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SCANDAL AND PLATFORM

2016 SGA Election week begins with a disqualification

ERICA SANTIAGO
News Director
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SGA elections week has started and the race is between FIYOU and Access FIU. FIYOU is lead by Alian Collazo, the current SGA speaker and Senator at Large. The party was founded two years ago by current President Alexis Calatayud, current Vice President Tiffany Roman Biffa and Collazo. The party's platform is to provide reasonable and attainable solutions for the FIU community.

FIYOU hopes to encourage Senator engagement with students, creating an environment where students feel comfortable

expressing their concerns to SGA. Among their initiatives, FIYOU is pushing a Rider Rewards Program, which is a bi-monthly semester pass that will allow students to access the BBC shuttle at a cheaper price.

Access FIU is lead by Jose Sirven, president of the Residence Hall Association. The party was founded this year by Sirven. Access FIU's platform is to create a student government that accurately reflects the diversity and needs of the student body. However, Sirven and his running mate, Devondra Shaw, have been disqualified from the race. This is because of questions surrounding the eligibility of Sirven as a presidential candidate.

Students can still vote for Sirven and Shaw due to their disqualifications occurring two weeks before the official elections. The party is currently appealing their disqualification to the Vice President of Student Affairs, Larry Lunsford.

Among their initiatives, Access FIU hopes to partner up with the Department of Parking and Transportation to make the BBC shuttle free for all students.

FIYOU also wants to extend the food pantry to address the needs of students hungry because of their socioeconomic status. The party also wants to partner with the Black Student Union to extend the library hours for all students.

2016-2017 SGA ELECTIONS

MMC POLLING LOCATIONS:

GL BREEZWAY, GC COMPUTER LAB,
EC PANTHER PIT AND AH3- 207

BBC POLLING LOCATION:

AC1 in front of Financial Aid Office

VOTING INFO:

Day 1: Tuesday, April 5

MMC & BBC 9 a.m - 7 p.m.

EC: Noon- 6 p.m.

Day 2: Wednesday, April 6

MMC & BBC 9 a.m - 7 p.m.

RESULTS ANNOUNCED THURSDAY, APRIL 7

MMC: GC PIT AT NOON

BBC: ANOTHER SQUARE AT NOON

CAYLA BUSH/THE BEACON

SEE CENTER SPREAD

2016-2017 SGA CANDIDATES

ACCESS FIU Candidates

JOSE SIRVEN Presidential Candidate
DEVONDRA SHAW Vice Presidential Candidate

MARIA IRAGORRY, ALEXANDER BORNOTE, JAKARIA WILLIAMS AND ALEX CARDENAS
Arts and Sciences Senatorial Candidates

TIA CLAY AND STANLEY EVANS
At-Large Senatorial Candidates

STEPHANIE GUTIERREZ AND ANTHONY SUAREZ
Business Senatorial Candidates

GENEVIEVE REMY
Education Senatorial Candidates

MARTIN VILLAMIZAR
Honors College Senatorial Candidates

NAJARI "MALLIEK" MURREL
Housing Senatorial Candidates

SHARLENE BUCHELY AND COOPER EISINGER
Lower Division Senatorial Candidates

ROCIO TAVERAS
Nursing & Health Services Senatorial Candidates

VICTORIA LOCKWOOD
Public Health & Social Work Senatorial Candidates

SALVATORE CONSTANZO
Engineering & Computing Senatorial Candidates

Unaffiliated Candidates

MUHAMMAD NASAR
Business Senatorial Candidate

CHAZMAN CHILDERS AND ANTHONY GORRIN
Engineering & Computing Senatorial Candidates

EVAN CRUZ AND SERGIO CHAVIANO
Lower Division Senatorial Candidates

PETER HERNANDEZ
Nursing & Health Services Senatorial Candidate

MOHAMMAD-TAGHI MORAVEJ
Graduate Senatorial Candidates

FIYOU Candidates

ALIAN COLLAZO Presidential Candidate
MICHELLE JUAREZ Vice Presidential Candidate

AARON WEISMAN, JUAN DUARATE AND MONICA REYES
Arts and Sciences Senatorial Candidates

SASHA SANTTI AND JOHNNY LEWIS
At-Large Senatorial Candidates

SIMRAN SAKRANEY AND JESUS PERNIA
Business Senatorial Candidates

ASHLEY ESPINOZA
Education Senatorial Candidate

KURT CALIBARA
Honors College Senatorial Candidates

JONATHAN PADILLA
Housing Senatorial Candidates

VANESSA BERRIOS, JULIAN ALARCON AND LAUREN ALEXANDER
Lower Division Senatorial Candidates

MELISSA CANCIO
Nursing & Health Services Senatorial Candidates

ALEXIA ZADOK
Public Health & Social Work Senatorial Candidates

GILBERT RODRIGUEZ
Engineering & Computing Senatorial Candidates

KAYLA COX
Architecture & the Arts Senatorial Candidates

SAHAR AJABSHIR, ANDRES GONZALEZ AND MWAI OSAHAR
Graduate Senatorial Candidates

CAYLA BUSH/THE BEACON

NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Polls find Trump benefits from mayhem at his rallies, at least for now

Protesters are a boost to Donald Trump’s campaign for the Republican presidential nomination. But should he become the nominee, his insulting, tough-guy ways of dealing with those who disrupt his rallies may be a big liability. Mayhem has become commonplace in, around and as a postscript to the billionaire businessman’s public events. Tuesday, police in Florida charged Corey Lewandowski,

Trump’s campaign manager, with simple battery, a misdemeanor. Police say he grabbed the arm of Michelle Fields, a reporter at the time for Breitbart News Network, as she tried to ask Trump a question March 8, apparently causing an injury. A campaign statement said he would plead not guilty and was “completely confident that he will be exonerated.” He is scheduled to appear before a judge May 4.

Obama tackles heroin and prescription drugs addiction in new initiative

President Barack Obama will announce a series of new public and private sector initiatives Tuesday designed to expand treatment, funding and education to combat the nation’s prescription opioid and heroin abuse problem. Opioids are a class of narcotic pain medications that include prescription drugs like OxyContin, Percocet and morphine, along with the illegal drug heroin.

From 2000 to 2014, the rate of opioid overdose deaths has increased 200 percent, according to the U.S.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And in 2014, 61 percent of U.S. drug overdose deaths involved opioids. The epidemic has led to a similar increase in heroin usage and overdoses since prescription opioids are often a gateway to heroin abuse. Speaking at the National Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit in Atlanta on Tuesday, the president will discuss the problem with medical experts, community leaders and people struggling to overcome their addiction.

California isn’t using blood data in Exide battery plant cleanup

The state of California has blood test results showing high levels of lead in children living near the closed Exide battery plant in Vernon, southeast of downtown Los Angeles, but is not using the information to direct its cleanup of lead-contaminated homes and yards. Health experts say the test results should be used to help pinpoint

neighborhoods most in need of swift cleanup because children there have been exposed to more of the poisonous metal. Lead, which spewed for decades from the Exide Technologies recycling facility, is especially dangerous to young children, putting them at risk of lifelong developmental and behavioral problems.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Emerging City Champions Fellowship scholarship has opened

NADINE MATAS
Staff Writer
nadine.matas@fiusm.com

The Office for Global Learning, here at Florida International University, sent out an e-mail in the past week regarding a fellowship program, whose application process starts at the end of March.

The name of the scholarship is the 2016 Emerging City Champions Fellowship Program. In an e-mail sent out to students, the Fellowship Program describes itself as follows:

“The Emerging City Champions is a fellowship program for civic innovators and status quo breakers in the 26 communities where Knight invests. The program empowers people who see opportunity in urban challenges and who are committed to creating change to enhance their communities.”

Dr. Stephanie Paul Doscher, Associate Director of Global Learning Initiative, says “FIU serves as a solutions center for South Florida and beyond. We realize this commitment by educating and supporting our students as solution makers—people with the knowledge, skills, and passion needed to lead positive change for people and the planet.”

The Knight Foundation, as they describe on their website, “supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. We believe that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged.”

Dr. Doscher sent out this opportunity to the students of the FIU community in hopes that the students could take advantage of the program.

“You don’t have to have a degree,” she says, “to make a difference—this fellowship presents students with an extraordinary opportunity to make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of right here in Miami, right now.”

The Knight Foundation, as seen on their webpage, in Florida alone, has four stations. The one

in Miami has a Program Director as the first point of contact. Overall, in the United States, they have 26 program locations. These locations are more centralized in the eastern part of the United States.

In the e-mail sent out, it lists that, in order to apply to this program there are a few requirements to be met.

The students who apply must be between the ages of 19 and 35, whose projects are based in one of the 26 project communities that the Knight Foundations invests in. These project ideas must contribute to improved urban mobility and public space. Finally, the applicant must turn in a multimedia submission of their project.

After fulfilling these application requirements, the student’s work will be evaluated and “successful applicants,” as the e-mail states, will be chosen to

to improve infrastructure or etc., that’s why they became a civil engineer in the first place.” Gomez says. “This would let them test out what they know and allow them to be creative before they get a job and are just forced to do work they are hired for.”

“I think it’s a great innovative idea in getting the young minds thinking beyond the boundaries.” Iqra Khan, a senior Psychology student, says “It will help them think outside the box around bringing forth new changes in the local community.”

“I see no reason not to try though,” Gomez state, “even if you don’t win all the way, it’d definitely be a good resume builder since you actively worked on a project, and the freedom it allows lets you do almost anything.”

The Emerging City Champions Program, in

“Any civil engineer surely has some resting idea in their mind on how to improve infrastructure or etc., that’s why they became a civil engineer in the first place.”
Andres Gomez
Senior Psychology

attend a special program in Canada where they can experiment with other individuals. Afterwards, they are given the deadline of one year and \$5,000 to complete their project in the community they chose.

Students on campus have mixed feelings about the program.

Andres Gomez, a senior psychology pre-law student, tells us, “It definitely sounds like it’s for civil engineers, and it sounds kind of specialized so no one outside of this field could really participate.”

The program’s expectations are for students to make change in their community through a certain route of projects, designed to improve a specific sector. In this case the sector of mobility of a place’s population.

“Any civil engineer surely has some resting idea in their mind on how

the e-mail, believes that this is an opportunity to “embrace the dynamism of your community by creating positive change. It’s about celebrating nimble approaches to city building that invite and empower everyone to participate in their community.”

“This [workshop in Canada], will help them mingle and connect with other bright minds and bring forth many new diverse sets of ideas” Khan says.

Gomez does not see the fellowship without flaw. “A con would be since it’s so open and with minimal rules, it could lead to not much direction, and some projects could be heavily favored over the others because the judges (or whoever) might prefer how one project leaned over the other.”

THE BEACON

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To Greek or not to Greek?

FIU's Greek SGA un-democratic

ROOM 101



JUAN SALAMANCA

On the fifth and sixth of April, thousands of students at FIU will be casting their ballots in the student government elections.

You know how this story goes; show up on election day, cast your ballot and if your party wins, your interests

are represented by your representatives. Everyone goes home content with the state of the civic affairs. It's democracy in action.

Yet what if nobody elected or any of the candidates available truly represent you?

What if none of the candidates even represent the majority of the population?

For the majority of FIU students, this is the case.

How are most FIU students not represented by SGA? Consider the following: President Alexis Catalayud is a sister of Phi Mu. Vice-President Juan Gilces is a brother of Zeta Tau Beta. Supreme Court Chief Justice Sergio Molina is a brother of Theta Chi. All associate supreme court justices, save one, are affiliated with Greek organizations. Of all the senators in SGA, only two are not associated with a Greek organization.

Speaking as what a fraternity brother

may call a "GDI," a slur for non-Greek men developed by frat brothers which fully spelled out is unpublishable, this strikes me as undemocratic. The University is not particularly known for its extensive Greek life despite the activity of the Greek organizations on campus. No matter how many three-lettered shirts you might see walking around under GL, most FIU students aren't Greek. So why is our student government run by them?

The answer is simple; Greek organizations are precisely that, organizations. By nature, they organize things. And in low turnout elections like the student elections of a massive commuter school like FIU, organization is everything. Any brother or sister who decides that they want to run for a political office at the school is backed by the formidable campaign machinery of their Greek society. It also doesn't hurt that Greek loyalty means that any member of a Greek organization that runs for office will have the entirety of their fraternity or sorority voting for them. This isn't to say Greeks are bad people or corrupt. Greeks simply have organizational advantages that non-greeks don't.

Consider that the non-affiliated at FIU are notoriously disengaged and apathetic toward campus politics. As a result, most don't run for office or end up voting at all in the election. Even if they did run for office, running against

a Greek means alienating the other Greeks.

They also have to cull their support organically, which taking the apathy of FIU non-Greeks into account, means a tough fight to have any sort of support at all.

The impact is that Greek organizations get a virtual carte blanche in setting SGA policy. This isn't just paranoia; the Greeks in charge appointed a bunch of Greeks to sit on the bench of the SGA Supreme Court.

The late Justice Antonin Scalia lamented the lack of educational diversity in the United States Supreme Court and I would imagine that he wouldn't be too impressed by the lack of diversity in FIU's own supreme court.

Whatever party wins the SGA elections, they should commit to including the voices of the non-affiliated and running more non-affiliated candidates in the future. In this regard, I seriously doubt that the incumbent party plans change much.

So I sign off with this message to the non-affiliated at FIU: you know what to do this April.

Room 101 is a column about politics and economics. Juan is a double major in International Relations and Political Science. For further commentary, please email Juan Salamanca at opinion@fiusm.com

Letter to the Editor: Sirven and Shaw wrongfully disqualified

The SGC-MMC Supreme Court was assembled following a week and a half before FIYOU Political Party President Juan Gilces filed the appeal that disqualified Jose Sirven. Chief Justice Molina was appointed by Alexis Calatayud last semester. The associate justices, however, were appointed recently, which conflicts with the SGA Constitution. Article V., Section 6, (F), of the SGA Constitution reads:

"In the case of a vacancy in the Court, the Chief Justice shall immediately appoint a new justice to be confirmed by the Senate."

Article VII, Section 5 of the SGA Constitution applies to both BBC and MMC Courts and states:

"Each Justice shall maintain, during Fall and Spring semesters, a minimum of nine (9) undergraduate or six (6) graduate credit hours for each semester in office; in their semester of graduation Justices are exempt from these requirements, but shall maintain a minimum of (3) credit hours."

However, the MMC Court must abide by, Article V, Section 5.02, Subsection (a), Subsection (i) of the SGC-MMC Statutes which explicitly states:

"All newly appointed Supreme Court Justice seats shall be reserved for students enrolled and in good academic standing at the FIU College of Law."

The associate justices appointed by Chief Justice Molina and confirmed by the FIYOU-controlled Senate are all undergraduates.

Ironically, justices who clearly do not qualify for their positions were to make a ruling on whether or not Jose Sirven qualifies to run for president.

All justices have the "power and duty" to recuse themselves (remove themselves from making a decision) when a bias exists. However, when Jose Sirven asked for the recusal of Chief Justice Molina, it was denied. Chief Justice Molina is the president of Theta Chi, the same fraternity to which Alian Collazo, FIYOU presidential candidate, belongs.

Thanks to the Supreme Court's biased ruling, Collazo will win by default if the decision is not appealed. This would be a momentous feat for their fraternity.

The legitimacy of the Supreme Court is further called into question when it was discovered that the court may have provided false information on legal documents. The Court's opinion states Feb. 25, 2016 as the date Mr. Gilces filed an appeal to the Supreme, but the writ was actually filed on Feb. 23, 2016, according to a copy of the writ of certiorari. This was done to ensure that Jose Sirven would not be able to switch positions with the Vice Presidential Candidate of Access FIU, Devondra Shaw.

The statutes allow the presidential candidate to switch with the vce presidential candidate if the presidential candidate is disqualified more than two weeks from the first day of voting. Because of the Court's deliberate lack of timeliness, Jose Sirven disqualification fits these conditions.

Pursuant to Article V., Section 5.03, (a), the Supreme Court needed to validate the writ within ten business days. The writ was validated on the 11th day, which makes the court in violation of the Statutes and renders the decision reached by the court invalid. Indicating Sirven's eligibility to participate in the 2016 SGA Elections.

It is a shame, but Jose Sirven, Devondra Shaw and AccessFIU are a victim of the very political manipulation that encouraged the creation of AccessFIU.

AccessFIU Political Party Leadership

Letters to the Editor are not written by FIUSM Staff. They are submitted by readers of The Beacon.

Greek involvement in SGA beneficial

POLITICOBUZZ



FABIENNE FLEURANTIN

SGA elections are coming up at MMC and BBC and students are eager to rally around the candidate of their choice.

The Student Government Association is a government led by students for students, aimed at establishing a

representative form of democracy built to solve the concerns of the FIU student body.

It has often been said that SGA has a heavy Greek influence and there are many benefits to this. Sudyen Navarette, a sister of Phi Mu, is running for the position of senator of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. She expanded upon the positive aspects of Greek Life in student government in an interview with FIUSM.

"Being a part of Greek life, you get to push yourself to get a leadership position, volunteer and join other student organizations. Most Greeks have SGA positions and both organizations can help a student network, have possibilities for a great job and be the voice of many students on campus."

Dennis Par, also in Greek life, is a proud brother of Theta Chi and is the senator of the College of Health and Sciences. He is also the chair for the Rules, Legislative and Judiciary Committee. During his time in SGA, he's had many successes.

"One of my biggest accomplishments during my time here is the development of the Student Health Advisory Council, since recently, there was a merge between student and FIU Health. Our council was very central at that time. That's one thing that after I graduate, once I leave, it'll still be there. And in a way, it's my legacy," Par told Student Media.

There is however, a broad misconception that in order to run or be in SGA, that you must be affiliated and that is simply not true.

"I've had some students come up to me and say: 'Don't you have to be Greek?' And no, the reality is you don't. We encourage everyone to run. We don't want to discourage anyone because yes, it is true... there's a lot of Greeks involved. But that shouldn't mean that anyone else shouldn't be involved. It's all about being inclusive and teamwork," Par said.

Jullyssa Lopez, sister of Sigma Sigma Sigma, is running for lower division senator in the BBC elections. Although she is affiliated, she does not let that dictate who her platform reaches. She is striving to work for all the students of FIU.

"I want to encourage students to take on leadership opportunities from very early in their undergraduate years so they can start building a great resume before entering their junior year. I plan on doing so by spreading awareness and partnering with different

councils and organizations at BBC," Lopez said.

"Also, I want to expand mentorship and internship programs offered only to juniors and senior students to freshmen and sophomores so they are also able to connect with their majors and future careers. I want to make our Panthers' first two years here at FIU the best it can be, help them realize their full potential and build their leadership skills."

Geraldine Gascon-Cavada, sister of Sigma Sigma Sigma, has been with SGA for a year and a half as special events coordinator, speaker pro tempore and vice president. Yet, she spoke passionately about how much SGA could achieve for the students of FIU.

"If we get more people to actually know what SGA does and come out to vote and understand the changes that are going on within FIU. Together we can work to make FIU an amazing place to live and study."

So maybe you are a Greek, proudly wearing letters stitched across your chest. Or maybe you are nonaffiliated. But at the end of the day, Greek or not Greek, we are all Panthers, looking to make our university Worlds Ahead.

PoliticoBuzz is a commentary that raises awareness about political issues in the US and worldwide. For more commentary, contact Fabienne at fabienne.fleurantin@fiusm.com

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

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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VOICE YOU

Meet the political parties f

ACCESS FIU

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Access FIU is a new political party created with the goal of implementing a student government that accurately represents “who the FIU students are,” according to Jose Sirven, the presidential candidate representing Access FIU.

“As of now, only about 10 percent of the population is actually represented in Student Government,” said Sirven to Student Media.

“With an estimated \$19 million budget next year that’s almost completely administered by those students, it’s not a real government per se,” he said. “So our goal was to create a real government that, first and foremost, reflected the diversity that exists in the student body.”

The candidates of Access FIU believe that by providing a more diverse representation of the student body, they can better serve the various needs of the community, according to Sirven.

Access FIU’s platform is divided into three facets. The first facet is “Putting Students First.”

“It means giving increased representation for all students. So we have identified specific student groups that lack significant representation at the University,” Sirven said.

These student groups include students of the African Diaspora, student veterans, students with disabilities among others, according to Sirven.

“Putting students first means caring for the basic needs of our students first and foremost,” he said.

Sirven said these basic needs include feeding students because, according to him, FIU has about “50 percent food insecurity.”

“[Food insecurity] means that those individuals are in danger of being hungry or are hungry because of their socioeconomic status,” he said. “We want to extend dining hours on campus for students who live on campus. We

also want to expand the food pantry.”

Access FIU also wants to lower suicide ideation by providing more resources to Counseling and Psychological Services and increasing the number of counselors available.

The party is also hoping to provide students with more scholarship opportunities.

Sirven said, “We want to work with the Fostering Panther Pride program here at the University to give those students

“
 We want to work with the Fostering Panther Pride program here at the University to give those students more of a voice and provide them more scholarships.”

Jose Sirven
Presidential Candidate
 Access FIU

more of a voice and provide them more scholarships.”

The second facet of Access FIU’s platform pertains to jobs and opportunities for students.

“We would like to create partnerships with fortune 500 companies who exist in the Miami area,” said Sirven.

These partnerships will provide more scholarships and opportunities for FIU students, according to Sirven.

“We would like to emulate the same partnership Emory University might have with Coca Cola,” he said.

The party also wants to increase accessibility for on-campus jobs available to students and will work with President Rosenberg to make this a reality, according to Sirven.

“We want to work with Tallahassee to find a way to extend the Bright Futures scholarships to cover summer semesters as well,” he said. “We’d also like to work with the Black Student Union to extend the library hours at the University and in turn create more jobs on campus for our students.”

FIU Access also wants to work closely with student veterans and the financial aid office.

“A lot of veterans have to wait almost two months, sometimes a whole semester, for their benefits to come from the Veterans Affairs office,” Sirven said.

“Our veterans have served their country and they are entitled to their free education. Other universities are willing to upfront the money but FIU doesn’t want to do that,” he said. “FIU has about 3000 plus veterans at the University. We’re considered a veteran friendly school yet we don’t do little things like this to provide for our veterans.”

Finally, the third facet has to do with transportation.

According to Sirven, Access FIU would like to pursue a partnership with the City of Sweetwater, FIU, Dolphin Mall and the Sweetwater community to create a “viable, safe transportation system.”

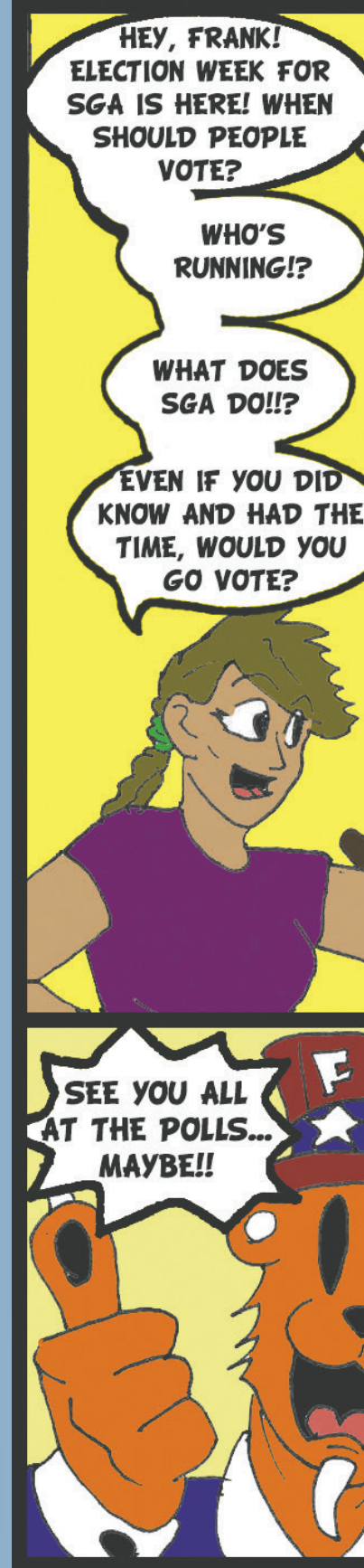
“For the FIU community, that would mean we’d have transportation throughout campus,” he said. “So it would pick students up from Housing then drop them off to the other side of campus, maybe in PG 6 and PG 5.”

That same system would take students, during the week, to places like Target and Dolphin Mall for.

In addition, Access FIU would also like to make the BBC shuttle free for students - an issue that affects students who attend both MMC and BBC for classes.

Sirven says “SGA has the funds to do that. [Access FIU] met with Parking and Transportation and the consensus of the meeting was that it’s viable.”

VOTE 4 PIZZA



Access FIU’s Platform

- Platform is divided into three facets: Putting Students First, Jobs and Opportunities and Transportation.
- Increase the Food pantry
- Extend Library hours
- Extend the Bright Futures scholarships to cover summer semesters
- Lower suicide ideation by providing more resources to Counseling and Psychological Services and increasing the number of counselors available.
- Work with President Mark B. Rosenberg to increase accessibility for on-campus jobs available to students.
- Work closely with student veterans and the financial aid office to get student veterans their benefits quicker.
- Shuttle students to places like Dolphin Mall and Target for free.

OUR CHOICE

for the 2016 SGA Election

FIYOU

CAYLA BUSH
FIUSM Staff
cayla.bush@fiusm.com

FIYOU is a party with University students at the forefront of their agenda, says Alian Collazo. As the party's presidential candidate for SGA, Collazo feels that it's important students understand that SGA is supposed to be an inclusive environment.

"We are a platform for students from all walks of life, all walks of the University, ethnicities and backgrounds to come together under the idea that SGA should be an entity based on selflessness and the idea of student representation," Collazo said.

"If you look at our slate of candidates you can find someone from literally all backgrounds and all walks of life. It's a diverse platform and that's what FIYOU is about."

The idea that everyone has a story and something to contribute to the University is, according to Collazo, why the party was founded two years ago and their focus moving forward.

Collazo says that two years ago, current SGA President Alexis Calatayud, current Vice President Tiffany Roman Biffa and Collazo, one of the current Senators at Large, branched out from FIUnite to create a party that allowed students to feel heard and represented.

FIYOU Business Senator candidate Simran Sakraney says this is the reason she chose to run under FIYOU's political platform.

"A lot of the kids that I'm standing up for, they couldn't do it themselves, because of language barriers or because they don't feel like they have that support," Sakraney said. "We represent those that can't do it for themselves."

According to Sakraney, while being Greek may give students more

confidence and a bit more of a support system, acting as the voice for those who don't have as large a support system is a key role of SGA.

"I'm a member of the Asian Student Union, and we never thought that we could be represented, or that we could have connections to SGA. I never thought we could influence anybody," said Kurt Calibara, candidate for

"If you look at our slate of candidates you can find someone from literally all backgrounds and all walks of life. It's a diverse platform and that's what FIYOU is about."

Alian Collazo
Presidential Candidate
FIYOU

Honors College senator. "I wanted to take the opportunity to be able to do that, because we never had that. I think this is a really great shot to finally have a voice on campus."

Collazo says that in addition to the visible changes in SGA since FIYOU has been in office, candidates like Sakraney and Calibara disprove the narrative that FIYOU is an exclusive party.

"Look at our candidates, we have people from the Asian Student Union, like Kurt, we have people from Theta Tau, which is not a Greek social organization, we have people from Toastmasters like Simran" said Collazo.

"The idea that we as a party are not doing our due diligence to make Student Government have diversity I think it could be very opinion based, and it could serve the purposes of filling in what other people want to hear to make their stories or their campaign viable."

Michelle Juarez, FIYOU's vice presidential candidate extends this sentiment to those who feel only Greek students have access to SGA positions.

"You can see that in our SGA now. In our cabinet not all members of our cabinet are affiliated with a Greek organization," said Juarez. "When they were being interviewed to be a part of the cabinet, it's not like you're asked 'Hey what Greek organization are you a part of.' It's not a prerequisite or it's not an unspoken thing."

According to Juarez, it's the qualifications of the individual that determine if students are appointed to their cabinet positions.

It's this collaborative culture that convinced other members of the party to join.

"From the start of my campaign to now, it's been a never ending support from everyone and that's what I've liked about it," said Sasha Santti, candidate for senator at large. "I'm not alone on this everyone is in on this even. Even when we're running as schools, within different schools their ideas would affect us, so we're all in this together."

Working as one, Collazo says the party aims to develop a new brand of leaders that is pushed to be better within the realm of politics and political parties who make attainable promises.

"We as a political party can't make false promises. We can promise students real things and real change, not for votes, but for the sake of being truthful to them," Collazo said.



SAMUEL PRITCHARD-TORRES/THE BEACON

FIYOU's Platform

- Provide students with reasonable and attainable solutions.
- Start a Rider Rewards Program in which students get a bi-monthly pass to use the GPE at a cheaper price.
- Implement a sexual and mental health kiosk
- Advocate for FIU Expansion to Fair Grounds
- Implement annual on-campus Student Job Fair.
- Organize student-led peer mentorships
- Free printing for Finals
- Extension of Sweetwater trolley to Housing

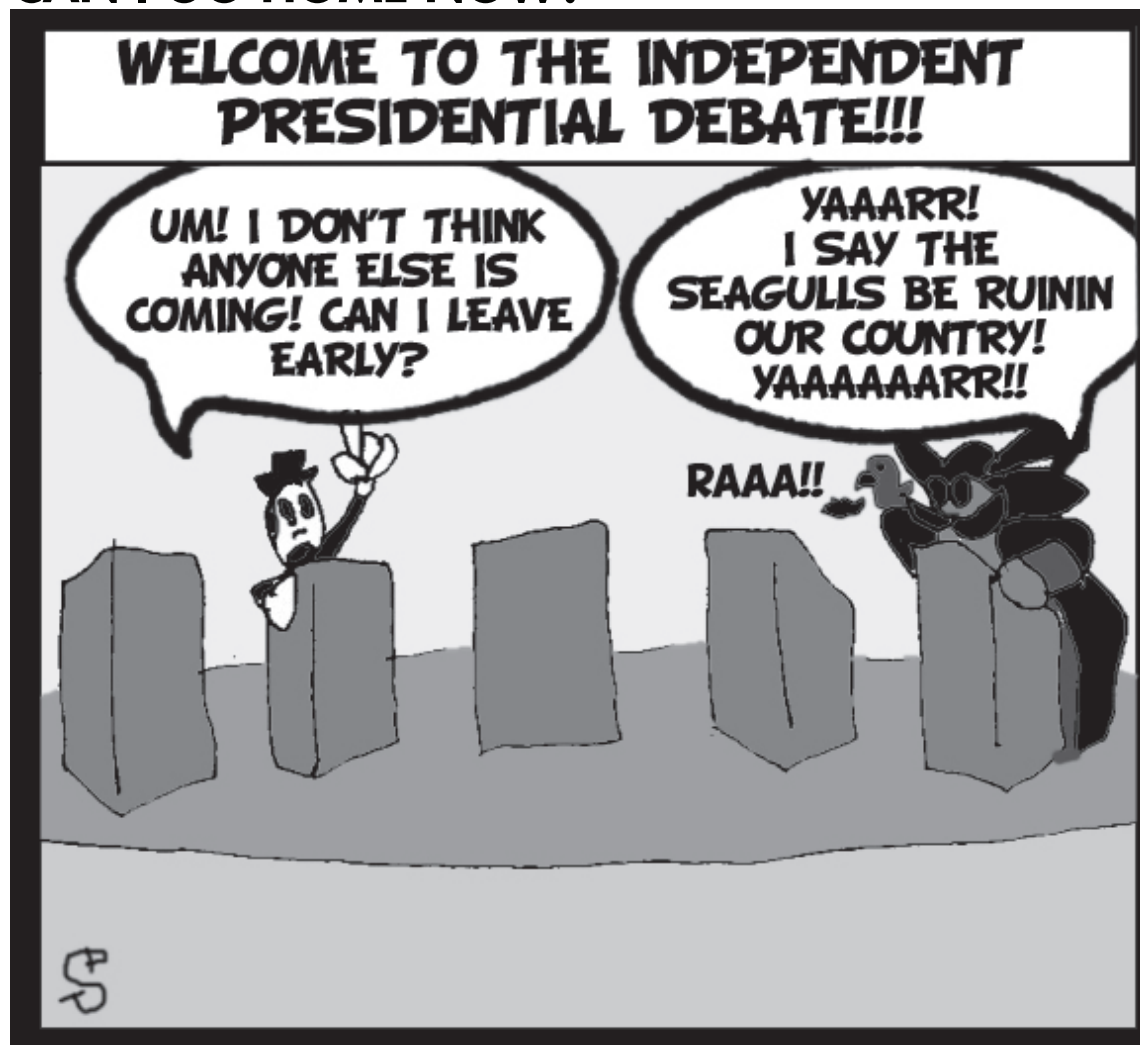
RACE TO THE POLLS



DARIUS DUPINS/THE BEACON

March 29. FIYOU Vice President candidate Michelle Juarez and FIYOU Lower Division candidate Vanessa Berrios inform Gabi Letona, senior Hospitality major of their platforms and upcoming election dates.

CAN I GO HOME NOW?



SAMUEL PRITCHARD-TORRES/THE BEACON

We live in a democracy: Our Votes Matter

M TALK



MICHELLE MARCHANTE

Controversy is around every corner when it comes to the upcoming SGA elections and Access FIU's presidential candidate, Jose Sirven and his sudden ineligibility to run for president.

According to a previous Student Media article, Juan Gilces, vice president of SGA explained that Sirven's ineligibility came from the fact that he had to hold an SGA position for at least a year, as stated by the Constitution of the Student Government Association.

Sirven argues that his position as president of the Residence Hall Association does count as an SGA position but the Supreme Court says otherwise.

The reason for Sirven's ineligibility to run would have made sense if they had stated it from the very beginning of the election process, yet, according to a previous article published by Student Media, Sirven's application to run for president was initially approved by the Elections Board.

So why has this confusion come about just two weeks before the elections? He's either eligible to run or not.

"We looked at multiple documents that are SGA laws and these documents clash with each other," Luis Callejas said in a previous interview with Student Media.

If we decide to ignore the fact that SGA shouldn't have conflicting documents to begin with, we're left with the problem they're causing student voters. The students who plan to vote will find themselves

staring at a ballot that not only has Alian Collazo's name but the disqualified Sirven and his running mate, Devondra Shaw's.

It only makes sense that if the candidate is no longer running then they shouldn't be in the ballot but due to the elections being two weeks away, SGA is unable to take his name off the ballot. Unfortunately, not all of the students who go to vote will be aware of Sirven and Shaw's disqualification and those who decide to vote for him will find themselves virtually casting an empty ballot. Their voice will be left unheard and it would be like they didn't even go to vote. Kind of sounds like a dirty trick doesn't it?

Keeping the names of disqualified and out-of-the-running candidates on the ballots seems to be a common occurrence though in the political world as the same thing occurred in Florida during the this year's primary election. At the time of Florida's primaries, the Republican candidates who were still in the running were Donald Trump, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz and John Kasich - all of the disqualified republican candidates were still listed on the ballot.

There are only two plausible explanations for this. The first, is monetary, where the ballots were already printed before the time of the primary and it would cost too much money to reprint them. The second is that it's a way for the establishment to give the candidate of their choice a higher chance of winning. Unfortunately, both of these explanations are probably true.

By keeping the name of the disqualified candidates on the ballot, the electoral system is confusing the voters and to an extent even silencing

them. If you go to vote and you find that your preferred initially disqualified candidate is on the ballot, you will most likely find yourself checking the box next to their name. You'll assume that they've returned or that you were previously misinformed but for every check next to a disqualified candidates name, that vote has just been lost and thus you've just casted an empty ballot.

When it comes to the monetary cost of the ballot, if that were to be the reason, the ballot shouldn't have been printed until a couple of days-at most a week- of the primary. The same can be said for the SGA elections that we're going to see here on campus on April 5 and 6.

For whatever reason SGA has for disqualifying Sirven, the fault is SGA and SGAs alone. There has been contradictory documentation within SGA on what classifies an official SGA position and while I cannot speak on what the decision of Sirven's running should be, this problem will only hurt the student voter in the end.

The way I see it, SGA has three options: Push the elections back until a final decision on Sirven and Shaw's case is made, reprint the ballots or go with the initial decision done by the Elections Board which is to let him run and let the student voters decide. After all, the worst thing a democratic government wants is to make their voters feel as if their votes- their voices- don't matter.

Michelle Marchante is the Assistant Opinion Director for FIU Student Media. M Talk, focuses on new and innovative ideas. For suggestions or comments, please email Michelle at michelle.marchante@fiusm.com

SOFTBALL

Miners make quick work at Felsberg Field

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Coming off a blowout conference win against Western Kentucky University, the Panthers entered the home stretch of the season where the majority of the games will be against conference

Texas at El Paso.

The Miners were coming into the series with a two game losing streak and their record five games under .500.

Although the Panthers took the lead in both games, the team lost by one run for each game played against UTEP.

During the first game,

UTEP's batter hit a double, making it straight to second base.

The next batter bunt the ball to bring the focus on her while the runner on second base could successfully make it to third.

The next batter tried to bunt the ball again, but the play was unsuccessful after Kaitlyne Musa, sophomore catcher, caught the ball in time to get UTEP out.

It wasn't until the bottom of the second inning when A.J. Belans, sophomore infielder, scored FIU's first run of the game.

"I'm just happy to be able to help out my team," Belans said. "That's my only goal."

Jackie Schoff, freshman outfielder, was the only player to earn an RBI for the game.

The game was tied at 1-1 in the bottom of the third after one of UTEP's batters hit the ball out of the park earning the team's first home run.

Both teams played the fourth inning without scoring any runs. FIU, unfortunately, played the rest of the game without scoring any runs while UTEP scored its second run in the fifth inning taking the lead over the Panthers.

The final score was 2-1,

and FIU earned seven hits while UTEP earned eight; Schoff led the Panthers with two hits.

"We need to have more energy on the field, and we'll be fine," Belans said.

During the second game, UTEP scored four runs in the top of the first inning. The Panthers earned two runs, and Dani Mowry, junior infielder, scored the first run for FIU in the bottom of the first.

UTEP played the second inning without scoring any runs. By the end of the bottom of the second, the Panthers added three hits to the scoreboard and lead UTEP 5-4 after Stephanie Texeira, junior infielder, hit a two-RBI double and Ashley Leon, junior infielder, hit an RBI single.

An error by the Panthers allowed UTEP to lead the team 6-5 in the third inning.

FIU, however, bounced back in the fourth after a UTEP error and tied the game at 6-6. UTEP retook the lead and came out on top after scoring its last run of the game in the fifth inning.

UTEP earned seven runs and 13 hits while FIU earned six runs and 10 hits.

Schoff led the Panthers once again for the night with three hits.

FIU played UTEP again



MEAGAN TAIT/THE BEACON



MEAGAN TAIT/THE BEACON

Infielder, Ashley Leon makes a running catch over second base. Despite the good defensive play all around, the Panthers were swept by the UTEP Miners.

opponents.

Trying to move up in the Conference USA standings, the Panthers had to play a doubleheader against The University of

both teams played the first inning without scoring any runs and earned nothing more than one hit each.

The action began in the second inning after

Outfielder, Jackie Schoff slides into third base in attempt to break up the force out at the base.

Saturday, March 26 at 1 doubleheader April 3 in p.m., and lost 6-4. Denton, Texas at 2 p.m.

The Panthers will play against the University of North Texas in a and 4 p.m.

TRACK AND FIELD

Wilkenson Myrtil finished first place at 'Canes' Twilight Meet

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For the second straight week, FIU's track and field team returned to University of Miami, but this time to compete for the Hurricane Twilight Invitational Friday, March 25 at Cobb Stadium.

With tough competitors from University of Miami, Louisiana State University, University and Cincinnati and Florida Atlantic University also participated in this meet.

Despite LSU dominated majority of the competition, the Panthers made a personal record and finished in the top three in some of the events.

On the women's side, freshman Clarissa Cutliff and Miriam Pierre, once again stood out for the Panthers in the high jump. Cutliff finished second in the high jump with a mark 1.78 meters. This would be a personal record for the Orlando native.

"It was great, I set a new PR for myself, and setting a new school freshman record, it was very good indeed," Cutliff said.

Senior Miriam Pierre won the silver medal in the discus throws, scoring a mark of 43.86 meters.

On the men's side, the Panthers dominated the 100-meter dash.

Former FIU football player, Wilkenson Myrtil, made his debut for the track and field team and finished first place with the time of 10.60 seconds.

Right behind him is fellow freshman Samuel Vrinios who took third with a time of 11.25 seconds. Here's what Myrtil had to say about his debut:

"Overall I'm satisfied coming out, ran for three years, and did what I set out to do and got the job done."

The men's relay team, consisting of Myrtil, redshirt junior Alton Elephant, junior James Jones and sophomore Brian Oliver, finished in second place in the 4x100-meter relay with the time of 40.71 seconds.

FIU also took third in the 4x400 relay with the team of freshman Vinton Lewis, freshman Samuel Vrinios, senior Jamal Dorvilier and sophomore Christian Williams. They finished with the time of 3:33.29 seconds.

During the high jump, Williams placed third with the result of 2.00 meters. Also senior Luka Mustafic earned bronze in the shot put with a mark of 16.64 meters.

Head Coach Ryan Heberling felt pleased on the performance by his track team going

against talents from power five conferences.

He didn't want his team to push themselves too hard, but was still looking for improvement in his runners. He rather focus on the next meet, which is the Pepsi Florida Relays.

that it feels more like a home competition. I think we need to work on taking every opportunity, putting full effort, and taking full advantage of what we have even though it's a local meet."

“

Overall I'm satisfied coming out, ran for three years, and did what I set out to do and got the job done.

Wilkenson Myrtil
Sprinter
Track & Field

”

"I felt pretty good, some freshmen did pretty well, we didn't compete everybody, we got Florida Relays coming up next week, so we try to put a priority on the relays. I think the hardest thing with coming to UM is that doesn't really feel like we're at a meet. Being

The Panthers will now focus on the next meet Friday, April 1. They will be traveling to Gainesville, Fla., to participate in the Pepsi Florida Relays.

2016-2017 SGC-BBC candidates share political platforms, goals

THE FOLLOWING PLATFORM MATERIAL WAS PROVIDED BY EACH CANDIDATE.

Presidential Candidates

Patrick Alcee

I am a highly experienced candidate in world affairs who seeks to accomplish dreams of operating a hotel. With background in French, Creole, Italian, Spanish and Russian influences, I seek to gain sufficient knowledge to apply to everyday life. There is an importance in having a well-rounded leader. I promise to abide by the SGA handbook set forward by FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg and represent FIU's prestigious name while working with and considering the voices of my fellow students.

Allhan Mejia

My goal is to establish and facilitate a stronger relationship between the student body, the university administration and the city of North Miami. I also hope to cultivate a culture of involvement which includes campus engagement, community outreach and sustainability efforts. I will accomplish this by appealing to students on all levels - individual, organizational and as a collective body. I will strive to create a community of which we can all be proud. I sincerely appreciate your consideration as I venture to represent you and take Florida International University's Biscayne Bay Campus Forward

Vice President Candidate

Michema Lafontant

I want to be able to make the Biscayne Bay Campus an environment where students feel the need to stay and interact with other students. I would do so by encouraging student and staff communication, appreciating

and celebrating the achievement of our diverse student body through various ways and over all bringing a sense of connection and positivity to our beautiful campus. "Student interaction leads to student involvement." Student involvement leads to a wide variety of opportunities which can increase our retention rate, graduation rate, etc.

Arts & Sciences Senatorial Candidate

Tonie Jean

As a student of Florida International University's Biscayne Bay Campus, I am able to see the improvement that the various colleges need. I am currently a student of the Arts and Sciences College. To improve the college, I would like students to be more aware of the prerequisites that are needed for them to graduate. Also, more upper-division classes should be added to the Biscayne Bay Campus. This campus can be more than just a pit-stop for FIU students. This campus has so much potential and I want to see it grow into that.

Business Senatorial Candidate

Micaela Suarez

My goal is to be productive and honest about my ideas while being Senator. I believe that students should be informed about SGA more proactively; more changes and concerns can be brought to light to commence discussions of possible changes. Any organization you join at BBC feels like you are being introduced to a little family. In the months that I've been in SGA, members have influenced me to want to do more, just like I believe in every single one of the students I will and do represent as Business Senator.

Honors College Senatorial

Candidate

Lauren Peterson

As previous Speaker of the BBC Senate, I recognize the importance of voicing student concerns and have experienced firsthand the influence and power they have. I would love to return to the Student Government Association here at the Biscayne Bay Campus as a continuing Honors College Senator. I hope that with resources available, the Honors College will learn that there is a student presence on this campus that demands recognition. This is necessary to ensure that BBC's diversity is accurately represented and is just one step in my plan to strive for a truly unified Florida International University.

SJMC Senatorial Candidates

Marquele Brown

By becoming a senator, I get a chance to become the change I want to see. If there is something about my school that the student population is not in agreement with, I have the power to help change that. Being a senator gives me the power to change the course of the school, but it also gives me a great responsibility. It will be my job along with the professors to make sure that the students are getting the education they paid for and they deserve.

Sudyen Navarrete

Becoming an SGA member is something I've always aspired to do since entering college. I already am a senator for The School of Journalism and Mass Communication, I deeply enjoy doing my job and I want to continue doing so. By becoming a senator, I will continue keeping students informed with any updates, engage students with faculty and be the voice for the students I represent. By uniting organizations of my school and getting students engaged

in these organizations is part of my plan as a senator. By engaging, students can build connections and possibilities for potential jobs.

Lower Division Senatorial Candidates

Maria Fauve

My name is Maria Fauve and I am a first year social work student at FIU. I am applying to be senator because I want to be able to promote the experiences that BBC has afforded me to other students. I have many other ideas for BBC like getting a gender-neutral bathroom to accommodate members of the LGBTQ community, extend the hours at the food court and add a health-oriented restaurant. Finally, I want to continue the campus sustainability efforts by starting a plan for BBC campus to be a plastic-free campus.

Jullyssa Lopez

I'm running for the Lower Division Senator position at Biscayne Bay Campus because I want students coming to this campus to be exposed to the amount of growth and enrichment opportunities available to them. I plan on doing so by spreading awareness and partnering with different councils and organizations at BBC. Also, I will support mentorship and internship programs offered to students, so they are able to connect with their majors and future careers. I want to make the freshmen's and sophomores' first two years here at FIU the best it can be and help them realize their full potential.

Nicole Mare

My name is Nicole Mare and I am a first-year social work student at FIU applying for the Lower Division Senate position. I am applying for this position so that I can advocate for the undergraduate students at FIU and continue to

encourage students to get involved. As a senator I would like to host a program where the international students are paired with local FIU students upon arrival. Also, I would like to improve accessibility for students with disabilities in areas such as housing. Lastly, I would like to begin steps toward becoming a paperless campus.

Senator At-Large Candidates

Meredith Marseille

Currently a sophomore majoring in public relations, I have been involved in the senate for over a year now. SGA-BBC has helped me grow as an individual by being able to network, improve my communication skills and continuing my quest to improve BBC. I have been in charge of receiving funding requests, working on surveys to gather student data and speaking to higher authorities to find out answers to questions that the student body has. In a nutshell, SGA-BBC has given me the skills to further myself and I would like to use those skills to continue furthering SGA.

Luc Pierre-Louis

During my time on the Student Council, I have strived for the complete representation of the student body. As chairmen of the Student Advocacy Committee, I have created various successful surveys to address concerns such as meager dining options and the unavailability of various key UCC courses on BBC, resulting in an unnecessary commute to MMC. I sat in key positions within the university to ensure that BBC students received proper representation. If elected as Senator At-Large, I will relentlessly pursue equivocal representation for all students regardless of their college or major. Vote Luc Pierre-Louis. Vote for change.

SGC-BBC elections still missing options

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FIU's Student Government Association at the Biscayne Bay Campus, just like the Modesto Maidique Campus, will be holding its elections April 5 and 6. The difference, however, is the number of candidates running for office.

FIUSM has covered the lack of candidates at BBC in past elections, as well as the implications for the democratic process when a potential student leader runs unopposed. This year, though, students voting at BBC will have one of two choices for executive positions - reelecting current President Allhan Mejia, or newcomer Patrick Alcee.

Currently, the only candidate running for vice president is Michelle LaFontant, though current Vice President Kenley Jean-Louis was previously listed as running alongside Mejia this election by Student Affairs.

Students choices are now also between two candidates for SJMC Senator, either Sudyen Navarrete or Marquele Brown, after the disqualification of Zainab Osazin.

Neither Osazin nor Jean-Louis could be reached for comment regarding their drop from the elections.

Senator At-Large also has two candidates in the running, Luc Pierre-Louis and Meredith Marseille.

Three candidates, Nicole Mare, Jullyssa Lopez and Maria Fauve, are running for Lower-Division Senator.

While this is an increase in participation compared

to previous years, there are still three candidates running unopposed for legislative positions - Tonie Jean for Arts & Sciences Senator, Micaela Suarez for Business Senator and Lauren Peterson for Honors College Senator.

Further, there are still many vacant seats in the BBC senate and judicial branch, according to the Student Affairs website - as there have been for a number of years.

Regarding the ability of students to select their representatives from a pool of worthy candidates, this is a step in the right direction for BBC. However, it seems yet another change the officials students elect this year will have to make to the campus.