MEDICAL SCHOOL APPROVED

Board of Governors cast 15-1 vote in favor of proposal

BY C. JOEL MARINO
Content Editor

TALLAHASSEE – Students cheered, administrators hugged one another and University supporters rose to their feet in a wave of applause as the Board of Governors approved the establishment of an FIU medical school with a 15-1 vote at its March 23 meeting, an anticipated decision made at the very end of a four-hour session.

“This is probably the most historic moment in the history of not just the University, but in the history of the state,” an exuberant Modesto A. Maidique, FIU’s president, told The Beacon after the news had been announced. “Yes, we had to wait a while for the confirmation, but it was worth it.”

The medical school proposal has been on the board’s agenda since 2003, although Maidique has said in the past that the initiative had been in the planning stages for at least a decade before that.

Since then, both Maidique and his colleagues (including former Provost Mark Rosenberg, who was present at the meeting as the BOG’s new Chancellor and a non-voting member) have worked on several drafts of the request, the last version submitted at a meeting held in spring of 2005.

“We’ve been working a long time on all of this, so of course the decision is exciting news,” said Interim Provost Ronald Berkman.

Although Berkman said that much lobbying had been done in preparation for this meeting, the nearly unanimous vote still took him by surprise.

“I didn’t know what to expect coming here. We had an idea of what was going to happen, but these results are just a delight,” he said.

The one dissenting vote came from board member and former Florida State University President J. Stanley Marshall, who is one of board’s newest governors.

“New medical schools won’t turn out fully qualified doctors for at least 12 years,” Marshall said during a discussion period before the vote. “There are underprivileged people in South Florida who need medical care and they can’t wait 12 years for it.”

Marshall acknowledged the current shortage of physicians in Florida, which has been the main reasoning behind the opening of a medical program by both FIU and the University of Central Florida.

However, he maintained that a better solution would be to expand doctoral residencies in existing programs like those in the University of Florida or the University of South Florida.

Marshall also blasted the continual affirmation by both Maidique and University of Central Florida President John Hitt that the new schools would bring about great economic growth to their communities and the state.

“Economic development is important, but we’re not an economy board, we’re an educational board,” he said.

Despite his oppositions, he nevertheless gave his dissenting vote with a smile, congratulating the universities and wishing them the best of luck.

Another avid opponent was Zach Zachariah, a board member who has consistently questioned the logic behind the school’s petition at several BOG meetings.

“I have never heard of a shortage of doctors. As soon as the universities began asking for a program, the shortage was born,” he said.

However, Zachariah shocked those in attendance when he promised to cast a favorable vote after being assured that the expansion of current residencies programs.

Candidates prepare for elections

BY BETSY MARTINEZ AND ANA SANCHEZ
Beacon Staff

The Student Government Associations at Biscayne Campus and University Park have planned events that will allow students to become familiar with the candidates running for office in this year’s elections.

At BBC there are an unprecedented three presidential candidates: Zachary Trautenberg, the current SGA presidential chair, Lemar Linton, the current president and official candidates; Zachary Trautenberg, the current SGA presidential chair, Lemar Linton, the current president and official candidates; Zachary Trautenberg, the current SGA presidential chair, Lemar Linton, the current president and official candidates; Zachary Trautenberg, the current SGA presidential chair, Lemar Linton, the current president and official candidates.

In past years, the number of presidential candidates running at UP has been higher than those of BBC.

“The past year people considering running for president [at UP] might feel that they don’t have the time or didn’t feel that they were ready. Maybe they want to wait another year,” said Charles Andrews, Campus Life and Orientation director.

Brent Maximin, the current vice-president at BBC who is also running for re-election, prepares for campaigning and wants people to know that students are working toward making SGA more visible at BBC.

“We want to up the bar,” Maximin said. “We’re trying to shed the image that students at BBC don’t care as much”.

Candidates will campaign March 29 through April 5. According to Leon, students at UP will get the full campaigning experience; he encourages students to vote.

“Freshmans will get to experience the campaigning process and even though I am running uncontested, I intend to campaign to get students to vote. We want students to know that SGA cares about their concerns,” said Leon.

At UP, the competition has shifted from the presidential ticket to representative-at-large.

“There are some [representative-at-large] candidates who are in the same Greek organization and it’s going to be interesting to see how those organizations are going to vote,” said Travis Stokes, former SGA special events coordinator.

Maximin, like other candidates, urges students to hit the polls.

“There’s no reason not to come out and vote because the competition is there … the choices are there,” Maximin said.

For a full list of the 2006 SGA candidates for both campuses turn to page two.

F.Y.I.

SGA Election Events

Monday, March 27
Know Your Vote
12 p.m. – 2 p.m. GC Pit
Know Your Vote
12 p.m. – 2 p.m. Panther Square, BBC

Tuesday, March 28
Chillin’ with the Candidates
2 p.m. – 3 p.m. GC Atrium
Know Your Candidate
10:30 a.m. in Panther Square, BBC

Wednesday, March 29
Meet the Candidates/Candidate Debate
GC Pit 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.
Meet the Candidates/Candidate Debate
12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theatre, BBC

Election Dates:
Tuesday & Wednesday, April 4 & 5

See MEDICAL, page 2
School expected to open Fall 2008

From MEDICAL, page 1

would still be on the Legislature’s agenda.

The board’s final decision was submitted in the form of a resolution drafted by member Sheila McDermott.

The document listed several factors that had been taken into consideration before the vote, followed by seven courses of action that the board would try to follow.

Among these points: the promise that no funding would be sought for the schools until the 2007 Legislative Session; a continual search for economic aid toward under-funded enrollment programs at the existing medical schools; and the quick submittal of the resolution along with each university’s economic findings to the Legislature.

“It hasn’t been easy getting here, but this resolution will help everything get easier from now on,” Madque said.

As they wait for the vote to be taken up by the Legislature, Berkman said the next step would be to strengthen the University’s basic science courses while getting the public health program fully accredited.

He also said that funds like FIU patron Philip Frost’s recently announced $40 million donation (one of the largest single donations in the University’s history) will be disbursed as soon as the legislature gives a positive vote. To date, FIU has collected an estimated $70 million in donations.

However, the next all important step is persuading the state legislature to spend $250 million over 12 years for the school, and then more than $20 million to build and maintain it.

Deals with Mount Sinai Medical Center, the Miami Children’s Hospital and possible ties with Mercy and Baptist hospitals are also in the works, with many of the hospitals’ CEOs and presidents in attendance at the actual meeting.

The school is expected to open for the Fall semester of 2008 with a graduating class in Spring 2012.

“We’re ready for what’s coming ahead. This has been a significant accomplishment for us, but that doesn’t mean the work is done,” Berkman said.

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Campus organizations confident after budget hearings

BY REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

After a month of ongoing its annual budget hearing and deliberation process, the Student Government Association at University Park has come to a conclusion as to where and how they will be allocating their budget for the upcoming academic year.

Although most student organizations will not know the decisions made by SGA for another two weeks, many are confident of getting budget increases for the upcoming fiscal year.

SGA usually conducts its hearings and deliberations every Spring semester during which various University-wide and campus-based organizations propose a budget for the next academic year.

The decisions made by the voting council of SGA, includes President Alex Prado, Vice President Christine Denton and Comptroller Nancy Cadavid.

Prado stated that he was very confident on the decisions made this year.

“I think, for the most part, the hearings went pretty much as we expected. The organizations came out and gave good presentations,” Prado said. “Some of them were very well organized and put together.”

During the budget hearing process, organizations are given between 10 to 15 minutes to present their case to the voting body of the SGA and persuade the members why they need the budget they are asking for.

Once the hearings conclude, the SGA voting body takes a look at the money they have to allocate and the money SGA allocated to a particular organization during the previous academic year.

Cadavid stated that the $7.5 million SGA budget that comes from students’ Activities and Services fee needs to be spent wisely and that’s where the deliberation process comes in.

“We take into account who needs what and how much, and then we sit down and discuss who needs the money the most,” Cadavid said.

The student organizations on campus, the largest share of the Activities and Services fee goes to the Student Program Council, an organization that programs comedy shows, concerts, movies and other campus entertainment activities for students.

SFC President Bill Buchanan was very satisfied with SPC’s proposal to SGA and believes that the hearings went very well.

“I think that our proposal will be fulfilled by the fact that we will get the money we asked for certain events,” Buchanan said. “What I do know is that our budget will be fine when it comes to dealing with the current SGA administration was dealing with the process.

“I believe SGA is really working hard towards dealing out the money in the best way they can,” Buchanan said. “And I do think we will receive as much as we asked for.”

Resident Assitants
Daniel Conway
Mfonobong Essiet
Neudy Nunez
Samson Tirfaghelu
Jodi-Kay Watson
Felicia Sutton
Zakina Ogbourne
Phillip DuVentre
Marisa dePaula
Stephanie Garland
Richard Goldberg
Nicollete Imam
Ashlee Smith
Damién Lloyd
Tamara Marryshow
Xaila Navarro
David Pernas
Kerece Richardson
Khela Stanley
Dane Yankovich
Yolanne Almanzar
Ryan Bedford
Cherish Blackman
St. John
Timothy Chin
Chad Ferreira
Cristela Guerra
Brad Low
Janeta Jackson
Jennifer Fransen
Mathew Parisi
Delio Morato
Amber Galusha-Patel

The Department of Housing and Residential Life would like to recognize the Student Leaders listed below for all the work they have done.

The job you have is a very difficult one, a job that you all do with passion and class. We hope you realize how important you are and the impact you have on students’ lives. It is sincerely appreciated.

Looking for journalism experience? The Beacon is now hiring!

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Maximim urges students to get involved

BY JOSE MAYA
Contributing Writer

The Biscayne Bay Campus Student Government Association is currently vice-president and vice presidential candidate for the 2006-2007 term, Brent Maximim. The Biscayne Bay Campus Student Government Association is in the process of ordering artificial palm trees for both buildings; these palm trees will be placed inside the buildings. The Biscayne Bay Campus Student Government Association is also in the process of ordering artificial palm trees for both buildings. These palm trees will be placed inside the buildings.

I wanted to be a voice of representation for the students and be involved in an activity where I can influence faculty or other key FIU personnel. Also, at times the administration doesn’t tell students as much information as they should.

Q: What are your goals as SGA vice president for the rest of the Spring semester?
A: I am planning on improving the general appearance of Academic I and Academic II so that students, faculty and visitors appreciate the campus. SGA is in the process of ordering artificial palm trees for both buildings; these palm trees will be placed inside the buildings. I’m also planning a big public relations campaign for SGA, so that students can learn about the organization and decide if they would like to join some time in the future.

Q: What do you think SGA needs to improve?
A: The campus needs to offer more classes. Although we are looking forward to the return of the nursing program and some business classes, we are also looking forward to the conclusion of the new marine biology building.

Q: Do you have any nicknames?
A: Breitless, in Trinidad where I’m from, it means to be straight to the point.

Q: Do you have any hobbies, interests or talents?
A: I love to watch and play soccer. I also love movies and I’m actually organizing my own DVD collection. I love to relax and read the newspaper, but I have no time for television.

Q: Why do you think students should join SGA?
A: Students will be fully aware of all University-wide issues and they will have a chance to become involved in an important organization where they will meet many important people.

Elections take place April 4 and 5 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. There will be one voting booth in Academic I, and one in the library.

Maximim, a junior majoring in psychology, said that if he is re-elected he plans to continue carrying out his ideas for a brighter future at BBC. SGA meets every Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. in the Campus Life office, located in the Wolfe University Center in room 141.

All students are welcomed to listen in or voice their opinions. For more information, students can visit www.fiu.edu/~sga/bbc/

Students stay active on campus late at night

BY SAMUEL HYPPOLITE
Contributing Writer

After the last class is released around 9 p.m., the Biscayne Bay Campus is not left in the dark. Isaac Georges, a junior, finds it a great place to be at night and leaves his home to relieve monotony on the campus both day and night.

“I am a football player, yet when I feel bored at home, I like to come to BBC,” said Souza, a graduate student.

However, many activities are shut down at BBC by 6 p.m., many others remain open late at night. Most of the offices on campus close between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., but some are open until after 10 p.m.

For example, in Academic I, the latest time the financial aid and administration offices are opened until is 7 p.m.

The Wolfe University Center is one of the buildings that has the most recreational activities and that makes it imperative to stay open late. It has an information center that makes it important to be available to students who need information at a certain time.

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However, mid-terms and final exams week increase the number of students on campus, according to Priscella, an information center employee.

According to senior John Morris, an information center employee, the Wolfe University Center is the place to be after dark.

“The WUC is one of the buildings that has more recreational activities and that makes it imperative to stay open late,“ Morris said.

The information center is one of the most useful resources at the WUC during late night hours.

Even at this time, it can be difficult to find an available computer in both the first and second floor of the library.

“We probably have that much more students at night because there is less pressure of the class schedule on them,” said Austin Bot, a library employee.

Even at this time, it can be difficult to find an available computer in both the first and second floor of the library.

Group meetings and individual studies are commonly observed at the library late at night.

Bot said that there are more students at night rather than in the morning at the library.

Late-night students are more serious about college, according to Bot.

People who come to study here at the library seem to be the ones who are more concerned about school, and those who come to use the computers for recreational purposes, said Bot.

BY SAMUEL HYPPOLITE
Contributing Writer

John Morris, an information center employee
With medical school approved, new questions arise

On November 18, 2004, University President Modesto Maidique traveled to Tallahassee, along with a contingent of hopefuls, to propose to the Florida Board of Governors a bold initiative to start a public medical school in South Florida. What would ensue over the next year and a half is a battle unlike any other FIU has seen in its history.

Almost a year and a half later, FIU finally got the approval it was seeking. The Board of Governors granted the University permission to go ahead and build its medical school. The decision was almost unanimous (15-1), with only one dissenting opinion.

The lone dissent came from former Florida State University President J. Stanley Marshall, who argued that the community could not wait for a medical school to be established to fill the need for physicians in South Florida.

As FIU now begins to prepare for the next leg in its journey to become one of the nation’s more traditional universities, some troubling questions remain unanswered. Firstly, let it be clear that the efforts of Maidique, who has led the University through an unprecedented period of growth, culminating in the medical school proposal, have been a great deal of controversy. Police officers work under a great amount of stress. When a policeman stops an automobile, for example, it is impossible for the officer to know whether the subject is an infringer, a drug dealer or someone whose had a bad day.

First off, she gives the example of Rick Warren and Saddleback in O.C., California. Later on in her article she says: “Mass marketing faith, however, and abusing it for monetary function? Money? Do you know that Warren does not receive any salary from Sad-dleback? Then what exactly is he gaining by ‘mass marketing faith’?”

The methods employed by police departments to battle crime have always caused a great deal of controversy. Police officers work under a great amount of stress. When a policeman stops an automobile, for example, it is impossible for the officer to know whether the subject is an infringer, a drug dealer or someone whose had a bad day.

First and foremost are the inevitable questions of funding. FIU has accrued an estimated $70 million in private donations. While impressive, we wonder how the University will find the remaining $180 million in the estimated quarter-billion dollar price tag of this endeavor. All that has come from the Board of Governors is the go ahead. There has yet to be any allocation of state funds so, as far as we know, the state may require that FIU swallow the remaining bulk of the costs.

For a university that—as Maidique has made clear in several interviews—is cash-starved, the last thing it needs is to scrounge another $180 million. But this is the reality. FIU may face a situation where the state fails to apportion the necessary funds. Where, at that point, would these funds come from? With a brand new medical school in its completed form, FIU is undoubtedly milking every dollar for all it’s worth.

Most students now will not be around to see the medical school in full fruition. In fact, the final facilities scheduled for completion around 2025, it is the children of current students who will most likely benefit from this school in its completed form.

This leaves the question: should the University fail to find the necessary funds from an extended line of credit, would the burden then fall on students’ pocketbooks?

Besides the students, who will undoubtedly suffer financially in any effort of expansion by University, what about the other inadequately funded entities, such as the College of Arts and Sciences for example?

Granted, a medical school will undoubtedly add an FIU degree more prestige and clout than ever before. However, we must differentiate between its worth and its cost.

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Tranquilizer guns are a safe and effective alternative for police

BY MARIO MENDOZA
Contributing Writer

The methods employed by police officers to battle crime have always caused a great deal of controversy. Police officers work under a great amount of stress. When a policeman stops an automobile, for example, it is impossible for the officer to know whether the subject is an infringer, a drug dealer or someone whose had a bad day.

There are officials who protect and serve as well as those who blur the line between duty and crime. In recent years, police departments have increased their use of tasers guns. Even though the electric shock can paralyze the alleged perpetrator immediately, this method has been highly questioned as being violent and dangerous. Cases involving the use of tasers on young children and senior citizens have occurred in the past year in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. One option that is less lethal than pistol firearms or tasers are tranquilizer guns. The term “tranquilizer guns” is applied to air powered rifles with sedative darts that are used for shooting large animals, such as polar bears and lions, for research purposes or removal if the animal has entered an area inhabited by humans.

Police type firearms carrying tranquilizer darts also exist; the shooting range varies between five and 50 feet in distance.

In an age where terrorism has become a threat, police departments must proceed with caution and must apprehend terrorists before they commit deadly acts without hurting civilians and other bystanders. A perfect example is the tragic death of Spanish aircraft Jean Charles de Menezes in the London Subway, the day after the 7 July, 2005 terrorist attack. Scotland Yard ordered de Menezes, who was running to catch the train, to stop, somehow he didn’t hear them and the officers opened fire fatally wounding de Menezes. In this case, if a tranquilizer firearm had been used the outcome would have been different.

The sedative darts would have stopped de Menezes without killing him and the case would have been closed as a misunderstanding. If the person running would have been a real terrorist and had been stopped with tranquilizers, he would have been caught alive and questioned about the whereabouts of possible accomplices.

Using tranquilizer firearms will reduce the risk of wrongful killings of innocent civilians and also the subsequent lawsuits that police departments face in these situations. Police officers are trained to handle danger and avoid civilian deaths, but they still make mistakes. The use of tranquilizer firearms will lower the margin of error. Police departments, FBI and other agencies should consider implementing the use of tranquilizer firearms as a safe alternative for fighting crime.
U.S. in difficult position with Iran and North Korea

Countries pose threat due to their nuclear policies

By Luis H. Garcia

Contributing Writer

Lately, Iran and North Korea have been scaring the hell out of everyone, as they are both demanding as possible nuclear threats. Relations with both nations have not been smooth thus far and with tensions mounting, the United States is in a very difficult position negotiating with the two countries.

Looking at both nations, it is easy to see that handling relations with both Iran and North Korea requires extreme care, but which is the greater threat? So far on the Iranian front, there has been criticism rising from within Iran regarding its nuclear policy. Former President Mohammad Khatami has criticized the current direction of the Iranian government and suggested a return to building relations with the West.

Iran seems to be giving off mixed signals with its nuclear affairs. On one hand, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei strongly insisted that Iran would not back down from trying to reach its nuclear goals, Iran has requested to continue talks with Moscow.

At first, Iran was very fierce in defending their nuclear program. Criticism from the American people and the change of the status of the talks with the United Nations, might signal a shift. The ayatollah, however, has the final say in what Iran does and so far, still holds that “a nuclear program is our inalienable right.”

The situation in Iran has the potential to dramatically affect Middle Eastern affairs. With tensions already mounting from the United States involvement in Iraq and the continuing conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, the possible addition of nuclear weapons can deteriorate the situation further.

North Korea has been more adamant in its stance. Currently, North Korea has been facing a squeeze on its funds due to United States involvement in blacklisting the Macao bank due to alleged counterfeiting and money laundering. In fact, the United States insists that Iran is unrelated to the nuclear talks.

This restriction on North Korean funds could be an attempt by the United States to put pressure on North Korea to disarm. While such a measure makes sense, it could be dangerous as well.

South Korea, also involved in the talks, has already urged the United States to watch its words. Even some in the State Department have had some reservations in how the United States is handling North Korean relations.

Another thing to consider is that North Korea is believed to have enough plutonium to make a nuclear bomb, but one must be extremely careful.

Even though the United States continues to be angered by the current U.S. policy and may put pressure on North Korea to abandon its nuclear program, it is easy to see that handling relations with both nations is a daunting task.

WINNER

The English: The Post Office Homephone survey revealed that 49 percent of British men and 27 percent of British women admit to making phone calls in the nude. Even more surprising is that they make these calls in public phone booths.

LOSER

Classical Musicians: One in four musicians use performance enhancing beta-blockers to calm their nerves and improve their performance on stage.

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off in GC Reserves or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must include the writer’s full name, year in school, major/department and a valid phone number for verification purposes. The Beacon reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and/or space constraints. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words.

By Luis H. Garcia

Contributing Writer

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What Do You Think?

Do you think that the Miami-Dade County Youth Fair will affect the parking situation at FIU?

Yes – The parking situation here is bad as it is – it seems like it will only get worse.

No – The University has made sufficient improvements to its parking facilities.

I don’t care whether it gets worse or not. The Youth Fair is worth it.

Total participants: 86

Cast your vote at www.beaconnewspaper.com

Winner & Loser

Winner

The English: The Post Office Homephone survey revealed that 49 percent of British men and 27 percent of British women admit to making phone calls in the nude. Even more surprising is that they make these calls in public phone booths.

Loser

Classical Musicians: One in four musicians use performance enhancing beta-blockers to calm their nerves and improve their performance on stage.

Quotation Nation

“T’was the night before Christmas, and all through the house Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. But I, Lord George, was wide awake With my eyes gazing in the skies above. For in the distance I heard a sound Like the sound of a thousand bells and a thousand gongs. And I knew in my heart that it was the moment Of the year when the Santa Claus would come.”

— Andrew Fastow, former Enron Corp. finance chief, on running financial partnerships that helped the company hide as much as hundreds of millions of dollars in losses.

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BY REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

Brett Castellucio is a junior majoring in architecture that, like many other students in his field, often stays until 3 a.m. in the University Park architecture labs. Looking for a relaxing alternative to his busy schedule, Castellucio learned that the University offered a scuba diving class and jumped at the opportunity to enroll.

"I enrolled in the class because I thought it would be something fun and at the same time, I’d be able to learn something useful from it,” Castellucio said. “It’s a more related class and it isn’t as hard as some of my other classes.”

The Basic Scuba Diving Course (PEN 2132) has been offered at FIU since 1996, as part of the Dive Safety Program under the direction of Dive and Safety officer Robert Weisman. The program has represented the University at several science and diving conferences and has been designated as one of the top 10 active marine research institutions in the United States.

Weisman, who also instructs the Basic Scuba Diving Course, stated that the basic course is the first step toward becoming a certified diver.

"Students enrolled in this class not only learn to dive properly but also learn the physics, physiology and medical aspects of the hazards of diving and how to prevent it,” Weisman said.

Students who enroll in the basic class also have to enroll in a corresponding lab class (PEN 2132) where they receive practical training and perform six ocean dives. Upon completion, students become certified as professional scuba divers.

Apart from the basic class, the Dive Safety Program also offers an advanced scuba training class, which is a combination of three certification courses and includes dives to depths of 100 feet, exploring shipwrecks and night dives.

Sophomore Lucas Araujo decided to take this class along with Medina, whom he had known from the previous semester. He admits that the class was more than he expected it to be.

“We had taken another class together in the Fall semester and decided to enroll in this class together,” Araujo said. “When I enrolled in the class, I expected us to go to the ocean and come back. I didn’t expect to learn as much as I did.”

The theory class, which meets every Monday from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Pharmed Arena, goes through the theory of dive safety and teaches students about the different marine creatures and hazards in the ocean as well as the various misconceptions about them.

Students are graded on their performances in four quizzes, a mid-term examination and a final, like most classes taught at FIU.

The lab class, however, is vastly different. The lab, offered on Saturdays, initially takes place at the Panther Hall Residential Quad pool and then later at the Tamiami Pool.

Students learn how to take deep breaths with sea creatures and how to avoid getting injured. When students train, they learn how to dive and go through every possible thing they will experience in the real world. The lab class is graded on student’s performances in five tests.

“They have to put on all their equipment under water in one breath, do an underwater emergency and learn how to rescue another diver,” Weisman said.

“araujo said. “We’re going to go diving in the Keys so I’m really looking forward to it.”

Weisman acknowledged that most students come into the class expecting to just have fun and get an easy A.

“They might have seen Flipper, or they may want to be photographers. Some even take this class to beat the fear of the water. What they get from this class is that they learn how to dive properly in the ocean and actually become certified divers,” Weisman said.

AQUATIC DIVE: For over 10 years, scuba diving courses have been offered to FIU students, opening the door to becoming a certified diver and learning a variety of techniques that will enhance diving safety. Photos Provided By Robert Weisman

This is part one of a five-part series that features fun classes available to students.
Studetn furthers artistic talent

BY SARAH RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

Looking back, senior Ivania Guerrero has realized she has felt pulled toward art since she was eight years old, when it was the one school subject in which she never needed assistance, it flowed from her naturally.

“I’ve known Nicaragua all my life, I’ve seen her paint since she was a kid. Her work is very analytical and the kind of person who is always learning,” said her best friend Marilyn Baez.

Guerrero has focused on painting and drawing as her main mediums, enjoying both so much she can hardly imagine pursuing only one.

A painting, Guerrero says, could take her as much as three weeks to complete, depending on how often she feels in the right mood to work on it, whereas finishing a drawing would only require her to dedicate a few hours. For this reason, she has about eight paintings, but a countless amount of drawings.

Guerrero has had the opportunity to participate in two art exhibits. Her very first art show and auction took place in April 2002 at the New Directions Employment and Training, a vocational school in the Miami Design District that helps children with disabilities.

Her second exhibit was the Exposición de Arte Nicaraguense (Nicaraguan art exposition) – held at the Teatro Towers on Eighth Street in September 2002 – in honor of the Teatro Towers on Eighth Street that helps children with disabilities.

“It made me nervous because you don’t know if people will like it or even buy it,” she said. “At an auction, for example, you don’t know how much they’ll bet. I was really happy when I saw they bet up to $600. That’s a lot of money.”

Guerrero is currently undergoing her second semester at FIU, she is seeing art from a different level of complexity. Aside from creating typical action figures and dolls for children to play with, toy makers have evolved and branched out into different levels of complexity. Aside from creating typical action figures and dolls for children to play with, toy makers have evolved and branched out into new types of toys to entertain. Diversions such as the Slinky, close to their hearts, this attraction has not left them by drawing her paintings. Through their feedback, she feels that she has learned a lot.

Music serves as Guerrero’s muse, as it does with any artist. It’s what Guerrero says is the key to her success. “I’m being gentle with myself, it’s a new year, I’m hoping it turns out well. I am glad this one did.”

2. EXPLAIN WHAT YOU DO AT SGA.

Well, as the international students chair, I am responsible for facilitating better relationships with students, the ISSS office and SGA. Also, as the international students chair, I have been a part of committee issues, and I participate in committee issues, problems and concerns about international students, and I work to provide solutions for them. This semester we hosted the “Taste of the World” during “Welcome Week” in January, had the International Students Forum in February, and hosted the international students dinner where we had an insurance consultant to explain to the students what is going on with health insurance. We continue to work on other issues such as scholarships, off-campus housing solutions among others.

3. IF YOU COULD SWITCH PLACES WITH ANYONE IN THE PAST, PRESENT OR FUTURE, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Provide me in the future? I trust I have such an exciting life ahead of me and I am just waiting to explore it. I believe I will live a life that is pleasing in the sight of God and made useful in affecting positive change in the lives of men. I just can’t wait to experience this, but I have to.

4. WHAT CELEBRITY/TV PERSONALITY/SHOW MAKES YOU SWITCH THE CHANNEL IMMEDIATELY THAT YOU CANNOT STAND TO WATCH?

I just can’t stand “Sex in the City!” It does nothing but continuously breed immorality. It’s like taking something that is bad and continually doing it, numbing your conscience into thinking it is good. That is what that show does to the minds of people.

5. THE POSSIBLITY OF TAKING AWAY THE ARTS REQUIREMENT FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS AND HIGH SCHOOLS WAS RAISED BY GOV. JEB BUSH: DO YOU THINK THIS IS A GOOD IDEA OR A BAD ONE?

I think this is a very wrong thing to do, because I am a strong believer that education comes in diverse ways and not just formal teaching going in classrooms. Not exposing students to the arts takes away a vital part of what molds individuals as innovators. It is expensive to keep, yes, but there are some things we have to continue to pay for in order not to drive the up and coming generation into intellectual stagnation.

- Compiled by Amanda Healy

Nostalgic TV show jogs memories

BY GEOFFREY ANDERSON JR.
Staff Writer

With shows like VH1’s “I Love Toys” reminding viewers of their beloved childhood playthings, the media attention surrounding toys has shown just how much these diversions have evolved over time.

Growing up, I loved playing with my toys,” said freshman Anthony Castillo. “I always played with a toy. I never played with a doll. In high school, I never played with dolls.”

Among the oldest toys created were dolls made out of wood or stone, yo-yos and kites. These toys, which were symbols of childhood, are still being played with over 200,000 years.

In the 20th century, however, toys evolved and branched into different levels of complexity. Aside from creating typical action figures and dolls for children to play with, toy makers have evolved and branched out into new types of toys to entertain. Diversions such as the Slinky, close to their hearts, this attraction has not left them.

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- Compiled by Amanda Healy
From STUDENT, page 9

"It takes me to that zone," Guerrero said, "I like all kinds of music, from Dave Matthews to the [Red Hot] Chili Peppers. Usually when I listen to rock and roll, my paintings turn out more intense and energetic. When I’m listening to something like jazz, they come out more relaxed."

Once in this zone of inspiration, Guerrero naturally fills her artwork with her own ideas, imaginations and stories. But once these basics have been laid, her goal is to allow her audience to take it from there, building their own stories upon her foundation.

As she looks toward her future, Guerrero aims to finish her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Art and then become a teacher at a university or magnet school. "Many people see art as an easy ’A,’" she said. "But I want to teach students who care about it and are really there to learn."

From NOSTALGIC, page 9

Old toys can yield big profits

Although I don’t play with my toys anymore, I still keep them around the house,” said junior Richard Lopez. “Even if I do not use them anymore, it is nice to have the toys around my house for nostalgic reasons.”

Instead of storing toys, other students have tried selling them over the internet on auction sites such as eBay. On eBay, thousands of listings for toys can be posted or found by users – collectors are sure to find some rare items for purchase. Some toys, such as Cabbage Patch Kids, are being sold for over $200 while others, particularly Beanie Babies, are selling for over $5,000.

“I think it is crazy how much money some of those toys are fetching on eBay,” said freshman Gabriela Santos. “Paying over $5,000 for a [Beanie Baby] is somewhat stupid. All that money could go to charity or be used on something useful. It’s absurd how some people spend their money.”

The reason for such high biddings on certain toys is their rarity. Toys such as Beanie Babies have limited production runs, resulting in few opportunities for consumers to buy them. Many of the toys given out at fast food restaurants such as McDonalds and Burger King have limited production runs and garner many bids on auction sites, such as a McDonalds 101 Dalmatians set selling for over $500 on eBay.

Whether toys are used for entertainment purposes or otherwise, they give children something to do and remind older generations of their fond adolescent experiences. As students continue to grow up and toys continue to evolve, many students still carry memories of childhood toys.

Music serves as artist’s inspiration

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Would like to congratulate the 2005 Greek Award Winners!

Highest IFC GPA, Spring 2005:  
Phi Gamma Delta – 2.78

Highest NPHC GPA,  
Spring 2005:  
Phi Beta Sigma, Fraternity Inc. – 3.29

Highest PC GPA,  
Spring 2005:  
Delta Phi Omega – 2.93

Highest PC GPA,  
Fall 2005:  
Delta Phi Omega – 2.88

Highest NPHC GPA,  
Fall 2005:  
Alpha Kappa Alpha, Sorority Inc. – 3.47

Highest PC GPA,  
Fall 2005:  
Delta Phi Omega – 3.01

Outstanding Alumni Relations  
Delta Phi Epsilon  
Pi Kappa Phi

Outstanding Campus Involvement  
Alpha Xi Delta  
Pi Kappa Phi

Outstanding Community Service & Philanthropy  
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

Outstanding Public Relations  
Alpha Xi Delta  
Pi Kappa Phi

Outstanding Recruitment Program  
Phi Mu  
Pi Kappa Phi

Outstanding New Member Program  
Phi Sigma Sigma  
Sigma Phi Epsilon

Outstanding Risk/Standards Management  
Phi Sigma Sigma  
Phi Gamma Delta

2005 Most Improved Chapter  
Phi Gamma Delta

2005 Sorority New Member of the Year  
Giselle Gutierrez  
Delta Phi Epsilon

2005 Fraternity New Member of the Year  
Adrian Molina  
Sigma Phi Epsilon

2005 Fraternity President of the Year  
Jorge Triay  
Pi Kappa Phi

2005 Sorority Woman of the Year  
Brittany Juliachs  
Alpha Xi Delta

2005 Fraternity Man of the Year  
Randy Mora  
Pi Kappa Phi

2005 Janelle Bertot Professional Award of Excellence  
Dr. John Bonanno

2005 Tony Perez Student Fraternal Award of Excellence  
Alexis Hamilton  
Alpha Xi Delta

2005 Advisor of the Year  
Anna Cuba de la Fe  
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2005 Sorority President of the Year  
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Sure, you can say that turnovers accumulated because of the fast-paced offense the Golden Panthers ran to make up for their size, but I attribute it to a lack of leadership. Although she had a solid season, Bouderra committed over five turnovers per game in route to a -4.4 turnover margin for the team.

In turn, many teams like Western Kentucky and Middle Tennessee brought heavy full-court presses that rattled Bouderra and Ciglar. In their 1-4 record versus the top two teams of the Sun Belt Conference, FIU’s two point guards combined to average nearly 12 turnovers per game.

The other supposed leader this season was Makela, an area where Makela strikingly came up short. After averaging 11 points and five rebounds last season, the Finnish guard only put up eight points and two rebounds per game. Surely a knee injury early in the season contributed to her low numbers, but her presence on the court was almost invisible.

I didn’t see that killer instinct and confidence a leader is supposed to have, especially down the stretch.

All in all, though, the season was a successful one for FIU. Even though it was supposed to downgrade from last year, the team persevered and went on to an impressive 16-13 record and a 9-5 record in conference play. The team advanced all the way to the third round of the Sun Belt tournament and was invited to the WNIT – which last year’s team failed to do.

Thanks to a promising core of young players, I look forward to a great next season and hope to see more butts in those bleachers to root for these women.

The way I see it, if you’re going to show up for a 7 p.m. men’s basketball game, why not come a couple of hours early and watch a real team play?
**SPORTS**

**DURING THE BREAK**

**MARCH 18**
- Sprinter Donita Harmon and hurdler Naim Yisrael qualify for NCAA Regionals.

**MARCH 19**
- Softball finishes as the runner-up at the USF Speedline Invitational.

**MARCH 20**
- Tabitha Embry and Sarah Belanger earn Sun Belt Player and Pitcher of the Week, respectively.

**MARCH 21**
- Women’s tennis beats Dartmouth 7-0 and earns its ninth-consecutive victory.
- Women’s golf, led by Rebecca Samuelsson, wins the USF Waterlefe Invitational title.

**KNOCKED OUT**

SEASON OVER: The women’s basketball team, led by head coach Cindy Russo [top right], ended its season with a 95-83 WNIT second round loss to cross-town rival Miami March 18 at the BankUnited Center in Coral Gables. The Golden Panthers fell to 14 UM 3-pointers and a game-high 32 points coming off the hands of UM’s star senior Tamara James. Junior Lasma Jakabsone came one point short of James’s total, scoring 31 points, and grabbed six rebounds. Senior Faeza Bouderra [top left], who was injured in the first round victory over Cincinatti, came off the bench to score 10 points. Eva Makela [bottom left] added 13 points. FIU ends its 2005-06 campaign in its 11th post season appearance in 15 years and with a 19-13 record.

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Robert W. Christoph Jr.
President — RCI Marine Inc.
UM MBA

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Women's team surpassed expectations this season

SPORTS

Women’s basketball fans can also look forward to another year from the developing Latin center, Lasma Jekabsone, who seems to get better and better every year.

Coming into the season, the big question mark was whether or not Lasma would be leading the team with her dominating presence in the paint and many people were relying on Jekabsone to fill that role, simply because she was the only one.

But no one expected this kind of season from her. Even when the season started, many were questioning Jekabsone's toughness.

Right before the Christmas break, Coach Russo told me, “We need Lasma to step it up. She’s a big part of our offense and she has not stepped up so far.”

Jekabsone took to the criticism well, en-route to a season that saw her average 16 points and 10 rebounds.

There were, however, some tough losses against quality programs like Western Kentucky and the University of Miami.

The Golden Panthers lost to Western Kentucky twice during the regular season and then got eliminated by them in an eight-point loss during the third round of the Sun-Belt Conference tournament.

The difference between a team like FIU and Western Kentucky is execution. Throughout the season, many players stepped up for this team and when they met on Feb. 23 at the Arena, FIU seemingly had the players to match up to the Lady Toppers, but turnovers were a recurring theme throughout the season and, eventually, spelled the demise of this team.

See WOMEN, page 14

A LOOK AHEAD: Freshman Iva Ciglar has a bright future ahead as a Golden Panther. Her performance this season shows she will be a good replacement for departing guard Faeza Bouderra.

BY ALDEN GONZALEZ

Staff Writer

Akeen Francis, pitcher

I could come out here naked and I have everything I need to play baseball.

Because she was so much older than him, Jermaine was a big influence in his life and proved to be the mother he seldom had.

“I love her very much because she did so much for me,” Francis said. “Sure we had our dumb little [sibling] fights, but she truly cared about me and she helped me get through a tough part of my life. I don’t know what I would’ve done if it wasn’t for her.”

Around this time, baseball staff started becoming a big part of his life, but Francis couldn’t just buy a glove and bat and hit the field. Growing up in the projects of Saint Thomas, Francis needed to use his creativity.

“We would pick up sticks and rocks and just start pitching to ourselves and hitting the rocks into buildings,” Francis said.

Then sometimes, we would break off tree branches or grab brooms and stand in front of a wall and pitch to each other with tennis balls. That’s how we started gaining technique.”

Little by little, Francis’ game kept enhancing as he started playing in the popular Latin American Tournament that would allow him to play against some of the best competition from countries like the Dominican Republic, Brazil and Venezuela.

His popularity also kept growing as he started displaying talent as a shortstop and a pitcher.

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Francis had a big decision to make. He could either stay with his loving sister and the only home he’d ever known in the Virgin Islands, Francis was the youngest of eight children, including six sisters.

At the age of eight, his mother died and Francis life and attitude would be changed forever.

“When my sister told me my mother died, I didn’t bother asking questions,” Francis said. “But it was a really tough loss for me because she was such a big part of my life.”

His mother’s death changed his life.

“It ended up changing me completely because I was always a troublemaker and after [my mother] died, I started doing better in school and not behaving as badly,” Francis said. Francis ended up moving in with his oldest sister Jermaine after living with his father for a short while.

I would’ve been easy to underestimate the women’s basketball team this season. After watching in the second round of the Sun Belt Conference Tournament last year and losing their best player in Milena Tomova, not much was riding high for the Golden Panthers.

However, in covering this team throughout the season, I must say I was extremely impressed with their resiliency.

Heading into the season, it was clear they were a young team that lacked a severe scoring threat on offense, but head coach Cindy Russo did her part instilling confidence in her players to get them back on track.

One thing that already has me excited about the 2006-2007 season is the outstanding play from the newcomers, especially Iva Ciglar and Marquita Adeley. Watching Ciglar penetrate through defenders and rain 3-pointers, I’m convinced the coach Cindy Russo did her part instilling confidence in her play.

She’s a big part of our offense and she has not stepped up so far.”

Jekabsone took to the criticism well, en-route to a season that saw her average 16 points and 10 rebounds.

There were, however, some tough losses against quality programs like Western Kentucky and the University of Miami.

The Golden Panthers lost to Western Kentucky twice during the regular season and then got eliminated by them in an eight-point loss during the third round of the Sun-Belt Conference tournament.

The difference between a team like FIU and Western Kentucky is execution. Throughout the season, many players stepped up for this team and when they met on Feb. 23 at the Arena, FIU seemingly had the players to match up to the Lady Toppers, but turnovers were a recurring theme throughout the season and, eventually, spelled the demise of this team.

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A LOOK AHEAD: Freshman Iva Ciglar has a bright future ahead as a Golden Panther. Her performance this season shows she will be a good replacement for departing guard Faeza Bouderra.

BY ALDEN GONZALEZ

Staff Writer

Akeen Francis, pitcher

I could come out here naked and I have everything I need to play baseball.

Because she was so much older than him, Jermaine was a big influence in his life and proved to be the mother he seldom had.

“I love her very much because she did so much for me,” Francis said. “Sure we had our dumb little [sibling] fights, but she truly cared about me and she helped me get through a tough part of my life. I don’t know what I would’ve done if it wasn’t for her.”

Around this time, baseball starting became a big part of his life, but Francis couldn’t just buy a glove and bat and hit the field. Growing up in the projects of Saint Thomas, Francis needed to use his creativity.

“We would pick up sticks and rocks and just start pitching to ourselves and hitting the rocks into buildings,” Francis said.

Then sometimes, we would break off tree branches or grab brooms and stand in front of a wall and pitch to each other with tennis balls. That’s how we started gaining technique.”

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