Students seek to register new voters

As November creeps closer, students diligently campaign for the candidates of both the Republican and Democratic Parties vying for presidency. These students wake up early, come to FIU and set up information tables in between fraternity and sorority rush tables. Members stand in the middle of the Graham Center with voter registration documents at hand and ask each student who pass by if they are registered to vote.

These groups face a daunting task: getting college students – a group that has historically been apathetic to politics – to vote.

There is some good news, however. According to the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, while voter turnout for college students has decreased 16 percent since 1972, it increased for the second major election in a row by more than 11 percent. The organization, which researches voter trends among American youth, notes that college students are more liberal than older voters when it comes to issues such as the Iraq war.

Chris Cabral, current president of the FIU College Democrats, said that issues such as the Iraq war and disappointment with the Bush administration makes it almost too easy to attract young voters to the Democratic Party.

“It’s the failures of the Bush administration that have brought young voters to the Democratic Party, and has made them very eager to vote Democrat,” Cabral said.

The barrier-breaking campaign of Barack Obama as the first African American to clinch the Democratic nomination has captivated the attention of many FIU students. Cabral pointed to Obama’s strong youth support, which led to his victory in the Iowa primary.

“He has inspired young voters by speaking about issues relevant to them, such as organized departments and dismantled others and fired at least 20 HCET employees, according to a Miami Herald article published on Aug. 15, 2005. Maidique’s weekly newsletter stated the case had been previously presented to the state’s Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a court-appointed arbitrator, both of which found no evidence of discrimination.

The July 18 verdict, however, cites federal discrimination during his accounting and human resources searches, according to the media.

University President Modesto A. Maidique reaffirmed the University’s commitment to diversity in a July 24 newsletter – just six days after a Miami-Dade jury ruled against FIU in a discrimination lawsuit. The jury ordered FIU to pay former employee Sean St. Louis $2.5 million for racial discrimination during his accounting department’s dismantlement in 2004.

“We take allegations of this nature very seriously,” Maidique said in a statement responding to the verdict. “The University plans to appeal the decision.”

In 2003, FIU had undergone several federal audits investigating the misappropriation of federal grant money in the Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technologies, where St. Louis worked.

Evidence of mismanagement at high administration levels led to drastic changes in the makeup of the accounting section.

The University created new offices and positions, hired a chief financial officer, reorganized departments and dismantled others and fired at least 20 HCET employees, according to a Miami Herald article published on Aug. 15, 2005. Maidique’s weekly newsletter stated the case had been previously presented to the state’s Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a court-appointed arbitrator, both of which found no evidence of discrimination.

The July 18 verdict, however, cites Florida House Speaker will teach in the Fall

Paulo O'Swath

Staff Writer

Florida House of Representatives Speaker Marco Rubio has joined FIU’s Metropolitan Center as a Visiting Distinguished Service Professor. He will teach two political science courses in the 2008-2009 academic year.

“We are excited about the contribution that Speaker Rubio will make in teaching and research,” said University President Modesto A. Maidique in a press release.

Rubio will teach a course entitled Florida Politics and the 2008 Election along with Dario Moreno, associate professor of political science and Director of the Metropolitan Center.

“I am very, very excited about this,” Moreno said. “This is a golden opportunity for all of us to see a public servant and learn from them directly.”

In addition to his duties as co-instructor, Rubio will also be responsible for course and lecture development as well as student evaluations, according to the press release.

Another major responsibility will include working on research for the Affordable Housing Project where he will assist with recommendations and also develop a proposal for a demonstration project.

“I am honored to work with students and faculty at FIU,” Rubio said in a news release.

Rubio added, “I love politics and government and this opportunity will enable me to be a part of the public policy conversation in Florida. It will definitely be a learning opportunity for me.”

Rubio will teach another course in the Spring alongside Moreno called Miami Politics.

“We are looking forward to having Speaker Rubio join our team,” Moreno said. “Rubio’s insights will give students and researchers a different perspective of the state political process.”

In addition to teaching at FIU, Rubio will also continue to practice law in Miami with the law firm Broad and Cassel, according to the release.

Rubio holds a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Florida and a law degree from the University of Miami.
PENDING LAWSUITS COULD COST FIU $27.8 MILLION

SUSAN ROBAINA

With the new elections come new opportunities for students to post videos about their favorite candidate or about their opponent. With the new elections come new opportunities for students to post videos about their favorite candidate or about their opponent. With the new elections come new opportunities for students to post videos about their favorite candidate or about their opponent. With the new elections come new opportunities for students to post videos about their favorite candidate or about their opponent. With the new elections come new opportunities for students to post videos about their favorite candidate or about their opponent.
Personal trainer course welcomes all shapes, sizes

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KISHORE SAWH
Staff Writer

It may be a bit late to realize a summer six-pack by the season is over, but don’t give up: this is Miami, and beach days are not going away any time soon.

Biscayne Bay Campus’ Recreation, in partnership with the National Exercise Trainers Association, may hold the key to your success with their upcoming Personal Trainer Certification program. For those looking to fulfill their state New Year’s resolution of having a beach body or to just have a healthier lifestyle, this may be the chance to do so.

“Becoming a personal trainer is a great way to earn extra money and stay in shape,” reads the program flyer floating around campus.

It is a sentiment shared by Warren Shaw, assistant director of campus recreation who is a key person for this agenda.

Shaw, an FIU alumnus who garnered his master’s in Sports Management in 2001, makes it a point to address a possible concern.

“These classes are open to any and anyone – no specific fitness level needed. All you need is some time ahead to study the book to be able to apply what you have learned during the class,” Shaw said.

Andrea Reynoso, the only BBC Fitness Center staff member enrolled in the program, is still motivated to take the class despite her small stature.

“It’s always something that’s been interesting to me. It’s good to help yourself stay fit and help others stay fit, also good to be healthy conscious,” said Reynoso, who is a sophomore double majoring in physical therapy and athletic training. “I don’t need it as a job. It’s a good knowledge base and it’s convenient. It’s right here.”

Aside from convenience, Reynoso also thinks that, in today’s world, the extra certification looks good on a resume.

The course is accredited by National Exercise Trainers Association, which has graduated over 120,000 thousand fitness professionals since its inception in 1977, according to its Web site, netafit.org. The association is currently approved by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, among other professional standard organizations, and are considered leaders in their field.

According to Shaw, this was among the primary reasons for FIU choosing NETA to partner with, as well as their willingness to do the class at FIU while offering students a significant discount.

The course will be held August 23 from 8 a.m to 5 p.m and August 24 from 8 a.m to 3:30 p.m. It is an intensive two-day course that will entail classroom as well as hands-on time.

The class will offer health and fitness assessments, exercise programming for healthy adults, exposure to cardiovascular and strength training equipment, dynamics of communication and leadership skills, and an exercise science refresher, according to www.netafit.org.

A written exam will be held at the end of the course. If passed, a National Certificate valid for two years will be granted.

The cost for the entire course will be $299 for FIU students and staff, and up to $370 for all others.

A maximum of 25 people can register, so those interested should register sooner rather than later.

Personal training classes are just the tip of the iceberg of what NETA offers.

“We may do other types of classes with them [NEFA] if this one does well,” Shaw said.

NETA also has Pilates instructor classes, as well as Yoga and group instructor training.

Shaw also revealed that it is a desire of Campus Recreation to have a personal trainer on staff as it is a frequent request.

“It would be great for an FIU student to be one of our personal trainers,” Shaw said.

So as another incentive, there might be employment opportunities available to those interested that become qualified.

To find out more about the Personal Trainer Certification Program, call the BBC Recreation Center at (305) 919-5678 or visit http://www.netafit.org.

Student crowd soaks up fun, food at annual foam party

ANA PEREZ
Staff Writer

Water, foam and a barbecue under the stars – this is the way that many students ended a long week of classes.

On July 25, Biscayne Bay’s Student Programming Council, along with Panther Power and the Black Student Union, provided students with a fun-filled night of wet and wild entertainment at the annual foam party.

Ryan Lyttle, SPC President, was pleased with the outcome.

“I expected it to be as big as it was,” Lyttle said. “The turnout was awesome; the best part of the party for me would have to be when I did my rounds at 11 p.m. and saw that everyone was having a good time.”

The lawn in front of the Bay Vista housing complex resembled a night club. Student guests from University Park Greek societies were even sufficing for the entire night.

The FIU community needs our events can be successful,” Lyttle said.

They will also have a comedy show, a few parties and Hispanic Heritage month events.

“The FIU community needs to know that without them, none of our events can be successful,” Lyttle said.

For more information on upcoming campus events, call (305) 919-5280.

JOIN THE FUN! ... NOT TO MENTION THE MAYHEM

The Beacon is always looking for talented and dedicated individuals to join the staff. Apply in GC 210 or email kassandra.pool@fi usm.com.
A little less than a century ago, the RMS Titanic made the fatal mistake of believing itself invincible in an attempt to make history. FIU has a lot to learn from this catastrophic cruise which demonstrates that stubborn determination to reach a goal can end up sinking you. Several times in recent memory, FIU has had to deal with image-destroying controversies as a result of irresponsible expansionism, the most recent of which a $2.5 million ruling against the University brought by a former employee who was let go from his position in 2004 when his office, the Contracts and Grants Department, was disbanded resulting from misappropriation of federal funds within the Hemispheric Center for Environmental Technologies.

According to an August 2005 Miami Herald article, the HCET was a main factor in the University receiving a top ranking from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The foundation is a highly prestigious designation, now shrouded from controversy due to the allegations of fraud stemming from such actions as using grant money earmarked for research for other expenses, such as the hiring of consultants.

According to a report, the BIG experiment within FIU is a $2.5 million in punitive damages from former employees for the removal of the Facilities Management Director. The BIG experiment within FIU is akin to more recent FIU em- barrassments such as the NCAA policy violations committed by some sports teams as well as the University's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and an independent court-appointed arbitrator did not find any basis in fact for such an accusation, neither did the University President Modesto Maidique in an e-mail newsletter. This, along with the facts of the case, calls into question the legitimacy of the hefty amount awarded to St. Louis by the jury.

What is more readily apparent is that the entire situation is the result of FIU's continued lack of principles and values, and we do not have enough lifeboats to save us from the icy waters of this litigation. It is imperative that FIU appeal this decision before a costly precedent is set in future cases, and that greater care is taken in preventing future debacles.

Taking up the cause of raising the minimum wage to $15, the most recent political policy in his history, what better way to show that you are a man of the people than to get behind a micro- phone and declare that you feel that your constituents feel the same way about this. And consider what a boon it would be if minorities were filled by Hispanics, and many of the low jobs were previously held by black employees, both the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and an independent court-appointed arbitrator did not find any basis in fact for such an allegation. The BIG experiment within FIU is a $2.5 million in punitive damages from former employees for the removal of the Facilities Management Director. The BIG experiment within FIU is akin to more recent FIU em- barrassments such as the NCAA policy violations committed by some sports teams as well as the University's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and an independent court-appointed arbitrator did not find any basis in fact for such an accusation, neither did the University President Modesto Maidique in an e-mail newsletter. This, along with the facts of the case, calls into question the legitimacy of the hefty amount awarded to St. Louis by the jury.

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A higher minimum wage only affects those workers who are actually making minimum wage. Those with a house and a family who are making a couple dollars more than the legal minimum will not get a raise since they are already making more than what the beneficial government demands.

One of the reasons for this drastic employment drought is the mandated wage hikes that policymakers have forced down the throats of local businesses, said Eastlick in the article. She cites research from the University of California at Irvine, which indicates that unemployment within certain groups rises 8.5 percent for every 10 percent increase in minimum wage, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which shows that Florida’s unemployment rate two subsequent increases, the company now only pays what the state requires it to: $6.79. Of course, new hires benefit because they are getting paid more than I did three years ago, but the financial strain that these increases is put-ting on businesses is also apparent. However, with each increase in the minimum wage, new-
Yasumicon celebrates everything anime

KASSANDRA POOL
Staff Writer

If you see Super Mario walking around University Park, don’t look around for any green warp pipes or goombas. If he didn’t jump off your TV screen, that can only mean that Yasumicon is back for its sixth year.

The three day anime convention kicks off this Friday, Aug. 1 at 7 p.m. in Gracie’s Grill. Admission for the first event is $7 and it includes dinner and musical performances by local artist Benjamin Bear and his wife Jaylyn Coffin. There will be giveaways and prizes for the person with the best costume, and the remaining two days of the convention are absolutely free.

Yasumicon is coordinated by the Anything Goes Anime Club. According to Junior Ben F. Badger Jr., Yasumicon’s president, the event is one of the largest student events at FIU with last year’s attendance reaching up to 2,700 people.

“The 2,700 people were a mixture of students, alumni, community members and even some people as far away as Tampa, Georgia and even California,” Badger said. This year, the group expects anywhere between 3,000 to 4,000 people to come out for the weekend and enjoy an array of entertainment and panels.

Last year, the snack panel featured free Japanese snack samples and commercials from Japan were shown. “We had prepared 100 of the snack packs we were giving out and nearly all of them were gone by the end of the panel. The room was completely packed and everyone loved the commercials we played,” said Elyse Coleman, vice president of Anything Goes Anime.

The group began planning the event about a year ago when Yasumicon wrapped up around the same time. From printing flyers to going to comic stores, the club has been heavily promoting the event for the past month or so in the hopes of making it bigger and better than the previous year.

With more panels and more room reservations, students and guests can enjoy a variety of activities. Most events will take place in Graham Center rooms 140, 150, 243, the GC Ballrooms and the Green Library room 100.

If attendants want to see some action, they might look forward to the Adrian Empire demonstration. The club takes pride in recreating renaissance era armor and weapons and fighting with each other. No need to worry though, the members of the club fight with dull weapons and in armor, so no one gets hurt.

Brandon Potter is the guest of honor at this year’s Yasumicon. Potter’s credits include the voice of Shanks in Funimation’s “One Piece,” as well as Sven Vollfield in “Black Cat,” Barrett in “Glass Fleet” and many more. He is also one of the directors from Funimation.

On Saturday, Aug. 2, the convention will be open from 11 a.m. to midnight and on Sunday, Aug. 3 it will open at noon and will run until 6 p.m. The event is being sponsored by Funimation, Bandai-Entertainment, Viz-Pictures, Right Stuf, ALC Publishing, Tate’s Comics, Noobie Games, Monster and Pjll Throttling among others.

“Yasumicon is simply a great way to have fun. We are a family show and encourage everyone to attend, even if you’re not into Anime and video games, you will be able to have fun at our convention. It’s a safe way to kick back and relax,” Badger said.

www.fi usm.com

Contact Us
Christopher Towers
Life! Editor
life@fi usm.com

LIFE!
Yasumicon celebrates everything anime

Ben F. Badger Jr.
President of Anime Club

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Primetime success leads “Office” star to the big screen

STEVEN MESA
Contributing Writer

After conquering primetime television as Dwight Schrute, the sycophantic assistant to the regional manager on NBC’s “The Office,” Rainn Wilson is setting his sights on the big screen.

Wilson, an Emmy-nominee, plays the former drummer of an 80’s rock band who gets fired before the band makes it big in “The Rocker,” which comes to theaters Aug. 20.

Wilson was looking for something to do after last year’s hiatus from “The Office” in an interview with The Beacon when the script for The Rocker came to him.

“It has great broad comedy and, at the same time, it had a lot of heart,” Wilson said in an interview with The Beacon. “With my roles in “Six Feet Under” and “The Office,” I found myself suddenly becoming a celebrity.”

Wilson had some harsh words for some legendary rock bands like Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, as well as many metal bands of the 80’s.

“I know most of the girly rockers can kick my ass, no matter how much mascara, eyeliner, blouses and leopard prints they wear,” Wilson said. “It seemed like it was heavy metal aimed specifically for girls and women.”

Following The Rocker, Wilson’s next role is as a college professor in the sequel to the 2007 summer blockbuster, Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen. The Transformers role will be Wilson’s first blockbuster, and it may just push him past his current status as comedy bit player and into the next level of popularity.

Besides his upcoming role in the Transformers sequel, Wilson has also written a script called Bonzai Shadowhand for Oscar-nominated director Jason Reitman (Juno).

“It is a very dark comedy with a great role for me in it as a down-and-out ninja living in the San Fernando valley in a halfway house,” Wilson said.

The Rocker is Wilson’s first time as the lead in a motion picture and he has a great supporting cast that includes Jeff Garlin (“Curb Your Enthusiasm,”) Will Arnett (Blades of Glory), Jason Sudekis (“Saturday Night Live”) and Christina Applegate (Anchorman).

“One thing that was great was that the filmmakers put together the greatest comedy ensemble you can ask for,” he said. “There are a lot of actors in small roles, which really makes the movie more of an ensemble comedy.”

Wilson and his character in The Rocker share a similar goal that they both achieved: becoming a celebrity in their late thirties and late forties.

“They didn’t just spring up overnight for me in my career and it picked up speed a little bit,” Wilson said.

“I barely scraped by in my career and it may just push him past his current status as comedy bit player and into the next level of popularity.”

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**THIS WEEK IN MIAMI**

**WEDNESDAY • JULY 30**

**WHAT:** Slipknot, Disturbed
WHERE: Cruzan Amphitheatre
WHEN: 2 p.m
HOW MUCH: $25

**WHAT:** Return To Forever
WHERE: Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $50

**THURSDAY • JULY 31**

**WHAT:** The Soundtrack of your Summer Tour
WHERE: Mizner Park, Boca Raton FL
WHEN: 5 p.m
HOW MUCH: $25

**WHAT:** Mark Knoffler With Jessica Hoop
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: $20

**FRIDAY • AUGUST 1**

**WHAT:** Projekt Revolution Tour
WHERE: Cruzan Amphitheatre
WHEN: 11 a.m
HOW MUCH: $25

**WHAT:** Miami Libre
WHERE: Adrienne Arsht Center
WHEN: 7:30 p.m
HOW MUCH: $40

**SATURDAY • AUGUST 2**

**WHAT:** Rock The Bells
WHERE: Bicentennial Park
WHEN: Noon
HOW MUCH: $55

**SUNDAY • AUGUST 3**

**WHAT:** George Michael
WHERE: Bank Atlantic Center
WHEN: 7:00 p.m
HOW MUCH: $50

**WHAT:** Bow Wow
WHERE: The Fillmore Miami Beach
WHEN: 7:00 p.m
HOW MUCH: $30

**MONDAY • AUGUST 4**

**WHAT:** Catch 22 with Supervillians
WHERE: Culture Room
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $13

**WHAT:** Lochai World Erotic Art Museum
WHERE: South Beach
WHEN: 11 a.m
HOW MUCH: $15

**TUESDAY • AUGUST 5**

**WHAT:** Executive Fitness Boot Camp
WHERE: Bayfront Park
WHEN: 6:30 p.m
HOW MUCH: $10

**WHAT:** Academy of Movement Arts
WHERE: Ocean Bank Building
WHEN: 5 p.m
HOW MUCH: $34

**WEDNESDAY • AUGUST 6**

**WHAT:** Coheed & Cambria with Secret Machines
WHERE: Revolution Live
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $20

**FRIDAY • AUGUST 8**

**WHAT:** Ron White
WHERE: Maxwell C. King Center for the Performing Arts
WHEN: 8 p.m
HOW MUCH: $30

**WHAT:** Sound Abyss with Dear Dad, Yours Truly
WHERE: The Wallflower Gallery
WHEN: 10:30 p.m
HOW MUCH: $5

**SATURDAY • AUGUST 9**

**WHAT:** The Sneak Preview with The Fallling Alarm
WHERE: The Wallflower Gallery
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $10

**WHAT:** Aquarium Behind The Scene
WHERE: Anne Kolb Nature Center
WHEN: 2 p.m
HOW MUCH: $1

**SUNDAY • AUGUST 10**

**WHAT:** HippieFest Feat. Burdon & The Animals with Jack Bruce
WHERE: Pompano Beach Amphitheatre
WHEN: 7 p.m
HOW MUCH: $20

**WHAT:** Sundays At Fairchild Tropical Garden
WHERE: Fairchild Tropical Garden, Old Culter Rd.
WHEN: 11 a.m
HOW MUCH: FREE

- Compiled by Rosalyn Delgado

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.
Academic center adds tutors, athletes' grades improve

**ACADEMIC CENTER, page 8**

despite the bigger staff.

"It needs to be more strict about timing and scheduling," she said. "Sometimes there would be one tutor for English and they would avail-
able only on Mondays."

Zarraga says student-athletes must turn in a progress report weekly to their assigned tutor. This is the method the tutors use to keep tabs on their students’ performance.

APR Specialist Garcia is in charge of keep-
ing FIU’s APR scores up to par by assessing incoming transfer students’ possible effects on APR and working alongside the SAAC.

NCAA bylaws state that sports programs must obtain at least an APR score of 900 or they will face scholarship losses. For two consecu-
tive years, the football, baseball and men’s bas-
etball teams scored less than 900.

As a result, those three teams will be unable to participate in postseason play if they do not score at least 900 next year. If the same teams do not score 900 the following year, they will be banned from Division I and the Football Bowl Subdivision.

Former FIU baseball head coach Danny Price was at the helm for 26 years during the pe-
riod in which the SAAC did not have the num-
ber of resources it has today.

“They offer summer school now for athletes. That never happened before," Price said. "There is so much more help available than when I was coach.

"Of the student-athletes enrolled in summer 2007, 95 percent graduated.

All-time hits leader former FIU baseball player Brian Pillin played under coach Price and graduated in Spring 2007. During his col-
lege career, he saw the center’s progression.

"My last year, the academic center had so many resources," said Pullin. "At that point I al-
ready knew what I was doing, but that extra help would’ve helped me out when I was younger."

FIU’s initiative to bolster the center’s re-
sources produced results when the Athletics program graduated the highest number of stu-
dent-athletes this past spring. The student-ath-
letes posted a higher GPA (2.90) than the rest of the general student body.

"It is evident that having the right resources in place with the right people has paid dividends for our Athletic program," he said. "Because of the commitment we have secured from every-
one, beginning with our student-athletes, the results have been accomplished are no surprise."

And we expect to continue to do well because academics will never be compromised at FIU.”

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Postseason experience, recruits hope to keep team a contender

**SOCCER, page 8**

impossible a week before.

The Golden Panthers lost to the Thundering Herd during the regular sea-
son by a 2-1 score on Sept. 28.

They fell short of their miracle run in their final round against the Tulsa Hurricane.

After trailing 1-0, two consecutive goals by senior Bruno Barbosa and Juan Guerra put FIU up 2-1.

However, the defense couldn’t sustain the lead in the last ten minutes.

Two late goals by Todd Goddard and Eric Burkholder, respectively, resulted in a devastating 3-2 loss.

The Golden Panthers lost to the Hurricane in the regular season on Oct. 31 by a massive 6-0 deficit, but this loss was felt a lot harder.

"[The last ten minutes] were really bad. We really thought that we had it and it was really hard because we were winning but they were putting a lot of pressure on us. I don’t know, I guess that’s soccer. When the whistle went, we realized we had it but we let it go."

Coproletti said.

"We weren’t over confident; we knew they were going to come with everything and they were pounding us as for the last 30 minutes that we were up and they were able to get the two goals," Jair-Cabas said.

The loss was especially tough for Eketebi, as the team he guided all season was so close to culminating a historic run.

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Thank you for reading our summer issues.

Back-to-school issue Aug. 25
We’ll see you in the Fall!

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### FIU upgrades academic center’s resources

**SERGIO BONILLA**  
Sports Editor

Student-athletes’ performance in the classroom from 2003-07 has lost the Athletics department a total of 17.75 scholarships the past two years. Low academic standings have put three programs in danger of postseason banishment and expulsion from Division I and the Football Bowl Subdivision.

In order to prevent severe penalties, FIU added a number of resources to the Student-athlete Academic Center this past year.

Along with the goal of helping student-athletes graduate, preventing the termination of athletic programs is a new task the center must undertake. FIU increased the center’s operating budget from $62,000 to $195,000, purchased 20 personal computers and 25 laptops for student use and doubled the number of tutors from seven to 14.

“The SAAC is the lifetime of the Athletic department,” Academic Progress Rate specialist Monique Garcia said. Garcia is one of the new compliance officers hired by FIU to help the University meet the APR score needed to meet NCAA standards. The APR takes into account an institution’s academic performance over the previous four academic years.

The APR is calculated by giving points to each team based on the number of players in good academic standing and on the number of players who remain in the institution.

President Modesto A. Maidique and Athletic Director Pete Garcia were instrumental in the SAAC receiving more resources and oversaw the hiring of new staff members.

Such a position is the Director of the Student Athlete Academic Services, who is charged with managing the center and supervising four advisers, a Learning Specialist, an office manager and the tutoring staff.

Former Director of SAAC Shirelle Jackson no longer works at FIU and Assistant Director Damienne Rivero is acting as the interim director in her absence; Rivero declined to comment.

The center’s tutors offer general and subject-specific tutoring, but tutoring in the basic subjects like Math, English and Sciences is the SAAC’s primary focus. Business Calculus, Statistics and Accounting are examples of the advanced courses also available for student-athletes.

Tutors at the center include professors, graduate students and undergraduate students.

One of the Economics tutors added during Fall 2007, senior Christina Zumalacarregui, says that there are ways the center could be more efficient.

### THE IMPOSSIBLE RUN

**LUCA MESSINA**  
Staff Writer

When the men’s soccer team walked off the field in Birmingham, Ala. last Nov. 18, there was a strong feeling of disappointment but at the same time, there were reasons to stay positive and reflect on what was an improbable championship finish.

The Golden Panthers finished the regular season at 3-3-2 before pulling off two consecutive upset wins in the Conference USA Tournament before losing a heartbreaker to the No. 1 seeded Marshall Thundering Herd 3-2 after junior Juan Guerra was unavailable for the final.

“I think it was a problem of us not being fit in the beginning and then towards the end we became more fit and were able to support ourselves,” said sophomore Steven Jair-Cabas of the scoring drought.

When asked why the team lacked the proper fitness, Cabas responded, “It was mostly not being responsible and taking care of business during the summer.”

The momentum certainly carried over into the semi-finals round as FIU defeated the No. 7 seed Tulsa 3-2, a game that FIU lost in the last 10 minutes.

“It’s obviously tough to lose in the final,” head coach Minga Eketebi said. “We had a poor season but finished strong, and I told the guys to remember the feeling they had when the game ended and remember it when you’re training in the off-season.”

Besides pulling off two surprising victories, the offense suddenly clicked as scoring goals became more of a normal occurrence.

The team scored just 15 goals in 18 regular season games but scored eight goals in three postseason contests.

“I think it was a problem of us not being fit in the beginning and then towards the end we became more fit and were able to support ourselves,” said sophomore Steven Jair-Cabas of the scoring drought.

When asked why the team lacked the proper fitness, Cabas responded, “It was mostly not being responsible and taking care of business during the summer.”

Eketebi agreed.

“The team did not come in as fit as it should have been. We seemed to find a way to lose and it was difficult to reverse the trends early on,” he said. “During the postseason our fitness level picked up and I told the guys all year long that we were not as bad as our record indicates.”

The disappointing regular season that saw the team win three games was not a complete failure as the team was fortunate enough to land a spot in the post-season tournament as the No. 7 seed.

Their first round match up was against a No. 2 seeded Southern Methodist University team that was nationally ranked during the regular season and defeated the Golden Panthers in their first meeting 2-0 on October 20.

A shocking 2-1 victory was capped off when junior Christian Caporalletti scored the go-ahead goal in the 74th minute.

“After the first game we really pumped ourselves up and got ourselves on track.”

Caporalletti said.

The momentum certainly carried over into the semi-finals round as FIU defeated Marshall Thundering Herd 3-2 after junior Juan Guerra [who was unavailable to comment] scored in the second over-time to propel his team to the Conference Finals, a destination that seemed almost impossible.

### Breaking Loose

Junior forward Juan Guerra was instrumental in the team’s postseason upsets. He was the team’s leading scorer.