New Vice President of Advancement fills void

EDUARDO Morales
Staff Writer

After a 15-month vacancy, the vice president of advancement position was announced to be filled once again on Oct. 1.

I am excited about this opportunity to lead fund-raising efforts at FIU,” said the new VP of Advancement Robert Conrad, who will take on the position on Nov. 3.

In this age of declining state support of public higher education, we have to do all we can to reinforce the foundation of private philanthropic support for FIU.”

During a Board of Trustees meeting held last month, University President Modesto Maidique announced that the candidates for the position had been narrowed down to three.

The position remained one of the University’s top priorities, since the post encompasses the responsibility of raising money for the school.

The University’s estimated budget deficit for the next three school years is $33.7 million, according to the Office of Media Relations.

Conrad’s credentials reveal why he was the most qualified for the job.

Conrad held a previous position at the Florida State University Foundation where he was vice president of the Office of Planned Giving in 2004.

From there, he was promoted to vice president of Central Development Services. During his time at FSU, Conrad managed planned giving, corporate/foundation giving, regional giving and annual giving programs and fundraised an astounding $50 million for the university.

He was also responsible for bringing back the Planned Giving program by creating a systematic marketing campaign and increasing staff production.

Aside from FSU, Conrad also worked at Ohio University, where he began as director of Development for Planned Giving and later moved to the position of executive director of Planned Giving.

Obama addresses college student inquiries via phone

ELSIE Puig
Staff Writer

With the upcoming presidential election, college campuses have been at the center of a large grassroots movement for voter registration.

As voter registration deadlines started drawing to a close across the United States, Senator Barack Obama held a phone conference on Saturday, Oct. 4 at noon, inviting college journalists to ask questions about the issues that are important to students.

First on the call was Josh Earnest, deputy communications director for the Obama campaign, who talked to about 70 college journalists nationwide while Obama was landing from a delayed flight in Virginia.

“Today, the issue of job security and how to pay for college is at stake,” Obama said.

He answered questions about his thoughts on affirmative action, the Serve America Act, job security and how to pay for college.

“The biggest challenge for students is paying for college tuition,” Obama said. “By implementing a $4,000 tax credit, we will make college affordable.”

Obama enforced the idea that the strength of the economy lies in investing in higher education and training a competitive workforce in the global economy and in the alternative energy sector.

“We invigorate the fundamentals of our economy by creating opportunity for job growth in the alternative energy sector, which requires skills and training,” he said.

“Candidates call: Democratic nominee Barack Obama spoke to a group of nearly 70 college student journalists on Oct. 4.

One of the hallmarks of this campaign has been the involvement of youth, because there is a sense that we are at a defining time in our history. Young people are getting more familiar with each candidate’s positions and our track record,” Obama said.

He opened the lines to a Q&A where students had the opportunity to ask questions about the issues that most mattered to them.
Florida elementary schools are under pressure to offer 150 minutes of physical education per week. The law, which went into effect last year, did not specify how schools should fit those hours into days.

A new bill passed this year gives school districts the authority to determine how they will allocate the required time. The bill also states that the focus should be on improving the overall health of students.

The bill is intended to combat childhood obesity and help students pay attention in school.

Faculty concert helps save music programs in schools

The FIU Big Band and the Faculty Concert help save music programs in schools where they are in jeopardy of being eliminated.

This year’s concert will be held on the main stage at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center on Friday, Oct. 3. The concert will feature a variety of music, including classical, jazz, and contemporary. The event is free and open to the public.

We want to up the amount. Our goal is to be able to give away $750 to the first place winner and give around $300 to the second place winner.

Even though the music education program at FIU is in the process of being cut, the Faculty Concert is expected to go on in the future.

“Let’s keep the Faculty Spotlight Concert as a tradition at FIU,” said Assistant Professor for the School of Music Dr. Kathy Kennedy.

“The concert is a way for us, as a community, to give back to our educators and help them become better teachers,” Murrell said.

The FIU Big Band and the Jazz faculty will hold another performance on the same date for the community to enjoy.
Faculty leave mark with ‘last’ lectures

RENE BORSQUIOT
Contributing Writer

A lecture series about childhood dreams became the last and most important by a professor after a deadly cancer diagnosis.

The theme, which would be Randolph F. Pausch last words to his students, inspired a new lecture series at the Biscayne Bay Campus. Pausch’s lecture topic asked, “What would you say to your students if you knew you were going to die?”

For the professor of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University, however, it wasn’t a hypothetical question. Diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer in 2007, Pausch used the address to discuss the things he held most dear. His lecture emphasized the importance of dreams, how to achieve them, how to enable other people to achieve theirs and why driving forces are dreams, according to the dust jacket of his novel, “The Last Lecture.”

The “Legacies” lecture series was started by Barbara Hawkins, vice president of Tau Sigma Alpha, the honor society at BBC sponsored by the Honors College.

“We have so much outstanding faculty, and students do not have the chance to experience all of these exceptional professors due to program restrictions,” Hawkins said. "A psychology major may never get the chance to experience a hilarious computer science professor, and a nursing major might never hear a business professor’s life lessons.”

Beginning Oct. 9, the first chapter in the periodic lecture series given by FIU professors embraces the idea of giving a last lecture to the students.

Dr. Bruce A. Harvey, associate professor of English and the director of humanities, will deliver the “Legacies” series’ first lecture, “The Importance of Curiosity.”

“I’ve been thinking and writing about curiosity in other guises – travel and exploration literature, in my last book, for example – and this is a great chance for me to reflect about the theme behind many themes,” Harvey said.

According to Katherine Bennett, BBC student assistant at the Honors College, the topic of curiosity is an integral component in everyone’s lives; it drives learning and expands knowledge.

“Anyone who appreciates the value of curiosity will appreciate Dr. Harvey’s lecture,” Bennett said.

The second lecture, “Using one’s talents to improve the quality of humanit,” will be presented by Ronald P. Fisher, professor of legal psychology, on Nov. 6.

Mary Lou Pfeiffer, adjunct professor of religious studies, will be giving the last lecture in the series on Dec. 11.

Beginning at 8 p.m. in the Mary Ann Wolfe Theater at the Wolfe University Center, the event will be free and open for students, faculty, staff and the North Miami community.

Friends of Wine will hold wine tastings before and after the November and December lectures. Working alongside TSA, Hawkins said she decided to start the series to benefit students outside of the classroom. Her goal was to give students a chance to see their professors on a more personal level.

“Tau Sigma Alpha Honor Society has a mission to ‘make students’ dreams a reality,’ said Antonina Shachar, a psychology and philosophy major and member of TSA. "If one of our members can come up with a meaningful event which can raise awareness or broaden perspectives, we will draw upon all available resources to carry out the plan.”

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Imagine this. You bite into a bagel, and begin to taste it and feel the different textures on your tongue. First, the toasted crusty outside of the bagel, followed by the softer inside. Finally, the layers start to reveal themselves: smooth-as-silk cream cheese, tart and sour veggies and finally, the salty, buttery finish of the lox. Sounds like a foodgasm to me.

The open-faced lox and bagel sandwich is a brunch staple – a food that is neither light enough for breakfast nor hearty enough for lunch – introduced to the American dining district cluttered with deli-style restaurants in the 1950s – is now available in corporate chain, but let’s be realistic, it serves you only grunts a few words during your stop: “Thin sliced?”

“Stop here on your way to class and eat anything from breakfast fast meals to other deli staples at their sit-down deli restaurant. The lox and bagel platter comes with your choice of bagel – go with the stinky ones, like onion or garlic-hand-pressed cream cheese, an assortment of veggies like cucumber, tomato, olives and, of course, the star of the show, the lox. If you want to actually have brunch, but don’t want to pay $30 to fill up on eggs and prime rib, hit up Sage’s deli counter and buy a pound of your favorite smoked fish. You will be able to satisfy the nova needs of 10-12 people with a pound, and it costs roughly $20. With your remaining $10, stock up on the fixings – bagels, cream cheese and veggies, and you are still feeding 10 people for the price of one South Florida brunch.

Although Sage has great bagels, I prefer mine a little Americanized. The traditional Jewish-style bagel has a thick, hard crust even before toasting and has a dense middle, while the corporate interpretation, like those served at Einstein Bros. are soft, airy and chewy, and only develop their outer crust during toasting.

My suggestion is to definitely toast your bagels. There is nothing like the dynamic hot/cold play on your palate from a toasted bagel and cold, whipped cream cheese– a true foodgasm.

Brunches at my house consist of a pound of Sage’s finest nova, sliced thin, alongside our dozen bucket from Einstein – 13 bagels and two tubs of double-whipped cream cheese ($12.99). Fresh slices of juicy tomatoes, thin-sliced red onion and pickled capers are served, and everyone creates their own personal lox and bagel sandwich. Finish this brunch off with a tall, cold glass of fresh-squeezed orange juice and you’ve just had a brunch-fest of champions, not to mention a foodgasm. Need help with a recipe or finding a place to eat? Bianca is here to help! Send any questions, comments or Foodgasm ideas to bianca.rojas@fi usm.com.
Miami Dade College no pushover institution

TOO CONVENIENT

On-demand devices will be the demise of television

KISHORE T. SAWH
Staff Writer

Byline: Eric Feldman

The Wall Street Journal

Miami Dade College no pushover institution

professors who actually know

College has smaller classes with

from such a wonderful institution

status is shifted toward the stu-

ship" with Miami-Dade College,

pressed that FIU's "2+2 partner-

Reyes wrote a piece which ex-

as well because of YouTube and TiVo.

about the quality of education

I'm receiving.

If I'm complaining so much,

But we'll sooner bear witness to the extinc-

ness to the extinction of the polar animals,

thing else that really showers me with

a fi ve thousand dollar suit because he has

around the corner of Wall Street is wearing

your house, and the homeless gentleman

tents in your fridge are worth more than

that you become single-handedly respon-

of anything plastic comes from a factory

ification from around the globe detailing the

– that's all we hear nowadays. (Notice

chute this, Sarah Palin is an idiot  that, and

TOP-NOTCH SCHOOLS DON'T LET JUST

Fulbright Scholars, Phi Theta

school.

Like FIU, Miami Dade College

were just as demanding as FIU's

The only way to become bet-

ter is to realize that the faults are

Don't we have a say about

The Beacon – 4

www.fiusm.com

October 8, 2008

Miami Dade College no pushover institution

KIMBERLY C. ENGELHARDT
Staff Writer

Editor's Note: Recently,

Contributing Writer Chris Lee

Reyes wrote a piece which ex-

posed the fact that FIU's "2+2 partner-

ship" with Miami-Dade College,

which allows many students who

complete Associates' Degrees at

the college admission into our

University, is detrimental to

FIU's college rankings. Today,

we present a counterpoint in de-

fense of MDC.

As a proud alumna of Miami

Dade Honors College, I am ap-

prised to read how much of the

blame about FIU's fourth-tier

status is shifted toward the stu-

dents coming from Miami Dade

College. I, for one, am proud to

come from such a wonderful institution

that has taught me so much.

Unlike FIU, Miami Dade College

has smaller classes with

professors who actually know

your name.

Yes, there is such a thing as a

professor remembering who you are.

Unlike FIU, Miami Dade College

classes fit around your

schedule, not whatever schedule

FIU feels like giving you.

In Miami Dade, I was done

before 1 p.m. almost every day.

Despite what my professors at

Miami Dade College said about

FIU not being a great school, I

chose to come here anyway.

The quality of FIU is left to

be desired; customer service is

a three-ringed circus, classes are overcrowded and huge time gaps interfere with jobs.

At FIU, I’m lucky to leave at 3:30 p.m.

Like FIU, Miami Duke College

prides itself in its diverse student

body: Honors College students,

Fullbright Scholars, Phi Theta

Kappa members and international

students.

Some of my fellow classmates

from Miami Duke College went

to Yale, Columbia, NYU and

Stanford. We all know that these

top-notch schools don’t let just

anybody in.

Miami Duke College students

work extremely hard to reach

their goals and succeed in life.

Yes, we had other choices be-

sides FIU, UF, FSU and UM, to

name a few.

I remember back in high

school, everybody told me not to

go to Miami Duke College

because it wasn’t the greatest

school.

Following my gut instinct and

going against their advice, I dived

into the Miami Duke College

Honors program only to fi nd out

that I didn’t like it. I loved it. I

made lasting friendships, some

thing that is very hard to do in

FIU.

Anyway, I thought FIU de-

served a chance. Besides, the

School of Journalism and Mass

Communications is one of the

harder programs to get into FIU.

Not to mention that the Honors

College at Miami Dade was

harder programs to get into FIU.

No one will publish any music, print,

shows, movies – anything – if they don’t

get any money.

Even if people did pay, they

wouldn’t sit through the commercials

that pay for a show, they’d just hit

fast forward.

And how honest do you think

shows available on computers

would be if they were sponsored by say,

Apple?

Having a TV show and no commer-

cials is like speaking with only con-

sens. You need a vowel or it

doesn’t work.

Suing really is not an op-

tion either. It seems that even

if you attacked YouTube for airing your show and you don’t see a penny in return – like

Robert Tur attempted in 2006 –

they might have to take it down, but

it’ll only pop up on the next day

on some new Web site.

What’s the point of suing some-

one whose only belongings is a lap-

top and a matching set of SpongeBob

Square Pants underwear and socks?

It seems that everywhere I turn, tech-

nology is taking over.

There are now robots that have

tiny grey matter to search for a power sup-

ply when their juice is done. Handing

over anything more to technology is

hell, now seeing as though jobs are

dropping like flies.

I guess at some point we can just turn

off the machines and start over. But can

we? Can you turn off the Internet?

I don’t care much about our

sports teams. I care a lot more

about the quality of education

I’m receiving.

That’s a good question, but

I will answer you simply and di-

rectly: I believe that FIU can

change and become a better

school.

The only way to become bet-

ter is to realize that the faults are

not coming from students being

accepted, but the system itself.

After all, we’re the ones fund-

ing it with our tuition money.

Don’t we have a say about

how bad our school is and how

we can improve it?
Web site eases stress of college application process

DIANA JORDAN
Contributing Writer

College-bound students’ prayers have been answered in the form of tell-all Web site Unigo, created by a recent Wesleyan graduate, Jordan Goldman.

Knowing the difficulties high school students face when choosing which higher education institution to attend, Goldman set out to create a one-stop site to aid students and parents alike. During the difficult years of sorting through hundreds of schools, students can become overwhelmed with books advising how to get into college.

The Web site caters to tens of thousands of students and parents across North America in hopes of making the burden-some process of college application less stressful. Although the site cannot guarantee students’ admission into the schools of their choice, it does provide them with critical and useful information about 267 schools.

This site is unique in several ways, including the fact that the majority of the information provided has been obtained from students who attend the schools. Not surprisingly, students would rather learn from others.

“The site is beneficial because the information is coming from other students who have experienced what they are commenting on,” said Valeska Rodriguez, a freshman majoring in business.

To date, over 30,000 student opinions have been listed in the forms of answers to questionnaires, photos, videos and blog entries. All members of Unigo create user profiles in order to facilitate other students’ searches for specific peer opinions.

Although students already attending a university most likely know important information about their school, the site allows them a place to discuss professors, school spirit, majors and their school’s overall atmosphere.

Students will be glad to hear the site offers a large quantity of generally unbiased information about the school provided by students from diverse backgrounds and majors.

“Unigo helped me adjust to life at FIU by providing advice about practical things [like] getting to school [earlier] to find parking,” said Carmen Sarduy, a freshman majoring in psychology.

Students will also find positive statements about the University, such as “It is located in an exciting city,” “There are free concerts” and “it provides a safe environment,” as well as negative feedback, including criticism of inadequate parking, budget cuts and a lack of enthusiasm for the school.

The site serves as a medium for all current and future Golden Panthers to express themselves freely about their school or to rent and future Golden Panthers to express their school or to learn from others.

“I liked the fact that the Web site provided positive and negative aspects of the school and that the students’ comments were honest. I would like to see more information about professors and a sports section with updates on our teams,” said Donna Perez, a freshman majoring in English.

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TNA star Consequences

Creed discusses career, life

INTERVIEW, page 5

down there that I would never feel like reading.

TB: So how did you start in professional wrestling?

CC: I started training under Rob Adonis and learned a ton that summer. When I went to school in South Carolina I met up with a guy named Brodie Ray Chase and he finished up my training. He taught me more than I could ever repay him for.

We then driving around the south-east on weekends trying to find places to wrestle and things like that so it kind of snowballed right after I met Rob into what it is now.

TB: With Kurt Angle coming from the WWE, how has that impacted TNA? In what way?

CC: It’s been great. Kurt Angle is one of the best, if not the best, in the world. And him and being on the roster has done great things for TNA.

It has opened so many doors for us and gotten us so much more popularity now that we’ve got guys like him.

It helps the younger guys like us because we can learn from people who have the knowledge.

TB: I understand that you went to Furman University and you majored in psychology and philosophy. What are some of the reasons why you chose those two?

CC: I just love psychology and understanding why people are the way they are and how the brain works and things like that - what does what and why.

It’s just always been really interesting to me. If I’m not able to wrestle then I want to do something in psychology. And actually in my psychology courses I took an autism seminar and I really got a passion for learning about autism and so I’d do therapy with kids and things like that. It’s really something that is really close to me - psychology - specifically children’s autism is what I want to do if I’m not able to wrestle.

TB: In terms of TNA Wrestling, how is this product different from other wrestling programs such as the WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) or the old school WCW (World Championship Wrestling) or ECW (Extreme Championship Wrestling) and what do you bring to the table to attract more fans and more viewers?

CC: It’s in the name, Total Nonstop Action. That’s never really a dull moment in the show. From the moment it starts to the moment it ends you are on the edge of your seat.

There’s action, there’s drama, there’s everything wrapped up into one. And that’s something that other companies don’t have and it’s amazing to watch the shows.

For the rest of the interview, check out FIUSM.com.

Latin culture flourishes campus during Hispanic Heritage Month

LUCIA SASTRE

Staff Writer

Hispanic Heritage Month comes once every year, yet it seems many students are unaware of its existence. However, there is a community to this multiethnic society.

Hispanic Heritage Month was started to inform people about Hispanic culture and Latin culture through a wide array of activities.

“Last year, the Student Programming Council featured Carnival in the University Park campus, where people were able to sample food, read up on different countries and attend a concert,” said Cristyana Rodriguez, a presidential candidate for External Affairs in SPC.

For many, it is an important time to learn and get in touch with their Hispanic culture.

“I love Hispanic Heritage Month. Considering that I am Hispanic, I take great pride in my culture and seeing it flourish like this in my own school makes me feel right at home,” said junior Emilene Perez.

One of the biggest events that will take place this month is called the Latina College Life Tour. The tour will be set up in the Graham Center Ballrooms lawn between Oct. 7-8 and will feature a variety of activities.

“There will be a fashion show from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the ballrooms and on Oct. 8 there will be a movie screening in GC 140. The tour seeks to promote Hispanic culture in the University through displays including music, fashion and film,” Rodriguez said.

SPC is in charge of Hispanic Heritage Month and the Latina College Life Tour. Along with an executive board, a group of event directors and a strong number of members, they represent the basis that makes Hispanic Heritage Month run smoothly.

“Together, we network outside the organization, make decisions and plan out all the details of any given SPC event. We also seek to maintain clear communication with the agents, vendors and artists that we are working with. At the event, we have individual tasks and pull through as an efficient team,” Rodriguez said.

Sophomore Catalina Rueda has been waiting anxiously for Hispanic Heritage Month.

“I never know how it’s been. So many people seem to be involved and care so much about the Hispanic community. It is as though your roots are always here and that’s an experience words can’t explain,” she said.

Hispanic Heritage is an event that is important to both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students.

“Hispanic Heritage is essential within any given school, Rodriguez said. “It is a topic that everyone should be informed about and something that should be enjoyed and celebrated.”

FIUSM is the perfect venue to host this as it is infused with so much Hispanic and Latin culture. To do so is about remembering my roots and gaining a new sense of pride for my ethnicity.”
Miami Heat takes the show on the road for preseason in Europe

TOM REYNOLDS  AP Staff Writer

For the Miami Heat, a week in Europe may seem nothing like a vacation. Sure, they’ll get to gather at the Edelf Towner and take a bus ride through the streets of England’s biggest city, snapping photos and making videos like just about every other tourist. Dwyane Wade said he’s been thinking about the trip for weeks. Udson Haslem is anxious to play in France again. Michael Beasley, well, he’s just leery of the long flight.

But for Heat coach Erik Spoelstra, it’s a business trip — and he’d like his team to remember that.

The Heat will spend seven days overseas, playing the New Jersey Nets on Thursday in Paris and then again on Sunday, London in the coming annual NBA Europe Live tour. It’s a long trip, yet Spoelstra thinks the extra time together as a team could prove valuable.

The prospects of a nine- game series starting in about three weeks. There is a chance to bond and practice and do things outside of the court to spend time with each other,” Spoelstra said. “We do have new players. We have a bunch of guys coming from different places and it’s available to spend time like that. I’m hoping guys will spend time together, in another country, and get a better understanding of each other — starting the process of us being together.”

Wade, who has pulled out of plans to do any television work for the season in recent times, Traving with the U.S. Olympic basketball team said he’d like to spend some time overseas, even if it’s not in the official capacity. Wade’s Olympic success and All-Star status surely will make him recognizable even to the casual European fan, Haslem’s presence will add intrigue to the game in Paris.

Even when Heat president Pat Riley is vacationing in Europe, he’s recognizable. Riley, his wife Chris and their actor friends Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones were on a business trip together as part of the world this summer, when Tour de France officials were looking for celebrities to present the yellow jersey after a stage of cycling’s most famous race. They inquired about Douglas’ availability, and someone in the vacationing party suggested Riley assist as well.

“It’s not like he has a choice.”

Beasley was one of the Heat players who got to be thankful and at the same time, suffered a serious setback. That day would come after his freshman season, sitting out an entire season to perform on the second line of organized football for a year in the hoopla and post-game celebrations.

Coach Cristobal brings championship experience throughout across town to try to win a bid for a second consecutive national championship and fifth overall would be denoted by Alabama in a 34-13 win.

To make matters worse, Cristobal, a fifth-year senior by the time, suffered a serious knee injury that hurt his draft stock significantly and kept him out of organized football for a year.

The injury certainly was a setback for the 1992 First Team All Big East Conference selection, though, makes no excuses.

“It does happen. The last thing I ever wanted to be was a guy who always blamed not being able to go to the next level on an injury. When it happened, I worked my butt off and tried to get back in time and for whatever reason, I couldn’t go as high in the NFL as I wanted to. As much as that kills you inside as a player, you also have to be thankful and at the end of the day, you live to play another day,” he said.

That day would come after 7 months of rehab and sitting out an entire season as it would be an opportunity to perform on the second grandest stage of football: The NFL Preseason.

Cristobal spent the 1994 training camp with the Wade Phillips’ led Denver Broncos, signing as a free agent. He was cut after just three preseason games, raged before the start of the regular season.

While in Broncos training camp, he got a small taste of what the pros are about, and got to share a few offensive repetitions with the likes of John Elway and Shannon Sharpe.

“It was the ultimate dream come true. There were some unbelievable moments and there were a lot of us competing for those jobs. Those were real trying times but an unbelievable experience,” he said.

With the desire to reach the top level still there, Cristobal made one last attempt for the NFL by joining the Amsterdam Admirals of the NFL Europe league which had become a safety net for players who were attempting to prolong their careers. Unfortunately, after two years overseas and even a World Bowl appearance in 1995 (the equivalent to the NFL’s Super Bowl), Cristobal returned to the states hoping the two-year sacrifice would pay off, but he was once again denied.

From then, it took Cristobal just three weeks to realize it was the end of the road. He had several tryouts, didn’t receive any contract offers. A disappointed athlete.

I don’t know if you could ask for a more blessed career. The culture and mentality that was created and getting placed in an environment like that has really helped me as a human being.

Mario Cristobal, Head Coach

Miami Heat, well, he’s just leery about as a team could prove valuable.

The experiences and lessons learned are what he is teaching his young men here at FIU.

While the team is learning at a day’s rate and still quite far away from reaching their ultimate goal, he hopes and has a vision for the Golden Panthers to achieve some of the successes that he had when he was the one with the helmet and shoulder pads on.

When exactly it will happen is unknown but for now, the Golden Panthers have a foundation to build upon: they are led by an individual that has tasted success many times.
Cristobal draws credibility from experience on the field

**JONATHAN ALPERT**
Asst. Sports Director

FIU Women’s Volleyball split a tough weekend road trip, losing to Middle Tennessee State (12-3, 2-1 Sun Belt) in four sets on Friday, and edging Western Kentucky (13-4, 2-1 SBC) in 5 sets on Saturday.

The three squads are the toast of the Sun Belt East Division with a game or less separating them atop the division.

Despite the split, FIU leads the division with a 13-4 overall record and a 3-1 conference record.

Before the trip, Head Coach Danijela Tomic addressed the challenge the team faced.

“Playing them (MTSU and WKU) second love. As a second team offensive lineman, played in three national championship games winning two, while still being a part of an NCAA-record 58 victory.

When Mario Cristobal entered Christopher Columbus High School as a freshman at just 5’5 and 130 lbs, he figured that he would be playing the most popular sport in this city, baseball, with football as his second love.

Though Cristobal was a season-long backup as a freshman on the football team that Spring but was cut. It was then when he realized that the game of football was his true calling.

“I was always drawn to it. I just loved the fact that it was a physical, violent game. It’s almost like a modern-day gladiatorial combat,” Cristobal said.

Another reason for Cristobal’s switch of passion was the fact that his older brother, Luis, was on the same squad – which allowed for a little bit of a sibling rivalry.

“I always wanted to beat him because we were always fighting,” Cristobal said of his brother and fellow offensive lineman.

The consequences of leaving the game of baseball to pursue football ultimately paid off remarkably well for Cristobal several years later, when he was recruited by Jimmy Johnson to play for the University of Miami in 1988. The move reunited the Cristobal brothers as the two would be participants in an era of college football that has been considered among the greatest of all time, when the University of Miami dominated the national scene for close to a decade.

Cristobal, in his five year career as an offensive lineman, played in three national championship games winning two, while also being a part of an NCAA-record 58 game home winning streak at the now-defunct Orange Bowl. Cristobal knows how fortunate he was to reach college football’s pinnacle, he also knows the differences between the two national championship victories.

“It was a second team offensive lineman and it was a little bit surreal. It was something that we had to do at the beginning of the season so it was obviously a tremendous goal accomplished,” he said of 1989 team that finished the season at 11-1 and defeated Alabama 32-25 in the Sugar Bowl for the program’s third national championship.

Just two years later, on Jan. 1, 1990, Cristobal’s team captured another national championship in a 22-0 shutout victory over Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. The 1991 team did not lose a game (12-0) and Cristobal’s role as a starter made the victory seem more as a personal culmination of sorts, particularly given the team retreated back to their hotel that night in Miami.