STATE UNIVERSITIES’ BUDGETS CUT

FIU slated to lose between 4 and 10 percent of overall budget

Responding to Governor Charlie Crist’s rejection of a 5 percent tuition increase in Florida’s 11 public universities and his decision June 27 to limit tuition increases to only three public universities (Florida State University, University of Florida and University of South Florida), the Board of Governors has asked universities to prepare for budget cuts between 4 and 10 percent.

The board has also voted to challenge Crist and the legislation with a 5 percent tuition increase by January 2008 and decided to freeze freshman enrollment by January as well.

As a result, the board joined in a lawsuit with former U.S. Senator Bob Graham against Crist last week. The goal of the suit is to give sole power of the voting tuition to the Board of Governors. FIU Faculty Senate Chair Bruce Hauptli and history professor Howard Rock have also joined the lawsuit against Crist.

“This is a critical issue for higher education and the future of Florida’s families,” Graham said to The Miami Herald. “I don’t think this is going to make a difference in the next few months. It will make a difference in the next generation.”

Hauptli agrees with Graham. “It is the Board of Governors [that] should set tuition,” Hauptli said. According to Hauptli, if the lawsuit is successful, FIU could see tuition increase as early as Spring 2008. “If there is not enough money, things will have to be shut down,” he said.

In a presentation made by Mark Rosenberg to the BOG, chancellor of the state university system of Florida and former FIU provost said that in a worse case scenario, the 4 percent cut could result in the loss of 17,000 students-equivalent to the University of North Florida. A 10 percent decrease would result in the loss of 42,000 students-equivalent to the size of FIU.

There have been no plans or discussions to close either university. According to a press release on July 12, a 4 percent cut to FIU’s budget is equivalent to all the money received this year to partially fund 1,100 additional full-time students.

FIU is preparing by identifying a minimum budget cut of $8.4 million of its $231 million recurring state appropriation. If the budget cut goes as high as 10 percent, the budget would have to be reduced by $23 million. Overall, FIU’s yearly budget is roughly $800 million, the press release said.

Although some universities, such as UF, responded by freezing faculty hiring, FIU President Modesto A. Maiddique said in a press release issued July 13 that FIU will freeze administration and non-faculty hiring instead, and cut from different ‘non-core expenses’ such as employee raises. “The [University] is only going to approve hiring that is considered a need, not a want,” said Marbely Hernandez, Student Government Council President.

BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director

REMEMBRANCE

SILENT MEMORIAL: Commander Hiber Matos (left) held a silent vigil July 13 at the University Park Fountain to remember the 41 victims of a tugboat that sank on July 13, 1994 when 72 Cubans tried to reach American soil.

University joins ‘green’ initiative

CHRISTINA VEGA
Asst. News Director

Within FIU’s blue and gold, a little green seems to be leaving its mark.

With President Modesto A. Maidique’s recent signing of the American Co- operative University Presidents Climate Commitment, FIU has joined more than 300 American colleges and universities in an attempt to create a more sustainable planet by starting on their own campuses.

The commitment targets colleges and universities because of the unique responsibility institutions of higher learning have in serving as role models for the community and to train future generations to be more climate-conscious, according to the ACTJPC web site.

Presidents who sign the commitment pledge to tackle global warming by forming ways to limit greenhouse gas emissions and by providing research and educational opportunities that address the state of the earth’s climate.

Vivian Sanchez, the University’s Chief Financial Officer and senior vice president of the Division of Business and Finance, said that FIU joined the alliance because it allowed each university to be equal in the alliance.

“I don’t think this is going to make a difference in the next few months. It will make a difference in the next generation.”

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BEN F. BADGER JR.
Asst. News Director


A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

Vol. 20, Issue 4 www.beaconnewspaper.com
Climate agreement could affect students

ENVIROMENT, page 1

"...a record [we] [FIU and facilitities] are very proud of achieving on ... their ... basis," he said in an e-mail interview.

The ACUCC also requires that FIU meets the Leadership in Energy and Enviromental Design Silver standard – known as LEED. It is a rating system that provides a framework for new construction projects and for existing buildings.

According to Sanchez, FIU's geographic location makes some LEED standards difficult or impractical to abide by. But just because new construction is not LEED certified, it doesn't mean it is not more environmentally friendly, Sanchez said.

Citarella said that it is estimated that these new standards will increase construction costs by five percent. The University plans to pay for the increase by raising budget requests for state funds for things other than buildings of air due to dust or particulate matter.

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Police Beat

Cars vandalized

A student reported that her 1993 Toyota Carro with $200 worth of merchandise was broken into while parked in the Gold Garage on the night of June 12. Also that night, another female student reported that her Toyota Matrix, also parked in the Gold Garage, was missing two wheel covers valued at $70. Despite video cameras in the garage, there are no leads.

Anonymous e-mail

Two female students reported in June that pictures of them kissing at a nightclub were e-mailed to them and class members, anonymously, along with a caption that read: "does your mother know about this?" An FIU employee reported that the e-mails came from public domain computers on-campus and are impossible to track.

Trespassing

A homeless man was arrested for trespassing in the Green Library June 16. Marvin Hendricks, 42, has been arrested by Public Safety 12 times before for trespassing and petit-trespassing.

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Following a series of burglaries at the Engineering and Computer Science building between June 1-6, a police report was filed June 14 describing a master key as missing. The master key, which she holds, was replaced with another key that belonged to a former FIU student. The master key was still missing and the locks have yet to be changed.

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FIU NEWS

Transportation program takes students from parking garages to classes

Starting in the Fall semester, a new transportation program referred to as Panther Safety Aid, or PSA, will begin offering students the chance to park anywhere at University Park and be driven to and from buildings on the opposite side of campus. The system, which will be student-operated and is made up of five golf carts, will help alleviate the parking situation on campus and increase student safety at night.

PSA was organized by the Student Government Association and will be funded from a $20,000 grant approved July 6 by the Student Affairs and Undergraduate Vice-President, University Park and be driven to and from buildings on campus.

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NATIONAL NEWS

House passes $19 billion cut in subsidies to student lenders, increases Pell grants.

A bill approved by the U.S. House of Representatives July 11 may provide some relief for college students.

The new bill, which promises to help with the escalating costs of higher education, would cut $19 billion in federal subsidies to student lenders over five years. The bill would also increase maximum Pell grants and cut interest rates in half for new borrowers.

The bill reduces the share the government would guarantee in the event of student default and provides loan forgiveness in the amount of $5,000 for police, firefighters, prosecutors and other public servants. Public servants would be granted a complete release from student loans for public service after 10 years, and complete forgiveness of federal student loans after 20 years for economic hardship.

President George W. Bush has threatened a veto the loan-forgiveness provisions of the bill, but has proposed cutting government subsidies to lenders by $10 billion and increasing the size of Pell grants. The Senate is expected to pass legislation that would reduce these subsidies by $18.3 billion, while increasing the Pell grant.

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BUDGET, page 1

President. "It's going to be more on need-based." Secretary Citarella said he decided to freeze freshman enrollment as of Spring 2008 to help curtail spending. This means that undeclared freshmen nor must be able to enroll more freshmen than they did last year.

According to Hernandez, it is an economic measure that will affect SGA. Also, all of SGA's funds come from the A&S fees by student registration. Less students means less fees for SGA, said Hernandez.

In 1997, FIU had 16,824 full time students enrolled with a state expenditure of $10,146 per student. FIU is expecting to have 25,261 full time students to be enrolled this Fall semester, with a increased state expenditure of $9,430 per student. "After years of cuts, we are creating a climate for our students to increase their commitment to quality, we are going to have to turn away students," Maidique said in the same press release. Ma itique added that he is committed to making sure the cuts do not further erode the quality of education at FIU and that he still envisions FIU becoming one of the top urban research universities in the country.

"Although FIU will not be receiving any additional money, we are determined to meet operating expenses," Maidique said in the press release. "Therefore, to meet these obligations we will need to immediately identify savings within our core budget." In an interview conducted by The Beacon on July 3, day before these decisions were made, Maidique said that there are other ways to help offset rising costs other than tuition increases, and they involve fundraising and donations.

"We would need to raise a billion dollars," Maidique said.

To identify viable budget solutions, Maidique will appoint by next week a budget stabilization task force led by senior vice president and Chief Financial Officer Vivian Sanchez.

The task force will consist of a senior administrator, a representative from the faculty and a student representative from both campus, Sanchez said.

According to Sanchez, if the budget cut is within the 4 percent range, operations at FIU would be affected minimally; however, if the case scenario of a 10 percent budget cut does happen, the impact would be immediate.

However, student services will not be affected by the budget cut.

"This has been coming for a while," Sanchez said. "We haven't received full funding for student enrollment since I've been here." Sanchez also said that the amount of funds FIU requested versus the amount actually received for grants and funds over the last three years has been deferred by $13 million.

Once the task force has been assembled and knows the exact amount of the budget cuts (which will be after the state budgeting forecast on Aug. 1), the task force will determine what changes need to be made.

Student Programming Council President Sophia Del Zoppo says the budget cuts could change the way events are planned this year, and that if 10 percent of SPC’s budget was cut, it would likely result in many of the smaller SPC events being cancelled.

"We’re trying to do bigger and better," Del Zoppo said. "But the big events would have priority over our smaller events." Sanchez urged University departments and divisions not to panic.

"Once you go into hysteria, you may make some decisions you will regret later," Sanchez said. "Which is why I am a fan of this task force. A methodological will be established and good decisions can be made.

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Compiled by Vanessa A. Alvarez and Christina Veiga from news wires

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated July 9, 2007, the name of the artist on the cover should have read Paula G. Gracye.

In the same issue, the photograph titled "Dr. Ian Gough" should have been credited to Fernando Garcia.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our UP office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.
Science building finished but not yet furnished

SANDRA MATEU
EDDITH SEVILLA
Beacon Staff

Despite the fact that it opened last summer, the Marine Sciences building in the Biscayne Bay Campus, is still a work in progress.

Money meant to pay for the odds and ends that came at the end of the construction process, such as blinds, digital projectors, chairs and other things, was used to pay Centerx, the construction company that erected the $13 million building, according to Joel Trexler, interim director of the Marine Sciences program and professor of Biological Sciences.

“The construction firm wanted $800,000 more for their work and the University said ‘oh no we’re going to go down line by line and we’re going to work this out’, so they went through a negotiation process and resolved it,” Trexler said.

The resolution closed its budget with the construction company and allowed FIU to completely own the building, but still left the Marine Sciences building $500,000 short, which was suppose to cover some of the furnishing expenses for the building.

But Trexler insists that the shortfall is not something out of the ordinary.

“This $500,000 is not an extreme case. I imagine that there have been buildings that in fact worked out exactly on the original budget but sometimes there are some adjustments that occur at the end,” said Trexler.

Among the items waiting to be completed, is the seawater system that would allow every floor in the building access to saltwater from the bay.

“The piping is all there but the pump that pumps the water out of the ocean and into the building has not been purchased yet,” said Trexler.

The building was originally intended to have digital projectors and teleconferencing equipment, which would allow students to take classes at a particular campus while physically being at a different campus, among other things.

“We still need some office furniture meeting desks, chairs and technological appliances,” said Clayton Williams, a Marine Sciences graduate assistant.

So how will the building get money to pay for all this?

Trexler says the University is currently going through a process of allocation of funds from internal University sources to basically complete the marine sciences building.

“FIU is operating on very tight budgets these days and so the fact that the building ran over means that the process to kind of tie up these details is taking some time,” said Trexler.

According to Trexler, the way the University allocates money, which comes from the state of Florida and student tuition, is through a “special initiative” process by which programs that desire funds for upgrades such as projectors or to start new initiatives, write and submit a proposal to the Special Initiative Program committee.

But Trexler admits that the needs are greater than the funds.

“The needs of the two campuses exceed the money and [the Special Initiatives program] has a process that is intended to be very open to evaluate the most pressing needs for the University,” he said.

He added that staff from the Marine Sciences program is waiting to hear from the program to determine if they will obtain the funds needed to complete the furnishing of the building.

Meanwhile, the Marine Sciences program faces another challenge: finding a permanent director.

Williams says that while Professor Trexler is the interim director, there is a worldwide search for a permanent program director.

Even though the building lacks office furniture, proper media equipment, a functioning seawater system and at one point even had a few leaks in some of the plumbing, George Meichel, Marine Sciences building manager, says the experience in a new building has gone fairly smooth.

“Since it is a new building, all the headaches that you run into with an older building, faulty plumbing, bad wiring isn’t the case here,” said Meichel.

“Getting set up, getting the faculty moved into their offices, getting set up with the fax machine, the photocopier, getting people’s phones and computers hooked up and just kind of moving in, if you will, has basically been the biggest hurdle,” he added.

COMMUNITY NEWS CALENDAR

THURSDAY • AUGUST 2

For people who want to volunteer during the week, Stop Hunger needs help to pack food and distribute it to families in need, from 9-11:00 a.m. For information call Hands on Miami at (305) 646-7207.

SATURDAY • AUGUST 11

August is turtle nesting season. You can make Crandon Beach a safer place for hatching turtles and other marine wildlife by removing trash such as cigarette butts, straws and bottles. For more information, call (305) 646-7207.

TUESDAY • SATURDAY • 7:30A.M.

Volunteer with Habitat to help low-income families achieve their dream to own a home. Volunteers build Tuesday through Saturday 7:30 am - 3:30 pm. For information call Carlos Beron at (305) 634-3628, or go to www.miamihabitat.org.

- Compiled by Eddith Sevilla

STUDY OF THE AQUATICS: Megan Dunphy, Marine Science graduate student, works in one of the laboratories within the Marine Sciences building at the Biscayne Bay Campus.

Biscayne Bay Campus WANTS YOU!

If you have an interest in writing, photography, or even grammar, pick up an application at our office located in WUC 124.

- Compiled by Eddith Sevilla
KEVIN CASTRO  
Contributing Writer

FIU medical center needed

Florida’s public universities may become less public with a recent decision by the Florida Board of Governors, freezing annual enrollment.

Though the BOG decision is in the best interest of Florida’s public universities, it will also be depriving thousands of qualified students from receiving a higher education.

The Universities must now stress the importance of quality over quantity to its highest degree; however, with a fixed number of enrollment the opportunity for many students to be accepted will become seriously competitive.

Public universities must have the ability to offer an education to all who are deserving and willing.

Unfortunately, the State has not funded public universities adequately for the past six years. Furthermore, these Universities will now be faced with a 4 to 10 percent budget cut as well which will be effective as August first.

Fortunately, the problem has been temporarily bandaged. What once seemed like an easy solution to the problem has now evolved into a major crisis that will affect the lives of current and future students, as well as many others.

In addition to the enrollment issue, Florida’s governor Charlie Crist approved for up to a 5 percent tuition increase for Florida’s three largest public universities—University of Florida, Florida State University, and University of South Florida.

This will serve as a double-edged sword for him because there will be negative consequences of any decision made. However, these universities already receive the highest amount of funding and it would be more beneficial for universities such as FIU to have a tuition increase.

This University is still in need of better classroom equipment and more faculty, and should be under continuous growth and development.

The Florida legislature’s failure to realize a lack of funds that public universities have is a problem that will affect not only students now, but for many more years to come. It will stay that way until they start appropriating the necessary amount of funds to the universities that our children will be attending in the future.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Letters to the Editor must be dropped off at GC 210 at University Park, WUC 124 at the Biscayne Bay Campus or sent to beaconopinion@yahoo.com. Letters must adhere to a maximum of 300 words. 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 spacing constraints.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Coca-Cola not responsible for questionable conduct in Colombia

The Coca-Cola Co. would be remiss if we did not respond to questions regarding our business practices in Colombia. Just because an allegation is repeated over and over again does not make it true.

The allegations that have been waged by professional activist organizations suggesting complicity in violence and intimidation against union workers in Colombia are absolutely false. The Coca-Cola system employs 2,000 people in Colombia directly, but generates approximately 8,000 jobs in the country.

We treat all of our employees fairly and respect their right to organize. Our Colombian bottling partners, including the largest, Coca-Cola Femsa, have collective bargaining agreements in place with a number of unions in Colombia.

Our Colombian bottling partners work with unions and the government to provide emergency cell phones, transportation to and from work, secure housing, and many other measures.

More than 31 percent of Coca-Cola Colombian bottler employees belong to unions, only 4 percent of Colombians can claim to be represented by a labor organization.

Judicial inquiries by the Colombian and the Colombian Attorney General found no evidence to support the allegations that bottler management conspired to intimidate or threaten trade unionists. These allegations were the thrust of a lawsuit filed in 2001 against The Coca-Cola Company in a U.S. District Court in Miami; the Company was dismissed as a defendant.

On September 29, 2006 the court issued a decision to dismiss the two Coca-Cola bottlers in Colombia from all remaining cases as well.

The International Labor Organization (ILO), a specialized multilateral organization within the United Nations which is responsible for establishing international labor standards, has agreed to conduct an independent and impartial investigation and evaluation of the labor relations and workers’ rights practices of Coca-Cola bottlers in Colombia.

With the ILO assessment, we are fulfilling our commitment to an independent, impartial third-party investigation and evaluation of our system’s labor relations and workers’ rights practices in Colombia.

Diana Garza Ciarlante  
Director of Public Affairs  
Coca-Cola North America
Excessive alcohol can cause more than just headaches

L ast week as I was checking my email, I had my instant messenger on and my best friend told me the horrible news—one of my cousins had a terrible car accident; my friend and my cousin live in the same city, and my family has been so troubled that they haven’t had the time to let us know.

As you can imagine, I almost fainted. I started asking all sorts of questions: When was this? Who was in the car? Where was it? How is she? Why did this happen?

It happens to be that she was under the influence becomes a drug. The ability to drive, but any activity depends on how much food is consumed. It depends on age, gender and body size. It depends on how much alcohol: in the beach, in a car, in a club and surgery, making us go back home and all of them fell asleep on the way there. The car hit a concrete partition and went upside down.

She hit herself with the front glass and damaged her face, especially her eyes. The doctors had to reconstruct her eyelids completely, put two plaques and 13 nails in her face. To make matters worse, she was not wearing her seatbelt, which cost her a week in the hospital and surgery, making us go back home and all of them fell asleep on the way there.

When something tragic happens to someone close to us, we sometimes find that it’s the fault of another, but this isn’t one of those cases.

Alcohol is a very powerful and dangerous drug—it’s a drug because it changes the way the body works. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), difficulty walking, blurred vision, slurred speech, slowed reaction times and impaired memory clearly show that alcohol affects the brain.

“When people drink alcohol, it’s absorbed into their bloodstream. From there, it affects the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord), which controls virtually all body functions,” said the Nemours Foundation, one of the nation’s largest group practices for children with ongoing research and education programs.

Being a depressant, alcohol makes every movement and function of your body to be in a slower mode. It can not only affect your ability to drive, but your body under the influence becomes a danger. Some people die in the most ridiculous ways because of alcohol: in the beach, in a car, in a club and even in the pool.

Some of you may have experienced something similar to my situation—perhaps with someone in your family, a friend or maybe even yourself.

It’s one thing to have one or two drinks socially but to go overboard can leave you with more headaches than one, including blackouts and vomiting.

“Drinking affects a person depending on age, gender and body size. It depends on how much and how fast a person drinks. It depends on how much food is in the stomach,” Peterson said in a brochure entitled “About Alcohol.”

If you know someone that has a problem with alcohol, you need to pay attention to it. People cannot stop drinking unless they know and accept they have a problem and want to overcome it. Let them know why it is a problem, how it affects you—and him or her especially—and how you can solve it.

There are many programs within the community that help with this type of problem.

If you need any help, you can contact Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. at www.alcoholics-anonymous.org or The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at www.niaaa.nih.gov.
The Police

EVER CRUZ
Staff Writer

It took just three guys – Sting on bass, Andy Summers on guitar and Stewart Copeland on drums – to bring back the noise and power of rock ’n roll as the smell of beer, sweat and some illegal substance filled the air at Dolphin Stadium July 10. More than 40,000 people packed the place to watch The Police perform.

Throughout the set, the musicians were on point, especially the band’s leader, Sting, 55, still sounding the same as the young man from the late 70’s and early 80’s, but he lacked interaction with the audience, almost as if he just wanted the audience to stare in amazement.

It’s been 23 years since The Police last toured and, although Sting has stated this is simply a reunion tour, they are a different band.

Besides the fact that they are older, they have lost their raw punky attitude and this loss was especially evident in some alterations they did to certain songs during the set.

The biggest problems of the highest points of the show were when the band performed a right-on, excellent “Can’t Stand Losing You,” an extended “So Lonely,” and an out-of-control, scorching “Next To You,” which channeled their early punk roots.

At this point of the concert, the smell of marijuana kept getting stronger, too.

The band saved their best numbers toward the end: “King of Pain” and their most famous “Every Breath You Take,” which suffered a bit from the band toning back down.

When “ Roxanne” came blasting through, the audience jumped into frenzy, singing along only to become quiet moments later when the band transformed the song into an extended jazz-like number that toned down the noise.

Overall, the show was good, but it could’ve been great. A smaller venue such as an arena would’ve probably made a huge difference for the better, preventing the artist from being too far away from the audience.

The biggest problems, though, were the alterations of a lot of songs and lack of band-audience interaction. Maybe the problem is the fact that Sting hasn’t played with his old band in so many years, or it’s just because he has gone on to have a successful career singing ballads, spiritual and adult contemporary music.

Maybe he’s just lost that rock’n roll attitude that made him and The Police one of the greatest artists of all time and that’s why the show was just good, not great.

Vermont’s Springfield wins The Simpsons Movie premiere

JOHN CARRAN
AP Wire

Maybe it was the pink doughnut. Maybe it was the clever homemade video, or small-town charm. Maybe it was the pink doughnut.

Vermont’s Springfield, which has a bowling alley, a pub, a prison and a nuclear power plant just down the road, wasn’t initially part of the contest, but a local Chamber of Commerce executive appealed to movie producer 20th Century Fox and the race was on.

Vermont Springfield, Ore., hoped it had a chance to win.

“This is an exciting, exhilarating moment for Vermonters,” said Gov. Jim Douglas.

“Were so excited,” says Patricia Chaffee, vice president of the Springfield Regional Chamber of Commerce. “We came in at the last minute, and for us to win, we feel like the underdogs, which makes this so big and so great for us.”

The mayor of Springfield, Illinois, the state’s capital city, took the loss like a man, not a cow.

“We knew all along that it would be a tough battle against the other cities who claim a relationship with the television program,” said Timothy Davlin. “We in Springfield, Illinois, have enjoyed the notoriety from this exercise and hope that it translates into more people visiting Springfield looking for the Abraham Lincoln sites and the Simpsons.”

Springfield, Ore., hoped it had an in because “Simpsons” creator Matt Groening is from Portland, the state’s largest city, and many of the show’s landmarks are named after streets in Portland.

It noted in its video that “the only Springfield Groening passed through on his way to Hollywood was in Oregon.”

According to USA Today, which ran the vote on its Web site, the 13 other Springfields that participated will be given small screenings of their own the night before the movie opens nationwide July 27.

The Life! section is looking for motivated students to fill the following positions:

- Assistant Life! Editor
- Writers

Follow the Model of Health in Life every other Monday.
Track runner discovers potential late in career

LUCA MESSINA
Contributing Writer

Some athletes discover the desire and motivation to strive for the best at a young age. But others, like junior Naim Yisrael, discover that desire at a later stage in life. Yisrael, the current record holder of FIU’s 400 meter hurdles, grew up in the urban area of Jacksonville, FL.

Dating back to middle school, she began running as a hobby. She attended Terry Parker High School where she attempted to excel in the classroom while trying to participate in extra curricular activities. She never thought running would be anything more than a diversion she could partake in outside of her academic studies.

“When I first started running track back in seventh grade, it was nothing more than an extracurricular activity to me,” said Yisrael. “I really just enjoyed the hobby of running. To me, it was sort of a stress reliever.”

The motivation and drive to run developed during the summer going into her sophomore year at Terry Park. That was when she began to entertain the possibility of seriously honing her running skills.

“My coach started telling me that I could take my talents to the next level,” Yisrael said.

She says that her drive started to dramatically increase during this time. At the same time, her accomplishments were increasing in prestige as she went on to place first in a city competition for the 300 meter hurdles, second in a county competition, and third at the state level.

“After this change, the results became evident at the collegiate level as Yisrael began lowering her time dramatically. Starting from the end of sophomore year, her time for the 400 meters was 60 seconds. After this year’s national competition, her current time is at a school all-time low of 56.98 seconds – placing sixth in national competition. The girl who never thought that it would be like this, but I know now and have proven that I can run with the best.”

-runner Naim Yisrael

Yisrael began running sparingly as a seventh grader, had reached a new stratosphere in her athletic career. Despite her improvement, Yisrael looks forward to expanding her running horizons even more as she hopes to crack the Olympic roster in the qualifying trials, which take place on June of 2008 and which she hopes to see herself running a share of as well.

“Never thought that it would be like this, but I know now and have proven that I can run with the best.”

Yisrael says that sometimes talents are hidden, and when these talents are discovered, they not only become a passion but can lead to endless opportunities in the scope of life. Her hobby turned into a passion, and she hopes running will transport her to success.

“Sky is the limit.”

FIU and underwent another transitional stage as her past successes were not repeated.

“I stuck with it but didn’t do anything worth noting,” Yisrael said.

The turning point in her collegiate career was when FIU hired hurdles specialist coach, Eric Campbell last year.

“The new coach, who has been a past volunteer, helped Yisrael strengthen her talents on a more one-on-one basis, which was something that current coach Steve Rubin wasn’t able to accomplish due to his position as a general coach.”

“Coach Rubin had everyone to coach; therefore, he couldn’t always train just me alone,” Yisrael said. “Coach Campbell was specialized in my area so I was able to strengthen my talent much better.”

Following this change, the results became evident at the collegiate level as Yisrael began lowering her time dramatically. Starting from the end of sophomore year, her time for the 400 meters was 60 seconds.

After this year’s national competition, her current time is at a school all-time low of 56.98 seconds – placing sixth in national competition. The girl who never thought that it would be like this, but I know now and have proven that I can run with the best.”

-SERGIO BONILLA
Sports Editor

FIU’s new women’s softball coach, Beth McClendon, filled the last vacant head coaching position on July 12, 2007. McClendon’s track record includes a five year tenure at the University of Houston where she helped take the Cougars to two NCAA tournament appearances by coaching one of the best ranked pitching staffs in the nation.

“We are very excited to have someone with such an outstanding coaching and playing background to lead our program,” said Athletic Director Pete Garcia in a press release.

In addition to winning the Conference USA championship, the Cougars’ pitching staff ranked 15th nationally in ERA (1.160), which led the team to a 44-18 record.

McClendon’s worked as a recruiting coordinator, and she recruited two time C-USA Pitcher of the Year, Angel Shamblin.

McClendon’s coaching career began in 1995-2000. The Hatters’ pitching staff also excelled as her pitchers set school records in wins, shutouts, strikeouts and strikeouts per nine innings.

The Golden Panther’s softball program recorded a 22-35 record in 2007.

McClendon’s history of building strong pitching staffs is attributed to her success as a pitcher at the University of Florida. She was as four-year letter winner, who still holds the Gators’ record for wins with 60.

She excelled on the field and mirrored her success academically.

“I am happy to return home to the state of Florida and I’m excited to be part of a growing athletic program. The future is bright for FIU softball,” McClendon said in a press release.

Players responsible for winning, not coaches

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having that burning competitiveness inside them to be the best, with or without an omnious coach screaming in their face. It’s an illusion fans embrace, once again after those magical qualities that are nonexistent. Part of the irony in professional sports is that the coach always makes five to ten times more than the general managers, who actually put the talent in uniform. Scott Pohl is the most valuable man in the NFL, and he should be the one given credit for building Billickich his masterpiece, but for whatever reason, he is always overlooked.

Coaching also gives a perfect scapegoat for a team’s problems when an omnipotent owner surveys his realm and says that things must change. Firing one coach and ushering in another always gets the fans excited. You want to know why your team lost 90 games, Martins management? Not because Jack McKeon forgot how to coach. The year he won the championship he couldn’t remember his player’s names and would take afternoon naps in the sixth inning. It’s because your players stink. And that’s what it comes down to. For all the coaching press conferences, for all the Sportscenter segments breaking down why the new coach will make his team a contender, all the preaching and books that come down to the players. It’s what sports has always been and will always be about, and we must be careful never to forget that winning comes down to the players.

THE REPLACEMENT: Former University of Houston pitching coach, Beth McClendon, was hired as the new women’s softball coach.

Former University of Houston pitching coach, Beth McClendon, was hired as the new women’s softball coach.
Men’s basketball adds more size, international talent

Darren Collette
Contribution Writer

Junior Badara N’Diaye measures in at nearly 7 feet (6 feet 11 inches) officially and comes to FIU by way of a transfer from Southeastern Iowa Community College. Next season, when he takes the court with fellow FIU giant Russell Hicks, the FIU basketball team will have one of the tallest frontcourts in NCAA basketball.

N’Diaye, 23, is an international business major with a 3.6 GPA. He came to America via a nine hour plane ride, arrived at Southeastern Iowa Community College in 2001 speaking no English, but prepared to work hard to develop his skills as a basketball player.

“I went over there not knowing any English and it was hard at the beginning not having any friends. It was not easy — having to build a social life again — but I met some very nice people,” said N’Diaye.

He lived with a local family who took him in, and he said they treated him like a son. After playing at Iowa for two seasons, N’Diaye averaged four points and four rebounds playing junior college basketball with the Blackhawks under head coach Tim Walsh.

Born in Saint-Louis, Senegal, he played soccer until he was 14-years-old because he had grown so tall. He became so tall his friends and family persuaded him to take up basketball. N’Diaye would heed the advice of those around him, and his coaches noticed his quick speed and athleticism on the court.

In Senegal, N’Diaye has a large family that includes three younger sisters and two younger brothers. His big break came when FIU basketball head coach Sergio Rouco came to Senegal to scout for talent.

Rouco spoke to him about his prospects as a college basketball player and recommended that N’Diaye come to America to develop his game. N’Diaye says his parents are open minded people and when he had the opportunity to come to America they embraced it.

It was time for N’Diaye to move up to the next level, so he chose Iowa Community College, mainly due to Rouco’s influence. Rouco’s teammates recognize that playing alongside a player of his size and versatile athletic ability is a rare opportunity. The tallest player on last year’s roster was freshman Nikola Gacesa, who stands at 6 feet 9 inches.

“He brings a big presence inside. He’s athletic; that’s something we have not been missing for a couple of years at least,” said senior point guard Michael James.

“He has a good feel for the game. He can pass and step out and hit the little 15 footer. He can [also] rebound and block shots. He brings a variety to our team. We are excited to learn from Badara’s culture and he is excited to learn from us.”

Forward Alex Galindo

“We’ve got an international team. We are excited to learn from Badara’s culture and he is excited to learn from us.”

N’Diaye matured physically in Iowa and noticed his quick speed and athleticism on the court.

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Frequently, Bill Belichick is being proclaimed the greatest football guru in the game and put high upon that coaching pedestal the media has created, his time before Tom Brady always seems to be forgotten.

Over the same time span, a certain mustached former Dolphins coach that was chased out of town with pitchforks and torches had nearly more than a season’s worth of victories than that brilliant head coach of the Patriots.

Phil Jackson, holder of nine rings, conveniently won them all when he had two of the five greatest NBA players of all-time in their prime.

What happens when you have Kwame Brown instead of Shaq? Good for a seven seed and a quick playoff exit for a couple years.

Mike Hargrove, former coach of the Seattle Mariners, recently announced he would be retiring in the midst of an eight game winning streak because ‘his heart wasn’t in the game anymore.’ It was met with respect from insiders and fans alike.

Now imagine Ichiro Suzuki, in the middle of an eight game winning streak, announcing his retirement because he has lost his passion for the game.

An ovation from the people? Not quite. In fact, chalk him up as the biggest sports villain this side of Barry Bonds.

Simply put, coaching is the most over glorified position in all of professional sports, a creation of the media and fans searching for the same romanticism we see in the movies and hear about from past decades of the fearless leader, directing his team like a general in war to victory.

In sports, fans are quick to give intangible qualities when they are unable to explain certain championships. Players argue while mired in a losing season, and we call it a lack of chemistry.

The Heat are swept in the first round; suddenly they are too old, despite being only ten months removed from a championship and the eventual champions, the Spurs, having the oldest team in the league. Pat Riley didn’t resign seven days before the 2004 season started because he suddenly forgot how to coach.

It’s just a whole lot easier when you have Magic, Kareem, and James Worthy instead of Caron Butler and Eddie Jones.

Even worse is the infatuation with disciplinarians to the point where people think that Rod Marinelli taking the sofats out of the players lounge is meant to toughen up the athletes when the team is exactly what they are, a 3-13 team. These athletes are professionals. They did not become who they are without...