FIU decided to change the name of the former Golden Panther 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 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 Césedes 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 same Miami Herald article discussed the former Golden Panther Arena.

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.

GUITAR HERO

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.

RELIGION not a prime concern for Floridians

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), they 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 condemns 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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Views of faith vary with students

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 denied it. In the police report, he stated there was.

In the same article, ACLU Florida Staff Counsel Rosalind Matos was misquoted saying the first offer made by the City of Miami was $3,000. The offer was stated there was.

In the same article, it was stated that the return of the 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 Pie.”

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

MOLINA, page 1
Mu and serves as the Family Relations Chair.
Molina hopes his SGC-UP position will help him gain the experience and expertise necessary to be able to handle another position in the SGA next year.
“I feel that what I will learn will benefit me,” Molina said. “I will already know the way SGA works along with knowing the staff, deans and other school officials.”
Molina was born in Havana, Cuba but he grew up in Miami.
No stranger to student government, Molina was involved in the Student Government Organization and was president of his junior and senior classes when he attended Hialeah Senior High School.

FAITHS, page 1
Raymond Matias, a junior majoring in psychology, also sees interest in religion among his peers diminishing.
“Science has proved to be more important [than religion],” Matias said.

Matias sees religion as more of a safety blanket.
“People use religion when it’s convenient for them or when they need something,” Matias said.

Orlando Vega, a senior majoring in hospitality management, believes that college students need religion or spirituality in their lives despite the results of the Pew poll.
“Secularization is the trend, but I note [college students] retain a certain degree of spirituality, whether it’s expressed through belief in some higher order or some form of reflective meditation,” Vega said.

It is the disconcerting feeling of having an all-powerful supreme being judging each individual that drives people away from traditional religious dogma in a modern society, according to Vega.
“It’s kind of intimidating,” he said. “That’s why I think Eastern ideals like karma are so popular now. They take God out of the picture but retain a reward system for proper moral judgment and behavior.”

In the end, Vega sees a growing trend in secularization among his peers, yet notes the attachment most people have to faith in something.
“I think people just want to have faith in a happy ending,” Vega said.
Upon arriving to a college atmosphere a new student may go in any direction in terms of his or her religious affinity.
Deborah Perez is a sophomore studying sociology at the University of Miami. Perez noted an elevated interest in religion among her group of friends.

“Coming into college religion has become more prominent in my life,” Perez noted.
Although the FIU survey shows diverging student opinions of a miniscule part of the FIU population, Lantz still believes the informal poll shows a nice variety of opinions, even if they oppose his personal beliefs.
“The positive part is that it is much easier to live an authentic life in Miami because you don’t have many people pretending. They are more genuine,” Lantz said.

Molina looks to the present for guidance in the future

After he graduates from FIU, Molina is pursuing a career in the United Nations or the State Department, mainly focusing in on international problems and conflict resolutions.
Although he plans a life in the world of politics, Molina said he would also like to pursue his childhood dreams of becoming an actor.

U.S. Religious Survey

ReligiousAffiliationPercent
Religious
More important
Very important
Not important
Cell phone
72%
63%
21%
Avoiding
11%
9%
37%
Avoiding
45%
37%
18%
Avoiding
33%
31%
56%
Avoiding
36%
34%
20%
Avoiding
55%
53%
30%
Avoiding

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Garbage bags help Stop Hunger

JULIA CARDENUTO  Asst. 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 profit of each box sold, $1 goes to BBC Wish Givers and $1.15 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 monthly, according to a business profile at www.city-data.com.

Even though the company - Stop Hunger Garbage Bags - is only 60 days old, they have been successful. "We are working with Bruce Goldstein, a member of Stop Hunger’s board of directors. It is unbelievable. You can’t imagine the success," said Ed Mintz, treasurer of the BBC Wish Givers.

"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 786-857-5144 or e-mail info@bbcwishgivers.com.

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 cigar box, $30 in chips and $5 auction credit. A box of dark or milk chocolate cigars will cost $2.50.

Alumna Magaly Estrella becomes a ‘hotdogger’

WILMA HERNANDEZ  Staff Writer

After singing the Oscar Mayer jingle and passing a second round of interviews in Madison, Wis., FIU alumna Magaly Estrella “cut the mustard,” as the company’s saying goes.

“We get the best of the best, and Magaly really stood out,” said Ed Roland, mobile marketing manager for Oscar Mayer.

Estrella, 24, was part of the 14 students selected in February to be spokespersons for Oscar Mayer. She will show off the new MINI Cooper Wienermobile around the Midwest during the first half of her one-year assignment.

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

“Fresh off the grill,” as Estrella describes herself, she has been on the road for about three weeks and has visited Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota. During this time, she has done some grocery store appearances, been impacted by some terrible natural disasters, and golf tournaments.

“No two days are alike. I remember on my first week on the road, a woman literally had tears in her eyes because it was her lifetime dream to see the Wienermobile,” Estrella said. For the second half of the year, she will drive the regular sized Wienermobile, but her exact itinerary is yet to be determined.

According to Roland, the primary responsibilities of a spokesperson, or “hotdogger,” are to show the Wienermobile, meet the media and take pictures. He said “hotdoggers” are true brand ambassadors for the company.

Roland, who was in the group of the six managers responsible for hiring Estrella, said the “hotdogger” position is highly selective. For Roland, Estrella’s education, bilingual skills, position with a bachelor’s degree, preferably in communications or education, although other majors are welcome. Many candidates have some experience with internships or being overseas.

Oscar Mayer offers “hotdoggers” a one-year benefits package worth $50,000. The position pays a basic salary of $26,500, and the remainder is spent on other benefits and hotel expenses.

“It is a very competitive package,” Roland said. “We give them money for clothes, their laundry, their meals and public transportation.”

In addition to the benefits and the excitement of driving across the country, “hotdoggers” also make a lot of beneficial job connections while on the road.

Estrella graduated in the spring of 2008 with a bachelor’s in liberal studies and a minor in communications. She now plans on gaining experience in public relations through her “hotdogger” role, and eventually work for a well-known public relations or advertising agency. Estrella’s future goals are to earn a master’s degree in business administration and start her own family.

“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 you 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/oscarmayer.
Review of potential donors needed to avoid lost payments, embarrassment

Following the trend of other local event venues who cannot hold onto 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 chosen because of 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 President ModestoMaizique has described as “FIU 3.0,” an institution more conservative in its growth spurs.

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 just 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 the School of Journalism and Enquirer made 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 back 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, after 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.

In the span of these years, the international community has given support to Colombian President Alvaro Uribe in many ways.

The United States government has been the main ally of the Colombian government and intelligence partner of the rescue operation.

Starting out with Bill Clinton’s terrorism and drug fighting program, Plan Colombia, which was continued under George W. Bush, the Colombian government has been able to almost diminish the FARC altogether, this rescue being their latest.

Other international leaders such as Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez and French President Nicolas Sarkozy have tried to mediate mostly unsuccessfully – a hostage release between the FARC and the Colombian government.

Before the high profile kid-napped victims were in captivity, the FARC had already been struggling.

The hierarchy atop the FARC has been disappearing, after its two main commanders Manuel Marulanda and Raul Reyes were killed in battle during the past year.

Motivated by a government protection program, the FARC rebels have been abandoning the group and thousands have deserted according to Colombia’s minister of Defense Juan Manuel Santos and confirmed in a Chicago Tribune article last week.

The number of FARC rebels has been in a downward spiral thanks to the outstanding efforts of the Colombian government and international community.

The morning after the news came out was not a normal one for the Latin student body at University Park.

“The day that not only 13 people given their right to be free, but a message from the world that unity, love and hope will always be in our hearts.

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

Captives recovered from FARC

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.

Guests occupy tables with multiple empty wine glasses while discussing a strong Argentinean Malbec. A waiter appears to uncork a bigger collection of wines and are offering destinations along with its first-rate wine connoisseur, Barry Albert. The mood is set by the house band’s smooth Latin jazz, and tasters can enjoy a casual evening of six different glasses of Spanish wines tastefully paired with cavi- rès, 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.

THIRSTY THURSDAYS AT JAGUAR CIVICHE 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 six different glasses of Spanish wines tastefully paired with cavi- rès, meats and chicken straight off the skewer, with an assortment of delicious sauces.

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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. Its intimate and glamorous settings along with its first-rate wine connoisseur, Barry Albert. The mood is set by the house band’s smooth Latin jazz, and tasters can enjoy a casual evening of six different glasses of Spanish wines tastefully paired with cavi- rès, meats and chicken straight off the skewer, with an assortment of delicious sauces.

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SCHEMBLY WINERY (30205 S.W. 217th Ave, Homestead, FL 33030)

When looking for the full wine tasting experience – but not the flight to California or Italy – Scheibly Redland’s Winery in Homestead is the place to go.

Top Three Wines:

1. Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2005
2. Ridge Chardonnay Santa Cruz Mountains Santa Cruz Mountain Estate 2005
3. Le Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2005

www.winespectator.com

CHRIS TOWERS  Life! Editor

South Florida’s music scene gets a much needed reprieve

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 their talent as a live outfit.

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 its 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-

CONCERTS, page 6
JADE LLEONART
Staff Writer

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 statuesque 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.

“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 can’t ask for someone more lovely to work for than them,’” said Maggie Alea, 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!

“I love retro things. Most of the time, I can’t find anything I like at the mall but when I go to Miami Twice, I always want to buy the entire store,” Amber Komatz, Miami Twice shopper.

“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.

Miami Twice offers a large and diverse crowd.

“Lots of tourists come here. We have our loyal customers that always come. A lot of different people shop at Miami Twice; it’s not just one type of person,” Figarola said.

The fact that most of the items in the store are about to be owned a second time around when bought does not bother customers.

“I love retro things. Most of the time, I can’t find anything I like at the mall but when I go to Miami Twice, I always want to buy the entire store. I can find pretty, unique things that no one else has,” said Amber Komatz, Miami Twice shopper. The store’s Halloween transformation only attracts more shoppers.

Past acts add modern twists to some old school hits

CONCERTS, page 5

July 22, Journey with Heart and Cheap Trick, Cruzan Amphitheater

For the few of you who won’t be attending the Brooks & Dunn show on this night, the star of one of the most successful TV shows ever will be doing a double feature of his standup at 6:30 and 9:30 p.m. at the newly redesigned historic Miami Beach venue.

Expect the same humor that has made Jerry Seinfeld one of the most beloved comics in the country, with many of the jokes based around observations of the mundane parts of everyday life.

July 31, Journey with Heart and Cheap Trick, Cruzan Amphitheater

Alright, so this paper is definitely not going to the right demographic for this show, but who am I to truthfully say they’ve never rocked out in a car to “Don’t Stop Believin’” or “Surrender.”

Sure, it’s one of the more ridiculous bills to come down here in recent years, but these were three of the most popular bands of their time for a reason, so there’s no reason to expect anything negative.

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.
First baseman aiming for major league career

CASTILLO, page 8

Q: How do you feel about the fact that even though you were drafted, you didn’t graduate with a degree from FIU?
A: Oh, I don’t care. Baseball was always my dream and school will always be there. I needed only 20 more credits to graduate and I could still 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 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 settled 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: What would 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.

For more information, call 305-348-2709 or e-mail charlie.grau@fiusm.com.

Deadline for applications is July 10th!

FIU graduate shows promise playing with San Diego Padres

WASCHI, page 8

Bank was the highest Golden Panther ever taken in the MLB Draft, going to the 20th round with the 50th overall selection.

The last time we saw Banks in a Golden Panthers uniform, in 2003, he was a first-team All-Sun Belt selection going 8-3 in 15 starts. Even more impressive, the right-hander tallied 114 strikeouts through 105.1 innings and walked just 25 batters that season. Banks was the highest Golden Panther ever taken in the MLB Draft. Going to the Toronto Blue Jays in the second round with the 50th overall selection.

If not more so, get high draft ratings and jump onto the prospect lists. How a player looks on paper sometimes can be vastly different than actual production on the field. This was the hurdle that Banks has successfully cleared. In his first Minor League season, Banks quieted the few critics that he had with impressive numbers: 2.43 ERA and an 8.1 to 1 Strikeout-to-Walk Ratio over 15 starts. Banks started in the 2004 season at High-A Dunedin and picked up where he left off his prior campaign with a 1.80 ERA out of the gate. Banks was promptly promoted to Double-A. Promote to give up the long ball, Banks struggled with a 5.03 ERA in his final 18 starts of 2004 in Double-A. After a successful 2005 season with the Double-A New Hampshire Fisher Cats, Banks was promoted to the highest level of Minor League Baseball, Triple-A, however, is close, yet so far away, from making it to the Big Show.

Banks pitched two full seasons (2006 and 2007) with ERAs of 5.17 and 4.63 respectively, and he made his MLB debut for the Blue Jays as a relief pitcher on September 11, 2007. Banks proceeded to retire Yankees hitters Robinson Cano, Melky Cabrera and Johnny Damon in order. After the Padres claimed Banks off waivers on April 23 and promoted him to the Major Leagues on May 22, Banks found himself once again facing the Yankees and his “counterpart,” Joba Chamberlain at Yankee Stadium.

Joba bested “Jo-Ba” that afternoon in a 2-1 pitching duel, but after five starts apiece, both hurlers are sporting All-Star-caliber ERAs and both show a strong command of the strike zone.

To date, Banks is sporting a 3.08 ERA with two wins, 21 strikeouts, and only 12 walks in 49.2 innings pitched.

The nickname “Jo-Ba” may not stick, but Banks should stick in the Major Leagues for years to come.

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Deadline for applications is July 10th!
**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 20-for-52 with a home run and 9 RBI. He was able to share his thoughts on his accomplishments with The Beacon through a cell phone interview.

Q: How do you feel about being drafted and having the opportunity to play in the big leagues?
A: I feel amazing. I was so happy when I got selected, and I was so excited. It was my dream.

**CASTILLO, page 7**

**Donor faced bankruptcy, several legal controversies**

**PHARMED, page 1**

-closed that Hospital Corporation of America, owners of KRMC, 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 after 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.

In the 1990’s, AmerisourceBergen, a large medical supply wholesaler, sued the Pharmed Group for not paying $1.2 million worth of shipped goods the February article stated.

During the years the Pharmed Group was supposed to be making payments to the University, the company continued running into legal troubles.

In January 2005, four months after the donation to FIU, Johnson & Johnson stopped providing its supplies to the Pharmed Group and accused Pharmed of fraud and “unjust enrichment” in collecting $22 million, according to the same article.


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 the same article noted.

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

Because the policy favored the Pharmed Group along with other local suppliers, Commissioner Diaz was not breaking the law, according to the same Miami Herald article.

FIU’s criteria for accepting donations are contingent on the information retrieved by the research department and the potential donor’s interest in the University, according to Director of Media Relations Maydel Santana-Bravo. Executive Director of Stadium & Facility Development Joe Velasco, who is responsible for contacting potential donors to rename the arena, was unavailable for comment.

FIU is still actively seeking donors to rename the FIU Arena.