The Beacon, July 9, 2008

Florida International University

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Pharmed Group loses naming rights

**SERGIO BONILLA**  
Sports Editor

FIU decided to change the name of the Pharmed Arena to the FIU Arena in early June after the Pharmed Group filed for bankruptcy in October last year. The former Golden Panther Arena was renamed after the medical supply distributor donated $1 million in 2004 – the largest donation to Athletics to date.

The confidential donor agreement made between Pharmed and FIU noted that the company had to pay FIU an unknown amount of money every year. However, after the bankruptcy, the Pharmed Group was unable to complete the remaining payments.

"There was an agreement in place and [Pharmed] did not finish paying the amount," said Vice President of Community Relations Sandra Gonzalez-Levy.

Founded by Jorge and Carlos de Cespedes in 1980, the medical supply distributor was once recognized as the eighth largest Hispanic-owned business in the United States, and the 24th largest privately-owned business in Florida.

Despite the company’s financial success through 2004, the Pharmed Group was embroiled in legal problems before the donation to FIU.

Most recently in June 2008, three hospital employees working at Kendall Regional Medical Center were charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud in connection with the Pharmed Group. The Miami Herald reported on June 12.

The Miami Herald article discussed the renaming of the arena.

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**SGC-UP Coordinator has eyes set on safety, progress**

Paulo O'Swath  
Staff Writer

Yuniel Molina, new coordinator of Special Events for Student Government Council-University Park, holds himself to high standards.

A junior double majoring in political science and international relations, Molina is motivated to work with the Student Government Association.

"I want to work with SGC because I see a great potential in SGA and I feel that there is a lot to take care of," Molina said.

"I feel the need to provide my skills and services to our student body for the betterment of FIU."

Molina has many objectives in mind while working with SGC-UP; he plans to facilitate the welcoming of new freshmen and transfer students to FIU during Welcome Week, hold a presidential election voter’s registration event and oversee Panther Hall’s renovation.

Molina is also dedicated to improving student safety with continued work on Mobile Campus, an ongoing project that sends students text messages in the event of an emergency at the University.

Molina also hopes to hold at least one major event per semester for the student body as well as several student town hall meetings.

"I hope that this year’s SGA works diligently for the students," Molina said.

"I encourage the whole student body to be informed of what SGA is and what SGA can do for them."

Other than being involved with the SGC-UP, Molina is also Entertainment Chair for Dance Marathon. FIU’s largest annual student-run event, which raises money for the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation.

He is also a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity.

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**US Religious Landscape Survey**

Floridians are less likely to attend weekly services or claim religion to be central in their lives, according to a survey published by the U.S. Religious Landscape Survey last month.

The Pew Research Center conducted the survey on a national and state scale, and polled approximately 35,000 adult Americans concerning their religious attitudes.

"Globalism is happening among religions, too, mostly on an unconscious level, and the Pew study is picking up on that," said Nathan Katz, founder of FIU’s Center for the Study of Spirituality, in an article published by TCPalm.com.

The survey revealed larger disparities between the general population of America and Floridians in particular occurred on questions regarding their religion.

Florida residents were less likely to believe literal scripture interpretations or regularly attend religious services.

Steve Lantz, chairman of the Multifaith Council, believes the trend is not surprising, especially since Florida has liberal centers like Miami where people from different backgrounds tend to flock.

"Miami is the least church city in America. Miami tends to be a place for people to get away and start a new life," Lantz said.

However, an informal poll of 30 FIU students yielded somewhat more polarizing results. Of those polled, 90 percent believe in God. A majority of the 30 questioned also indicated that religion is very important in their lives (63 percent) and they pray at least once a day (60 percent).

At the same time, a greater majority reported that they do not regularly attend religious services (80 percent), do not believe literal interpretations of scripture (80 percent) and that their religion plays a minor, if any, role in their political ideals (70 percent).

Junior Samantha Simeon notes the waning interest in religion among college students.

"[My friends] all grew up Catholic, but when we got to college, we stopped going to church," Simeon said.

Simeon also said that besides having less time for regular church attendance, college has opened her mind to new ideas that her religion staunchly opposes. For example, Simeon said she has friends who are homosexual, though her religion denies the lives they lead.

"I just don’t agree with [such Catholic dogma]," Simeon said.

While some college students have come to reject certain aspects of their religion, others have rejected religion all together.

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**GUITAR HERO**

**FANCY FINGERS:** Junior transfer student Carlos Andrade, plays classical music on a bench adjacent to the Cube sculpture. He will be attending FIU in the Fall to major in music.

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**Our View:**

I feel the need to provide my skills and services to our student body for the betterment of FIU. Molina has many objectives in mind while working with SGC-UP; he plans to facilitate the welcoming of new freshmen and transfer students to FIU during Welcome Week, hold a presidential election voter’s registration event and oversee Panther Hall’s renovation.

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**FAITH, page 2**

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**MAJOR DREAMS**

First baseman drafted by White Sox

Chris Lazaga  
Staff Writer

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**PAGE 4**

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**SPORTS PAGE 8**

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**FINISHED**

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http://www.fiusm.com Vol. 21, Issue 3  
July 9, 2008
CORRECTIONS

In the online article titled “Former student’s ACLU case settled,” dated July 2, 2008, Miami Police Department officer Manny Bello was misquoted saying there were no suspicious materials in Emily Vogel’s car when Miami-Dade police denoted it. In the police report, he stated there was.

In the same article, ACLU Florida Staff Counsel Rosalyn Delgado was misspelled throughout the article titled “Seann William Scott looks for life after Flu.”

In the same article, it was stated that the return of Vogel’s car took one year. MDP destroyed her car and it was not returned.

In the same issue, Seann William Scott’s name was misspelled throughout the article titled “Seann William Scott looks for life after Flu.”

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

- Compiled by Rosalyn Delgado
Garbage bags help Stop Hunger

JULIA CARDENUTO Assist. News Director

FIU students can help Stop Hunger by taking out the trash with the Biscayne Bay Campus Wish Givers. The BBC Wish Givers is a student organization that raises funds throughout the year for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Now, the group has partnered with Stop Hunger Garbage Bags, a non-profit company, to sell garbage bags to raise funds for Stop Hunger Inc.

One box of 20 trash bags, sufficient for a month, costs $5, while one case with 12 boxes, equivalent to a year’s supply, costs $60. From the proceeds of each box sold, $1 goes to BBC Wish Givers and $1.5 goes to Stop Hunger.

Stop Hunger Inc. is a South Florida non-profit food bank and food pantry founded over 28 years ago. It feeds over 27,000 low-income families and individuals in South Florida monthly, according to a business profile on file at www.city-data.com.

Even though the company - Stop Hunger Garbage Bags - is only 60 days old, they have been successful. The company’s founder, Bruce Goldstein, is a member of Stop Hunger’s board of directors.

“It is unbelievable. You can’t imagine the success. Nobody says ‘no’,” Goldstein said.

But the fund raising doesn’t stop there.

BBC Wish Givers will also hold a Casino Night complete with roulette, slot machines and Maori Grass theme. There will be auction items, free food and music.

“It is not a gambling event,” said Joe Mintz, treasurer of the BBC Wish Givers. “It is a fun activity where we are raising funds for the [Make-A-Wish] foundation.”

“The more you win, the more you donate,” said Zach K. Trautenberg, BBC Wish Givers’ founder and current advisor, emphasizing that there will be no prizes.

Casino Night will be held July 16, in the Ballroom on the second floor of the Wolfe University Center, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Anyone can buy a VIP or regular pass either at the door or by contacting BBC Wish Givers.

“It has been very successful,” Trautenberg said. “It is going to be a fun night, with lots of free food and we’ll be helping a wonderful cause.”

BBC Wish Givers is also planning a Dunk Tank day, but the exact date is yet to be announced.

Founded in 1980, the Make-A-Wish Foundation is a worldwide, non-profit organization that relies on fund raising, donations and sponsoring to grant wishes to children with terminal medical conditions.

“We are not going to ask you to give us money without giving you a little fun,” Mintz said. “Come, support us and have fun, and know that you are supporting a good cause.”

For more information, contact Zach Trautenberg at 786-837-5144 or e-mail info@bbcwishgivers.com.

Garden, art meet at BBC

DAINELY MARTINEZ Contributing Writer

A new piece from artist Florencio Gelabert was added to the BBC sculpture garden on May 6.

The sculpture, “Column Trees 1,” is part of Gelabert’s series “Column Trees.” It is four feet tall and is made from aluminum, steel, tree trunks and polyester gel coast resin.

“Florencio Gelabert’s work is the ideal fit for our sculpture garden, which draws attention to the connection between art and the environment,” said for- mer Interim Vice Provost Damian Fernandez, who is a new recreation facility and already features four stainless steel sculptures by environmental artist Ross Power.

Gelabert was born in Cuba and received his bachelor’s degree from San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Havana in 1981. He left Cuba in 1991 and lived in Miami before moving to New York, his current residence.

Gelabert will present a solo exhibition at FUA’s Patricia and Phillip Frost Art Museum later this year. Neither Gelabert nor Routih was available for comment.

Visit our Web site for BBC Student Government Council notes and Senator profiles.

So You Know

A VIP pass for the Casino night will cost $20 for students and $25 for non-students.

The pass includes one chocolate cake box, $30 in chips and $5 auction credit.

A box of dark or milk chocolate cakes will cost $2.50.

I will be traveling the country, granting wishes and taking people’s pictures as a wiener.

Magaly Estrella, alumna and “Hotdogger”

I was born and raised in Miami and made my way to FIU to get a degree in Telecommunications. I am currently the Hotdogger for the 2008-2009 Wienermobile around the Midwest for Oscar Mayer.

“I’m fun to be around. I love kids and hot dogs,” Estrella said. “But I’m also very responsible and dependable; you have to be if you give them the keys to an American icon.”

Oscar Mayer will return to FIU in February of 2009 for recruitment. For more information, visit http://www.kraftfoods.com/oscamayer.
Opinion

Review of potential donors needed to avoid lost payments, embarrassment

Following the trend of other local event venues who cannot hold on to a name, the complex at University Park formerly known as the Pharmed Arena has been renamed to FIU Arena.

The blue building located on the west end of UP campus which holds various sporting events such as basketball and volleyball, high-profile comedy shows, and other community-related functions (such as the somber funeral for a slain Miami-Dade police officer) was originally christened with the Pharmed name in 2004 when the medical supplies company entered into an agreement with FIU to pay $1 million to the Athletics department.

It all came crashing down several years later, when in 2007 the Pharmed Group filed for bankruptcy, getting out of their financial obligation to the University before having completed the final of the phased-out payments originally agreed to between both parties.

The exact amount of money that FIU received from Pharmed was not disclosed due to a confidential agreement meant to protect donors, however a Feb. 3, 2008 article in The Miami Herald reported that about one-third of the $1 million was paid.

This situation underscores a larger issue of the background check process that is involved when the University is considering potential donors.

Due to massive shortfalls in public funding, degree programs are being cut, institutes are being shut down and operational hours of certain offices are being shortened.

As a result, the University is shifting from a focus on enrollment growth to enrollment caps, as part of what PresidentMODesto Maizquez has described as “FIU 3.0,” an institution more conservative in its growth spurts.

This increased reliance on private funding warrants a greater scrutiny toward those who we are receiving these funds from.

Donations from questionable sources could not only end up not being collected in full, such was the case with the Pharmed Group, but attaching a name to a building at FIU that brings along with it the potential for a public relations dream...or nightmare.

For a bit of an exaggerated example, School of Journalism and Mass Communication students may find it hard for their degree to be taken seriously if FIU can’t even gleaning market data in order for a donation in order for the SFMC to bear it’s name.

Naming part of a school after an individual or company implies at least a certain level of endorsement of that brand, which will reflect badly on the University if the donor ends up in legal woes.

Though Pharmed’s most recent legal and financial troubles occurred after the naming of the arena, the company has been embroiled in controversy as early as 1987 when they were accused of improperly obtaining drug discounts and throughout the 1990s when another company sued Pharmed for not paying for shipped goods.

It is worth pointing out that both of these lawsuits were settled out of court.

Pharmed was not ruled against, and therefore FIU administration cannot be totally faulted for accepting the purported $1 million in exchange for the arena naming rights.

The issue in question here is whether these legal factors were even looked at or considered before we took the cash.

The Beacon has been unable, through interviews with the Athletics and Media Relations departments, to glean any details regarding any concrete policy for viewing the legal backgrounds of, or potential controversial activities of potential donors. We will continue to look into the donation approval process and provide clarifications.

This saga began when Betancourt, campaigning for president in 2002, was kidnapped and later three American contractors were captured in 2003 by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, when their aircraft went down in the rebel-infested Colombian jungle.

The international effort to bring freedom to the hostages, who had been held captive by FARC for as much as 9 years in some cases according to Bogota’s newspaper El Tiempo, has been an arduous process.

The FARC is Latin America’s oldest left-wing insurgency that has financed itself by drug trafficking and kidnapping.

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On July 2, the course of Latin American and world politics severely changed course.

This after a miraculous mission in which the Colombian military freed a group of high-profile hostages that prelude the end of Latin America’s oldest terror group.

On the afternoon of July 2, Colombian army commandos rescued Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt, Americans Marc Gonsalves, Thomas Howes and Keith Stansell along with 11 other hostages by posing and infiltrating as their Guerrilla rebel captors and flying them out to safety.

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Local wine bars offer inexpensive tastings

SHANON FALLON
Staff Writer

The intimate restaurant is dimly lit with candlelight. Bottles of wine from Italy, Australia and Spain stand on shelves from ceiling to floor as the pungent smell of aged cheeses and olives fills the air. Guest occupy tables with multiple empty wine glasses while discussing a strong Argentine Malbec. A waiter appears to uncoil a variety of both white and red wines, pouring a little into each glass and describing the night’s selection.

That’s a common scene at local wine tastings, which are held weekly all over South Florida. The affordable pricing is making these tastings a cheap way to include a bigger collection of wines and are offering designated nights to give people a chance to explore a variety of wine—without the pressure of being familiar with wines in general,” said Mario Ramirez, an avid wine taster. “It makes drinking wine fun.”

Tastings range from free to $30 per person. Promoters pour smaller portions of various wines, as they provide a little instruction and information on what the tasters are sipping.

At some tastings, restaurants will even provide some food such as cheeses, olives and other tapas. Here’s a list of some local hangouts that host weekly tastings:

**THIRSTY THURSDAYS AT JAGUAR CUVÉE SPOON BAR & LATAM GRILL**

(3067 Grand Avenue, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)

This Latin American theme restaurant offers $15 tastings every Thursday night with wine connoisseur, Barry Albert.

The mood is set by the house band’s smooth Latin jazz, and tasters can enjoy a casual evening of different glasses of Spanish wines tastefully paired with ceviches, meats and chicken straight off the skewer, with an assortment of delicious sauces.

“I never knew I could eat and get drunk for less than I would pay for the drink at the bar,” said restaurant regular Jorge Luis Perez.

**BIN NO. 18**

(1800 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, FL 33132)

Hang with the Midtown locals every Thursday night from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. for free wine tastings in this hip, industrial-themed restaurant. It’s intimate and glamorous settings along with its first-rate dining set the mood for the night. Bin No. 18’s staff offers food recommendations for those who don’t know much about wine.

**CHRISTABELLE’S QUARTER**

(3159 Commodore Plaza, Miami, FL 33133)

This well-known restaurant in the Grove specializes in home-cooked New Orleans cuisine and has a theatrical Bourbon Street setting. Barry Albert enlightens tasters of his knowledge in fine wine and the wine-making process. At the wine tasting, you receive a free Schnebly’s glass, which you can bring in anytime after for other free wine tastings.

South Florida’s music scene gets a much needed reprieve

CHRIS TOWERS
Life Editor

Unless you are a fan of Jimmy Buffett, South Florida isn’t exactly the place to go for a great live music scene. Sure, Parrotheads get their fill of “Cheeseburger in Paradise,” but for the rest of us out there, South Florida’s musical landscape can seem awfully bleak most of the time. Luckily, every summer does tend to bring around some choice concerts, comedy shows and summer festivals to hold you through those cold Miami winters.

Here’s a few of the concerts that will tide you over for the next month.

**JULY 11-12, DAVE MATTHEWS BAND, Cruzan Amphitheater**

One of the more dependable bands to come to South Florida is Dave Matthews Band, making an annual appearance at the West Palm Beach venue.

While some might deride the stereotypical frat boy audience and the band’s sleepy, world music-lite sound, it is hard to deny these talents as a live outfit.

If you can get past the guys in upturned visors passed out on the lawn, you’ll be able to catch a pretty entertaining show.

**JULY 12, VANS WARPED TOUR, Bicentennial Park**

Thousands of sweating kids moshing and skanking in downtown Miami can only mean Warped Tour is back in town.

While it’s pop/punk/emo lineup may not appeal to everyone, but this ultra popular touring festival is entering it’s 14th year, so it certainly has it’s fans.

Bands scheduled to perform at the all day event include Angels and Airwaves, Gym Class Heroes, Against Me!, Jack’s Mannequin and Reel Big Fish, among hundreds of others sprawled across numerous stages.

**JULY 15, TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS, BankAtlantic Center**

While college students might not be the main demographic for Petty and his band, the Heartbreaker’s music has proven to be timeless, with an appeal to listeners of all ages.

Despite Petty’s legendary status as a rock musician, tickets for this show are reason-
Vintage store promises a unique shopping experience

Shoppers tired of seeing people in the street wearing the exact same outfit they’re wearing or finding their friends’ rooms decorated the exact same way as theirs will find relief and release in the vintage clothing store, Miami Twice.

Bird Road has numerous stores that hold historical significance. Everyone has, at one time or another, seen the huge sign and the statuary mannequins modeling vintage clothing at the window of the shop.

The store opened its doors in May of 1985. The original owners, Mary Holly, Diane Kyle and Kim Smith, are still the owners today.

“You really can’t ask for someone more lovely to work for than them,” said Meggie, former Miami Twice employee.

The vintage shop derived its name from two places – the popular 1980s show “Miami Vice” (which was at the height of its success at the time of the store’s opening) and the fact that it also sells items that have been bought once before.

“We sell vintage clothing, as well as new clothing. Furniture, designer handbags, accessories, costumes. For Halloween, we turn the entire store into a costume shop,” said Dina Figarola, sales manager.

The vintage clothing that the store sells comes from lots of different people. A lot of the time, when someone passes away, a loved one will bring in their clothing. Elderly people also donate their old outfits, accessories and furniture to the shop. Miami Twice also sells new, designer clothing. Some of the brands they offer are Sky, miss me and Stop Staring!

The store’s Halloween transformation only attracts more shoppers.

“I’ve bought my Halloween costume there for the past two years,” Komatz said. “If someone goes into Miami Twice once, there is no way they will never return. Whenever I talk about Miami Twice with anyone, they always include ‘awesome’ or ‘really cool’ in the same sentence.”

Miami Twice is a distinctive place to shop in a world of sameness.

“I guarantee that between the amazing vintage brand name shoes that are 20-years-old, the latest beautiful brand name purses, the neat, tiny knick-knacks and the interesting pieces of colorful furniture around the store, there is going to be that one thing that each person will fall in love with,” Alea said.

Past acts add modern twists to some old school hits

CONCERTS, page 5

Join our staff!

The BEACON is always looking for talented and reliable individuals to join the staff. If you have an interest in writing, photography or even grammar, don’t be shy.

Stop by one of our offices located in GC 210 and WUC 124.
Q: How do you feel about the fact that seven times you were drafted, you didn’t graduate with a degree from FIU?

A: I don’t care. Baseball was always my dream and school will always be there. I need only 20 more credits to get my degree in the fall if things don’t work out. I’m actually taking an online class right now too.

Q: What are your immediate plans in terms of your baseball playing career?

A: Right now I’m playing rookie ball up here in Bristol. I’ll be here till the end of August when our season ends. Afterwards I have no idea; it depends on how well I play, what they need at the other levels and if there are any injuries.

Q: How do you feel about FIU’s team in the future with Turtle Thomas at the helm?

In other words, what are the positive and negative areas that you see with this team?

A: I would say that a positive was that our hitting was consistent and a negative was our pitching. We didn’t have that much pitching and every game always seemed as if it had to be a hitter’s duel. Even though we had some good pitchers like Corey Pollizzano and Jorge Marban, everything seemed to be about the bullpen. I do think that next year will be a totally different year for FIU once Turtle gets his recruiting class and settles down. They also already have a lot of people that know the system.

Q: Who taught you the most about baseball? Who has taught you the most about life?

A: My grandfather was my inspiration because he played for the Cuban national team, and my father because he was always the one right there pushing me saying things like “you got this, you got this” and “come on your right there.”

Q: Have you spoken to any former FIU players who play in the MLB now?

A: (Laughs) Like Mike Lowell? No not yet. I definitely want to one day though.

Q: Now that the season has ended, what was the difference playing for the University of Louisville as opposed to FIU?

A: I really liked playing for both coaches; they just were different. Turtle Thomas was about working hard and being persistent. He always told us that if you work hard, good things are going to happen to you. Coach [Dan] McDonnell had a different coaching style. He liked to play more players in a game and there wasn’t really that much consistency in that sense, even though we made it to the College World Series in 2007.

Q: How did playing for FIU possibly prepare you for the Minor leagues?

A: I just worked hard every day to prepare. I tried to be both persistent and consistent at FIU. I just kept working and worked and when I got here (Bristol), the minors seemed like cake because of it.

Q: When did you feel that you were skilled enough to make it to a level higher than college baseball?

A: I always felt that I knew, but I also knew that I had to make some adjustments. When I got to FIU, Turtle Thomas and the coaching staff helped me to make those adjustments.

Q: What round do you think you should’ve been drafted in? Why?

A: I think the Top 18. I saw some players that were picked ahead of me that I thought I was better than, but I’m just happy I made it.
**White Sox draft FIU star player**

**LUCA MESSINA**

Staff Writer

Former Golden Panther senior third baseman Jorge Castillo was selected in the 26th Round (780th overall) by the Chicago White Sox and was the 97th Golden Panther overall to be drafted on June 6.

Castillo had a 30-game hitting streak and was one of FIU’s more consistent hitters in his only season for the Golden Panthers. He hit .367 with nine home runs and 58 RBI and was one of FIU’s more consistent hitters in his only season for the Golden Panthers.

**CASTILLO, page 7**

**BANKING**: San Diego pitcher Josh Banks has a 2.33 ERA with two wins and 12 walks in 4.2 innings this season.

**Former Golden Panther pitcher belongs in majors**

**ADAM WASCH**

Staff Writer

With the hype surrounding Yankees star Joba Chamberlain this season, many of people may have overlooked the fact that another “Jo-Ba” is tearing up Major League Baseball. This “Jo-Ba” is former Golden Panthers starting pitcher Josh Banks. Unfortunately, nobody in Major League Baseball circles is confusing the two pitchers. Joba Chamberlain is a media machine and has the golden arm to back it up. Banks certainly has the tools to be a quality starter for years to come, but he has struggled at times on what some might call a rocky road to the Majors. Regardless, as a Golden Panther fan, you should be excited that there is a new kid on the block representing our school and our baseball program.

Picked up off waivers by the San Diego Padres for only $20,000, Banks, 25, has been a nice surprise for the team’s injury-depleted starting rotation. Twenty thousand dollars for a starting pitcher in Major League Baseball is an absolute steal, especially considering the fact that the Blue Jays shelled out the $650,000 signing bonus for Banks, groomed him in the Blue Jays system and has the golden arm to back it up. Banks certainly has the tools to be a quality starter for years to come, but he has struggled at times on what some might call a rocky road to the Majors. Regardless, as a Golden Panther fan, you should be excited that there is a new kid on the block representing our school and our baseball program.

**WASCH, page 7**

**Donor faced bankruptcy, several legal controversies**

**PHARMED, page 1**

-closed that Hospital Corporation of America, owners of KPMC, paid the Pharmed Group $5.4 million in medical supplies it never received.

-The hospital employees were charged with falsifying purchasing orders for the Pharmed Group; they plead not guilty.

-The issues in the HCA case are under federal investigation.

-Gonzalez-Levy says that the Pharmed Group’s recent legal issues occurred years before it made the donation to FIU.

-Before the 2004 donation, Pharmed was involved in two separate lawsuits.

-In 1987, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals sued the de Céspedes brothers over allegations of improperly obtaining drug discounts.

-After nine years, the case was settled out of court in a confidential agreement, The Miami Herald reported on Feb. 3.

-Pharmed in turn sued J&J for “reprehensible, intentional, malicious” defamation.

-Pharmed in turn sued J&J for “reprehensible, intentional, malicious” defamation.

-J&J refused to comment.

-In 2006, with the company struggling financially, Commissioner Jose Diaz co-sponsored an ordinance requiring Jackson Memorial Hospital to give preference to local suppliers, including the Pharmed Group.

-Jackson administrators said the ordinance gave no new edge to Diaz’s private employers, the Pharmed Group.

-Because the policy favored the Pharmed Group along with other local suppliers, Commissioner Diaz noted.

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-Commissioner Diaz noted.

-There was an agreement in place and [Pharmed] did not finish paying the amount.

-Sandra Gonzalez-Levy, Vice President of Community Relations

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