

4-6-2015

The Beacon, April 6, 2015

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Recommended Citation

Florida International University, "The Beacon, April 6, 2015" (2015). *The Panther Press (formerly The Beacon)*. 796.
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ONE MORE TIME



CARL-FREDERICK FRANCOIS/THE BEACON

Incumbent Alexis Calatayud celebrates with her campaign team after the SGA president announcement on Thursday, April 2. Calatayud and Vice President Tiffany Roman Biffa (not pictured) were the first to run for re-election in 15 years.

Students re-elect Calatayud and Roman Biffa for second term in SGC-MMC

ADRIAN SUAREZ AVILA
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The student body at the University's Modesto A. Maidique Campus has re-elected Alexis Calatayud and Tiffany Roman Biffa as the president and vice president of the Student Government Association.

The announcement, which took place in the Graham Center Panther Pit on Thursday, April 2, marked the first time since 2000 that the current president and vice president ran for re-election.

Calatayud and Roman Biffa were chosen over their opponents, Stefan Bahad and Kristen Nyman, both members of the FIUnite party.

While Calatayud and Roman Biffa received 51.46 percent of the total votes, Bahad and Nyman received the remaining 48.54 percent.

Despite the fact that voting procedures took place on both March 31 and April 1 through electronic voting methods, electronic voting was not the only

method available to cast votes.

Paper ballots were also submitted.

According to Michelle Castro, assistant director of Campus Life at the MMC and Student Government Association advisor, 25 paper ballots were submitted for Stefan Bahad and Kristen Nyman, and 26 for Calatayud and Roman Biffa.

Taking into account the paper ballots, the total amount of votes for Calatayud and Roman Biffa were 1,949, and 1,839 for Bahad and Nyman.

"I'm extremely grateful, extremely proud of our FIU student body for coming out as they did and [having] a record turnout [for this] election," said Roman Biffa.

She added that she was excited to continue working for the University, and humbled to be able to continue to a second administration, considering that students trusted her and Calatayud enough to allow them a second term.

For Roman Biffa, she and her fellow members of SGA need to find new innovative ways to reach out to students and engage them,

especially professional and graduate students, who she mentioned had no knowledge that she and Calatayud also represent their needs.

Calatayud was equally excited. "I can't believe it," she said. "I'm so happy that I get to help people for another year, that I get to help make

"I'm so happy that I get to help people for another year, that I get to help make a difference in this university, that people saw that I wanted to do that and voted for me—that's beautiful."

Alexis Calatayud
Student Body President
SGA-MMC

a difference in this university, that people saw that I wanted to do that and voted for me—that's beautiful."

Acknowledging the challenges of her next administration, Calatayud believes that self-expectations of improvement is a major one to face.

She admitted that this present administration could be considered

a practice run, and that the next one will provide an opportunity to perfect what is currently being done.

Bahad and Nyman could not be reached by press time.

In addition to the presidential and vice presidential winners being

are vacant.

Once the applications for the seats are made available, students interested will be able to apply.

Although last year a total of 2,354 votes were administered by students for either Calatayud and Roman Biffa and Philip Koenig and Adriana McLamb, this year's elections saw an increase in voter turnout.

When voters took to the polls this year 3,788 votes were made.

Despite the increase, the turnout is low, considering that the University boasts a population of over 54,000 students.

Calatayud and Roman Biffa admitted that this is a problem for SGA in general, considering the fact that since so much work within the organization is done behind the scenes, students don't always know what's taking place and don't take an active role in trying to find out how to be involved with initiatives led by SGA.

Calatayud and Roman-Biffa will commence their next administration in early May.

announced, members of the Senate were also declared.

According to Vice President of Student Affairs Larry Lunsford, who made the announcement, certain Senate seats for the College of Architecture and the Arts, nursing and health sciences, graduate senator, education senator, and public health and social work

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Iran nuclear talks yield framework

Six world powers and Iran announced the outline of a preliminary deal Thursday that Western officials say will impose sweeping restrictions on Iran’s nuclear activities for more than a decade.

Concluding a marathon bout of negotiations, diplomats laid out an unexpectedly detailed plan that Western officials said would cut Iran’s capability to enrich uranium by two-thirds for the next 10 years and impose other limits lasting up to 25 years.

The plan, which did not produce a signed document, would give Iran substantial relief from U.S., European and United Nations sanctions. But the gradual phase-out of sanctions would depend on Iran’s compliance with its obligations under the deal and probably would not start before next year.

The proposed deal calls for Iran to cut its enriched uranium stockpile by 98 percent and to halt sensitive nuclear research and development for a decade, according to the Western officials.

Somali militants kill 147 university students in Kenya

It took just four gunmen to demonstrate Kenya’s impotence against the Somali militant group al-Shabab.

In an attack heavy with foreboding symbolism, al-Shabab massacred 147 college students, all or most of them Christians, in the eastern city of Garissa on the eve of Good Friday. At least 79 were injured, and the four gunmen were also killed.

Survivors described their terror Thursday as gunmen searched dormitories, asking students

whether they were Muslims and executing any Christians.

Earlier in the day, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta downplayed the attack’s severity, although it was known that hundreds were trapped, telling Kenyans that several were killed and wounded.

Unconfirmed local news reports suggested some students at Garissa University College were beheaded, as furious critics railed at the failure of security forces to prevent mass terrorist attacks on civilians.

Presentation to shed light on eco-friendly food production

MERCEDES CEVALLOS
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A professor of biology at Florida Keys Community College will be delivering a lecture on Aquaponics, a food production system that combines the raising of aquatic animals with the cultivation of plants in water.

Bill Irwin, chair of the Department of Mathematics, Biological and Physical Sciences at FKCC, will examine the different methods used in agriculture.

Irwin hopes to explain the history of global food production, as well as discuss changes in economic and nutritional values of society’s foods.

He also wishes to shed light on the sustainability of current agricultural methods by using a model aquaponic system along with images and descriptions of a wide range of designs.

Aquaponics mainly combines aquaculture -- the raising of fish -- with hydroponics -- the growing of plants in a liquid nitrous solution.

“This is one system that you use to raise both plants and fish together,” Irwin said. “Because you do it together, it is very natural and can be organic. It’s a very successful way to produce a huge amount of food -- with very little energy, very little cost and very little input.”

Irwin wants to demonstrate how anyone

can produce a significant amount of organic vegetables and fish with little effort and low costs in an eco-friendly and sustainable way.

He thinks that these kinds of lectures are important for people to learn more about the planet and the sustainable ways to produce food.

“It is extremely important for everyone to be thinking about waste and to do more sustainable things in our lifestyles,” he said. “As part of the population of the planet, we all are able to produce and provide some of our food.”

“As part of the population of the planet, we all are able to produce and provide some of our food.”

Bill Irwin
Professor
Florida Keys Community College

For him, aquaponics is a powerful and creative system to protect our planet and produce healthy and nutritious foods.

Mayra Quiroga, a graduate student in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, is excited for this talk.

“This lecture will provide knowledge for everybody,” she said. “Furthermore, it is significant for a journalist

to communicate and explain to the society about the new methods of sustainability and discoveries in agriculture.”

More than studying topics of biology and science, Irwin has also worked with organizations of animal rescue and sustainable issues.

According to Elaine Pritzker, program manager of the School of Environment, Arts and Society, thinks that this talk will contribute to the interests of students and the community of Florida.

“He is talking about a large issue of sustainability in South Florida, which is obviously of interest to our students,” Pritzker said. “This is an extra opportunity to hear from an expert in the area, who is able to show more about different models and applications of this topic.” Olga Salazar, a sophomore biology major, supports this.

“I believe this is a good opportunity, not only for students but also for the community to know and learn about sustainable issues,” she said. “It will teach us how to protect our environment.”

Sponsored by the School of Environment, Arts and Society, the lecture will be held on Friday, April 17 at 7 p.m. in the Murray E. Nelson Government and Cultural Center, 102050 Overseas Hwy, MM 102, Key Largo, FL 33037.

It is free and open to the public.

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The Beacon is published on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the Fall and Spring semesters and once a week during Summer B. One copy per person. Additional copies are 25 cents. *The Beacon* is not responsible for the content of ads. Ad content is the sole responsibility of the company or vendor. *The Beacon* is an editorially independent newspaper partially funded by student and services fees that are appropriated by student government.

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Tidal poses to solve artists’ setbacks

VERONIKA QUISPE
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Early Monday morning I scrolled through Twitter and noticed some artists I follow changed their avi’s and profile color to a vibrant teal blue. Kanye, Jay Z, Deadmau5 among others encouraged everyone to join the cause by also changing their profiles, ending with the hashtag #TidalforAll.

Of course I was instantly confused. What is Tidal, what’s up with this blue? It sounded like yet another social media epidemic when Kanye tweeted “Together, we can turn the tide and make music history.” I mean, the idea of Kanye saying “together” is something worth raising an eyebrow for. Then I saw our queen, Beyonce, was also “in the cause” so I immediately began my research.

The announcement was set to be made at 5 p.m ET and explain what all this fuss was about. Something big was coming, and I got a little excited hoping all these artists would somehow make a collaboration concert in benefiting some sort of humanitarian cause.

Then at five o’clock my concert dream was shattered. The big announcement revealed Jay Z’s \$56 million dollar investment in a something called Tidal. A new subscription based music streaming service.

The Tidal press conference also revealed that it is the first ever artist owned music platform. Enter Arcade Fire’s Win Butler and Régine Chassagne, Beyoncé, Madonna, Rihanna, Kanye West,

Usher, Alicia Keys, Daft Punk, Chris Martin from Coldplay and Calvin Harris featured via webcam, Nicki Minaj, Jack White, Jason Aldean, Deadmau5 and J. Cole on the stage one by one as the pioneering owners.

To make the launch official, the man who sang “first rapper to rewrite history without a pen” picked up a pen to sign a “declaration,” as Alicia Keys called it to end her speech about a new revolutionary time for music.

Then passed the pen along to his colleagues. I again was left with many questions. First, why can’t I be that pen? Secondly, okay so this is the artist’s way of shutting down Spotify? What will be the difference? How much will it cost?

Tidal offers a variety of genres in both sound and video. It also offers exclusive music from popular artists and even their music videos. The best selling point Tidal has is the promise of high quality sound. As a music fan, hearing the difference in sound is vital especially when so many people invest money in high quality speakers and headphones. Tidal’s monthly subscription prices vary on the quality of sound beginning at \$10 for normal quality sound, and \$20 for the HiFidelity quality.

Yes the layout of the website resembles to Spotify, and it does have Shazam’s song recognizing features.

However, Tidal will offer artists the control and value of their art. Apparently something Spotify has been disregarding by offering 45 million users free access to music thus causing some popular artists, such as Taylor Swift, to pull their music away.

This week’s social media outburst led music fans to quickly run to twitter to express their thoughts on this new program. Of course, they took #TidalforAll to the number one trending topic.

Free advertising, check.

And of course, most people were pissed. Half complained about the ridiculous prices, “Tidal is a way for the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer.” The other half said that this amount of publicity should be directed toward other causes.

However, this is a serious issue for artists because they are being devalued with the advancement of technology and instant streaming. It’s true, people no longer go out and buy albums and their revenue has taken a hit over the past few years.

It may not force our favorite artists to settle down when spending at clubs, stores, or vacations but it goes without saying that the amount of work these artists have put forth in order to spend lavishly on vacations and clubs is something worth compensating.

As a mere mortal with absolutely zero musical talent, I have no idea what it’s like to deal with record labels and music streaming services. Therefore I have to admire the A-Lister’s effort to get “control” of the way their music is being transmitted. But I do know music. Music is a universal inspiring language that has brought a plethora of cultures and ideas together time after time.

To say that these artists remained completely quiet in times of social injustice, is a little far off. They have all done their part in advocating their values and the betterment of their fans. Whether they made huge publicity out of it, or wrote songs that got you through the day, they have all done a part in our world. Probably more than those complaining about a 20 dollar fee when they spend more money on other unnecessary things.

It’s apparently a hard knock life for artists now a days, and they need our help to get back on their feet.

Why is it that we don’t ever want to know?

MEGHAN MACLAREN
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With the campaigning for the FIU Student Elections seemingly in our faces at every turn these past few days, people’s disinterest in politics in general is probably more heightened than usual.

But I write this as a student from England, where the General Election is just over a month away - a pretty major event in the shaping of the country.

Since I came to the US for college three years ago, my interest in politics has grown, and so I am desperately trying to keep up with the campaigning going on at home, as my country attempts to pick a leader to drag us through the never ending economic mess most of the Western world finds itself in.

Trying to keep up with one political system is difficult enough. Trying to keep up with two is sometimes impossible. But trying to keep up with them both, while also getting to grips with their very fundamental concepts and origins, is too often causing me to wonder why I am even bothering to try.

When speaking to my dad on the phone about the televised debate between the leaders of the six main parties, we talked briefly about how I should get registered to vote, seeing as this is the first time I am old enough to do so. He laughed when I said I thought I had been old enough in the last election (I thought perhaps I had done what many people do and just chosen not to vote).

But it was then he informed me of a

fact I was ashamed I didn’t know: that the general elections only happen every five years in the U.K. So back in 2010 my 15-year-old self definitely wasn’t able, or anywhere near ready, to vote for anybody.

But of all the complexities and intricacies of political processes, knowing that a general election occurs every five years seems to me something very basic that I should have known. Yet I didn’t. What is the point in me trying to get to grips with which candidate is the best option to take our country forward - or at the very least, which candidate’s lies are the least destructive - when I don’t even know such elementary information?

I know the U.K. general election has little relevance to students not from the U.K. But with the next presidential election in the US only a year and a half away, now is the perfect time for students to start figuring out which way they might pledge their allegiance when it comes around.

Very few people - in the U.K. or the U.S. or anywhere at all - are particularly happy with the state of things in their respective country. But if we sit here and use not understanding as an excuse not to vote, what right do we have to complain about the state of things? How can we complain about the people who make all of those big decisions if we don’t make the effort to choose who those people are?

I know it’s easy to say one person not voting isn’t going to change the outcome of anything. But if 90 percent of the student population uses that logic, suddenly things could be very different. The voting system, whatever its flaws may be, is supposed to give us the chance to have a say over what happens to us. If we want change, don’t we

need to be a part of its foundation?

Something in the system needs to change, I think, to help make young people more aware of how the processes that control their country operate. We shouldn’t have to go out our way to find these things out; we shouldn’t have to spend hours trawling through internet pages just to find

out the core principles of each party, or the background of the candidate or the ideals being put up for debate.

It shouldn’t require a dramatic extra output of energy to get that knowledge. But we also shouldn’t use that as an excuse not to know. It’s something we should want to know, regardless.

FRANK & IRENE: Finals

SAMUEL PRITCHARD/THE BEACON

Foundation brings awareness through spinning

LESLIE BLANCO
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On what started off as a regular autumn day, about ten years ago, Anthony Jason Perez sat talking to friend and fellow FIU student Janelle Bertot, 19.

The car was running and the windows were down --everything seemed harmless.

What they didn't know was the fumes they inhaled from the car running was noxious; the car was also an older model.

The two students fell unconscious in the car from inhaling the fumes and died from carbon monoxide poisoning on Nov. 14, 2004.

Carbon monoxide is called the silent killer and with good reason.

death in many instances.

In commemoration of Perez's memory and to help raise awareness about the dangers and effects of carbon monoxide poisoning, the liberal art major's family established the Anthony's Light Foundation and partnered up with Pi Kappa Phi, the fraternity of which Perez was president at the time of his death.

Since then, the fraternity has taken the organization in as part of their philanthropy and to help the family's efforts in raising awareness in light of the tragic event.

Despite what happened, they wanted to make something positive out of something tragic.

"This isn't so that I can kill your happy day and make you

with different organizations all across South Florida to help with this cause, and effectively helping to pass a law -- Senate Bill 1822 Carbon monoxide detectors -- they have also spoken at schools and awarded scholarships to both high schools and Universities.

The Anthony's Light Foundation is planning a visit next week to FIU's Modesto Maidique Campus where it will host its 8th annual Ride to Light signature event.

The spinning event is scheduled to begin Tuesday evening, April 7, and will run for 24 hours untill Wednesday evening. It will be the organization's first big fundraising event.

Stationary bikes will be set up in the GC pit, where students can cycle at any time between classes and the bikes will be available for 24 hours straight.

The event will also be an opportunity for the organization to raise funds in order for it to continue its mission of saving lives.

There will be food available by donations, a live DJ and raffle tickets.

All of the proceeds from this event will assist in creating educational materials, obtaining CO detectors to be given freely to the public and toward student scholarships.

At the end of the event, Wednesday evening, the Anthony's Light Foundation will also be announcing the scholarship winner from FIU Greek life.

"It's not a sad event, come out, be active, be healthy and have fun while you learn something new. We're trying to save lives and ultimately we believe that through these events, no matter the turnout, we've made a difference--even if it touches only one person," Perez said.

“The reality is that this is a sad story but I'm trying to turn this tragedy into something positive, into an awareness.”

Jennifer Perez
Vice President
Anthony's Light Foundation

It is a tasteless, odorless and colorless poisonous gas that claims the lives of hundreds of people a year in the U.S. alone.

This gas can not only be produced by cars but it can also be found in homes, buildings and other equipment that burns fuel, which includes the burning of coal, wood, charcoal, oil, kerosene, propane and natural gas.

Many people would not know if they are being exposed to carbon monoxide due the fact that the gas itself is almost impossible to detect.

Breathing in the gas for too long can cause hazardous consequences and can result in

feel sad because I'm telling a sad story, no. The reality is that this is a sad story but I'm trying to turn this tragedy into something positive, into an awareness," said Jennifer Perez, sister of Anthony Perez and an FIU alumni. "My loss doesn't have to be your loss. If I can bring something from this, it's that he didn't die in vain."

Jennifer Perez, who is also Vice President of the Anthony's Light Foundation, now in its 10th year has spearheaded the organization along with her mother, Vilma Perez.

In addition to partnering up



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Secrets' singer talks about the band's future, going acoustic, and tour experience

COLUMNIST



CLAUDIO ZELAYA

We all have our secrets, but there are some that make a living with theirs.

The first day in April, 2015 saw The Devil Wears Prada bring their Zombie 5 tour to Ft. Lauderdale, FL featuring The Word Alive, Born of Osiris and the exceptional Secrets.

The tour was to commemorate the Zombie EP that The Devil Wears Prada released only five years ago.

With other industry juggernauts on the tour, the Secrets had a lot to prove opening for such a stacked card.

We were able to sit down their singer, Richard Rogers, and talk about opening the tour, their new music and the highs and lows of the young band.

How's the experience been so far touring with everyone on the Zombie 5 Tour?

This tour has been unreal. I actually used to listen to The Devil Wears Prada and Born Of Osiris when I was in high school

so it's crazy that I'm hanging out and playing shows with two bands that helped shape me musically.

How has the South Florida area treated you in the past?

Florida has been fairly good to us in the past and we have actually recorded all of our albums in Florida. It's always a great time performing out here.

Looking at the other bands playing the bill, does it feel a bit intimidating opening for such juggernauts of the scene?

I think that being with these great, successful bands is only pushing us to perform better and work harder. We are more motivated than intimidated.

Being a heavier band, what was the decision making process like for taking a step back and making an acoustic EP?

We have been talking about doing an acoustic EP since we released Fragile Figures.

It's something I have always been adamant about doing, because I'm so influenced by softer music and there's this

side of the band that's just been screaming to come out so we finally decided to do it and I am so excited about how it turned out!

Do you see yourselves doing more acoustic shows in support of the EP?

We probably won't be doing any acoustic shows, but we will have some live performance videos.

With a new studio album also in the works, can you talk about the new elements you want to bring?

This new full length is just such a huge step up for us. We really wanted to keep our heavy aspects, but try not to use the basic chug breakdowns that we always used in the past. We wanted to be a little more technical, instrumentally.

If you had to pick any musician alive or dead to collaborate on the new album, regardless of genre, who would it be and why?

My dream team for an album would be Jesse Lacey, Ben

Gibbard, Chris Walla, Anthony Raneri and Dallas Green.

Is the band surprised of the feedback its getting seeing as your second studio album charted significantly higher than the first?

We're just excited! When you work so hard on something and people recognize it and appreciate it, it's the best feeling.

Seeing as you're going back and re-doing some songs in acoustic versions, are there any moments in your lives that you also wish you could tweak?

There are definitely some things I would change in my past. I lose a lot of stuff on the road. I think I've gone through five or six toiletry bags just from leaving them in bathrooms or venues.

I would go back and not be such a forgetful idiot and save myself money on soap and cologne haha!

In the same train of thought, what are some moments you're glad happened the way they did?

Lots of moments in my life have gone smooth so I'll give you a simple one. I once ordered a double quarter pounder with cheese and it looked exactly like picture. Best day ever.

Are there any tricks or life hacks you wish you knew about the music industry that you wish you'd known before touring?

There are too many, haha! I wish we had stayed in our van. We bought this large shuttle bus and built bunks in it.

It was super expensive and broke down on our first tour with it and cost a ton to fix. Then it broke again and wasn't worth fixing and now we are back in a van, full circle.

What's next for Secrets for 2015 and why should we keep our eye on your journey?

Lots of touring, new heartfelt music with music videos and live performance videos!

Secrets' acoustic album, "Renditions" is out April 7, 2015 and their second full length, "Fragile Figures" is in stores now.

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MLB

Miami Marlins 2015: legit contenders or another bust?

CAPTAIN'S CORNER



ALEJANDRO AGUIRRE

Could this be the year for the fighting fish? For the first time in a few years I was able to look at the projected roster for the Marlins and there was a small sigh of relief. I printed out the projected 25 man roster and taped it to my desk like I do every season and simply said, “this could be a good season.”

The last time I said that it was for the 2012 season and it hurts me too much to talk about it.

“ I am not even expecting them to make it to the World Series but this team has the ability and the right players to make a big splash in their division and hopefully be in the hunt for a wild card spot. ”

That’s a story for another day. I am not even expecting them to make it to the World Series but this team has the ability and the right players to make a big splash in their division and hopefully be in the hunt for a wild card spot.

It was a good winter for the Marlins as they were able to boost their lineup and pitching rotation with key acquisitions. Through trades they were able to get Dee Gordon, Matos, Dan Haren, David Phelps and Martin Prado.

They also signed right handed slugger Michael Morse and future hall of famer Ichiro Suzuki.

Morse will man first base this season and is coming off a championship season with the San Francisco Giants.

Ichiro is going to provide that veteran leadership in the clubhouse and be the primary outfielder off the bench.

He will be a great mentor for that young but extremely talented outfield consisting of Giancarlo Stanton, Christian Yelich, and Marcell Ozuna.

Here is a preview of the projected lineup for opening day:

- 1. 2B Dee Gordon
- 2. LF Christian Yelich
- 3. RF Giancarlo Stanton
- 4. 1B Michael Morse
- 5. CF Marcell Ozuna
- 6. 3B Martin Prado
- 7. C Jarrod Saltalamacchia
- 8. SS Adeiny Hechavarria
- 9. Pitcher spot

On paper that lineup is a tremendous upgrade from last season. Morse batting fourth provides two players in the lineup with immense power and he also protects

Stanton hitting third which is something the Marlins haven’t had in a couple years.

Another piece in their new lineup they didn’t have last year is speed at the top of the order.

Dee Gordon was acquired from the Los Angeles Dodgers in a big trade in December. He gives the team a traditional lead off hitter, something they haven’t had since the days of Juan Pierre ten years ago.

What Gordon can do is steal bases and he lead the Majors in that category. He stole more bases by himself than the Marlins all together. Hitting sixth his ten year veteran Martin Prado who is a career .280 hitter.

He does have some pop in his swing but what he is really known for his ability to make contact and get hits while limiting the strikeouts.

This well balanced lineup displays a unique blend of speed, power and contact which is something not many teams in the Majors say they have that.

With ace pitcher Jose Fernandez still recovering from Tommy John Surgery, the Marlins had to get some pitching depth in order to stay competitive in the National League East.

Mat Latos and Dan Haren were both acquired in separate trades to hold down the fort until Fernandez returns to the rotation in July.

Latos is used to leading a rotation as he was the ace for some time in his former teams the San Diego Padres and Cincinnati Reds.

Haren is a grizzled veteran who has

been in the Majors for 12 years and knows what it takes to win. He is closing in on 150 games won as a pitcher as he enters this season with 142.

Returning from last years rotation is all star Henderson Alvarez, Tom Koehler and Jarred Cosart.

Here is what the projected starting five would look like:

- 1. RHP Henderson Alvarez
- 2. RHP Mat Latos
- 3. RHP RHP Tom Koehler
- 4. RHP Jarred Cosart
- 5. RHP Dan Haren

If this rotation can stay intact and healthy by mid season other teams should be really worried facing the Marlins. The reason why I said mid season is because that is when Jose Fernandez rejoins the rotation. Imagine how dangerous that rotation will be with three aces in one staff.

Pitching is what makes or breaks a team. Pitching carries the team to go deep into the playoffs and succeed.

Fans couldn’t agree more when it came down for Marlins in the 2003 World Series. That rotation dominated to win the title.

This is the same formula the Marlins are trying to do now. Just only with a different name, stadium and uniforms.

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NHL

South Florida unappreciative of home hockey team

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If the Florida Panthers hockey team have a great season that results in a thrilling playoff race going down to the final games of the season, but nobody is there to see it, does it really happen?

The answer to that question is indeed yes, as the Panthers, South Florida’s least appreciated professional sports team, are preparing to play their last few games of the 2014-15 season.

While a 3-2 loss at the hands of the 8-seed Boston Bruins on Tuesday, March 31 likely ended their playoff hopes for this season, the Panthers still impressed the hockey world with their improvement and resiliency. The Panthers are on pace to finish with their best record since the 2011-12 season, which is the last time they made the postseason.

As somebody who just moved down to South Florida, I find the lack of support the Panthers receive very unfortunate.

All you ever hear people talking about down here are the Heat, Dolphins, and occasionally the Marlins, but never the Panthers, who have given hockey fans a product to be very proud of all season.

The Panthers have acquired some of the biggest names in hockey, including future hall-of-famer and one of the greatest forwards of all time Jaromir Jagr, who was brought in to fill a leadership role at this season’s trade deadline.

Since joining the team, he has quickly become one of the biggest offensive catalysts in the NHL.

In net, the Panthers have savvy veteran Roberto Luongo.

Luongo was at one time considered to be one of the top goaltenders in the entire league, and

has played at a very high level for the Panthers the past two seasons.

The list of great talent who call the BB&T Center home does not end there.

“ The problem is so bad that there have been talks for years to move this team out of South Florida due to the lack of appreciation fans show them. ”

Players with Stanley Cup experience like Brian Campbell (one of the top offensive defensemen in the NHL) and Dave Bolland have played key roles in their time with the Panthers.

The roster is stacked with

young talent - guys like Aleksander Barkov (19), Aaron Ekblad (19), and Alex Petrovic (23) could be the future stars of the league.

Factor in the tremendous amateur players the Panthers have acquired via the draft and signings, and this is a team built to win for years to come.

Despite all of this, however, the Panthers are dead last in the NHL in attendance.

The problem is so bad that there have been talks for years to move this team out of South Florida due to the lack of appreciation fans show them.

I personally don’t think all hope is lost for this organization in South Florida, as these problems can be turned around.

My beloved Chicago Blackhawks used to be the joke of the NHL (back when I was a partial season ticket holder), and now they lead the league in attendance and you can’t find tickets under \$100

for any home game.

It’s completely plausible to believe things can turn around for the Panthers, but it will take legitimate fan support.

The team itself has done everything in their power to appeal to fans. They’ve built a roster combining household names and young, star talent.

They have a beautiful arena in Sunrise that doesn’t cost a whole lot to get into. At the end of the day, it will come down to South Floridians to show support for their hometown team.

There are two games left in 2015, both of which are at the BB&T Center, one of which is against the Boston Bruins, which could potentially still have major playoff implications.

Do yourself a favor and show these guys some love, because they’re a team on the rise that deserves a lot more support than they’re receiving.

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NFL

‘Dolfans’ hoping for a turnaround this season with new team talent

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A couple things come to mind when I hear anyone talk about the Miami Dolphins. I first listen to what they have to say, and if it includes anything about QB Ryan Tannehill, the departure of veteran players like WR Mike Wallace or Brian Hartline, and how we will never be as good as we once were. Then, I chime in. I am a realistic NFL fan and will always tell it how it is. As a die hard Dolphins fan, I feel responsible to defend this team at every opportunity, but it’s a vicious cycle every year that starts with me defending them and continuously being disappointed. Let’s hope for a turnaround this season. It may be easy to forget who was released while signing defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh and the trade for wide receiver Kenny Stills. Hopefully the departure of the veteran players like Brandon Gibson, Jared Odrick, and Randy Starks can open the doors for players to have a chance to prove themselves and finally get an opportunity to play and effectively contribute to this team.

The D Line

The defensive line for the Miami Dolphins will be the best in the division. While most are focused on the signing of Suh, alongside key

players like Olivier Vernon and Cameron Wake, I’m focused on the mass exodus of linebackers that has left me with more questions than Suh could answer. Dion Jordan was the third pick overall in the 2013 draft. The buzz about his explosive ability off the edge as a potential pass-rusher in a 3-4 defense is what created all the hype and is why I was excited when the Dolphins traded up to get him. He has hardly played with only 562 snaps in his first two seasons. Now with Dannell Ellerbe and Philip Wheeler gone, this gives the Dolphins lots of options on how the linebacker group will work out and possibly let Jordan prove himself on the strong side. It is finally Jamar Taylor’s year to stay healthy on the field. Together with Brent Grimes, these cornerbacks can have the chance to make a big impact on defense. Taylor started a few games last year when Cortland Finnegan was out of the lineup and I personally see a lot in him. I watched him play at Boise State and he is quick and excels in zone coverage. I believe he could start opposite Brent Grimes to make our defense unstoppable.

The QB situation

Josh Freeman is on the Dolphins now. I don’t know how to feel about this personally, but he will be third string behind Tannehill and Moore. We signed him for one year. A quarterback that went from being one of the most promising

FIU OPEN



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

Sophomore Valentina Briceno returns a serve against New Mexico State on March 24. The Panthers play in the C-USA championship in Houston, Texas starting on April 16.

players in the NFL to a major disappointment. Freeman was drafted in 2009 in the first round by Tampa Bay and looked so amazing throwing 25 touchdowns and just 6 interceptions. He didn’t get along very well with coach Schiano, and the Bucs cut Freeman during the 2013 season. He then went onto the Vikings but was a complete disaster and was benched after the first game. Now the Dolphins are giving him a chance. Ryan Tannehill will be the starting QB finishing last season throwing 27 TDs and recording over 4,000 yards passing during his third NFL season. He’s growing and it is making me anxious to see what he can really do for this team. The Dolphins are now building a team around him and his style of play that looks to be promising this upcoming year.

O line

Jarvis Landry led the team with 84 receptions

last year and could see his role expanding even more now that Wallace and Hartline are gone. He does have Kenny Stills by his side to also be a huge part of the Dolphins aerial attack so I think its safe to say that Landry won’t be the only talented receiver catching for the Dolphins this year. Rishard Matthews finished the 2013 season with a career high 41 receptions for 448 yards and two touchdowns. Most of it happened in one game, but it still counts. Matthews didn’t really have that many opportunities to go out on the field when the Dolphins had Wallace, Hartline and Gibson to out there but now these open slots will hopefully give Matthews more playing time and a chance to clean up his act. He has reportedly had problems with tardiness and lack of attention to detail. So if the Dolphins and Matthews could work through their differences, I could see him being a key component on the field.

NCAA

NCAA took stand on Indiana religious freedom law

LUKE DECOCK
TNS

Right about the time the Final Four teams were getting their first look at the court set up at Lucas Oil Stadium on Thursday, the governor of Indiana was doing some fancy dribbling of his own a few blocks away at the state capitol. One week after he signed Indiana’s widely derided Religious Freedom Restoration Act into law, which critics argued gave businesses the right to discriminate, against gays and lesbians in particular, Gov. Mike Pence and state lawmakers announced a hasty “fix” to the law in the face of massive public outcry. No one applied more pressure than the NCAA, which moved its headquarters to Indianapolis in 1999 and is hosting its signature event here this weekend and in 2021, along with the Women’s Final Four next year. NCAA president Mark Emmert was one of the first to decry the law and went on a national media tour in the days after its passage to urge for its clarification or repeal, threatening to move events like the Final Four if not the NCAA itself. “We made very clear that we

wanted this resolved as quickly as possible,” Emmert said. “This bill is more important than a basketball tournament.” It was a strange juxtaposition of circumstances: At a time when the NCAA is under fire in both Federal court and the court of public opinion over what its critics say is a broken system that exploits college athletes, a gross injustice, the NCAA was at the forefront of the pursuit of justice in Indiana. The NCAA has taken a comparable stand in South Carolina and Mississippi, which have been prohibited from bidding for NCAA events since 2001 in response to the Confederate battle flags on state capitol grounds. But the NCAA’s connections to those states are tenuous compared to Indiana, where it has put down firm roots and plays an important role in the local economy. It has the power to wield a heavy hammer. And from the moment the bill was signed, the NCAA did just that. “The NCAA has appropriately in the past been critiqued for being slow to respond to things,” said Kansas State president Kirk Schulz, the chairman of the NCAA’s board of directors. “This is one of those

cases where if we had spent three or four days talking to everybody, deciding on a response, everybody would have said ‘Gee, the NCAA has this major event, one of our marquee events of the year occurring, and couldn’t even take a public stand on this.’ “This is one of those times where I believe the rapid, quick, decisive communication from the NCAA office, by Mark and our staff, was exactly where we needed to be.” Before Thursday’s addition of language that specifically protects sexual orientation and gender identity, the broadly written Religious Freedom Restoration Act, or RFRA, allowed private businesses to refuse service to customers who they believe infringe upon their religious beliefs _ which its detractors said essentially sanctioned LGBT discrimination. And its detractors were, to say the least, many. Entire cities adopted “everyone is welcome” policies, including traditionally conservative suburbs like Fishers, which has an all-Republican city council. Businesses throughout downtown Indianapolis hung signs in their windows. Several states have RFRA-type

laws, but few were as ambiguous as Indiana’s. A similar bill has been proposed in the North Carolina legislature, and has some support from elements of the Republican majority, but House speaker Tim Moore said this week he doesn’t see it as a priority and Gov. Pat McCrory said it “makes no sense.” Arkansas’ Republican governor said Wednesday he would urge his legislature to recall and revise a similar bill there. The backlash against the Indiana law, scheduled to go into effect July 1, was so strong and immediate both inside and outside Indiana that Pence was quickly forced to retreat. USC athletic director Pat Haden, a member of the College Football Playoff committee, said he would not attend a CFP meeting in Indianapolis. “I am the proud father of a gay son,” Haden posted on Twitter. “In his honor, I will not be attending the CFP committee meeting in Indy this week. (hashtag)EmbraceDiversity” The University of Connecticut’s president forbade basketball coach Kevin Ollie and his staff from attending the National Association

of Basketball Coaches convention this weekend, held annually at the Final Four, and even after Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said Tuesday he would not address “social issues,” he signed a joint NABC statement Wednesday from the four Final Four coaches affirming the NCAA’s position. Earlier this week, the presidents of three of the participating schools and a Duke spokesman did the same. In addition to the Indianapolis corporate community, which includes pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly, NASCAR echoed the NCAA’s position. One of NASCAR’s biggest Sprint Cup races, the Brickyard 400, is held annually at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. One issue for the NCAA going forward will be, having taken such a strong stand in this case, how will it proceed as other states debate and potentially pass religious-freedom acts like Indiana’s that may create license for discrimination? “I think these are things that, as we go forward, as we make big decisions about places we should take our tournaments, we’re going to have to look deeper and harder at,” Emmert said.

Mejia and Jean-Louis elected as President and Vice President for the BBC-SGC

CAMILA FERNANDEZ
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Students at the Biscayne Bay Campus have elected Allhan Mejia and Kenly Jean-Louis as President and Vice President for the 2015-2016 BBC Student Government Council.

Mejia, a junior business major, has been involved in the BBC-SGC as Lower Division Senator, Business Senator and Speaker Pro Tempore since fall 2013. He said that being President gives him the opportunity to make a difference.

“In changing the scope of things and making it better for the students who come here,” said Mejia, “and actually having students not go through that experience of not being involved and just coming to campus.”

Mejia said two years ago he had no idea how to be a part of student life until a friend encouraged him to join the council. Now, he wants to help students be more engaged in campus life.

He also wants to make the council more transparent and accessible to students through a “Street Team.” This group of BBC-SGC students would help promote student government involvement, projects and initiatives.

Jean-Louis agrees with Mejia and says in his platform that he wants to provide more internship opportunities for

students. Jean-Louis also plans to work with the Golden Panther Express Shuttle to coordinate a schedule that better fits students’ needs.

This year has seen one of the most competitive elections at the BBC. According to Student Media archives, there has been a history of uncontested candidates, especially for President and Vice President.

Last year, current BBC-SGC President and Vice President, Jazmin Felix and Camille Williams, ran unopposed. This year, Mejia and Jean-Louis ran against Christopher Morisset and Elina Sibony, winning by 55 percent.

There was also a larger voter turnout with 420 students compared to last year’s 221, according to the council.

More students were also seen running for Arts & Sciences Senator, Graduate Senator, Lower Division Senator and Senator At-Large. Felix said this may be due to her change in the BBC-SGC internal environment as President.

“An issue in the past at SGA has been retention, but this year we saw the highest retention of SGA members in reference to any other year,” Felix said.

Felix said that in the past, many members felt like they didn’t have a voice. Instead, she always made sure that everyone’s opinions were

considered.

“When people have a part in success, then they’re more likely to stay,” Felix said. “When I first came in, my platform was making BBC more student-centered and making it more unified and with that goal in mind, I made sure that every single person that came in had the same exact goal as me.”

Amani Nephew, a senior English major, said she looks forward to students participating more on campus.

“I think that’s always going to be a good thing,” said Nephew. “It brings positivity [and] it shows that it’s okay to get involved and to speak your voice...We need to get involved,” she said.

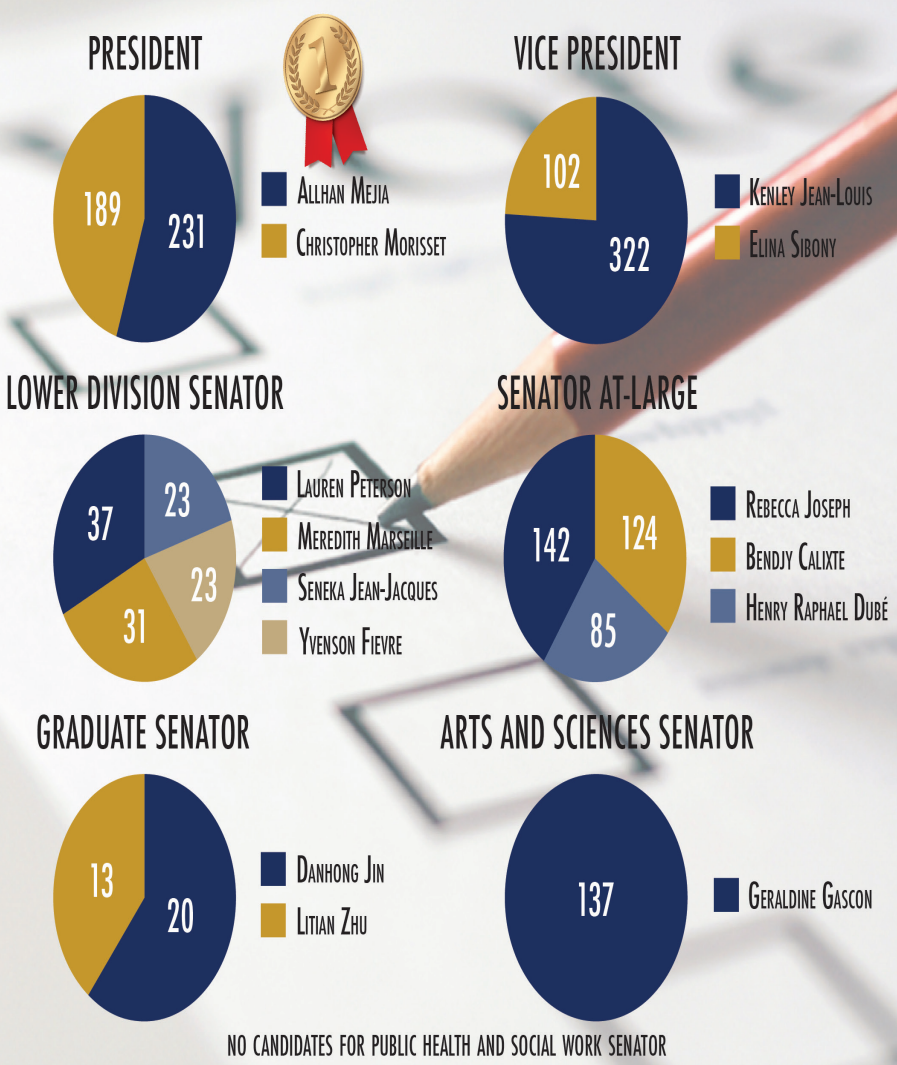
Erica Amaya, a junior English major, said the idea of having a Street Team is good for the campus and the student body.

“[Mejia] involving the students more is definitely a great thing, especially if he makes his ideas known and all the things that he wants to do to better,” Amaya said.

Despite the BBC’s smaller student population size, Amaya said she enjoys being at the North Campus a lot more than at the South Campus.

“I really do like the BBC campus a lot more than the MMC campus. It’s a tighter-knit community. At MMC, you run into far more strangers than you do with friends,” Amaya said

BBC SGA ELECTION RESULTS



KRONO LESCANO/THE BEACON



MARCIA AKSU/THE BEACON

Allhan Mejia receives the SGA president symbol from incumbent Jazmin Felix after Mejia was announced the new BBC president on Thursday, April 2.

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