Mayoral candidate’s campaign begins in Graham Center

JONATHAN DAVILA  Staff Writer

A candidate nominated by the Miami-based Socialist Workers Party to run for city of Miami mayor in November began his campaign at the University last week.

Omari Musa, who was on the ballot for the same office in 2005, sat at an information table inside the Graham Center on Jan. 21. He handed out fliers and spoke to passersby about issues he hopes to address.

“The first thing I would do is introduce a resolution and organize people to demand jobs for all,” he said in an interview with The Beacon. “We call for a mass program of public works.”

The public works program would include the building of schools, day-care centers, housing and the reconstruction of bridges and roads, according to Musa.

The idea of such a large program raised questions about the project’s feasibility.

“This ideas — they sound like they are not grounded in reality,” Musa said.

They’re not practical,” said Chris Cabral, co-president of the College Democrats and Student Government Association senator. “The city of Miami mayor does not have the power or the funds to do all of that stuff. It’s completely unrealistic.”

Jayneqy Robaina, the executive director for the Florida Federation of College Republicans, also questioned whether such a project would be financially possible.

“It’s all great and good, but it’s a lot of money. Where will the money come from?” he said.

“They sounds like an example of someone who is overreaching their boundaries in order to get elected.”

Musa said the money would come from the more affluent families in the country.

“We’ve got millions of people in the United States, literally millions, who live off of

MUSA, page 2

EARLY CAMPAIGN: City of Miami mayor candidate, Omari Musa, speaks to Francois De La Torre, history major, about his campaign.

Chung brings mastery to post

DAVID BARRIOS  Senior Staff Writer

Robert Chung sits behind a bookshelf in a small office he shares with Student Government Council at University Park Senate Speaker Jean Rosene. Inside the bookshelf are countless notebooks filled with budget information and procedures left by his predecessors.

The 24-year-old Chung, born in Java State with parents from Hong Kong, is the comptroller of SGC-UP.

“He came into this position with a lot of passion,” said Rosene. “He’s constantly researching other universities and benchmarking our strengths and weaknesses.”

Chung was originally hired for his job by Chief of Staff Anthony Rionda.

“He had a good background with the College of Arts and Sciences as treasurer for the Council for Student Organizations,” said Rionda. “He also had a good business background and he even had an internship with Caterpillar tractors. He’s one of those people you can count on to do their part and do it right.”

Jan. 27 was the last day for the universities departments to submit budget requests to SGA.

The rest of the semester will be spent organizing and passing the 2009-2010 budgets for SGA.

The budget for the 2008-2009 school year was $9.6 million; the budget for 2009-2010 has yet to be finalized.

“We have various [budget] hearings coming up,” said Chung, a finance major.

Budget requests come from all of the departments at the University that are funded by SGA.

“Hearings for University-wide student service departments will be held in a joint meeting early in February. Fees for orientation and welcome back week, for example, are considered University-wide fees since they involve both campuses,” said Chung.

However, for a department like career services, which has an office at both the UP and BBC campuses, the budgets are divided between the respective campuses.

“Last year, they came in under University-wide hearings but, this year, because they want a more flexible budget, they’ll now be heard at campus specific hearings,” Chung said. “Once we have all of the figures in mind, we’ll set SGA, page 2

for fund raising

JULIO MENACHE  Staff Writer

At a Jan. 27 Faculty Senate meeting, Kathleen Blais, chairwoman of the Budget Committee, alongside Vice President and CFO Vivian Sanchez, stressed there is a need to expand the auxiliaries, which are self-supporting entities that provide a service for students, faculty and staff.

Auxiliary enterprises may play a pivotal role in helping the University cope with the current economic recession.

The Department of Parking and Transportation and the bookstore are examples of such entities.

“If we expand auxiliaries, it will make for better services and it will allow us to make more money,” Sanchez told Senate members.

Blais and Sanchez both called for an increase in auxiliary funds and in faculty “securing contracts and grants.”

Sanchez revealed in her presentation on the budget that the University will experience an estimated $12.5 million cut in state funds.

FIU could see an even steeper state cut of $46.2 million in funds for 2009-2010 as the recession continues to grip the country.

One major source of state funds that is expected to decrease is lottery funds, $6 million of which is usually allotted for the

FACULTY, page 2

Vice provost agrees to stay until 2010

DIANELYS MARTINEZ  Staff Writer

Joseph West, dean of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management and interim vice provost for the Biscayne Bay Campus, has agreed to be the vice provost for BBC through August 2010.

West had planned to step through August 2009 as both dean and interim vice provost, extending his previous plans to step down as dean in August 2008.

“I’m happy because it is necessary and I’m happy that I can do it,” said West. “It would be nice to be on sabbatical now, but I understand the situation. We have budget cuts, we’re constrained; this is a
the Bill Cosford Cinema at UM located on Miller Drive.

The Commerce Department is due to report on the pace of the credit markets. They are also ready to purchase and credit flowing once again.

NATIONAL

nation to magnet schools, cutting the number of days all
expects another $140 million to be cut next year. The
Broward schools brace for more budget cuts

2

local

Broward schools brace for more budget cuts

After months of tapping into the reserves and being able to manage its budget with slight cuts, the Broward School Board will have to make bigger cuts that include cancelling programmes and eliminating jobs.

The district had to cut approximately $13.0 million from its $2 billion operating budget in the past year but expects another $140 million to be cut next year. The elimination of some high school sports, transportation to magnet schools, cutting the number of days all employees work and eliminating jobs will all play on the table. According to an article in The Miami Herald. The Board will have a series of workshops in the coming months to find ways to cut and spare certain programs.

The Federal Reserve keeps its key interest rate near zero percent on Jan. 28, and said it is prepared to take additional steps to try to fix the troubled U.S. economy and credit markets. They are also ready to purchase longer term treasuries if it determines that such a move will help get credit flowing once again.

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Dean West accepts vice provost appointment

BBC, page 1
difficult time. I can do the job.
August 2010 will be his 11th year as dean of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. As vice provost, West has five projects underway.

Surveys were sent out to students and faculty about the services offered at BBC, as well as their perceptions of the level of professionalism from all departments, including the office of vice provost. The survey results will be reviewed by the office of vice provost, and if needed, changes will be made to campus services.

He says, and it’s not yet confirmed, Jan. 30, six classes have been scheduled to provide customer service training for BBC employees, though they are not mandatory. The classes alternate between mornings and afternoons, and four of them are already full with a total of 30 employees each.

One of West’s other projects involves an environmental initiative to make BBC more environmentally friendly. Jennifer Grimm, the environmental coordinator for BBC, was hired for this purpose as well as other environmental projects.

For the next two years, projects will be developed with the help of the Department of Environmental Resource Management to return BBC to its native habitat, according to West. $50,000 have already been raised to begin landscaping the entry way of the campus.

West wants to create meditation areas, with grottos where students can read, relax and think. “We want this campus to have the feel of a liberal arts college,” West said.

“We have a hearing for the campus budget every year, as well as keep track of the funding needed. “In approval of hearings we want to have a fair distribution of the budget for next year, not to waste money on events that cater to a selected portion, but rather, to the whole student body, and allocate funds we receive the best way possible,” Becerra-Pineda said.

“He’s a great guy, I share an office with him,” said Paul. “He’s meticulous at making sure that the students money are being represented accordingly.”

The most recent version of the Finance Codes, which regard the A&S fees, are appropriated to SGC-BBC and Biscayne Bays campuses for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

The comptroller is responsible for assisting SGC-BBC, as well as auditing SGA committees, coun-
cil and departments to ensure proper spending practices, according to the SGA constitution.

As comptroller, Becerra-Pineda also attends finance committee meetings, executive board meetings, where council members discuss what each has planned, and what each is currently working on, and weekly general meetings with the rest of the council, to which students are welcome to attend to overview ideas, concerns and resolutions.

Becerra-Pineda is also responsible for verifying SGC-BBC Financial Proposal forms that need to be processed. These proposal forms go to the finance committee when unappropriated money is requested for a particular event.

Becerra-Pineda also processes File for Funds, reports that give organizations and clubs permission to use funds from their appropriated budget.

“We [the finance committee] have been working on finance codes to apply to the University as a whole. “I want to finish the Finance Codes this semester so they can be used for the upcoming years, as well as keep track of the budget (by) not spending too much on things that don’t benefit the students,” Becerra-Pineda said.

“His a great guy, I share an office with him,” said Paul. “He’s meticulous at making sure that the students money are being represented accordingly.”

The current version of the Finance Codes, which regard the A&S fees, are from 1999, so Becerra-Pineda and Robert Chung, SGC-BBC comptroller, have been working together to update the codes to apply to the University as a whole.

“West always kept a close eye on the finances, and when needed, he came to the office, and if needed, changes will be made to campus services. He says, and it’s not yet confirmed, Jan. 30, six classes have been scheduled to provide customer service training for BBC employees, though they are not mandatory. The classes alternate between mornings and afternoons, and four of them are already full with a total of 30 employees each.

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the Bush administration's aims of the War on Terror. It has been the withholding information critical to suspected terrorists believed to be "black prisons." 

making plans to shut down the Guantanamo Bay, suspending all signed an executive order to close that most inmates of Guantanamo detention center and other CIA employees (both past and present) of Wal-Mart in the United States. Dukes claimed that her lawsuit was dismissed to the largest workplace-bias lawsuit. In 2004, the Supreme Court was introduced to the largest workplace-bias lawsuit in history, Dukes vs. Wal-Mart, according to Equal Rights Advocates. Betty Dukes, a 54-year-old greeter, at a Wal-Mart store in California, sued Wal-Mart under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, alleging gender discrimination. On June 21, 2004, a federal judge ruled that her lawsuit could go to trial as a class action with the massive support of up to 1.6 million female employees (both past and present) of Wal-Mart in the United States. Dukes claimed the and all of the women lost promotions, bonuses, pay and ultimately their jobs because they complained. Male pharmacists, on the other hand, who formerly or currently worked at Wal-Mart, had faced different treatment in terms of pay and promotions. The suit threatens Wal-Mart with as much as $5.10 billion in punitive damages. The cases of discriminatory practices are rising from stores all across the country as more women – wives, mothers and grandmothers – speak out against the retail giant. The lawsuit has already brought important changes to Wal-Mart’s workers; women were recently hired into senior staff positions, a new job posting system for manager-in-training positions has been implemented and a host of other personnel changes have been made. 

In addition to gender discrimination lawsuits, Wal-Mart faces a number of other similar lawsuits that charge the retailer with breaking labor laws. The enterprise has undergone attacks of exploitation and allegations of running a U.S.-based sweatshop. One particular case involves 187,000 current and former employees who worked at Wal-Mart and Sam’s Club from March 1998 through May 2006. Workers united in a force to protest against Wal-Mart for not allowing them to rest or meal breaks during their shift. A jury last year awarded them approximately $78.5 million. Of course, Wal-Mart disagreed with the final decision of the case. But really, what is $78.5 million to the world's largest company? It certainly isn’t an arm and a leg of a loss. It barely even scrapes the surface.

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Obama’s closure of Guantanamo Bay shows morality

MATTHEW RUCKMAN
Staff Writer

On Jan. 24, President Obama signed an executive order to close Guantanamo Bay, suspending all ongoing military tribunals and making plans to shut down the detention center and other CIA “black prisons.”

This couldn’t come too soon. Since 2001, Guantanamo Bay has been used as a place to house suspected terrorists believed to be withholding information critical to the war on terror. It has been the elephant in the room concerning American foreign and domestic policy, especially in regard to the Bush administration’s aims of spreading “freedom and justice” abroad.

A hypocritical objective given that most inmates of Guantanamo never received a fair trial, the Associated Press reported that over 500 were recently released when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the government’s right to hold prisoners beyond the reach of U.S. courts.

Guantanamo also served as a citadel for torture and represented a big fat pimple on the face of America; a place to brutalize individuals, too distant from U.S. shores for anyone to hear the scream. The Justice Department defined legal interrogation as anything that was the “…equivalent in intensity to the pain accompanying serious physical injury, such as organ failure, impairment of bodily function, or even death.” It is a truth universally acknowledged: When you want someone tortured properly, you send them to Cuba. The detention facility became synonymous with the “human rights with your fingers crossed” policy that the Bush administration espoused, which placed our country alongside other practitioners of torture like Pol Pot and, ironically enough, Saddam Hussein.

The Washington Post reported that one U.S. official even said, “If you don’t violate someone’s human rights some of the time, you probably aren’t doing your job.” This is why the closure of Guantanamo and other CIA prisons comes as such a welcome event. We can finally say that we believe in fairness and justice, with no laughing or laughably redressing torture.

It’s a feeling akin to what the Nazi opposition must have felt when the concentration camps were liberated; a collective sigh of relief with the ultimate knowledge that our taxes are not supporting the torture of some guy stuck in a hole and penned up like a pig. It’s a great feeling, but presents a daunting question: Are we safe without the information extracted through torture? There are benefits in using torture but there is also peace in a grounded moral foundation. We have to prepare to accept a certain level of danger to remain a democracy, with all the liberties that entails. What it comes down to is choice. To be a nation of laws, a person of ideals, or to be that other entity that cares about its own preservation at the cost of everything else – like human decency.

I’m glad Obama made his decision and recognized that the choice between safety and ethics isn’t a choice at all. In shutting down Guantanamo, Obama returned America to its proper place: a place where values are not shirked in the face of disaster, but instead held and gripped, so that we may rise above the tide of terrorism.
2009 video games deliver brawls, shoot 'em ups aplenty

JONATHAN DAVILA
Staff Writer

So what do we gamers have to look forward to in the early portion of 2009?

Let's take a look.

F.E.A.R. 2: PROJECT ORIGIN (X360, PS3, PC)

The well-received supernatural first-person shooter F.E.A.R. has had two expansion packs since its original release on the PC in 2005.

Finally, players will continue the story of Alma, the creepy psychic girl who wants to destroy the world after some company impregnated her to try and produce genetically-engineered, psychic soldiers.

You won’t be in Point Man’s shoes this time around, though – F.E.A.R. 2 puts you between the ears of Michael Becket, a Delta Force operator.


STREET FIGHTER IV (X360, PS3)

It’s been 10 years since the release of a true Street Fighter sequel, and Capcom is bringing it back in style. The 2D fighter embraces cel-shaded visuals and gameplay more reminiscent of Street Fighter II Turbo than more recent iterations.

The coin-operated arcade game has already been released in Japan, and some arcades in the U.S. have imported it, so you may be able to get a sneak peek of the fighter at local arcades.

Console versions of the game will be in stores on Feb. 17, so start practicing your hadokens and sonic booms.

KILLZONE 2 (PS3)

This sci-fi first-person shooter was originally slated for release in late 2008, but was delayed for unknown reasons (cough, Resistance 2). Guerilla Games probably needed the extra time to polish the frenetic, guns blazing gameplay that will feature worldwide, online multiplayer for the first time.

Up to 32 players can connect into one match, and the game will feature a class system similar to Call of Duty.

The single-player campaign will continue the story of the Interplanetary Space Alliance as they invade the home world of the Helghan, the planet Helghan.

Killer 2 drops on Feb. 27.

RESIDENT EVIL 5 (X360, PS3)

Imagine the great gameplay from Resident Evil 4 with HD visuals, agile enemies and new light effects. Now imagine all of that with online, cooperative gameplay and you’ll get Resident Evil 5.

Players will assume the role of Chris Redfield, one of the protagonists from the original title. Redfield is joined by newcomer Sheva Alomar, the second playable character, as they venture into Africa to uncover the origin of one of the series’ many viruses.

The critically-acclaimed survival-horror series makes its return, creeping onto store shelves on March 13.

Yoga club makes you go ‘Om’

SHANNON FALCON
Staff Writer

Are you looking to de-stress this semester? Just get away from all the distractions and drown out the noise of school? Then look no further!

The University Park Yoga Club offers opportunities to feed your mind and body with stress-relieving yoga and activities.

But the Yoga Club isn’t your typical club with deadlines and inconvenient meeting times, it’s a club specifically made for its members to unwind from the tensions pressures of school and calm any anxiety that has been building up throughout the semester.

“We don’t have general meetings. General meetings tend to be ineffective in getting people to show up and it’s too stressful for students,” said Leonor Armas, president of the Yoga Club.

Yoga is a Sanskrit word that means union. It is not limited to physical exercise alone – that is merely one aspect of it.

The physical exercises and breathing techniques were originally designed to keep the body strong and healthy so that the practitioner could more easily reach for some of the deeper aspects of yoga, according to the American Yoga Association.

The union between breathing and the body during exercise can also inspire a union between one’s self and environment, creating awareness that impacts everyday behavior.

The AYA also states that yoga promotes a healthier lifestyle by ridding the body of toxins and the consumption of organic produce, avoiding the chemicals found in everyday foods. It not only benefits the body, but the environment.

“Yoga is a way to bring you to the present moment and be centered. It is about awareness and noticing your impact on yourself as well as others. Once you are able to approach situations with a clear mind and just be 100 percent focused on everything that you do, you get so much more out of life. Not only because you are always giving each little act your all, but because you end up with all of this extra time,” Armas said.

The benefits of doing yoga are many, according to Armas. Such benefits include weight control, better posture, improved balance, better sleep and more energy.

For these reasons, some students have already joined the club.

“I want to synchronize my body and mind. I would like to promote the yoga lifestyle in all imaginable aspects of my life: personal, academic and professional. I’m looking to find balance in my own life with the help of the club,” said Dorian Santos, a sophomore psychology major and new club member.

The Yoga Club also works with the Art of Living organization which maintain programs such as YES +.

YES + is a program that helps “empower young people with tools to eliminate stress, rid the system of negative emotions, develop strong social and leadership skills, heighten awareness and increase mental focus.”

Don’t stress if you don’t have much experience in the

HURRY UP AND WAIT

ORDINARY PEOPLE: About seven hundred students lined up to purchase tickets for the John Legend event.

Leonor Armas, president of the Yoga Club, said, “The Yoga Club isn’t your typical club with deadlines and inconvenient meeting times, it’s a club specifically made for its members to unwind from the tensions pressures of school and calm any anxiety that has been building up throughout the semester.”
It seems to me that Hollywood is running out of ideas. In order to make money, they rehash old movie classics and modernize them for moviegoers. The majority of the remakes fail in the horror genre, which includes Japanese horror (J-horror) films. While there have been pretty bad remakes in the past (Psycho, The Wicker Man), there have also been tremendously successful ones. Here is a list of the best remakes of all-time:

6) Little Shop of Horrors: Little Shop of Horrors was originally a black-and-white B-movie directed by Roger Corman and starring a young Jack Nicholson. Several years later, the movie was turned into an off-Broadway musical comedy and then returned to the big screen as a musical. A nerdy comedy and then returned to the big screen as a musical. A nerdy

5) Invasion of the Body Snatchers: This remake of the 1956 film, which in turn was based on a novel, is about a Department of Public Health worker (Brooke Adams) and her colleague (Donald Sutherland) who discovers that their town is slowly being invaded by pod-like aliens. Don Siegel and Kevin McCarthy, the director and star of the original film, have cameo in the film. Siegel plays a taxi driver who may or may not be a pod and McCarthy plays the character he played in the original film, only to get run over by a car.

4) The Fly: The original 1959 film featured horror legend Vincent Price as a man investigating in a case where a scientist has a horrible accident using a teleportation device with a fly in it that causes to exchange the head and body of a fly with his. Directed by David Cronenberg (Eastern Promises) and produced by Mel Brooks, the 1986 remake takes it a step further with Jeff Goldblum as brilliant and eccentric scientist who slowly transforms into a giant man/fl y hybrid after using his latest invention, two matter teleportation pods, where a fly flew into one of the pods. The film won an Oscar for its makeup, which took five hours to apply the most extensive makeup stages to Goldblum.

3) The Thing: Though this film takes certain elements from the 1951 film The Thing From Another Planet, it is different and gorier than the original film. Directed by John Carpenter, an American scientific expedition that is led by Kurt Russell is stationed in Antarctica. They are interrupted by a group of Norwegians chasing a dog in a helicopter. What they did not know is that the dog mutates into a horrible creature - an alien that has the ability to transform and take the appearance of anyone amongst them.

2) Scarface: Originally a 1932 gangster film starring Paul Muni, Scarface started the trend of Tony Montana imitations and inspired the hip-hop/rap community. The story is set in 1983 where a Cuban refugee by the name of Tony Montana (Al Pacino) and his friends, Manny (Steven Bauer) build a drug empire in Miami, Florida. When it was released in 1983, the film was blasted by critics and bombed at the box office. Over time, Scarface has had cult following and eventually was ranked number 27 in the American Film Institute’s list of the ten greatest films in the genre “Gangster.”

1) The Departed: Based on the 2002 Hong Kong film called Infernal Affairs, this Oscar-winning film features an amazing ensemble cast, great plot twists and lots of blood. Two recent graduated officers from the Massachusetts State Police Academy are working on opposite of the law. Billy Costigan (Leonardo DiCaprio) is assigned to work undercover with mob boss Frank Costello (Jack Nicholson) to get evidence to arrest him. The Departed has become Martin Scorcese’s biggest hit grossing up to $132 million domestically and winner of four Oscars, including Best Picture and Director.

There has been rumors that there will be a sequel to the movie that will feature Robert De Niro as Frank Costello and the return of Sean Dignam.
Van Gundy's unconventional style inspires Magic

BY TIM REYNOLDS
AP Sports Writer

Stan Van Gundy just bought a new car. A gift from the Orlando Magic coach to himself, a reward for his team's sizzling start to the season? Not really. Van Gundy simply needed one because of engine problems in the old one.

Of course, that's what happens when someone engulfed by work forgets to change his oil for 30,000 miles. "It's not so say that it's a joyless existence," Van Gundy said. "But you don't have time to focus on the record and 'Oh, well, we're doing well' and all that. The next game up for us is Cleveland and only one game in the loss column behind reigning NBA champion Boston in the Eastern Conference standings, and the winning coach Thursday -- Van Gundy or Erik Spoelstra -- would very much be a double-edged sword. "You want to play well and have the great record," Van Gundy said. "But to be honest, what it would mean to me is I don't get those four days off. I look forward to that as a time at home where I can be with my family more. But I would love to see us on top of the East. Coaching the thing, that's not a goal of mine at all." No, his lone goal is clear. In every Magic player's locker, a picture of the NBA championship trophy is taped to a wall. With Van Gundy at the controls, Orlando has emerged as a contender -- a huge turnaround consider- ing the Magic spent much of the previous decade as little more than also-rans in the East.

"It's a long season, but obviously, success helps you get through it," Van Gundy said. "And it has been enjoyable."
A BIG ADDITION

Center Russell Hicks played in his first game since late November to score 11 points on 4-of-10 shooting at ULM. The All-SBC second teamer has missed a chunk of the season due to a stress fracture, but his presence gives the Golden Panthers an intimidating pair of post-players in him and Freddy Asprilla.

During practices, Asprilla says he has been advising Hicks to be more aggressive. “I’ve been telling [him] to be stronger on the inside to get more rebounding,” Asprilla said.

Hicks also grabbed five rebounds against ULM.

INCONSISTENT

Forward Nikola Gacesa has been one of few FIU players to stay healthy throughout the season, but his consistent minutes have come with unreliable results of late.

In Gacesa’s last six games, the junior had 17, 12 and 20 points in three contests, but he averaged less than five points in the other three.

The Belegrade native has maintained a career-high average of 10.4 points and 4.6 rebounds on the season, however.

LEADING AGAIN

Even though guard Michael Dominguez led the team in scoring while forward Alex Galindo was gone, the Puerto Rican native has regained his crown as the team’s perimeter offensive leader. He is averaging 16 points since his return.

“Nick Taylor has done a great job, but Josue gives us more of a scoring point guard,” said assistant coach Kevin Fricke.

Finally starting: Guard Josue Soto entered his first game of the season against the University of Louisiana Monroe Jan. 24. He is expected to see more playing time the rest of the season.