Presidential hopefuls look to “get it done” for University

MELODY CACERES
Staff Writer

In the University’s first contested SGA race since 2008, presidential candidates Patrick O’Keefe and vice presidential candidate Sanjeev Udhnani intend on “Getting it done for FIU.”

A promise that includes collaboration, advocacy and consistency for the student body, the O’Keefe/Udhnani ticket claims to have a “clear vision on engaging University students.” “We’re fighting for inclusiveness, which is why we’re open to new and fresh ideas, rather than having SGA be this exclusive club, which is how it tends to be portrayed as most of the time,” said O’Keefe in an interview with Student Media.

While running with a campaign that focuses on advocating students’ rights, the candidates support and guarantee better collaboration between colleges, continuing to fund successful student programs and making FIU more commuter-friendly while still supporting residential students.

Born in Elkridge, Maryland and relocated to Miami at age 15, O’Keefe is a Political Science major whose involvement on the campus includes a past leadership position with the Student Government Association. Before O’Keefe, the O’Keefe family was involved in SGA for nearly 20 years, running for and winning the presidency after the resignation of Nick Autiello last fall.

A Forum for Free Student Expression at Florida International University

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Experience, student services highlight Gonzalez ticket

NICOLE CASTRO
Asst. News Director

Running on a platform of experience and outreach to students, Alina and Kevin Gonzalez look forward to the challenges ahead of them if they are elected to be president and vice president of the Student Government Council at Modesto Maidique Campus.

Alina has been a part of three different administrations of Student Government, ranging back to the days of President AJ Meyer, who she worked for as an intern. During her sophomore year, Alina served as director of international affairs for then SGC-MMC President Anthony Rionda.

She then continued her service in SGA, becoming the chief of staff for current SGC-MMC President Helena Ramirez.

Alina held the position until the beginning of the Spring 2011 semester, where she relinquished the position in order to fill a void left in the vice presidency after the resignation of Nick Autiello last fall. According to Alina, the rapid transition into vice presidency and the diverse positions she has held along the way have helped her become a better leader.

The largest protest yet against leader

Yemen

Hundreds of thousands marched in villages and cities across Yemen on Friday in what appeared to be the largest demonstration in more than a month of.

$122,000 raised for first generation scholarships fund

ALEXANDRA CAMEJO
Asst. News Director

University leadership, faculty, staff, students and community members gathered to aid the nearly 40 percent of students who will be the first generation in their families to graduate from college.

On March 31, Student Government Association along with University Advancement sponsored the 2nd Annual First Generation Scholarship Fundraising Benefit at the Ronald W. Reagan Presidential House.

“We worked in collaboration with University Advancement to fundraise money for the scholarship. It’s been a true collaboration with them,” said Alina Gonzalez, SGA vice president for Modesto Maidique Campus.

Conceptualized last year by Myka Figueredo, during her time at SGC-MMC, the benefit welcomed attendee donations to go towards the First Generation Scholarship Fund.

As one of the first scholarships of its kind, private donations towards the fund will be matched 100 percent by the state legislature. Approved by the Florida legislature in 2006, with the help of Representative and FIU Alumna Anitere Flores, the Fund has awarded nearly $3 million to first generation students since its inception.

Biscayne Bay Campus SGA President Christian “Cici” Battle and Vice President Denise Haplin worked with SGC-MMC President Helena Ramirez and Vice President Gonzalez to raise money for this year’s Fund.

As of press time, $66,000 have been raised for a total impact of $122,000 with State match by Florida’s Board of Governors, according to Jackie Valle, coordinator of Corporate and Foundation Relations University Advancement.

At the Reagan House, attendees heard from not only Gonzalez and Haplin, but also University President Mark Rosenberg and FIU alumni Joseph Caruncho, CEO and co-founder of Preferred Care Partners—both announcing their $5,000 donations.

Members of the President’s Council, FIU Foundation Board of Directors and Board of Trustees were at the benefit to show their support, financially and socially, for the scholarship’s recipients.

Over 4,600 First Generation awards have been allocated to University students. Emilio Colyer, vice presidential candidate for SGC-BBC, was one of the First Generation scholarship recipients that attended the benefit.

With 91 percent of its recipients being minorities, the goal of the First Generation Scholarship is to “change the lives of South Florida’s multicultural students.”
CANDIDATES PUSH FOR STUDENT ADVOCACY, REALISTIC GOALS

O'KEEFE, page 1

Student Advocacy Committee and a member of the Fiji fraternity as well as the Pre-law honor society Phi Alpha Delta.

He hopes to use discretionary funds to bring back outreach programs for students, with a focus on giving them more information and being more approachable. "The biggest problem is that we're not hearing students enough. We're not going out and talking to them as much as we should," he said.

Currently, O'Keefe serves as the finance chair for SGA, after having only been a first time lower division senator for one year.

"It's really not about having more experience," said O'Keefe, who acknowledged that he is running against a presidential candidate with a longer history with SGA. "It's about having a clear and concise plan of what we want to do." His running mate, Udhnani, is a junior and honors student majoring in International Business, having been born in Miami with an Indian background.

The vice-presidential candidate is currently the president of the Sigma Alpha Lambda Hones Society and SGA attorney general, who served on a committee focused on textbook affordability; an issue that is part of the ticket's platform.

"In that committee, we worked with the Office of the Provost in finding ways to make sure that students have the cheapest and most affordable option for textbooks," Udhnani said. Both candidates are also concerned about those students who they believe are 'neglected,' mainly those that must take courses at the Engineering Center, which are five blocks away from the main campus.

After going to a town hall meeting at the Engineering campus, we walked away with over five pages of notes on student concerns that should be addressed," said Udhnani. "They were truly legitimate concerns like having call boxes on campus or a社团 that students could join and we should not give up on that system until we try to address those concerns and spearhead the ticket to be an "SG-outsider.""

Media. "Our presidential tickets which had zero prior experience," said Ryan Aquilina, UM student director for SGC-BBC.

"This year, we had three tickets, and both candidates are also concerned about those students who they believe are 'neglected,' mainly those that must take courses at the Engineering Center, which are five blocks away from the main campus."

"If you're coming to a town hall meeting at the Engineering campus, we walked away with over five pages of notes on student concerns that should be addressed," said Udhnani. "They were truly legitimate concerns like having call boxes on campus or a社团 that students could join and we should not give up on that system until we try to address those concerns and spearhead the ticket to be an "SG-outsider.""

Candidate推forcandidacy-Realistic Goals

Gonzalez ticket looks to unify SGA

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The Beacon will gladly change any errors. Call our MMC office at 305-348-2709 or BBC at 305-919-4722.

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Bermudez propels offense in road win over ULM

ANDRES LEON  
Staff Writer

After picking up momentum in New Orleans this past Wednesday with a win over Tulane, the Golden Panthers would travel upstate and continue conference play in a three-game weekend series against conference opponent Louisiana-Monroe.

Friday night would bring more momentum for the Golden Panthers on the back of Phil Haig, who would start and earning the win for FIU (17-11, 3-4 SBC) with seven innings pitched, allowing three runs on only seven hits in a 6-3 victory on April 1.

Haig would get three strike outs for the Golden Panthers.

For the Warhawks, Drew Granier would get receive the loss after allowing all four FIU runs off ten hits, but he would strike out nine. The Warhawks would fall to (14-10, 3-4 SBC) after losing to FIU.

The Golden Panthers infield would play a huge part in keeping the War Hawks off the scoreboard in the first inning. After FIU would get two hits in the top of the first, The Golden Panthers would come up short only to provide great infield work to take ULM three and out.

FIU would find themselves struggling in the second inning, but managed to keep ULM scoreless and would score the first run of the game in the top of the third.

Bermudez would single to the left side and to be brought home by Wittels single, giving FIU the lead. The Warhawks would tie the game after Les Aulds would bring Jeremy Sy for the tying run in the bottom half of the inning.

Later on in the fourth, Tyler James Shantz would score off an error by the Warhawk short stop. Shantz had reached first base off an infield single and would take second off a wild pitch.

In the fifth inning, ULM would come back again, this time taking the lead after scoring two runs off three hits. Aulds would bring in catcher Jarrett Hammond and designated hitter Jordy Poche would bring in Jeremy Sy to make the score 3-2 in favor of ULM.

That would be the last of the ULM offense as FIU would score two runs in the sixth inning to regain the lead for good. Jose Behar hit a deep ball down the left field line that went over the wall to tie the game at 3-3. After a Bermudez single, Jeremy Patton would single to center field to bring Bermudez home to break the tie and give FIU the 4-3 lead.

Bermudez would continue to have a solid night singling to left field, earning his fourth hit of the night to bring Jabari Henry in for the lone run the eighth inning.

Bermudez finished the game going 4-for-4 while scoring twice and picking up an RBI.

FIU would close the game with a ground ball from Henry that would bring Shantz home for his second run of the game, giving FIU the 6-3 victory.

The Golden Panthers closer Bryam Garcia would close the game in the ninth with two strikeouts.

Pablo Bermudez [left] scored twice and had an RBI in FIU’s win over ULM on April 1.
Fans were able to get a firsthand look at some of what they can expect to see in the 2011 football season as the Blue vs. Gold game took place on Saturday, April 2 at FIU stadium. Around 75 players were run in the scrimmage, which ended with the offense winning the matchup 19-10.

From the start, it was the defense that really looked strong and on the first drive of the game forced a costly mistake as Wesley Carroll threw an interception to Sam Miller on the first drive for the only turnover in the game.

Medlock got the second string quarterback position and took control on the second drive that ended with him overthrowing Glen Coleman in the end zone, ending the drive at the defense’s 32-yard line.

Dalton would then get his chance to try and get something for the offense going, but could get nothing started either. The offense would not score until Medlock hooked up with none other than T.Y. Hilton at the one-yard line to help set up a Jeremiah Harden touchdown run that put them up 12-7 on the defense.

Carroll, Jake Medlock and Blaine Dalton all took turns taking snaps at quarterback, with Carroll the only one wearing a red no-contact jersey.

The players that made the most impact on the defensive end were both lineman Gregory Hickman and defensive lineman Isame Faciane. Hickman recorded three sacks on the day and Faciane got one of his own.

Faciane moved from outside to inside lineman, and the spring game showed that so far it has been a smooth transition for him. “I think Isame is going to be a heck of a player for us, and I think Hickman is going to be a heck of a player,” commented Cristobal on their performance today.

Dalton would end up being the biggest performer from the quarterback side as he led two drives that put points on the board. One that gave Jake Griffin a field goal and another that was a touchdown pass to Glenn Coleman that ended the practice.

Replacing quarterbacks Cedrick Mack and Brad Seniti from the offensive line is going to be tough this year, and at the start of the spring game it looked a little shaky as the defensive got to the quarterbacks quite often making them have to scramble and run down the field.

“They played okay. We had a couple bad snaps with one that was in the red zone that was unacceptable, but they’re going to keep on getting better and better,” Cristobal said.

During the second half they started to pick it up, which helped the running game get into the groove of things. Both Brandon Bennett and Torrence Seymore had 45 yards each, and Jeremiah Harden ended the day with a one-yard touchdown run and 41 yards.

“I think after the butterflies got out, we started coming off the ball and the running backs started hitting the holes harder and everyone just stayed together,” said center Ceddick Davis.

At the conclusion of the game, all of the players and coaches received their championship bowl rings, and Maris Cristobal gave a speech to the fans thanking them for their support and encouragement to continue this happen every year after,” Cristobal said.

There are only 163 days left until FIU takes on North Texas at the start of the 2011 season on Sept. 1.

RISING AND SHINING
Offense and defense trade barbs in morning spring game

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There are only 163 days left until FIU takes on North Texas at the start of the 2011 season on Sept. 1.
Monday - Great American Cleanup of FIU @ EC/Woman's Park  
9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Tuesday - University Sustainability Launch & EcoFair @ Panther Garage Lawn  
(next to the Arena) 9 am to 11 am

Wednesday - Farmer’s Market @ Green Library Breezeway  
12 pm to 3 pm

Thursday - Nature Preserve Service Day @ Nature Preserve  
2 pm to 5 pm

US Dept. of Energy “Positioning Yourself for Jobs in a Green Economy” Lecture @RDB1100  
6 pm to 7 pm

Friday - Sunset Yoga and Bike-in Movie @ Nature Preserve  
Yoga 7:30 pm, Movie 9 pm

Saturday - Shake A Leg Eco5K @ Soccer Stadium  
9 am to 11 am

For more information, visit GoGreen.FIU.edu
TOMS Shoes’ 4th Annual One Day Without Shoes to Take Place on April 5, 2011.

By Nunez.

The IRC is hoping the event opens students’ eyes to the fact that most of the diseases suffered in developing countries due to being shoeless are 100 percent preventable if children have access to basic shoe wear and have an opportunity to practice foot hygiene.

“I think an event such as this one fits with the University’s initiative of Global Learning for Global Citizenship,” said Nunez. “It will remind (the students) that there are people around the world who do not live with the same standards we possess living in a developed country.”

The event will also serve to explain the consequences of going without shoes such as exposure to diseases. Healthy living conditions for children in developing countries are important to their community as access to education is an important factor of long-term success.

“Often children cannot attend school limiting their access to education which would affect their future and the future of their community. Going barefoot daily can negate positive outcomes on children in ways that can affect them for a long time,” explained Nunez.

While tabling at GC, the IRC’s banners attracted the attention of many students who came up to them and asked about the event. “Student response to the event has been very positive and many have committed themselves to going barefoot at least once throughout the day,” says Nunez.

“Day Without Shoes has also drawn the attention of another student organization which has contacted the IRC and has promised to let their members know about the event as well. "We might see some professors joining in to make a statement which would be so great!" said Nunez.

The event will take place on Apr. 5 and will be an all-day event. The IRC has also booked the GC lawn from 12:30 p.m. for some bare-foot activities like bare-foot Frisbee and a bare-foot march at 12:30 p.m. along with many others.

The climax of the event will take place at the housing quad where IRC will air the GC banner and the One for One campaign.

We plan to start the march in the GC lawn, go through the library’s breezeway over the bridge all the way to the Law building and back,” said Nunez.

“As we gather and march our way through campus barefoot I hope it inspires others to take their shoes off and join in,” To Nunez, it doesn’t matter if participants go barefoot an hour or the whole day, the point is to experience what others go through on a daily basis.

“I’m sure there will be students that will go barefoot all day, to class and back,” she said. “Some have told me they are even going to work barefoot, too.”

As a Day Without Shoes wears on, the IRC anticipates other people are unaware of the event coming up and asking why people are taking off their shoes.

“That will be our chance to talk and educate others about what’s going on. By taking our shoes off we are bringing attention to the millions of impoverished children who have no choice other than to go shoeless,” Nunez said.

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“That will be our chance to talk and educate others about what’s going on. By taking our shoes off we are bringing attention to the millions of impoverished children who have no choice other than to go shoeless,” Nunez said.
Alina Gonzalez and Kevin Gonzalez failed to meet our expectations and therefore, will not receive our support. As per the answers in our questionnaire, some of which were omitted, we feel that Alina and Kevin failed to adequately answer the questions they had to consider.

We feel that their plan to increase an already bloated Senate to 50 representatives, failure to fully address the issue of student participation and their inclusion of an unnecessary and possibly fiscally irresponsible Rent-A-Bike program will ultimately do nothing to improve student life. Unfortunately, having a cheering section did not mask their poor debate skills. Much like their questionnaire submission, their responses lacked substance and clarity. Furthermore, their unprofessional and condescending debate demeanor, both in spoken word and in body language, did nothing to save their poor debate prep. We are especially disappointed that, as the current Vice President of SGC-MMC, Alina Gonzalez failed to uphold the high standards of conduct expected of a representative of our student body. If this is the attitude these candidates will carry with them while representing us, we would much rather that they did not.

Based on the answers given in their Beacon Election Questionnaire submission and debate performance, The Beacon proudly endorses Patrick O’Keeffe for 2011-2012 SGC-MMC President and his running mate Sanjeev Udhnani.

As outlined in their answers in the questionnaire, which was sent to all SGA candidates on both campuses, we believe that O’Keeffe and Udhnani have a clear, feasible vision for improving the student body experience. We find their stance on improving infrastructure and career services utilization is proof that they are well-tuned to the needs of students at the University. Furthermore, their emphasis on outreach at the collegiate and the high school level shows that they are looking to the future of the University in terms of expanding its influence and supporting student government transparency.

As for their debate performance, we feel that both O’Keeffe and Udhnani displayed professional, gentlemanly conduct in addition to handling questioning well. We are especially pleased to see that their conduct remained appropriate despite pressure from their opponents.

This year, the student government elections at the Biscayne Bay Campus are completely uncontested, and because of this, The Beacon will not recommend any of its candidates. All of SGC-BBC’s candidates, in both the executive and legislative races, only need their own vote to win, therefore we cannot logically recommend one candidate over another. This is not an attack against the candidates, their experience, or their ability to govern. Per our several editorials on the subject, we hope that this is not a trend that continues in future elections because it limits the choices available for students and prevents candidates from constructively hearing about issues that will have a direct impact on students.

It is important for candidates running for these positions in student governments to have opposition in order to guarantee accountability and credibility.

For an up-to-date version of this voter guide, which includes coverage and analysis of the SGC-MMC Senatorial debates and SGC-BBC Candidate forum, log on to fiusm.com.
GUATEMALA

Release of accused drug lord demanded

Police say 400 people marched in support of Guatemala’s reputed top drug trafficker captured by the government and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

PERU

Resurgent leftist in Peru election

A leftist former army officer who nearly won Peru’s presidency five years ago with fiery anti-capitalist rhetoric and open defiance for Hugo Chavez has risen once again to share the local in opinion polls.

MEXICO

AG quits, pres nominates 1st woman to post

President Felipe Calderon accepted the resignation Thursday of his attorney general and nominated his top organized crime prosecutor as a successor, the first woman to hold the post if she is approved.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

More students could run, if not for clause

BECCA GRIESEM
Staff Writer

A clause in the student government association’s constitution that’s been on the books for only a handful of students on a university of thousands eligible to run for SGA president may prove to be the end for a good number of applicants in the upcoming election.

Donna Milo has never quite fit in: as a result of a conservative, and a man.

Milo, a transsexual running for City of Miami Commissioner, was on campus on March 31 to discuss herstory with men to woman and aspirations for office.

Milo, 49, who last year ran for Congressional primaries in Miami- Dade and lose to her struggles from a confused young man to a professional woman, and answered questions to an enthusiastic, albeit small, crowd.

“The most important point is openness to the world,” said Milo.

She spoke often of the misconceptions she would face from strangers and people she would deal with on the phone for business, and then meet for the first time.

“I don’t know what it’s like to be a generic female, nor a woman trapped in a man’s body. I just had an abiding need to feel complete and whole,” Milo said, who shortly after decided to confide in her sister, tearing up briefly as she remembered her sister’s immediate acceptance.

“Transsexuals like Milo are different from the transgendered in that the former not only identify with the opposite gender, but also wish to surgically become that gender. In a sign of growing acceptance of transsexualism, President Barack Obama appointed Amanda Simpson, a transsexual woman, to the Commerce Department.

But stigma still exist, as well as personal conflict. Milo, who grew up Catholic, was surprised at the open affi nity for Milo to underg several surgeries including penile modifi cation and vaginoplasty, although she did not alter her voice.

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