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# The Beacon, July 6, 2016

Florida International University

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## BEYOND BREXIT

### British referendum sparks discussion at FIU



MELISSA BURGESS/THE BEACON

Panelists Gwyn Davis, Cem Karayalchin, David Prodger, and Markus Thiel gather to discuss the UK referendum on FIU's MMC campus on Wednesday, June 29.

**MELISSA BURGESS**  
Staff Writer  
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A week after British voters decided to leave the European Union, the so-called "Brexit" referendum has left the world with more questions than clarity.

To help answer some of the questions swirling around "Brexit," FIU's Steven J. Green School of International and

Public Affairs brought together a panel of experts on Wednesday, June 29 to explain their take on the possible geopolitical, economic, and financial implications for Britain and Europe.

The panel included special guest, David Prodger, the British Consul General of Miami; Markus Thiel, the director of Jean Monnet Center of Excellence and European & Eurasian Studies Program; Cem Karayalchin, chairman and professor in the Department of Economics; and

Gwyn Davis, an associate professor in the Department of History at FIU.

With the pound plunging to its lowest level and prompting Prime Minister Cameron's resignation, the Brexit results have already shocked global markets, roiled the stock market and thrown British politics into disarray.

In Thursday's election, the referendum asked UK citizens if they wanted to remain or leave the EU. They voted to leave the EU with 52 percent to 48 percent.

"I am appalled of the outcome of this referendum. I cannot pretend to be anything other than appalled by it. I think it's a serious error and the consequences are going to be catastrophic both socially and economically. It was an unnecessary referendum, but that's just my personal opinion," said Davis.

Prodger emphasized that at the moment, Britain is still a EU member.

The clock won't start ticking for Brexit until the UK submits Article 50 to the EU.

Article 50 is a European treaty that must be submitted in order to leave the EU. Once the article is submitted, the divorce is expected to be a two-year process.

"What is very clear from this debate is that the UK will continue to have an incredibly strong relationship with their European partners," said Prodger.

The panelists pointed out that the UK will face both costs and benefits from

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What is very clear from this debate is that the UK will continue to have an incredibly strong relationship with their European partners.

David Prodger  
British Consul General  
Miami

”

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#### BISCAYNE BAY

## Disabled student learns to swim through club

**ALEXA ROTH**  
Contributing Writer  
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Poseidon's Panthers, a swim club founded in the fall of 2014, gives students an opportunity to swim with others and learn basic techniques, or perfect existing ones.

One student in Poseidon's group, Daniela Salinas, lost her vision due to a condition called Leber Congenital Amaurosis, which is an inherited retinal degenerative disease characterized by severe loss of vision at birth. Salinas joined Poseidon's Panthers about a month and a half ago to have some summer fun and stay in great shape.

Salinas says she loves the music that they play during the sessions and how much she has learned in the club.

Her coach, Ibrahim Sultan, says "it's not as easy to teach her new things as it would be to coach someone without a disability. The way I teach her, is by having her put her arms on mine so she can get a sense of the motions."

Sultan says he learned that someone who is blind can swim just as well as someone who can see. Most people wouldn't imagine someone with no vision to swim, however, Salinas has proven them wrong.

She has gained so much from this club and has made numerous strides since joining. She says she has mastered her

dolphin kick and her freestyle, something she couldn't do before joining the club.

"She does a lot more than the basics and can even do laps, she is doing very well," said Sultan

Sultan says he has learned a lot about what it's like teaching someone with a disability such as Salinas'.

"Having her join made me less nervous to teach people with disabilities, which made me a better coach. People in the club know her and admire what she does, and it has definitely made us more diverse and has been a learning experience for all of us."

This swim club runs through the summer and is free to all students.

## Hurricane ready for this season at FIU

**SARAH FIGUERAS**  
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Too dangerous to stay or far too great to leave, with hurricane season approaching, you must know how to prepare and evacuate, if necessary. Florida International University has prepared helpful suggestions for the community to know what to do during hurricane season.

"The past should serve as a guide for the future. It is easy to grow complacent, but complacency is never an excuse for unpreparedness," said President Mark Rosenberg in a mass email. "It only takes a single storm to have widespread, devastating effects. If you haven't started to prepare, now is the time."

Rosenberg encourages the community to have a hurricane plan to be prepared, if and when a disaster strikes.

"Begin to review, revise or create your personal hurricane plan, become familiar with the University's

emergency communication procedures – which apply to all potential hazards – and purchase the supplies necessary for your disaster kit," wrote Rosenberg. "Before a storm, you should always follow any protective actions issued by emergency officials."

Some recommended disaster supplies are water, non-perishable food, battery powered radios, flashlights, batteries, first aid kits, can openers and local maps. More recommended items recommended for hurricane preparedness can be found on [ready.gov/kit](http://ready.gov/kit).

FIU housing students are responsible for acquiring their own supplies. They are also responsible for seeking out their own shelters if they do not wish to remain in a common area on campus.

In the event of an emergency, FIU has multiple forms of communication known as FIU Alert, which will help advise the FIU community during the disaster. In addition to checking

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## NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

### US in diplomatic talks with Venezuela while backing recall referendum

The reopening of diplomatic talks with Venezuela won't clash with the Obama administration's support of a recall referendum that could oust President Nicolas Maduro, a top U.S. diplomat said Friday.

Thomas Shannon, the U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs, described Wednesday's talks with Maduro as a first step toward finding common ground with the Venezuelan government. But Shannon emphasized that the administration would not back off its pledge to back an Organization of American States investigation into the erosion of democratic institutions in Venezuela.

### There are signs hole in ozone layer has begun to heal

For the first time in 30 years, the gaping hole in the ozone layer above Antarctica is showing signs of healing.

Every year since it was discovered in 1985, scientists have watched the hole grow bigger from one Antarctic spring to the next, eventually covering 10.9 million square miles in 2015.

Now researchers are noting an encouraging trend. Though the hole still exists and reached a record size last year, it is forming at a slower rate, according to a report published Thursday in the journal Science.

#### TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

### CORRECTIONS

In Volume 28, Issue 2 the article titled "Vigil Held at FIU-MMC in remembrance of Orlando" ran with Laura Vega as the name of the associate director for Multicultural Programs and Services instead of the properly named Giselle Vega.

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

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# SGC-MMC talks plans for upcoming year

STEPHANIE ESPAILLAT

News Director

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The Student Government Association at the Modesto Maidique Campus has started the summer semester by conducting bi-weekly meetings and have already begun confirming the cabinet. Showcasing its diversity and ingenuity, President Alian Collazo shared his hopes for the newly appointed and elected team.

"I feel very happy. I think we had a large pool of applicants," said Collazo. "It is a very diverse cabinet, there's a lot of greeks, non-greeks, [and] women.

"I think it's going to be a great year and most importantly they all have great ideas," said Collazo. "Ideas that coincide with some of the ideas that [I] and Michelle have, and they have really good work ethics."

Collazo explains that the majority of SGC-MMC this year is young, but he hopes to continue building new leadership opportunities within the

council.

"I think it is important to build new leadership so that we don't have two candidate running for SGA ever again. We want to have [more] students applying for cabinet positions," said Collazo. "We want diversity [that is] not just colors and genders, but of ideas. That's important."

FIU SGC-MMC encourages students to get involved by following their Instagram and Facebook pages. Collazo believes having a university presence, whether through social media or in person, is important for building relationships. However, he stresses that SGC-MMC cannot solely rely on waiting for students to get involved.

"We want them to work on engagement events on a bi-weekly basis so that we can engage different constituencies," said Collazo. "No longer [will students] be saying that [they] have question[s] for SGA. SGA wants to ask [the students] what [their] question [are]. We can't be waiting for [students] to come to us with the

question. We have to go to [students] with the answers."

With additional outreach programs and efforts, Collazo and SGC-MMC are trying to encourage more opportunities for students. Collazo wants to have more job fairs on campus to further student success, and would also like to see more students getting involved with FIU in D.C. program.

SGC-MMC has been working with FIU in D.C. and with the Office of Governmental Relations to send students to the nation's capital.

"We have trips planned to D.C.," said Collazo. "We want to bring our students to the new FIU in D.C. office. Something that student government invested in."

Collazo is planning on putting together two trips: one for student leaders on campus, and also another trip for everyday students from different colleges, to have an experience where they can connect.

Visit [fiusm.com](http://fiusm.com) for the full story

# FIU talks hurricane preparedness for this year's season

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FIU emails accounts, FIU recommends using tools such as: text messages, informacast, checking emails on FIU account, updates on the FIU homepage, social media, FIU Help Line, FIU WRGP Radio at 95.3 FM and local media.

Since Miami is estimated by Google maps to be 5,906 feet above sea level, this potentially leaves FIU at great risk of flooding or heavy rainfall, the latter usually falling in between classes. As a result, FIU has prepared these measures because it can be directly impacted.

"We care deeply about our entire FIU family, which is why we have taken the appropriate and precautionary measures to ensure their safety," said Rosenberg. "Being prepared and following these steps will make for a safer hurricane season and quicker recovery, should a hazardous event affect our university community."

Hugh Gladwin, an anthropologist and associate professor for the department of Global and Sociocultural Studies has been published for his field research in hurricane Katrina, Andrew and Sandy. Much of his research focuses on decision making and hurricane disaster planning.

Gladwin highlighted two main points: being prepared for a

hurricane and knowing when to evacuate. "When people know there's a hurricane coming, they go crazy," said Gladwin when referring to storm search. It is known to be the four days before a storm hits, and forecasts can accurately predict a hurricane's strength and path.

Gladwin mentions that by this time, it is too late to be prepared. Supplies run out, traffic escalates and gas prices begin to increase. A category one hurricane can knock off power in certain areas for 10 days, so Gladwin recommends to start preparing for hurricanes about two weeks before the season begins.

Gladwin's second point is knowing when to evacuate. Depending on your location, you may not have to evacuate, Gladwin mentions that there's a hotline from the National Hurricane Center (3-1-1) that can be called during all hours to know your risk.

If you are a FIU student, the FIU Help Line, 305-348-HELP, is also a useful tool to use in the event of an emergency.

Gladwin recommends relocating as less as possible; if your location is unsafe, it's best to stay at a friend's house in a safe area. If you are however a Panther staying in housing, information on FIU's hurricane preparedness can be accessed on [dem.fiu.edu](http://dem.fiu.edu).

Additional reporting by Stephanie Espaillat

# The British referendum sparks discussion at Florida International University

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leaving the EU.

Karayalchin mentioned that there are numerous reasons why UK citizens may feel that leaving the EU is for the best, including regaining control of their regulations in trade, less meddling from EU bureaucrats in Brussels and the abysmal performance of the European economy.

"It's not about regulation, but rather the discontent of a large number of UK citizens have, due to the economic decline. There's a widening disparity of income gap

between the lower and upper classes in the UK," he said.

However, Karayalchin predicted an estimated loss of 3.4 percent in GDP, and will face other economic consequences including short-term and long-term damage to trade and foreign investments with the EU.

Yet throughout this historical moment, no one really knows what's going to happen next.

Thiel, who sees Brexit as a "geopolitical earthquake", suggested that many referendums similar to Brexit don't

always occur. So, he wondered whether the UK will end up leaving the EU at all.

Prodger responded by saying that the UK will exit the EU, as the Prime Minister Cameron considers the referendum a "mandate from the people that must be respected."

The main concern is that allowing the UK to leave the EU may encourage the other EU countries to follow suit. Thiel acknowledged that since other EU countries have the common currency – the Euro – they may be discouraged from exiting

since it would be more expensive.

Ultimately, when asked about the special relationship between the UK and the U.S., Prodger said that it would remain that same.

"The UK has been very grateful for the many kind words from our partners here in the U.S. and whatever measure we decide to take. The U.S. is one of the UK's most successful alliances. The U.S. will remain one of our closest and most enduring partners," he affirmed.

## SYSTEMIC FAILURE

*Stanford rape case highlights judicial system flaws*

ON THE SCENE



GABRIELLE GARCIA

Widespread outrage has catapulted across the nation after a California judge made a careless decision to give former Stanford University swimmer Brock Turner an astonishingly lenient sentence for sexually assaulting an unconscious young woman.

Since the unfathomable sentencing, an extensively detailed, emotional and thought-provoking letter from the assault victim has been read by millions across the globe. In fact, on June 16, 20 members of the House of Representatives

gathered to read the victim's letter in unison and hold a discussion about the case.

In solidarity, people have taken to social media and other platforms to express their condolences, their grievances, and their anger with not only Turner's sentencing but also the prevalence of rape culture in society.

Stereotypically and statistically speaking, sexual assault is perhaps one of the most detrimental issues facing university campuses.

In 2015, CNN conducted a survey that included over 150,000 students from 27 universities across the nation (including Ivy League members with the exception of Princeton).

The survey revealed that 23% of women on college campuses have reported some kind of unwanted sexual

contact including touching, kissing and penetration.

Many have referred to Turner's overtly lenient sentence as a "slap on the wrist" but the victim had other words for the extent of his penalties.

**“The survey revealed that 23% of women on college campuses have reported some kind of unwanted sexual contact including touching, kissing and penetration.”**

“The fact that Brock was an athlete at a private university should not be seen as an entitlement to leniency, but as an opportunity to send a message that sexual assault is against the law regardless of social class,” the

victim said in her letter.

The victim's overall statement in court fervently contends that Turner's socio-economical status had a significant impact on the way in which the legal system handled the case—from the questions Turner's defense attorney asked the victim, to Turner's sentence.

Typically, those found guilty for rape face varying penalties, given that they are contingent on the circumstances and the evidence presented during a trial.

In comparison to the maximum sentence of 14 years in prison, Turner's six-month sentence in a county jail not only drastically differs but also suggests to society that rape is to be taken lightly.

As with other assault cases, many often determine alcohol and drugs to be the culprits

while simultaneously dejecting the severity of the danger and degradation of sexual assault.

The exhausting phrase “boys will be boys” should hold no significance in society. Boys—men, should be held accountable for their actions, just as girls—women should be.

No societal ideal or environment should deem such despicable and barbaric behavior acceptable. Sexual assault holds no ambiguity—any action enacted without the presence of consent is rape and is inexcusable.

*Gabrielle Garcia is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, On the Scene, is a commentary on the hottest pop culture topics. For suggestions or comments, please contact Gabrielle at gabrielle.garcia@fiusm.com.*

## Student athletes shouldn't be held to lower standards

The 2015-2016 student athletes earned the highest grade-point average on record with a 3.1 average throughout the entire department, with 273 of the 400 students earning at least a 3.0.

“The word ‘student’ in ‘student-athlete’ will always be the most important thing to us,” FIU Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia said. “The work that our student-athletes have done in the classroom is outstanding. Their dedication, along with the commitment of our coaches, faculty and Student-Athlete Academic Center (SAAC) towards high academic standards, is the reason we see such impressive results.”

Additionally, student athletes have seen a 10 percent increase in their graduation success rate over the last two years.

Even though Garcia and his department expects to continue seeing an upward trend of high academic standards, we feel that this may not be worth celebrating. While we agree that academic progress on any level is applaudable, we do not agree that student athletes should be held to different standards from any other student.

We can understand that increasing the average GPA is a step in the right direction, and we should be encouraging our athletes to perform better. A 3.0 is the bare minimum to enroll in some majors at FIU; many students work hard to obtain and maintain a 3.0 simply to pursue their passion. It's discouraging to see a group of students who are already seen at times as “elites” being applauded for this.

It also takes a great effort to attend classes while working full time, being a parent or caretaker. Those students do so without hopes of a pat on the back for a 3.0.

Holding athletes to a lower standard reinforces negative stereotypes against athletes. We do not believe our athletes to be any less capable than any of the other students who attend classes at FIU.

As an editorial board, we believe that holding our athletes to different standards is a disservice to the athletes themselves. We know that it feels great for these athletes to achieve academically, and encourage the University community to promote academic progress and growth for student athletes as much as they would any other student.

We are proud of the academic success of our student athletes and do not wish to diminish the hard work it took to achieve a high GPA. We congratulate and applaud the 143 Panthers who were named to the FIU Dean's List in the spring.

We admire the dedication that it takes to dedicate oneself to a sport, attend multiple practices, and travel for games while ensuring to aim high academically. That is no small feat.

We would also like to wish our student athletes the best in the upcoming academic year, both on and off the court.

## Letter to the Editor: FIU is reaching higher, setting new standards

Last month, the FIU board of trustees held our last meeting of the academic year, where we approved the university's \$1.3 billion budget and work plan for the 2016-2017 year.

As Miami's only public research university, FIU has charted a course that honors its responsibility to serve local residents, and my fellow FIU trustees and I want to share with you our vision for the future of this university under the leadership of President Mark B. Rosenberg.

Since taking the reins of FIU in the fall of 2009, President Rosenberg has pursued a strategy of controlled growth and improvement that has yielded excellent overall results, especially in two key areas that universities are judged by: research and student success.

Earlier this year, FIU made it into the top category

of research universities in the nation – R:1 Doctoral Universities, with more than \$165 million of research funding a year and high production of Ph.D.s.

This fall, we will welcome a freshman class with the highest average high school GPA in FIU history – 3.9. We have found that GPA is the best predictor of success and timely graduation. That is why in the last few years, while adding about 2,000 students a year, we have prioritized GPA over standardized test scores in the freshman admission process. Even then, average SAT scores have remained above 1120, which is higher than they were 10 years ago.

In addition, they are graduating at rates never before seen at FIU: The six-year graduation rate is at 58 percent, up from 42 percent 10 years ago, and climbing. In the last three years, the graduation rate has become

important to the funding model adopted by the Florida

**“As Miami's only public research university, FIU has charted a course that honors its responsibility to serve local residents.”**

Board of Governors, which governs state universities. FIU has done very well under this model, always scoring in the top half among Florida's 12 public universities.

Education is the key to success in the 21st Century economy, and FIU is working to make sure that anyone in our community who has the desire and the preparation to pursue a college education, has the opportunity to do so

right in our community.

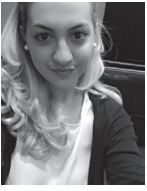
It is a pleasure and an honor for us to serve on the board of trustees of FIU. Together, we have charted a course that will help make FIU one of the great universities of this nation, building on our success as an agent of change that transforms lives. We are counting on the energy and the talent of our students, faculty, staff, alumni, elected officials and this community to help us reach higher.

Claudia Puig  
Chairperson  
FIU Board of Trustees

*Letter to the Editors are published once a month. They are not written by FIUSM staff but by members of the FIU community. If you would like to submit a letter, please email it to opinion@fiusm.com*

# Education reform raises questions regarding early education funding

## EDUCATING THE MASSES



STEPHANIE ROQUE

Throughout the past few years, a big spotlight has been shown on education reform. One of the main aspects education advocates are discussing is that of early childhood education: what can be done to increase funding of early childhood educational institutions to ensure the best outcome for America's children?

However, the question that should be asked is not

what should be done, but who should be taking the initiative in order to ensure America's youth have the best early childhood education possible in order to set a solid educational foundation for the future of America?

U.S. News' Sara Mead discusses what exactly the government is and is not doing in terms of early childhood education and its future in America. Mead details the current argument being used throughout education policy discussions: the demographics depict that America cannot afford to make "big investments in new, large scale public programs."

The argument does make sense. With Social Security and Medicare

rising in the coming years due to the retirement of the Baby Boomers, America's pockets are being emptied out. As a result, funding for education seems to be the collateral damage and is being placed on the back burner.

Nevertheless, the future of education may not be so bleak. In a new Urban Institute Report, federal budget and finance expert C. Eugene Steuerle discusses how despite all the financial strains to come, tax incentives and federal spending is predicted to grow by about \$15,000 per household within the next ten years.

However, without the political gusto, or incentive, to back these funds and allocate them correctly and respectively,

education funding will remain as is.

Furthermore, Steuerle

“The demographics depict that America cannot afford to make “big investments in new, large scale public programs.”

argues that “investments in education- and early childhood education in particular- are exactly the kind of opportunity investments that must become an increasing priority for federal resources.”

He argues that we

can increase education spending without cutting others out thanks to economic growth: generating increasing revenues with which “policymakers can fund opportunity investments.” In addition, editing current policies can also make a big difference spending wise.

We take from here that the deduction of spending is not necessarily a “fiscal problem of constrained resources,” but a political one: policy makers are unwilling to make difficult choices about “resource allocation.”

In the long run, we can see that increased spending for early childhood education is not unfathomable, but completely possible.

Advocates of early childhood education need to begin coming up with not only arguments detailing the benefits of what increased spending can and will do for America's children, but “feasible policy proposals.”

America's educational system can have a very bright future ahead of her; she just needs a little help from the right people.

*Stephanie Roque is a contributing writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, Educating the Masses, is a commentary on the humanities, arts and education. For suggestions or comments, please contact Stephanie at opinion@fiusm.com.*

## Letter to the Editor: ‘Distorted sense of power’ contributes to dislike of police officers

As a white male history professor at FIU, I'm an unlikely target for police harassment, but a cop attempted to intimidate me one spring Monday at the entrance of Green Library before class.

An officer biked up:

-Did you put out that cigarette?  
-What cigarette?

He persisted, insisting I had been smoking and threatened to cite me.

-For what?

-For being disrespectful.

What was offensive was not his assuredness, but his distorted sense of power. I respect men and women in blue, if they command respect.

The English defer to authority without asking why. Americans defer to authority only if we

know why. Police are citizens, and we should police them as citizens.

To write with a balanced perspective, I spoke with other professors and students who said they, or someone they knew, had had a run-in with an FIU police officer.

Many of these were for traffic disputes, but not all.

I went to speak to the officer's superior and peers, none of whom rushed to defend their colleague. These FIU cops were courteous and professional. Maybe

nearsightedness should relegate some police to desk duty, and the department should do more to reward its brightest stars. At the very least, the department and University should require the less bright to do a course in

professionalism and sensitivity training when addressing faculty, staff, students or visitors.

“The English defer to authority without asking why. Americans defer to authority only if we know why. Police are citizens, and we should police them as citizens.”

This is a waste of print, right, getting angry over a silly

mistake? This is more than griping.

In 2010, a football star, Kendall Berry, was brutally murdered on campus. More recently, a creep on a bike grabbed women's posteriors. Another sicko sniffed a woman's toes at Starbuck's.

I am not intimating that any police officer could have foreseen or prevented these horrible or weird events, only that other things, perhaps more important than smokers and jaywalkers, need policing on campus.

FIU is a microcosm of society, and as we have seen a spate of police misdeeds across the country, we must be cognizant of and vigilant against any police injustice in our FIU

community.

I'm the unlikely target, a white male history professor at FIU. I'm probably not you. A more likely target at Florida International University is a young Latino, Black, or foreign student, who may be far from home and afraid.

Don't be scared and know your rights.

Michael Brillman  
Professor  
FIU

*Letter to the Editors are published once a month. They are not written by FIUSM staff but by members of the FIU community. If you would like to submit a letter, please email it to opinion@fiusm.com*

## Always be aware and cautious to keep yourself safe

### RIVERS OF TRUTH



LINDA RIOS

Friday, June 16 the Miami Herald reported that FIU business professor, David Ralston was taken into custody last Thursday after a month-long pursuit. Ralston was found hiding in a motel 20 miles from his Weston home, in Fort Lauderdale.

According to CBS Miami, Ralston refused to turn himself in due to the lack of a warrant that required him to do so.

According to the Lee County Sheriff's

Office, the 69 year-old professor had allegedly hired his maid this past April to clean his Ft. Meyers home through Craigslist.

CBS Miami reported that on the afternoon of April 29, Ralston offered his maid a drink, and after accepting it, she felt like she was not herself. Half an hour later, she concluded that she had been drugged.

The victim's statement said that she felt Ralston taking her clothes off, something vibrating and then the accused penetrating her.

The woman was able to get away from Ralston's house late at night, and sought help from a neighbor who was then able to contact her husband and the authorities.

After the assault took place, the sheriff's deputies performed a search and walked out with, what had been thought to be at the time, the surveillance tape containing the evidence incriminating Ralston.

Ralston is pending to appear in front of the court in Ft. Lauderdale and then he will be transferred to Lee County for prosecution.

It's important to always be cautious of who we meet and our surroundings because we never know who they might turn out to be and if they will be a threat to our safety and peace of mind.

*Linda Rios is a contributing writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, Rivers of Truth, is a commentary on pop culture current events. For suggestions or comments, please contact Linda at opinion@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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NICOLE HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

Above and left: The GC Pit was filled with balloons and floaties to give the feeling of a summer beach party during the SummerFest Pit Part, Thursday, June 30

Far left: Sophomore sports and fitness education major Taylor Fana hands out t-shirts during the Pit Party.

NADINE MATAS/THE BEACON

## Campus Life prepares for concert ‘better than any previous lineups’

**CHLOE GONZALEZ**  
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June 20, 2016 marked the first day of summer and to FIU students, that means summer classes and SummerFest.

SummerFest is an annual concert event organized and hosted by FIU's Campus Life at the Modesto Maidique Campus. It's "Campus Life's biggest event over the summer... that attracts about 3 to 4,000 students and guests" according to Campus Life's creative director and SummerFest advisor, John Parmenter.

SummerFest is a "unique campus experience unlike any other concert here at FIU," and it introduces students "to

everything else that we have to offer here at Campus Life," said Parmenter.

He explained that SummerFest "serves as a perfect engagement for all our new freshmen," who make up the largest group of SummerFest attendees, as "it's their first college experience, their first college event."

Whether it's freshmen going to their first SummerFest or seniors experiencing their last, students who attend this year's SummerFest can enjoy the foam cannon theme, the concert stage decked out with LED lights, and an artist lineup "better than any of our previous lineups," according to Parmenter. Two main headliners, Dzeko & Torres and G.T.A., will be performing, instead of one as in previous years.

FIU students attending SummerFest will be admitted for free but must bring a valid student I.D. that will be swiped at the gate. Any guest looking to go to SummerFest must purchase a ticket. They can do so online for \$30, or at the gate for \$35.

The event will begin at 8 p.m. and end at midnight. Doors will open at 7:15 p.m. but there will be a special early entrance at 6:45 p.m. for students who donate \$1 to Campus Life's Roar It Forward. Students who donate to the program will be helping raise funds meant to aid close to 100 homeless FIU students.

SummerFest will take place on Thursday, July 14 at MMC between the Blue and Gold parking garages.

NICOLE HERNANDEZ/THE BEACON

## Wellness and Rec hosts Ultimate Panther Challenge

**JOSEPH CARDENAS**  
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The FIU Recreation Center is putting together a special event next month, on the lawns of the Graham Center. July 13 will see the debut of the first ever Ultimate Panther Challenge, where teams of up to five players compete and run five obstacle courses.

"I wanted to think of some ways that we could get students to be attracted to the Rec Center and learn more about our programs," said Ratasha Iribarren, a graduate assistant in charge of public relations and marketing for the Rec Center. "I noticed that the obstacle course, the

sparrring races, the mud runs are all very popular right now."

I wanted to think of some ways that we could get students to be attracted to the Rec Center and learn more about our programs,

Ratasha Iribarren  
Graduate Assistant  
MMC Wellness and Rec

From noon to 2 p.m., the event will have many activities including a tire flip, speed drills, and a rock climbing wall. Food and drink will be provided by sponsor, Muscle Milk, who will also be giving out prizes yet to be announced.

The Ultimate Panther Challenge is accepting submissions for anyone who would like to participate in the obstacle course runs.

If you're feeling up to the challenge, you may register with the Rec Center on their website. For more information, contact Iribarren at: riribarr@fiu.edu.

# Video game series makes big screen debut

## LIFESTYLE POINTS



JOSEPH  
CARDENAS

Hollywood's search for the next big fantasy franchise for the big screen sounds simple enough, but somehow, finding it in a roleplaying game franchise, one that's gone

through several generations of gamers with little plot, seems like an odd place to land.

"Warcraft" started as a series of video game titles in the early '90s, released by Blizzard Entertainment. It was set as a real-time strategy game where you could choose to be an army of humans defending their world from an invading race of creatures called Orcs, or play as the army of Orcs invading the human world.

Since then, it has spawned all kinds of media, from a popular massively multiplayer online roleplaying game, to books, and a tabletop RPG. The film, released early in June with massive numbers at the box office, became the highest grossing video game film adaptation of all time.

The movie plays with the basic plot of the first game, which was simply that Orcs are invading the world of Azeroth. The Orc homeland is being torn apart by fel magic, and so the Orc Horde enters Azeroth to start over, kidnapping humans in order to fuel a portal being used to transport Orcs.

Meanwhile, King Llane of the kingdom of Stormwind and his commander Anduin Lothar fight the Horde with assistance from a clan of Orcs who realize their leader, an Orc warlock named

Gul'dan, will destroy Azeroth the way he destroyed their world.

Without substantial context to the lore of the franchise, a lot of world building would be lost on the casual film goer. However, it's still an exciting watch. Despite its heavy use of CGI animation, it still provides scale and practicality to its production and set design to avoid relying on CGI for most of its scenes.

On its story alone, it definitely drags - though only as much as any fantasy film of its scale would. It's also slightly inconsistent in theme and pacing; often it places significance on certain plot points that become irrelevant later in the film, while other more important elements are left unexplored. In addition, not to spoil anything directly but there are several major deaths that fail to carry much weight, and end up being more anticlimactic than anything else.

All of this said, it's still incredibly fun. The dialogue is on point, the visual effects are stunning and the actors play well in this film. Despite its shortcomings when it comes to the story, many aspects redeem it; it's purely an action fantasy flick and that's what keeps you watching.

"Warcraft" has been out for almost a month now, and promises a wild adventure. There's no need to skip out on it for a prerequisite on nerdy RPG gaming, the movie works as its own, with only its setting supported by the mythos of the franchise.

*Lifestyle Points is a column covering films and pop culture. To contact Joseph Cardenas for suggestions and comments email [joseph.cardenas@fiusm.com](mailto:joseph.cardenas@fiusm.com).*

## AT THE BAE



JAKE BURNS/THE BEACON

Campus Life at the Biscayne Bay Campus hosts 'Creative Panthers Day' to welcome summer B students

## 'Creative Panther' Day at BBC

### CHLOE GONZALEZ

Contributing Writer  
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On Tuesday, June 28, Biscayne Bay Campus' Campus Life hosted an event called Creative Panthers Day, in The Wolfe University Center's Panther Square.

For the event, four long tables were set up with different creative activities, along with mini posters of FIU fun facts, for students to enjoy. The first table was an emoji pillow station where students could sign in and pick up an empty emoji pillow of their choice. They would then pass to the other side of the table and fill their new pillows with stuffing.

From the emoji table, students could then go on to the three other tables where they could make a vision board, assemble a paper-craft Roary, create personalized key chains, or write on a banner what they would like to get out of FIU and leave their paw print.

BBC's Campus Life program assistant Kaytien Franco said that "these creative things, these little creative stations its (sic) to help them [new

students at BBC] network and connect with other FIU students."

Franco mentioned that the event is just one of many being hosted at BBC this week to introduce summer B students, which are mainly freshmen and transfers, to the campus and "to get students engaged and most importantly, make them feel welcome at FIU at BBC."

Shannon Joseph, junior majoring in geosciences, said that she found the event "very creative and very fun and engaging. It's very much something that's different and something that reaches out to the taste of a lot of people."

SLS professor and academic advisor Giovanna Tello brought her SLS students to the event on their first day of class in an effort to encourage them to "go and get involved" and "practice what we preach."

To transfer student Angelica Walker, senior majoring in hospitality management, Creative Panthers Day was another chance for her to be involved and she thought it was "a fun environment. It helped students to interact with one another ... to interact with students you don't know ... it makes you feel welcome."

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## BASEBALL

# University names former Alabama State University coach as baseball coach

**ALEJANDRO SOLANA**  
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A press conference was held to announce Mervyl Melendez as the new head coach of the baseball team. Mendez was welcomed into the Panther family on Tuesday, June 28.

"Today is an exciting day for all of us, especially FIU baseball," Executive Director of Sports and Entertainment Pete Garcia said. "FIU baseball has a rich and very successful tradition, and that's one we think will continue today when we announce our new head coach."

Melendez resigned from the head coaching position at Alabama State University Tuesday morning, a school he spent five years at, hours before the FIU baseball team announced on twitter that he would be the new hire.

The 42-year-old Puerto Rican native takes over for Turtle Thomas, who resigned from the position just over two weeks ago after nine seasons with the Panthers.

"Almost two weeks ago, we started on this journey, a national search for a head baseball coach," Garcia said. "I promised our players that we were going to get them the best possible coach out there."

In the five seasons he

coached at ASU, Melendez led the Hornets to 158 total wins, a 24-0 perfect conference regular season in 2016, four consecutive 30 plus win seasons and an NCAA Division I tournament appearance this past season.

"We're not promising victories, and we're not promising championships here," Melendez said. "What I will promise you is that I will dedicate my life to FIU baseball."

Under Melendez, ASU held a record of 158-117 and a 138-80 mark in the five years he coached there. The 158 total wins Melendez recorded at the helm of the Hornets was the highest five-season total in school history. Prior to Melendez's arrival in Alabama State, the program hadn't logged a 20 win season in over ten years.

Despite winning the Conference-USA championship in 2015, the Panthers have only recorded one winning season in their past four.

"I believe in playing well on weekends," Melendez said. "It's awesome to win midweek, but when it is all said and done, you have to win your league if you want to get to the tournament."

In the five seasons at ASU, the Hornets notched a 79 percent



ALEJANDRO SOLANA/THE BEACON

Mervyl Melendez, FIU's new baseball coach, speaks about his plan for the team for the upcoming season.

winning percentage in the Southwestern Athletic Conference tallying a 95-25 record.

"If you see what has happened the last three or four years, we have concentrated a lot on weekends and we have beaten some people that we supposedly should not have," Melendez said. "We will always take it one game at a time, but

the most important part of our season will be league play."

Melendez told the media that University of South Alabama Head Coach Mark Calvi, an ex-FIU assistant baseball coach for 11 seasons, was one of the bigger factors that ultimately led him to taking the FIU job. ASU was sent home from the NCAA tournament after

losing to Calvi's team 6-3 in the Tallahassee Regional on June 4.

Melendez said: "I talked about this job with him knowing that he had been here. One thing he had said to me was, 'Mervyl, I think that you would do a great job there if the opportunity presents itself.'"

Melendez thought so as well as he agreed

to bring his 17 years of coaching experience down to South Florida. This new opportunity, however, isn't all that Melendez is excited about.

"I can't wait to be able to wear shorts everyday to practice," Melendez said. "I made sure to leave my jacket up in Alabama."

## COLUMN

## Women in sports: rising, prevailing and enduring in the male-dominated industry

## JAS REPORTS



JASMINE CASIMIR

The world of sports has always been thought of as a male's platform. The concepts of strength, performance and adrenaline put forth in sports are not often attributed to women.

Then, the year 1866 came around.

Students at the all-female Vassar College formed two baseball teams. Within a decade, in 1875, three men decided to create a women's baseball club in Springfield, Illinois, where they divided the club into two teams called the "Blondes" and the "Brunettes." It paved the way for women to continue to be physically involved in sports.

Women evolving in sports also came with criticism.

Many have heard the phrases "you throw like a girl" or "you run like a girl." There has always been this idea that males represent strength, and girls represent weakness. However, you can be a woman and have the ability to run faster, throw farther and fight

harder than a man.

FIU Bay News' Mallory Sanchez spoke with FIU swimmer Naomi Ruele on what it's like being a woman playing in sports after being the first FIU student-athlete to qualify for the Olympics.

"I've been told that I swim like a man because I'm fast, and I don't think that a woman has to be a man in order to be fast or to train well," Ruele said.

In addition to participating in sports, women also started reporting for sports. In the late 1930s, the wife of Harry Johnson provided color commentary during Johnson's broadcast, and became the first woman sportscaster. The few women who started their sportscasting career after her were Jane Chastain, Donna De Varona and Jeannie Morris. During that era there was no communal space for people to voice their opinions. Now, people run straight to Twitter and Facebook to voice their opinions. Twitter, especially, has been a very ugly place for women in sports media.

Julie DiCaro, an anchor for 670 The Score, has witnessed disgusting tweets by

“

I've been told that I swim like a man because I'm fast, and I don't think that a woman has to be a man in order to be fast or to train well,

Naomi Ruele  
Swimmer  
FIU Sports

”

male sports fanatics who often disagree with DiCaro's opinions. One once told her, "You need to be hit in the head with a hockey puck by one of the BlackHawks and killed." It makes you wonder, is it really that serious?

Albany Times Union columnist Jennifer Gish wrote a column criticizing Bills fans,

and later received voicemails where she was told she should "stay in the kitchen" and that "women shouldn't be writing about sports anyway."

Gish was not the first to receive these types of comments, and definitely won't be the last.

The biggest challenge for women making it into the sports world is breaking down gender stereotypes, highlighting their professionalism and knowledge on the sports they're playing in or want to cover as an anchor.

"It's very important to have thick skin if you want to work in sports," FIU Student Media Sports Director Jayda Hall said. "People will always have their opinion about you and how you do your job, but as long as you are confident and know you do your job well, that's all that matters."

*Jas Reports is a biweekly column about issues in sports. To contact Jasmine email her at jasmine.casimir@fiusm.com.*



## SWIMMING

# Head coach and swimmer grateful for Rio Olympics opportunity

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With her country's flag in one hand and her coach walking alongside, FIU swimmer Naomi Ruele made her Olympic debut as she waved to a Brazilian crowd during the Opening Ceremonies in Rio de Janeiro.

The Redshirt sophomore qualified for the Olympics in Rio when she completed a time trial inside of the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center on March 20, qualifying with a time of 26.07 seconds. Ruele's coach, FIU's swimming and diving head coach Randy Horner, joined her

when he accepted an offer from Botswana's Olympic Committee to be the coach for the country's two swimmers.

"I was very overwhelmed heading into the competition," Ruele said. "In the opening ceremonies, you would walk out and there would be 500 cameras and a packed stadium waiting to greet you. Because the ceremonies were so extravagant, I couldn't register in my head that I was at the Olympic Opening Ceremonies."

In Rio, Ruele competed in one event: the 50-meter freestyle. In the event, Ruele placed second in her heat with a time of

26.23 seconds. While her time was not fast enough to earn a place in the semi-finals, Ruele was able to break the top 50 times at the Rio Olympics, posting the 47th-overall fastest time.

"After my events, I went and watched several other sports I would normally not be able to watch," Ruele said. "I watched the USA men's basketball team play against Serbia and women's gymnastics. I believe gymnastics to be one of the toughest sports to master and seeing those athletes master it with such precision amazed me."

Horner left his family at home to coach Ruele

for the 50-meter freestyle and Nova Southeastern University swimmer David Van Der Colff for the 100-meter backstroke.

"My wife was jealous of me going to Rio," Horner said. "So much so, that she booked a trip to California to visit friends and run a half-marathon. She enjoyed herself over there."

Horner took full advantage of the perks of being an Olympic coach. He walked alongside all of Botswana's athletes during the opening ceremonies and watched other Olympians compete during his downtime. Horner said he watched all of the swimming events

he could and several other sports.

"I watched the USA men's basketball team play against China," Horner said. "I also saw Usain Bolt win the 100-meter for the third time and watched women's gymnastics. It was amazing to see athletes nail their respective moves with such precision and skill. It was fun to watch."

Ruele was satisfied with her stay in the Olympic Village; her room, which she shared with two Botswana runners, was free of any electricity or leakage issues.

"It was a smooth stay," Ruele said. "It wasn't the most extravagant of places, perhaps because

they were fitting 14,000 athletes, but it was a nice place to stay and relax in between training and events."

The Swimming and Diving team begins its season Sept. 30 against the University of Miami in Coral Gables. The first event is scheduled for 6 p.m.

"Our goal for this season is to repeat as Conference USA champions and make the NCAA tournament," Horner said. "Our swimmers have grown a lot during the offseason, and we have all of our sprint swimmers returning, which was our greatest strength last season."

## MEN'S SOCCER

# Soccer player aims for a memorable season

SAMIR BADER  
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Luis Betancur, forward for the FIU men's soccer team, is looking to making his final season, a historic one. Following a strong season his junior year with 19 points – 9 goals, 1 assist – Betancur wants to leave with his name forever remembered in the books.

Nandi, as his teammates and close

friends call him, strives to be the best, often working on drills after practice to improve his game and ensure a great season with the team.

The Panthers currently find themselves ranked No. 23 in the nation, ending the season with 12 wins, 7 losses and 1 tie. For this upcoming 2016 season, Betancur and his teammates want to go even further as they defend their Conference USA title.

"After last year, having a great year, it was a good turn around for my college

career. I realized it's my last year, who knows if we could do it again? We only had two of our seniors leaving ... We have a big returning group, so I felt like if we use what we did last year and do more, we can get further in the NCAA tournament and try to win conference again," Betancur said.

With a widely diverse group of players, Betancur believes having players with different backgrounds and cultures only make their bond more special.

"We are from everywhere, we are from Colombia, Jamaica, France, Germany, etc. My recruiting class we were like 14 guys, and then we have been a family ever since, this [is] like a brotherhood. We are together as a team on and off the field," said Betancur.

The Panthers will play against the University of Kentucky on Saturday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m.

# Turnover sets Panthers up for second win



Paul Marie, junior defender, attempts to steal the ball from Wisconsin defender.

The men's soccer team received its second-straight win of the season after defeating the University of Wisconsin Badgers 1-0.

Forward Santiago Patino scored the first goal of the game after the Badgers created a turnover in the fifth minute, setting the Panthers up for a victory.

The Panthers' next game will take place on Saturday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. against the University of Kentucky.

Santiago Patino, sophomore forward, before scoring the first point for the Panthers after a turnover by Wisconsin.

## FOOTBALL

# WELCOME BACK

## FIU alumnus hosts celebrity softball game for charity



T.Y. Hilton, wide receiver for the Indianapolis Colts and University of Florida alumnus, bats for the CYP Squad during the charity softball game held by Johnathan Cyprien.

**PETER HOLLAND**  
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FIU alumnus Johnathan Cyprien, who is currently a safety for the Jacksonville Jaguars, held his second annual celebrity softball game at the FIU Baseball Stadium for his Cyp Squad At Risk Youth Foundation.

Alumni from FIU reunited to face alumni from the University of Miami and other Miami-

native NFL players in a friendly softball matchup. Before the game began, Cyprien gathered all of the children who attended the game and explained to them why the event took place and how much he cared about them and their future.

"I would throw different events like the softball game for example, and raise a good amount of money to sponsor kids to do things throughout the summer, such as after

school programs to keep them out of the streets and give them a choice of doing something better than getting into trouble," Cyprien said.

Current and former NFL players were the main attractions from both teams. Players such as T.Y. Hilton, wide receiver for the Indianapolis Colts; Tourek Williams, linebacker for the San Diego Chargers; Isame Faciane, guard for the Minnesota Vikings, were some of the players



PHOTOS BY PETER HOLLAND/THE BEACON

who represented FIU. Recent graduate and current defensive back for the Dallas Cowboys Jeremiah McKinnon, who was a freshman when he played with Cyprien, made an appearance as well.

have a brotherhood coming out of high school in Miami, and we just want to support each other."

The final score was 20-10, with FIU coming out on top. For the players who participated, it didn't

"Football is like a family," Cyprien said. "We always look out for each other, especially when it's a good cause for the kids."

## ATHLETICS

# Student athletes earn highest average GPA on record

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The "student" in "student-athlete" is the most important thing to the Athletic Department, according to Pete Garcia, executive director for Sports and Entertainment.

The emphasis on being a student first has earned a new record for the department -- the highest grade-point average on record.

The 3.1 average for the University's student-athletes was earned during the 2015-2016 year.

During the spring semester, 273 student-athletes earned at least a 3.0 GPA, with 143 of those students earning a 3.5 or higher, earning them a spot on the Dean's

List. In all, the Athletic Department claimed 515 3.0 or better GPAs, and 270 Dean's List members during the last academic year.

According to Paul Dodson, assistant director of Athletics Media Relations, the 15 percent increase is from a combination of factors, including improvement of the Student Athlete Academic Center.

"We've added more advisors to provide better attention to our student-athletes and their academic well being," Dodson said to Student Media. "There's a reason that the word 'student' comes before athlete, and it's pretty significant that the entire department averages over 3.0."

During the last five terms (Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Summer 2015,

“The work that our student-athletes have done in the classroom is outstanding.”

Pete Garcia  
Executive Director  
Sports and Entertainment

Fall 2015, Spring 2016), FIU has had a total of 1,165 student-athletes earn a GPA of 3.0-or-better, while 681 were named to the Dean's List. There were 362 student-athletes who earned a GPA of 3.75-or-better

and 195 earned a 4.0.

Dodson says academic success is a source of pride for the student-athletes, who sometimes have more pride for their academic success than their athletic success.

"You'll see the student athletes wearing 3.0 club t-shirts, or 3.5 club t-shirts with pride, because they've worked hard for that," Dodson said.

Both Dodson and Garcia attribute the support system of the entire department to helping student athletes reach higher in academic spaces.

"The work that our student-athletes have done in the classroom is outstanding. Their dedication, along with the commitment of our coaches, faculty and Student Athlete Academic Center towards

high academic standards is the reason we see such impressive results," Garcia said in a press release sent to Student Media.

Each year, the NCAA releases an annual report for graduation success rates, federal graduation rate for student-athletes and federal graduation rates for all students. The Athletic Department is expecting an increase in all three, according to the press release.

The University's 76 percent graduation success rate is a 10 percent increase over the past two years, and the FGR has seen a six percent increase led by the men's basketball and football teams.

"We expect to keep producing this upward trend and continue to set a high academic standard in the Athletic Department," Garcia said.

## MARTIAL ARTS

# PLANK IT OUT

## Budokon club brings ‘warrior spirit’ out of students



KRISTEN KING/THE BEACON

FIU students get in straight-arm plank at Budokon class.

**KRISTEN KING**  
Contributing Writer  
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Budokon, a fairly new workout craze, combines two essential exercise regimens into one: yoga and mixed martial arts. Its purpose is to work out the body and mind, but also to evoke the “way of the warrior spirit” from each one of its students.

Here at FIU, Budokon began as a club about four years ago and has since amassed a large amount of

student participants who enjoy exercising their mind and bodies.

Taught by instructors Natasha Kukreja Ranasinghe and Joana Antunes, each class begins with mild meditation to prepare students for a rigorous workout from the inside out. Ranasinghe finishes the meditation and starts the workout, a combination of yoga poses and mixed martial arts movements.

“Budokon seeks to

understand the relationship between different aspects of daily life by integrating the six-pillar system consisting of movement, thought, emotions, relationships, environment and nutrition,” Ranasinghe said. She has been practicing the art form for three years.

The class moves through positions that mirror the way a warrior would indeed move like “Reaching Warrior” and “Warrior’s Bridge.” These positions release an abundance of

energy while realigning specific areas of the body, namely the spine.

During the class, Ranasinghe made a mention on the basis of the workout. She said that when the students are doing this workout, control is used, not momentum. Meaning that as long as your body is in control of itself, students can guide themselves into some of the most intricate positions without necessarily straining themselves.

But do not forget: this class is also working out your mind.

Daniela Rodriguez, a FIU student who started attending Budokon classes two months ago, said that she was simply looking for a class to relax her. According to Rodriguez, what she got from Budokon was more than she could have asked for.

“At first, you feel like this is something that’s going to relax you,” Rodriguez said. “Then you take the class and realize that it’s very demanding in more ways than one.”

Once the students finish their yoga poses, the mixed martial arts element comes into play and Ranasinghe leads the class in a quick burst of punches and kicks that could be helpful in to everyday situations.

“I think the benefit of Budokon is the possibility to incorporate lessons we learn while practicing yoga or martial arts to the daily life and therefore practice Budokon everywhere,” Ranasinghe said.

As the class comes to a close, students are again encouraged to meditate to calm and revitalize their bodies after the hour-long workout. Ranasinghe cleans up the studio with a smile on her face.

When asked why they enjoy teaching Budokon, Ranasinghe and Antunes shared a common answer: the progression of their students.

“To me personally, it is a way to improve my communication skills and to see the yoga practice from a beginner’s point of view,” Antunes said.

Ranasinghe said: “I love how I feel after every class [as a student] and wanted to give back the same experience [as an instructor now] to other students. It’s awesome watching students’ progress on their mats and do things they never thought they’d be able to do.”

For now, the Budokon classes have ended for summer at FIU but Ranasinghe and Antunes made sure to mention that in Wynwood, there is a studio called “BDK Academy” that is open to any and every one looking to start or continue this workout.

“We invite everyone, regardless of their previous experience with yoga or martial arts to try Budokon and evaluate for themselves what they can take out of the practice,” Antunes said.

If you are looking to explore different ways to expand your workout regimen, Budokon might be your next best option. A lot can be taken away from these courses, according to the instructors and students, but that will ultimately be left for newcomers to discover.

## FOOTBALL

# Jonnu Smith confident in football team this season

**PETER HOLLAND**  
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After a knee injury left him unable to continue the season, Jonnu Smith, a tight end on the FIU football team, feels 100 percent healthy and is looking forward to getting back on the field for this upcoming season. Smith believes this could be a big year for the Panthers.

In his senior year, after finishing one game short of bowl eligibility, the Ocala native is sure that he will leave FIU on a high note now that he is one of the team leaders for this season.

“Just being around the guys and motivating them, I got to put more emphasis on how important it is to

improve every day,” Smith said.

On Oct. 24 during the last football season, Smith broke school records, along with his own, for career catches and receiving yardage in a game against Old Dominion University, finishing the game with 10 catches for 183 yards and two touchdowns.

A week later, his 2015 season was cut short after sustaining a knee injury a day before the team faced Florida Atlantic University. He was unable to play for the remainder of the season and the Panthers suffered, losing three out of the final four games. The two-time captain finished the season with four touchdowns, recording 36 catches for 397 yards and starting in eight games.

“I learned that for the most part

“We have to stay together more during the course of adversity because it’s going to strike.”

Jonnu Smith  
Tight end  
FIU Football

”

that when times got tough, we kind of fell apart as a team during some of the losses,” Smith said. “We have to stay together more during the course of adversity because it’s going to strike.”

After months of rehab and recovery, Smith believes that his left knee is stronger than ever and is confident that he can stay healthy throughout the 2016 season.

Smith said: “Just like I told everybody, my knee is better than it was once before. I feel faster, stronger and more powerful off that left knee. It feels like I’ve never been injured. I’m just appreciative of the trainer and strength staff for getting me past the point I was before.”

For a second year in a row, Smith has been named to the John Mackey Award Preseason Watch List; this recognition is given annually to the most outstanding collegiate tight end in the nation. He was also voted First-Team All-Conference-USA by Athlon Sports

Magazine.

Smith is confident that this season FIU is going to witness his best year yet. The senior Panther is also sure that the team will get over the hump, and he’s hopeful that the Panthers will get at least six wins for the first time under Ron Turner and win C-USA.

“You’re going to see the best Jonnu Smith you have ever seen since my freshman year,” Smith said. “I’m more experienced, older, wiser, better, faster, stronger, more confident, you know all the above. I’m excited for this year, and I’ll be going out with a bang.”

The Panthers’ first game will take place on Sept. 1 against Indiana University at the FIU Football Stadium at 7:30 p.m.

## BISCAYNE BAY CAMPUS

# Tennis program offers free tennis lessons to students

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The Wellness and Recreation Center at FIU's Biscayne Bay Campus is offering free tennis instruction to students from beginner to advanced levels. Instructor Tom Fowkes, has been teaching tennis for almost 15 years, with 10 years working full time.

Fowkes teaches kids and adults in addition to FIU students. He instructs a student who has won four national championships, and has coached other tournament players, too.

Fowkes decided to teach at FIU because "It gives him a chance to expand his program, and work with college students." He says he has formed many relationships with the students that attend the program and the faculty and staff at FIU.

Fowkes accommodates

those on different levels and says "keeping everyone interested is the main idea, and I keep the instruction informative and light so that way everyone can get something out of it."

"As a student, it's great that it's offered to us for free, and what I enjoy the most is Tom's personality," William Sturup, a participant in Fowkes' program, said. "He is a nurturing, attentive, and motivates students to come out and do their best."

Sturup also stated that his technique has improved significantly as well as his endurance.

FIU student Remy Miller said: "Tom really plays attention to detail. For example, he noticed my stance on my serve had to be corrected, which improved a lot through practice with Tom."

Fowkes is grateful to

have formed such a strong relationship with the faculty and staff at the FIU Wellness and Recreation center, particularly with Director Elias Bardawill and Assistant Director Warren Shaw.

The tennis program will take place every Thursday from 6-7 p.m. at the Biscayne Bay Campus and will last until July 28.

Fowkes' passion for tennis is shown through his successful tennis program here at FIU.

Whether you are just starting to play tennis or in need of extra practice time, this program helps students improve techniques and gives students an opportunity to meet new people who want to learn the game of tennis, too.



FIU student gets the opportunity to swing the racquet at the tennis instructions.

## BASEBALL

## Mervyl Melendez ready to accept role as man in charge

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New FIU baseball coach Mervyl Melendez said at his press conference that FIU has always been on his radar since he began coaching at the collegiate level. The ex-Alabama State University head coach made it clear that his intention was to "find a new home."

Melendez said: "This journey started for me many years ago. 20 years ago I became a baseball coach, thinking that one day I would be here. This is one of the few jobs that I looked at as one day could be mine. One day I could be there. One day I can call FIU home. And the day has arrived."

The day has indeed arrived, but the journey was no quick one. The 42-year-old was born in Carolina, Puerto Rico, the same birthplace of baseball legend and hall of famer, Roberto Clemente. At the age of 13, Melendez moved to Orlando, Florida, where he attended Lake Howell High School in Winter Park.

The Puerto Rican native spent his playing days at Bethune Cookman, prior to becoming the assistant coach and ultimately the head coach of that program. Melendez spent 12 years as the head coach of the Wildcats and posted a 379-319 record.

After his time at Bethune, it was his tenure at Alabama State that really showed Melendez was one of the most respected young coaches in the nation. With a 158-116 record in his five seasons, Melendez became the third-youngest head coach in Division I history to earn his 500th career win.

From the moment Melendez accepted the position as the Panthers' leading man, he says he understood the responsibility

that came with the job.

Melendez said: "For me, I take great honor and I take great pride leading this program. I have a responsibility. I have a responsibility to the administration. I have a responsibility to the alumni. I have a responsibility to our players."

The players currently on the roster at FIU may have enticed Melendez, but there is no question that the hotbed of talent in the area is what truly lured Melendez to South Florida.

"The excitement comes from the players that are in Miami," Melendez said. "The talent level here is unlimited."

Melendez says he "has always recruited in this area." So it comes to no surprise that he would take a job in the area where he has already established a strong recruiting repertoire.

"This is the area we are going to target first," Melendez said.

He also mentioned at the press conference that he wants to keep talent close to FIU instead of the University of Miami.

"We have to stay home," Melendez said. "We have players in this area that need to stay in this area, not on the other side of Miami."

As confident as FIU fans may be in their new signing, there is no denying that competing with the University of Miami and the established Jim Morris for recruits in South Florida will be no easy task.

"You start with the idea that you not only want to be successful, but you want to get to a place that you can call home," Melendez said.

Hopefully for FIU, Melendez and his family will be calling South Florida home for a while.

## COLUMN

## New tv deal can put Panthers on the map

## BADER BUZZ



SAMIR BADER

Conference USA released its preliminary schedule stating that six out of 12 FIU football games will be televised on CBS Sports, American Sports Network, ESPNU and beIn Sports. The news was released on June 8.

This deal gives the Conference the attention they have been looking for. Why do I say that? Well, think about how many teams you can name in C-USA without looking on the internet; it may not be very many.

This isn't just benefiting FIU, but it also brings publicity for the entire conference, especially in this day and age where every huge sporting event is on a flat-screen television.

"I think it's going to be great for FIU because now

they are going to get more media coverage and more exposure because not too many people know about the team," FIU student Diana Obregon said when asked about the new television deal.

Indeed, the deal will provide more exposure to the Panthers and possibly help evolve the FIU history and tradition.

Not only will this deal stir things up for FIU Football, but it could provide more exposure for other teams in the future like the basketball and baseball teams, who are in the C-USA as well. This television deal could help draw more interest in recruitments, fans and sports media in general.

The first of the six games will be the season home opener against the Indiana University Hoosiers on Thursday, Sept. 1.

The rest of the games being televised are listed

below:

**Thursday, Sept. 1; Indiana at FIU (ESPNU); 7:30 p.m. ET**

**Friday, Sept. 9; Maryland at FIU (CBS Sports Network); 7:30 p.m. ET**

**Saturday, Sept. 24; UCF at FIU (beIN SPORTS); 7:00 p.m. ET**

**Saturday, Oct. 1; Florida Atlantic at FIU (beIN SPORTS); 7:00 p.m. ET**

**Saturday, Nov. 5; FIU at WKU (beIN SPORTS); 5:30 p.m. ET**

**Saturday, Nov. 19; Marshall at FIU (American Sports Network); 7:00 p.m. ET**

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

## WELLNESS & REC

# POP, LOCK AND DROP IT

## Former Heat dancer mixes choreography and fitness



the women say, ‘oh my God that was amazing.’ I want them to learn confidence because as women we always look at things as negative. I want women to embrace everything and just let it giggle.”

Although the class focused mainly on the glutes, Jackson made sure to include crunches and bicycles performed on mats and arm movements to help sculpt students’ core and build arm muscles.

When students started to feel the burn she would say, “I know you feel it, but you’ve got to do the other side.”

“You don’t realize

weights,’ and I’m like ‘no, I’m just dancing.’”

Jackson is going on her second year working at FIU. She came down from North Carolina and tried out to be a Miami Heat dancer; she made the team and danced for the Heat from 2009-2010.

Along with being a fitness instructor at FIU, Jackson has her own nonprofit organization named “Love Dolls.” The organization is for girls ages 18 and older and gives them the opportunity to be apart of a dance team without having any background experience. Jackson says that “dedication can’t be taught, but the dancers can be taught

FIU trainer Tiffany Jackson teaching students a choreography that included voguing, a type of dance that imitates striking a series of poses like a model on a catwalk.

JAYDA HALL  
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Former Miami Heat dancer and current FIU trainer, Tiffany Jackson, wants to see your booty work.

Her class doesn’t include jumping jacks and lunges. Instead, she creates a choreography and makes students perform it multiple times to get their hearts

pumping and glutes jumping.

She includes hip rolls, ‘90s moves and a form of voguing called waacking, which consists of moving the arms over and behind the shoulder to a music beat. Although students get their workout in through choreography, Jackson makes sure to emphasize technique in all of the moves.

During her class, Jackson made students forget they were ever working out by

letting them freestyle while doing her choreography and telling them to have facial expressions.

“I took her in the spring, and I try to come to her class twice a week,” Junior Victoria Padron said to Student Media. “What I like a lot is the enthusiasm, and once you leave the class it really helps with any insecurities.”

Padron said that she hopes to gain “more confidence”



PHOTOS BY JAYDA HALL/THE BEACON

from the class, and Jackson does her best to make sure that’s what the students learn.

“I’m doing what I love,” Jackson said. “I love when

how much calories you’re burning just by dancing,” she said. “I don’t work out my arms. People see my arms and they’re like ‘you’re ripped, you must lift

technique.”

The Booty Work class is open to students for free and is held on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. in the BBC Wellness and Rec Center.

## MEN’S SOCCER

# Head coach ‘makes it easier for team to balance school and soccer’

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Entering his third season as the head coach of the men’s soccer team, Scott Calabrese has brought success to this program in little time, but has also been a mentor off the field for his players.

In only two seasons, Calabrese transformed the Panthers from a middle-of-the-pack conference team to Conference-USA champions and a team now ranked No. 22 in the nation.

Calabrese’s ability to bring the best out of his players on the field isn’t the only thing that stands out to the team.

“One of the most important things that he does that a lot of coaches don’t pay attention to, is more of the off-the-field stuff,” says redshirt freshman midfielder Andrew Booth.

Calabrese, according to Booth, makes it easier for the team to balance training, matches and school - a quality that is “really unique.”

“I’ve never had a coach who is this committed,”

Booth said. “Always making sure we sleep the right amount, eat the right things, and keep us hydrated before games, our training regiment is great, so we’re not worried about injury.”

From his days as assistant coach for Clemson and North Carolina, to his days as the head coach at East Tennessee State and FIU, winning seems to follow Calabrese. The Bryant College graduate has had success at every level of the game, and his players take notice of his commitment to the game.

“He’s different than any coach I’ve had. Tactically and as a person,” said defender Juan Benedetty.

The 5-foot-5 senior leftback owes a lot of his success at the collegiate level to Calabrese. Considered undersized by many, Benedetty significantly improved his game over the course of his four years with FIU, and Calabrese was a big part of that, even helping him reach, what he called, his “new prime.”

“I think it’s been great for everyone with Scott being here,” Benedetty said. “On a personal level, last year up until I got injured, he had me playing the best I had ever played. It was like a new prime and obviously Scott has a lot to do with that. He gives me confidence and allows

me to play with aggressively.”

A goalkeeper in his playing days, Calabrese remembers what it was like being a student-athlete and how difficult it can be balancing sports, school and a job.

“I don’t think it changes, it gets even harder when you get older and have kids and a job,” Calabrese said.

It’s why he focuses so much on being a mentor in all areas of his players’ college life.

Calabrese has watched players, namely Daniel Gonzalez, graduate from FIU and continue their career at the next level. He’s also given us the opportunity to witness cinderella-like-moments with walk-on defensemen Patrick Lopez, a player Calabrese brought in, who scored championship-winning goals.

The first two seasons under Calabrese were successful turnarounds for FIU, and as his third season is underway, there is no reason to believe it won’t continue to be this way for this program.

FIU’s next home game will be played Sept. 17, as the University of Kentucky comes down to Miami for a C-USA battle. Kick-off against the Wildcats will be at 7 p.m.