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RECENT REFLECTIONS

University administration, students discuss recent violence

STEPHANIE ESPAILLAT

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The FIU community came together to reflect on the escalation of tragedies and police brutality taking place around the world. FIU gathered to reflect on the significant horrors taking place in Turkey and Bangladesh, and also the systemic issues concerning police brutality and violence here in the United States.

Invited speaker, Nykeema Radway, president of the Black Student Union at FIU said "It feels like I have been in this place before. In a place of grief, anger, a lot of confusion, and pain."

Radway told the audience who gathered in GC 140 on Friday, July 8, that she and many others in the community have been mourning the deaths of many victims in the past few days and in the last few years.

"A year ago, we were mourning the deaths from the Charleston shooting, the murder of Sandra Bland, and a young Black boy, Mike Brown, [who] laid in the streets in Ferguson [for] over four hours after being gunned down," said Radway. "By who? Yes, it was an individual person, but it was a system. A system of violence which was preceded by the decades of the Jim Crow laws and the centuries of the institution of slavery."

Radway mentioned that even though the recent tragedies impact her and the Black community at FIU, many of us can unite in our struggles to create change.

"This [is the] history of the African descendants in the nation, but this rhetoric is the same for places impacted by imperialism and European colonialism," said Radway. "Orlando, Baton Rouge,



JEFF WARNER/THE BEACON

The FIU community gathered Friday, July 8 in GC 140 to remember and honor those lost in recent tragedies taking place all over the world.

Minnesota, Dallas, Turkey and Bangladesh is a collective struggle that calls for many solutions."

Radway asked the FIU community to take time to recognize those issues and to heal. She asked that the community process their emotions before taking immediate

action.

"If you need to cry before standing, then do so. Or if you need to cry while standing, then feel free to do that, too," said Radway. "This is not a battle between us or them. We as a people of color fight for the liberation of all the oppressed folks. It will be the task

of allies to stand up."

Radway also encouraged allies to join the conversation and take part in creating change within our communities.

"You do not need to be Black to promote

SEE REFLECT, PAGE 2

BISCAYNE BAY

Students speak with police

CAYLA BUSH

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If Batman were real, 11 year old Janelle Prophete would like him to stop the police from killing black people.

"I know it's not happening in Florida, but the police who are killing black people for no reason, if he could, I would like him to fix that," Prophete said. "If the Avengers were real, I feel like they probably would've fixed that a long time ago."

Prophete's statements mirrored those of her sixth to 10th grade peers at the youth dialogues facilitated by communication arts professor, Antoine Hardy at the Biscayne Bay Campus on Monday, July 11.

Having conversations with

police and the communities they serve is a good place to start in improving police relations, according to Hardy, who began facilitating dialogues between Miami Dade County Police and community students in 2015. The dialogues, he says, were created in an effort to spark conversation and open the floor to questions, specifically to students.

"Getting it out on the table is a good place to start," said Hardy. "We're doing these dialogues, of course we have ambitions and goals like helping communities and people to feel safe, but we also want people's voices to be heard."

According to Miami Dade County's Office of Economic & Demographic Research, close to 5,000 juvenile delinquency complaints were filed between

2013 and 2014. Reaching students during the ages where they're most susceptible to police interaction is an important part of the dialogues.

Hardy worked along Taisha Gauthier, director of the Haitian Mentoring Program and FIU student, to facilitate a dialogue between Haitian-American youth and Miami Dade community resource officers in the Hubert Library. Students in the community were given the opportunity to ask the officers questions in a relaxed setting, and get a better understanding of police protocol.

"Our community members are pretty afraid of the police, and I don't think law enforcement was originally supposed to have that effect on people. I think that they are here

SEE POLICE, PAGE 2

BSU holds candlelit vigil for victims

SHENNEL SANYAOLU

Contributing Writer

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At FIU, our diversity is our strength, according to Larry Lunsford, vice president of Student Affairs.

These words were sent in a mass email to the student body following Wednesday's vigil hosted by Black Student Union.

The vigil began with a gospel song by Kirk Franklin, echoing through the candlelit pit in the Graham Center. Students and faculty gathered around the Pit, where they engaged in a forum-style discussion and mourned with the nation the death of Alton Sterling.

Alton Sterling, a 37-year-old black male, was shot dead after an altercation with two police officers outside of Triple S Food Mart in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, early Tuesday morning. With permission from the store owner,

Sterling was selling CDs outside of the convenience store where the altercation and subsequent shooting were recorded. The video went viral.

The two police officers are currently on paid administrative leave as the investigation, conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice, continues.

At the vigil, students and faculty members expressed their feelings of frustration and hopelessness.

Associate director of Multicultural Programs and Services, Janice Spann-Givens, reacted to the incident saying "For me it's a lot of disappointment in our society. We don't recognize that there is a problem. When something happens once, we can say it's a coincidence; when something happens twice ... OK, but when something's happening on a recurring basis, the same

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NATION & WORLD BRIEFS

Feds nearing a decision on whether pot has medical potential

In legal parlance, pot is a Schedule 1 drug, with a high potential for abuse and no medical purpose. However, the law might soon change, as the Obama administration prepares to make what could be its biggest decision yet on marijuana.

Suspense is mounting after the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration missed its self-imposed June 30 deadline to decide whether to reschedule the drug and recognize its potential therapeutic value. Twenty-six states already have legalized its medical use.

Dallas shootings might stall efforts to demilitarize police

Criminal justice experts said Friday that the deadly ambush in Dallas could undo two years of precarious progress toward demilitarizing police since the protests and riots in Ferguson, Mo.

The conflicting trends of community policing and the militarization of law enforcement have coexisted in a delicate balance since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Those attacks led law enforcement agencies to focus on protecting people against rare but cataclysmic events, while the Ferguson unrest of August 2014 prompted a call to return to beat-based policing focused more on relationships than on heavy-duty equipment.

Florida's algae problem stems from decades of Lake pollution

The algae fouling South Florida beaches traces its origin to cattle ranches, farms and neighborhoods as far north as Orlando.

A vast area drains into Lake Okeechobee, where water laden with phosphorus has fertilized the growth of horrific algae blooms that have been discharged to the ocean. The target phosphorus level for the lake is 105 metric tons a year. Last year, the lake received 450.

The problem has been building up over decades, and defies easy solutions.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BSU remembers recent victims of police brutality

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type of scenarios, we have to grasp hold of the fact that yes, we really do have a problem.”

Givens, or Mama G as she is known at FIU, expressed her pain in regards to recent events, “I am angry. I am disgusted. I am hurt. I am disappointed that we are moving [to] a place that’s not good for any of us.”

Givens also said that students should not be complacent because situations aren’t as bad as they may

have been generations ago.

“Racism is alive, even here at the University,” Givens said. “Take it from conversation to: what can we do?”

This shooting follows a string of police shootings, involving young Black males around the nation, and has attracted national news attention.

The vice president for Student Affairs stated, in his message to the student body, FIU’s commitment “to fostering understanding and open dialogue about racism among our

students and the community as a whole.”

Amber Clark, a recreational therapy major, says “FIU students can be more active by attending events like this [and] speaking up ... We are here to let you know that we do matter; we are here. We are part of this country.”

The vigil concluded with students holding hands in a circle praying for a resolution.

Professor brings together police, community for dialogues

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to protect and serve us, and we need to feel that way,” said Gauthier. “In order to create that type of setting, we need to create dialogue so that police officers can understand the concerns of the community and address them, and the community can address concerns of the police officers, which are sometimes valid.”

Throughout the dialogues, students asked about bullet proof vests, the reasons for police tactics such as shooting for the chest when using deadly force, and how to de-escalate a typical traffic stop.

“I feel like this conversation helped me understand more about police,” said Prophete. “There was a lot that I learned. I’d like to have more of these conversations throughout the year.”

Role playing activities also highlighted the situations officers might face, to provide students with an understanding of the day-to-day life as a police officer.

“The dialogues are an awesome tool because it gives the public the opportunity to talk to police officers one on one, and get our input. For them to ask questions, for us to reply with any resources they would like to know,” said officer Stracy Devero.

According to Hardy, this mutual understanding of officers and the communities they serve is the biggest benefit of holding the dialogues.

“A lot of times, both the officers and the students will tell me ‘I know a lot more now’ at the end of the dialogues,” said Hardy. “It opens the floor to new ideas, which may lead to some solutions for the issues we’re facing today.”

Community gathers together to overcome recent tragedies

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change or to encourage change in the Black community. Encourage people to take action in a positive way,” said Radway. “Know that it is OK to be angry and hurt. Rooting that pain in humanity allows us to build a better tomorrow. Please do not lose hope.”

FIU President Mark B. Rosenberg also reminded students that FIU gathers in times like these because the community cares about how recent events affect everyone. He also spoke about students and their potential to make lasting changes in our community.

“You all have the potential to lead by example, and in moments like this, we have an opportunity to recommit to that. Let’s mourn the losses, but use the memory of the pain around this mourning to build a more just and equitable society,” said Rosenberg. “We cannot be on the sidelines, because we are losing the stability that guarantees the harmony and the commodity that is so critical to maintain this

democracy.”

Cheryl Nowell, assistant vice president of Student Affairs and director of Counseling and Psychological Services said, “We come together today as a university to strengthen the ties that bind us together and to strengthen our resolve. To be reminded that who we are matters in this world and that what we do day in and day out, makes a difference.”

Nowell also mentioned that the University provides many services for students who are grieving and are in need of assistance. She said that the staff and the offices at the university are open to everyone to provide a safe space. In addition, there are multicultural programs and services, counseling and victim empowerment services, and the women’s center that are available to students if needed.

Tyrone Giffard, a junior studying information technology told Student Media how he felt FIU was handling issues that students are facing.

“I can tell they are very

sincere, and don’t get me wrong, I feel very safe on campus,” said Giffard. “But still, as an IT consultant, I have been stalked [while] being racially profiled; [asked] ‘what are you doing here’ like I am out of place, and I’m Black. It is a crazy world, and there are days I don’t want to leave.”

“It’s good that we have resources on campus,” said Giffard. “It is nice coming together, and it is nice that the president sent out an email for grieving students, but it is still terrifying to step out and to think that you may get shot.”

FIU police chief, Alex Casas, also shared his thoughts and promises at the gathering to let students know how the police department is here to protect and preserve the University.

“We, your police department, will not allow the actions of individuals to weaken this commitment to our community. We are FIU,” said Casas. “Our FIU community needs to have this same resolve. The events that have transpired must galvanize

our community and it must inspire our resolve to stay together as one.”

Casas also spoke to Student Media about how the FIU community can be assured they will be safe under the FIU police force.

“It is a two-way street, it goes both ways. As far as reassuring our FIU community, I think that it’s important that we are simply here to serve them, to protect, and preserve the things I spoke about,” said Casas. “I know that our practice is consistent. We have increased our training over the last few years in light of what is going on around the country to have that empathy. To realize that everyone has a different paradigm and a different perception.”

The gathering took place in order to allow students to express their opinions, share their thoughts and ask questions. FIU highlights the importance of mourning and reflection on recent tragedies that have taken place, and to seek assistance on campus if needed.

THE BEACON

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NATIONAL OUTRAGE

Humanity seeks answers in the wake of a tragedy

POP TAK



CINDY CUADRA

Humanity has been recently clouded by tragedies, racism and violence. A few weeks ago, the world mourned over the 50 innocent lives lost in the Orlando shooting. Just as society was beginning to move forward from one tragedy, three others occurred.

On July 5, Alton Sterling, 37, was fatally shot multiple times in his back and chest after being pinned to the ground by two Baton Rouge police officers in Louisiana.

A day later, on July 6, another man suffered a similar fate in Falcon Heights, Minnesota. Philando Castile, a 32-year-old man, was shot multiple times and killed at a traffic stop by St. Anthony police officers.

Twelve police officers were shot, five of them killed and seven of them injured, during a “Black Lives Matter” protest rally in Dallas, Texas a day later on July 7, by Micah Xavier Johnson. Johnson was a 25-year-old man who, according to ABC News, “expressed anger for Black Lives Matter” and wanted to harm police officers.

The recurrence of these hate crimes, the violence and the racism has driven society into mayhem. It reminds us how much work still needs to be done in order to better society and coexist with each other while respecting our differences. In times like these, it’s important to recommit ourselves to change.

As a society, we need to become conscious of the stereotypes we give to others and the consequences they

may have. Generalizing a group of people for the wrongdoings of a few is what caused five police officers to lose their lives in Dallas.

The officers, who were at a protest rally to ensure the safety of “Black Lives Matter” protesters, were innocent people and because they wore a uniform, they were deemed evil by one individual who generalized an entire institution for the actions of a few bad officers.

Nevertheless, police brutality is still an ongoing issue. According to an article published this May, by the National Institute of Justice, research consistently shows that minorities are more likely than whites to distrust law enforcement and view them with suspicion. The article said “minorities frequently report that police disproportionately single them out because of their race or ethnicity.”

As a criminal justice minor, I’ve learned that in law enforcement, profiling is a necessary tactic. The method is meant to be used to describe characteristics of a person’s appearance or behavior in order to catch a suspect. However, racially profiling an individual to then arrest, shoot, or tackle them to the ground based on an assumption, is unacceptable. Perhaps training officers on new tactics for handling suspicious situations before they decide to pull the trigger could make all the difference.

FIU held a discussion on July 8, Reflections on Recent Tragic Events, to talk about how we can support each other.

“The events that have occurred around our nation and the world only serve to strengthen our resolve to embrace this diversity and work

to preserve how that diversity manifests and expresses itself,” said FIU’s police Chief Alex Casas during his speech.

While speaking to FIU Student Media, Chief Casas said he hopes one thing we can take away from all these tragic events, is the energy to revitalize our society to move forward and make changes together.

President of the Black Student Union at FIU, Nykeema Radway, had many words of encouragement toward making changes.

“I feel like I’ve been in this place before, a place of grief, anger, a lot of confusion and fear,” said Radway during the opening of her speech. “You don’t have to be black to encourage change,” she said.

Radway motivated everyone to encourage change and to contribute more towards the movement of equality. “Sometimes we need more than just a retweet or a post on Instagram. We need the collective dedication toward equality.”

Having open discussions and open dialogue, like the opportunity FIU presented, is one way to start making progress towards equality and ending violence and hate crimes. No, not all lives matter yet in today’s society, because if they did, there would be no racism or violence or hate crimes.

The context of the “Black Lives Matter” movement is imperative because it represents the progression and equality that we are lacking in the U.S. It’s not to say that some lives matter over others, but to make it clear that black lives matter just as much as everyone else’s. It’s about inclusion not exclusivity.

Moving forward from any tragedy is never easy, but it’s

necessary. Sterling, Castile, Trayvon Martin, Mike Brown, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland, Sean Bell and unfortunately many others are more than enough proof to realize that change needs to happen.

Whether it’s emailing members of our Congress regarding legislative changes, joining the Black Student Union at FIU, peacefully protesting, or even just researching and taking time out of your day to think about the events going on in society to form your own understanding and solutions are contributions toward making changes.

FIU’s President Mark Rosenberg said during his speech at Reflections, “We all have the potential to lead by example and in times like this we must recommit to that.” These issues affect everyone, whether we realize it or not. It’s time to let the past be the past and make a better future for ourselves and the generations after us. We cannot lose faith in humanity.

As the late rap superstar, Tupac Shakur said in his Grammy nominated single, “Changes,” “We have to make a change/ It’s time for us as a people to start making some changes/ Let’s change the way we eat, let’s change the way we live/ And let’s change the way we treat each other/ You see the old way wasn’t working, so it’s on us to do what we have to do to survive.”

Cindy Cuadra is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, Pop Talk, is a commentary on pop culture current events. For suggestions or comments, please contact Cindy at cindy.cuadra@fiusm.com.

Police brutality causes national fear

POLITICOBUZZ



FABIENNE FLEURANTIN

Hoodies and skittles. A BB gun mistaken for a real gun. A severed spine gone wrong. A man who couldn’t catch his breath.

Now, the sound of music has been silenced permanently.

Alton Sterling, a 37-year old man, was gunned down July 5 by two police officers at the Triple S Food Mart in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The incident was caught on video.

Police received a distressed call from someone at the convenience store, saying that “a Black male who was selling music [CD’s] and wearing a red shirt threatened him with a gun,” according to NPR.

The store owner, Abdullah Muflahi, saw the whole altercation unravel before him while he stood two feet away

from the scene. The two officers, Blaine Salamoni and Howie Lake II, pinned Sterling down, and “fired four to six shots into Sterling’s chest,” said Muflahi to theadvocate.com.

He also said that even though Sterling was carrying a weapon while he was pinned down, “his hand was nowhere near his pocket.” He did not attempt to hurt those police officers. Muflahi added that “they were really aggressive with him from the start,” to theadvocate.com.

The officers have been placed on administrative leave and “the U.S attorney’s office in Baton Rouge, the FBI and State Police also will be involved in the investigation,” said Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards to CNN.

This outrageous event has caused protests to erupt nationwide. This is the “505th fatal police shooting by an on-duty officer in 2016,” according to the Fatal Force database, created

by the Washington Post to track shootings based on news reports.

The Black Lives Matter movement grows stronger now that this incident has occurred and more people have grown restless with anger and outcry. It seems that the carelessness with which black lives are treated is becoming more evident, as more and more of these events surface.

Even as there are changes that have occurred within the police force, like having to carry body cameras, that has not stopped the violence or the countless lives that have been lost in the process. The changes have made violence accessible to those who seek it.

Young black men and women are losing their lives left and right with no probable cause and no sense of justice for them and their families.

How careful does an African American have to be to maneuver in this life without police brutality? What does a black person need to do in order to be

entitled to his or her own life? We look over our shoulders in fear, trying to walk a straight path without diverging but it does not suffice. Sometimes I think it never will.

If we do not take the necessary steps to bring forth change and spread awareness about what is occurring today, and find solutions to this prominent issue, more damage will take place.

Something needs to be done in order to ensure the future of black lives before their future gets taken away from them.

Fabienne Fleurantin is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, PoliticoBuzz, is a commentary that raises awareness about political issues in the US and worldwide. She also covers events at FIU’s Biscayne Bay Campus. For suggestions or comments, please contact Fabienne at fabienne.fleurantin@fiusm.com.

THE BEACON | Editorial

University’s brief forum not enough to soothe student fears

It’s nearly impossible to watch the news or scroll through a social media feed without seeing outrage over the violence that has taken place within the last week across the nation.

Alton Sterling was shot by officers while selling CDs on Tuesday, July 5. Philando Castile was shot by officers the very next day, on Wednesday, July 6; then, on July 7, a sniper took the lives of five police as they stood by protesters.

“It feels like I have been in this place before. In a place of grief, anger, a lot of confusion, and pain,” said Black Student Union President Nykeema Radway at a University held forum Friday, July 8.

Other students spoke with genuine fear of the police, with real confusion, and a distrust of the intentions of the forum. The common connection between students – a lot of confusion and pain.

“We, your police department, will not allow the actions of individuals to weaken this commitment to our community. We are FIU,” said Casas. “Our FIU community needs to have this same resolve. The events that have transpired must galvanize our community and it must inspire our resolve to stay together as one.”

Words that mean nothing -- a symbol to the black students on the editorial board that FIU Police doesn’t get it. The rest of the members of eboard see it as a genuine disinterest in events that shape the nation and community relations.

To “stay together as one” is a wonderful ideal that always falls short, because we do not feel like there is “one.” We feel like it’s police against us. Having officers sit on a platform in silence as tears are shed only further solidifies this emotion. It’s symbolic -- it says “I see your pain, I hear your frustrations, but I can’t relate.”

In order to stand as one, we need to have a mutual understanding, something that’s missing from the University community. There are too many questions and not enough answers. The only way to improve relations is to have an open dialogue, with officers given the space to speak to students directly.

The discussion held by administration was a start. It opened the floor for dialogue, but less than an hour later it closed all too soon. It closed without hearing from officers anything other than standardized rhetoric.

FIU Student Media proposes a discussion between students and FIUPD moderated by our staff with objectives such as three tangible improvements on the part of FIUPD to soothe students’ fears and three thoughts students could keep in mind to assist police in doing their job as the guideline for the discussion.

We want to provide the police department the space and opportunity to share their concerns, just as students should be able to, so that there is a space for healing and improvement within the community.

Visit fiusm.com for the full editorial.

President Obama discusses police brutality

RIVERS OF TRUTH



LINDA RIOS

With cell phone recordings and social media, the recent tragedies involving police officers when targeting African Americans seem to be showing up more frequently than in previous years.

President Obama released a statement on July 8, where he addressed the police shootings and provided some staggering statistics. Among the list of statistics he shared, the president mentioned that “African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched after being pulled over.”

When discussing the incarceration percentages, Obama mentioned that African American defendants are 75 percent more likely to be charged with offenses carrying mandatory minimums, as well as receiving sentences that are 10 percent longer than those given to Whites committing the same crime.

How is it possible that after all these years with slavery abolished and the Civil Rights Movement, African American citizens are still being treated poorly?

The New York Times, who published the press conference held by President Obama, also included that the Hispanic and African American community, being only 30 percent of the United States population, occupy more than 50 percent

of jails all over the nation.

Several activist groups have decided to take a stand and fight for the rights of those affected by the recent events, not only for African Americans, but also the families of the victims who have regrettably passed away due to the violence that has taken place in the past few days.

Some musicians like Jennifer Lopez, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Weezer and Christina Aguilera have also released new songs in order to raise funds and support the families who are currently grieving for their loved ones.

Why is it that during times of violence, everyone is willing to help out yet no one stands up to fight the root of the problem? Spur of the moment actions only provide

temporary solutions.

It’s time to realize that our actions, or inaction, is going to lead us down a destructive path, unless we stop and make a change now.

Every couple of years, there are songs and movies that promote change and peace in the world but is it finally going to happen or are we going to wait a couple more decades to realize that it’s too late?

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.

Supreme Court votes in favor of Pro-Choice, 5 to 3

POLITICOBUZZ



FABIENNE FLEURANTIN

Victory has been seized once again in a historic 5 to 3 court ruling, where the Supreme Court rejected a Texas law that made women’s access to abortion clinics unnecessarily difficult and gave women back their right to choose.

The battle of Whole Women’s Health vs. Hellerstedt began in 2013, when the Texas legislature passed an anti-abortion law, House Bill 2.

According to wholewomenshealth.com, HB2 was developed with the purpose of “making safe abortion care more difficult to provide and obtain which has resulted in the closure of nearly 75 percent of the clinics in the state of Texas since 2013, forcing some women to drive up to 300 miles one-way to obtain a safe and legal abortion care.”

This law imposed unjust restrictions that needed to be followed by the state’s abortion clinics. Some of the restrictions included “doctors who provide

abortion services must obtain admitting privileges at local hospitals no farther than 30 miles away from the clinic; and every health care facility offering abortion care must meet building specifications to essentially become mini-hospitals,” as mentioned on reproductiverights.org.

“

The government shouldn’t have control over what a woman chooses to do with her body.

”

These requirements, such as putting these institutions at a farther distance, would make it more difficult for women to reach a clinic and ultimately punish women for exercising their right to terminate a pregnancy.

I don’t know about you, but if someone wielded their power to intervene on my ability to choose what I wanted to do, I would be furious.

The government shouldn’t have control over what a woman chooses to do with her body. It’s not within their realm of power to do so. It’s her right and

her decision to determine what should be done. That choice should not be hindered by narrow-minded individuals who believe their values should be imposed on others.

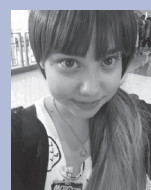
For Texas legislators to go to such extreme measures to create a difficult situation for a predicament they may not fully comprehend is simply wrong. Abortion will always be a controversial issue. However, it is erroneous to give a concrete solution to such a complex issue.

Women have claimed back the right to have their decisions belong to themselves and have designated their path of choice to be respected by all. They have won today, not only for the women in Texas, but perhaps have led to a bigger understanding that will extend to the country as a whole.

Fabienne Fleurantin is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, PoliticoBuzz, is a commentary that raises awareness about political issues in the US and worldwide. She also covers events at FIU’s Biscayne Bay Campus. For suggestions or comments, please contact Fabienne at fabienne.fleurantin@fiusm.com.

NYC sets standard for ‘menstrual equity’

PANTHER HEALTH



MAYTINEE KRAMER

Tampon. Sanitary napkin. Panty liner. Period. Just a few years ago, it was rare and even taboo to hear or speak these words in public. Today, they are being written into law.

New York has recently stepped out as a leader, in a growing national and global movement for menstrual equity, by being the first state to pass a legislation that provides free feminine hygiene products to students in public schools, homeless women living in shelters and women in jail.

The New York City Council voted 49-0 to approve the legislation, and councilwoman Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, a Queens Democrat and a sponsor of the legislation, called the measure an issue of “menstrual equity.”

States across the country are fighting to eliminate sales tax on menstrual products, which are a basic necessity and should never have been taxed in the first place.

However, as states debate whether or not to remove the sales tax, feminine hygiene products remain largely inaccessible in the United States. Menstruation isn’t something women can control and menstrual products aren’t a luxury item.

Therefore, like New York City, states should put more effort in providing free menstrual products to women in certain settings.

“Whether it’s in public schools, shelters, or even our city jails, giving women access to these products is a no-brainer and long overdue,” Melissa Mark-Viverito, the New York City council speaker, said to The Advocate.

According to The Advocate, high priced feminine hygiene products were largely unaffordable for many New York City public school students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch. People in homeless shelters were equally unable to afford tampons and pads.

Tampons and pads can sell for more than \$10 at a local drug or grocery store. For

example, a pack of 40 Always Infinity pads with wings costs \$10.99 at CVS Pharmacy while a box of 50 Tampax Pearl plastic tampons costs \$11.99. Making sure you’re covered and taking care of your health can really add up financially.

Council finance chair, Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, who worked on the legislation, expressed her support to The Advocate, stating the city was “setting a standard for equality and access for the rest of the country to follow.”

Menstruation falls squarely at the intersection of sound health, and economic and educational policy, yet America has long lagged behind in providing menstrual products, while raising awareness that menstruation isn’t taboo.

Thankfully, there are legions of activists, journalists, policy makers and others working to raise awareness of the negative impact caused by lack of access to affordable, safe menstrual products.

In the U.S., public policy is a key lever for change. Just last year, menstrual activism captured so many headlines that NPR dubbed it “The Year of the Period” and Cosmopolitan proclaimed it was “the year the period went public.”

As menstrual equality garners more interest and awareness, states are moving in the right direction by providing basic needs for its people. This year, 15 of the 40 states with a “tampon tax” moved to change it, and just last week, the American Medical Association released a statement urging states to exempt menstrual products from sales tax.

No woman ever said getting a period was a luxury, so menstrual products shouldn’t be treated as such. It’s not about giving away free stuff: it’s about ensuring a high functioning, equal society. New York made history for menstrual equity, and the rest of the country, and the world, should follow.

Maytinee Kramer is a staff writer for FIU Student Media. Her column, Panther Health, is a commentary on maintaining one’s health during college. For suggestions or comments, please contact Maytinee at maytinee.kramer@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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Editorials are the unified voice of the editorial board, which is composed of the editor in chief, management, and the editors of each of the four sections. The Beacon welcomes any letters regarding or in response to its editorials. Send them to opinion@fiusm.com.

POCKET MONSTERS ON CAMPUS

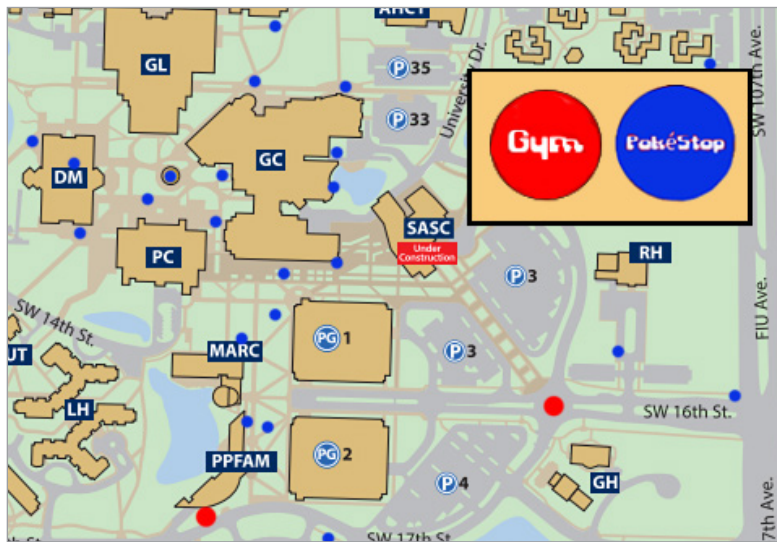
Students and strangers gather to catch them all








Clockwise— FIU senior students Ana Briz, Art History major, Omar Morillo, English major, and Aidin Greenstein, Liberal Science major, playing Pokémon Go! on Saturday afternoon with a group of individuals that came to campus to catch pokémon

There are currently five gyms on campus, their levels are as shown as of June 11

The most popular pokéstops on campus are generally around the Graham Center and Frost Museum.



PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS BY NADINE MATAS/THE BEACON

-  FIU AHC5 Building
Gym level 2
-  The Red Penne Sculpture
Gym level 2
-  Engineering and Computer Sciences
Building
Gym level 3
-  FIU Panther
Gym level 3
-  Bone Wall
Gym level 5

Pokemon Go application takes over FIU

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The Pokémon Company, in association with Nintendo and Niantic Labs, recently released the application Pokémon Go in the United States. The app features the Japanese-created pocket monsters in a new gaming experience for its fans.

“Travel between the real world and the virtual world of Pokémon with Pokémon GO for iPhone and Android devices,” as the Pokémon Company website says, in their article reporting on the game’s features and release dates.

The objective of this game is to explore your neighborhood and surrounding areas in order to track down virtual creatures and, as the Pokémon, add them to your pokedex. The ultimate goal is to “catch ‘em all”, as the catchphrase of the popular TV show states.

“Pokémon GO is built on Niantic’s Real World Gaming Platform and will use real locations

to encourage players to search far and wide in the real world to discover Pokémon,” says the Pokémon Company on their site. “Pokémon GO allows you to find and catch more than a hundred species of Pokémon as you explore your surroundings.”

The popularity of this application has spread to the FIU community in large numbers. Within the past few days, FIU has been the hangout spot for gamers, both FIU students and non-students. People come from all around just for a chance to catch a pokémon.

Omar Morillo, a senior studying English says, “I play partly for nostalgia and partly because it’s a fun bonding experience. There has been a surprisingly large amount of community building over this game and seeing people go and walk around at all hours is really cool.”

“I must have made 20 new friends since playing this game,” says Adin Greenstein, a senior studying liberal science. “[We were] crowded around in the uncut grass before GC, just so everyone can

catch the Pikachu someone found there. That was when it hit me: we, those of us playing this game, spending countless hours walking out in the sun, have been given a gift we never really thought we would.”

Sunday, July 10, an estimated 200 individuals walked together through the Green Library in hopes of finding a “Squirtle,” during the night. The video posted by Twitter user @lynchetaa has gone viral with over 3,000 retweets overnight.

“I just love how suddenly everyone found this one and they’re all over it. This game is literally everywhere,” Morillo said. “Especially on campus. There are a lot of moments where I’ll see people playing and we’ll all just cooly smile to each other because we know. I play basically every day.”

Ana Briz, an art history senior, expresses concern albeit enjoying the game.

“It gets people outside and essentially breaks up the sedentary lifestyle, I enjoy the fact that it brings people together,” she said. “But I’m worried about others’

safety. People are driving around and playing the game, which is really serious. Texting and driving is already a huge problem, so I hope the game builds regulations around travel speed limit.”

English freshman, Aaron Rodriguez-Pupo, also expresses concern over developments that have been in the news since the game’s release less than a week ago.

“I’ve already seen several news reports of people getting into accidents with the game, or using Pokemon GO to rob others, so I know there is controversy surrounding whether or not it’s safe.”

Rodriguez-Pupo does however comment on the physical benefits to the game.

“Honestly, it encourages physical activity in a way that nothing else ever has, at least for me.” He says, “I have a rather sedentary lifestyle, but in the past four days I’ve walked five kilometers I would otherwise not have walked. It also encourages social interaction.”

Other than the benefits to the consumers, Nintendo’s stocks have

benefited enormously from the game’s release. In an article for The Verge, James Vincent headlines “Pokémon GO’s success adds \$7.5 billion to Nintendo’s market value.”

The Pokémon Company believes the app has been at a high point since its release and will only continue growing with new features to be released in the near future. The fans are the ones who will continue fueling the so-called “Pokémon Fever”.

“In the realest sense of the term, we’re all actually partaking of the magical quest that some part of our brains refused to stop believing in. For anyone who plays the game, brow covered in sweat and smile almost painfully large, this realization brings almost incomparable joy.” Greenstein says. “We’re heros on a quest, walking towards the horizon for greater finds, playfully battling to become stronger, and making new friends and new experiences along the way.”

Visit fiusm.com for the full story

Aubry's 64 days abroad: Vienna Edition

64 DAYS ACROSS
THE POND



AUBRY CARR

There was once a four year old girl whose mother was up one night watching the 1984 film Amadeus. This was the first time this little girl heard opera and was conscious of its beauty, and so there was nothing else to do than walk out, lie about a faux nightmare that kept her up, and beg to be closer to the soundwaves. This little girl was me, and since that day I have longed to visit Vienna, famously named the City of Music, see a live opera.

How fortunate that I should visit during a national holiday when Antonio Vivaldi's Don Carlo would be showing the day after learning the cheapest way to get tickets. It was a beautiful performance, inspiring chills, tears, and many "bravos" from the audience.

Should you wish to attend an opera on a low budget and don't mind standing for an extended period of time, there are "standing tickets" for \$5.77 available for purchase at the box office of the Vienna State Opera

House (Wiener Staatsoper) starting two hours before the performance. Before those two hours, though, people begin queuing, but you're allowed to bring a newspaper, a shoe, anything, to hold your place in line.

However, if your person is not queued by the time the box office opens, your effects will do nothing to reserve your place any longer. Once inside with a standing spot claimed, a sweater or a ribbon will serve as your reservation and though everyone is respectful of the system, the workers will ensure that your place is not taken.

A city isn't very efficient if it is difficult to navigate, but even for someone with no sense of direction and without the aid of GPS, Vienna is not a terribly difficult city to understand. Vienna's metro system is relatively cheap and simple to comprehend; for students and children, there is a five day pass available for \$17.31 that can take you from the airport to the city.

The metro works on an honor system; no one routinely checks tickets, but when there are the occasional ticket checks, it's a fine into the hundreds to not have one.



AUBRY CARR/THE BEACON

If biking is preferred, do not fear the danger that accompanies a bike ride in the US. Red or green coloured bike lanes exist in Vienna, unlike in the States where bikers must make the difficult decision between running over pedestrians or getting killed themselves by oncoming traffic, stuck in a limbo between lanes in the world of transportation.

I stayed at the Wombat's Hostel in Naschmarkt, which was just as any standard hotel, and even better than some. They rent out bicycles, umbrellas, and many more supplies, in addition to offering walking tours

and day trips to sight-see. For an additional fee, breakfast is buffet style with little selection, but all of the choices are very light, healthy, and tasty. There is a bar on the main floor, laundry facilities with free soap downstairs, and large, comfortable rooms in the floors above, with windows that open to a beautiful view.

Food is the best part of visiting a new place; in Vienna, beef and potatoes are generally your most common meals. Gmoa Keller, a traditional Viennese restaurant, has the best boiled beef I have ever

tried. Schnitzel and apfelstrudel are necessary dishes, and while the schnitzel is good nearly anywhere, the apfelstrudel is the best at the Café Museum.

Culture shock isn't a big problem here, because apart from the food and architecture (and bike lanes), nearly everything else is similar. Familiar department stores like H&M and Zara are on every block, American music is played nearly everywhere and there are few people who don't speak English. Less English is spoken in Miami.

It was strange to be in a foreign country on a different continent and still feel so close to the U.S. The only aspect of Vienna that came as a shock was the lack of use of credit or debit cards. I applied for my first one before this trip to avoid the worry of carrying large amounts of cash around, only to find out that many places accept only cash.

Generally, the people here are lovely and were quick to help us when they saw lost tourists crowded over a map. Vienna is a city rich with history, breathtaking architecture, interesting food, and great sights to see.

Supercon 'creates community'

LIFESTYLE POINTS



JOSEPH
CARDENAS

Comic conventions always create a sense of community; the unique and close atmosphere of geek culture is something that few things in this world can match. July kicked off with not only Independence Day weekend excitement, but also the Florida Supercon, where people came dressed in their respective fan communities — from Game of Thrones to Star Wars.

Walking in felt almost normal, despite the fact that there was a guy in an incredibly elaborate "Do It Yourself" getup of what could only be assumed as a retro Transformer robot. Somewhere else

in the entrance hall was someone dressed head to toe in a Nick Wilde furry costume from "Zootopia", which may be the most ghastly thing to exist since bolo ties. And yet with all of this, it still felt inviting and positively fun.

It's not unusual to see celebrity guests in attendance to speak at panels, meet fans and sign pictures and merchandise. Cons, short for conventions, even usually feature them.

This year's Supercon guest list was extensive: three leads from this year's "Deadpool": Morena Baccarin, also on FOX's "Gotham", Brianna Hildebrand as the Negasonic Teenage Warhead, and Stefan Kapicic as Colossus.

Other guests included Baccarin's co-star and lead on "Gotham" Ben McKenzie, William Shatner, and famous voice actresses Tara Strong and Paige O'Hara.

Another voice actor who was available for fan meetings was Jim Cummings, whose work in voicing animated characters is renowned. His most famous work has been in Walt Disney Animation for beloved characters such as Winnie the Pooh and Tigger, and for the obscure but still as widely admired, Darkwing Duck.

"It's interesting to see what really touches people," said Cummings in an interview with FIU Student Media. He recalled his first convention where fans had unexpectedly asked him to recall a line from the 1998 video game, "Baldu's Gate", instead of his more iconic roles. "They grew up on all my crazy cartoons and voices."

Cummings also talked about the culture that resonates in these conventions. The admiration and love for a movie, television show, or

any media, comes to a sort of nexus here.

People dress up in simple or elaborate costumes because this is the place to do it, it's an environment where people understand it. Anywhere else, it might seem weird to dress like a fox from a Disney movie, but at Supercon, it's not any more weird than being clad in black and carrying around a crossguard lightsaber.

Comic Con goers love these characters and the actors who brought them to life. Though people may not have been familiar with Cummings and his work, they still came because of the legacy he has and that's something that is valued and love at these conventions.

After speaking with the man behind Winnie the Pooh, it really is interesting to see what touches people. That is what made Supercon a great experience.

Rally 100 event aims to bring students together

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Unity is defined as the state of being united or joined as a whole. The Rally 100 Kick Off to Homecoming event, taking place Wednesday, July 13 at the FIU Housing Quad from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., was created as a way to bring FIU students together to start the official countdown to Homecoming. According to the organizers, this year's Rally 100 is going to be quite different from previous years.

"It used to be 100 days long and would take place in the pit," explained Sammy Hadi, assistant director of operations for the Homecoming council. However, this year Hadi wanted to shake things up.

Unlike past Rally 100 events, this year's event, free for all FIU students, will bring together all clubs and organizations on campus.

"When I got the position of assistant director, I wanted to have an open door policy with all of the

other organizations," said Hadi. He began thinking of ways to bring all of these different organizations together and thus, this year's Rally 100 was born.

Attendees will be able to participate in games, giveaways, take pictures in the photo booths, enjoy cotton candy, and watch performances by FIU's Dazzlers and Karizma.

There will also be special guest appearances from DJ Hercules of 99 Jamz, and our very own President Rosenberg.

The Rally 100 event will lead into the Splash 50. The Splash 50 is a pool party in the Housing Quad, on August 26, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., to mark the 50 days before the Homecoming game. There will be appearances by a guest DJ as well as giveaways and special contests every hour.

"Homecoming is the fabric of FIU," said Hadi. "Once a year, we come together and share our pride for our university. You can come from any major or background and this brings us together."



Anthony Hernandez, senior psychology student, at Florida Supercon 2016

WELLNESS AND REC

BBC Wellness and Recreation Center offers free tennis lessons for 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.

“

As a student, it's great that it's offered to us for free, and what I enjoy the most is [the instructor's] personality,

William Sturrrup
Student

Tennis classes

”

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 Sturrrup, a participant in Fowkes' program, said. “He is a nurturing, attentive, and motivates students to come out and do their best.”

Sturrrup 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



ALEXA ROTH/THE BEACON

A student of the BBC Wellness and Recreation Center's tennis class takes a shot at returning a serve during class.

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.

BASEBALL

Melendez 'takes great honor' in leading team

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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.

FOOTBALL

TV deal can put FIU 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, ESPN 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 (ESPN); 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.

SOCCER

German transfer learns to adjust after tough transition to U.S.

REINALDO LLERENA

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Initially, the adjustment to life in the United States was difficult for Marvin Hezel, defensive player for the FIU men's soccer team, who grew up in a small town with a different climate.

Born in Waldshut-Tiengen, Germany, Hezel grew up in a family oriented, relaxed community with a small population. He was introduced to soccer at a young age by his parents and often played with friends in his free time. When he was offered a scholarship to play overseas in Miami, he jumped at the opportunity.

"It took about a year or so to get used to the Miami weather," said Hezel. "It was a big change from Germany. I often practiced in the heat that first year to try and get used to it as fast as possible. Coming from a town that only had 25,000 people to one that has almost half a million is a big change. It felt crowded compared to Waldshut, where you have met or seen just about everyone that lived there."

It didn't take long for the soccer player to make a name for himself here in the states.



MARIA SOLEDAD LORENZINO/THE BEACON

Junior defender Marvin Hezel competing on the field against a University of South Carolina player.

In 2015, Hezel was named the Conference USA "Defensive Player of the Week" for the week of Sept. 8. He started all 20 games of the Panther season and accumulated a total of six points throughout the season. The points include two goals and two assists from the FIU defender. At the

end of the season, Hezel was named to the 2015 All-Southeast Region first team, the All C-USA first team, the C-USA Championship All-Tournament team and the C-USA All-Academic team.

"When I first arrived in the U.S., I spoke a very limited English," said

Hezel. "I was very excited when I was awarded a scholarship to play at FIU, but more excited about a foreign opportunity to play overseas while getting an education."

Hezel said he would listen to how the people around him spoke English and would research any unfamiliar words at night. He made it his goal to look up at least one word per day during his freshman year to help him learn English. Hezel said his English is almost as good as his German, although he has trouble with the occasional word.

Now entering his senior year, Hezel is focusing on his final season on the team and completing his undergraduate degree in marketing. He is currently interning with FIU's Sports Marketing department and working out twice a day to get ready for the fall season.

"I love the communication aspect of marketing," Hezel said. "Learning how to promote a product to a certain consumer is the part I like the most. There's some psychology at play in marketing that I am fascinated by. It's an interesting field."

FOOTBALL

Three Panthers on All C-USA Team

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Conference USA has released its preseason All-Conference USA Team on July 20, and three FIU players were selected this year: two seniors, Jonnu Smith and Michael Montero, and junior, Anthony Wint. These returning starters are expected to be the leaders of this season as they are preparing for training camp beginning in August, knowing that the Panthers are going in as a young team.

"They are always looking up to me," Smith said. They know they can come to me for any advice."

Last season, Smith started eight games before going down with a knee injury that kept him out in the last four games. Despite his injury, he led the team in touchdown passes and finished his junior career with 36 passes for 397 yards and four touchdowns.

The Ocala, Florida, native was added to the NCAA record books for catching at least one catch in 32 consecutive games. His best game, last season, was in week eight against Old Dominion University, when he tied a career-high 10 catches and a career-best 183 yards, which was fourth-most in the University's history.

Smith was named to the John Mackey Watch List for best tight ends and received an All-C-USA honorable mention. He is currently on the watch list this year as well, and is ranked No. 8 best tight end in the country.

Wint started every game at middle linebacker, leading the Panthers with 88 tackles, 41 solo, which ranked him No. 16 in the C-USA for total tackles. Adding the 5.5 tackles for loss tackle, he also recorded 0.5 sacks, one interception, two-pass breakups and two-fumble recoveries, which gave him a single-season career best. The two fumble recoveries ranked him No. 24 in the country.

Montero started all 12 games as the starting center for the Panthers and received Second-Team All-C-USA honors. The three-time captain anchored the young offensive line by contributing 4,173 total yards, which was fifth-most in school history, including 2,854 passing yards, the second-most in school history.

Montero was recently selected to the Preseason Rimington Award watch list for best linemen and the Danny Wuerffel Award watch list for community service.

The Panthers will report to training camp on Aug. 1 and the team's first game is on Sept. 1, against Indiana University at 7:30 p.m.

SWIMMING AND DIVING

Horner to coach Botswana in Rio this summer

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Randy Horner, FIU's swimming and diving coach, will be coaching the Botswana Olympic swimming team in the upcoming 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

"It's an honor to be selected to coach Naomi and David at the Olympics," Horner told FIUSports.com.

Horner, who was named the "2016 Conference USA Coach of the Year," guided the Panthers to their second straight C-USA championship this season, defeating second-place Rice by 318 points, the largest margin of victory in C-USA championship history.

Since taking over the program in the 2010-2011 season, the Missouri State grad has found success in recruiting athletes from around the world. Horner has recruited swimmers from over 12 different countries including Iceland, South Africa and Slovakia.

Horner will be coaching sophomore backstroke and freestyle swimmer, Naomi Ruele in Rio, who he recruited back in

2014 while she was still living in her native city of Gaborone, Botswana.

"I spoke to Nacho and Randy and got along with them really well," said Ruele. "There was a coach/athlete chemistry and I decided to come here."

Horner will be coaching Ruele this August as she competes in the 50-meter free, as well as David Van Der Colff, a freshman from Nova Southeastern, who will be competing in the 100-meter backstroke.

This summer in Rio will be the first time Horner coaches an Olympic swimming team, but Ruele and Van Der Colff are not the first Olympic swimmers to be coached by Horner. Olympians Raichin Anotonov (Bulgaria) and Jackie Wellman (Zambia) were coached by Horner in 2004 during his time as an assistant swimming coach at Missouri State.

He then established a swimming program in New Orleans prior to moving to South Florida and then repeating his success as a coach at FIU with two-consecutive Conference USA championships. Now, Botswana has trusted Horner to lead their swimmers in the Olympic Games.

Despite his international success, Horner plans to stay in South Florida for the next few years. In 2015, the FIU executive director of Sports and Entertainment announced that Horner agreed to a contract extension with FIU which runs through the 2018-19 season.

Christian Garcia, a senior accounting and finance major, is an avid Olympics fan who says he can't wait to support Ruele and Horner.

"I always watch the Olympics every four years, but there is no doubt I will be tuning in to see Naomi represent FIU," said Garcia. "I think it is awesome to see athletes from my university represent their home nations. I will be rooting hard for Ruele and Horner."

Senior Adam Machin, majoring in political science, agrees with Garcia and was shocked when he learned about Ruele representing Botswana.

"I was fascinated to learn about Ruele and her background. I think it is amazing that FIU will be represented by someone from Botswana in an Olympic Game," Machin said. "It truly does speak to the diversity of our University."

CLUB SPORTS

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.

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Budokon, a fairly new workout craze, combines two 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.

At the University 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.

Students looking to explore different ways to expand their workout regimen, are encouraged to try Budokon. 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

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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.

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

Jonnu Smith
Tight end
FIU Football

“I learned that for the most part 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-Con-

ference-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.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

WELCOME HOME

New Assistant head coach excited to work with the women's basketball team



PHOTO COURTESY OF FIUSPORTS

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Joe Silvestri, new assistant head coach for women's basketball, has high hopes for the success of the women's basketball team for the upcoming 2016-2017 season. Although Silvestri has only been a part of the coaching staff for a month, he believes that there is something special about the team that will

develop throughout the offseason.

The New York native moved to Spring Hill, Florida, 15 years ago. Silvestri attended Palm Beach Atlantic University where he played basketball. After suffering a few knee injuries, this led him to hang up his basketball shoes for good. He later finished his degree at the University of Central Florida.

"I would have loved

to play all four years, but it didn't work out that way," Silvestri said. "I regret not being able to finish, but at the same time, I look at it and say that my path brought me to this."

Before joining FIU, Silvestri was an assistant head coach at UCF for two years and served as the director of Program Development before that. Earlier this year, he received an honor as one of the women's basketball

Coaches Association's "Thirty Under 30." The class recognizes 30 up-and-coming women's basketball coaches, ages 30 and under in the sport. Silvestri was one of six male coaches to make the cut.

When coach Tiara Malcom began her search for an assistant head coach, Silvestri was at the top of her list. Silvestri received a call from Coach Malcom in May saying

that she wanted to set up an on-campus interview.

It only took her a week to make a decision before contacting Silvestri again, letting him know that she wanted him on her team. Coach Malcom appreciated Silvestri's ability to work hard and the positive energy that he brings to all of his games.

"It was a really great honor that she called me and went through the process with me," Silvestri said.

Since being hired, Silvestri has been working with the team in small groups for the offseason, and says that he is happy with the progress they are making.

"So far, I know what they can and cannot do in some of the drills," Silvestri said. "They're very coachable, great listeners, and very attentive."

Silvestri plans to learn about the team on the court, but he believes that growing a relationship off the court is also a big part of the offseason for him.

"I think it's important to really get to know the girls and have that connection for you to really take them to the next level," Silvestri said. "It's also

important to have that relationship outside of this and spend time with them not on the court so that when they do come into work, they know that your relationship with them is genuine."

The Panthers ended their offseason in the second round of the Conference USA Championships against Marshall University. The game was the last for senior Taylor Shade, who scored eight points and finished her season 19th overall on the all-time FIU scoring list with 1,069 points.

"She was a really good player," Silvestri said. "Those are big shoes to fill, but I think we have some kids with similar skill sets. We do have a pretty young team as far as our guards, but I think they do have potential to get to that level."

One of the assets Coach Malcom admires about Silvestri are his recruiting skills, and the ability to add great talent to his team.

"If I can get a 'Taylor Shade' or two 'Taylor Shades' in the process, then that'll be great," Silvestri said. "FIU is a great campus and beautiful vicinity, and once I get these recruits to come on campus, it's going to be so easy to sell."

INTRAMURAL SPORTS

Blocked shot ends basketball game in a tie

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"This Is It", one of the intramural basketball teams, started the game against the "Alpha Motor Neurons" with one player down. The team had to play most of the first half four on five.

They started the game in a 2-2 defensive scheme: two men up top and two men down low.

They took a 9-7 lead in the game and kept control for much of the first half, never relinquishing their lead.

"We were not prepared for that," said Jordan Davis of Alpha Motor Neurons. "It actually hindered us more than it helped, there was no familiarity

facing a 2-2 zone and everyone was confused,"

With 11 minutes left to play in the half, This Is It now had five players on the court. Defense was switched to a man-on-man scheme and the players were now able to move the ball better on offense. The team took a two-point lead at the half with a score of 37-35.

In the second half, both teams competed hard, trading basket for basket. Holding on to a four-point lead with two minutes remaining, This Is It made a late-game substitution, taking out one of their primary ball handlers.

Instead of running out the clock, This Is It made a few plays and unsuccessful shots that allowed Alpha Motor Neurons

to come back and tie the game with just under 20 seconds left to play.

This Is It had one more chance to win the game with a last-second shot with 10 seconds remaining. The shot bounced off the rim with Alpha Motor Neurons rebounding and quickly calling a timeout.

After the timeout, Alpha Motor Neurons designed a play to get one of its players free for a full-court pass. Caleb Swanner's opponent hauled in the pass. Swanner managed to block the layup attempt without fouling his man. Two seconds now remained for Alpha Motor Neurons.



SETH LOUIS/THE BEACON

The team attempted to inbound the ball and almost got a five-second violation. The inbounder found a teammate in the lane toward the rim. The player tried to go up for the layup, but again

Swanner blocked the shot.

Time expired with a score of 57-57.

