The Beacon, May 1, 2006

Florida International University
Prado reminisces on experiences, tenure

BY REUBEN PEREIRA
Staff Writer

Alex Prado, who graduates this week, never envisioned himself as Student Government Association President or, for that matter, even running for the position when he first enrolled at the University.

However, as he got more involved on campus with various student organizations, he realized that the best way he could make a difference was by getting involved with the SGA.

Looking back at his time at FIU, he considers the three days leading up to the moment he was announced as University Park SGA president as the single most memorable moment of his college tenure.

“It all came down to the day when I was lifted up,” said Prado, referring to the moment when he was lifted up by his fraternity brothers after the election results were announced. “I’ll never forget those three days.”

Prado first got involved on campus with the Pi Kappa Alpha (Pikes) fraternity, with whom he rushed for during his freshman year. However, he credited the peer advisors as the first people to welcome him into the University.

Prado considers his term as SGA president as one of the best experiences of his life and one that helped him become a better person.

“From the very beginning, when I went into office until now, I’ve grown a lot as a person. I’ve learnt things that a lot of people would be proud of. But I’ve also realized that every year is a challenge. I must understand that every year is different from the other.”

As SGA president, Prado has added more to the role and has raised the bar on what a president should be,” Leon said.

Among the accomplishments that Prado is extremely proud of are the implementation of extended hours at the recreation center, anything the University’s initiative for the School of Medicine and extending hours and increasing services.

Grad student achieves long-awaited goal

BY BETSY MARTINEZ
City College Editor

After losing his sister about a month before he was to begin the graduate program at the School of Hospitality and Management, David Edwards decided to take sometime off.

“It was really tough on my family, and I didn’t want to start grad school with those images on my mind,” Edwards, 35, said.

During his two-year academic hiatus, Edwards worked for Baymont Inn and Suites, located in Ft. Lauderdale, as an assistant manager, but he was searching for more than a job. He wanted a career.

He resigned at the hotel and enrolled in the School of Hospitality and Management graduate program in 2004. He said it would have been impossible to work as a graduate student.

Originally from Manderleville, Jamaica, Edwards arrived in South Florida in 2001 and enrolled in FIU’s Hospitality Management undergraduate program. Several years earlier, he had graduated from The Joint Board of Teacher Education, a three-year program offered at the University of the West Indies, where he obtained a professional certification in teaching.

Instead of teaching, he went on to become a sports journalist and worked for the Gleaner, one of the largest newspapers in Jamaica, and then pursued a career in sports radio. However, although “it was fun, it wasn’t challenging,” Edwards said.

His adaptation to South Florida went smoothly because Edwards had friends in Miami and had already visited the city several times before he moved. For Edwards, the challenge was in the books.

“It’s a lot more intense because if you are a research institution and every class requires a huge research paper,” he said. “People told me that you read for a degree, and grad school taught me what that means.”

But after completing several 30-page papers and conducting group research projects Edwards said that the program was challenging him.

Art student discusses time at University

BY HARRY COLEMAN
Editor in Chief

After five years at the University, Andrew Horton will be able to call himself an alumnus when he receives his degree May 1.

A graduate of Christopher Columbus High School, Horton is graduating with a bachelor in fine arts and a 3.1 grade point average.

Horton’s current work is on display at the Frost Art Museum’s BFA exhibit. "The Beason," talked to Horton about his time at FIU and what he wants to accomplish in the future.

Q. What is your most memorable moment as a Golden Panther?

A. The first time I showcased my work in the University student show in 2004. It was the first time I showed my work anywhere, something very important to me.

Q. Is there a particular professor you credit for your success here at the University?

Out of the top of my head there are two – drawing professors Clive King and Gretchen Scharnagle. They both helped me find out what I was trying to do and pushed me to go further. They were both willing to spend a lot of time on my work, something very important to me.
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GRADUATION

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Love of animals leads to creative art

Q. Now that you will graduate, what is your dream job?

Ideally, I would love to be able to work solely as an artist. It would also be really cool to be an art professor at the college level or work at a museum.

Q. Which drawing do you cherish the most and why?

There’s one drawing I have in the current BFA show that deals with an issue close to me, which is animals, especially dogs. I’ve had dogs all my life, and I’ve worked with the Humane Society. It’s a subject I take very seriously.

Q. What advice do you give to future art students?

Make sure to really learn about your art history and check with the counselor often. Q. Can you use one word to describe how it will feel when you receive your degree? Relieved.

ANIMAL ART: Horton credits the painting above as one of his favorites, due to his involvement with the Humane Society. HARRY COLEMAN/THE BEACON

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Prado plans to attend law school

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within the University Health and Wellness Center.

However, Prado admits that there were some things that he could have done better including expanding Panther Card services and having better communication with the faculty senate and some campus organizations at the beginning of his term.

Omer Bill Buchanan, Student Programming Council president and a friend of Prado stated that Prado will be remembered for his accomplishments as well as for his tenacity.

“Of all the things, I think he’ll be remembered for bridging the gap between the administration and the students,” Buchanan said.

Prado also credits Christene Denton, SGA vice president, as one of his greatest assets stating that their diverse personalities actually complimented and balanced each other.

“I’m very business oriented and she’s very spontaneous and bubbly,” Prado said. “I didn’t go out on the weekends – all I did was study.”

Prado thanked his girlfriend Luiza Martinez for helping him cope with things throughout the year and considers her his sanity.

“She was my huge sanity. She helped me out with my apartment, and we’d go out to movies or to dinner. She helped me greatly throughout the year.”

After he graduates this semester, Prado plans to work with Anitere Flores, the State House Representative for District #114 (which is the district FIU falls in), which is the district FIU falls in. She represents District #114 for Representative for District #114 Anitere Flores, the State House Representative for District #114. Anitere Flores, the State House Representative for District #114 is shining bright and will be remembered for her dedication and service.

Prado also credits Christine Edwards to miss “shooting the breeze,” which means hanging out with friends outside of the Hospitality Management building and looking out to the Biscayne Bay.

Edwards has a couple of employment offers lined up already. The most promising offer is from The Hilton, which will soon be opening up in Ft. Lauderdale, and he got the interview though the School of Hospitality and Management a couple of weeks ago.

He said that his sister’s death gave him the inspiration to keep going and that he enjoys the hospitality field because it’s always changing.

“You’re in a business where you never work [less than] 40 hours a week and no day is ever the same,” he said. “A lot of people think that hotels are all about smiles, but it’s more complex than that.”

Gabrielle Antoine Office Manager — UM Planning & Institutional Research

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Edwards to miss

“shooting the breeze”

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has made him career-ready.

“The grad program has prepared me to look for more senior level positions,” he said. “I have a grasp of what drives executive positions and why some executive decisions are made.”

But for Edwards, it wasn’t all work and no play. His fondest memories include volunteering for The House of Angostura, a Caribbean-based company, which produces bitters and rum products exported worldwide, at the annual Taste of the Caribbean University Fete and the Back-to-School Bar-b-cue, which takes place during the beginning of the Fall.

“I always looked forward to that because I looked forward to seeing my friends who I didn’t see during the summer,” he said.

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