Good credit history key to employment

MARIA CONCHA
Contributing Writer

With graduation just a few weeks away, students are hoping to land the job they’ve been training for throughout their college career. But, if they didn’t keep up a good credit score, they may be in for a big surprise.

These days, employers are checking possible employees’ credit history as part of the decision in the hiring process. So, whether or not one is hired may depend on a lot more than skills.

According to John Zdanowicz, professor of finance at the FIU College of Business Administration, employers check a future employee’s credit history to find out more about the character of that individual and determine if that person is responsible.

“It is a distinct honor to be selected by the Chinese government as the only university to participate in the project.”

Yong Tao, professor of mechanical and materials engineering and director of the project

Although credit card companies target everyone, they tend to target college students the most, according to Lohr.

“[It’s] because of the knowledge they lack when it comes to credit cards,” Lohr said. “Most, not all, college students have a very limited knowledge about their personal finances and the actual potential problems faced with using a credit card.”

Zdanowicz adds that college students have bad credit due to their spending habits and to the fact that they have no self-control.

“To have good credit, it must be built. It’s not like grades where you start out with an ‘A.’ You have to develop your credit rating with payments like credit cards, car payments and home loans,” Lohr said. “A young person’s first introduction into this is the credit card, one of the hardest to manage and easiest to abuse.”

Unfortunately, there is no quick fix to bad credit, but experts suggest students can start by paying their bills on time even if it’s just the minimum payment.

“Always pay your monthly bill, even if you are paying the minimum for the month,” Lohr said. “Also, don’t use a credit card for excessive purchases that you could not afford otherwise.”

Toscano suggests getting a finance expert involved.

“If students feel that they might go overboard applying for placement at a financial institution, other jobs may also require a credit check.

According to Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, an employer or prospective

College of Engineering builds “green” house in China

After an invitation from the Chinese Ministry of Construction, faculty from the College of Engineering and Computing were asked to design and build an environment-friendly house in Beijing, China, which will be located near the site of the 2008 Olympic Games.

Called the Future House Competition, the plans arose out of China’s growing energy and environmental concerns.

The overall goal of the project, directed by the CMC, is to design and build energy and environment friendly houses. In total 10 houses will be built by eight different countries.

Besides China, the other countries participating in the project are Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Sweden and the United States.

FIU will be the only university participating from the United States.

“It is a distinct honor to be selected by the Chinese government as the only university to participate in the project.”

Yong Tao, professor of mechanical and materials engineering and director of the project

Construction Management, the School of Architecture, and Mechanical Engineering were the departments most responsible for the designing of FIU’s Future House, Tao said.

It is estimated that the project will cost at least half a million dollars, according to Vishwanath Prasad, executive dean of the College of Engineering and Computing.
The Beacon – April 12, 2007

NEWS

House of Nursing celebrates 25 years

In commemoration of its 25 years at FIU, the School of Nursing is honoring 25 distinguished alumni.

The school announced its list of Top 25 Outstanding Alumni who will be honored at a 25th anniversary black-tie gala event held April 14 at the Doral Golf Resort, located in Doral.

SPC hosts concert, raises donations for Dear Jack Foundation

SPC presents Jack’s Mannequin, Jack McMahon’s side project from his band Something Corporate.

The band will be performing their album, Everything in Transit, April 16 at the Pharmed Arena.

Tickets are free for FIU students and the general public. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the concert will begin at 8 p.m.

Compiled by Betsy Martinez and Ana Davis

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated April 9, 2007, the article “SGA readiness for elections, changes” erroneously stated that there has never been an election site at the Engineering Center. There is also an election site there this year.

Also, the name for representative-at-large candidate Patricia Concepcion was misspelled.

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

Every-thing in Transit, April 16 at the Pharmed Arena.

The house is based on the works of Frank Lloyd Wright, a famous architect from the late 1800s and early 1900s, Prasad said.

Wright practiced organic architecture, a form that combines habitation with the environment around it. FIU’s future house also incorporates the Chinese philosophies of feng shui, literally translated as wind and water.

This principal emphasizes the placement and arrangement of space to maintain harmony with nature.

The house will also reflect some of Florida’s architectural style, according to Prasad. It will include solar panels to offset energy needs and utilize low water consumption methods.

“We will be able to show our stuff,” Prasad said. “We will also be able to learn from each other.”

Ground breaking for the project was held March 16 in Beijing and went well with over 100 in attendance, according to Tao.

With the design aspect essentially finished, all that’s left is for the house to be built.

“There are always modifications made,” Tao said. “But construction is all that’s left.”

Construction is expected to be complete by the start of the 2008 Olympic games.

The house will be open to the public for touring until 2014, after which FIU will use it for workshops and training exercises, Prasad said.

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BBC fitness center to offer new, improved facilities

EVERT CRUZ
Staff Writer

Junior Nick Arrieta was excited to hear about the construction of a brand new fitness center at the Biscayne Bay Campus. He felt the current fitness center he utilizes, located on the third floor of the Wolfe University Center, needed to expand and offer more services.

“This gym is ridiculous. It’s outdated and the equipment needs to be updated,” Arrieta said.

According to Carlos G. Aspillaga, the senior director of Student Affairs and Auxiliary Services, had been planning the creation of a new fitness center for many years.

“There was a great need for this. Students had requested this for years and it’s long over due,” he said. “I know the students will really enjoy it,” Olson said.

Although Wassenaar said the new center’s main goal is not to increase enrollment, but rather, to enhance BBC’s existing services, he said the center will help attract new students to BBC.

According to junior Paul Richardson, the current BBC gym was not as adequate as the fitness center at University Park. UP’s two-story fitness center houses work-out equipment on both floors that range from squat exercises to step machines. The UP fitness center also houses aerobic classrooms and only has four cardio options. BBC’s current fitness center might have some disadvantages due to its size and space for more students to work out.

“I am satisfied with this current gym. It’s guy-oriented and space for more students to work out is needed,” Hussain said.

According to Gregory Olson, senior director of Student Affairs at BBC, said both the fitness center and the cafeteria will be up and running by Fall 2007.

He also said student tuition would not be affected by this new addition to BBC, since the funding for both projects came from a Capital Improvement Trust Fund given to the University by the state of Florida.

According to Olson, the current fitness center had formerly been an old recreation lounge. The new fitness center would give students the “opportunity to have a stand-alone fitness center.”

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OPINION

Accents can hinder learning

BEN F. BADGER JR. Staff Writer

It’s the first day of a math class and the professor walks in and writes his name on the board and passes out a syllabus. So far so good, until the professor decides to speak. It’s not what the professor is saying that is the problem, it’s the fact that no one can understand what the professor is saying. That is the issue.

“We do have some problems,” said Julian Edward, the chair of the mathematics department. “We try to hire the best adjunct professors possible.”

When I talk about the professors being incoherent, I’m referring to their inability to speak English properly. Some of them have such thick accents, it makes it impossible to understand. It is a general standard here at FIU that it is required to take math to graduate; I would think that the math department would take greater care when hiring their adjunct professors.

According to Edward, student evaluations are taken seriously at the end of each semester, and if an adjunct professor has a serious language problem they would be let go and not rehired. The problem with using the evaluations made by students at the end of a semester is there’s the minimum GPA requirement — which is easy enough — and a lack of academic and disciplinary sanctions, which, frankly, is what should be expected of all student government representatives. Take at least half your classes at the campus you’re running to represent and — voila! — you are fit to run for president.

So, what is it then?

The answer is so obvious, it makes the question hardly worth asking. It’s the apathy.

The lack of presidential wannabes the past two years isn’t anything remarkable. It’s just a symptom of student apathy.

Most student organizations — The Beacon included — know what that’s like.

They know how hard it is to find even a few good students to sign up and participate. They also know that getting them there is one thing, but getting them to stick to their commitment is almost a ludicrous proposition.

Anyone who’s screened a department, and has organized a talk knows that, no matter the amount of advertising used, getting more than a handful of students to show up is usually a matter of pure, dumb luck.

That said, having only one presidential candidate is unacceptable, and a wake-up call might be more over at the University Park council? If so, couldn’t they be making more of an effort to recruit a fresh crop of aspiring politicians?

The Beacon makes an effort each year to recruit fresh writers and staff from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication’s crop of young journalism students. Heck, even among grizzled seniors, we usually manage to scrounge up a handful a semester. Given the shortage of political stock these past two years, SGA veterans should consider going out to political science lectures and do some recruiting.

Here’s a thought: past United States presidents, after leaving their posts, habitually used their residual political sheen and visibility to lobby for their pet causes. If current SGC-UP President Alfonso “Ali” Leon wishes to remain involved with the organization, perhaps he could help lobby students from fields such as political sciences to get involved. SGA has also done little to emphasize the merits of working with student government: the networking, the chance to represent students, and of course, a resume boost.

The council needs fresh blood, and it needs it now. It sure beats getting stuck with a single-candidate presidential race yet another year.
In Miami you’re likely to hear the sounds of salsa, hip-hop and rap when you turn on a radio or when walking down the beach. To bring a different kind of music to South Florida, FIU’s School of Music is hosting the 2007 New Music Miami International Society of Contemporary Music Festival.

FIU is one of two chapters of the ISCM in the U.S., according to festival director Orlando Garcia. The ISCM holds a special week of music every year as part of their World Music Days events. FIU’s chapter submits compositions from various ISCM events that take place throughout the year in hopes they can be performed at the festival.

New Music promises to bring some of the most innovative composers and musicians from around the world to FIU.

“Music is my life,” said clarinetist Evan Ziporyn. “I started clarinet when I was in third grade and have been into music for around 30 years.”

Ziporyn kicked off the festival April 10 with a special lecture about his musical experiences playing as part of a gamelan, an Indonesian musical ensemble. Students present at the lecture were impressed with the wealth of experience that he brought.

“His perspective only comes with years of experience,” said senior Ansen Steiner, a former student of the Berkley School of Music in Boston.

Other students present who were not as musically knowledgeable as Steiner also took something away from Ziporyn’s lecture.

“Most of it went over my head,” said senior Emily Hutchinson. “But it was extremely interesting.”

Ziporyn performed during festival’s first concert at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center alongside Garcia, trombonist Mark Hetzler and the FIU Wind Ensemble.

Some musicians are more compatible than others; Ziporyn views Garcia as a musical complement.

“It’s like a yin and yang,” Ziporyn said.

The next event of the festival will take place April 12 at 7:30 p.m. at Miami Art Central, an extension of the Miami Art Museum.

A concert will follow a pre-concert panel of international musicians, including Alejandro Escuer from Mexico and James Fulkerson from Holland. Members of the Barton Workshop will also perform.

Escuer received a Grammy nomination in 2004 for his work on the album Planos. Fulkerson has composed over 200 works and the Barton Workshop boasts a rigorous rehearsal schedule, which allows the group to innovate electronic music methods.

For graduate student David Mendoza the festival has been a once in a lifetime opportunity.

“I’ve helped organize the festival by transporting the various composers and performers to the different venues,” Mendoza said. “But getting to really know them has been an experience.”

Mendoza also commented that the master classes – special classes where known composers or performers critique works written by students – has made his experience invaluable.

“When you take music classes you learn from one or two professors you can’t relate to,” Mendoza said. “Some of these performers and composers are in their 20s or 30s, which helps.”

There will be a public flute master class featuring Escuer in WPAC 157 at 11 a.m. Escuer will also discuss music by Mexican composers.

“(New Music] will give students and South Florida the chance to hear this classical music,” Garcia said. “It’s important.”

For a complete list and schedule of events see www.fiu.edu/~music. All events are free and open to the public.

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ANGELINA ESPOSITO
Staff Writer

In Proof, the School of Theatre chose a play that forces audiences to think beyond just personal insight or a twisting plot – a little algebra is needed, too. Compared to Silence, its predecessor in rotating repertory, Proof's topics are somewhat lighter but just as dramatic and insightful.

Directed by Judy Bauerlein, Proof revolves around high order mathematics, the emotional undertones of turning into our parents, personal discovery and a little bit of romance.

The story revolves around Catherine, the daughter of a mathematical genius named Robert, who deals with the discovery of a groundbreaking mathematical proof and an overbearing sister, Claire, who fears Catherine has a touch of Robert's mental illness. Added into the mix is Hal, Robert's former student, who brings a little needed love to Catherine's life.

Proof made its way into movie theaters recently with a cast of big name actors including Anthony Hopkins, Gwenyth Paltrow, Jake Gyllenhaal and Hope Davis. Such a notable cast could make it difficult for young actors to even fathom trying to provide an adequate or better performance.

So fearful of seeing a reenactment of the actors who portrayed the characters on the big screen, I was generally taken aback by the students’ performances. While each individual held their own in the portrayal of their characters, the sisters in the play really stood out.

The relationship of the two sisters was more dynamic than in the movie and I really enjoyed the way Natalie Ceballos, the actress who played Claire, interpreted her role. Claire wasn’t just a snobby New Yorker – Ceballos gave the character some flare and a touch of comedy. Due to the nature of Catherine’s character, Ceballos’s wit helped amplify the differences between the two.

As for the portrayal of Catherine, it was actually entertaining (sorry, Paltrow, but you seemed drugged out most of the time). Corinne Farkash, who plays Catherine, gave her character some backbone but was still able to display the Catherine’s weaknesses at the right times.

The set and costumes were well done. I was confused for a second as to why the house looked like it was an outline in chalk, but then I realized — Oh duh, chalk. As for the key elements that each show used didn’t distract or seem out of place. From the styles of both Silence and Proof, these plays display huge differences, but are still fun to watch.

For show times or ticket information, contact the box office at 305-348-3789. Student tickets cost $8 and general admission is $10.
Late goal determines intramural winner

Amastha proceeded to do back flips with the Teke crowd providing him music to celebrate.

FIU’s final attempt to score one more goal was futile as they were unable to defend their championship.

The Tekes had gained their revenge and became champions for the first time in four years.

“This is my year; I’m graduating. It’s mine now and I wanted it,” Rendsheus said.

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FIU Sports Replay

BASEBALL

The baseball team (17-18) lost the final two games in a three-game series against Arkansas State University (14-20) April 6-7 at Tomsonlwood Stadium in Jonesboro, Ark.

In the first game, Chris Allen dominated the Indians as he struck out 11 batters throughout the course of his second complete game effort of the season. Allen gave up three earned runs to give the Golden Panthers a 5-3 win. Outfielder Rainy Fuentes finished with two RBI, including a solo home run and a triple. Sun Belt Conference batting average leader, outfielder James McCown, hit in the lead-off spot and came around to score the game’s first run after hitting a lead-off double.

In the first game of a doubleheader April 7, the Indians’ lefty T. J. Brewer threw a complete game of three shutout innings, but it did force them to load the bases and they stranded nine batters. The offensive was productive as it recorded nine sacks in 100 plays from scrimmage. The defense recorded no interceptions, but it did force several dropped passes.

TRACK AND FIELD

Junior Paula Reategui set a new FIU record in the women’s 3,000-meter steeplechase, finishing with a time of 11:14.68. Sophomore Eddie Arguello recorded the second best time in FIU history in the men’s 3,000 steeplechase with a time of 9:34.64.

HOCKEY

The roller hockey club was eliminated from the 2007 Collegiate Roller Hockey National Championships by Eastern Michigan University in a 8-3 loss.
Softball beats 14th ranked Ragin' Cajuns

CHARLIE GRAU
Sports Editor

At Lawson Park, Ragin' Cajun fans have a tradition of throwing back any home run hit by the opposing team.

On April 7, Cajun fans were busy throwing back three balls — all courtesy of senior catcher Tabitha Embry.

Her three home runs helped FIU (17-26, 5-7) defeat No. 14 University of Louisiana Lafayette 8-3 on the final game of the three-game series to give the women's softball team the sweep.

"To sweep them at their park is a big deal," coach Kier Gwydir said. "This is not a little Miami thing, this is a nation-wide thing."

It was the first series sweep of the season for the Golden Panthers and also the first time the Ragin' Cajuns (34-11, 7-5) had been swept in their 11 years of conference play in the Sun Belt Conference.

"We always struggle with ULL," Embry said. "We usually come up short against them, but luckily, in my senior year, we showed them who was boss."

FIU 4, ULL 0
The Golden Panthers' pitching and defense was on point in the first game of a double header as junior pitcher Kerri Houck (7-13) limited the No. 4 ranked offense in the conference to four hits during seven innings of work.

"[A pitcher] definitely doesn't do it on their own," Gwydir said. 

"[Our team] has had a lot of adversity this year. It's nice to see some tangible results from all the hard work they've put in."

Up 1-0 in the fourth inning, sophomore Kim Rodriguez and junior Ashley Falk added three more runs after hitting back-to-back home runs off of Ragin' Cajuns pitcher Holly Tankersley (11-4).

FIU 2, ULL 0
It was a simple bunt by Ragin' Cajuns senior second baseman Tara Hamilton in the bottom of the fifth inning that kept Golden Panthers starting pitcher Penny Eastman (9-10) from recording a no-hitter.

Despite the bunt single, she struck out five batters in seven innings of work.

"On some days we hit well, but don't pitch well and on other days we pitch well but don't play good defense and vice versa," Gwydir said. "But they're starting to put it all together. This shows they can beat anyone."

Junior shortstop Monique White provided the Golden Panthers with all the offense they needed with a two-run home run in the fifth inning.

FIU 8, ULL 3
The final game of the series brought some dynamic weather elements as sleet came down.

"That was in the weather forecast," Embry said. 

"We help each other. Today it was me, but usually it's someone else."

Her final home run of the night doubled her season total from three to six on the year and 18 for her career.

Her second home run sailed straight over the bleachers behind the centerfield wall.

"It took them a couple of pitches to throw that one back," Gwydir said. "She was a one-man wrecking crew."

On some days we hit well, but don't pitch well and on other days we pitch well but don't play good defense and vice versa. But they're starting to put it all together.

The FIJI's success would be short-lived, as the Tekes as they headed into intermission.

"Equally as impressive as Embry's power was Eastman's command on the mound as she relieved Houck, who was having difficulties controlling her pitches in the frigid conditions, during the second inning."

Unerved by the weather conditions, the Colorado native relied heavily on her curveball and struck out two Ragin' Cajun batters in four and two-thirds innings.

"It felt amazing to get the win. This was probably my best memory as a college player," Eastman said.

Teks win fraternity intramural soccer championship

A sea of red and purple divided the Recreational Field.

The two rivaling factions rooted for the soccer teams of Tau Kappa Epsilon or Phi Gamma Delta as Phi Gamma Delta had and of Phi Gamma Delta as Phi Gamma Delta last year in a decisive shootout.

FIJI won last year in a decisive shootout.

"Each of the three home runs I hit were for my mother, father and sister who were at the game," Embry said.

"FIJI would gradually weaken the Teke defense and vice versa. But they're starting to put it all together."

FIU 2, ULL 0
The once fluid game was now a rigid defensive battle that included various balls kicked or not properly received by teammates.

"The once conservative minded defense became the norm."

Fans became restless and frustrated because of the teams' inability to produce an effective offense had slowed down the pace of the game.

FIJI eventually began to play a stronger defense. James Edward White controlled the ball from the right wing of the goal post.

He kicked the ball from a difficult angle, but managed to sneak the ball away from Teke goalie Daniel Rendueles, tying the game at 2-2.

White's game-tying blast would change the pace of the game.

The shots on goal increased rapidly, but so did the defensive effort from both goalies.

"The once conservative minded defense began taking risks by moving toward the ball rather than letting the offense kick it towards them. Diving saves and collisions between players became routine towards the last minutes of the game.

The once fluid game was now a rigid defensive battle that included various balls hit well out of play.

Fatigue began to set in as the play from both teams looked like it was coming to an end.

The FIJI's success would be short-lived, as the Teke defense would not be able to relive last year's success.

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