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COMMUNITY CONSTRUCTION

New details released on FIU's UniversityCity Prosperity Project

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FIU's UniversityCity Prosperity Project has released new details on its \$15 million project that may provide a new hangout spot for students, while strengthening the connection between FIU and the City of Sweetwater.

"At FIU, we're bridge builders. We like to build bridges between people. We like to build bridges between communities. We like to bring people together and there's no better example of this than the actual bridge we're building," said FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg.

Funded by a TIGER grant, the UniversityCity Prosperity Project plans to make improvements to the infrastructure and community transit of FIU and Sweetwater, as well as develop the Informed Traveler Program and Applications.

Enhancements to infrastructure include the pedestrian bridge and plazas on SW 8th St. and 109th Ave. that are being constructed from a partnership between FIGG Bridge Engineers and Munilla Construction Management.

The 32-foot wide bridge will not only connect plazas on the south end of Sweetwater and the north end of FIU, but its unique features may also make it a new place for students to hang out.

While on the bridge, students can use its Wi-Fi, electrical outlets and sit at the built-in table and chairs in the shade provided by a cover. A bike-tire track along the side of the stairs will make it easy for students to walk their bicycles up



CHLOE GONZALEZ/THE BEACON

CFO and senior vice president for Finance and Administration Kenneth Jessel and President Mark B. Rosenberg show a model of the bridge in construction to Student Media on Friday, September 9th 2016.

the stairs without having to lift it up each stair.

Also, the bridge benefits FIU students by providing a safe way to cross over an arterial road.

"He [FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg]

wanted to really build a relationship with the City of Sweetwater ... So it's a way of linking the two communities," said Kenneth Jessel, FIU senior vice president for Finance and Administration and chief financial officer, "It's almost a Berlin

Wall trying to cross 8th street ... It's very dangerous so we've always worried about the safety of our students and others."

The construction process to prepare the

SEE BRIDGE, PAGE 2

BISCAYNE BAY

Spirit council brings back mid-day event

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This fall semester, Panther Power, the spirit council at FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus, is bringing Panther Power Spirit Hour back to campus. The hour is dedicated to providing a fun, mid-day opportunity to help bring spirit to campus with free food, music, games, giveaways and prizes.

Taking place on Thursday, Sept. 22, the spirit hour will take place at Panther Square from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. The event is free and open to students, faculty and staff. To improve the experience, all participants are advised to wear school gear or the colors blue and gold.

The event was started to evoke a sense of spirit by bringing it to the

event, essentially exposing students to what it's like to be a panther so they can be proud of it.

Rosemona St. Jean, the President of Panther Power, explains the benefits of having school pride.

"It's important because school spirit creates a sense of community, which helps students be more involved which leads to networking," said St. Jean.

Students are also invited to volunteer at the event by filling out a membership application on OrgSync. Volunteers will be expected to help set-up and monitor the event to make sure it runs smoothly.

Panther Power Spirit Hour will also be held on Oct. 6, Nov. 2, and Nov. 17. For more information, call BBC Campus Life at 305-919-5804 or visit the Panther Power office at WUC 141.

Pete Garcia receives two year contract extension

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President Mark B. Rosenberg announced on Friday, Sept. 19 Pete Garcia's two-year extension as FIU's executive director of Sports and Entertainment.

Garcia's contract extension has him working until July 31, 2018. After his new contract expires, he indicated he will officially step down.

"Leading FIU Athletics has been one of my most rewarding and exciting experiences," Garcia said in a press release provided by Media Relations. "However, after months of personal reflection, I believe it is important to explore new professional challenges."

According to the release, Garcia's primary focus for his final two years is to complete his \$14 million renovations and upgrade facilities, including the football and soccer stadiums, the convocation center and the

softball and golf complexes.

Garcia's extension comes after calls for him to be fired came from students and alumni alike. Wednesday, Sept. 17, an airplane carrying a banner

"Leading FIU Athletics has been one of my most rewarding and exciting experiences"

Pete Garcia
Executive Director
FIU Sports

with the words "FIU, fire Pete Garcia" was seen flying above the Modesto Maidique campus.

Garcia has recently come under more fire since news outlets reported on the strategies used to get students to attend games, including offering an Amazon Fire Stick for attending

all home games.

Community support for Garcia plummeted after he fired former FIU's football head coach Mario Cristobal after a 3-9 season, despite his teams playing in consecutive bowl games and being Sun Belt Conference champs in 2010.

Under Garcia's tenure, some of the sports teams have seen a decline in national performance and recognition, including baseball, men's soccer and both basketball programs, though football, swimming and diving and women's soccer have seen improvement.

"Pete has led our athletic program during a pivotal decade in its development," Rosenberg said in the press release. "I thank Pete for his leadership and the commitment he brought to the job."

There is no word on when Rosenberg will begin the search for Garcia's replacement for 2018.

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Two California lawmakers lambaste Snowden in report summary

The California leaders of the U.S. House Select Committee on Intelligence are condemning former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden after a two-year inquiry into Snowden's actions, methods and alleged motivations.

The full 36-page Intelligence Committee report has been marked classified but Reps. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., and Adam Schiff, D-Calif., released a three-page summary Thursday.

Russia's courting of Nicaragua concerns Washington

Russia's cozy military relationship with Nicaragua, which is rapidly evolving into a single-party regime, is raising concerns in Washington.

Russia recently sold Nicaragua 50 tanks, won access to Nicaragua's airspace and ports, and is building a law enforcement center near the Pacific coast.

The Obama administration is "closely monitoring" Russia's presence in Nicaragua and is expressing concern about the lack of democratic space. The White House tried unsuccessfully to pressure President Daniel Ortega to host international observers for the critical November elections.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CORRECTIONS

In a previous article by Maytinee Kramer 'Harley Quinn and Joker's relationship isn't #goals' published on September 12, the quotes from CAPS were accredited to Justin Santoli. This is incorrect, the comments belong to Sandra Burr.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

Student Academic Success Center facilitates student services

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Opened earlier this semester, the Student Academic Success Center houses several student-focused offices and departments once located in Primera Casa and the Graham Center.

Four-stories tall, the \$25.6 million building stands next to GC and close to the Gold Parking Garage. The building was created to update and centralize student support services and consists of the following offices: OneStop, Student Access and Success, Study Abroad, National Student Exchange and Career and Talent Development.

"It's meant to enhance student success," says John Cal, associate vice president of Facilities Administration, in an interview with FIU News. "To make it easier to gain access, to learn about FIU, to find the right course of study – and to graduate on time."

OneStop, which assists with admissions, registration and financial aid questions, is located on the first floor and has new features.

"We removed the need to stand in line by implementing the MyVisit app. Students can now check in before they get to the SASC building or go get a coffee instead of standing in line," said Wendy Kutchner, director of OneStop Enrollment Services. "We've also implemented an online document upload option through the student My.FIU.edu portal. This feature was added so students didn't need to come in person to drop off forms."

With more service locations, the office space is flexible and allows for staff to be more responsive to student volume, said Kutchner.

Despite all the new features,

the office still has more features in the works, including one for The Biscayne Bay Campus.

"We plan to add the Panther ID to the check in process for OneStop so that we can reach out to students who can't make their appointment and gather student satisfaction survey results," said Kutchner. "We will also be implementing the MyVisit app check in feature for BBC later in the fall semester."

And although students are enjoying the new services, some still have critics.

"The addition of SASC is a great one. There's a place dedicated for all the intricacies of a big school bureaucracy," said Vivian Bermudez, a freshman and business major at FIU. "However, having a larger capacity isn't always a good thing."

Some students fear the office, while it can accommodate more students, may just increase the time spent waiting.

"They, in my opinion, don't have the personnel to run it at the highest capacity possible. Yes, students have a space but they're still waiting hours to get served," said Bermudez.

The building was constructed by Balfour Beatty Construction, and it consists of more than 90 windows, 129 individual office space and five classrooms. Goulds Evans, an architecture firm, designed the building so that it took advantage of natural light.

"That's been based on how a palm frond diffuses light in the natural environment. Basically, we did a lot of sun shade studies to figure out the right proportions of the window treatments as it runs West and East of the building," said Steve Carpenter, project director for Goulds Evans, to FIU News. "We believe that the natural day lighting helps infuse life into space. The more light you can

bring into the building, it's just a better environment."

The first floor is also home to a two-story lecture hall. With a seating capacity of more than 700, the lecture hall is the largest on campus.

The second floor is home to Student Access and Success --which focuses on connecting students to academic programs and research opportunities-- Study Abroad and International Student and Scholar Services, which caters to international students or exchange visitors at FIU.

Formerly known as Career Services, Career and Talent Development is located on the third floor and help students choose a major, resume writing, provide practice interviews and career assignments, among other things.

Connect4Success; Exploratory Advising Center, which provides academic advising for exploratory students and those who need help finding a major; First-Year Programs, meant to help students in their first year of college; National Student Exchange, for undergraduate exchange within the US and Canada; and Transfer and Transition Services, meant to help transfer students, are located on the fourth floor.

Connect4Success enhances Florida's 2+2 Pathway to Success Program, which states that once you complete an associate degree, you are guaranteed admission into one of Florida's 11 universities, but not necessarily the one you pick. The office provides workshops and advising to help students with university competition.

"The others services offered are a good thing," said Bermudez. "College can be scary and lonesome. It's nice to know that your college has your back and will do things to meet your needs."

FIU bridge construction in progress estimated to complete in 2018

BRIDGE, PAGE 1

area is said to begin on Nov. 11 of this year. Construction on the bridge is expected to start in early 2017 and it will be completed in Spring of 2018.

Even though the bridge is the largest and most visible component, it's only one part of a much greater project.

FIU's UniversityCity Prosperity Project also includes a community transit aspect, which will have three types of transit vehicles on the road. The first will be hybrid-electric trolleys that cross U.S.41 as they travel to and from FIU and the City of Sweetwater. The second will be a back-up circulator bus and the third will be a multi-purpose outreach vehicle.

The bus service that already commutes between The Biscayne Bay Campus and the Modesto Maidique campus, as well as the shuttles operating within FIU, will be expanded to include stops in the cities of Sweetwater and perhaps Doral, said Jessell. It will not only be available to FIU students, faculty and staff but also to Sweetwater residents.

Jessell explained that through a partnership with Miami-Dade transit, they're going to incorporate a transit station in Parking Garage 6 where express bus service will be traveling back and forth from the airport and FIU

in a short amount of time. This garage will also house buses previously stored on the East side of campus. It was designed and built to include a bus depot, said Jessell.

This new community transit system will be included in the new ITPA software.

"You'll know when your bus is coming, where it's going to be, what the backlog might be what the delay might be," said Jessell.

The ITPA extends beyond community transit to offer FIU students, faculty, and staff real time traffic, congestion, and route information. It will send users notifications about efficient, timesaving routes. Also, it might suggest nearby places to stop at where drivers can wait out the estimated time until any congestion clears up.

ITPA, in addition to the upcoming improvements to infrastructure and the community transit system, hopes to strengthen the FIU/City of Sweetwater connection and it will encourage economic growth for both parties involved.

"We're going to link FIU and the City of Sweetwater ... That's why it's called UniversityCity Prosperity Project because we think it improves the prosperity in this community," said Jessell.

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The follies of Colin Kaepernick's logic

CONSERVATIVE
CORNER



CHRISTIAN
GONZALEZ

Colin Kaepernick, quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, spawned a firestorm of controversy when he refused to stand for the United States national anthem at a football game.

He justified his actions by saying, "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people." In some ways, it's almost too easy to criticize him.

There was something richly ironic then, when Kaepernick walked onto a press conference in a T-shirt that sported Fidel Castro's likeness. Only in Kaepernick's twisted and inverted moral plane could an island ruled for 60 years by two men, along with their accompanying gang of Communist Party thugs, be a purer example of political freedom than the liberal-democratic regime in the United States.

Nevertheless, Kaepernick's statement about the oppression of blacks clearly struck a chord in some. He received praise and respect from several sports commentators, such as Stephen Smith of ESPN. Beyoncé's

mother, Tina Knowles, said he was being "truly brave."

Racism and discrimination are existent problems in this country. The belief that someone is in any way inferior on the basis of how they look is repugnant, but very much alive. But a belief it is — indeed, racism is an attitude embedded in the minds of some people. To acknowledge that this outlook exists in the minds of some Americans is not to say that the institutions in this country are oppressive.

However, what people like Kaepernick, Beyoncé and many others believe is that the entire fabric of the United States is tainted by racism. That, in other words, our very society is irreparably consumed by a hatred of African Americans and that American institutions reflect this resentment.

They are not the first ones to make such arguments. In the '60s, the case against American society was made by far more thoughtful people, including a certain James Baldwin.

Baldwin was a black activist, novelist and social critic. In 1965, he faced off in a debate with the conservative intellectual William F. Buckley about whether "... the American Dream has been achieved at the expense of the American Negro."

The debate, which can be found on YouTube under the previously mentioned title, displayed the masterly rhetorical skills of both Buckley and Baldwin. Despite

the fact it took place over 50 years ago, there is much we can learn from the insight of these two great minds.

Baldwin began with a denunciation of America that makes one feel both compassion and outrage.

"From a very literal point of view," he said, "the harbors and the ports and the railroads of the country — the economy, especially in the South — could not conceivably be what they

moment comes when we, the Americans, are able to accept the fact that my ancestors are both black and white, that on that continent we are trying to forge a new identity, that we need each other, that... I am one of the people who built the country — until this moment comes, there is scarcely any hope for the American dream."

This easily rivals the best of Martin Luther King. And, in many ways, what Baldwin

another civilization anytime, anywhere, in the history of the world in which the problems of the minority... is as much a subject of dramatic concern as it is in the United States."

There is other such civilization. According to the Cato Institute, since Lyndon Johnson declared a "War on Poverty" in 1964, the U.S. government has spent an extraordinary 15 trillion dollars on social welfare programs. While these programs also benefit whites, they disproportionately go to minorities, as a result of their lower incomes.

A U.S. Census Bureau study authored by Shelly Irving indicated that 41 percent of African Americans and 36 percent of Hispanics are welfare recipients compared with 13 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

But it's not merely a matter of statistics.

Aside from the untold trillions spent on programs, how many books have been written in America attempting to remedy the condition of minorities? How much time has been spent discussing solutions? And what of affirmative action, housing projects and the innumerable community efforts expended in attempting to improve the lives of minorities?

We all know the horrible history of racist atrocities in America — from slavery to segregation to lynching. But we must not forget the antidotes

America has produced against its own racist poison.

This country does care about its minorities and its poor. Just ask any student here at FIU, or at any other university, about the status of American minorities. Whatever their opinion may be, there will be no lack of concern for fellow countrymen, regardless of the color of their skin.

If there is to be hope for minorities, not just in America but in every country on earth, it's going to come from reaffirming the profoundly American ideals of liberty and equality.

We ought not denounce the whole of America, or disrespect her national symbols, let alone question what the U.S. stands for; we should instead challenge our government to vehemently stand behind the ideals it preaches, and to criticize it when it fails to meet our expectations.

But to adopt anti-American ideas of people like Fidel Castro as Kaepernick suggests is to give up the very notion of the American dream and hope for the improvement of the most vulnerable members of society.

Christian Gonzalez is a contributing writer for FIU Student Media. His column, Conservative Corner, is a commentary on foreign affairs, culture, and social sciences. For suggestions or comments, please contact Christian at opinion@fiusm.com.

“We all know the horrible history of racist atrocities in America — from slavery to segregation to lynching. But we must not forget the antidotes America has produced against its own racist poison.”

are if it had not been ... for cheap labor. I am speaking very seriously ... I picked cotton, I carried it to the market, I built the railroads under someone else's whip for nothing."

"For nothing ... The Southern oligarchy ... was created by my labor and my sweat and the violation of my women and the murder of my children. This in the land of the free, the home of the brave."

He adds that the sin of slavery is not even debatable. It is a "matter of historical record."

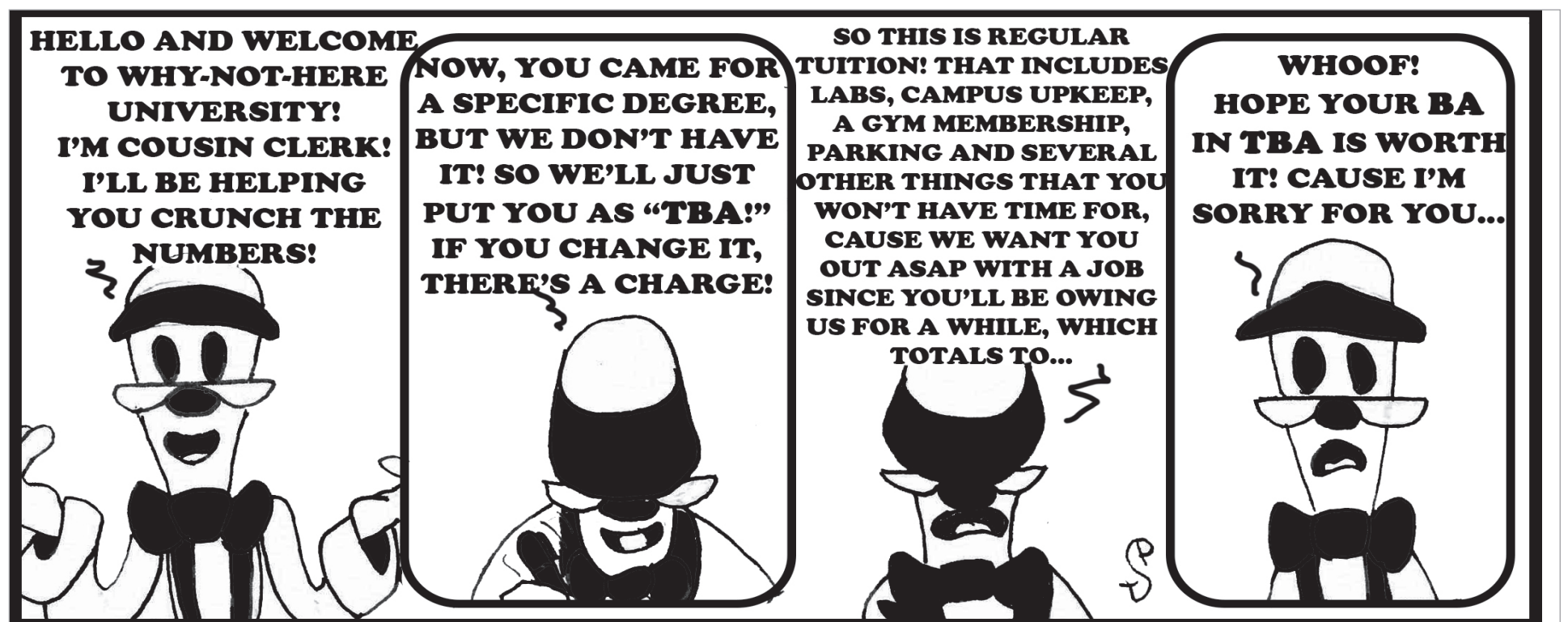
"It is a terrible thing for an entire people to surrender to the notion that one-ninth of its population is beneath them," said Baldwin. "Until the

says is true.

While Baldwin neglects to mention that the working conditions of northern whites in industrial sweatshops weren't exactly stellar, he is right to remind us about the deprivation of the property and the liberty of millions of black slaves. He is also right in demanding of American society that it accept African Americans as part of the American identity.

Buckley did not completely disagree, but he issued a challenge which could not be answered in 1965 and cannot be answered still today. He said, with regards to the supposed disregard for the condition of minorities in the US, that, "I challenge you to name me

BA IN TBA



SAM PRITCHARD-TORRES/THE BEACON

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Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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POSTED WITH POSTERS



PETER HOLLAND JR./THE BEACON

Students look through posters for sale by GlobalPrints.com, an organization that travels across the country.

Nonbinary student exists in 'gray area' of identity

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Noel Cerulean is a student living in a "gray area" of multiple identities.

Cerulean, a senior majoring in nutrition and dietetics, is a first-generation Cuban-American who also identifies as non-binary and asexual; the former describes someone who identifies as neither male nor female, and the latter describing someone who does not experience sexual attraction.

"[I'm] a mesh of everything so at the same time I'm not anything," said Cerulean, who uses they/them pronouns.

However, there is one aspect of their identity they consider to be the most important.

"The biggest aspect of my identity ... is my identity as an activist who fights for causes that are important to me and who fights to make the world a better place for everyone, so that people don't have to feel like they have to fit in to be someone who matters," they said.

Fitting within certain spaces, particularly Cuban, has been difficult for Cerulean due to their multiple identities.

"My family is really Cuban. I go

to all the family events and I hear them speaking super Cuban Spanish ... about Cuba," they said. "But I can't relate so much to that because I'm not from Cuba."

However, Cerulean doesn't identify fully with "American" either.

"Whenever I go anywhere in the country ... and I'm with my family speaking Spanish, people look at us like we're different," said Cerulean, recalling a time their family was discriminated against while on vacation.

"I went to Coco Beach [with my family] and my grandma was speaking Spanish to us, and the family next to us started speaking 'mock-Spanish' – making fun of us."

Along with being pressured to identify as either Cuban, American or both, Cerulean also feels pressured to conform to gender roles.

"I don't really identify with being a man but if I want to put my foot through the door in some places, and I deviate from male, I'm not going to get that opportunity," they said.

Though Cerulean prefers "they" or "them" pronouns, they often hesitate to tell others their preferred pronouns.

"If someone asks, I'll say [my preferred pronouns]," they said, "Because if they're asking they're probably aware, but otherwise I never say it because I know the

backlash I'll get."

It's been through Cerulean's activism and involvement with groups like the Students for Justice for Palestine that they have found their niche and people who accept them for who they are.

"I feel really comfortable with SJP because I know that I can just be myself," they said.

They also feel at home with the friends they made in student housing.

"We understand each other on a deeper level, our friendship is personal," said Cerulean. "It's about getting to know each other."

When asked how to best connect with people who live at the intersection of many identities, Cerulean says the answer lies in listening.

"Listen to the people you are standing in solidarity with, take what they're saying about themselves [and] what you're doing as an ally and listen to what they're saying," they said.

Allies can also use their privilege to help other communities, according to Cerulean.

"For example, if you're white and you're trying to help Black Lives Matter, you speak to other white people, get other white people on board with Black Lives Matter," they said. "Amplify and don't speak over. Speak to the ones who aren't listening."

Drug-user photo exhibit launches

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requesting help to be heard.

"We were doing research on HIV and drug abuse in the Dominican Republic on a larger project, and we met a small group of heroin users in this neighborhood that we visited as a part of our research," Padilla said. "They began to tell us their stories and how they felt essentially abandoned by society. They said 'We are ready to tell our stories, and we don't want to be invisible anymore.'"

The Green School of International and Public Affairs and Kimberly Green Center Latin American and Caribbean Center will be showcasing the hardships of heroin addicts in the Dominican Republic through photos.

The Lens Project, spearheaded by Mark Padilla and Armando Matiz Reyes, was a two-year long project that placed cameras in the hands of addicts and taught them to be social analysts in an effort to educate and inform the community and policy makers about addiction.

Padilla, a global and sociocultural studies associate professor, said the project began after a group of the community approached researchers in Santo Domingo

Padilla said that the participants were, at the time, homeless and current drug users, and also lived in horrific conditions, but the fact that they suggested and were dedicated to the project made it easier to complete.

He and and Matiz Reyes began to

SEE DRUGS, PAGE 6

Organic foods are the healthier option

SDA HEALTH



SABRINA SCOVINO

Whether it's on the products you see in the grocery store or in an article published in your favorite health magazine, you have surely heard of organic foods.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, organic food products are those that follow the production restriction imposed by the association, which limit the use of chemicals, hydrogenation, trans-fats, pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones.

These products are often more expensive than the conventional ones, however, is their nutrition quality worth spending a few extra bucks on?

A great debate has sparked concerning the organic food products that, lately, have been increasingly demanded by consumers, according to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

A study was conducted by the AJCN to seek evidence proving that organically produced foods had better nutritional quality than conventional foods; results showed there is no difference in nutrient quality between the two.

The issue here is, can that be concluded based on nutrient content alone? Is the value of food defined merely by it?

There are multiple factors to consider when making the decision of grabbing the regular or the organic package of an item. Taste, cost, and the presence of pesticides, antibiotics and chemicals in foods also contribute to

their value.

The presence of pesticides in fruits and vegetables is a reality, and so are the associated health risks.

Cancer, hormone disruption, infertility, birth defects, and toxicity of the brain and nervous system are just some of the issues on the rise.

A study conducted by the National Resources Defense Council found that memory and hand-eye coordination impairment, low physical stamina and other health issues were found in children exposed to pesticides.

In addition, genetically modified organisms should also be considered when defining the value of foods.

Currently, there are no regulations on GMO labeling in food products and yet, they are associated with several health risks: liver problems, reproductive problems, infant mortality, and allergies.

Organically produced food products are the number one alternative to avoid these risks. Even though they tend to be more expensive, preventing these health issues will save you the big money in the long run.

To conclude that organic foods are no different from conventional foods based on nutrient quality is quite unfair.

Shop locally; buy from the farmer's market, because despite the very small difference in nutrient content, organic foods are the healthier choice to feed your body today.

SDA health is a column written by members of the Student Dietetic Association focused on healthy living for students. To contact SDA, email life@fiusm.com

Alumna finds success in fashion blogging

STEPHANIE CASTRO

Contributing Writer

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Former Panther Annie Vazquez's motivation to start a blog was propelled by a few harsh words of wisdom.

"Originally I wanted to be a poet, but a creative writing professor at FIU told me my work was no good and that it's better to find another career. So I did the second thing I liked to do and that was fashion. Hence 'The Fashion Poet' blog name" Vazquez said.

Vazquez is known for her eclectic style and edgy pieces, something she said was influenced by her mother.

"I spent a lot of my childhood in and out of stores shopping with her and I'd watch her dress in stuff other moms weren't wearing and always receive a ton of compliments. I started to do the same."

Since graduating from FIU with a liberal studies degree, Vazquez has pursued fashion writing full-time.

Writing came naturally to Vazquez and her love for fashion made her idea for a blog flow effortlessly, but her eye for innovation is what helped her secure the title of "Miami's fashion pioneer" given to her by Style Blazer.

"I was a journalist at the time and I was living through the change. There were so many stories about local designers and style events, but papers weren't buying them and I decided to do something about it," said Vazquez.

Though blogging has become a social media staple, not everyone supported Vazquez's decision to begin her blog.

"I had three people that believed in me. Everyone else thought I was crazy or I was going to fail," said Vazquez.

That didn't stop her, and she became a "social media influencer," since graduating in 1999. According

to LuxuryDaily.com, social media influencer campaigns are 11 times more impactful than digital advertising.

Vazquez's blog, The Fashion Poet, has been voted Miami's Top Fashion Blog by the New Times in 2013, and was awarded Best Fashion Content Creator at the Hispanicize x Telemundo Awards in 2016. Vazquez also became the first blogger from Miami to star in a campaign for Coach.

"Every year I set goals and go after them. I think coming out in Vogue was epic, but really following my love of writing and fashion because it led me to this. You have to do what you love because you'll be successful."

The FIU alumna says that doing a job you hate for the rest of your life isn't worth the money when you can earn a lot doing the things you love.

"You just have to give things time and believe it. Most people quit too fast or they want instant success but my journey [was] long and I had a lot of doors shut in my face and I spent some sleepless nights wondering."

Getting to where she is now did not come easy, according to Vazquez. she says she had to work three jobs to support her freelance writing. During that time, she was asked why she didn't quit, but she felt like to quit writing would leave nothing else for her because writing makes her happy.

"The only failure is not trying. Life is short. We are all blessed with gifts and we are here to use them." Vazquez said. If I could recommend a book to kids in college, it would be: The Alchemist and The Secret. Read those books. "Manifest good stuff, believe in the magic, trust the universe and most important let your star shine. We are here to shine and fear is fake. Don't believe the hype."



'La Nona' a 'huge deal' for theatre department

CAYLA BUSH

Editor in Chief

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For the first time in 42 years, the Department of Theatre will stage a play completely in Spanish.

"La Nona," Roberto Cossa's story of an immigrant family working to feed their grandmother, opens on Friday, Sept. 23. For instructor Marina Pareja, who did the play years ago in English, it's a real change.

"I wanted to give it another try, and do it in Spanish, because when I did it in English I felt that it didn't translate properly," Pareja said.

Although Pareja says that staging the play in Spanish caters to the bilingual community and fills a void in the department, costume designer Caroline Frias and set designer Mario Alonso said they nevertheless faced with a language barrier.

"This show has been one of the most challenging designs ever presented to me. I don't speak any Spanish, so I had to read an English version of the script," Alonso said. "Things get lost in translation, so the designers reading the Spanish script vs. me reading English script might get two different ideas about the scenes throughout the show."

Frias said the English script didn't do the play justice, as the "narrative flows better in Spanish."

Alonso said the novelty of a completely Spanish

show will have a payoff for the department.

"Some people may be like, 'Oh, cool, it's a theatre piece in Spanish,' but it's a huge deal for us, and I think it's a really great opportunity," Alonso said.

Pareja, the play's director, said that in addition to wanting to redo the story in Spanish, she chose the show because of its relevance to the community.

"It's relevant in the sense that it deals with different issues. Mainly, it has to do with the working middle class and how powerless they can be in front of unforeseen forces sometimes. It's very relevant to our political, economic and social issues right now. It also has to do with immigration issues, to an extent," Pareja said.

Set in 1970s La Boca, "La Nona" follows the struggles of a family who immigrated to Argentina. The family, according to Pareja, wanted to escape Italy's socioeconomic turmoil but settled in a new country fighting an even bigger issue.

The deterioration of the characters is also reflected in the costume. One character, Maria, undergoes six as her ethics unravel.

"I just would like the audience to notice that deterioration of the costumes. Look at the colors. Look at the actual distressing of the costumes. [Marta's] costumes indicate something about her that is never explicitly mentioned out loud," the third-year BFA candidate said.

By the end of Act Two, the characters are doing very strange things; Alonso uses that distortion of reality to create the scene as a backdrop.

"If you really look into La Boca, there's a lot of violence in it. It's not the greatest city in the world, as you would depict it to be because it's so colorful and so bright," Alonso said. "It's a great touristy place, but it's actually kind of dark, in a sense. So we played a lot with the distortion of reality and things falling apart, things not being the way that they appear to be."

The senior BFA candidate said that the single-unit set doesn't change much, but the lighting changes really bring the visual metaphor of deterioration home for audiences.

"With the different colors amplifying the set, as those start to disappear, you start to see the imperfections within the set both intentional and unintentional," Alonso said.

The show, which Pareja describes as a tragic comedy, will play until Oct. 3 in the Black Box Theatre, which Alonso says will add something special to the show.

"The comedy and tragedy are so close together. I think that's one of the great things about this show; you have all these great emotions mixed in, in one play," said Pareja.

Panthers share first generation experiences

PATRICIA KATRI
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College is often a time of many firsts: first time living on your own, first time thinking seriously about a career, first time contemplating adulthood.

For first-generation college students, meaning first in their families to enroll in and/or obtain a four-year college or university degree, these firsts can be accompanied by particular joys and tribulations, including high parental expectations.

“As a first-generation college student, [I faced] a lot of pressure from my family,” Destiny Medina, a sophomore and psychology major said. “They had high expectations for me to get straight-As, to be involved, and even eventually to become a doctor.”

Madeline Tablada, a freshman and biology major, echoes this sentiment.

“I’m the first in my family to seek higher education which will set the bar for future generations,” she said.

The overall number of such students has increased over the last 40 years. Of 7.3 million full-time undergraduates attending four-year colleges and universities, 20 percent are the first in their family to go to college.

The College Board acknowledges some of the challenges faced by first-generation college students, advising counselors working with students who are preparing for college to reach out to these students early, to involve the family, and to help explain what college will be like.

“First-generation students may never have been encouraged to assess their talents and weaknesses with a view toward higher education,” the College Board states on its website. “They are likely to have minimal knowledge of what education requirements are for certain professions.”

Others are as knowledgeable about their future

prospects as their counterparts from “college-going families,” those who have sometimes sent generations of family members to institutions of higher learning.

“I’m currently majoring in psychology, hoping to go to graduate school and have a concentration in mental health,” Medina said. “My dream would be to become a psychiatrist and open my own practice here in Florida and even internationally.”

Tablada also has definite career plans.

“I plan on attending medical school and become a forensic pathologist and/or physician in emergency trauma,” she said.

According to website Inside Higher Ed, the term “first-generation college student” itself requires clarification: does it refer to students who come from homes where neither parent has a degree, or where neither has ever enrolled in college? What if a live-in step-parent has attended college? Or only one parent attended? Do the latter qualify?

While educators and policy-makers might throw the term around without defining it explicitly, the U.S. Department of Education specify the first generation student as one where neither parent has a college degree.

In its First Generation Scholarship program, FIU extends this definition, inviting applications from students “whose parents or legal guardians have not earned a baccalaureate degree.”

FIU offers extensive counseling services for first-generation college students. To be eligible for coaching and guidance for first-generation students, offered by Student Affairs, a student “must be a first-generation college and/or financial aid recipient and/or [be] registered with the Disability Resource Center. In addition, participants must be US citizens or legal residents currently enrolled as undergraduate students at FIU.”

Additionally, students must apply to and participate in the Student Support Services Program.

First-generation college students may require special

assistance in becoming engaged with their education. High levels of engagement can be particularly important to college students, as there is often a high correlation between student engagement and university retention and graduation rates.

In a 2012 study, researcher Krista M Soria found that first-generation students have lower academic engagement and lower retention as compared to non-first-generation students.

Many, however, do not exhibit this trend. For Medina and Tablada, engagement extends beyond the classroom.

“I’m trying to get involved with PASS, a psychology club, Alternative Breaks, and am also thinking about joining a sorority,” Medina said. “I am attempting to gain the greatest college experience that I can.”

Tablada echoes this level of involvement.

“So far, I’m in a sorority, but I plan to be part of multiple organizations on campus,” she said.

Understanding financial aid, the College Board states, is particularly important for first-generation college students. However, colleges and universities may overlook this unless first-generation students seek counseling themselves through such programs as those offered by Student Affairs.

“The university did not counsel me at all with financial aid,” Tablada said.

Overall, perhaps the greatest reward for first-generation students is the prospect of becoming role models within their own families, which now may have a wealth of information to draw from as future generations prepare for college careers and find themselves part of the college-going tradition.

“I’ve been told by family members that I’m an inspiration,” Medina said.

And in terms of being a first-generation college student, Tablada responds: “It’s pretty cool.”

Lens Project exhibit to open

DRUGS, PAGE 4

brainstorm ways to adapt the photovoice methodology to the group.

“The point is to basically allow the photographs to speak for themselves, so the visuals can say something the participants can’t say because they don’t have access to the policymakers or the audience they are trying to reach,” Matiz Reyes said. “Photovoice is a great methodology for those that do not have any kind of education yet still want to make some changes.”

Padilla said the participants learned social analysis and photography skills, to allow the photos to spark discussion and debate about the surroundings of the participants.

The FIU exhibit of these photos, which opens Thursday, Sept. 22 at 5 p.m., is part of efforts by Padilla and Matiz Reyes to show the correlation between heroin addiction and pandemics in the Dominican Republic and the U.S.

“What we’ve been doing recently is talking to teachers to sort of talk about the U.S. based heroin epidemic and show that it’s all connected. The Dominican Republic is not isolated from the U.S. and a lot of the heroin that enters through the U.S. enters through the Dominican Republic,” Padilla said.

The duo hopes to hold workshops and further exhibits to help educate the community to help bring about changes in drug policy and health access. Spanish, people look at us like we’re different,” said Cerulean, recalling a time their family was discriminated against while on vacation.

“I went to Coco Beach [with my family] and my grandma was speaking Spanish to us, and the family next to us started speaking ‘mock-Spanish’ – making fun of us.”

Along with being pressured to identify as either Cuban, American or both, Cerulean also feels pressured to conform to gender

roles.

“I don’t really identify with being a man but if I want to put my foot through the door in some places, and I deviate from male, I’m not going to get that opportunity,” they said.

Though Cerulean prefers “they” or “them” pronouns, they often hesitate to tell others their preferred pronouns.

“If someone asks, I’ll say [my preferred pronouns],” they said, “Because if they’re asking they’re probably aware, but otherwise I never say it because I know the backlash I’ll get.”

It’s been through Cerulean’s activism and involvement with groups like the Students for Justice for Palestine that they have found their niche and people who accept them for who they are.

“I feel really comfortable with SJP because I know that I can just be myself,” they said.

They also feel at home with the friends they made in student housing.

“We understand each other on a deeper level, our friendship is personal,” said Cerulean. “It’s about getting to know each other.”

When asked how to best connect with people who live at the intersection of many identities, Cerulean says the answer lies in listening.

“Listen to the people you are standing in solidarity with, take what they’re saying about themselves [and] what you’re doing as an ally and listen to what they’re saying,” they said.

Allies can also use their privilege to help other communities, according to Cerulean.

“For example, if you’re white and you’re trying to help Black Lives Matter, you speak to other white people, get other white people on board with Black Lives Matter,” they said. “Amplify and don’t speaker over. Speak to the ones who aren’t listening.”

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FOOTBALL

Player of the week, running back says team is 'going to bring it'

JASMINE CASIMIR
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The ending to the story for the Panthers when they played against the University of Maryland, was another loss. But junior running back, Alex Gardner, gave it all he had to fight for a different ending.

Gardner was a man with a plan in the Friday night lights game against the Terrapins, leading the Panthers with 109 rushing yards.

The offense opened up the first quarter scoreless, but had a different mindset for the second quarter as they made an impressive drive to put points on the scoreboard.

The drive to the Terrapins' end zone included a 55-yard breakthrough by the running back, putting the offense at the four-yard line.

"I pressed the hole when the



MICHAEL SLOAJ/THE BEACON

Alex Gardner, junior running back, has possession of the ball, bringing the team at the four-yard line.

offensive lineman got to the guys," Gardner said. "I seen (sic) the cutback and I split through the middle and just did my thing after that." In the very next play,

redshirt freshman quarterback Maurice Alexander handed off to Gardner to finish the job.

Gardner's on-field relationship with quarterback Alex McGough was cut short during the game after McGough sustained an injury, but he made a connection with Alexander after he stepped in for McGough.

"McGough is one of our leaders so when he went down, it was kind of frustrating, but [Hardtime] came in and he showed up big," Gardner said. "With him coming in, it opened us up with the inside run game."

Gardner was one of the four team captains for the matchup, and made it his duty to step up for his team no matter the outcome.

"The great thing about sports is that you get another chance to improve and get better," Gardner said. "We're going to bring it. We'll be good."

COLUMN

Sports director uses tablet giveaway to increase attendance

COLUMNIST



PETER HOLLAND JR.

F I U ' S
Marketing and Promotion Department is doing whatever it takes to increase home attendants for the football games. Perhaps maybe too much than what's already offered to Panther nation.

Just when you thought giving away free tuition last season was enough to fill out seats, the marketing team is now giving the first 500 people free food and free tablets for every home game they attend throughout the season.

Athletic Director Pete Garcia is kicking it to high gears to make sure all home attendants are living up to Division 1A standards.

By failing to do so, the National Collegiate Athletic Association would take away FIU's division one privileges and the University could possibly be downgraded to the FCS subdivision.

According to Garcia, he wants to reward all the fans who come out and support their football team. What's skeptical about this marketing tool is the reward part.

Is it a reward or a desperate bribe to get students to come to football games? Do students come to see a football game or just to get free luxurious items for showing up?

"There are probably other ways, but giveaways and halftime shows (along with a winning team) are the common ones," said Tyler Porth, a senior majoring in sports management and recreation.

There's two ironies to this: One, all football games are free from the get-go. Two, the Panthers were 5-1 at home last season and were one win shy from bowl eligibility. Yet, about 500 to 1500 people would show up, and that's mostly from the opponent's side.

The fans that do show up, however, how long do they planned to stay? You could just simply swipe your card, stay for the first half, then go home. It wouldn't make a difference.

Gina Fernandez, an FIU student who had no interest in the football games, however, the biology major would attend for other reasons.

"I'm not into football, I'm just mostly hanging out with my friends and don't really pay attention to what's going on," said Fernandez. "I do like how they give away free

stuff."

First game against Indiana, 16,089 were in attendance. A decent amount if you want count Indiana fan base and the freshman class.

Against Maryland, 17,084 people were at the FIU Stadium last Friday. The first 10,000 students who showed up received a free T-shirt.

Desperate times does call for desperate measures, right? To make money you have to spend money, right?

As much as Garcia is trying to make FIU a college atmosphere during sporting events, at the end of the day, winning games consistently will bring fans.

The men's soccer team was at one point in the top 10 nationally. There was no marketing scheme to promote home games for the soccer team but a decent amount of people would still show up and sit in the wooden bleachers.

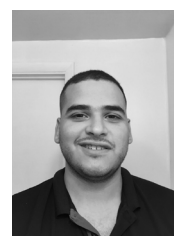
"I think with such a big freshman class, that a lot of people were there for the game ... If anyone did come for the free stuff, then they were probably upperclassmen," said Porth.

Pete's pick is a weekly column about FIU football and Athletic news. To contact Peter, email him at peter.holland@fiusm.com.

SOCCER

Defender leaves hometown to play soccer

COLUMNIST



SAMIR BADER

The more popular than the Iceland premier league. My step father used to play soccer in Iceland, and he got me into it." Whether it's through television, the internet or someone close, soccer, among other sports, travels all over the world to gain someone's interest. Heiddal is a prime example of just how special this sport can be.

With a promising freshman year and a college career for Heiddal, the Panthers look to continue defending their Conference USA championship. Many surrounding the team believe they can take another step forward and gain more respect from their peers all across the nation.

When asked if his favorite player of all time was a forward or defender, Heiddal said: "First thing that comes to mind is Francisco Totti. He's a fantastic player and loyal. I love loyal players."

FIU men's soccer team will travel away to play Wake Forest University in North Carolina at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 20.

Bader Buzz is a biweekly column about occurrences in sports at FIU. To contact Samir, email him at samir.bader@fiusm.com.

Standing at 6-foot-2 and wearing the No. 4 jersey, Heiddal uses his talent of controlling the ball and communicating with teammates to make sure that nothing will get past him.

"It's different in a way. Everything about facilities and how coaching is done, [and] everyone acting so professionally," Heiddal said to Student Media. "Back home in Iceland, there is no professional league so players can act more lousy just to have fun."

Coming from a town where soccer is not taken too seriously, Heiddal thought about what really got him motivated to play.

"Well that's a hard one," Heiddal said when asked about his motivation. "The English premier league is

FOOTBALL

ROAD TO RECOVERY

Running back fights to bounceback from ACL injury



PETER HOLLAND JR./THE BEACON

Napoleon Maxwell, redshirt sophomore, doing drills on the sideline in his orange shirt, which means he's refrained from any contact activities.

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While some players have already returned on the field from their injuries, redshirt sophomore Napoleon Maxwell has yet to be cleared.

According to the

National Collegiate Athletic Association, over 30 percent of injuries encountered involve ligament sprains.

During the 2014 season, Maxwell played six games, rushing for 254 yards and one touchdown that year. With high expectations going into the 2015 season, Maxwell's

sophomore season was over before it started.

Days before training camp, Maxwell was doing drills to prepare for their first official practice when he went down and tore his ACL.

The St. Petersburg native was redshirted and spent his entire season rehabbing his knee. Even

going into this season, Maxwell is not quite ready.

Kevin O'Neill was hired as head trainer for FIU athletics last March, following a 20-year career working for the Miami Dolphins, and works on Maxwell's recovery.

"I tried to take an approach with him in

season to work him five days a week. We're going to give him two good days of recovery every week. Because, the work we are trying to challenge him during those five days is difficult," said O'Neill. "We're trying to take a little step forward each week to be incrementally stronger and incrementally better in movement activities that pertained to his position as a running back."

According to the former NFL Trainer of the Year, one of the exercises he uses for players is cardiovascular workouts, namely stationary biking and treadmills.

"We like him to stay somewhat fit from a cardiovascular standpoint," said O'Neill.

During the recovery process, O'Neill states the importance of making sure injured players are physically ready, but also see if they are mentally.

"I think that if you know

your players, you will have a better understanding of their individual make up, said O'Neill. "Some may require more sensitive handling than others. We always treat them as students, as athletes and interact with other people."

That includes visiting friends, family members and teammates, said O'Neill.

An ACL injury take around nine to 12 months to heal, according to O'Neill. Maxwell has not been medically cleared to participate in football activities going into the Panther's fourth game of the season.

He is still recovering and is looking forward to being in full pads again.

COLUMN

Weight cutting: A danger in combat sports

COLUMNIST



KRISTEN KING

Losing an excessive amount of weight through dehydration and dieting in a short period of time looks as bad as it sounds.

In the fight business, this is known as weight cutting and it's done by fighters who want to achieve a goal weight in order to perform in a specific weight class.

One of the great features about combat sports is that any and every one can perform. Men, women and sometimes children can compete in these sports but they are typically limited to one weight.

This is done to ensure that two athletes are competing against an equal counterpart. This way, there's little chance of one of the athletes having a significant weight advantage over the other.

There are different names for these weight classifications. They start as low as atomweight, which means that a person weighs less than or at least

105 pounds, and end as high as heavy-weight, meaning that a person weighs less than or at least 265 pounds.

Now, having these divisions in weight seems like a fantastic idea to reinforce the fairness of these sports, but the problem lies in the manner in which some of these athletes get down to their designated weight goal.

FIU student Natalie Banos said: "I don't think rapid weight changes can be good for the body. Most of the methods are too severe and unhealthy, which can make the person sick. I don't even think it can improve these people's performances."

She's right. In fact, weight cutting gives an athlete the worst disadvantage there is in combat sports. According to a memo published by the California State Athletic Commission, almost 40 percent of athletes enter their fight dehydrated, which puts them at risk of injury and imbalance within the body.

"The worst part about cutting weight is trying to go back to your regular self. You go from one extreme

in losing a severe amount of weight to another extreme in trying to gain it all back which causes even more problems," said nutritionist and former bodybuilder Nancy Sneed.

From brutal injuries, fainting before fights and death, fighters subject themselves to these risks for the sake of the sport and something must be done to change these ways.

FIU, thankfully, does not promote this extreme measure of weight loss for their sports. Instead, the University offers a healthier alternative that just began at the start of this year.

In January, a group of doctors lead by Dr. Zaher Nuwayhid, initiated a weight management/bariatric surgery program through the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, which will help people lose weight in the healthiest way possible.

"I think having this program at FIU shows how much we care for the health of our students and community. We have some combat sports clubs at the school and I would hope they don't have to weight cut for compe-

titions or tournaments," said FIU student Edrik Bandez. "If they did, I would want them to use a program like this just to make sure that they are 100 percent healthy."

By having a program like this, we are already taking one step to promote safer and healthier alternatives for athletes and people alike who wish to get down to a desired weight. If we continue to do this, hopefully it will spark a change that goes beyond collegiate lines and into professional sports.

These athletes are putting their lives and bodies on the line to fight. The least we, as spectators and fans, can want for them is to guarantee they are at their healthiest when they go into battle.

Kristen's Korner is a column focusing on issues that affect students interested in sports. For questions, commentary or suggestions email Kristen at kristen.king@fiusm.com.