A year after: alerts still face flaws

ALEXANDRA CAMEJO
Asst. News Director

With the one-year anniversary of Kendall Berry’s death approaching, changes that have been made to the University’s communication system since that time have drawn conflicting reactions from students across campus.

Aiming to upgrade the University with instant emergency alerts—ranging from weather-related emergencies, to hazardous conditions on campus or even criminal activity—the text message system has been in place for over two years.

Since its implementation, the Office of Emergency Management has been developing the system’s effectiveness—a quality that was doubted after janitor and football running back Kendall Berry was stabbed on campus.

According to a report from the Dean of the College of Law, R. Alexander Acosta, there were significant communication flaws with the system in place due to the fact that the first alert sent out to the University was over an hour after the incident had occurred on March 25, 2010.

“There were a lot of issues with that whole event. As a tribute to him, a huge effort has been made to manage the messages and get them out on time,” said Ruben Almaguer, who served as the consultant for Emergency Management after its former director, Dorothy Almaguer, stepped down.

Some students feel that it is not the timing of these messages that is an issue, but the subject matter.

“I think the texts create more panic than needed, because if you get a message, it rarely gives you the full story on the incident. And then 30 minutes later, you simply receive one that everything is OK,” said Brittany Lopez, a sophomore and psychology major.

While students such as Lopez feel that the vague wording of some text messages may give reason for unnecessary fear, the administration and OEM considers this to be a necessary safety precaution for situations on campus.

“We wanted to be able to get something out that is going to be somewhat abbreviated. We’re trying to give you the full story on the incident. And then 30 minutes later, you simply receive one that everything is OK,” said Brittany Lopez, sophomore and psychology major.

Students to walk in eco-friendly gowns

ANAIA FISTAS
Staff Writer

While some may be used to seeing plastic bottles thrown into garbage bags, FIU students may need to adjust to the idea of wearing 23 plastic bottles on their very own graduation gown.

For the spring commencement ceremony nearly 4,500 FIU graduates will receive their awaited diplomas wearing caps and gowns made completely out of recycled plastic bottles.

The University may be following the lead of other schools that used recycled gowns such as Florida Tech College, Gulf Coast Community College and Stetson University.

Yet, it is the first State University to send down graduates wearing the Earth friendly gowns.

In a press release on March 3, University Provost Douglas Wartick said, “This is an innovative way to show our commitment to sustainability and make an impact given the size of our graduating classes.

By emphasizing that FIU is the most energy efficient university in the State University System, Wartick claimed that these environmentally conscious gowns coincide with FIU’s continued commitment to be worlds ahead and eco-friendly.

“I think recyclable gowns are a great idea because they are better for our environment. I like the idea. It’s like a novelty. It’s not only fashionable, but eco-friendly. I love it. Nowadays, it’s really important to be green, and this is a really great way to do it. We’re setting an example to all the other Florida schools,” said sophomore Anam Z. Parpa.

Freshman Cheke Pope went on to praise the green efforts of the University.

“We [FIU] are number one for saving energy, so having recyclable gowns contributes to our honorable title. Not only that, but we are also protecting our environment,” said Pope.

Designing by Virginia-based Oak Hall Cap and Gown, the gown style is called GreenWeaver.

Both the caps and gowns were made from a fabric spun from molten plastic pellets.

The GreenWeaver had never been made into any other color but black.

However, the manufacturers decided to produce blue regalia for FIU, as blue is the traditional graduating and spirit color for the University.

The bags in which the cap and gowns come in are also made from plastic bottles.

The ink size labels on the back of the gowns are even derived from soy.

According to Assistant Director and Commencement Coordinator for the Office of the Protocol and Special Events, Lynda R. Rodriguez, the price tag for the recycled gowns is actually slightly higher than the previous due to the new manufacturing process.

Each gown is currently priced at around $5.

“Five dollars is nothing. What is that, a gallon of gas? Five bucks are totally worth trying to conserve our environment,” said junior Nicole Cardona.

Rodriguez has personally heard students rave about the new gowns.

“The students have really accepted it. What I have heard from graduating students is that they think it’s an amazing idea. They’re excited to personally work with two seniors in my office, and they are really happy about the gowns. They can’t
Students excited to wear new gowns at commencement

Concerns raised by students over alert delays, reliability

Around 70 students get tested

GOWNS, page 1

wait to wear them,” said Rodriguez. Rodriguez claims that the idea of these innovative gowns came about during the annual national commencement conference. One of the commencement officers went to the conference and presented the idea to the office. Although from the fact that no resources are being depleted, which equates environment conservation. Rodriguez believes there are a number of advantages that along with the gowns. The gowns also show commitment to sustainability. From a safety standpoint, these gowns have high ratings with inflammability. Students received their cups and gowns during Grad Send Off from March 7 to 9 at the Barnes & Noble FIU Bookstore on Modesto A. Maidique Campus. Commencement ceremonies will take place May 2 and 3 at the US Century Bank Arena.

The BHIVE Project took place in the housing quad on March 11. The event aimed to educate about HIV and STD awareness. There was free food, games, performance, giveaways and free HIV testing.

ALERTS, page 1

After verification from first responders on a scene, the Police Department and dispatchers have the authority from OEM and the administration to send out a text message using the University's web-based alert system.

“We wanted to develop a system that enables them to do the best job that they can possibly do in terms of notification of emergencies, providing information to our students, our faculty, our staff, our visitors that will be helpful,” said Rodriguez. Our visitors that will be helpful to students, our faculty, our staff, providing information to our students, faculty and staff to receive Panther Alerts.

“We have the emergency management group that includes representatives not only from University police and Emergency Management but Housing, Traffic and Parking, Athletics, Recreation and Wellness. Everybody knows that they have a big stake in this program,” said Jessell. Taking on this new position, Aikens appreciates the support and development of faculty and staff to receive Panther Alerts.

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Gniadek emerges as a team leader

MALCOM SHIELDS  
Staff Writer

As the Golden Panthers took the field against Ohio State in the season opener, it was the changing of the guards in the pitching circle as junior Jenn Gniadek took the ball against the Buckeyes.

Last season, the Golden Panthers pitcher staff was anchored by senior Kasey Barrett, whose career statistics ranked her in the top five of numerous pitching categories in Golden Panthers history. Gniadek replaced Barrett as the top pitcher on the Golden Panthers staff after being the number two pitcher last season. The process has had its ups and downs early on this year.

“Now that I’m in [Barrett’s] role, it’s really different,” Gniadek said. “It’s taken some time to get used to.”

Through the first 24 games, Gniadek is 4-6 with a 3.29 ERA recording 61 strikeouts in 14 appearances on the season. She is ranked first on the team in innings pitched with 66.

Although Gniadek may have not gotten off to the ideal start that she would have wanted, Coach Beth Torina praised Gniadek’s athleticism and her work ethic.

“She is the total package. She has so many things going for her; not just on the softball field but in life. She is a special person.”

As a leader, Gniadek is not the type of person who is overly boisterous. Instead her leadership is expressed by her actions rather than her words.

“She is going to go out and work hard and try to set the example [with her actions],” Torina said.

With the personality that Gniadek has of internalizing her focus and energy, Coach Torina feels that she may be placing too much pressure on herself.

“I think she feels the weight of the world on her shoulders and it really is not,” Torina expressed. “We have a good team on all sides of the ball [around her]. If she relaxes, and makes adjustments the will be fine.”

Barrett, who is currently a student assistant coach on the team, spoke about the intensity that Gniadek brings to the circle as well as how she supports her teammates.

“She is very focused, especially in games when she is pitching,” Barrett said. “When she is not pitching she cheers and she is more relaxed.”

When Gniadek needed advice on anything last season, she leaned on Barrett for guidance.

“The relationship between Gniadek and Barrett continues to be very close.”

“She was a great example for me,” Gniadek said of Barrett. “When I came in as a freshman, I had Kasey [pitching] in front of me. I use to love pitching with her. If I had a problem she would be the first person I would go to. With Kasey still here, it’s good that she can still help me.”

Barrett echoed the same sentiments about their relationship as well as how the how her being a pitcher allows her to relate better to Gniadek.

“We have a really good relationship.”

Gniadek [above] has made a team-high 16 appearances so far this season as she assumes the top pitcher role for FIU.

FIU able to sweep MTSU in home set

MALCOM SHIELDS  
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers (15-12, 3-0 SBC) took to the field on March 15 and 16 against Middle Tennessee (5-16, 0-3 SBC) in their Sun Belt Conference opener at home and swept the Blue Raiders in the series.

FIU 3, MTSU 2 (8)

In game one, both teams did not score until the fourth inning. With two outs, Brie Rojas doubled to centerfield to extend the inning for FIU.

Kayla Burri drove in Rojas from second on a single that just went over the glove of shortstop Britney Banana to give FIU a 1-0 lead.

“Hit it off the handle. It wasn’t a solid hit but it worked,” Burri said. “If that’s gonna get us a run, I’ll take it.”

The Blue Raiders countered in the fifth inning by loading the bases on three walks and tied the game when Natalie Ysais was hit by a pitch to force in a run from third base.

The game went into extra innings. In the top of the eighth inning, with two outs, Kaycere Popham crushed a homer to right-center field to give MTSU a 2-1 lead.

FIU 3, MTSU 2 (8)

The Blue Raiders once again had the bases loaded in the bottom of the eighth inning with two outs and the tying run at the plate. But Junior pitcher Jenn Gniadek [above] came to the mound to shut the door on the Blue Raiders.

11 with a 7-0 sweep of the Troy Trojans.

Jenn Gniadek [above] has made a team-high 16 appearances so far this season as she assumes the top pitcher role for FIU.

The team has now won six straight matches and seems to be well prepared for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

Opening with a doubles victory, taking two out of three matches, the Panthers got off to a hot start. The Blue Raiders countered in the fifth inning by loading the bases on three walks and tied the game when Natalie Ysais was hit by a pitch to force in a run from third base.

Rojas was hit by a pitch to load the bases with two outs and the tying run at the plate. But Junior pitcher Jenn Gniadek [above] came to the mound to shut the door on the Blue Raiders.

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The team has now won six straight matches and seems to be well prepared for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

OPENING DECK

The Golden Panthers, ranked No. 61 nationally as of last week, have been unbeatable the past two weeks and won again on March 15 over North Texas by a score of 6-1.

The team has now won seven consecutive matches and seems to be well prepared for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

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The team has now won six straight matches and seems to be well prepared for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

Golden Panthers open conference play with wins

BRANDON WISE  
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers, ranked No. 47 nationally as of last week, have been unbeatable the past two weeks and won again on March 15 over North Texas by a score of 6-1.

The team has now won seven consecutive matches and seems to be well prepared for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.

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The team has now won six straight matches and seems to be well prepared for the Sun Belt Conference Tournament.
ANDRES LEON
Staff Writer

The Golden Panthers (12-5) would look to bounce back after a hard loss to Rice earlier in the week during their series against No. 14 Texas A&M (12-4). In a series of close games, the Golden Panthers lost two, but picked up a win in the middle game of the series. It was FIU's first win over a Top-20 opponent since 2008.

TEXAS A&M 6, FIU 5 (10)

FIU (11-4) would lose to Texas A&M (11-3) in a nail biting run-inning series opener at College Station on March 11.

After an early single from Garrett Wittels and a ground ball from Rudy Flores, Mike Martinez would bring Jeremy Patton around after he was walked and off an error from the second baseman. Wittels would come home to give FIU a 1-0 lead. In the bottom of the first, the Aggies would steal bases off two errors and were able to cut the Golden Panthers lead back down to one. In the following inning, FIU starter Phil Haig would allow the tying run on an RBI single from Andrew Collazo.

With the score tied 1-1, the Golden Panthers were headed for extra innings with the score tied at five. But an RBI single Kenny Jackson would bring in the game-winning run for the Aggies in the tenth inning, handing the Golden Panthers a tough loss.

FIU 2, TEXAS A&M 1 (10)

As the Golden Panthers bullpen began to find rhythm in the road trip, they did so again in game to against the Aggies in a thrilling 2-1 victory in the second consecutive game to go into extra innings.

R.J. Fondon would lead the way for the FIU pitching staff, pitching a little over seven innings and only allowing one run and earning seven strikeouts.

The Golden Panthers would topple the one-run lead from the Aggies after Pablo Bermudez hit a fielder’s choice to bring in Joel Capote. Later on in extra innings, the bases were loaded for the Golden Panthers when Sabari Henry would run off of a wild pitch to score the winning run for FIU.

Bryan Garcia would earn the victory with two innings pitched and recording two strikeouts while only allowing one hit.

TExAS A&M B, FIU 5

After beating their first Top-20 opponent since then No. 1 University of Miami in 2008, the Golden Panthers looked to make up for history at College Station for their final game in a three-game series against the Aggies on Mar. 12.

Game three would prove to be a slugfest contest with the Aggies as Tyler Naquin hit a double early on to start things off in the first inning. On the next play, Matt Fuegel would hit a ground ball deep into left field to bring Naquin home for the first run of the game.

The Golden Panthers would strike back as Mike Martinez doubled to left-center field and would eventually be brought home on a single by David Vazquez. With the game tied up, things were bound to break loose. FIU would take a 5-2 lead going into the seventh inning after a Jose Behar double drove in Yosandy Barroso and Joel Capote. Things looked bright for the Golden Panthers, but after late fly-pitches from Arbolaya and a few errors, the Aggies would rally back to win the game 8-5.

With stopper Kenny Jackson would come up big for the Aggies hitting a home run to bring in Charlie Curl for the eighth run in the game.

DJ. Swatscheno would close the game for FIU earning the loss.

D.J. Swatscheno would close the game for FIU.
Students present local artists in annual art exhibit

ALFREDO APARICIO
Staff Writer

The Aesthetics and Values seminar, led by faculty fellow John Bailly, began as an underground class. On the first go-around, only 18 students filled the classroom and brought together the first Aesthetics and Values exhibit at the FIU Green Library.

The number of students since that first class has only grown, tripling in the last five years. “It’s not about looking at art from a historical point of view,” said Bailly, who teaches the class. “It’s about how this art exists in society and how we approach it.”

One reason so many students are interested in the class, who are required to participate in the yearlong exhibit project, have taken initiative to bring only the best elements to the table. “They do everything, from funding to choosing the artists to promoting the event,” said Bailly. “For me as a faculty member what I have found most rewarding is that the students take ownership of the project and they’re very creative in how they engage themselves.”

Students choose from a list of established artists but are encouraged to seek out other artists who catch their attention. One of the artists who will be featured, Josè Bedia, was not part of the original list.

“If a student finds someone not on the list, they make a proposal for the artist and present it to the museum. If accepted they have the go-ahead to contact the artists,” said Bailly.

This year’s exhibit will also feature well-established artists such as Daniel Arsham, Ivan Toth Depeña, Jacin Giordano, Karen Rifas, Cristina Lei Rodríguez, John Sanchez, Jen Stark, Antonia Wright and Fabian Pela, many of whom have created original works specifically for this exhibit.

Pela will contribute to the exhibit by painting a quote around the gallery walls with letters formed from insect bodies. “It’s supposed to make you think...”

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Life Editor
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ON THE PROWL
Dating younger men offers more reward than risk

If not automatically eliminating a guy from the running due to his age makes me a cougar then so be it. I can’t quite say I prefer younger men to older men yet, but as of late they’re looking like the better option.

About a year ago I got dubbed with a very fitting nickname: BP Lover. Since “cougar” usually refers to women twice my age dating men in my age range, it seemed appropriate to my friends.

Now if you think you’ve taken a really good guess at what it means, let me clarify this enduring term. Yes, it means “baby penis lover.” But I assure you it refers only to the age of the attached male, not the size of his manhood.

My first BP ever was only six months younger than me, so differences were hard to pinpoint. The most recent BP in my life is three years younger and our age difference can be very clear at times, usually only around our respective groups of friends.

Most of the negative opinions are from outsiders, but we never cared and we rarely even think about our age difference.

But let’s not dwell on the cons when the pros can make more up for them.

The thrill of being with a passionate, younger man can’t be understood until you just embrace it and go for it. Unlike older men, BP’s are usually more passionate about life and love and know how to balance it with fun.

They’ll usually be more appreciative to have hit the jackpot with an older, open-minded woman.

Depending on the depth of your shallow- ness, younger men can serve as wonderful eye candy with their perfectly toned bodies and their fresh, youthful faces. If you picked well, odds are he won’t have a beer gut and will still have all his hair.

The best perk to being with a BP is their willingness to please you. You can benefit from their loyalty and ambition to try new things. Not that they should have to prove anything to you, but they can’t help but feel they need to assure you of your decision to be with them in spite of the age difference.

These are obviously not true all across the board, but if you decide to embark on this new adventure make sure it will be advanta- geous for both of you and take it as a learning experience.

My BP and I are taking it slow for now since he’s starting a stage of his life I’m almost done with: college. I try to help him through his new experiences and he reminds me that I need to take time for myself.

In the end, we will both benefit from meeting at the halfway point between our lives.

On the Prowl is a biweekly column on dating. Look for it every other Monday.
ALEXANDRA CAMEKO
Asst. News Director

Long time ago, in a section of the Graham Center far, far away, the battleground for FIU’s ultimate video gamers and card traders was abruptly taken away.

The construction of Chili’s Too left these students on a quest to find a new stumping ground to claim as their own.

“Everyone thinks we’re all ‘nerds,’” said liberal arts major and senior Eli Philippe.

Philippe and many of his friends who once filled the abandoned corridors of Gracie’s, Grill—now Chili’s Too—have come out of the shadows and into the light sitting just outside of Sushi Maki.

When construction began for the restaurant, these gamers still had a TV for their video game duels, but its relocation to a second floor classroom never caught on. Soon enough after, the TV was gone, and never caught on. Soon enough after, the TV was gone, and never caught on. Soon enough after, the TV was gone, and never caught on.

A new place of residence.

Now venturing far from their space at Gracie’s Grill, video gamers and card traders show up to their new hangout to battle it out in a variety of games.

“Everyone assumes that there’s a stereotype for this, but the truth is anyone can be a player,” said senior and biology major Pleu Sinclaire.

Sinclaire referred to not play sports, but actually play the collectible card game Yu-Gi-Oh!, where each card represents a fantasy monster used to duel another player in a mock battle.

“The card game is our own miniature economy. It helps us learn so much about business tactics and strategies. You have no idea how important it is to be an educated player,” said Philippe.

According to Yu-Gi-Oh! table, there are several oversized binders filled with “monsters,” laminated card decks closely guarded and monitored by each owner, and a marked area reserved for battle space.

For both Philippe and Sinclaire, the card game has become more than just a hobby—it’s a source of income.

The value of the most exclusive playing cards can run up to $10,000 a piece, and these two students have financially benefited from such sales.

“Nerds make no money. One says nerds don’t make money. You can call us professional nerds then,” said Philippe.

While Sinclaire understands that this world of monsters on cards can seem a bit out of reach for many students, he doesn’t feel that people can assume what these players are like.

“I think people assume that we’re the losers, we aren’t well paid,” said Sinclaire while looking down at his Polo t-shirt, “but there is so much money to be made from this game, and I don’t think that’s nerdy at all.”

Pointing out at a table of students playing Risk, Abram Foster, a junior and English major, confidently declared, “Now, those guys are definitely nerds.”

Foster pointed out his dislike for the strategic board game when he said, “Not only is Risk a conniving and back-stabbing game, but you can’t make any money off of it.”

Almost emulating the battle styles from their Yu-Gi-Oh! cards, a debate quickly ensued about what accurately classifies someone as a “nerd.”

“I think the term nerd has evolved from what it used to be. Before it was ‘Star Wars’ nerd, now it’s something like ‘Pokémon’ nerd,” said Sinclaire.

“Star Wars is not really nerdy, but ‘Star Trek’—that’s nerdy,” said Foster.

Directing his argument toward Jessie Negron, a freshman and international business major, who was fully engaged in a card battle, Sinclaire declared that any player of the popular video game, “Super Smash Bros. Brawl,” “qualified as a nerd.”

Focusing on the Yu-Gi-Oh! battle, Negron jumped into a duel with Sinclaire.

That’s not true. I play professionally, I get paid, and therefore it’s not appropriate to call it nerdy,” said Negron.

As a professional gamer, Negron received sponsorships from stores to compete against other gamers in “Super Smash Bros. Brawl” tournaments.

After winning several competitions and cash prizes, Negron is gearing up for a Texas tournament next month.

Even Philippe has considered getting paid to judge the Yu-Gi-Oh! competitions held throughout the country.

So, while these students may have suffered the loss their gaming cave, their new spot has become an open playground where others are invited to play.

“A lot of people just think we’re the nerds, but the game, that’s a stereotype. And that’s not true. You’ll find a huge range of people around here, and we surprise people all the time with how we really are,” said Philippe.
Social support of gays ahead of politics

PAULO RAMOS
Staff Writer

While conditions for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community continue to positively develop in America, the rate at which they are proceeding is still relatively slow. At certain points, it has been stagnant.

It is frustratingly ironic that a culture that has brought into prominence gay icons like Lady Gaga has failed to mimic the same response from the international community, as Lady Gaga herself. As such, gay iconography has brought into prominence gay icons like Lady Gaga, but without the same cultural response from the international community.

Gay icons like Lady Gaga have actively promoted messages of tolerance and equality through their work. The recent award show season also has reflected this cultural shift. Chris Colfer, who plays gay teen Kurt Hummel on the first Golden Globe for that role, which he accepted with a speech encouraging young people to be themselves and feel advantaged for expressing their true selves. Also, the film The Kids Are Alright highlights some of the contemporary social issues that gay people face, such as domestic relationships and parenthood. If the media was the sole source of the American social temperature, all seems to be well for the homosexual community.

While it is great that the social attitude towards gay marriage has shown significant improvement, the political attitude is still relativel


ty ("purse"), have become hovering over the nation pulling invisible strings and bypassing the foundations that kept the nation afloat. The country now faces problems that it must deal with socially, economically and politically.

This mass devastation has brought about the need for foreign aid and migration of the sovereignty of Haiti's republic. It has also done its part in making crops which bring 60 percent of the nation depended on for food and wages, and it has destroyed the capital. As the "White House" of Haiti lies in a heap of rubble, it has become a symbol of a fallen nation.

The United States has helped the nation rebuild and recover by sponsoring numerous programs and supplied the nations with temporary jobs. But the rise in the response from the international community was astounding by working with USAID. The United Nations, and World Food Programme in orchestrating the largest urban food distribution history, in accordance to the Bureau of International Information Program, the immediate aid helped feed 3.5 million people. With many people unable to return to their homes, leaving about 1.3 million people displaced, the dislocation of economic ties includes focusing on infrastructure. Homes have been assessed and the U.S. government has put in $19 million into the local economy and short term jobs have been provided to keep families afloat.

Despite all of these things there is still more work to be done. Aside from the structural damage caused by the earthquake there are also strong internal problems such as the challenged integrity of the Haitian people and its politics almost completely dissolved. The problem that the aid has caused, in terms of long-term effects, is keeping the country from shaping its own future.

The main powers, the holders of the "purse," have become large, looming puppets hovering over the nation pulling invisible strings and bypassing the government. Alex Dupuy, a Haitian political analyst and professor at Wesleyan University has called Haiti "a republic of the NGO’s". Due to the mass amounts of money and effort put into the country by the U.S. and several financial institutions, they are in the position to lead the reconstruction of Haiti.

The political actions regarding same-sex marriage are even slower than those in the military. As of now, 80 six states have recognized full same-sex marriage. The issue of gay marriage itself has been praised across the states rather than being dealt with on the federal level. This has and will only continue to slow the progress if no further federal initiative is taken.

Though President Obama has condemned the Defense of Marriage Act to be unconstitutional, recent polls reveal the country to still be evenly divided on the issue. With the presidency being highly democratic in nature, and though Obama may very well be leaning towards legalizing gay marriage, the desires of the country, airstrikes why those who are politically active, will continue to stall the progress of true equality within America.

Gay rights are being put through unnecessary motions in order to be realized. Though the values of all Americans should be considered, progress for the sake of progress must be made. Full recognition of gay rights is something that can only benefit the American population in the long run by giving American citizens more of an incentive to treat each other with more respect and to devote more time and energy to more detrimental issues.

Plain and simple, the drama surrounding gay rights is entirely needless, and the only results that are derived from its complexities will only serve to hinder progress.

Haiti is under foreign leadership

SHEDWIN ELIASSIN
Contributing Writer

On Jan. 12, 2010, Haiti faced a catastrophic earthquake that will be remembered in the annals of history as one of the worst in the decimation of their way of life. The earthquake not only caused the death of more than 200,000 people, but also destroyed the capital. As the capital not only has destroyed the capital. As the earthquake not only destroyed the capital, but also caused the decimation of their way of life. The earthquake not only destroyed the capital, but also caused the lack of respect towards the Haitian elite.

Haiti is going to require billions of dollars to repair the infrastructure, to cater to the needs of the people and to fix the republic. However this does not justify the lack of respect that the foreign powers have for the Haitians' elite.

To see Haiti return to what it was prior to the earthquake as the poorest Caribbean country would not be an improve

ment. The foreign community has a big role to play, from combined effort from Haiti’s elected officials, to improve the condition of the population.

The University's emergency text alert system, Panther Alerts, is plagued by inefficiencies which have led to misunderstandings and, in some cases, cause panic. The primary concern regarding the alert system is its reach. Although the system is implemented University-wide through a mandatory sign-up through myFIU, it seems that not all students are accessing the texts. It is really impossible to hit every single person, but out goal is to get 80 to 90 percent to get the message, said Robin Almanger, consultant for the University’s Office of Emergency Management. However, this is not the case. Of the total number of messages sent, 68 percent reach the mobile phone’s network but only 28 percent are confirmed to be delivered to devices, according to the OEM.

A survey of our editorial board showed that a majority of its members had not received the most recent alert. The few who did receive the alert got it as late as two hours after the incident. Messages on this system should serve to clearly inform students to emergency on campus without inciting panic. This has not been the case. As evidenced by an alert sent on Feb. 11 to alert students about a fire on the Engineering Campus, a significant distance away from Modesto Maidique campus. "FIU ALERT! A hazardous condition exists at the Modesto Maidique campus! Remain cautious. Evacuate area immediately if instructed to do so," the message read. The message sent to students was not only light on details, but suggested that the entirety of MMC was “hazardous” rather than convey the true nature of the incident: a fire at a satellite campus a few blocks away. Messages sent out in this case cause panic and confusion to recipients on- and off campus, particularly MMC housing students, who live on campus and depend on this information for safety.

The current system in place allows for the first responder from Public Safety to issue the emergency alert on the FIU website. But being good at this is a good thing as it removes the bureaucracy of having to gain authority to issue the alert. However, those who can respond are being able to broadcast alerts on this system should use sound judgment and communicate to students an accurate account of what is going on and what they should do. Ultimately, it comes down to a proper balance of accuracy and timing.

University Chief Financial Officer Kenneth Jones does not want the text message service to be the end all but rather a part of a system with various redundancies, such as email alerts. While The Beacon agrees that redundancy is a good thing in alerting the University community, we must stress another platform for information which the University community uses everyday: social media. The University should actively market its Twitter and Facebook portals as methods for students to be informed about important campus information, such as emergency alerts. Working with External Relations, the University’s emergency information correctly and instantly to a wide net of students.

With the efficacy and the wording used, the Panther Alert system can be an effective way of reaching students in times of crisis. But by no means should it be the only way.

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SEND US YOUR LETTERS
Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts (550 words maximum) in to opinions@fiu.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WC 124. With your letter, be sure to include your name, major and year.
Students join local campaign with love in their hearts

JONATHAN SYDLO Staff Writer

From spending a night on the streets to feeding politicians, members of Humility Now are no strangers to the struggles and degradation that the homeless endure on a daily basis.

On March 1, Humility Now and Time-Peace, along with a handful of volunteers, gathered in the Downtown Miami area to hand out T-shirts to the homeless as part of the “Love Your Neighbor” collaboration.

In an ongoing mission to develop face-to-face relationships, spreading awareness of the struggles experienced by those on the streets, the organizers of “Love Your Neighbor” are building a relationship and recognizing the humanity of the homeless. Humility Now and Time-Peace have come together to end the cycle of homelessness and help the homeless.

Roderick Camacho, a sophomore journalism major, described the atmosphere during the event: “I saw the people being so kind, they were really happy and grateful to receive the T-shirts.”

Camacho observed that “they seemed so happy about it, and that’s what really made me happy.”

The organization’s mission is to help the homeless and bring awareness to their cause. Camacho expressed his belief that “everyone has a right to have a roof over their head.”

Humility Now is committed to continued collaboration with Time-Peace and the “Love Your Neighbor” campaign to end homelessness and support those in need.

As a non-profit homeless advocacy and relief organization, Humility Now is constantly seeking out local advocates throughout the United States to assist in the spread of humanity. For more information on homecoming to become involved with Humility Now, visit their website at www.humilitynow.com.