The Beacon, July 23, 2008

Florida International University

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COMMUNITY DRIVEN
Club tutors underprivileged kids

AT THE BAY

A BAD DEAL
Seminoles pact invalidated

OPINION

iOBSESSED
iPhone sweeps market

LIFE!

PROVEN WINNER
Tennis player championship tested

SPORTS

ONLINE FEES CUT
State moving toward more online classes

DANIELLA BACIGALUPO
News Director

As recent national trends show students flocking to online courses due to increasing gas prices, FIU students have more reason to migrate online as a new state law has forced the University to lower online tuition fees for the 2008-09 school year.

Previously, FIU’s $299 fee paid for faculty today as well as the development and delivery of the University’s online courses, said Joyce Elam, vice provost of FIU Online. The new law limits online fees to cover only operational costs.

The law, however, is a small section encompassed in a broad online learning bill that shows a growing statewide interest toward online programs at universities. “The price of gas will make [online courses] more attractive,” said Elam, “but our courses have been full in the past even before the economy went into its tailpipe.”

For the fall semester, the reduction translates to a $199 fee for a three-credit online course, but Elam does not believe the charge ever deterred students considering online classes in the first place.

Enrollment at FIU has grown exponentially since the program’s inception in 1999 and has peaked to 37,000 students in 2007-08, Elam said.

FIU’s numbers reflect a statewide trend. Enrollment in the same period reached a total of 290,000 students in 10 state universities.

As well as regulating online fees, the still nameless bill establishes the Florida Distance Learning Task Force. The Task Force will be building an entrepreneurship center that will be named in the future.

“Alan, as well as others at the Center, have always been extremely supportive of my research interests, and I have received both great guidance as well as financial support,” Renko said. “Maybe one day I will be building an entrepreneurship center somewhere else.”

She is currently an Assistant Professor in Entrepreneurship at the University of Illinois. In 2004, Renko was a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University’s Scandinavian Consortium for Entrepreneurship after she presented her thesis, “The Role of Market Knowledge in Recognizing and Exploiting Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Technology Intensive Firms” in March 2008.

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This is Renko’s second doctoral thesis. In 2006, she has earned a Doctor of Science degree in the field of marketing in international business at the Turku School of Economics. Her current research focuses on predicting and explaining the failures and successes of high potential startup ventures based on technology.

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FIU entrepreneur snags second Ph.D.

RENSKO, page 1

Organizational Research. Founded in 2003 with a grant from the Kauffman Foundation, the entrepreneurial program provides campus-wide awareness of entrepreneurship as an approach to life that enhances and transcends traditional academic experiences, according to its Web site. The entrepreneurship Center promises to “address the unique entrepreneurial needs of one of the nation’s largest ethnically diverse academic institutions.” It received in its name Engin Rensko, a Cuban-American serial entrepreneur and his family. Rensko agrees with the center’s sentiment. “Many of [the professors] are extremely well connected in the academia, which has been very helpful when applying to different kinds of consortiums and scholarship,” Rensko said. “Also, I taught many entrepreneurship courses to undergraduate students when I was a graduate assistant, an integrated part of the Ph.D. program.”

The program encourages to be coupled with the student’s career path to open more possibilities in the future. The advertisements in the Green Library display several of the alumni entrepreneurs who have done exactly that. The program has been combined with the likes of investor, producer, educator, attorney, dancer, journalist and several others. There are three Ph.Ds currently in the program; two in adult education and the other in economics.

“A Ph.D. program is a lot of work,” said Rensko. “It helps if you are curious [about a lot of different kinds of phenomena]. I think the successful senior professors that I have observed have all one characteristic in common - academic curiosity.”

While these are tough times for the University, Carsrud stated that the program is “battling the budget crisis,” adding that it is “a stable program.”

For more information, visit the program’s Web site can be found at http://entrepreneurship.fiu.edu/. The office is located at University Park in Viertes Haus, room 130.

Duck, Duck...

GOOSE?: Young students run around the Graham Center Pit in a game of “Duck, Duck GOOSE.”

JUAN PRADO
Staff Writer

Students who visit the popular Web site RateMyProfessors.com can find comments like “Didn’t learn anything in this class!” or “Great professor; makes class so much fun.”

For many students, the site serves as a vehicle to post comments about their professors’ teaching styles. But what students may not realize is how powerful their opinions can be; these comments can have an effect on the professors who read them, as well as on students who take the site into consideration when registering for classes.

According to the Web site, Rate My Professors is the largest listing of college professor ratings available on the Internet. Since its inception in 1999, it has grown to showcase over one million comments on professors from 6,000 schools across the United States, Canada, England, Scotland and Wales.

“I think that of the comments received are misleading or unfair to some professors, as ‘not too serious students’ or students with biased opinions about a teacher may be easily inserted,” said FIU political science professor Bertin Kouadio.

While some professors avoid reading comments about themselves on the Web because they consider them irrelevant, others can internalize these comments, which results in changes of teaching styles and classroom interaction. “If the person is a good professor, he or she would feel singled out, judged and classified. But if the professor doesn’t care much about his or her job, he or she could take actions against the students in many ways,” said Ricardo Portillo, a retired psychologist.

According to Portillo, professors who read the comments posted on the site are subject to possible effects that can be either positive or negative, and that can result in the professors changing their methods of teaching in several ways. “Bad comments can result in harder exams, tougher attitude in class and less turnout of students; while good comments can translate into easier tests, more dedication to the class and a higher turnout of students,” Portillo said.

RateMyProfessors.com was created with the purpose of helping students with their class schedules as well as to serve an opportunity to rate professors in different categories such as fairness of teaching, helpfulness and clarity.

In the case of professors, opinions are mixed considering the Web site’s usefulness or credibility. “I have never looked at it,” said professor Polly Phillips, a member of the Biological Sciences Department at FIU. “But it seems like it is probably a place for students to vent more than anything.”

For some, Rate My Professors has a strong influence on students because it gives them preconceived ideas about the professors. “I don’t think students should rate a professor solely by RateMyProfessors.com,” said Scott Kass, University librarian and Honors College professor. “It gives a very broad portrait of the professor. It’s like a cartoon of the professor.”

But not all students use this Web site as an indicator of a professor’s style of teaching. Some, in fact, prefer not to use the Web site at all. “I don’t use it at all since I think the comments there are mostly biased,” said junior Corina Moreno.

State, FIU scrutinize E-classes

Force is mandated to present the Legislature a report recommend- ing statewide guidelines for higher education online learning by March 2009. The Task Force will ensure that online courses comply with accreditation standards but questions about the quality of online education compared to traditional instruction has propelled FIU’s Faculty Senate to set up its own Online Learning Committee.

Watzok explained in an e-mail that contradictory studies leave the quality question unanswered. He assured, “[FIU] gives a lot of attention to quality of presentation and meeting student learning objectives.”

At the state level, the State University System is looking to expand and improve online offerings by integrating programs from different universities, through programs like Orange Grove, a digital collection of education resources that are shared by Florida educators, said the Board of Governors’ Director of Communications Bill Edmonds.

“With gas prices alone, even that wasn’t an issue, we would still expect distance learning to continue to grow,” Edmonds said. “It’s really the convenience of it for some students.”

Because of this interest, the BOG is exploring online cost issues and inter-university sharing of technology but class quality issues need to be dealt with by individual universities, said Edmonds. He added, “We are not unaware about that kind of complaint but I’m not even sure whether [quality fears are] valid or not.” Nonetheless, Elam expects online enrollment to continue to grow. Because the FIU community is heavily based on non-traditional students who must balance multiple responsibilities, online options will be in demand, Elam said.

The reduced fee will force FIU Online to pay its faculty with its $49.8 million instructional budget. Yet, even with the current budget crisis, the University is steadfast in offering online courses if the demand is there, Watzok said.
Finding a direction with music

CHERISHMAH Contributing Writer

Self described on his business card as a “revolutionary, poet, actor, screenwriter and pianist,” business student Hubert Phanord’s life thus far reads like that of a comic book hero.

“I used to talk with a thick slang, have a grill, long hair and was always in trouble,” said Phanord. “I started noticing my experiences with women and then friends and family dying and I just thought, ‘Man, there must be something more than this.’”

Phanord now focuses on the future and has grand plans. He is currently working as a custodian at BBC.

A fellowship in his church motivated Phanord to go forth and “do good in this world.”

Phanord moved from Chicago through a series of bad events which led to good people; he said. After finding a direction through beliefs, music helped him focus.

“God is my life,” he said. “I have hope. [You] gotta reach out to people for hope. There are people out there struggling who can be helped,” he said.

“I love jazz,” Phanord said. “I have only been playing for a year now and I can’t read music well, but I’ve learned all the jazz chords.”

But where Phanord’s passion for jazz comes from is a mystery.

“Growing up,” he said, “my mom wouldn’t let us listen to hip-hop or rap because she didn’t want us to have anything to do with that lifestyle.”

Phanord began playing piano when he was at a friend’s house and found the notes and keys on the piano. A few months later, his friend gave him a small, old keyboard. That keyboard turned things around for him. He practiced for five hours a day for the first five months.

“I was able to practice at home, and I pulled a lot of information about playing from the internet that helped me to verbalize the chords I already knew,” Phanord said.

“There are many ways to play the piano,” he said. “I can’t read music well, but I’ve learned all the jazz chords.”

“I was able to practice at home, and I pulled a lot of information about playing from the internet that helped me to verbalize the chords I already knew.”

Phanord said. “To stumble upon Phanord playing piano in the midst of a frantic Biscayne Bay Campus class day is like watching your way through a bustling jungle, then arriving at Blue Lagoon. He is amazing,” said Ryan Jagessar, a fellow BBC student.

“His music is like a regular party but with FRU students,” said Ryan Lyttle, president of Student Programming Council.

“DJ Skip will be performing during the outdoor event, next to the volleyball courts. Anyone who wishes can join, really. Non-majors are more than welcome to join. As a matter of fact, our club president last year was an engineering major, and our treasurer this year is an engineering major also,” Juman said.

According to Valientes, the club hopes to reach out to more kids in the senior community and to recruit more students.

“A lot of our past members graduated, so we have lost a few,” Valientes said. “We are really pushing to recruit new members.”

“Don’t come to be pretty, come to get wet because that will make the event so much better.”
Student participation necessary for text message alert system success

In an era when campus security demands proaction, the University should be lauded for its recently implemented emergency text message system. At a cost of $2.5 million, it would send a mass text message to all students, faculty and friends of the University whenever urgent announcements such as severe weather alerts and when an emergency situation is present.

There are several things about this program that are positive.

First and foremost, it is free to students. Miami-Dade County offers the system to municipalities and educational institutions without charge.

With campus tragedies so frequent, and incidents of terrorism, such a useful system that would not only benefit a school but also garner positive publicity for the institution, the text message system easily could have been exploited for a large profit.

Luckily, Miami-Dade had the wisdom and the foresight to recognize the proliferation of this technology. From an operational standpoint, the emergency text messages stand to be the most useful and effective form of mass communication to the University community.

Prior to the launch of the text message registrations, University officials could send out e-mails to every student and faculty member.

One example of an emergency e-mail that appeared in inboxes last school year was when a fatal shooting occurred at the Shell station across the street from University Park.

Almost everyone has a cell phone on them at any given time, and finding the quickest way to reach someone who needs certain information.

A public announcement system, such as a loudspeaker, only enters the picture when an ear-shot of the speaker, and many students and faculty may not be checking their e-mail at the time a serious threat situation is occurring, if they check their official FIU e-mail address at all.

The short amount of time that it takes for people to check a text message versus an e-mail is particularly important during an emergency situation, such as a security threat on campus that requires immediate action.

This hurts, especially for students, since the state education budget, which was already cut more than $300 million this year, is a major loser in the compact. Yet, the Hard Rock and all the games it offers are still open for business, while the legal status of the card games is in limbo.

The Seminoles have to be allowed to offer slots regardless of Florida’s approval due to federal law that enforces the conditions on same to the same gambling systems allowed anywhere in the state.

Because some facilities, such as race tracks, have slots, the federal Department of the Interior would allow the Seminoles to have slot machines, regardless.

The important distinction to make here is that the state would not make any money from the casino if mandated by the federal government.

Potential revenue from Hard Rock justifies Crist’s compact

This article was originally published in the Sun-Sentinel.

By Contributing Writer

KISHORE SAWH

July 23, 2008

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www.fiu.edu

A furore is some extremely worrysome, and there are many in the state legislature who think that they can decide how others live their lives by placing warning labels for everything that could go wrong, and restricting activities.

They tell us that we can’t drive over 55 mph, and shouldn’t drink more than a syrupy worth of Chablis with dinner.

It is entirely clear where these people come from but their most recent target is gamblers.

Last November, Gov. Charlie Crist brokered a deal with the Seminole tribe leaders that would allow them to expand its gambling operation to include card games at its Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and casino—like blackjack and baccarat as well as some more Vegas Style slot machines not legal in the rest of the state.

This deal would greatly benefit our struggling state financially while giving Floridians greater freedom over how to spend their leisure time in a severely gambling-restricted state.

According to tribal spokesman Gary Biter, the public has shown interest in playing these games.

“We had 40,000 people play the table games the first week. That shows demand,” Biter was quoted as saying in an article by Sun-Sentinel writer Nick Sortal. To give an idea of how much money the state would receive, The Palm Beach Post offered some round ones. Under the terms of Crist’s compact, Florida would receive $175 million in the first year, $150 million for the next two and $100 million for each subsequent year from the Seminoles. Not to mention the initial $50 million which was given on the spot.

Now that you have considered the things that can be done with this money and how many Floridians are interested in gambling, it should be a serious blow to find out that Florida House Speaker Mario Rubio questioned Crist’s authority to make such a deal shortly after it was brokered and was struck down July 3 by the state Supreme Court.

There is a 15 day grace period where the table games can continue and during which an appeal to the decision can be filed but there stands a chance that the state might have to return the $50 million that it already received from the tribe due to the invalidation of the compact.

The games will stay for now but the money is to be given back to the Seminoles. So nothing changes now except for state revenues and educational funding decreasing yet again.

Cheers Rubio, I’ve seen better-looking wounds than the hand you’ve dealt us.

What’s the big deal with offering these games anyway especially with the handsome return to our education? They already offer some types of gambling ranging from slot machines to betting on horses and dogs. Adding a deck of cards to the matter is hardly the last straw.

It seems the fret is of becoming a super casino, which apparently will create new addicts. The problem with this idea is that it’s saying people are not in control of themselves. Worrying about a new casino adding more games because it might create more gambling addicts is like worrying about every new bar that pops up with new shrinks will create more alcoholics.

This idea making people feel they have no control over themselves is a disease-model that makes everything into an accident or an affliction. Then this tells them there isn’t much they can do to take charge. This works much like satellite navigation in cars. When you rely on it you stop realizing the streets are going in the wrong direction. You stop using your intuition and innate sense.

As students sit before their computer monitors waiting for their enrollment appointment to near, there are different methods that are used to pick classes.

Some are very adamant about getting their schedule to exact specifications, while others care more about their professors’ track records.

One way that many students at both FIU and around the country get opinions about instructors is through the Web site RateMyProfessor.com.

The most positive aspect of this site is its accessibility.

While all students do get to fill in an evaluation regarding their instructors at the end of the course rather than an objective one.

Many comments are of questionable intelligence, and considering that there is no accountability for those who post comments, the evaluations you read on the site may be biased, incoherent or contradict one another.

Just like using a reporting site like CarFax before buying a car, Rate My Professors may be somewhat useful for a preview of what your class may be like, but is not reliable enough to decide which classes to pick without any other knowledge of that professor.

Rate My Professors is also adapting to the growing niche of online courses.

Since students and professors have very little face-to-face interaction, professors may receive inaccurate ratings from students disdainful for a course may have come in highly; students may have not met the standards of self-motivation required from an online course rather than an objective view of the instructor.

So, students, when using this tool, take it with a grain of salt.

Contributing Writer

BAD HAND

Potential revenue from Hard Rock justifies Crist’s compact

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Honor society seeks growth at FIU

KASSANDRA POOL
Staff Writer

With a not-so-average size and heavy key in the right hand, a person is tapped on the right shoulder while facing the person tapping them.

This isn’t the initiation to some kind of cult, but that of a national leadership honor society.

Omicron Delta Kappa was nationally founded on December 3, 1914 at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. Publicly known as “The Circle,” FIU established the ODK honor society on April 21, 1985. According to president of ODK, Senior Cleo Monique, to encourage them to aspire to higher achievements.

The purpose of the honor society is to recognize individuals who have faculty as-
Potential members are tapped to join ODK

ODK, page 5

the number three most prestigious honor society, the group is very selective when it comes to picking new members, stated junior and vice president of membership, Jenise Fernandez.

This past spring, 15 students applied and only six were selected to become a part of ODK.

Three of the six students were recently tapped at the Greek BBQ that was held on July 10 in front of the Graham Center ballrooms. The remaining three will be tapped sometime in the fall.

When all the selective students have been tapped, they get inducted in either the Fall or Spring semesters, depending on which semester they applied in.

Once students have been tapped, they go through a new member orientation explaining their expectations and what the honor society entails. At this point students who feel they will not be able to commit to the circle should expect for the standards to be raised and commitment to be implanted.

Students interested in joining or getting more information should expect to see the ODK Circle more on campus.

“We have a couple of ideas for events to do with students and faculty, but that is a surprise,” Fernandez said.

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Pop/rock band diverges from its Beatles roots

WEDNESDAY • JULY 23

WHAT: Yoga lessons
WHERE: The Standard
WHEN: 6:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: Whole Wheat Bread
WHERE: Culture Room
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $1.50

THURSDAY • JULY 24

WHAT: Battle of the Bands
WHERE: Museum of Contemporary Art
WHEN: 6:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free

FRIDAY • JULY 25

WHAT: Secondhand and My American Heart
WHERE: Culture Room
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $20

SATURDAY • JULY 26

WHAT: Jerry Seinfeld
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $47

SUNDAY • JULY 27

WHAT: Aquapalooza
WHERE: Haulover Beach Park
WHEN: 6:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free

WHAT: An Egyptian Adventure
WHERE: Lower Art Museum
WHEN: 4:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $5 for students with I.D

THE BEACON – JULY 23, 2008

WHAT: Music Movies Monday
WHERE: Sweet Records
WHEN: 8:00 p.m.
HOW Much: Free

WHAT: Yoga Lessons
WHERE: The Standard Miami
WHEN: 4:45 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free

TUESDAY • JULY 29

WHAT: Urban Theatre Entertainment Festival
WHERE: Hyatt Regency Hotel
WHEN: 8:30 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $55

WHAT: Slava’s Snow show
WHERE: Adrienne Arsht Centre for the Performing Arts
WHEN: 8:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $50

WEDNESDAY • JULY 30

WHAT: Return to Forever
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $50

WHAT: Flobs with Busdriver
WHERE: Culture Room
WHEN: 7:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: $12

WHAT: Can you Rock a little
WHERE: Churchills Pub Beach
WHEN: 9:00 p.m.
HOW MUCH: Free

-Compiled by Rosalyn Delgado

WHY SO POPULAR?

RECORD BREAKER: On the strength of Heath Ledger’s historic performance as the Joker and months of hype, Christopher Nolan’s The Dark Knight shattered every box office record on its opening weekend, bringing in $158 million. To read The Beacon’s review go to FIUSM.com.
Volleyball adds new assistant coach

**REPLAY, page 8**

Led the Sun Belt Conference with 974 home runs. That was a huge leap from the previous season when the team hit a total of 32.

She will not add much power to the lineup, as she hit four home runs last season, but she will provide a contact batter.

The new recruits will try to help the Golden Panthers improve on last season's fourth place finish.

**Volleyball**

Volleyball head coach Danjela Tomic announced the appointment of the team's new assistant coach, Eve Rackham on July 16.

She comes from East Carolina University where she was an assistant coach for the last three years.

"She brings with her a very impressive resume in the sport, both as a student-athlete at North Carolina and as a coach," Tomic said.

At ECU, she was the program's recruiting coordinator and helped identify and develop three first-team All-Conference USA selections, a pair of second-team all-league picks and a third-team C-USA honoree.

Rackham worked specifically with two-time All-conference USA selection Heidi Krug.

She was responsible for developing the young star for the East Carolina University Pirates.

She comes to a Golden Panthers squad coming off two consecutive trips to the Sun Belt Conference Championship.

As a player, Rackham played for the University of North Carolina Tar Heels program. She was part of a team that won three ACC Tournament championships and had four straight NCAA appearances.

As the starting setter at UNC from 1999-2002, the Tar Heels posted a 115-22 record.

**Golf**

Golden Panther Monica Arreaza was named to the National Golf Coaches Association All-American Scholar Team on July 14.

The minimum cumulative GPA to qualify is a 3.5. The criteria for the selection to the NGCA's All-Scholar Team are considered some of the most stringent in college athletics.

Arreaza is a three-time letter winner for the Golden Panthers. Despite a knee injury last season, she averaged a 80.56 per round.

Her head coach Joe Vogel understands the difficulty of Arreaza's accomplishment.

"Despite playing hurt all year long, she competed in every match for us," Vogel said. "She truly epitomizes what it means to be a student-athlete."

Brito striving to lead women’s tennis to championship, improve on last season

**BRITO, page 8**

"That was when I decided to bring my game to FIU," Brito said.

Brito joined a Golden Panthers women’s tennis team that has an all-time winning percentage of over .575 over thirteen seasons. The pressure of college classes and the NCAA tennis ranks made Brito’s freshman year at FIU difficult.

"Freshman year was very hard for me. It was tough balancing the academics and tennis, and sometimes I couldn’t tell which was harder," Brito said. "I ended up changing my major from interior design to sports management. I guess it makes perfect sense."

Taken under the wing of head coach Carlos Casely, Brito is quick to acknowledge the fact that staying in shape is a top priority to her coach.

"We have practices every morning during the season."

He stresses conditioning and being in good physical shape. During the fall I put in a good four to five hours a day, and that’s still not enough," she said.

And this past season, as a Golden Panther, Brito defeated the school that once tried to recruit her, Baylor University.

"I first saw him two years ago at a tournament being held at Richmond College which is in Dallas," he said. "We ran score goals, and he was just a fresh- man at the time."

Eketebi said Brito joined a Golden Panthers women’s tennis team that has an all-time winning percentage of over .575 over thirteen seasons. The pressure of college classes and the NCAA tennis ranks made Brito’s freshman year at FIU difficult.

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**Freshman year was very hard for me. It was tough balancing the academics and tennis, and sometimes I couldn’t tell which was harder.**

Last Brito, freshman tennis player

**SHUTTING OUT: Recruit Jennifer Gniadek will bring her high school championship to FIU**

**XIMENES, page 8**

chooses not to talk about his childhood in detail.

"There were a lot of killings ... like shootings," Ximenes said.

He said he was fortunate enough to have a strong support system with his parents, who attended every soccer game he played in, no matter the family’s circumstances.

Amid a crime and poverty stricken city, Ximenes’ personal life had a different story.

Before graduating high school, Ximenes was a member of the Under-17 Jamaican National Team, then after graduating from Excelsior High School in Kingston, he began his collegiate career playing for the San Jacinto Gators in Houston. It was unfamiliar territory for him, but he soon adapted with ease.

"Houston was great," he said. "I got to know a lot of people and I learned a lot of Spanish."

It was in Houston where he continued to impress and caught the eyes of Eketebi.

"I first saw him two years ago at a tournament being held at Richmond College which is in Dallas," he said. "We ran score goals, and he was just a freshman at the time."

Eketebi said Brito joined a Golden Panthers women’s tennis team that has an all-time winning percentage of over .575 over thirteen seasons. The pressure of college classes and the NCAA tennis ranks made Brito’s freshman year at FIU difficult.

"You guys are in a good four to five hours a day, and that’s still not enough," she said.

And this past season, as a Golden Panther, Brito defeated the school that once tried to recruit her, Baylor University.

Brito’s championship background, combined with NCAA tournament experience, gives her hope for redeeming last season’s abrupt end.

"I really want to make it to the NCAA tournament, that’s my dream," Brito said. "FIU qualifies for regions, and after winning in the first two rounds, you get in. Why not us? I’ve only gotten better and faster since last year."

**XIMENES brings ‘A’ game to FIU**

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Transfer midfielder poised to spark men's soccer offense

LUCA MESSINA
Staff Writer

While his team's vocal leaders are screaming and directing players on the field, he is silent and prefers to let his skills do all the talking.

When ordered to help his team as a freshman, he scored 11 goals at San Jacinto Community College.

New Golden Panthers men's soccer recruit, junior Ricardo Ximenes, brings his silent demeanor and offensive prowess to the 2008 squad. This past offseason, head coach Munga Eketebi recruited a player with an introverted leadership voice.

"He's pretty much low key and will lead by example, but we're bringing him in to make some noise," said Eketebi, who in his second season, will try and help the Golden Panthers make another miracle run at the Conference USA Championship.

The team finished with a 3-13-2 record but managed to pull off three consecutive upsets to make it to the conference championship game.

He's powerful. He's got a tremendous shot. He has great technical ability and his job is to put the ball in the back of the net.

Munga Eketebi
men's soccer head coach

They led powerhouse and No. 1 seeded Tulsa 2-1 with just 10 minutes left, but a depleted defense couldn't sustain the lead as FIU eventually lost 3-2.

With Ximenes on the field for FIU, the team has the scoring option it needed much of last season, as it scored only 15 goals in 18 regular season games in 2007.

"He's powerful. He's got a tremendous shot. He has great technical ability and his job is to put the ball in the back of the net," Eketebi said.

Growing up in the hostile streets of Kingston, Jamaica, Ximenes has experienced his share of violence. Jamaica has one of the highest murder rates in the world and 1/3 of murders occur within Kingston, according to the Department of Correctional Services, Jamaica.

Despite the numerous murders committed where he grew up and learned to love soccer at age five, he

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SPORTS REPLAY

New softball recruits show promise, want to improve lineup

SERGIO BONILLA
Sports Editor

Two of FIU's new softball recruits received All-State honors in Virginia and Florida respectively.

Pitcher Jennifer Gniadek and third baseman Kelsey Grabiak will be suiting up for head coach Beth McClendon this upcoming 2008 season.

Gniadek led her team to the Virginia AAA State Championship when she earned the victory and hit a home run in the Hickory High School 2-2 championship victory.

During the playoffs, she pitched 43 consecutive scoreless innings, including 18 hitless innings and two no-hitters. The hurler allowed just three earned runs for the whole regular season.

Gniadek was voted the Virginia AAA Pitcher of the Year. She joins the FIU pitching staff that compiled a 5.93 ERA, but struckout 248 batters in 423 2/3 innings.

She will be paired up with start-
er Kasey Barrett, who compiled a 16-18 record in 263 innings.

Third baseman Grabiak was named to the Florida State Class 5A First Team and was District Player of the Year playing for Lakewood Ranch High School. In her senior year, she batted .466 with four home runs.

Last season, the Golden Panthers power oriented offense

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