their diet as much as the United States does.

In fact, GMOs are so commonly used by Americans that there is a huge market that depends on the industry of genetically modified food products.

To understand the power this industry has in our society, one can simply turn on the news or read a newspaper on any given day and find news related to the GMO phenomena affecting our society. For example, just recently, President Obama signed the Monsanto Protection Act, an act which exempts biotechnology corporations like Monsanto from judicial restrictions.

This act was included in the budget bill that was submitted just a few days ago, and not surprisingly, Monsanto even wrote some of the act itself.

This shows the level of power and leverage that these GMO-creating corporations have on American society.

Yes, those companies have gained substantial political influence through lobbyists, but we are also to blame for letting it get that far. American citizens in some states have had the opportunity to raise public awareness regarding genet-



ALFONSO YEC/THE BEACON

ically modified products, but have failed to pass the necessary bills to do so.

In late 2012, Californians had an opportunity to legalize food labeling on products made with GMOs by passing Proposition 37. However, it did not pass, and many blame corporate coalition which supposedly invested millions of dollars in efforts to prevent Proposition 37 from being passed.

It is always easier to blame others for our problems, so many just blame

the corporations and their financial power for the lack of labeling on foods containing GMOs, but it is also our fault.

Our culture is centered around fast "food", which is the least nutritional and is made with the worst kinds of GMOs. Just look around MMC campus, you see fast food chains like Burger King and Chick-Fil-A -- and even Taco Bell is coming to FIU.

While everyone is crazy about the "Doritos Locos Tacos", very few people

take the time to consider the issue that college students must face: Most of us work part-time jobs and have lots of bills to pay, so eating cheap is the easy choice, so we conform to the "food" choices we are offered. Organic foods are relatively pricey and out of the budget of an average college student, but shouldn't we demand healthier choices on campus?

It seems that for every five unhealthy choices in our food courts, there is

one healthy choice. Sure, we all have the right to eat whatever we feel like eating, and we have some healthy options like Salad Creations and Jamba Juice, but the options are unbalanced.

If I have the right to make a choice about what to eat at my university, at least make it a fair choice by adding healthier restaurants to campus, not Taco Bell.

Many students feel the same way, they just are not outspoken about it or

they doubt they can make a difference.

"More money can be made from fast food establishments because that is what an overwhelming majority of students can afford on a daily basis," said biology major Camila Uzcatagui. "But quality should be more important than quantity. We deserve better."

I wonder how Floridians would vote if we had the chance to pass a bill like Proposition 37, would we be interested in knowing what food products are pumped with GMOs? Or would we just look the other way?

This might be a polarizing issue for many students, but it is an issue that should be discussed.

Maybe the first step towards getting healthier restaurant choices on campus would be to let FIU administrators know how much we care about knowing what food they offer us.

It might seem far-fetched to think we would ever see GMO-labeling in our University's food products, but maybe the first step towards raising the awareness about the unhealthy contents of our food is to simply speak out and ask for more nutritional options in places like the GC food court or the Market Station at PG5.

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Energy drinks pose health risks to students

EDWIVE SEME
Staff Writer

It's that time of the year again. Study rooms are occupied, the Green Library is filled, students are staying up longer than usual for academic purposes and final exams are right around the corner.

Students do their best to stay up with a cup of coffee, but when it's not available or it isn't doing the job, students turn to energy drinks, which seem to work for the time needed.

But what happens after all the rush is gone? How does it affect students in the long term?

Most students are attracted to energy drinks because of the advertised effects of providing them with temporary high energy and concentration; however, the components can be dangerous when these drinks are frequently

consumed.

According to an article by FIU's Student Health Services, there is no cap on the amount of caffeine and other supplements in energy drinks, so "levels may not be safe for daily, frequent or even sporadic consumption."

Some ingredients that energy drinks contain are guarana, taurine and ginseng. Each of these ingredients can have their own adverse effect. For example, guarana can cause insomnia, anxiety and chest pain. Ginseng can also cause insomnia, breast tenderness and heart palpitations. However, the amount of these ingredients added to energy drinks isn't high enough to cause these adverse effects. They become dangerous when mixed with caffeine and high doses of sugar which can cause obesity and diabetes.

In small doses, caffeine

can be healthy and can act as an antioxidant, giving a boost of energy and help with focusing. But when used in high quantities and mixed with other products, such as in soft drinks and energy drinks, it becomes dangerous in the long run.

According to an article by the Journal of the American Medical Association, some energy drinks can contain up to 250 mg of caffeine per serving.

According to Adriana Campa, associate professor in Dietetics & Nutrition at the University, when used in high doses, it can become an addictive drug; the more people consume drinks containing high levels of caffeine, the more they develop the need to always have these drinks.

"In the long term, you get addicted," said Campa, "and you can't even function well without it."

Also, large amounts do

Students experience Honda



CESAR RODRIGUEZ/THE BEACON

Students attend the Honda 'Unexpected Event' held on April 11 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the GC Chapman Plaza. In addition to free food and fun giveaways, students were able to examine, sit inside and experience Honda's new models firsthand.

the opposite of what the drinks are actually supposed to do. "While a small amount helps you focus, a large amount can actually make you lose focus and you can get dehydrated," said Campa. Some other adverse effects of energy drinks from mixing caffeine with the other ingredients

can be insomnia, confusion, anxiety, dizziness, paranoia, obesity, stroke and sometimes even death.

According to Campa, it is better to stay away from high consumption of energy drinks and other drinks containing high doses of caffeine.

It is recommended to

get more sleep and exercise instead in order to have more energy, and if caffeine drinks must be consumed, keep it at a low level and withdraw from consuming it if any signs of addictions start appearing.

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'Room 237,' a look at 'The Shining' theories

To bring up the movie, "The Shining", around some people is to open a Pandora's box of speculation that would leave any non-fanatics in a position that they wouldn't want to be in. Then again, even the bravest of film fans have a hard time mustering up the patience to get through some of those pseudo intellectual rambles.

"Room 237," a documentary all about those wacky theories your best friend read about online one night after watching Stanley Kubrick's masterful horror film "The Shining," is a true test of patience like no other. This is the sort of thing you might expect to find on YouTube under related videos for "Pixar and Illuminati Connections" or something equally as crazy.

But it's not. It's a documentary that was deemed worthy to show at Cannes and Sundance, but there's absolutely no finesse in the way it was put together. There's no real framing to the theories presented and it leaves one with as many questions as one of Kubrick's films might. Though the most important question it leaves the audience to ask is: why would someone make this?

One segment in the film presents a man discussing a short segment in the Overlook Hotel, and in the background one can hear a child crying and yelling. This man pauses the footage and says, "Can you hear that? My boy... yelling? Hold on one second," at which point he goes off to quiet his child and close the door.

This is far from what you might find in any normal documentary. Interviews are standard fare and some are less refined

than others, but this is an entirely new level of disrespect for the audience and the subject. The subject at hand is arguably not even "The Shining" itself, nor the farfetched theories, but rather the people whose lives are driven by this inane obsession.

None of these people are ever shown, and all we know about them is their theories. One believes the Apollo landing was faked by Kubrick, one believes "The Shining" is all about Native Americans being massacred, and another thinks Kubrick's face is airbrushed into the clouds of the opening scene. Some theories are insane, others are plausible and interesting. It's how they're put together and presented that's the trouble.

Archival footage from all of Kubrick's oeuvre is brought to the table, moving along frame by frame at times as a narrator guides the audience along their theory. Plenty of footage from

other works of art, George Cukor's "My Fair Lady" and Hanna-Barbera's "Scooby-Doo, Where are You?" to name two of the strangest, plague the film as either vague references or simply just to keep things entertaining. Everything looks incredibly crisp and clear, but that's only because it is almost entirely made up of said high quality footage, along with a few reenactments and drawings.

There are two reasons why Rodney Ascher, director of "Room 237," would present his film in such a way. The positive outlook is that this film was entirely serious and honest in giving these people a voice to express their critical film theory work, regardless of how stupid some might sound.

The other, just as believable, outlook is that Ascher was acting out of contempt for these people, parading their insane theories while also showing just how

uninterested in reality they were for the sake of talking about "The Shining." It'd be nicer to think otherwise, as exploiting people's love for something in a documentary is shameful. To borrow a phrase from the Onion's brilliant series "Sex House," that dark suggestion "implies a clarity of purpose that I do not want to attribute to anyone involved."

It's unfortunate that "Room 237," a documentary with a fascinating teaser and concept, could go this far downhill, but however much of a grating experience it might have been, there will still be people who love this for all its pointless rambling.

Juan Barquin is a junior FIU English major. For the past year and a half, he has written more than 80 movie reviews for YAM-Magazine and is pursuing a certificate in Film Studies at the University.

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The power of WordPress: tool for bloggers, designers and developers



LUIS BOLANOS/THE BEACON

Some of the WordCamp speakers answer questions about the WordPress social network plugin BuddyPress.

WordPress is an invaluable tool to bloggers, designers and developers. It also features a large and friendly online community, actively helping each other out with the platform.

What exactly is WordPress? It's a free and open source content management tool, typically used for blogging. However developers are able to go into the code and turn it into something more than a bloggers tool. WordPress can be modified to become a web application, websites for businesses and social networks for niche communities.

Just recently, WordCamp Miami was held at the University of Miami, a conference held for the WordPress community ranging from the basic WordPress user to WordPress developers.

At the conference, topics like web design, security, web developing, marketing, business and user experience were covered. There were over 30 speakers, all from different backgrounds providing the talks to the WordCamp attendees.

Having used WordPress for over two years, every-

thing at the conference was invaluable to me. The value came from the talks, the networking and the inspiration to do more with WordPress.

What was even more valuable than the talks, was the networking and the seeing the WordPress community first hand instead of browsing forum posts for help. Goes to show that leaving the PC behind to go outside to local outings is beneficial. Who would have thought? Seeing the WordPress community first-hand also reaffirmed the existence of the Miami tech scene. Just in case anyone doubts it, WordCamp Miami had sold out and there were over 450 attendees that signed up.

While WordPress isn't the first thing that comes to mind when you discuss web technology, going to WordCamp, interacting with attendees, listening to the speakers and just being at there confirmed the impact WordPress has on the online world.

If you're interested to learn more about WordPress, I urge you to check out WordPress.com if you'd like to test out the tool, and for the more technically inclined to read up about what people have been able to do with the WordPress framework and mess with the WordPress framework provided at WordPress.org.

Those that weren't able to make the conference were able to watch the talks online through Ustream, and those that would like to see the talks online should head to <http://2013.miami.wordcamp.org/live-stream/>.

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Values and Goals



Dear Nick,

How can I do a better job at setting my values and goals?

V.H.
Junior
Biology Major

Dear V.H.,

College is a wonderful time for self-exploration. We are exposed to so many opportunities and experiences that show us the limitless possibilities in life. As we come to the end of our college career, sometimes it may feel like we have so many dreams and fantasies but lack the structure to achieve and accomplish them.



This is why it is so important to clarify and define your goals and values to center yourself and move in the direction of what is important in your life! Defining your core values helps to center you in what is important. Simply ask yourself: "What do I stand for? What is important to me? What is meaningful?" These self-reflective questions can help you to decide what you stand for as a person. When you think about defining your goals, imagine that you are going to the mall to buy shoes; you would start at the directory, look for the dot that says "you are here," plan out the route to find the shoe store and walk in that direction. Setting and achieving your goals is quite similar; know where you are, know where you want to go and move in that direction! Goals can begin with dreams, fantasies or thoughts. Once you decide on a goal and commit to attaining it, I suggest writing it down. The best goals are written down, measurable, attainable and they have a time limit. As you formulate your goals, read them over daily and ask yourself: Am I moving in the direction of achieving my goals? What am I doing today to take one step closer to accomplishing this goal? As you begin this process, life tends to have more meaning and direction. You will awake with more zest and excitement. Good luck in realizing all of your phenomenal potential!

Be Well,

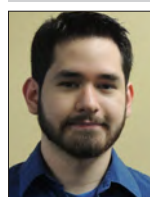
Nick



Nick Scheidt, M.S. is a Doctoral Psychology Intern at FIU Counseling and Psychological Services. He is a Clinical Psychology Doctoral Candidate from Carlos Albizu University. Once he completes his internship at FIU, Nick plans to work as a Psychologist, Writer, and Professor.

Do you have questions you would like to Ask Nick? Send an email to: Nscheidt@fiu.edu

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Marriage-like bond key to success in sand volleyball

DANIEL BREY
Contributing Writer

In sports, chemistry is the key to success, period.

Apart from natural talent and conditioned skills applied by players in their sport, a healthy balanced level of compatibility within a team often leads to positive results.

“Chemistry is no doubt very important and very overlooked in today’s society,” FIU sand volleyball Head Coach Rita Buck-Crockett said. “You have to have some chemistry in order to be great.”

Establishing solid chemistry among teammates in any collegiate sport is an arduous task all in itself, but in the sport of sand volleyball, a team’s connection means far more than just a simple high-five.

“Chemistry is probably the main task to focus on when you are finding out who your duals partner is,” junior sand volleyball player Jessica Mendoza said. “Just because you really have to know your partner’s tendencies and be able to communicate effectively.”

What separates sand volleyball from baseball, football, and even indoor volleyball is the need

to depend on not multiple teammates, but just one teammate.

To win a match, a team must win two sets. Each set comprises two teammates lumped together. And each pair of teammates rely heavily on each other to succeed.

As a result, the diffusion of responsibility within the game of sand volleyball is significantly less varied when compared to other sports.

The increase in responsibility emphasizes the importance of creating and maintaining cohesiveness between each respective duals team in order for the overall team to succeed.

“It is very important for each other as teammates to get along on the court and play well,” junior sand volleyball player Maryna Samoday said. “How we relate to each other will play a factor in our overall team’s performance.”

Apart from chemistry on the court, it is as equally important to develop a relationship that extends beyond the confines of the sandy perimeter.

Much like a marriage, two duals partners must create a sense of comfort and trust that could only be accomplished in a setting that does not involve volleyballs traveling at double-digit speeds.

An exceptional off-the-

court bond allows teammates to conform to each other’s pre-serve decision making, which consists of notifying the server to what position on the court to serve next.

Since being placed in the same duals team, Samoday and Mendoza have created a tightly

of the duals team lineups on a match-to-match basis, Mendoza and Samoday have managed to remain consistent and extremely successful.

During the Surf and Turf Tournament final on March 31, Mendoza and Samoday showcased their super glue-like bond

her frustrated partner, Stepanova remained noticeably upset at her teammate’s inability to re-focus on the match, which eventually led to their 15-12 demise.

“It was a great match,” Buck-Crockett said. “Unfortunately for Kate and Ksenia, they came apart towards the end.”

The level of chemistry within the FIU sand volleyball team has, for the most part, told the tale of the tape of the inaugural season for the Panthers.

With the continuous switching up lineups and match ups early on in the season, a certain comfort level could not be established between the bottom three duals teams.

Now, after establishing a more concrete lineup during the latter part of the season, a visible improvement in body language and on the score sheet has proved once again the importance of the teammates connecting with one another.

“We were looking for the best chemistry throughout the year, and I believe we finally found it, Buck-Crockett said. “Because now the threes, fours and fives are able to win, and even the six spot.”

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“It is like a marriage. Our success on the court has been pretty much because of that comfort we share off it, and how much we push each other.

Jessica Mendoza
Sand Volleyball
FIU

knit bond that has allowed the pair to reach an impressive 14-2 record on the year.

“Samoday and I have a unique relationship,” Mendoza said. “It is like a marriage -- our success on the court has been pretty much because of that comfort we share off it and how much we push each other.”

Although Buck-Crockett has mixed and matched most

by defeating fellow teammates and No. 1 ranked Kate Stepanova and Ksenia Sukhareva in an epic three-set match, which was ultimately decided by one factor, chemistry.

With the match tied up at two sets apiece, the duo of Mendoza and Samoday took advantage of a mental break down by Sukhareva late in the third set.

Unable to effectively calm

Softball pitcher trying to make home away from home



ROBERTO JIMENEZ/THE BEACON

Mariah Dawson makes her home in Camas, Wash. every summer. The junior right-hander has a 5-12 record, 4.16 ERA and 80 strikeouts through April 11.

JOLSON DIAZ
Contributing Writer

Three-thousand miles away from FIU, junior softball pitcher Mariah Dawson spends her summers back home in Camas, Wash., a far cry from South Florida’s culture. Learning to adjust and transition to Miami’s vibrant atmosphere has been her biggest struggle, but also her biggest teacher.

“It’s a struggle being away from home but I have learned a lot,” Dawson said. “Not having any family here, not having anyone to go to when you’re down or stressed out, you have your teammates but nothing beats having your family right there for you.”

Starting at the 7 years old, Dawson played in little league before she officially started softball at age 10, where she played shortstop. Her dad, being a huge sports fan and follower of softball, taught her everything she knows about the sport.

“My dad is by far my

biggest influence,” Dawson said. “It’s because he’s not easy on me. When he would throw a ball and I’d miss the catch, he would make me go and run after it. He was my biggest fan and my biggest critic, and he told me the honest truth no matter what.”

Dawson has two younger twin sisters who also pitch for softball, which is the reason she got into pitching. Dawson only knew the shortstop position up until middle school, but after seeing her little sister get all the attention from pitching, she wanted the spotlight for herself and knew that was not going to happen playing shortstop.

“I honestly love pitching. You have all the pressure on you but you also have the ability to control the outcome of the game in a way,” said Dawson. “If you have a really good game, you have the chance to dominate the other team and shut down their batters, bringing your team to victory.”

Dawson’s junior year of high school was a turning point in her life. That’s when her high

school coach told her she could play for Division I softball. Although she didn’t believe it at first, after playing in a big tournament in Colorado, a lot of the coaches noticed her and assured her that she was ready to start pitching at a college level.

Through April 11, she had an ERA of 4.16 with a 5-12 record. In 22 appearances this season, she struck out 80 batters, the second highest on the team right behind freshman pitcher Corinne Jenkins’ 90 strikeouts.

After every season, Dawson settles back home in Washington where she gets to spend time with her family and take her mind off school. Although it’s getting easier, those first couple of weeks back in fall is always the toughest.

“I love it at FIU, I like the team and I’ve learned a lot,” Dawson said. “It’s a huge transition and it’s very tough, the beginning is always the toughest, but I can definitely say it’s getting easier.

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Turner settling in with new team and new city

PATRICK CHALVIRE
Staff Writer

FIU may not be the big name sports schools like the neighboring Hurricanes in Coral Gables, but as the Panthers start to gain recognition in athletics, one thing has started to become a norm: family members working together for a common goal.

The first year sand volleyball team is lead by Head Coach Rita Buck-Crockett. In choosing her staff for the inaugural season, Buck-Crockett hired her daughter, Marrita Royster-Crockett, as assistant coach.

In football, like sand volleyball, the Turner family has a strong presence on the staff. Head Coach Ron Turner hired his son, Cameron Turner, as an assistant coach. Having his son as a coach is something the elder Turner seems to enjoy.

"It's been a lot of fun," said Ron Turner said about working with his son. "He's expected to do his job very well just like all the other coaches are. He's no different than anybody else. He's got to do his job and he will."

Working in Miami is nothing new to Ron

Turner, having spent some time in the Magic City for the Super bowl with the Chicago Bears and a bowl game with the University of Illinois, but living in the city is different altogether. What many people may take for granted in Miami, Turner embraces.

"I'm enjoying the weather," Ron Turner said. "Especially when my wife is in Chicago and she calls everyday saying its raining, its 40 [degrees], its cold. More than anything it's about the people. There's real good people here, people at FIU have been tremendous and very very supportive."

NO EXPERIENCE, NO PROBLEM

Half way through spring practices the FIU football team looks like they're jelling to first-year Panthers coach Ron Turner and his new system in offense and defense. The defense looks the strongest and hopes to improve on their fourth ranked total defense in conference play last season.

The first practice of the spring in March brought energy, athleticism and showed the coaches the talent they would be dealing with and coaching

in the future. According to Tom Williams, linebackers' coach for the Panthers, he knew there would be one main concern ahead for himself and the coaching staff.

"They don't have a lot of playing experience," Williams said. "We got to try to get them as much experience in practice to prepare them for the games in the fall."

Three weeks after the first snap of spring practice, the defense looks seasoned and does not seem to show signs of inexperience.

Jason Brooks, defensive secondary coach, sees improvement and feels comfortable going into the future.

"Our defense is progressing nicely," Brooks said. "They're taking great to coaching, taking to us schematically, all the new things we've been putting in and installing. They've been doing a great job from day one, getting better and better each day. That's all we can ask for."

PANTHERS REACHING GOALS FROM NEW SOURCE

Rarely does a football program have a coach dedicated to special teams and

kickers. In the past, FIU fell into that category, until this season. Under new management, special teams will be coached by Kevin Wolthausen.

Returning kicker Sergio Sroka spent last season learning from former Panther Jack Griffin. Now that Griffin has his sights on a possible NFL career, Sroka has spent this spring directly coached by Wolthausen.

"Having coach [Wolthausen] has been really good," Sroka said. "He's very one on one with us. We have a coach we can always review film with and who can help us out, last year we didn't have that."

Though there is already competition in practice, summer practices will bring more players fresh out of high school ready to compete for playing time. There is expected to be at least two more players kicking for a spot on the roster, but that doesn't seem to faze Sroka.

"Competitions [have] been good," Sroka said. "It keeps me working harder, knowing if I slip up, I can be replaced. It really boosts up your confidence kicking with the team."

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ROBERTO JIMENEZ/THE BEACON

Ron Turner looks on during spring practice, enjoying the Miami sun that he lacked during his time in Chicago.

Tennis snaps nine-game losing streak

TENNIS, PAGE 1

"The key in the tournament will be doubles since in conference matches the match stops at four points, so not all the matches are played completely, that's why until the tournament, we are working on our doubles," Petrovic said.

The Panthers made sure that they would make the most of their final match before the SBC Tournament. It was also Senior Day and Rita Maisak, back from a near month-long injury absence, made the most of her final home game as she won her doubles and singles match and helped give FIU a doubles point for the first time in nine matches.

With the victory, the Panthers finished their regular season 3-15. The tournament will be an opportunity to salvage a season that saw little success under Petrovic. The Panthers will trek to Lafayette, La., to take part in the tournament that begins on Thursday, April 18.

The Panthers have enjoyed success in their past two trips to the tournament, winning the championship in 2011, and reaching the championship round of the tournament last season.

"We already talked about it and they are aware of it, and that must be the reason that they are a lot more optimistic about the tournament, and the seniors since it's their last year they really want to win the tournament," Petrovic said.

Last season, the Panthers finished with a 5-14 record before reaching to the championship of the Sun Belt Tournament. That is where they fell in defeat to University of North Texas. It is a loss that still remains in the

back of the head for Boha, Maisak, and Holt.

The only players that remain from the past two tournaments run are junior Giuletta Boha, senior Magali Holt and Maisak.

While the three upperclassmen have experience in the tournament, freshman including Carlotta Orlando, FIU's biggest star this season will get her first taste of the Sun Belt Tournament. Orlando finished her freshman campaign with 10-5 record in singles and leads the team in singles victories. She could not be reached for comment.

"I just tell her [Orlando] to give 100 percent and that there is no pressure," Petrovic said.

Three other freshmen, Aleksandra Trifunovic, Michelle Sabado and Lotte Gras, will make their first appearances in the Sun Belt Tournament as well.

From the defeat against North Texas last season to having a rough showing in the regular season this season, the Panthers will look to put those two things behind them as they are motivated to make a run and win the tournament for the second time in three years.

On Thursday, the Panthers take on the University of South Alabama, a team that defeated FIU earlier this season 4-3 back on Feb. 15. Petrovic felt that was a winnable match and the players will look to avenge their earlier loss to the Jaguars.

"We had a couple match point opportunities against them in the season, and we couldn't win it but hopefully we come out stronger and come out with the win," Petrovic said.

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SJMC resumes broadcast media major this fall

AILYS TOLEDO
Contributing Writer

Exciting changes are underway for the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Starting fall 2013, broadcast media will be available for students to declare as a major. The SJMC has worked diligently to bring the program back to the curriculum and is ready to take in students.

The new major, broadcast media, consists of two different tracks: broadcast journalism and TV production.

This major re-emphasizes what was done in the past, which was a general track for both fields.

When the University faced serious budget cuts in 2008, the program was taken away. Broadcast media will take both tracks and consolidate it into one

major.

“I used to be the sole professor teaching the broadcasting courses. The innovative thing about this new program is that I always wanted to teach in conjunction with production students and we are finally doing that,” said Teresa Ponte, chair and associate professor for the Department of Journalism and Broadcasting.

Courses will provide a variety of subjects, from media management to electronic news gathering.

The program merges the standard ideas of broadcasting and production with new ideas from the communications industry.

The induction of the new program is especially vital for those students who were unsatisfied with the current programs offered by the school. Many students who were inter-

ested solely in the production of digital media rather than the content of digital media now have a new window of opportunity.

“I was considering transferring to another school that offered the major after finishing my UCC courses. I hope to learn how to write, film, and edit content for TV shows and news programs. I want to produce the media that impacts society,” said Chelsea Torres, digital media major.

“We are right in the middle of this amazing vortex of energies and changes. From SJMC’s point of view, this is an exciting time in terms of media and this is the time to get involved,” said Allan Richards, SJMC associate dean and professor..

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SANA ULLAH/THE BEACON

Starting in the fall, FIU will introduce a new major to the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. A broadcast major consists of courses that will provide a variety of subjects, from media management to electronic news gathering.

You’ve got the whole wide world...in your food

STEPHANIE MASON
Staff Writer

As the semester is winding down, students returning for the fall start thinking about what the next school year has to offer and what classes they are going to take.

Students in the Chaplin School of Hospitality and Tourism Management in need of another elective may want to consider leaving room for a brand new course, Global Food and Culture.

This course will be offered for the first time this fall and will be taught by Mark D’Alessandro, visiting professor in the CSHTM, who also created the course. It will only have one section and

will be a low-enrollment class cutting off at around 40 students.

D’Alessandro said the reason for the class having only one section is because, “There is an amazing opportunity in that course that cannot take place... in any other program because I have the opportunity to put them in the kitchen.”

D’Alessandro will be providing two days during which the students will get the chance to work hands-on in the kitchen.

“It always feels like you cheat the students if you don’t get their hands dirty,” D’Alessandro said.

When told about the course, Jungeun Kim, sophomore in hospitality management said, “As a title, the word global really

attracts me.”

Kim said she thinks the class was a good fit for the school and said she would be interested in seeing a course involving hotel conferences added to the curriculum.

“It sounds like an interesting course. I mean, me being a hospitality major, I’m interested in the worldwide cuisine and the fact that it has the option of being hands-on. I think it’s something interesting and as an elective I don’t see why not to take it,” junior in hospitality management David Cabarrocas.

Global Food and Culture will be a course designed for undergraduate students in the CSHTM, however, it’s not limited to

students in the school. The course is also part of the University’s global learning initiative, counting for students who take the course as a global learning credit.

“What this course specifically gives me the opportunity to do is to celebrate that globalness of the course through food, and to have students think about politics, about globalization, about their own individual culture through food,” said D’Alessandro.

D’Alessandro also mentioned an exercise he has prepared for the course called “food voice.” According to D’Alessandro, this exercise will entail students choosing a food item that represents his or her self and

explaining themselves through that food.

Although students are not yet able to enroll in the course, D’Alessandro said he is expecting the course to be available for enrollment by the end of April.

D’Alessandro said he wants this course to help students with team building and group dynamics as well as gaining more of a global perspective.

“You cannot live inside of a shell, inside of a bubble, inside of a vacuum. Today’s hospitality manager has to be worldly,” said D’Alessandro.

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Couple jailed for fleeing with kids to face judge

KELLI KENNEDY
MIKE SCHNEIDER
AP Staff

The Florida parents charged with kidnapping their boys from their grandparents and sailing to Cuba on a boat called “Salty” to elude authorities were expected to face a judge Thursday for the first time since they were forcibly returned from the island nation.

Joshua and Sharyn Hakken face charges including kidnapping, child neglect, false imprisonment, burglary and interference with custody.

Four-year-old Cole and 2-year-old Chase are now with their grandparents, who planned to talk about the ordeal publicly Thursday morning.

The couple arrived with their sons in Florida early Wednesday morning, accompanied by

federal, state and local authorities after being handed over by Cuban officials.

The couple seemed to have a charmed life, doting on their two young boys, buying a comfortable home and building successful careers as engineers.

It all derailed last year when police in Louisiana found the family inside a hotel room with drugs, weapons and promises from the parents to take “a journey to the Armageddon.” The parents lost custody of their sons who were cared for by their grandparents.

“This is a train that went completely off the tracks, and I don’t have any explanation for how it can go off the track that badly basically in a year and a half. It’s very bizarre,” said Darrell Hanecki, who employed Sharyn Hakken for nearly a decade at Hanecki Consulting Engineers.

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