Groups to raise funds online

United Way partnership helps students give back

MEENA RUPANI  Staff Writer

An easier way to reach out to students today is through the Internet, according to Sanchez-Levy. With this in mind, the University is launching an online campaign to raise funds for United Way.

The Student Online Campaign was initiated this year through a partnership between the University and United Way. Launched on Oct. 27, it is expected to attract students to help make a difference in the community.

The campaign will make it possible for student organizations to raise funds online. Each group will compete with each other and by the end of the campaign, the group that raises the most funds will be rewarded with Council for Student Organization points, funds for their organization and tickets to the FIU vs. UF football game.

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According to Mathew, the organization just needs to give them their full name, an abbreviated name for their organization, a picture and a fundraising CAMPAIGN, page 3

PHOTOS BY MEGAN KELLEY, COMPILED BY ALEX GARCIA/THE BEACON

TIBETAN MAGIC

PATIENCE: (1) Starting with a religious ceremony of prayer and blessing on Nov. 4 during Target Wednesday, students are finding it difficult to pay to live on campus.

LIFE! page 7

As scholarship awards are cut, students are finding it difficult to pay to live on campus.

LIFE! page 8

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FRANCISCO MARADIAGA 
Staff Writer

The Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus part-
nered with the Center for Excellence in Writing last week to mutually gain
exposure. The center provided a workshop while SGC-MMC provided their
Grant Center chambers, Room 150, and some snacks.

SGC-MMC vice president, Mykaelle
“Myk” Figueiredo said, this is a new
way to reach out to the concerns of
the students.

“Unfortunately, in the past, forums
have failed dramatically,” Figueiredo
told Student Media. “Forums never
work
She added that students get nothing
out of it if they don’t already have a
problem, but workshops offer an oppor-
tunity to poll students.

Entitled “Exposed! 10 Secrets to
Writing a Smashing Paper,” the work-
shop on Nov. 20 attracted around 60
people, mainly freshmen and sopho-
mores currently taking ENC 1101 and
ENC 1102.

The presentation was done by Ena
Castellanos and Courtney Just from the
CEW.

“We think it’s important especially
for ENC 1101 and ENC 1102 students,”
Just said.

Castellanos described the collabo-ation with SGC-MMC as “organic” as
some members, like Figueiredo, work
at the center. “It became a natural
fit,” she said.

Last month, the center partnered
with SGA to present a workshop for
graduate school applicants on how to
write a personal statement.

Those in attendance this month were
treated to a table of drinks and snacks.

According to the vice president, the
food only cost around $120.

SGA also had a comment card with
the promise of a personal response to
any question from the vice president.
Figueiredo later told Student Media
that she received no comments.

“The main purpose was two-fold:
one, to let students know the center
is there, and to remind students that
writing a paper is a process,” Castel-
lanos said.

Figueiredo said she is open to any
organization that would like to form
a partnership with SGC-MMC.

JESSE J. HOLLAND
LAURA WIDES-MUNDOZ
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The Supreme Court is staying out of a dispute in
Miami between school officials and civil libertarians over a book about
Cuba that depicts smiling children in communist uniforms but
avoids mention of problems in the country.

The justices on Monday rejected an appeal from the American
Civil Liberties Union of Florida that sought to prevent Miami officials
from removing the book “Vamos a Cuba” and its English-language
version, “A Visit to Cuba,” from library shelves.

The Miami-Dade County School
District board wants to ban the book
intended for children ages 5 to 8. Because it does not mention
problems in Cuba, political indoctrination of public school chil-
dren and food rationing among other
issues. Board members voted to
remove the book after a parent who
spent time as a political prisoner in
Cuba complained.

The school district would not
immediately comment on the decision.

Frank Bolanos, a former Miami-
Dade school board chair who cham-
pioned efforts to remove the book,
said he was pleased.

“I support the author’s right to
publish the book as incomplete and
defective as it may be,” he said, “but
we’re simply not required to pay for
it with taxpayers dollars,” he said,
although the district already spent
money to buy the book. Bolanos said
the case sets precedent for districts
to back parents’ rights in future cases.

The ACLU disagreed.

“These books were removed under
the guise of ‘inaccuracies,’ but the
real reason they were removed was
because the books ran afoul of the
political orthodoxy of a majority of
the school board members,” Florida
director Howard Simon said in a
statement Monday.

“If that is to become the new stan-
dard for censoring books from public
library shelves, the ACLU may be
immersed in censorship battles for
years to come.”

A federal judge in Miami ruled
that the school board should add books of different perspectives instead of
removing all books, but the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta said
the district shouldn’t be infringing on freedom of speech
rights by removing the book because
it presents an inaccurate view of
life in Cuba.

In the 2001 book by Alta Schreier
contains images of smiling children
wearing uniforms of Cuba’s commu-
nist youth group and celebrating the
country’s 1959 revolution. In
discussing daily life, the book says
children work, study and play the
same way children in other countries
do.

The case is ACLU v. Miami-Dade
County School Board, 08-1564.

Resolution honors Walker

The appropriation passed with a vote of 20 for and five against.

The senate also passed a resolution to honor senior vice president of Research Development and Graduate Education and theoretical nuclear physicist, George E. Walker.

“He developed standards of service indicators that have shown continual improvement over time in the responsiveness of that office to the needs of the research faculty,” reads the resolution.

According to the Office of Research Web site, Walker was voted by his peers as a “Fellow of the American Physical Society.”

The University’s “Fellow” status.

“FUI has benefited immensely by [his] contributions,” reads the resolution.

CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated Nov. 16, the “Home Sweet Home” photo spread’s caption incorrectly identified University President Mark Rosenberg’s wife. Her name is Eileen Rosenberg.

In the same issue, the article titled “Magazine recognizes law dean,” incorrectly stated that R. Alexander Acosta has served as U.S. attorney for 30 years. He has been appointed by George W. Bush in 2005.

The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.
Modern doctors now ‘tweet’ from operating room

NIRVI SHAH
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — In the waiting room, the patient’s family members circled a BlackBerry. About every 15 minutes, Dr. Carlos Wolf of Miami Plastic Surgery gave them a few keystrokes of information about how the patient was doing.

“Is asleep,” one of Wolf’s nurses typed at 9:13 a.m. on June 3. “Will start surgery soon.”

Less than an hour later, the nose job was complete.

“Beautiful,” the nurse typed. “She’s going to love it.”

Wolf, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube aren’t just for entertainment anymore. Wolf and doctors around Florida and the rest of the country are using the social networking tools to bring patients’ families and the general public into operating rooms, sometimes sharing step-by-step medical procedures.

They favor the real-time updates and videos as a way to reduce the way conversation. The most important thing is for me to concentrate on what I’m doing.”

And if something were to go wrong in surgery? Wolf said he or a nurse would step out to speak with the family — just like in the past.

“We think of social media as being gold,” said a South Florida mother whose teenage daughter lay in a hospital bed with melanoma. “We can do this without being nosy. We can be there for her.”

Still, Schwartz has a Facebook page and encourages patients to communicate with her via e-mail. “This is the only reason I’m here today,” the nurse typed. “Surgeries can last from 45 minutes to 2½ hours,” Lesnikoski said. “These families will get updates every 20 minutes. The patients we’ve done focus groups with have loved this concept.”

Sader, who tweets under the user name @drbilmartin, who tweets under the user name @drbilmartin, said, “It is important that we all live united,” Gonzalez-Levy said. “The students should come out to the auction, there will be a great opportunity for them to receive great prizes and get a report of what I did rather than surgery seven to 12 pieces of paper to see ‘How many times did I see Mr. Smith?’ Sader said.

In terms of whether the SOC will be repeated, this will be left up to the University community to come together to support one great cause.

“This is a student-friendly way for students to get involved in the campaign without having to spend their own money,” Eric Arneson, director, Campus Life.

The advertising of the SOC and the other activities within the United Way campaign are being managed by Arneson and two student government representatives: Helena Ramirez, senate speaker for the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus and Anthony Rionda, president of SGC-MMC.

An auction will also be held when the campaign ends. Students, faculty and staff are all invited to participate.

“The students should come out to the auction, there will be a great opportunity for them to receive great prizes such as airline tickets, art pieces, tickets to football games, and many others,” Gonzalez-Levy said.
National Geographic invites students to collect all kinds of bugs, plants for 24 hours

Students, faculty and staff from the University can spend 24 hours chasing, collecting and identifying insects, bugs and cockroaches for the National Geographic.

The National Geographic Society, one of the world’s largest non-profit scientific and educational institutions, invited the University community to next year’s BioBlitz, a 24-hour event in which teams of scientists, volunteers and community members join forces to find, identify, and learn about local plants and animal species.

The event will take place from April 30 to May 1, 2010, at Biscayne National Park located at 9700 SW 328 St.

Professors from the Department of Biological Sciences and student volunteers will be able to register for the event March 2010, according Stuart Pimm, BioBlitz expert and professor of conservation ecology at Duke University.

Apart from the species-chasing marathon, other activities at the BioBlitz include public presentations about biodiversity, field exercises with K-12 classes and teachers, demonstration of field technology and exhibits ranging from global biodiversity to local nature photography.

Suzanne Koptur, professor of plant ecology at the Department of Biological Sciences at the Modesto Maidique Campus, said she is already excited.

“I have already e-mailed the National Geographic telling them that I am interested,” Koptur said.

University professors will guide students from K-12 classes and teachers, student volunteers and public volunteers to identify and photograph species, then collect and prepare specimens for preservation and maintenance.

Last year’s BioBlitz took place in Los Angeles, Calif. at the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, where the public found and identified more than 1,700 species and organisms, plus several that have not yet been identified.

“The BioBlitz is a neat program that focuses on one site of the globe,” Koptur said. “This is our first opportunity for this event to come to South Florida, and experts in every field are coming to this event. The eyes of the world will be on this place and it’s in our own backyard.”

The term “BioBlitz” was coined by National Park Service Naturalist Susan Rusly while assisting with the first BioBlitz at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, Washington D.C. from May 31 to June 1, 1996.

The 1996 BioBlitz was organized by Sam Droege of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, a center that researches and provides information needed to manage the nation’s biological resources, and Dan Roddy of the National Park Service, a United States federal agency that manages all national parks.

This BioBlitz inspired other organizations to host a BioBlitz of their own.

According to Koptur, students with a science background are especially encouraged to volunteer, but students from all majors can register for the event.

“Anybody who is the least bit interested can help. It’s a way for people to get more interested in biology,” said Koptur. “Most people will be amazed at the diversity. There are so many plants and insects and we may even discover a new species.”

The University’s faculty will not be getting paid for the event, but Koptur describes it as a “volunteer-fun-thing.”

“We do it because we like it, my specialty is studying pollination and flowers and I love looking at plants and bugs,” Koptur said.

Pimm, who is a special contributor for NatGeo News Watch, an online news service about developments in the fields of science, nature and culture, said this is his fourth BioBlitz and he believes students have a lot to gain by participating.

“It’s an amazing opportunity to bring in students. Miami has an amazing variety of life we have in the field and it’s right under our noses,” Pimm told The Beacon.

“Meals will be provided during the 24-hour inventory and team leaders will take the stage and announce what they have found.”

For more information about BioBlitz and to register go to www.nationalgeographic.com/bioblitz.

FOODGASM

Create new family traditions with these holiday recipes

JALAPEÑO CORN BREAD

Makes one loaf

The existence of corn bread at our holiday spread shows you how cookie cutter my Thanksgiving is.

How many of you, for example, know you who pass down corn bread recipes? I know none, so I modified a simple corn bread recipe to make my own.

I only made this on Thanksgiving; it is our special treat. Don’t be afraid of the jalapeño. It does not add unbearable spice, but rather color and texture.

Serve this with some homemade honey butter and your guests will really feel like they’re in a southern home.

Sift together 1 1/2 cups of both flour and yellow cornmeal, 3/4 cup of sugar, 2 teaspoons of baking powder, 1/4 teaspoon of baking soda and 1 1/2 teaspoons of salt.

Next, mix in 3 large eggs by hand, one at a time, until they are incorporated in the batter.

Follow this with 1 1/2 cups of milk and then 1/4 cup of melted butter.

Finally, add 1/2 of a seeded and finely diced jalapeño to the mix.

If you want to add more sweetness, color and texture, add a small 6 oz. to 8 oz. can of corn to the batter.

Let the batter rest for 30 minutes. Use your time efficiently. While you wait, start another Thanksgiving task.

Bake at 375 degrees for 30 minutes, and let it sit for 10 minutes before you slice it.

LINDA’S HOLIDAY MASHED POTATOES

Makes a heaping holiday serving, over 5 lbs.

Mashed potatoes are essentially my favorite part of the meal. The potato can do no wrong in my eyes. This holiday staple is the classic side dish.

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Serve with homemade honey butter and your guests will really feel like they’re in a southern home.
Events on campus come with foreign influence

LAURA DE LA FE
Staff Writer

Biscayne Bay Campus students will continue to celebrate International Education Week with an array of events as an introduction to the University’s global learning initiative.

The Office of Global Learning Initiatives, an interdepartmental committee that includes several departments within the University, such as the Department of International Student and Scholar Services, Multicultural Programs and Services, and the Office of Campus Life & Orientation, organized a series of events to celebrate International Education Week, which started Nov. 16 at BBC.

International Education Week is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education to promote opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and to celebrate the benefits of international education, according to the IEW official Web site.

Nov. 19 will be “International Career Day” at BBC. There will be an International Job Search Strategies Workshop at 11 a.m. in the Wolfe University Center, Room 157. The workshop will help students learn tips on finding jobs in the international market. After this, there will be an Engage Workshop on global leadership, which will feature a panel discussion with the International Student Club at 1 p.m. There will also be a Job Search Strategies Workshop for international students at 3 p.m. Students can also get a free latte and cookies at 4:30 p.m. in Academic I in celebration of International Late Night.

International Education Week ends Nov. 20 with the “International Film Festival Day.” International movies will be shown throughout the day in the WUC’s Mary Ann Wolfe Theater. The movies begin at 12:30 p.m. with Arusi Persian Wedding, a film that chronicles an Iranian-American’s return to Iran as he travels with his American wife to have a Persian wedding ceremony. They explore his lost heritage as they discover the land on their own terms, thus offering rare glimpses into modern and traditional Iran.

The 2002 hit comedy My Big Fat Greek Wedding will be shown at 2:30 p.m. The movie follows Toula, a 30-year-old Greek woman, who falls in love with a non-Greek man and the turmoil that ensues as her family tries to accept their engagement.

The final movie of the day, Touch of Pink, begins at 6:30 p.m. It is the story of an Israeli-Canadian named Alim, a gay man who lives with his Caucasian boyfriend in London. His life begins to unravel when his mother shows up to find him a Muslim girlfriend, and to convince him to return to Canada for his cousin’s wedding. This movie was provided by the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival to Stonewall 2 BBC, a student club on campus that supports and represents the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

All events are free, and everyone is welcome to attend.
Cuban bloggers unlawfully beaten

JULIO MENACHE
Special to The Beacon

On Nov. 6, Yoani Sanchez was briefly abducted and beaten by two plainly clothed men of the Cuban / government’s police force. Sanchez, along with her friend, Orlando Luis Pardo, were badly bruised and beaten. Sanchez, 34, most often walks with a cane and deals with back pain sustained from having her head banged against her abductors’ right eye.

The irony of it all was that Sanchez was headed to a protest against violence.

“Now you might be thinking to yourself, what could trigger such a violent act by state security officers?” It’s simple. Sanchez has had the courage to speak out against her oppressors.

She is an independent blogger inside Cuba, who chronicles the daily struggle of Cubans living under the dictatorship of Fidel and Raul Castro.

Her blog posts range from a variety of subjects, but she is most known for her scathing criticism of the lack of freedom inside the island.

While her blog, Generation Y, is difficult to access in Cuba because of rampant censorship, it has given the world a view of life in Cuba that contradicts the monopoly of information held by the single-party government.

A government is meant to secure the rights of its people, not order hits against its own citizens like a mob boss. It is meant to shield its citizens from pain and suffering, not instigate it.

And yet attacks against those who dissent from the island’s Communist system are common-place in Cuba. The government’s Committee for the Defense of the Revolution regularly harasses peaceful human rights protesters.

According to Human Rights Watch, Cuba has the largest number of political prisoners in the western hemisphere, many of whom, like Sanchez, were arrested for merely speaking out against the lack of human rights on the island.

The FIU Free Cuba Foundation denounces the attack against Sanchez and Pardo. Sanchez, as well as the hundreds of other bloggers on the island, should not be treated as “enemies of the state,” but rather be entitled to the same rights guaranteed to any other person living in a free society.

Yet this courageous woman has not let this attack deter her from continuing to post her blogs. In her home country, Sanchez has stood out like a sore thumb.

Now, because of her bumps and bruises, she’ll stand out even more.

Julio Menaché is a junior political science and journalism major and is the co-chair of the FIU Free Cuba Foundation.

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OPINION PIECE
SEND US YOUR LETTERS
Get a problem with parking? Want to give kudos to faculty? Or do you just have something to say about FIU? Send your thoughts to opinion@fiu.edu or drop by our offices at either GC 440 or WC 114. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.

QUOTATIONATION
1.5
In millions, the number of open positions “Going Rogue: The American Algorithmic Gone Wild” by Alex Soule

“The best thing we can say about the labor market right now is that it may be getting worse more slowly.”

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, on the recovery of the U.S. economy

When I was in seventh grade, I remember sitting in front of my teacher’s sometimes-cluttered desk, getting ready for the lesson of the day. Her desk was often filled with a variety of workbooks, a small green notebook with our grades and notes she scavenged for herself from future classes. While I wasn’t aware of it, the structure of the classes she taught were incredibly concise and linear. At this time, I had no idea where his lesson came from or how they were created.

I’ve since kept in touch with my teacher (and subsequent mentor), and on one occasion I went with him on a trip to GetSmart, a store entirely devoted to materials for teachers in elementary and middle school. He needed new workbooks for his lesson plans, which he had to finish by the end of the day.

While it occurred to me that these lesson plans could be recycled for year-long classes and tweaked for different age groups, I had no idea that lesson plans could be sold to other educators. I never saw lesson plans as a commodity.

An article from The New York Times indicates that more teachers are taking their lesson plans to the Web in order to make extra cash to pay for bills, mortgages and even cover other materials and treatments for their students. But eye-brows are being raised when the legalities are considered. Deputy Director of the New York State Council of School Superintendents Robert Lowry told the Times that it was “fair to ask whether the district should share in the proceeds” or if when school district resources are used.

The article also raises the concern that purchased lesson plans demean the education profession.

“Somebody asking 75 cents for a word puzzle reduces the power of the learning community and is ultimately destructive to the profession,” said Joseph McDonald, a professor at New York University’s Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development.

If teachers are going to buy and utilize lesson plans from other teachers, in order to maintain their integrity as educators they must use their purchased materials as supplements. It’s as if they’re making and selling SparkNotes or CliffNotes; teachers are outlining a specific project — in this case, a class — in order to guide others through it.

If the lesson plans are of their own conception, then educators have every right to cash in. In the end, the goal is to educate, and perhaps the end will justify the means.

Getting Schooled appears every Wednesday.

PLANS FOR PURCHASE: TEACHERS SHOULD HAVE RIGHT TO SELL LESSONS ONLINE

The Beacon – 6
www.fiu.edu

Thursday, November 18, 2009

Students struggle to pay
FRANCESCA COSTA
Contributing Writer

I just recently logged on to my PanterSoft account and realized I owed over $5,100.

My next immediate thought was, “Where on earth am I going to get this money?”

I am not alone either. As Spring semester approaches, a number of students are finding themselves short of money.

Many haven’t even finished paying off their balance for Fall semester and we are already being asked to pay another $4,000 to $5,000 just for room and board.

It’s safe to assume that more and more students are finding it harder to afford college.

For the 2009-2010 school year, room and board fees have increased by 5.1 percent at public colleges and 4.2 percent at private colleges. That is an average of $8,193 and $9,563.

Here at FIU, most incoming freshmen like myself pay well over the average.

Out of the seven public universities in Florida, according to the College Board, our University is the most expensive when it comes to room and board, with an average of $11,946.

Second on the list would be Florida Atlantic University with an average well below ours of $9,582. We even top the University of Miami ($10,800), a private institution.

Shockingly, these numbers are considered cheap to some.

Students in the Eugene Lang College in New York, for example, are paying $15,990 just for room and board. Suddenly I find myself feeling lucky.

At the same time, scholarships and funding programs are being cut. The amount of scholarship money available to students is slowly decreasing.

The amount of money coming in is decreasing while expenses skyrocket.

For example, most Florida high school graduates count on one of the state’s two Bright Futures Scholarships. The Florida Medallion Scholars grant is said to cover 75 percent of tuition expenses, while the Florida Academic Scholars grant is supposed to cover all tuition.

However, the program has been severely altered for this academic year.

Bright Futures now only awards a flat rate per credit and has cut all forms of college-related expense allowances.

This means Bright Futures does not even cover 100 percent of tuition anymore, even if you have earned the Academic Scholars grant.

Out-of-state students who do not have the luxury of Bright Futures face double the tuition fees plus room and board, which averages to about $28,926 a year.

So what’s happening now? Students, if possible, are turning to their last resort: loans.

I have been swamped with loan papers to fill out, even though I never planned to take out a loan until graduate school.

I am also thinking of where exactly am I going to live next year because at this rate it surely cannot be on campus.

I know of others who have been less fortunate and have already been kicked out of their rooms.

The numbers are only going to go up.

Universities that have already released student fees for the 2010-2011 school year have admitted that their prices have yet again increased.

If FIU ever hopes to become more than just a “commuter school,” their room and board prices need to come down.
A group of students is working to improve the image of Islam as part of a project they call "Nur." Project Nur is a national organization that has recently opened a chapter at FIU. Nur, defined in Arabic, means "enlightenment." Project Nur is a student-initiated initiative of the American Islamic Congress. According to the Project Nur Web site, the ARC was created at the attacks that took place on Sept. 11, 2001 as a non-religious organization that would challenge the increasingly negative perception of Muslims.

The FIU chapter of Project Nur was started by Maryam Shakir, a senior philosophy major who is also pursuing a minor in biology. According to Shakir, she founded the FIU chapter of Project Nur because she "thought it was a great and relevant cause." According to Shakir, the goal of Project Nur is to enlighten students about Muslims and dispel stereotypes in all parts of America, because even in a diverse country like ours, ignorance is rampant. Currently, Project Nur has active chapters in 23 universities across America, and that number is growing steadily, according to Ghazal Yazdanparast, a Project Nur coordinator. Project Nur is aiming to have a total of 50 chapters by the spring of 2010. Shakir alleges she had problems starting the FIU chapter of Project Nur because it was related to Muslims. "One person came up to me, when I was starting the club, and said 'I have three words about Islam: Osama Bin Laden,'" Shakir said.

Samar Raad, the vice president of Project Nur at FIU, is also a senior majoring in biology and pursuing a minor in chemistry. Her involvement in Project Nur stemmed from the misrepresentation of Muslims and their culture. Raad strongly believes in Project Nur's ability to dispel negative statements and ignorant thoughts about Muslims. Raad has also directly encountered ignorance, not only while living in Miami but also on the Modesto Maidique Campus.

While Raad was praying on campus, she received what she called looks of "accusation." In downtown Miami's Metro Campus, she received what she called "looks of 'accusation.'" In downtown Miami's Metro Campus, she received what she called "looks of 'accusation.'" In downtown Miami's Metro Campus, she received what she called "looks of 'accusation.'"

"I'm OK with [Project Nur] as long as they don't brainwash non-Muslims in the group," said Melissa Lamberty, a senior psychology major. "I'm not against any religion. I believe religions get dangerous when they are extremists or fanatics." However some students believe that organizations like Project Nur have a very positive effect because they allow students to learn about other cultures and religions. Ricardo Hernandez, a senior who is majoring in chemistry, and an active non-Muslim member of Project Nur, joined the club because he does not believe that Islam is an extremist religion. The club promotes an interfaith dialogue as well as a moderate and respectful view of Islam.

Raad agrees. "People may be discouraged to become involved in [Project Nur] because they may feel as though it is just promoting Islam," said Raad. "If anyone feels this way, their thoughts should be re-considered."
Arcade Fire’s ‘Funeral’ the best album of the decade

This has been a fairly surprising and enlightening enterprise, I must say. Prior to about my freshman year of high school, I was largely unaware of the music world at large. I was generally content to venture no further than the modern rock station on my radio dial, and my musical choices didn’t go much further beyond that.

Sometime during that freshman year, I began expunging my reach due to a series of borrowed albums from a friend, and my interest in music has grown from there.

And yet, surprisingly, as I put together my top albums of the decade, rather than being littered with later decade releases, there isn’t one from past 2006, and fully half of the choices are from 2002 or earlier.

10. ILLINOIS (2005) — Wilco

This album in a friend’s car by accident almost immediately after I listened to it. She put it in and told me she couldn’t get past the first track. It was, of course, “too weird.”

That is a fair assessment of Steven’s chronicle of life in the Land of Lincoln, what with its eschewing of normal pop time signatures and reliance on instruments not normally found in a pop album.

However, despite all of those things, it is a brilliant pop album, going from the breezy “Chicago” to the haunting “John Wayne Gacy Jr.”


All things considered, I think the leaked version from 2005 that he decided to pull back is a better listen, but the official album is still better than just about anything else anyone in the hip-hop world has to offer.

It might rely too much on falsetto choruses for hooks, but Lupe’s ample talents as an emcee better than just about anything else anyone in the hip-hop world has to offer.

8. SOUTHERN ROCK OPERA (2002) — Drive-By Truckers

A ballad for the misunderstood Ronnie Van Zandt, this is the logical progression of Patterson Hood’s storytelling. Some of their other albums may have been more concise, but none can match the scope of this one.

7. REINVENTING Axl Rose (2002) — Axl Rose

Probably the best album ever made that sounds like it was recorded on a lo-fi boom box in a dorm bathroom on a warped cassette, and definitely the best I’ve ever heard to scream along to.

6. LIFTED, OR THE STORY IS IN THE SOIL (2002) — Bright Eyes

Conor Oberst might have matured as a songwriter on later releases, but he was at his self-indulgent peak here, blending his considerable talents with lyrics that is sometimes too much for the listener to handle.

5. SEPARATION SUNDAY (2005) — Drive-By Truckers

Avoiding the overtold and overblown story of this album’s creation, what you have is the aural equivalent of America coming apart. If the songwriting isn’t much different from what Wilco had done before, it is certainly better, and certainly more well arranged.

The tension between Jeff Tweedy and the late Jay Bennett (and eventually Jim O’Rourke) led to a compromise that sounds at once classic and forward looking. It is a brilliant folk album warped and filtered through a crippling migraine and prescription pillkillers and the breakup of a friendship.

1. FUNERAL (2004) — Arcade Fire

It was difficult for me not to put Wilco at No. 1, but when it comes to the emotional depth, nothing released in this decade can compete with the Arcade Fire’s exhilarating debut.

Recorded in the wake of several family deaths, they turn their grief into ecstasy here, reminding you that even when terrible things happen, there is still the awe-inspiring majesty of music to hang on to.

It received a ton of press and hype, deservedly so, but if you get past that, you’re left with a communal experience of grief through joy.

Pop & Circumstance is a bi-weekly column discussing all things pop music. For more “End of the Decade” retrospectives, top ten lists and other nostalgia, keep an eye on the Life! section for the last three issues of the semester.

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Movie industry should learn from past failures

New ‘Posse’ program aims to help at-risk students adjust, stay in college

KATHY MATHESON
Associated Press Writer

BRYN MAWR, Pa. — When Sharthea Wade arrived at Bryn Mawr College from a big-city high school, it seemed as if every other student had made up their mind to attend a private, exclusive school.

“I felt intimidated by them,” recalled Wade. “Bryn Mawr is a different world.”

Yet whenever she felt like a fish out of water, Wade could turn to her “posse” — nine other girls who, like her, had been recruited from struggling Boston-area school districts and sent on full merit scholarships to the women’s college.

Wade’s posse is one of dozens sent to top-tier universities each year by the New York-based Posse Foundation. The combination of money and social support is a model that experts say could help move the U.S. toward President Barack Obama’s goal of having America lead the world in the percentage of college graduates by 2020. Next fall, the program will bring the Ivy League and more.

For more information on Posse programs, call: (305) 348-3365.

The program targets students in disadvantaged urban districts who have strong leadership skills but may lack the guidance to make the transition. Posse provides academic support and help with college applications, including full merit aid, to about 12,000 nominations this year.

Students heading to the same university each year by the New York-based Posse Foundation are from different backgrounds. The scholars have really energized the environment at Bryn Mawr, said Laura Perna, an expert at the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education.

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The Beacon – Wednesday, November 18, 2009

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PERFORMERS OF THE WEEK

Down 28-14, the senior cornerback made a crucial interception in the third quarter to swing the momentum in the Golden Panthers’ favor to help them secure a 35-28 win over North Texas on Homecoming.

FILLING IN FOR INJURED MIDDLE LINEBACKER: Running back Kendall Berry (left) celebrates with T.Y. Hilton (right) after a touchdown. Berry was a big part of the Golden Panthers’ Homecoming win over North Texas. The sophomore scored two touchdowns on 82 yards rushing.

WORKOUTS WITH PRO BOWL RB HELPED PUSH FRIERSON

Frierson said it has been a challenge to get Frierson the ball at times due to the fact that he often lines up in the same position as Hilton.

VERSATILITY

McCall said it has been a challenge to get Frierson the ball at times due to the fact that he often lines up in the same position as Hilton.

The first set was a back-and-forth affair, as both teams traded leads and forced tie scores on various occasions until Yarimar Rosa and Jovana Bjelica helped FIU escape a potential pitfall, taking the first set 30-28.

The second set wasn’t anywhere near as dramatic with FIU breaking away in the middle of the stanza and never looking back. The Panthers took a 2-0 set lead that would be too much for the Owls to overcome.

The third set proved to be just as competitive and close as the first set was, with both teams once again exchanging tie scores and lead changes as both teams battled to the end of the set to try and earn the victory.

The Golden Panthers were able to come out strong at the end, and a couple of errors gave FIU a perfect Sun Belt Conference record. Rosa led the way with 13 kills with Bjelica and Andrea Lakovic adding 10 and 11 kills of their own to the offensive effort.

Natalia Valentin also played an important role of her own, adding 43 assists and six service aces. Rosa and Valentin both led the team on defense with 11 digs each.

The Golden Panthers return to action in the Sun Belt Conference Championships in Bowling Green, Ky. from Nov. 19-21.

Golden Panthers sweep Owls to end 2009 season

The sophomore linebacker led the team in tackles with 13, nine of which were solo. He also recorded half a sack.

Down 28-14, the senior cornerback made a crucial interception in the third quarter to swing the momentum in the Golden Panthers’ favor to help them secure a 35-28 win over North Texas on Homecoming.

The All-American led the team in kills (13) during the Golden Panthers’ 3-0 win over the Florida Atlantic Owls. The win helped secure a perfect record in Sun Belt Conference play for FIU. The Golden Panthers head to the conference tournament as the No. 1 seed.

Frierson made sure that wasn’t an issue by grasping more of the playbook in his third season.

“Being here in the same offense for two years, I have learned everything,” he said. Despite the competitive nature of the receiving corps, Frierson and Hilton maintain a close relationship off the field, and even though Hilton is the offense’s main cog, Frierson can boast one thing he has on him: blocking.

“If I catch a ball, he’ll probably say something slick,” Frierson said with a smile. “He does something and I say something. When we’re blocking, we have a little cuttin’ contest where all of us are competing at that.

Right now I’m the king, so he’s trying to catch up to me.”

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Friendship led to 75-17 record while at FIU

LUIS ESTRADA
Staff Writer

Attending FIU was an easy choice for volleyball setter Natalia Valentin. “I even went where her best friend, Yarimar Rosa, was helping bring the volleyball program to Sun Belt Conference championships. “I mean, Yari’s like my best friend and she was already here, and what’s better than having your best friend in college with you on the same team? So she was a big part of it,” Valentin said.

Their cohesion has translated into a combined 75-17 past three seasons together at FIU, and have hopes of taking their teammates on a deeper run into the NCAA tournament this season.

TRUSTING EACH OTHER

Both players said their friendship is based around trust and honesty. “We tell each other every single detail, no matter what it is,” Rosa said. “It’s hard to find someone who you can trust so much, and I can tell Yari everything, and I know she will support me,” Valentin said.

Coach Daniela Tomic has watched the best friends become two of the most integral parts to a successful program. “That trust comes into play every time Valentin, a setter, makes a pass to Rosa, one of the best outside hitters in the country. “Naty knows where Yari likes the sets, and their relationship is such that if they get frustrated with each other, Yari knows how to tell her things in a different way,” Tomic said.

The girls each admit they never fight, and silly disagreements are quickly resolved. “Seemingly the only time they argue is on the court, when they are constantly pushing each other to play better. “The only time she’s ever said ‘What’s wrong with you?’ is during a match when I make a mistake. We forget those very quickly,” Rosa said.

SISTERHOOD: Best friends Natalia Valentin (9) and Yarimar Rosa (right), will be playing in their final Sun Belt tournament together this season.

‘THAT LOOK’

After so many great moments on the court together, it was difficult for them to single out one favorite moment, but Valentin referred back to a match last year against Middle Tennessee, a team neither of the girls had defeated during their time at FIU. “Last year’s Middle Tennessee game. In a fifth set Yarimar has this feeling where she knows if we’re going to win or lose. After the first point of the set I looked at her, and she gave me the ‘we’re going to win’ look.”

Valentin went on to explain the pressure while they trailed in the last set, but managed to come back to win. She mentioned Rosa’s confidence, and how important it is to her to be able to look at her friend and know they’re never out of a match. “She’s never given me the ‘I don’t feel it’ look, and I love that. She always thinks we’re going to win, no matter what,” Valentin said.

Tomic understands the importance of having the girls on this team together, and knows Rosa played a huge part in bringing Valentin to FIU. “The main reason Naty picked FIU is because her best friend had started here the year before,” Tomic said.

Even in practice, their bond is evident among a group of 15 girls. They are constantly laughing, yet encouraging more effort. “Coach Tomic feels the best part about their friendship is how much Valentin admires Rosa. “Naty is Yari’s biggest fan. Nobody gets more excited than Naty when her best friend does something great on the court,” Tomic said.

REALITY CHECK

This is the last Sun Belt tournament they will participate in. Even with hopes of having a family and playing volleyball in Europe or at a high level, Valentin is sure of one thing in her future. “I will probably go watch Yari play in Europe,” she said.

Rosa wanted to give Valentin a bit of a reality check. “You’re going to have to get some money,” Rosa said to Valentin.

Even though this will be their last season together at FIU, Rosa was very confident in their ability to go separate ways and maintain a close bond. “I will miss playing with her but we have to move on, and of course I’m going to support her no matter what she does and I know she will support me,” Rosa said.

‘We have the talent to win the tournament’

Tomic said. “We set our goals at the beginning of the season. We wanted to be undefeated after the regular season because we felt we had the talent to do that and I feel we have the talent to win the tournament. I’m going to feel that we under-achieved if we don’t win the tournament.”

The top eight teams in the conference, with FIU being the No. 1 seed, will meet at Bowling Green, Ky., the host site for the tournament this year.

For some of the players on the team, this will be their last chance to win the Sun Belt tournament after coming up short the last few seasons.

“We are very excited about going back,” Tomic said. “I know our three seniors are excited. They have something to prove. Our motto all season has been ‘Finish Strong’ and this is our chance to finish Sun Belt play with that attitude.”

The Golden Panthers will play the first match on Nov. 19 against the North Texas Mean Green, whom FIU defeated earlier this season in three sets on the road. If the Golden Panthers win, they play on Friday against the winner of the New Orleans/Arkansas State match. The championship match takes place Nov. 21. “We just need to play our game,” said Yarimar Rosa who will be playing in her final Sun Belt tournament this weekend. “We don’t have any doubt that we can’t win in three sets against North Texas.”

Despite the tournament being away, Coach Tomic actually considers that to be an advantage, alleviating the team from the pressure of playing in front of the home crowd. “Whomever we play, we have to win three matches,” Tomic said. “We play well on the road. I’m actually glad we are playing on the road after last season. I think the pressure of playing at home got to us.”

The team knows that they cannot take any of these teams for granted, since this will be the last opportunity for most of them to earn a bid to the NCAA tournament. “This is their last chance, so they’re all going to give their best,” Rosa said of the teams playing in the tournament. “Every team is going to go there and play their best to try and win. There are no surprises, we’re ready for everything.”
No. 1 seeded Golden Panthers turn their focus to Sun Belt tournament

JOEL DELGADO
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers volleyball team went undefeated in Sun Belt Conference play was 1990, when the Owls went 3-0 against conference opponents before the University ever had thoughts of joining the conference.

Nineteen years later, history would repeat itself.

The Golden Panthers (28-2, 17-0) defeated crosstown-rival Florida Atlantic (6-20, 4-13) in three sets to secure an undefeated record in conference play as they prepare to go to the Sun Belt tournament as the No. 1 seed.

But the Owls were not going to roll over and come out matching the Golden Panthers as they tried to play spoiler to FIU's season.

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FLAWLESS VICTORY: The Golden Panthers recorded their second perfect conference record since 1990.

Tulsa extends men's basketball losing streak to three

JEFF LATZKE
The Associated Press

The towering Tulsa Golden Hurricanes blew out the Golden Panthers 81-49 on Nov. 16.

Already undersized, FIU played without guardniko Kacius due to a knee injury. Marvin Roberts had 18 points and nine rebounds, leading the team in scoring, and Stephon Weaver added 9 points.

Ben Uzoh had a game-high 20 points and 4 assists to lead Tulsa.

The size differential between the two teams led Tulsa to the dominating win against coach Isiah Thomas's Golden Panthers. Tulsa has no player on the roster less than 6 feet and has 10 players that are over 6-foot-5, while FIU has an average height of 6-foot-2.

Midway through the second half, Thomas motioned toward Tulsa coach Doug Wojcik as if to ask when he'd take his starters out. A few minutes later, he got vocal with his request, shouting a few words in the direction Wojcik. At that point, FIU (0-3) was down 63-25 with 8:59 to play.

"It's a 40-minute game. If you want the truth of it, go back to the Carolina game Monday night, when Carolina was pressing them with 3 minutes left," Wojcik said. "I don't press, and I don't embarrass anybody."

Wojcik, who was putting Uzoh back into the game, looked back at Thomas and shrugged his shoulders. He pulled 7-footer Jerome Jordan shortly thereafter and Uzoh with more than 5 minutes remaining.

Wojcik explained that he had only eight scholarship players available, with Glenn Andrews out with a knee injury and Bishop Wheatley serving a four-game suspension. Two other players are sitting out under NCAA transfer rules, and Wojcik is replacing another.

"We weren't as good as we would have liked to have been, and they were really good," Thomas said before heading toward the door.

On his way out, he added: "By the way, I'd like to invite them back to play us next year. I hope he accepts. Good luck."

Staff writer Joey Cruz contributed to this report.

Frierson a sure-handed receiver

JOSEPH RAMOS
Asst. Sports Director

In the third quarter at Western Kentucky on Oct. 10, the Golden Panthers led the Hilltoppers by three points and were in the midst of driving in WKU territory looking to extend their slim lead.

Since star receiver T.Y. Hilton left the game in the first quarter with a knee injury, FIU had to look elsewhere for a big play. On the next snap, quarterback Paul McCall found his target deep in the end zone. The play was called for junior wide receiver Ty Frierson, and he came down with the catch to give FIU all the scoring it would need to earn their first victory of the season.

Frierson stepped on the sideline, Hilton was there to greet him with words of encouragement.

"He already knew when we called the formation that the play was coming to me and her squad, the goal from the very beginning has been about this one weekend.

And it's about finishing something that they set out to do from the very beginning: win the Sun Belt Conference tournament and become the conference champions. "We know what's on the line," Frierson said of Hilton's words.

Frierson hasn't played inside and outside, not only as a freshman, he made the Golden Panthers one after becoming a consistent target in 2007. As a year after becoming a consistent target and leading the team in catches in 2007. As a freshman, he made the Golden Panthers coaching staff look wise for offering him his only Football Bowl Subdivision scholarship, but a sophomore slump ensued.

"I blame it on me, for my work ethic and workouts," said Frierson. "I came back the next year and did things totally different than the year before. My summer workouts and the workouts in January, I worked hard and I put more effort in what I did."

Part of the dedication Cristobal and Frierson talk about include intense workouts at FIU, but Frierson said the biggest challenge of the offseason was his work-