Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. speaks to students about alternative energy

MARIELLA ROQUE
Contributing Writer

Attorney Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. came to FIU to raise awareness about the need to invest heavily in alternative energy technology as opposed to coal and oil burning, thereby reducing our dependence on fossil fuels to supply energy. “Nature is the infrastructure of our community,” Kennedy said during his visit on Feb. 17. The lecture was funded by the Student Government Association, which spent $27,500 to bring Kennedy as a guest speaker. SGA also had a private reception with Kennedy preceding the lecture. Kennedy is a co-host on the radio talk show “Ring of Fire” on Air America Radio and founder and chairman of Waterkeeper Alliance, an umbrella organization supporting programs that work toward “keeping” the national waterways clean.

He is also a nephew of former U.S. president John F. Kennedy and the son of U.S. Senator and Presidential Candidate Robert F. Kennedy. Kennedy spoke about the advantages presented by the use of geothermal energy. The ignorance of the American people when it came to global warming was one of Kennedy’s concerns. He blamed it on “the media’s bias in reporting the effects of global warming,” stating that the media’s “only interest is... their own pocketbook.” Kennedy also disagreed with the Obama administration’s funding of research into alternative nuclear power technology – dubbing it Obama’s “moment of insanity.”

The previous day the president had promised a conditional $8.3 billion loan guarantee to support Obama’s “moment of insanity.”

HONORS, page 2

PHILIPPE BUTEAU
Staff Writer

Six senators from the Student Government Council at Biscayne Bay Campus joined 22 senators from SGC at Modesto Maidique Campus on Feb. 22 for the first of two joint sessions this semester.

Discussed during the meeting were plans for changes to the SGA constitution and the problems and potential solutions in SGA.

Nickolay Chikishev, SGC-BBC lower-division senator, proposed reducing the total number of senators for BBC from 21 to 18. Chikishev and Zahra Arbabi Askii, lower-division senator, proposed reaching this number by reducing the amount of lower-division senators from four to two and senators at large from three to two.

Chikishev said this wasn’t about representation but about better retention. He said later that SGC-BBC would look to their history in determining the final number of senate seats.

Chikishev said the number of senate seats isn’t proportional to the amount of students at the campus because BBC has 8,000 students with 20 senators and MMC has 32,000 students with 30 senators. “I think someone just came up with that number off the top of their head,” Chikishev said.

Askii emphasized that only the SGA, page 2

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. spoke on raising awareness on the need of alternative energy on Feb. 17 in the GC Ballrooms.

Honors College beautifies city of Sweetwater

MELISSA CACERES
Staff Writer

The city of Sweetwater, with the help of the FIU Honors College, will take part in a city-wide project to help enhance the community and assist its residents.

The FIU Honors College-Sweetwater Partnership, managed by Student Enrichment Coordinator Cecile Houri, gives Honors College students the opportunity to engage in a variety of hands-on projects throughout the Sweetwater community, ranging from tutoring children to serving as interns at the mayor’s office.

“I think this is going to be very long term and large scale,” Houri said, who is in charge of the program.

Preparation for the partnership began over a year and a half ago after the concept was mentioned by the Honors College community advisory board.

The college’s “adoption” of Sweetwater then came to develop into an extensive community service program that now engages in more than nine different projects that are meant to strengthen leadership skills as well as integrate the University more fully within the city.

“The idea behind it was that we wanted to have a coherent Honors College project that all honors students could be a part of,” said Lesley Northup, the interim dean of the Honors College. “Instead of just doing little things like Relay for Life and beach cleanups, we can get them to concentrate on something that would have a valuable and noticeable impact on a community. So choosing Sweetwater then was a no-brainer because they are our community.”

The partnership is divided into separate sections of the community which include the governmental team, education team, and senior partnership group. Starting in the fall of 2011, a Green team will be added which focuses on environmental initiatives such as planting trees around the neighborhoods.

“Often when you start a new thing you find that it’s very hard to get it off the ground, but this has been going great from the beginning and more Honors College students are getting excited about doing things over there,” Northup added.

With the governmental team, eight students currently have unpaid internships within the mayor’s office in different services that include social services, economic development and finance.

According to Northup, “they were delighted with the idea that FIU students would want to do stuff, and
Suspect confesses in failed terrorist attack against U.S.

Najibullah Zazi, a terrorism suspect arrested in September accused of conspiring to detonate bombs in New York has plead guilty.

According to CNN, Zazi appeared in court on Monday and plead guilty to conspiring to detonate explosives in the U.S.

In an appearance before a federal judge, Zazi admitted his role in the conspiracy, saying: “In spring 2008, I conspired with others to join in the Taliban, to light along with the Taliban against the United States.”

Toyota accused of negligence on accelerator testing

Leading Democrats on the House Energy and Commerce Committee accused Toyota of dismissing the notion that computer issues could be at fault for sticking accelerator pedals, and of making misleading statements concerning repairs.

According to the New York Times, since last fall, Toyota has recalled more than eight million vehicles worldwide in two separate actions related to complaints about accelerator pedals that can become stuck, making it hard to stop the vehicle.

The comments, from Henry A. Waxman, the committee’s chairman, and Bart Stupak, a subcommittee chairman, came in an 11-page letter to James E. Lentz III, the president of Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A.

The New York Times reported that the letter was released on the eve of the committee’s hearing into the Toyota recall, one of three scheduled.

WORLD

NATO air strike leaves 25 dead in Afghanistan

A U.S. air strike is drawing criticism after being responsible for the deaths of at least 25 civilians, and wounding a dozen more.

According to the Washington Post, the Afghan cabinet condemned on Monday what it called an “unacceptable” attack and asked NATO troops to “coordinate with the Afghan security forces” before any operation.

The top American commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, held a conference Monday morning with task force and regional commanders across the country to remind them about the need for “judicious application of fire.”

“It’s a great opportunity for kids like Read2Succeed and L’il Abner, to visit and have someone there to help you with your homework, to make it a lot easier,”

Students under the same govern ment-centered team will also organize six to seven citizenship classes by March 3, for Sweetwater residents going through the process of becoming U.S. citizens.

Through the educational team, elementary school children are visited by five Honors College students during after-school hours in order to play games of citizenship.

The participation has also received free tickets to attend athletic events at FIU, like the women’s basketball game that took place Feb. 17.

Targeting academics at the same time, Honors students offer tutoring to kids as well through aftercare programs like Read2Succeeded and L’il Abner Mobile Home Park Tutoring.

“Some have been coming every week now and we’ve gotten to know them.” Hourly said. “We have kids from Pre-K who have parents who don’t speak English very well to a girl who comes who is 17 for [help in] algebra. It’s really rewarding.”

Senior citizens at the community senior center receive benefits from the program as well through visits from the members of Gamma Epsilon Phi, the honors society for Honors College students.

During the Fall of this year, they will be provided lessons, by the members, in managing e-mails accounts on the Internet.

According to Houry, the partnership will be expanding student involvement within the next semesters and adding environmental projects that aim to beautify the city.

COUNCILS DISCUSS STAFF DOWNSIZING

SGA, page 1

amount of lower-division senators in what they want to reduce.

“Their lower division senators is literally too much for Biscayne Bay;” Alex Garcia, a senator said.

Other constitutional amendments brought up were the impeachment process opting to use a three-fifths vote versus the current one-third, the ratification of amendments how long it takes for amendments to go into effect and why the vice president of student affairs has to sign amendments and defining “senate leadership.”

Though retention was meant as a discussion topic to improve SGA retention as a whole, it focused on SGC-BBC.

The retention problem at SGC-BBC, according to Chikishev, was a combination of pay, scheduling and time problems.

He also said that they feel a pressure to appoint people to positions.

“We have no one on our council, we need to appoint people,” Chikishev said.

Because of that pressure, he said SGC-BBC needs to improve its screening process.

Alex Garcia, a senator from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, suggested that retention could be improved if there was more involvement.

He said people would stay if they were paid more often, but Chikishev said SGC-BBBC senators were paid their $1,100, one-year place salary.

The joint session came about from resolutions passed by both student government councils.

The SGC-MMC resolution was passed Nov. 23, 2009 in favor of five, opposition and no abstentions.

The joint session will be twice a semester, according to Helena Ramirez, SGC-BBC senate speaker.
### University-wide council discusses financial matters

**JASMYN ELLIOTT**  
**BCC Managing Editor**

The University-wide council met on Feb. 19 to approve and deny funding for various campus offices, organizations and amenities out of the $9,634,960 budget.  

Although the meeting was scheduled to take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the number of items being considered and the discussions that ensued extended the meeting until 7 p.m.  

The executive boards from both campuses were present and SGC-BCC Comptroller Robert Chang acted as the meeting chair.  

Both Rafael Zapata, assistant director of Campus Life and Jose Toscano, assistant director of SGA were present to help guide the councils they advise while Director of Campus Life Craig Cunningham, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Cathy Akens, and Director of Budget and Personnel Matilde Gramling offered their expertise.  

One of the most heated debates ensued when the discussion to fund the marching band came up. Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus President Anthony Rionda was quick to begin a motion to fully fund the $130,000 requested, despite a call for discussion.  

"There is no point in debating it," said Rionda. "We have debated it backward and forward."  

SGC-BCC Vice President Christin "Cici" Battle pointed out some reservations.  

"Explain your passion," said Battle. "Yes, we should fund the band – however, there are some things that need to come in place for students," Battle continued.  

SGC-BCC President Sholom Neistein agreed to vote only if proviso language was added to the motion. Ultimately it passed unanimously with proviso language that stated that this was a one-time allocation and the vice presidents from both councils must be involved in leadership-based decisions.  

Furthermore, they expect other departments to contribute funding in the future, although they did not specify which departments.  

Another major cause for contention was the funding going toward SGA itself, namely to contribute funding in the future, although they did not specify which departments.  

The passed motion states that the funding for SGIB, the Intern Retreat at $10,500 will be used for the actual retreat while remaining funds that are not used for retreats go toward training workshops, T-shirts and other materials.  

Major budget cuts were also a part of this meeting. To begin with, MMC’s Graham Center only received $2,153,00 of the $3,000,000 requested. Additional requests such as 17 flat-screen televisions, restroom remodeling, and a permanent dance floor were denied.  

According to Gramling, neither GC nor the Wolfe University Center is doing well in regards to revenue, which is "drying up due to the economy." Ergo, proviso language added to the passed motion states that the funding for a proposed art gallery, computer lab, and game room must come out of their approved allotment.  

Story Corps/Writing for Change, a campus organization that combined community service and creative writing, was unanimously denied their request for $4,000 due to its lack of presence in the University.  

"If you can tell me what they do, then maybe I’ll consider [funding them]," Figueiredo said.  

Rionda suggested that the organization should be referred to the Council for Student Organizations as a club instead.  

Furthermore, the funding toward University-wide distribution of The New Times has been cut.  

"I am against the New Times program because we are not in New York," Rionda said.  

To replace the program, the University will make an effort to advertise the online edition of Times and possibly create a similar, and ultimately less expensive distribution partnership with The Miami Herald or The Sun-Sentinel.  

Additional reporting by Sergio Monreal.

### Scholarships’ ultimate aim is giving back through Caribbean, Mexican students

**KATHERINE PORRAS**  
**Contributing Writer**

The Latin American and Caribbean Center at the University present the Florida Caribbean Institute and the Mexico Institute scholarship awards. The FCI and FMI provide financial aid to international students from the Caribbean or Mexico.  

On the LACC Web site it states that a student must be a citizen from the Caribbean in order to be eligible for the FMI Award. To be eligible for the FMI Award the student must be a citizen from Mexico. The international student is also required to have a F1 or J1 visa.  

A F1 visa is an exchange visitor program and the F1 visas are given only through academic institutions.  

According to Astrid Arrarás, director of academic programs, the FCI and FMI waivers are a very popular financial assistance tool but many students still do not know about it.  

"Last year more than 100 students applied for FCI and around 50 percent received the award. We had around 30 applicants for FMI and all of them got it," Arrarás said.  

The FCI and FMI awards are merit based. Both the FCI and the FMI require a minimum 3.0 GPA. Samuel Ogilvie, a senior and English major from the island of Grenada and recipient to the FCI Award, explained the award was not a scholarship but instead a waiver. "What it does is it takes away the international fees. We pay out-of-state tuition which is like six times more than in-state tuition."  

Lucio Vázquez, a Mexican graduate student acquiring his Masters degree in investigative journalism, said it was an extraordinary aid.  

"It helps us to cover the extra fees in order to pay like [Florida] resident students," Vázquez said.  

Along with a high academic standing, Ogilvie said they are required to return to their country after graduating. They are expected to work there for the same amount of time they received the waiver.  

"If you received the waiver for one year, you must work in your country for one year," Ogilvie said.  

Vázquez explained that the purpose of the FMI is to strengthen the links between Mexico and Florida.  

"I plan to return to my country and work on the social issues neglected by the mass media," Vázquez said.  

The deadline for both awards is May 3, 2010.  

"If you have any questions regarding these programs or if you want a copy of the requirements, you may contact Astrid Arraras at 305-348-2894 or e-mail her at arrarasa@fiu.edu."
Dear District 25: It’s just not working out

Mario isn’t abandoning his district; he’s breaking up with them before the chance to break up with him.

Both are relatively conserva-
tive, and they even look a bit alike. Perhaps Mario is hoping they won’t really notice the difference.

I commend Mario’s decision to move to a district that is more likely to appreciate him.

You can’t just go from 15 years of Lincoln Diaz-Balart to someone else just like that. They have to be weaned off the Diaz-Balarts slowly. They can’t have Lincoln anymore, so they might as well have Mario.

REality show star Lauren Conrad not deserving of praise

The premiere of MTV’s reality series “The Real World” provided a foundation upon which virtually all television networks adopted reality television into their programming. Whether it’s NBC’s “Big Brother,” Fox’s “American Idol,” Bravo’s “Real Housewives” or ABC’s “The Bachelor,” one cannot deny the fact that reality television has paved the way for many ordinary Americans to become celebrities.

MTV, however, still remains ahead of the curve as it pertains to reality television, with shows such as the more notorious “Laguna Beach” and “The Hills” which both have something in common: Lauren Conrad.

Conrad’s fame is an example of the new reality generation, loosely based on the television dramas that earned her money and fame. Some of these television personalities on these reality series, especially Lauren Conrad, are seemingly unaffected by the economic downturn.

What the Avon Corporation has sought to accomplish with its product is noble, but the representative they have selected doesn’t embody the philosophy of the project. How can’t be tied down to just one district, he still wants to play the field. District 25 was cool and everything, but it wasn’t “the one.” He has needs that need to be met, and the need to get re-elected is chief among them.

I for one applaud the Diaz-Balart’s move to put his feelings and family ahead of the people of his current district. Hopefully now they can both move on.

The people of District 25 can elect a Democrat and Mario can move to a district that better meets his needs until something better comes along. Mario’s just not one district kind of guy.

Mario's political career, since his current district has rapidly moved into the Democratic column.

According to the Miami-Dade department of elections, while District 25 now has about 2,500 more Demo-

crats than Republicans, District 25 has about 18,000 more Republi-
cans than Democrats, District 25

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Life!

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

www.fiu.edu

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Film review

SUPERMARKET CARROTS

by Ron Caldero

Eating your vegetables may not be too bad for you after all — at least if the vegetables are supermarket carrots, fresh from your favorite supermarket.

What exactly is the problem with supermarket carrots? That’s what the environmental and socially conscious documentary, Fresh, will be explaining to FIU students on March 3 at 6:30 p.m. in GC 150, free of charge.

More importantly, the film will show that there are people already working on a solution, and how you can join them.

Fresh touches on the issue of the over-industrialization of our food; the fact that the entirety of the United State’s production is controlled by three or four major corporations, and that they would rather mass produce hormone-fed chicken as cheaply as possible than deliver quality poultry.

FRESH, page 6

NATURAL SELECTIONS

by Adriana Rodriguez

Taiwan: Discovering In Place and Time, the new exhibit at the Frost Art Museum, succeeds at bringing the natural world with tradition.

There seems to be a rock in ordinary life. The walls in the main entrance of the exhibit are lined with works by Tsung-chien Chang. Chang chooses rocks based on their texture and color and slices them to reveal an image that you would never think came from a rock.

Pictures of Taiwan’s unique and beautiful geological characteristics are enhanced and altered to escalate them to another level of beauty.

The photos of streams, rocks and trees are bright and colorful and add a nice contrast to the more subdued colors of Pei-Ying’s work.

By digitally altering the photos, visitors are able to see the incredible detail in nature. Huang Pei-Ying goes against the idea of traditional sculpture. Instead of working his artistry into the usual suspect, stone, he chose a stack of books.

For “India Buddha Boston,” Pei-Ying stacked Boston White Pages phone books and carved the front side of the books to recreate the bust of the Indian Buddha.

The sculpture is almost unbelievable and, since you cannot touch any art of the bust, you are left with feelings of doubt about the possibility of a bust that looks so much like stone.

In case you really can’t believe the bust is carved out of books, the back side reveals the spine of the books.

The main event in the exhibit is the overwhelming gigantically large installation piece, “Heaven” by Yao Jui-chung.

“Heaven” explores the idea of interconnectedness between all beings. Tubes stem out from a gold piece that resem-

TAIWAN, page 6

PANEL PANEL

One-shot fails in attempt to incorporate silly humor

by Sean Gonzalez

A one-shot comic is a story that is written and drawn by a single artist and is released as a single issue.

For “Hit Monkey: The World’s Greatest Assassin,” the idea of telling the story with traditional methods seemed to be the way to go.

Yet within the pages, you find that the entire origin of Hit Monkey is told with a straight face. The entire origin of Hit Monkey is told with a straight face. The entire origin of Hit Monkey is told with a straight face.

The story of Hit Monkey is told with a serious tone, but it’s not worth finding out.

Once you come to terms with the fact that you’re going to be reading a very silly issue, you would think that being prepared would be enough to get you through the issue.

Yet within the pages, you find that the entire origin of Hit Monkey is told with a straight face. The entire story is extremely solemn and serious, completely disregarding that its main character is a monkey holding guns.

Though the idea of telling this story with reverence is slightly amusing, I couldn’t get too far in without wanting to put it down, because I simply did not care about the monkey or his monkey friends.

If you do a bit of searching, you’ll find that Hit Monkey ties into the most recent issue of Deadpool. Sadly, I don’t think this really gives this one-shot a reason to exist.

You can get through Deadpool fine without the help of extra background stories.

If you like animals or assassins or the rare combination of both, this issue might be perfect for you.

If you’re like me and are simply trying to get through Deadpool fine without the help of extra background stories.

If you like animals or assassins or the rare combination of both, this issue might be completely made for you.

One-shot fails in attempt to incorporate silly humor

PANEL PANEL

Against the beautiful

by Adriana Rodriguez

Exhibit merges natural world with tradition.

For “India Buddha Boston,” Pei-Ying stacked Boston White Pages phone books and carved the front side of the books to recreate the bust of the Indian Buddha.

The exhibition is designed to show the beauty of art derived from objects that surround us on the beauty of art derived from objects that surround us.

“Against the beautiful,” the exhibit is designed to show the beauty of art derived from objects that surround us.

The exhibit, which opened Feb. 19, offers a unique look at the beauty of art derived from objects that surround us.

Words of advice: Don’t expect to write something that is as good as the original work.

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Films explore accessible organic alternatives

This, and many other factual horrors of this industry, were the focus of 2008’s Academy Award nominated documentary Food Inc., and while Fresh revisits this sad but true scenario, its message is one of hope.

The film hopes to show you that the grass can indeed be greener on the other side.

Produced and directed by Portuguese filmmaker Ana Joanes, Fresh is a 72-minute documentary showcasing the harrowing effects of media on society, mainly children. The photos and video showing children in an unconscious state on a school bus and in a classroom dedicated to the work of Tseng Yu-chin.

The piece connects humor to a bigger theme: the connection that everything, living and non-living, has.

The William R. Kenan, Jr. Grand Gallery is dedicated to the work of Tseng Yu-chin. Yu-chin’s art is all about multimedia and the effects of media on society, mainly children. The photos and video showing children in an unconscious state on a school bus and in a classroom are probably the creepiest things ever.

So, if you are still scarred from watching The Grudge or The Ring, do yourself a favor and don’t go into that room.

The exhibit will be open until May 16.

Now, you may think this movie is just a nod to the organic trend that is getting more popular among health enthusiasts and the businesses that cater to them, but it really goes beyond that.

Fresh is not only about going organic, but going sustainable as well.

FIU alumna Stephan Nespasil, 51, is the man behind the screening of the film at FIU. While working on his thesis on modern agriculture last year, he found out about the documentary and, thanks to a grant from FIU’s Agro-Ecology Program, he acquired a license to show it on campus. He explained the concept of food security or sustainability.

“The current model for food distribution in the U.S. is to grow it wherever it is cheapest and then ship it to wherever it is to be sold. You can see a future where oil will reach such a price that it will make this scheme no longer profitable to these corporations,” Nespasil said.

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Add to that the fact that because crops and livestock are grown in such an unnatural way, more chemicals must be pumped into them each year to maintain yields, and you get a practice that cannot possibly continue forever.

“By decentralizing food and growing it locally, we are securing our food sources and, by doing it organically, we are doing so in a sustainable way,” Nespasil added.

This is the message that both Stephan and the co-director of FIU’s Agro-Ecology Program, Mahadev G. Bhat, wish to transmit to students through this documentary.

Bhat hopes the film will raise awareness of this very important issue among FIU students, most of which have no idea what’s going on with their food.

Mike Paez, 23, said that, while he did know something about the industry’s damaging practices, he didn’t know about any alternatives.

“I think it’s important for this food sustainability message to get out there, because at least shows a step in the right direction,” he said.

If you want to start going organic, you need not look too far.

Members of the University’s Garden Club set up shop every Wednesday, from 12 to 3 p.m. behind the Green Library at the Modesto Maidique Campus. Everything they sell is organic, and most of it is grown in the club’s own garden.

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Bhat hopes the film will raise awareness of this very important issue among FIU students, most of which have no idea what’s going on with their food.

Mike Paez, 23, said that, while he did know something about the industry’s damaging practices, he didn’t know about any alternatives.

“I think it’s important for this food sustainability message to get out there, because at least shows a step in the right direction,” he said.

If you want to start going organic, you need not look too far.

Members of the University’s Garden Club set up shop every Wednesday, from 12 to 3 p.m. behind the Green Library at the Modesto Maidique Campus. Everything they sell is organic, and most of it is grown in the club’s own garden.
Golden Panthers hope to peak with two games left

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to FIU’s success with two 20-point games in the last four. Russell has been coming off the bench most of the season, solely for defensive purposes before his recent offensive outbursts.

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RECENT STRUGGLES

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Reoccurring issues like Gary’s knee tendinitis are small obstacles in their road to the conference tournament.

“I don’t want to stop playing,” Gary said. “Especially when my team needs me.”

Junior Nick Taylor has lately been starting at point guard as Gary recovers, recently jumping Steven Miro on the depth chart.

Another concern for FIU: leading scorer Marvin Roberts has been slowing down as the season comes to a close. Other than the Troy game on Feb. 13, where Roberts scored 27, he has been shooting lower than his season averages in the last eight games.

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“We can win the next two games and jump to fifth or sixth place and get a good seed.”

The Golden Panthers will host MTSU on Thursday, Feb. 25 for the second time this season, looking to start the coveted streak.

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In addition to breaking the national high school record for the clean-and-jerk, Mattox joined the U.S. Olympic powerlifting team.

He was also a member of a local paintball powerhouse. Mattox got guidance from his family along the way, including his father.

“My drive came from my dad constantly saying that what I had achieved was not good enough, in a good way,” Mattox said. “The kind that pushes you to become better. My parents have always wanted the best for me.”

When it came time to choose a college destination, Mattox only had the option of going to Arkansas State on scholarship for weightlifting.

He opted for the chance to play two sports and walk on at FIU.

Mattox said he was mystified when he didn’t receive more offers. According to schools that were interested in him, like Georgia Tech, Mattox (6-foot-1, 270 lbs.) was too undersized to warrant a scholarship offer.

“I use it as motivation, and I wanted to prove the other teams wrong,” he said. “It made me work that much harder.”

MY DREAM

“My parents wanted me to play football, and my dream is to possibly play in the NFL one day,” he said. “The thing that attracted me to FIU was the diversity that it has, along with the possibility of playing two sports.”

While playing two sports can sometimes create issues for student athletes, Mattox has embraced the possibility with open arms.

“Playing football and doing track gives me the best of both worlds,” he said. “Football is much more team oriented than track and field, which is almost completely reliant on the individual. It’s a good mix year round.”

Mattox hopes to graduate from FIU with a degree in sports fitness, and to one day open a business or even coach football.

Before then, however, Mattox will look to threaten records in both sports during his career.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

Team looks to finish on high note

JOEY CRUZ
Staff Writer

Nearing the end of a rough season in which the Golden Panthers have compiled a 7-22 record and a last place 4-12 clip in Sun Belt Conference play, FIU seems to be making strides as the regular season comes to a close and the Panthers have the number of wins they've had recently.

"We're definitely playing better and starting to nail shots," Thomas said. "Hopefully once tournament time comes we can limit the small mistakes we are making."

In the Golden Panthers' last four games, they have lost by single digits and have been relatively competitive, despite losing all four.

Essential Golden Panthers late in the season include J.C. Otero, who in the last two games played, has put up double-doubles.

"His nickname is Mr. Double-Double," FIU point guard Phil Gary Jr. said. "We expect him to play, has put up double-doubles.

According to Carey, consistency will be the key to beating the Blue Raiders, something FIU has not had since the 2007-2008 season.

Elisa Carey, who leads the team in rebounding and scoring with 9.5 and 13.8, respectively, according to Carey, consistency will be the key to beating the Blue Raiders, something FIU has not had since the 2007-2008 season.

Alysha Clark of MTSU leads the Sun Belt in scoring and rebounding and is on the 2009-10 Nasimih Trophy Watch list.

Clark looms large as FIU puts win streak on the line

STEPHANIE GABRIEL
Asst. Sports Director

The FIU women's basketball team has been something of a surprise, with success late in the season and six straight wins dating back to Jan. 30.

Their next opponent, however, has been impressive the whole way through.

In fact, the Middle Tennessee Blue Raiders have just one loss in the Sun Belt Conference this season, to Arkansas-Little Rock on Jan. 9.

Since then, Middle Tennessee (20-5, 15-1 Sun Belt) has won 11 straight games, and will look to extend that streak against the Golden Panthers (14-13, 9-7 SBC) in tonight's matchup at the U.S. Century Bank Arena at 7 p.m.

Although the Sun Belt Conference's East Division is nearly set heading into the conference tournament, the Golden Panthers will get a chance to see how they stack up against first place MTSU today and in a Feb. 27 game vs. second place Western Kentucky at home to close the season.

There is also the possibility of moving in to second place in the division if they win both games and WKU drops their last two games of the season.

Before that, however, the Golden Panthers must try to stop the Middle Tennessee machine.

Earlier this season, Middle Tennessee beat FIU by 32 points. In the dominating loss, FIU gave up 34 points to Jackie Pickel and 22 points to Alysha Clark, who is a candidate for the Lowe's senior class award.

Most of Gonzalez' confidence stems from the improved defense that FIU's post players have shown late in the season, according to Gonzalez.

"We're going to concentrate on the guards because my post players are playing really good defense," she said.

The frontcourt she refers to includes junior Elisa Carey, who leads the team in rebounding and scoring with 9.5 and 13.8, respectively.

According to Carey, consistency will be the key to beating the Blue Raiders, something FIU has not had since the 2007-2008 season.

Freshman Finds Mansare has also been productive lately in FIU's frontcourt, averaging 7.2 ppg and 5.3 rpg. The Hungarian native has been a starter for head coach Cindy Russo the past seven games and has compiled a 49.4 field goal percentage. In FIU's most recent victory against Florida Atlantic, she scored a career-high 20 points and grabbed nine rebounds.

The forward will most likely be matched up against Clark throughout the game, in a measuring stick contest for the Golden Panthers.