Community efforts recognized with prestigious Carnegie Foundation award

NICOLE CASTRO Staff Writer

As the Spring semester unfolds, the University has already set an aura of success as the prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recognizes the institution for its commitment to the local, national and international community.

Among the 154 institutions that apliced for the Community Engagement Classification, 115 were approved based on evidence of an institution-community partnership for a "mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources."

Other recipients for the 2010 classification include Florida State University, University of South Florida and Nova Southeastern University.

"Clearly there is a great deal of interest among colleges and universities in being recognized for their community engagement commitments," said John Saltmarsh, the director of the Carnegie Foundation’s Administrative Partner for the classification on the Carnegie Foundation website.

Divina Grossman, vice president of the newly founded Office of Engagement at FIU, agrees with Saltmarsh’s statement and recognizes that it shares the same interests.

"We are a public university that is receiving funding from the state and the fact that we’re able to demonstrate not only internal impact but also in the community shows that we are an institution that has actual results," said Grossman.

The work the University commits to is an actual application of the institution’s intellectual capital comprised not only of students, but faculty and staff. Grossman also feels that community engagement is a “very important statement to make especially in this day and age when public resources are diminishing.”

Institution-community partnerships at the University date back to when it was first founded in 1965.

"Top 100 Best Values” list, joining five other Florida public universities which were also ranked best values. The University of Florida ranked 2nd – surpassed only by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which placed first for the tenth year in a row –, the New College of Florida ranked 11th, Florida State University ranked 20th, the University of Central Florida ranked 33rd and the University of South Florida ranked 55th.

"I am pleased that FIU is among such well-regarded colleges on this list,” University

FIU among best values schools

ANALIA FIESTAS Staff Writer

Despite consecutive years of tuition increases, Kiplinger Personal Finance has ranked several Florida public universities a “best value.” Florida International University ranked 97th on Kiplinger’s annual

Crime dramas boost interest in forensic studies majors

W. EARLE SIMPSON Contributing Writer

FIU’s graduate and undergraduate enrollments are increasing in biology, chemistry and biochemistry because of what some FIU professors are calling the “CSI Effect.”

During the past four years, the professors say they have observed an increase in the interests, applications and admittances of students wanting to study forensics related to crime scene investigations.

Professor Lidia Kos, associate professor and director of the graduate program in biological sciences, said her attention was drawn to the phenomenon when she observed a spike in the number of emails about forensics studies.

“The number of inquiries that I receive every week is incredible,” Kos said. “About 60 percent of the emails I get are asking questions about graduate programs are people interested in doing forensic work.”

The CSI Effect is a phenomenon that experts say largely affects the forensic evidence expectations of jurors in court cases.

Judges, prosecutors and defense attorneys believe that jurors, who on a regular basis, watch CSI – Crime Scene Investigation – and similar shows such as NCIS, Numb3rs, Crossing Jordan, Criminal Minds, Bones, 48 Hours, Cold Case and American Justice, have developed a higher level of expectation for the kind and quality of forensic evidence that must be produced to convict an accused, according to a report in USA Today.

But besides noticing the effect in courtrooms, people are beginning to see the CSI Effect in schools. At West Virginia University, forensic science catapulted to the most popular undergraduate major after the topic started to dominate network and cable television programming.

Professor Jose Almirall, director of the International Forensic Research Institute at FIU, said he noticed a similar trend at FIU.

“At FIU, we have had students who normally would not even enter science,” he said. “But because of these shows, they get turned on by science, pursue it and then find out that they like it.”

Almirall said before these shows began showing on TV, there was no student demand for forensic courses for freshmen and sophomores at FIU.

However, four years ago, the biology and chemistry departments responded to a need to offer these students a course called Survey of Forensic Science. Since that time, more than 200 freshmen and sophomores register for the course each semester.

But the most noticeable registration increases have been at the doctoral degree level, Almirall said.

Over the five-year period during which these shows have become increasingly popular, the number of students taking a forensic track in the doctoral degree in chemistry has grown from 2 percent to 30 percent.
Gas explosion rocks Philadelphia neighborhood

An explosion in a gas main in Philadelphia spawned a three-alarm fire that left one person dead and five injured and prompted evacuation of several dozen residents. Fire dispatchers said a gas and water main break was reported at the Tacoy neighborhood, and an explosion occurred at about 8:30 p.m. The dramatic blast was caught on tape by an NBC Philadelphia videographer.

Dozens of people were evacuated from nearby homes and businesses. The cause of the blast was not immediately known. Authorities said the fire was brought under control just before 11 p.m.

Obama Hosts Hu as Powers Seek Common Ground

President Barack Obama welcomed Chinese President Hu Jintao to the White House Wednesday with a full honors, red carpet greet- ing, marking the start of dayslong meetings to address trade, security and human rights issues that have been the cause of past strain between the two powers.

Although many Americans blaming China at least in part for the high U.S. unemployment rate, both presidents will be looking to build trust in a relationship grounded in mutual inter- est but troubled by intractable disputes.

Obama and Hu held a private dinner Tuesday night, each accompanied by two of their top officials, in the White House residence.

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CORRECTIONS

In the issue dated Jan. 19, 2011, in the column titled ‘In Stiches’ by Esra Erdogan, the name Ashley Garner was misspelled. The correct spelling of this name is Ashley Garner.

Also, the front page headline titled “My Moment of Silence” should be “Remembering Haiti.” The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our UP office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

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University engaged in community

CARNEGIE, page 1

but the Office of Engagement points out that the are more intentional about these partnerships and that the partnerships are mutually beneficial. In Within less than a year of its establish- ment, the Office of Engagement has demonstrated a rapid rise in projects.

The office opened Feb. 5, 2010 and in a matter of 8 months, it created the infrastructure of the office, established a budget, initiated a number of signifi- cant partnerships and most importantly submitted the application for the Community Engagement Classification.

In the most recent initiative, the Office of Engagement is taking public schools in Liberty City, such as Miami Northwestern, and establishing community schools in hopes to provide security, healthcare and social services.

Consequently, the number of high school graduates will increase due to these resources. “The goal in liberty city is to increase the academic success of student, as well as their college retention,” said Grossman.

“The more successful they can be, the more likely they will graduate from high school and come to FIU.”

In the agenda of the Office of Engage- ment are plans to visit the University of Pennsylvania’s Nutter Center for Community partnerships, a program that has nationally been held up as a model, in order to mirror their involvement. An additional project is the life sciences quarter, an economic develop- ment initiative. The work group consists of the deans of all public and private universities in South Florida, including University President Mark Rosenberg.

They have begun to meet in an attempt to attract more companies and venture capi- talist to create more jobs in the area of the life sciences.

Grossman believes this is impor- tant because of the way the region has been affected by home foreclosures and unemployment. “It is important to create an economy that is more knowledge based [in the life sciences], to create jobs that are higher paying and that are not subject to the fluctuation of the real estate cycle,” said Grossman.

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Tuition considered affordable when compared to other states’ schools

KIPLINGER, page 1

Provost Douglas Wartuzk told Student Media. “This Locks are extremely important for Kiplinger’s rejection of the rank- ings, the schools’ cost and financial aid, such as the price for tuition, manda- tory fees, housing and books also taken into major consideration.

For example, Kiplinger’s was extremely impressed by the New College of Florida, which offers strong academics at an affordable price for tuition, manda- tory fees, housing and books also taken into major consideration.

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RUNNING BACKS

Beyond Perry, who will be a senior in 2011, and Mallary, who will enter his junior season, the team has solid depth at the position. Jeremiah Harden showed promise before injuries derailed his 2010 season, but the junior-to-be figures to be in the mix for carries next season as well. Kedrick Rhodes had a productive freshman season. In addition, the team has invaluable young depth to spare with Robert Boswell, Brandon Bennett, and Paige Crosswell.

Trendan Turner will not return in 2011. Despite plentiful bodies, FIU is devoting a few scholarship offers to the position for its class, and has already landed three-star prospect Shane Coleman out of Green Cove Springs.

Although Coleman is the only public commitment at the moment, Cristobal is high on Hialeah’s Jerron Seymour, who visited FIU last weekend and also holds offers from Florida Atlantic, Kansas State, Tennessee, and Toledo, among others.

FIU extended interest in Lake Worth four-star prospect Tre Mason and three-star recruit Marquis Sumler, but both players reportedly have their sights set on other schools.

OFFENSE, page 4

2011 COMMITMENTS - OFFENSE AS OF JANUARY 19, 2011

- Shane Coleman - RB
- Yo'Keem Griner - TE
- Lorenzo Hammonds - QB
- Richie Rozy - OL
- Dominique Rhymes - TE
- Clinton Taylor - WR
- Ezekiel Turner - WR
- Dylan Warner - QB

Hilton will be back and will again be the team’s best weapon on offense, but he will be a senior, and depth is a concern.

Wayne Times should continue to produce in his slot role in 2011.

Jarius Williams has underwhelmed and received limited playing time. Jacob Younger became a contributor last season, catching 16 balls and topping it off with three catches in the bowl game win over Toledo.

Ariel Martinez will also be back after losing the season to a knee injury after a promising offseason. But none of those options present the upside of Willis Wright.

Wright came to the team last signing day amid a slew of hype after the former three-star prospect from Miami Springs made his

Recruiting Roundup

Recruiting Roundup

Second half struggles down Panthers

In 2011, FIU secured solid commitments from a few out of state players in Dylan Warner and Lorenzo Hammonds, both given a two-star rating by rivals. Both players are considered athletic prospects.

The Panthers will look to develop depth in key positions.

Offense looking to develop depth in key positions

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RECEIVERS

With Greg Ellingson and Ty Frierson graduated and Junior Merillle’s conversion to cornerback, the team suddenly finds itself as thin as it has been in years at wideout.

OFFENSE, page 4

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Panthers look to improve on road; Taylor enrolls at FIU

JACKSON WOLK
Staff Writer

After starting conference play this year with a three-game win streak, their success has since abruptly ended at the hands of a two-game slide with both losses, unsurprisingly, coming on the road.

If the Panthers want to keep up with cross-town rival FAU and the rest of the conference, their struggles on the road are a problem that must be solved.

“Taylors leaving was a big blow, but he’s been able to practice and stay in shape, and he’s expected to remain there,” said one pancreatic team official.

The issue is that the team must replace two starters on the interior of the offensive line, with center Brad Serini and guard Cedric Mack graduating. Curtis Bryant should return as the starting right guard for his senior season, with Giancarlo Revilla, Donald Senat, Austin Tottle, Kevin Van Kirk and Kenney White likely competing for the remaining two starting spots available.

One intriguing possibility would be to move Bryant to guard, which from a size standpoint makes sense, and would give impressive sophomore David Delsoin the job at right tackle.

So far, the only public commitment the team has comes from 6-foot-5 tackle Richie Ray from Chicago, who spurned Middle Tennessee to be a part of FIU’s class. Cristobal would like to add another offensive lineman or two by signing day.

The next edition of Recruiting Roundup will appear in next Friday’s issue.

WRIGHT IMPROVING

Delshawn Wright had to miss the game against Alabama on Jan. 15 due to catching a high fever on the road. He is a vital part to the team’s success and was sorely missed as the team went to overtime and eventually lost. He is expected to be back in the lineup soon.

“Right now his temperature is down, and he’s been able to practice the last couple of days,” Thomas said of Wright.

TAYLOR ENROLLS

After a lot of uncertainty about the status of recruit Phil Taylor, the freshman guard from Georgia has made his way on campus and is taking classes at FIU.

It is still unclear when Taylor, who decided to stick with the Golden Panthers despite opening up his recruitment, will be declared today but it is expected that he may return at some point this season.

Taylor, who averaged 16.6 points per game at Wheeler High School in his senior year, was unable to go directly to FIU due to a poor ACT score and went to CJEOTO Academy in Somerset, N.J. After attaining the necessary score to enroll at FIU, Taylor

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Just under two weeks ago FIU snapped a six-game losing streak against South Alabama when they came away with a victory at home in a game which saw three Golden Panthers score double digit points. They hope to have a repeat performance Jan. 21 as they take on the Jaguars again, this time on the road.

Senior Marvin Roberts was one of those three Golden Panthers. He’s had great success against South Alabama, as the last two times he played them he scored 17 and 18 points respectively. Coach Thomas was excited so I always play better.”

The last time they played the Jaguars, both Marvin Brock and Augustine Ruhi put up 22 and 20 points respectively. Coach Thomas is not so worried about certain players though, as is he with the whole team in general.

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Senior Marvin Roberts was one of those three Golden Panthers. He’s had great success against South Alabama, as the last two times he played them he scored 17 and 18 points in each contest.

“I just love competition and when guys get to talking to me that just motivates me even more to do better,” Roberts said. “South Alabama have a few guys that are always talking and that gets me excited so I always play better.”

The last time they played the Jaguars, both Marvin Brock and Augustine Ruhi put up 22 and 20 points respectively. Coach Thomas is not so worried about certain players though, as is he with the whole team in general.

“We’re not going to be able to shut everybody down, our focus is on the basketball game and if we can win the basketball game then that’s the most important thing,” Thomas said.
The Ruby Sunrise

TV’s genesis focal point of play

KATHY PAZ
Staff Writer

"There is truth… and then there’s television," or so says the tagline for The Ruby Sunrise, the latest production at the Theatre School.

Though one might think the play’s all about television, it is not just a story about the birth of the tube. Rinne Groff’s drama aims to showcase how reality is often rewritten by the media.

The production of this play has been an ongoing effort by the Theater Department. The show, which was supposed to premier this last fall semester, suffered a setback and was pushed to the spring following the discovery of mold infestations in the Deuxieme Maison building.

In fact, according to Marylin Skow, the Theater Department Chairperson, "The Ruby Sunrise had already been in rehearsal for weeks, costumes were well on their way to being completed [and] set designs were done," at the time of the mold discovery.

With the problems well behind it, the performance is set to debut on January 20. "We’ve been in a state of hibernation for the past 6 months, but now we’re awake and ready to show the audience a good time," says Groff.

The first character we meet is a teenage physicist who invents television. If you do not know how a television works, she explains how in the play, and there is even a scene where she makes a cathode tube on stage.

Then we meet other characters who decades later work in television production, who show us how decisions are made about what will end up on the small screen. Yawney said. "The play will take place at The Black Box Theater in the Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus."

"I like to think of that space [The Black Box Theater] as our holodeck, and you need that to do a play that jumps through time and space like this one does. The space is intimate but the story is huge," Yawney said.

"The Ruby Sunrise will be of interest to so many different parts of the FIU community. The characters are scientists, writers, television producers, and the people impacted by the work of those people. It shows characters whose vision bangs up against reality. We like it when our plays can engage students and faculty from other colleges in the University, and this one certainly does."

David Gallegos feels that the audience will be able to easily relate to The Ruby Sunrise. "Everybody watches television, and this play takes you back to a time where it was being invented by a girl with big dreams to change the world. We all have dreams and hopes for a better tomorrow, and this play explores that idea that a certain device can bring a nation closer together. All the characters have a passion; they love and fear the future. The characters in this play represent not only a movement of a nation, but of the entire world," said Gallegos.

The Ruby Sunrise runs Jan. 20-23 and Jan. 27-30. Tickets are $10 for students.

Hit show’s allure leads to increased forensic interest

CS1, page 1

"I am aware that it is a big influence for many in the field," forensic science graduate student Joel Lo Salvin said. "A lot of students go into it, get exposed to the real thing and if anything, drop it. But CSI is one of the main attractions for a lot of people."

One of those people is forensic science graduate student Michael Hyre. "I was exposed to the field of forensics through TV shows and that is what drew my interest toward it," Hyre said. "I later did some research and found out that the TV shows are a little unrealistic but they are what initially led me to the field."

Chemistry senior Nicole Metallo said she was also motivated by the crime scene shows. "I got interested in forensics because of the influence of the crime scene shows on TV such as Criminal Minds, CSI and NCIS," Metallo said. "I think forensic science is an interesting field and moreover, there are a lot of different things one can do with it."

DeEtta Mills, director of FIU’s Forensics DNA Profiling Facility, said she receives many inquiries from people who want to learn the field of forensics but lack the requisite qualifications. "Still, the demand from qualified individuals is enough to warrant the introduction of a new master’s program. "We are opening a combined degree in masters of forensic science and biology this fall," Mills said. "That will probably increase the enrollment with those people who would be interested in both of those fields."

Mills said because other universities are also noticing the trend of an increasing demand for forensic science degrees, the demand for professors to teach each course is increasing. She said FIU graduates have taken up some of those positions. But while the CSI Effect is influencing many, some forensic science students said CSI did not motivate them.

"Definitely, the CSI Effect does exist," biology senior Jackie Zayas said. "But I was not one of the people motivated by it."

Graduate students Krista John-Williams and Julian Mendel also said they were not influenced by the CSI Effect.

Still, the CSI Effect could be a double-edge sword. On the one hand, it drives an increase of students to the forensic sciences because finally they can see a direct application of science. On the other hand, students may be deceived by an unreal, elaborate and exciting depiction of science.

However, Mills said, the CSI Effect can be a good thing if it helps to attract students to the idea that in the real world, science is filled with rigor, defined operating procedure, long days and hard work.

W. Earle Simpson, a December 2010 journalism graduate, produced this story in the JOU 3300 Advanced News Writing course taught by Dr. Fred Blevens.

MIGHT AS WELL JUMP

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Oscar-worthy flick does not make for first date fodder

Watching Blue Valentine is like watching a car wreck between two vehicles that are mangled beyond recognition.

It is certainly not a pleasant film to watch yet it retains a brutal, understated force during its run time. It doesn’t rely on the morbid curiosity of onlookers to gain attention. It has the deft touch of two established stars giving mundane details. It has to be, especially with the seemingly inevitable outcome hanging over the movie from its first moments. It’s not about what happens, ultimately, but how it happens.

Arriving at a futuristic themed motel suite, Dean lets off a screech of laughter. “This is how they laugh in the future,” he tells his wife. She goes to the bathroom and closes the door behind her. She stands blankly for a moment, lost in a prevailing thought that remains unspoken.

Dean walks in to find her in the shower. Seeking a moment of intimacy, he enters, wanting to make love. As he kisses her, she remains more focused on rinsing her hair of any remaining shampoo. She spurns him. That same thought comes to his mind. “What happened?”

What makes these scenes of impending doom so searing are that they play throughout the movie as we also witness love’s blossoms. With a full head of hair and fit, Dean carries a rugged, roadabout air with a deep sensitivity. He asks a coworker with the moving company if he believes in love at first sight. Cindy tells her grandmother that her biggest fear is ending up like her parents: in a loveless relationship. She goes to the bathroom and closes the door over her shoulder. Dean is better with their child, Frankie, who dotes on him, perhaps because he is indeed a child.

In many ways, it serves as an update of Richard Yates’ Revolutionary Road. Woody Allen said in Annie Hall, “A relationship, I think, is like a shark. You know? It has to constantly move forward or it dies.” The film also serves as a musings about the love itself. Does love fade? Do people settle?

The film is honest, showing a great understanding of its characters and never seeking to make a villain of a character. Dean and Cindy are just victims of circumstance.

It is then up to Gosling and Williams to make this film work. Their spontaneity in scenes depicting the earlier portions of their relationship endears these scenes to the audience.

Looking for it every Friday.

FISTFULS OF TECH!

A Dispatch from the future: a weekly column on movies. The film is honest, showing a great understanding of its characters and never seeking to make a villain of a character. Dean and Cindy are just victims of circumstance.

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Fistfuls of Tech! is a weekly column on all things technology. For more FOT! check out FistfulsofTech.fiusm.com.

‘Disappointment’ the word of the day following merger

Cable-giant Comcast buying a majority stake in NBC Universal, the folks that bring you your weekly copy of The Office among other shows and movies, may seem like business as usual, but I assure you it is far from it.

Free Press, an open media advocacy group, did the math on this one, and it’s a bit of a shocker. After this deal, Comcast will acquire “more than two dozen local TV stations, numerous digital TV channels and cable company that distributes and creates content.”

These stipulations are band-aids on a sive concentration of power in the hands of Comcast will jack up the prices that other cable and online content providers pay for NBC content, and those prices will be passed to you. That means higher cable and Internet bills, even if you don’t subscribe to Comcast,” he added.

Where other organizations share a cautious optimism about this decision and the regulations that surround Comcast as it moves forward to cross that fine line between distribu-

tor and creator, these stipulations are band-aids on a gaping wound: temporary fixes and appease-

ments against a company that is positioned to eliminate any semblance of competition in a place that has been known for ultimate competition.

The FCC, though admirably trying to defend consumer interests in this matter, is a toothless pithball chained to the White House porch of a president who has forgotten his promises.

Silver, in his piece, points out something Obama said during his campaign in 2008. “I strongly favor diversity of ownership of outlets and protection against the exces-

sive-concentration of power in the hands of any one corporation, interest or small group. I strongly believe that all citizens should be able to receive information from the broadest range of sources.”

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Cable-giant Comcast buying a majority stake in NBC Universal, the folks that bring you your weekly copy of The Office among other shows and movies, may seem like business as usual, but I assure you it is far from it.

Free Press, an open media advocacy group, did the math on this one, and it’s a bit of a shocker. After this deal, Comcast will acquire “more than two dozen local TV stations, numerous digital TV channels and cable company that distributes and creates content.”

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ments against a company that is positioned to eliminate any semblance of competition in a place that has been known for ultimate competition.

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Sexuality still taboo topic despite media

PAOLO RAMOS  Staff Writer

With the scantily clad female musicians in the industry today, the reality stars, like the boys on Riff Raff’s "Diana Ross" and the members of the Jersey Shore, one would think that sex has taken center stage in America. However, the own beauty. This could not be further from the truth. In reality, most people, especially those in the younger generation, are clueless as to how to adequately approach their own sexuality. There is an over-sensationalized interpretation of it in the media. While it is great that the media have embraced a true connection with the urges and pleasures of the human body can experience, they fail to drive the point home in an effective and positive way. The trend in current pop culture is leaning toward promiscuity and impulsive behavior rather than a more grounded and constructive attitude. There is no art or grace to it, only mindless and repetitive fluff that more often than not gets people into more trouble than they can handle.

To the trained mind, it becomes less surprising to observe the rise in teen pregnancies and drunk-driving accidents when today’s pop culture encourages sex, drugs and alcohol in the excess. There is an inelastic perspective that the media have formed and directed toward young people. It is an easy or fiercely independent while men are expected to be aggressive and disrespectful toward women. There is no middle ground, and those who fall out of the loop are left confused and anxious. This translates in a negative way across relationships.

On the other side of this flashy embodiment of perceived sexuality is the confusion people struggle to form or her own identity. This results in a skewed attitude toward sexuality that undercuts its value and importance. There is also a counter problem to the oversexualized attitude in the media today, and that is the lack of education at home. With the increasing availability of sexual content in the media, parents and other authority figures are at a loss to adequately tackle the problem before it gets out of control. Anybody with a computer can access such content, and such technology is becoming increasingly available to younger and younger age groups.

The biggest problem, however, is the indifference most parents have toward the content to which their kids are exposed. Most parents let their children have free reign of their cell phones and laptops not knowing how simple it is for the children to come across content that is too mature for them to handle.

There is also a lack of discussion going on, not just within families but within society as well. Schools tackle sexual education at the minimal level, barely touching upon the most important issues that younger generations now face as a result of the increasing exposure to mature content. This is reflected in the poor decisions that many young people are now making, which result in teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Ironically, and in spite of the wealth of information provided by the Internet, parents and authority figures lack the initiative to keep up with the already sexually charged younger generation.

Abstinence-only sex education is, unfortunately, the primary resource that most young people have, both at home and in society. Most do not learn about the true impact of unsafe decisions either until college or until they are slapped with a pregnancy or a sexually transmitted disease of their own.

There is a definite distinction between what young people are exposed to and how they interpret it, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to reconcile the two. There is a need for more open forums of discussion, not just at home, but throughout society where sexuality is concerned as the media penetrate into the ever-shrinking sphere of childhood.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

University worlds behind in safety, tolerance, health

JAMES RICHARDSON

Despite all the arguments for, against, and indifferent regarding the recent smoking ban on campus, there isn’t the smoking ban at all. It’s the priorities and principles the university chooses to employ in its mission to become “World’s Ahead.”

The consistent rhetoric of these objectives includes promoting a safe, inclusive, and healthy environment. Sadly, the university has failed on all accounts.

Safety is an issue that concerns all students. Despite a stabbing, cars being broken into, laptops stolen, and a recent armed robbery, I personally witnessed an FIU police officer chatting on Facebook in his patrol car on Tuesday rather than promoting a safe environment by doing his job.

Additionally, many students have expressed that notifications regarding the armed robbery didn’t occur until after it was “deemed” safe to be on campus. The university continues to employ Target as a corporate sponsor for its Target Wednesday After Hours sessions at the Frost Art Museum (as well as other events on campus), yet Target continues to be targeted by the Human Rights Campaign (which began last summer) which includes a nation-wide boycott of the company for political donations to anti-LGBT rights candidates.

Despite ostracizing the LGBT community on campus with its continued relationship with Target, the university has additionally ostracized smokers by making them social outcasts on campus.

In terms of healthy, this has to be the biggest oxymoron the administration has employed. Despite the constant message of healthier choices on campus, the end result including dining additions such as Moe’s, Dunkin Donuts, Papa John’s, and Chili’s. In addition, the university employs long-standing choices such as Starbucks and Burger King.

The addition of Chili’s (complete with alcohol selections), paralleled by ramant alcohol consumption before, during, and after social events and football games on campus, leads me to believe that the underdage drinking shenanigans of SGA is merely a product of the principles and priorities the university employs.

The university put the icing on the cake by installing a “socially enforced” nanny state courtesy of the smoking ban. I find the hypocrisy of this most interesting as state & federal tax revenue from cigarette sales is a funding source of the university.

In becoming “World’s Ahead”, it’s very plain to see that the priorities and principles of the university has nothing to do with fostering a safe, healthy, and inclusive learning environment.

It’s purely all about the revenue. I have drastically lost much of my pride as a Panther because I’m seen more as a dollar sign than a valued stakeholder.

I’ll expect the alumni solicitation to build the new FIU gambling casino after I graduate since the university gambles with the students safety, health, and sense of belonging at the priority of becoming world’s ahead of everyone else’s pocketbooks.

James Richardson, senior, is an interna-
tional business major.

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First roundtable was a first amendment discussion

PNINIT COHEN
Contributing Writer

The topic at this semester’s first ever Tuesday Times Roundtable at the Biscayne Bay Campus was “Name that Freedom.” Students and faculty had the chance to openly discuss current events with each other in an open forum. Vice Provost Steven Moll, an FIU-MDC Wesley intern and five students were among some of the attendees of the discussion dealing with the First Amendment and Americans’ basic freedoms. Librarian Lauren Christos moderated the roundtable.

It’s important to know the freedoms the constitution gives us,” said Christos after citing a research poll which found that 52 percent of respondents believe the First Amendment declares our country as a Christian nation. “Are you offended by that?”

Lelieka Murdoch, transfer student majoring in public relations eyed over the exact wording of the First Amendment. “It’s so vague - I can see why every person interprets it differently,” she said.

The conversation ranged from freedom of religion to the current war to Americans’ attitude toward censorship. “Why is there a big fuss over 6,000 deaths in the war while almost 60,000 people die every year from car accidents and gun accidents?” Moll asked. The comment spurred a dialogue among the group.

Murdock argued it was because of the way the media frames the different issues. “We think of car crashes as accidents so we don’t bother to get angry about it the way we do about soldiers dying in a civilized war,” she said.

Faculty members were not the only ones provoking sensitive conversations. “I want to know why everyone thinks the First Amendment would not pass in today’s government,” said Julie Walker, intern at FIU-MDC Wesley, a Methodist student ministry of both FIU and Miami-Dade College.

Walker asked question after question provoking a rich conversation, while Vice Provost Moll, Murdoch and Christos dominated the conversation. “If we have freedom of speech, why do we have to have a designated free speech area on campus?” asked Walker. Moll insisted the entire campus is a free speech zone. “Now if you want to protest, we have a designated area by the flag pole,” Moll said. “Everyone has the right to protest, but we must do it in a way that allows everything else to continue as planned.”

The roundtables, which take place Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. in WUC 159, set a stage for a conversational debate among all levels of faculty and students.