Nine-year-old helps homeless, encourages others to help

OMAR GUZMAN
Staff Writer

Flipping through channels on the TV, it is not uncommon to come upon a commercial asking for money to go towards starving children in third world countries. While it may seem that most students disregarded it, Joshua Williams, who was five years old when he first saw it, reacted quite differently. “I wanted to adopt them all,” said Williams of the Joshua’s Heart Foundation.

After explaining to him that it would be impossible, his mother tried to direct his attention towards a cause that he could work with in his own neighborhood. Williams began by feeding one family in his church, but soon expanded his efforts to that of 250,000 pounds of food and over $80,000 raised. During a Panther Hall event on Jan. 27, Williams, now nine years old, spoke of the large homeless population he encountered in his work. Sierra Montgomery, resident assistant and senior majoring in psychology, organized the event. “Living a Dream, Leaving a Legacy,” to educate students on the state of poverty in Miami and encourage them to pursue their dreams.

The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who pursued his dream in spite of the odds inspired Montgomery. She urges students to follow his example by putting forth the effort to accomplish their goals. “We come out with degrees and we go in to careers we don’t like based on pay… if you really want to work for something, you can do it.” Montgomery feels as though some students are reluctant to tackle difficult tasks, such as obtaining a Ph.D. and instead settle for a fraction of their original dream.

To showcase the value of perseverance, Montgomery commissioned the performance of three students who danced, sang and recited uplifting poetry. “I’m pretty sure Obama didn’t know he was going to be president when he was five,” said Montgomery of the kind of aspirations she hopes students reach for. Devin Floyd, a member of AmeriCorps VISTA and volunteer for Miami Coalition for the Homeless, brought two guest speakers to share their stories. “[Homelessness] wasn’t a part of their plan, they didn’t expect it to happen.” The first speaker, introduced as Pat, shared his story about how he became homeless and the steps he took to overcome it. The second speaker, who introduced himself as “Kid Lawyer,” spoke about his experiences working with law firms. He emphasized the importance of networking and building relationships with mentors and bankers to lead towards success in the law business.

A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

Nicolas Saravia works as a Beat Writer, covering the School of International and Public Affairs and the College of Law for The Beacon.

Networking options offered to students, alumni at Career Fair

VINCENT FERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

In an attempt to prepare students with the transition from college into the working world, the Career Services Office will be hosting its Career Fair – one of four hosted each year. Open to all students and alumni, the fair will be hosted on both the Modesto Maidique and Biscayne Bay Campuses.

Through professional development workshops, practice interviews, career counseling and on-campus interviewing students will be able to practice for their future career path.

With 76 companies registered to attend, the Career Fair is considered one of the biggest career-related events and services provided to University students and alumni.

“Last fall, the MMC Career Fair attracted 89 employers, and over 1,000 attendees, so it’s a huge event for student and alumni job seekers,” said Kenneth Setzer, an employee at Marketing and Publications at the Career Services Office. “It’s also an opportunity for the employers to access so many candidates with varied degrees and experiences.

The Career Fair at MMC will be held on Feb. 3 at the U.S. Century Bank Arena from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. On Feb. 16, HBC will host the fair at the Wolfe University Center.

CAREER FAIR, page 2

Lawyer, author launches guidebook, lectures students

NICOLAS SARAVIA
Staff Writer

Speaking on the lessons learned throughout his career and encouraging students to seek advice from mentors, Lawyer Spencer Marc Aronfeld launched his guidebook, "Make It Your Own Law Firm," at the College of Law on Jan. 27.

Specializing in medical malpractice and personal injury, Aronfeld is the founding partner of his legal team, Aronfeld Trial Lawyers, which operates in Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Coral Gables. Aronfeld is an alumnus of the University of Miami, graduating cum laude in 1991. He also holds a Bachelor’s in Business Administration and is the author of the children’s book: “Sara Rose, Kid Lawyer.”

Aronfeld began his speech by mentioning part of a personal account featured in his book, such as his classmates’ struggle for work and his first legal case. “When I graduated from law school, I did not know anything about the court,” he admitted. After his first independent experience with a medical malpractice lawsuit, Aronfeld decided to speak to law school students interested in opening their own firm and share what he had learned. “I speak so no other kid ends up in a job they were forced into. The greatest tragedy is when you see people who are miserable in their jobs,” he explained, encouraging students to open their own firms.

The importance of networking was also emphasized, mentioning that solid relationships with mentors and bankers could lead toward success in the law business. “I want this to be helpful to those who will come after me,” said Aronfeld.

Aronfeld recalled that there is a need for law services both locally and globally, which led him to start a non-profit organization that provides legal assistance to the homeless called “Lawyers to the Rescue.” Aronfeld’s organization operates an office at the Camillus House, which is staffed by University students serving as externs. The attorney looks forward to the growth of the organization.

The speech made prior to the book signing impacted those in attendance. “The event was heartfelt. He showed the true emotion of his path. I am looking forward to reading his book, which I am sure will be useful for my career,” expressed Verónica Limia, third-year law student.

Aronfeld demonstrated his gratitude toward the College of Law community, highlighting the real world experience and advice that he has received from the University’s College of Law faculty. “I feel closer to the professors at FIU than to the faculty of my university,” said Aronfeld.

Nicolas Saravia works as a Beat Writer, covering the School of International and Public Affairs and the College of Law for The Beacon.
**WEIRD NEWS**

Professor charged with peeing on colleague’s door

A California university professor has been charged with peeing on a colleague’s campus office door.

Prosecutors charged Tihomir Petrov, a math professor, with two misdemeanor counts of urinating in a public place. A dispute between Petrov and another math professor was the motive.

Petrov was captured on videotape urinating on the door of another professor’s office. School officials had rigged the camera after discovering puddles of what they thought was urine at the professor’s door.

University awards first Beatles degree

A Canadian woman has become the first person in the world to graduate with a Masters degree in Beatles studies.

Former Miss Canada finalist, Mary-Lu Zahalan-Kennedy was the first to accept the MA in Beatles, Popular Music and Society from the university.

The course looks at the studio sound and composition of the Beatles and how Liverpool helped to shape their music.

Social networking leads to sex faster?

Nearly four out of five women and three of five men believe texting and other social networking tools cause couples to jump into bed faster.

Shape and Men’s Fitness magazines surveyed 1,200 men and women for their third annual sex survey.

Nearly 80 percent of women and 58 percent of men say it leads to sex faster.

Flirting occurs with men texting 39 percent of the time.

Nearly 80 percent of women and 58 percent of men say it leads to sex faster.

**MEGA Career Week’ to include resume and interview workshops**

**CAREER FAIR, page 1**

Ballrooms from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Attendees can expect major companies such as PepsiCo, GEICO, Sherwin Williams, Target and government organizations like the U.S. Department of State to have representation at the fair.

By promoting the diversity at the University, the Career Services Office understands the advantages that FIU students bring to the work force.

“Recruiters know that at FIU they can find the diversity and experience they seek, whether for an entry-level position or a more senior appointment. Where else can you find students and alumni from such different backgrounds, from all over the world? That carries a lot of value,” Jairo Ledesma, assistant director in the Career Services Office told News at FIU.

Career Services advises all students to attend some professional development workshops and complete a resume before attending the fair.

According to Setzer, Career Services is also sponsoring another major event—MEGA Career Week. During this week, there is an “intensified schedule of professional development workshops designed to help students and alumni get ready for the Fair.”

The Engineering center, MMC and BBC campuses will all host selective events for this weeklong experience.

Offering the popular workshops, like Resumé Writing, Interviewing Skills and PRODUCTION MANAGER/COPY CHIEF

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MEN’S BASKETBALL

Legion making an immediate impact

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

The highly speculated and intriguing life of Alex Legion has been analyzed by many throughout his basketball playing career. Starting from high school at Detroit County Day to now playing at FIU, it has been a long journey to get to where he is today.

His first stop was at FIU. He didn’t get approached by Coach Isaiah Thomas, but rather he approached him. The history between the Legion and the former Hall-of-Fame player goes back all the way to his high school days, where he played alongside Joe Dumar’s son.

Legion asked Dumar what he thought about recruiting at FIU. Although he was a high school basketball powerhouse Oak Hill Academy.

“I wanted to go there because I wanted more,” Legion said on transferring. “Michigan basketball was great but I wanted to really prepare myself for this level.”

Playing with the likes of O.J. Mayo and Brandon Jennings, Legion won the national championship along with setting some impressive marks.

He became the top three-point shooter for Section 3-4A and still holds the schools record for best free throw percentage (85%) and three-point percentage (42%) in a season.

By going to Oak Hill and putting up the kind of numbers that he did, Legion was recruited from Division 1 schools all across the nation.

His first choice was originally Michigan University, but reneged that decision once the road to FIU for Alex Legion [above] has been paved with many stops along the way.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

Coley earns Sun Belt honors for weekend play

RICO ALBARRACIN
Asst. Sports Director

Freshman Jerica Coley was named the Sun Belt Conference woman’s basketball Player of the Week for the second time this season, the league announced Monday, Jan 31.

Coley became the first freshman from FIU to receive a conference accolade since the school joined the SBC in 1998, and still holds the schools record for both free throw percentage (85%) and three-point percentage (42%) in a season.

His first choice was originally Michigan University, but reneged that decision once the road to FIU for Alex Legion [above] has been paved with many stops along the way.

WOMEN’S, page 4

FOOTBALL

Recruiting class could be best in program history

IGOR MELLO
Asst. Sports Director

With the National Signing Day looming today, there’s a strong possibility that head coach Mario Cristobal could have the best recruiting class at FIU. Although nothing is official until these verbal commitments sign on the dotted line, Cristobal has a chance of snatching up to 23 recruits for this year’s signing day and possibly cracking the top 50 recruiting classes of the year.

GIOVANI FRANCOIS

Cristobal may have snatched up another three-star recruit, this time from Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Giovani Francois has verbally committed to FIU over this past weekend, choosing the Cristobal’s team over the University of Temple. The 6-2, 230-pound defensive end was the 46th ranked defensive end in the nation. He’ll have a chance to complement a unit that was ranked first overall in scoring defense and overall defense in the conference.

The road to FIU for Alex Legion [above] has been paved with many stops along the way.

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LEGION, page 4

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www.fiuam.com

Wednesday, February 2, 2011

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REBECCA VILLAFANEI/THE BEACON

The Panthers will look to build on their two-game winning streak when they travel to Troy (5-17, SBC 2-7) on Feb 2. His fifth year at Illinois, he got to play the second half of the season and made the most of that opportunity. He played in 22 games and averaged around 11 minutes of playing time and even led the team in scoring in one game against Michigan State. Following that season, he made another trip outside of the country, this time to China.

“I really didn’t enjoy that trip so much, it was a real culture shock for me,” said Legion. “But in the end it was a great experience, I mean not everybody gets to say they went to China.”

To everyone’s surprise, he would only surprise – his fall semester for the Fighting Illini before announcing his decision to come to FIU. He didn’t get approached by Coach Isaiah Thomas, but rather he approached him.

The history between the Legion and the former Hall-of-Fame player goes back all the way to his high school days, where he played alongside Joe Dumar’s son.

Legion asked Dumar what he thought about playing for a guy like Isaiah Thomas and see if he could teach me a few things and uplift my career," Legion said.

"I wanted to go there because I wanted more," Legion said on transferring. "Michigan basketball was great but I wanted to really prepare myself for this level."
Golden Panthers to face off against Troy on the road

McNair, who leads Troy in both scoring (13.7 ppg) and rebounding (8.5 rpg), and is a top 10 player in the SBC in both categories, ninth and fourth respectively. Joining McNair is DeAngela Sword, who averages 13.5 points a game.

There is not much scoring after McNair and Sword, as the Trojans are the worst offensive scoring team in the Sun Belt, averaging 56.1 ppg. Another factor towards the Trojans shortcomings is that they are also the worst in assist-turnover ratio at -6 while giving up the ball 22 times a game.

For the Golden Panthers to continue their streak, look for them to play a similar style of defense that will force the Trojans to take bad shots and force turnovers. While on offense, the Panthers will continue to build an inside presence with Elisa Carey, who is recovering from her knee injury with every game she plays. Jerica Coley will lead the offense, with Finda Mansare looking to build off her 14-point performance against Middle Tennessee. One weak point for the Panthers is the lack of depth, as coach Cindy Russo continues to use a seven player rotation in games. With Rakia Rodgers out of the lineup while dealing with an ankle injury, Russo continues to play her players with no rest.

FOOTBALL, page 3

Rhymes is a lanky, but big 6-4, 205-pound receiver, who did see some time at tight end for the Bulls. Rhymes was the sixth best receiver statistically in Miami-Dade county, hauling 42 receptions for 745 yards and eight touchdowns. Rhymes has already promised that in two years from now, FIU will be in the Top 25 poll.

Taylor statistically produced more than his teammate. The little 5-8, 160-pound speedster led the county in receiving yards with 972 and was a reception shy of leading the county in receptions, with 68. Taylor ended his senior campaign with six touchdowns for Northwestern.

Cristobal may have also landed Lyndon Edwards, who played defensive end for the Bulls. Edwards, listed at 6-1, 190 pounds, may see time at the outside linebacker position. Edwards, a two-star recruit, looks to follow the deep tradition of Northwestern linebackers that have had success in college. All three are familiar to FIU, having played for the Bulls at FIU Stadium a few times during their high school career.

COREY TINDAL

Another hometown product may sign to play for the Golden Panthers in 2011. This time another 3-star prospect, according to Rivals.com. Corey Tindal, the 52nd ranked defensive back in the nation, verbally agreed to join Cristobal’s crew. Tindal, who came out of Boyd Anderson high school is listed at 5-10, 174 pounds.

Legion left Illinois to play for Isiah Thomas

LEGION, page 3

Legion left Illinois to play for Isiah Thomas.

The speculating and analyzing of Alex Legion’s decisions might always follow him throughout his career, but in the end there is no denying that he is a great basketball talent that can do some amazing things when he’s on the court.
Twinkle Toes

1. Committee members get emotional as they reveal their grand total to participants. In its thirteenth year, Dance Marathon at FIU raised $187,108.30 for children in need. 2. (From left to right): Joe Sevillano, Alfredo Roig and Katrina Pratts as they watch a dance performance. 3. Matthew Wittyngham, James Gamito and Martha Maria Lopez dance for a cause. 4. Vanessa Castro, a member of Alpha Omicron Pi, battles it out on the court. 5. Shannon Walsh was the Miracle child sponsored by Alpha Xi Delta. 6. Students dance as part of the 24-hour marathon to raise funds for the Children’s Miracle Network.
Professor receives Fanning Medal

ADRIAN ESPINOSA
Staff Writer

A professor since 2008, Michael Gillespie has been making his name on campus as an accredited scholar of Irish studies. He was chosen to write two volumes in the Norton Critical Editions (a publisher of college books) and 66 books and book chapters in the field of English and Irish studies.

Professor Gillespie began his interest in Irish studies while attending graduate school at the University of Wisconsin-Marquette and working on his dissertation based on the Irish writer, James Joyce. After receiving his Ph.D. he began to work at Marquette University, a private school run by Jesuits, where he began his interest in Irish studies. He became acquainted with a literary critic and historian engaged in Irish studies and Gillespie was the first American to win the Fanning Medal. The medal, a lot a lifetime achievement award, was awarded to Gillespie in recognition of his work as a literary critic, the work he has done with the American Conference for Irish Studies and his promotion of the study of Irish studies in the United States. Dr. Gillespie is also working on a book for the University Press of Florida on James Joyce and the experience of writing while in exile in Zurich and the writer's passion for Ireland.

Gillespie is also working on a book about his Mountain Dulcimer. The Chattanooga resident asked him if he wanted to take the job if Professor Asher Milbauer didn't chew with his mouth open. “I didn't chew with my mouth open,” said Milbauer. Also working closely with the ESCP is the Center for Humanities in an Urban Environment that Dr. Gillespie is building up. “The humanities center is going to be an important asset at FIU because of the way it engages members of the south Florida community so that people have a sense that FIU is not just Miami, but FIU is part of Miami,” said Gillespie.

Last November Dr. Gillespie was in Ireland for the Cork Film Festival in Cork City, Ireland where he was asked to curate a series called “Green Shoes.” The series focused on six new Irish directors whose movies were talked about the way very different films all come back to the issue of family and how family or the absence of family really shapes and sometimes undermines the lives of the characters,” said Gillespie. After his lecture, the discussion ensued was surprising because not everyone had taken into account such a perspective, but with time they all saw how that point of view was pertinent.

The Chattanooga resident asked him if he wanted to take the job if Professor Asher Milbauer didn’t chew with his mouth open. “I didn’t chew with my mouth open,” said Milbauer. Also working closely with the ESCP is the Center for Humanities in an Urban Environment that Dr. Gillespie is building up. “The humanities center is going to be an important asset at FIU because of the way it engages members of the south Florida community so that people have a sense that FIU is not just Miami, but FIU is part of Miami,” said Gillespie.

When the Coachella Valley Music Festival announced its 2011 lineup on Jan. 19, it unofficially kicked off the Summer Music Festival preseason. While it wasn’t the first festival to unveil their lineup, Coachella is the first of the Big Three American Festivals, along with Bonnaroo and Lollapalooza, and so it’s announcement is the first major event of the season.

In the coming weeks, other lineups will be coming out, and interested parties will have to begin making plans for which, if any, festival they will take on.

I’m here, a veteran of four Bonnaroo and a Langerado (RIP) or two to give you a preview of what you can expect if you’re looking at one of these festivals. First and foremost, is the music. This is, of course, a factor that is entirely up to the individual to decide which lineup speaks to them the most.

Personally, I was left a little cold by the unrolling of the Coachella lineup, which is heavy on headliners, but doesn’t have much in the undercard for me. Taste being what it is, of course, it could be a can’t miss for you.

The great thing about these types of festivals, though is that even though my initial disappointment in the lineup for Coachella hasn’t waned, I’m still certain that I would have no problem filling a day with memorable acts, just by the sheer numbers on the card.

If you are planning on going to a festival, don’t be turned off by a lackluster undercard, and similarly, don’t be blown away by a stacked lineup. You are going as much for the experience as for the lineup.

Often, you’ll find yourself dealing with scheduling conflicts that will force you to miss parts of a set, or just plain exhaustion that will keep you from trekking to the other side of the festival or from your campaign to have the most interesting band.

Sometimes, you’re better off sticking in the same place and catching a whole set from one band to another complete sets, and a potentially under-whelming lineup could be more fulfilling.

And by the way, yes, you can walk around camp sites. Trying to get a hotel near enough to go back and forth is next to impossible on almost any sort of budget, and speaking from experience, the RV-rental is worth neither the money nor the hassle of driving a 20-foot behemoth across the country.

So, if your idea of a good way to impress the possibility of no showers, blazing sun, and sleeping on the ground, you probably want to avoid an out of town festival.

There is a further announcement remaining, but Tiesto, Deadmau5, The Chemical Brothers, Royksopp, and Crystal Castles are just a handful of the artists already announced to be in attendance.

Unfortunately, the Harvest of Hope Festival, a smaller festival in Northern Florida that featured Billy Bragg, Broken Social Scene, Dr. Dog, and the Mountain Goats last year, has been cancelled for 2011.

However, another somewhat more local option is the much more roots rock and jam oriented Wanee Festival, in Live Oak, Florida, somewhere between Jacksonville and Tallahassee. This year’s lineup features The Allman Bros. Band, Widespread Panic, and Robert Plant & The Band of Joy, amongst many others.

Personally, I’m waiting with bated breath for the announcement of Bonnaroo’s 10th anniversary lineup.

Confirmed artists like Girl Talk, Talib Kweli, and Big Boi, plus rumors of anyone from My Morning Jacket to Prince to Daft Punk have me salivating for my fifth return to the farm in Central Tennessee.

If you make your way up there this June, make sure you look for the guy who looks sleep deprived, unwashed, and completely blissful. I won’t be hard to miss. I’ll just be standing next to your campsite to make sure you don’t miss parts of a set, or just plain exhaustion that will keep you from trekking to the other side of the festival or from your campaign to have the most interesting band.
Sexual content in media in need of censorship

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, the rates of sexual activity have climbed steadily for over two decades. About 20 percent more males and females are having sex today by the age of 18 than they were in the early 1970s. Researchers have made the link to mass media as the cause for this sexual revolution. Sex increasingly creeps up into everyday life and the sexual revolution reached its sweaty climax. The only rational plan of action seems to be not to watch television, read no magazines and stop listening to mainstream music. However, since this will prove to be impossible, it is not too ludicrous an idea to suggest a little censorship which is much needed in today’s society.

Television, ads, film and now video games have become popular forums for provocative images and obscene material. Children, who learn most of what they know about sex from the media, are not being properly educated as year after year video game characters wear less and less. The Kaiser Family Foundation asserts that when it comes to sexual health questions, 79 percent of teens get their information from television.

According to the National Eating Disorders Association, one out of four television commercials sends some kind of attractive- ness message. They also attest that children now report that 38 percent of the female characters in video games are scantily clad, 23 percent wear bikinis or cleavage, and 15 percent showing their rears, leaving many teens asking, “How can I compare?” Provocative images of half-naked women are prevalent in advertising and media. The famous expression “sex sells” proves to be true as women become sexual objects when their bodies and their sexu- ality are linked to products that are being bought and sold.

Analyses of broadcast media content indicate that teenage viewers see 143 inci- dents of sexual behavior on a network tele- vision program at prime time each week, whereas portrayals of 3 times as many sexual activities occurring between unmarried part- ners as between spouses. It is becoming increasingly harder for young teens, or the average person, to measure up to these conceptions of beauty that is imposed on them by the media.

Although a situation like that can easily spill disaster, it is becoming more important than ever for coun- tries to look for diplomatic solutions and to be more open to trade to avoid a global-scale nuclear disaster.
CUBA

Flash flood sweeps away bus, truck; 30 die

Police in Bolivia say a raging river has sough at least 30 people to their deaths after swamping a bus and a truck that tried to cross the river.

U.S. missionary killed in drug no-man's land

KATHERINE CORCORAN
Associated Press

American missionaries Sam and Nancy Davis were crossing a drug-cartel battleground in northern Mexico when gunman opened fire on their truck and mortally wounded Nancy.

The couple drove up to an illegal roadblock on a stretch of highway just south of the border city of Reynosa. When Sam Davis decided not to stop, gunmen opened fire and hit Nancy Davis, 59, in the head. Sam frantically drove his bleeding wife for help, across the wrong way on an international bridge into Texas, where she later died.

Reynosa is a gateway to the largest drug pyramid in Mexico and one where cartels from both Mexico and the United States are warring for drug routes.

Last summer's massacre of 72 migrants also occurred on the U.S. side, in eastern Tamaulipas state, where the Gulf cartel and the Zetas have been battling for lucrative drug routes in the United States for more than a year.

The Mexican government in November sent more troops and federal police there in what it called a major operation to try to control drug violence.

They ran a children's shelter for some time and founded several churches in other small settlements. Nancy worked as a nurse and midwife, gave Bible classes and was known as a deeply religious person who used music to express her faith.

 Among their stops was the tiny hamlet of Villa Mainero, where the Davises had a church. Residents said the couple was well-known and well-liked for work they had done over decades.

They were unusual.

“Cepeda said the government has a central plaza and town hall with a few stores, restaurants and a police station, and a train that runs between here and Reynosa,” Martinez said. “They gave everything in their lives to be here with us. Not everyone wants to stay here because we’re in the mountains, the road is difficult and it’s not safe.”

Like most small towns in Mexico, the pueblo has a central plaza and town hall with a few stores, restaurants and a police station. It has a train that runs between here and Reynosa.

In a sign of the effects of Mexico’s drug war, Cepeda said gunmen in flashy SUVs are now a common sight on the roads around the once-peaceful town. The highway that runs past Villa Mainero to Monterrey and north to the border with Texas is a notorious drug-smuggling route.

They loved Mexico,” Cepeda said of the missionary couple. “I think, sadly, that caused her death.”

**THE BEACON**

Paul Havens

Associated Press

A well-known Cuban dissident was in and out of police custody repeatedly Friday in a cat-and-mouse game with authorities, who told him they would lock him up anytime he tries to gather in public with other government opponents.

Meanwhile, the wife of a jailed activist began a hunger strike demanding her husband’s immediate release, the latest turn in Cuba’s simmering standoff with its small but boisterous opposition.

Guillermo Farinas was first detained Wednesday afternoon in the central city of Santa Clara, only to be released that evening. Authorities picked him up again the next day, holding him until Friday morning. By the afternoon, he was back in police custody after he and several others defied the warning about gathering in public. Farinas was freed yet again Friday evening, then taken to the hospital complaining of chest pain, according to Elizardo Sanchez, a leading human rights activist.

Their objective is to neutralize dissident activity,” Sanchez said of the authorities’ decision to repeatedly arrest Farinas. He said Farinas’s condition did not appear to be serious, though he was in a lot of pain.

Farinas and the other dissidents had sought to place a wreath at a monument to Cuban independence leader Jose Marti on the 158th anniversary of his birthday.

“About 20 of them went out to place the wreath,” Farinas’ mother, Alicia Hernandez, told The Associated Press. “They had only gone two blocks when they took them away.”

Earlier Friday, Farinas told the AP he would ignore the warning. “They told us they wouldn’t let us assemble in groups of more than three people,” Farinas said. “If they want to detain me, that’s their problem.”

Farinas, 49, gained fame while staging a 134-day hunger strike last year. He has largely stayed out of the spotlight since December, when he received the European Parliament’s annual human rights prize.

Cuban authorities refused to grant him permission to travel to Strasbourg, France, to pick up the award, a decision he said at the time was “irrational testimony to the fact that unfortunately nothing has changed” in Cuba regarding human rights.

Opposition figures are frequently detained by authorities, often to be released within hours or a few days, but the repeated arrests of Farinas were unusual.

Also Friday, the wife of imprisoned dissident Diosdado Gonzalez announced the start of a hunger strike demanding his release.

Alejandrina Garcia, one of the founding members of the “Ladies in White” opposition group, said in a phone interview from her home in Matanzas that she would only drink water until her husband is out of prison.

Cuban promised to free all 52 remaining opposition figures from a July deal with the Roman Catholic Church. Just 11 remain behind bars, including Gonzalez.

Church officials are optimistic the government will soon make good on its promise, but there has been little word on the men’s fate since the passing of a November deadline by which all were supposed to be out.

The last 11 dissidents have refused to accept exile in Spain, as most of the others did, the apparent reason for the delay.

The government considers Farinas — and the island’s other dissidents — to be common criminals paid for by Washington. Authorities frequently note that some of his legal troubles include an assault on a co-worker and other violent behavior. Farinas says all the charges are linked to his activism.

**PHOTO BY NED CHANDLER/THE BEACON**

Students, faculty and staff at the 11th Annual Jose Marti Breakfast held in Panther Square on Jan. 26. In the event, human rights and responsibilities were discussed with recent former Cuban political prisoners and five students received scholarships from the Jose Marti Scholarship Fund.

**PHOTOS BY NED CHANDLER/THE BEACON**

Monterrey, Mexico, contributed to this report.