The Beacon, October 8, 2014

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Students get a head start in Peace Corps

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With a semester left to graduate, Shirley Silva went to the Career Services office for advice on her future. “I’m about to graduate and I don’t know what’s the next step,” said the senior religious studies major.

Career Services pointed her towards the new Peace Corps Prep program at the University that just launched this fall. Students who enroll in the program can graduate with Peace Corps recognition which helps their application process to serve as a volunteer abroad.

“All I ever wanted to do with my life is travel, meet new people from other cultures,” said Silva. “The whole program is very attractive to me and I’ve looked into it. It seems like something that I should do.”

The FIU Peace Corps Prep program, managed under the Office of Global Learning Initiatives, is the first of its kind in Florida and 15th in the nation, according to South Florida recruit Steve Hunsicker.

Students that enroll in the program must take four language courses, four global learning courses and do an 80-hour community service project by the time they graduate.

Eric Feldman, coordinator at the global learning office, said that the program is worth completing. “If they’ve done something substantial that didn’t take up 80 hours, maybe they can do another project as a supplement,” he said.

The University has a long history with the Peace Corps, counting 200 alumni that have served and 11 currently serving. About 70 students enrolled into the program this semester, some which are undecided about what they want to do with the Peace Corps, but think the program is worth completing.

Take Abby Cheeseman, for example. As a freshman international relations major, she plans to volunteer abroad.}

TEDxFIU presents 2014 event ‘Fearless Journey’

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Charles Bleiker created a pilot math program to help at-risk preschoolers in Little Havana that will soon be found in classrooms across the nation. Bleiker, a professor in the College of Education, is one of 10 University members who will be presenting their work at TEDxFIU.

One of the most highly anticipated events of the year, the third annual TEDxFIU will take viewers on a “Fearless Journey” in November through the lives of some of the University’s front-running experts and pioneers in research.

SEEN TEDxFIU, PAGE 2

Homecoming incorporates new events this year

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Alfred Vizcarra said attending FIU Homecoming is in his senior year bucket list – he doesn’t want to graduate without knowing what it’s like.

“This is my last semester at FIU and I want to go—this is my last chance,” said Vizcarra, a senior broadcast media major.

The University Homecoming Day is Saturday, Oct. 18, with the annual parade and tailgate before the Panthers take on the Marshall Thunder Herd at 7:30 p.m. in the Alamodome at FIU Stadium.

Events leading up to the big day include a talent show, a comedy show, a lounge event, a beauty pageant and the PantherProwl concert.

Vizcarra is planning on attending the Homecoming events with friends or classmates, and looks forward to this year’s concert performance Wednesday Oct. 8.

“I’ve seen him before at the Ultra Music Festival, I’m looking forward to the concert,” he said.

Two new events this year are Midday Madness and Panther Reggae Fest. Midday Madness is a spirit day to gear up for the upcoming week of Homecoming events, said Taylor Hall, assistant director of communication for the Homecoming Council. The event will include free food, games and giveaways.

“They’ll have a day to unleash the spirit of FIU,” she said.

The event begins at noon on Friday, Oct. 10 in the Betty Chapman Plaza at Modesto A. Maidique Campus.

Panther Reggae Fest, on Tuesday Oct. 14, will be a performance on the lawn by the bay at the Biscayne Bay Campus. The band will be performing from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Students at BBC will have their own spirit day to gear up for Homecoming on Monday, Oct. 13 with the Kickoff By the Bay event from noon to 4 p.m. in the BBC lawns. The event will include food, music and kayaking. Some homecoming staples students look forward to every year are the comedy show and talent show.

This year artist DL Hughley and Eddie Griffin will headline the Panther Prowl comedy show. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 15 at the FIU Arena. Panthers Got Talent begins at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday Oct. 16.

Lauren Gottlieb, a senior journalism major and part of Alpha Omicron Pi, said she looks forward to the Saturday Oct. 11 “Unleash the Crown” beauty pageant.

The Homecoming Duke and Duchess will be announced at the pageant, after the contestants showcase a talent, answer University trivia and present themselves in formal attire, among other things.

“I’m definitely going to attend and support my sorority sisters as well as the rest of the Greek community,” said Gottlieb.

The Prince and Princess will be announced at the LXX Lounge Homecoming Dance event on Friday, Oct. 17 at the BBC Ballrooms. The event begins at 7 p.m.

The Homecoming King and Queen will be announced at the Homecoming football game on Oct. 18.

Gottlieb said the tradition of Homecoming is important to FIU. Since the University is typically a commuter school, she believes events like Homecoming create a peak in school spirit.

“I think all of FIU appreciates and enjoys it. I think FIU is probably the only school I know that invites such well-known artists to their concerts,” Gottlieb said.

Previous performers include Lifehouse, Lupe Fiasco, B.O.B., J.Cole, Zend and Kaskade.

The Homecoming Day Parade, which features different student organizations, floats, performers, dancers and the marching band, begins at the parking lot beside the College of Law and will stretch past Parkview and into Tamiami Park, where students can begin to tailgate. The parade will begin about three hours before the 7:30 p.m. football game. At halftime, the Homecoming king and queen will be announced.

Voting for Homecoming Court begins on Oct. 8 and 9 at the computer labs in the Graham Center, at the BBC Academic Center One Atrium or accessed remotely through the MYFIU website.
University partners with Peace Corps for new program

CORPS, PAGE 1

major, she isn’t sure if she’ll end up joining the Peace Corps, but thought it would be good to do the program just in case.

“I’m looking forward to learning a language, maybe Spanish or Portuguese,” she said.

Some students say that Peace Corps experience can help with different endeavors.

Marquie Brown, a junior public relations major, transferred to the University this year. While moving into the dorms, she found out about the program from her resident assistant and signed up immediately.

Brown thinks that joining the Peace Corps after graduation will give her the tools she needs to meet her ultimate goal—to start her own non-profit organization.

“When I found out about the program, I knew I made the right decision coming to this school,” she said.

The majority of Peace Corps volunteers help in education, health, the environment, community economic development, youth in development and agriculture abroad.

TEDxFIU highlights University’s experts and pioneers in research

TEDxFIU, PAGE 1

as learning to read.

“In the 21st century, math is becoming more important in anything we do,” said Bleiker.

Nicole Ruggiano said giving a TED talk didn’t occur to her at first; but, she realized it could help bring the topic of aging adult health care to the main discussion.

Ruggiano, an assistant professor in the School of Social Work, researched how elderly people tend to feel like they’ve lost control over their lives and their own health care.

“My research was based on looking at older people as being experts in their own lives,” said Ruggiano.

Bringing her grandparents to their doctor’s appointments and seeing how they were shuffled around the office sparked Ruggiano’s interest in aging adult health care in college.

Ruggiano said she believes it’s time to change the general fear people have of aging, and the idea that aging means you will no longer be able to function independently.

John Dufresne, a writer and professor in the University’s Creative Writing master’s program, said he saw TEDxFIU as an opportunity to end the misconceptions people have about being a writer.

“Writing is not romantic,” said Dufresne. “Every story, in a way, is a failure.”

Dufresne’s talk is about how to think like a writer.

He said a 13-minute talk is nowhere near enough time to explain everything a beginning writer needs to know, so his focus is mainly on how to develop plot.

Dufresne, who has 12 published books, a screenplay, a full-length play and many more short stories, said he doesn’t go out much.

So he is looking forward to watching the other talks as well, and he is excited to obtain other’s ideas and broaden his horizons.

Tickets for TEDxFIU 2013 sold out in one day, and the event’s coordinators, Deborah O’Neil and Eduardo Merille, expect the same for this year.

Students and staff who did not get tickets can watch a live stream of the event at the Graham Center Pit and the Wolfe University Center. Streaming is also available online from computers and mobile devices.

Last year, more than 1,500 people tuned into the live stream. The talks are also recorded and uploaded to the national TED Talks YouTube page. Since the start of TEDxFIU two years ago, FIU talks have accumulated more than 250,000 views around the world.

This is much more than a 500 person event,” said Merille. “It’s a spread of ideas worldwide.”
Pro: FIU to be recognized worldwide through pageant

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What better way to be “Worlds Ahead” than to have the Miss Universe pageant hosted and aired at the University? From countries like Venezuela, Ukraine, Canada, Brazil and Nicaragua, 75 sparkling contestants will travel from across the globe to step foot at our U.S. Century Bank Arena at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus. Not to mention that the pageant would be broadcasted in over 190 countries along with a commercial of our University.

Besides all the glitz and glam, Donald Trump stated last Thursday that he is granting $150,000 in scholarships to first generation students. He will also provide internship opportunities to the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

With national recognition of its Food Network South Beach Wine and Food Festival and a partnership with Carnival Cruise Lines, hospitality and tourism management students are sure to continue to profit.

“I’m delighted that having the pageant on campus will also make it possible for our first generation students to receive scholarships and young people all over the world to be exposed to FIU,” said President Mark B. Rosenberg in an Oct. 2 press release.

As the University aims to expand its grounds over the Miami-Dade County Fair and Exposition, Inc., there is no doubt that FIU wants to grow its student population, especially international students.

The University has already partnered with Shorelight Education in the hopes of attracting foreign students. They are to establish a 12-month undergraduate program for these students to help provide specialized English-language instruction besides their academic coursework.

With a worldwide transmission of the University, more students from outside the country are sure to be lured towards coursework.

Con: Miss Universe eclipses major issues of interest

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In a matter of a few months, FIU will find itself in the center of the universe. Come January, the University will serve as the host of the 63rd Annual Miss Universe Pageant.

Since its announcement, all that is being focused on is the good that this will bring to the University and its community. However, it is important to note that there are also some issues to take into consideration when moving forward as the host of the Miss Universe Pageant.

The first to consider is how this event can relate to the objectification of women’s bodies, or the treatment of women as objects. Given the recent sexual assault incidents with the campus groper, would it really be smart for FIU, unfortunatly, to step foot at our University as the host of the Miss Universe Pageant?

As ridiculous as the incident was, it is important to mention that these women are “sassy, goal-oriented and aware.” They assess their participation in the pageant, one comment on current affairs that they are “savvy, goal-oriented and aware.” They assess this not only with their poise and how they present themselves but also with the personality portion of the contest in which they are judged. But this portion comes in at the very end of the pageant, with the whole crown mainly focusing on how well they look in a bathing suit and evening gown. Even with its inclusion in the pageant, one comment on current affairs alone does not fully assess the intelligence of these women or how cultured they are. For all we know, these are topics these women are previously coached on in anticipation of providing the crowd-pleasing answer. As ridiculous as the incident with the campus groper might come off as, it is still a serious issue we’re dealing with.

Regardless of how well the University will benefit from hosting this beauty pageant, it should also take into consideration what message is being sent to its community. In participating in this event as the hosting venue, are we saying that it’s ok to treat women’s bodies as trophies, as something to ogle and judge based on attractiveness?

Several of the community’s members were quick to overlook the groper incident and even made a mockery out of it. Serving as the host of the beauty pageant might simply reinforce the repressive belief that women are nothing more than a body that can be taken advantage of.

Besides the message being sent, the University should also be concerned with how the pageant can possibly interfere with traffic on campus and whether we have sufficient space to act as the venue in which it will be hosted in the first place. The 62nd Annual Miss Universe Pageant was held in the Ccnsco City Hall in Moscow, Russia, which can hold a maximum capacity of 7,233 in one of their many floor schemes. According to the Athletics website, the FIU U.S. Century Bank Arena only has a maximum capacity of 5,000 seats. This could become an issue when considering how many people will need to be accounted for throughout the event. In regards to the on-campus traffic, it would be concerning if any hype leading up to the event as well as the event itself would interfere with students and faculty trying to get to their classes. It is taking place on a Sunday but surely, it will take time before-hand for rehearsals and preparations. For a production this big, that might mean that the event organizers and everyone involved will be working on campus for quite some time.

Aside from all the business, opportunities and publicity this will bring in, bottom line is that there are still some concerns to address. They are not enough to stop the event from being hosted in our University, but they are still serious enough to be taken into consideration when moving forward.

MESSAGES FROM URANUS

WHY IS YOUR POLICE MULTINATIONAL?

I THINK IT’S AN SHOCKING ACT ON THE PART OF INCREDIBLY SOCIETIES.

BECAUSE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS.

WHO CARES, BRO? SHE’S NOT THAT TALL.

SHE’S NOT THAT MUSCULAR.

LET’S GO TO ALL OF THE NATIONS FOR PREPARATIONS.

WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (400 words maximum) to opinion@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124.

With your letter, be sure to include your name, major, year, and copy of your student ID. The Beacon will only run one letter a month from any individual.

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School of Music to host concert in remembrance of Maya Angelou

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On May 28, people all over the world mourned the loss of an iconic woman. Many know Maya Angelou as a major civil rights activist, an actress, a singer, and the author of the famous book “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.”

The School of Music will be celebrating Angelou’s life and legacy on Oct. 8 by presenting “Travelogue: France A Tribute to Maya Angelou” at the Wertheim Performing Arts Center. Brenton Alston, who was recently appointed conductor of the Wind Ensemble and Conducting, is the man behind this major event.

Alston had been planning on putting on a French themed concert for awhile, but he realized immediately after Angelou’s death that it was important he put on a concert dedicated to her.

“She is an amazing influence on what I do,” Alston said. “I remember in school I read ‘I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.’ In a lot of her poetry, it sounds like music. There’s a cadence, a rhythm and a connection. I’ve admired Angelou from a very young age.”

Alston is putting on this concert as the beginning a concert series that will focus on music and poetry from various regions such as France, China, Japan and England. The concert dedicated to Angelou, as with the other concerts in the series, will engage the audience by infusing music and literature.

“I try to do things that can involve as many different types of experiences as possible because when most people hear about a classical concert, they immediately think of the best of their lives, so I try to involve something else that can keep the experience fresh,” Alston said.

The evening will begin with a video presentation of Maya Angelou speaking and end with students in the Department of Theatre each reciting one of her poems. The concert will go back and forth between songs and poems.

“The concert will start and end with her words,” Alston mentioned. He also explained that wind, brass, and percussion groups will play during the concert and that there will be no double parts in the ensemble.

“Because of this, the responsibility and the clarity of the orchestra is immense,” Alston said. He also said that the group will operate like a large chamber ensemble and will be very flexible musically and dynamically.

“There will be moments of hushed quietness to moments that are like explosions,” Alston said.

In honor of Angelou, President Mark Rosenberg will be sharing his thoughts and remembrances of her during the concert. Maya Angelou came to FIU twice — once in 1995 during the University’s black history month celebrations, and once in 2005 to speak to a crowd of 2,000. The day after Angelou passed, Rosenberg wrote about her in an email to the FIU community on May 30. In his message, Rosenberg said,

Sadly, this week we join Angelou’s family, friends, and admirers in mourning her loss. But we take comfort in the fact, that for all of us Maya Angelou was a bright, powerful star who touched all of our lives and whose light will never be extinguished.

The concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. and tickets can be purchased at wpac.fiu.edu.

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Hidden jewel offers a taste of Central America

OWNED BY A FAMILY

As an international student, I miss home and Hispanic food a little more than Miami-born-and-raised Latinos. Of course, you’d think with all the Cuban food around that I’d come to the right place; however, it wasn’t until I uncovered this restaurant that I realized the void I felt for my Central American food.

Having come across this restaurant several weeks ago, I visited more than a few times and been able to order a variety of things—everything from breakfast and coffee to dinner and horchata, a typical Central American drink that goes great with cinnamon.

For breakfast, El Centro Americano serves a variety of plates. Eggs are a main ingredient in the majority of the servings, ranging from scrambled to sunny side up. I ordered scrambled eggs with a corta of meat or chicken to go with the eggs and beans—or white rice. It brings a reasonable amount of food—almost enough for two—and a good price. It brings a reasonable amount of food—almost enough for two—and it satisfies you well enough.

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For lunch and dinner, there’s a large variety of options to choose from. Some of my usual orders include the pan con bistec, or steak sandwich; the parrillada, a mix of various meat cuts, pork and chicken; and the chuletas de cerdo, pork chop. The pan con bistec is a favorite of mine. The meat is very flavorful, although sometimes they might come out a little drier than you’d like, they still hold the flavor well. They are accompanied by your choice of gallo pinto—rice and beans—or white rice. Additional to the large selection of foods, El Centro Americano holds a bar and specialty drinks. This restaurant also houses Regia, a Salvadorian beer recognized for its larger volume—approximately 20 ounces more than the usual 12-ounce beers.

As appetizers, El Centro Americano serves the famous Salvadorian pupusas as one of their options. A tortilla with cheese and/or fried pork in the middle, it is a great dish to satisfy a mid-afternoon’s craving. You can also go with the chicharrones; small, fried pieces of pork.

But before the appetizers, El Centro Americano offers a bowl of chips with a savory, pink house specialty sauce. For lunch and dinner, there’s a large variety of options to choose from. Some of my usual orders include the pan con bistec, or steak sandwich; the parrillada, a mix of various meat cuts, pork and chicken; and the chuletas de cerdo, pork chop. The pan con bistec is a favorite of mine. The meat is very flavorful, although sometimes they might come out a little drier than you’d like, they still hold the flavor well. They are accompanied by your choice of gallo pinto—rice and beans—or white rice. Additional to the large selection of foods, El Centro Americano holds a bar and specialty drinks. This restaurant also houses Regia, a Salvadorian beer recognized for its larger volume—approximately 20 ounces more than the usual 12-ounce beers.

Another good breakfast is the desayuno especial, which includes a six-ounce piece of meat or chicken to go with the eggs and beans—also a pretty good option.

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Panthers return home to taking on Conference Rival South Carolina

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After losing to No. 17 University of Alabama at Birmingham and a long road trip to the No. 23 University of North Carolina, the Panthers will have a chance to capitalize on home turf when they face off against the University of South Carolina Oct. 5.

Before the 2 consecutives losses to UAB Blazers and UNM Lobos, the Panthers entered with two consecutive wins against San Diego State University and Florida Gulf Coast University.

After encountering a tough rival in New Mexico, coming up short against the Lobos, the Panthers hope to raise their conference record by defeating the South Carolina Gamecocks. A victory would potentially boost the Panthers’ chances of winning their respective Division of C-USA, and a better chance of participating in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Tournament.

With an overall record of 5-4, the Gamecocks will prove to be a hard team to handle. Head Coach Scott Calabrese will look to seize the opportunity to improve the chemistry within his team, while hopefully being able to pick up a victory against what will look to be a competitive game.

Inside Look at the Gamecocks

South Carolina has proven to be a powerful opponent from the beginning of the season. In fact, the Gamecocks have played nine games overall this season, and five out of the nine games have drifted into overtime.

With the tenacity both teams have, it would be no surprise to see this game move into extra time. The Gamecocks have been consistent, but not exactly the way the team would like. While the season started on a three-game winning streak, a three-game losing streak followed.

FIU ties; keeping still in Conference USA

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A win is a win and a loss is a loss. The Panthers and Florida Atlantic University were reminded that ties do happen as well, on Sunday, Oct. 5. The important match was slated to take place Friday evening on Oct. 3, but the weather did not permit.

Coming into the 0-0 tie, both teams had plenty to play for. With four shots, three on goal. Coming into the 58th minute, Leiva rocketed two back-to-back shots, the first in the 58th minute. Leiva finished with four shots, three on goal.

As overtime loomed, desperation for a goal was present on both sides. Sophomore midfielder Alyssa Robinson launched a shot that flew wide of the goal, keeping Drinkwater at bay for the time being.

The University’s freshman goalkeeper Nevena Stojakovc made quite possibly the most important save of the match in the 72nd minute, denying FAU’s Sammy Lujan’s shot on goal.

After 90 minutes, both teams prepared for overtime.

The Panthers saw their first bit of overtime action this season on Oct. 5, but acted like they had been there before. In the 93rd minute, the Panthers were given a corner kick, taken by sophomore midfielder Madlen Weinhardt. Inching closer and closer, Head Coach Thomas Chestnutt and his team were knocking on the door of victory. The first 10-minute half concluded with a whipping four fouls on FAU.

The last minutes of the match were all-or-nothing for the Panthers, and Volz proved she wanted to give everything for a goal. A cross into the box found the head of Volz, but the attempt was blocked.
Panthers snap losing streak in win over Blazers

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The new energy Castro mentioned was quickly shown from the very first serve as they jumped out to an early lead against the Blazers. The Panthers had a hitting percentage of .476 in the set and had 12 kills with only two errors against 21 attacks. FIU had the lead the whole set and easily won 25-13.

The second set was completely different though, as it was a back and forth game early in the set that had five ties and two lead changes in total. Unfortunately though, UAB was able to win the second set 25-18. The third set was crucial for both teams as the match was tied going into that set. The Panthers were able to come out of a close one with wins 25-23. Even though they had the lead the whole set, there were still three ties.

In the fourth and final set, the Blazers were no match for the new and improved Panthers’ offense as they finished UAB off with a 12-5 run to take the set and match.

With Sunday’s win, it improved the Panthers’ record to 4-13 and 1-3 in Conference USA play. The team is now in the second half of the season and from here on out, the bulk of the conference games will be played during this stretch.

“We finally saw again how it felt to win and we are definitely going to use that and just keep winning from here on out,” Castro said.

Up next, the Panthers will be on the road for two games, the first on Friday, Oct. 10 against Charlotte and the second on Sunday, Oct. 12 against Louisiana Tech.

VOLLEYBALL

Hundreds attend the Benjamin Dash to fundraise for charity

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On Sunday, Oct. 4, Benjamin Dash came to the Biscayne Bay campus, attracting hundreds of runners to the start line to raise money for charity.

The event had food trucks, face massage stations, free energy drinks for any runner who felt that they needed a quick boost. With 10 waves of up to 50 people in each, the action was intense all day as the 5k course seemed intimidating to even the veteran runners.

“It was really hard, but we enjoyed the water obstacles that cooled us down. I joined the race for charity, and it was the only reason I ran so hard,” said Kenny Johnson donating participant of the event.

Dashers were to grab as many yellow flags from the course as possible, who were then given a monetary value based on how tough the hiding spot was. These flags were then turned in to a Benjamin Dash employee who could turn these into cold hard cash, or if the runner wanted, money for a charity of their choice.

“I gave my money to Breast Cancer Awareness of Miami,” said Johnson. “With such a great cause, it is no wonder so many came out to support local charities and foundations.”

Included in the obstacle run was a tire hill, tire flipping, wall climbs, as well as a 15-foot inverted wall that runners had to pull themselves up on.

With all their energy sapped from the earlier obstacles, runners seemed more than content to stand on the side and pay the penalty for not finishing an obstacle.

The race also featured a water slide, as well as mud pits in which participants had to crawl through under barbed wire to get to the finish line.

Not a soul passed the finish line clean, but lucky for them, the Benjamin Dash set up showers for all runners to cool and clean up after their strenuous experience.

“I think the event was perfect,” said former FIU graduate student Nicole Chang. “They really focused on making sure it helped to cool the surrounding area in a fun way.

The event was well organized and the obstacles were great. We had a lot of fun.”

For their second run ever, Benjamin Dash is looking to expand to new areas, and hopes to add an even longer race for more participants who wished for a more challenging course.

Panther team outswoims Owls

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The Panthers were also strong in the relays, winning both on the day.

In the 200 yard medley, senior Klara Andersson, junior Karin Tomekoeva and sophomore Jennifer Alfani and Jennifer Deist posted a time of 1:45:96 to not only win the title, but was also the seventh fastest time in school history.

Alfani was able to put points on the board later in the day as well, winning the 50 yard freestyle as well as the 100 yard backstroke. Arguably the top performer of the day was senior Johanna Gustafsdotir.

She set a Conference USA record in last year’s 200 yard individual medley.

Gustafsdotir won two events on the day. In the 200 freestyle, she posted a time of 1:53.24. Over in the 200 breast- stroke, she bested her top career time, as she earned a mark of 2:18.53, moving her into fifth place in school history in that event.

When asked about how the team has bonded this year, Horner was quick to give praise to his swimmers.

“We’ve done a lot of work, and put [in] a lot of effort. We went on an Academy of Leaders retreat, as well as many team-building games and activities, to bring these girls together as one unit.”

Randy Horner
Head Coach
Swimming and Diving

“We’ve done a lot of work, and put [in] a lot of effort,” Horner said. “We went on an Academy of Leaders retreat, as well as many team-building games and activities, to bring these girls together as one unit.”

FIU’s next meeting will be Oct. 18, with the Homecoming Alumni Intrasquad.
Police identified the man who fell to his death from a cruise ship mast earlier this week and are continuing the investigation into his death, which appears so far to be accidental.

Miami-Dade police named Kendall Wernet, 20, as the man who climbed the forward mast of the Carnival Ecstasy at PortMiami and fell about 20 feet onto the deck. No foul play is suspected, according to police.

“Everything points to it being an accident,” said Miami-Dade police Detective Alvaro Zabaleta.

The mast area is restricted and has signs warning passengers not to enter, said Carnival spokeswoman Jennifer de la Cruz.

Wernet, a Clemson University student, was on the cruise, along with 130 of his colleagues, as a reward for being among the top achievers of the painting contest over the past eight years.

The ASK! Center will feature state-of-the-art Windows and Apple computers, cell phone charging stations, numerous outlets, and energy-efficient lighting.

“Anyone who comes to the University is committed to students’ success,” said Cooper, who hopes that the changing library scene will be a trend sustained in the future. “This is an important start to revitalizing the larger spaces in the library. The ASK! Center will feature artwork from the winners of the International Student Photo Contest over the past eight years. Students can also expect new furniture to use reference books at.

The unveiling of a one-stop-shop for students to get exposed to new programs will be displayed around the office of Multicultural Programs and Office of LGBTQA Affirmative Action.

“The day will be celebrated at the Biscayne Campus in Panther Square. Likewise, the day will be celebrated at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus in the Graham Center Pit from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will encourage and praise people openly declaring their sexual orientation, as well as LGBTQA legal victories.

“We want people to come see what the hype is all about,” said Serrano.

Last year, the Federal Supreme Court removed a section of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, which denied federal benefits to same-sex couples.

This year, the State of Florida’s gay community and civil rights activists fought for transgender rights in the workplace, and judges are ruling the Marriage Ban unconstitutional.

Kathleen Hernandez, a public relations freshman, the student ambassador for LGBTQA, is surprised by the level of support and activism in Miami.

“It’s cool – there’s so much going on that I didn’t know about in my backyard,” Hernandez said.

Serrano said he expects people to be more open about their sexual orientation now that it’s legally accepted. However, he doesn’t want to focus on politics on this day.

One of the highlights this year is a surprise lip-sync performance, according to Serrano, who hopes it will attract a larger crowd.

Serrano said he wants the event to be centered around the lives of LGBTQA students and hopes that more international students participate.

According to FIU student population data, Hispanic and minority students make up 69 percent of the University’s student population.

Serrano said due to their conservative background, international students don’t come to these events much.

“It’s really rare to receive international students coming and asking for support,” said Serrano, who said that if they end up attending an event, they think it’s only for gays.

He said the day is for everyone to come together and accept each other’s differences.

Testimonials from different LGBTQA members will be shared as a way to help educate those in the gay community.

There is a darker tone to this day according to Serrano.

Some attendees have been bullied into admitting their sexual orientation, while others experienced rejection and neglect from close relatives and the public.

Yet, Serrano said lessons can be learned from these negative stories. He said the event will benefit both straight and LGBTQA students, as it will help them become more aware of their surroundings.

“LGBTQA is also open to straight folks who are our allies and supporting their friends,” Serrano said. “By exposing them to progressive thinking and an open society, it does let them learn a little about being a global citizen.”