Glitch found in student data

BROOKLYN MIDDLETON
Staff Writer

Nothing was lost. But technically, it was lost.

This was how Elizabeth Béjar, vice provost for Academic Planning and Accountability, described a data “glitch” that, as of Oct. 10, resulted in approximately 300 students who applied for fall 2011 commencement not being registered in the system.

Students who applied for commencement passed a successful technical test that they were registered for the ceremony, but the system actually did not retain records of the students, according to Robertson, dean of undergraduate education.

“This is not a case of students being dropped,” Robertson said. “Students appear to be registered in the system. They just don’t appear in the right place.”

Students who applied for a commencement pass received a confirmation of registration with the registration deadline to Oct. 10. Students who applied after this date were assumed to be registered for commencement.

“Students who applied for fall 2011 commencement not having their registration recorded, alerted UTS that a possible glitch had occurred,” Robertson said.

According to Robertson, the six-year graduation rate at the University stands at 43 percent, which is nine points lower than the average rate in the country for all four-year institutions.

“If students are not listed in the system, it was possible their chances of graduation are much higher,” Robertson said. “Data suggests if students are placed in appropriate majors as soon as possible, their chances of graduation are much higher.”

The new system will be put in effect in its entirety in fall 2012. It consists of three major components.

MyMajorMatch, which will be launched in 2012, is a component that has yet to be entirely developed but seeks the goal of having an all-professional advising model where there would be approximately 300 students per adviser by 2014. Currently, the University’s student to adviser ratio in 2009 was 557 to 1, according to the 2010 Work Plan/Proposal.

In the revision for 2011, data showed there were 33 advisers total between those newly hired and those retained. For fiscal year 2011-2012, 18 new advisers were hired; in the next three years the University aspires to hire 40 more.

The advisers would have access to students’ universal advising record, which is meant to eliminate students getting multiple stories from advisers.

“They would also be commissioned to send messages to students who deviate from the track provided to them after their major has been chosen,” Robertson said.

Charlie Andrews, director of the academic advising center in Undergraduate Education, said it clear that no one solution exists for this issue.

“While no tool or assessment can provide all the answers, the MyMajorMatch tool, that FIU is utilizing, was developed using over 70 years of research on the ways that a person’s interests and abilities are linked to success in his/her chosen career,” Andrews said.

“There are a number of factors that contribute to how students select a major and the careers that individuals decide to pursue.”

FIU defense to be tested in road game

JACKSON WOLEK
Staff Writer

One season ago, Nov. 27 at versus Arkansas State, FIU clinched for the first time in program history the Sun Belt championship. On Oct. 18, the Red Wolves (4-2, 2-0 SBC) and Golden Panthers (4-2, 1-1 SBC) will play for the first time since that historic night in Jonesboro, Ark. at 8 p.m. on ESPN2.

ASU brings back many of the same impact players that they had last year when they finished with a conference record of 4-4.

Junior quarterback Ryan Aplin is number one in completion percentage in the Sun Belt at 66 percent, while also making great use of his legs by having the most carries on the team at 62 rushes for 177 yards and one touchdown.

“He’s a guy that you have to be on point in terms of your assignments, your discipline, and you certainly have to hustle towards the football because he can break it on you,” said head coach Mario Cristobal.

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FCOOTBALL

COMING UP | At the Bay

Check out the Oct. 19 issue for coverage of the “Meet Your Dean” event where students talk to their Journalism, Hospitality Management, Arts & Sciences, Business and Honors College deans.

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Program set to help graduation rate

MMAJOR, page 1

Andrews went on to say, “This tool will hopefully guide students to consider careers that people with their same interests have found to be a good fit for them.”

This change is a part of a larger plan called the “Graduation Success Initiative.”

Robertson said, “The grand concept here is that we get students on the path to become data for a planning tool.”

The second purpose for the tool is “to eliminate having students wait a year to graduate so they can’t get into a particular class,” Robertson said. “Through this, we can anticipate the demand for certain classes as we will have their paths to look for to find out where they should all be and when.”

William Berry, an adjunct professor of psychology, agreed. “Perhaps pushing students into a major will cut down on their expense as well as introduce them to a topic they seem suited for,” said Berry. “A little guidance never hurt anyone.”

It can take anywhere between three days to a month to solve a theft case.

“When you’re talking about a person’s crime, like a battery, it’s very easy. Even if you don’t know the person’s name, you can describe the person – and we have leads to work from. But when no one sees what happened [like in cases of theft], it’s difficult.”

Due to the nature of many cases of theft, however, most do not get solved.

Typically, not a whole lot of cases [get solved]. The only ones we tend to have leads on are when laptops are stolen. Even if we have surveillance video, it just shows somebody walking out with a backpack. You can do nothing about that because you can’t describe the person.”

EU considering massive cuts to food aid for poor

The European Union is considering a roughly 75 percent cut in funding for a program that helps feed 18 million of its poorest citizens.

The cuts, set to take effect after New Year’s, would come at a time of rising unemployment and consumer food prices in many parts of Europe, as well as overall economic turmoil on the continent. The looming cuts already have raised fears among people who rely heavily on the program.

“We poor, small people, we cannot face up to this,” said Rene Wallter, 41, who is unemployed and married with four children. “We sometimes have difficulties. We get through the month with a bit of milk here, a tin of cassoulet, a bit of yogurt — the kids are happy with that and it allows us to continue.”

Casas hopes that an increase in visibility of police officers in campus areas will decrease the numbers of thefts that occur in the future.

“We’re doing more foot patrol. I believe in that. That does have a deterrent effect. That visibility may deter a few.”

Casas also noted that EU students have a large number of people in one area, and it’s congested, “so it’s hard to see what every body’s doing,” he stressed.

There are a few helpful tips to prevent someone’s property from being stolen.

“The number one tip we give everybody is to be aware of your surroundings. That’s a little more easier than a particular property. Do not leave your stuff unattended. Keep track of the serial numbers of your property. Write your name on the back of the book you buy. You do things that make it an opportunist go somewhere else.”

Casas said that if a student owns a smart phone, they should install any app that will help track down the device in case it is ever stolen.

For example, Black Berry Protect, which is a Black Berry-exclusive downloadable app, uses GPS to track down a Black Berry device, and allows its owner to see the location on a map. It also allows the owner to log on to the app’s website and lock the device remotely, the theft from further using the device if the owner did not have a password in place originally.

Casas said that if a student realizes they have been a victim of theft, they should call FIU Police immediately and file a report.

“And they will have their stuff hanging around. They haven’t learned yet that they need to be aware and mindful of their property.”

But he advised that freshman students are not the only victims. “It can happen to anybody. You can be in the line at the Bastions store in GC and have left your backpack at a table right behind you, and in that minute, when you go back there, you have a large number of people in one area, and it’s congested, it’s hard to see what every body’s doing,” he stressed.

EU is considering a roughly 75 percent cut in funding for a program that helps feed 18 million of its poorest citizens.

They haven’t learned yet that they need to be aware and mindful of their property.”
For the Golden Panthers’ offense, good is an understatement. This season, the offense has shattered the record books.

Darriet Perry has set the record for rushing touchdowns in a career with 26. T.Y. Hilton has set the record for receptions in a game with 12, and the team itself is off to its best start ever at 4-2.

The offense has been able to carry the team this season. Wesley Carroll is in the midst of his greatest collegiate season of his career.

Through six games this season, he has 1,232 yards and six touchdowns, with a completion percentage of 63.8. Meaning, he is finding the receiving core has been solidified. T.Y. Hilton set the record for receptions in a game with 12, and the team itself is off to its best start ever at 4-2.

The Golden Panthers have broken record in FIU’s best start in program history.

When the Golden Panthers have needed someone to step up under the gun, the junior has been right on him and stay disciplined.” The defense has been able to complement the offense’s success thus far by being the number one team in the conference in pass defense with opponents completing only 54 percent of their passes and causing eight interceptions.

Defensive end Brandon Joiner has been able to help disrupt opponents passing game by becoming an elite pass rusher for the Wolves. Through the last ten games he has played in, going back to last season, he has 7.5 sacks in all, with 3.5 coming from this season alone.

“He’s had about 10 sacks in his career, and most of them have come in the last 10 or 11 games so he’s a guy who’s gotten really hot, and I think he’s their guy this year,” Cristobal said.

Cristobal knows how important each conference game will be for his team from here on out and compared it to what could be considered the playoffs starting now.

“As competitive and as much parity as there is in the conference, I think every single game is going to have those playoff implications and feel to it and that’s what makes it such a great conference,” said Cristobal.

Fellow defensive end Jonathan Segal has been a solid second option for the pass rusher for the Wolves. He has helped make ASU offenses all season. With the second one competing for the position at FIU battling it out each and every week to prove who is better.

When the Golden Panthers have needed someone to step up under the gun, the junior has been right on time.

Picking up 308 yards on 30 catches and one touchdown, Times has proven that if defenses want to lock in and blanket Hilton, he will find holes and expose them quickly.

All of this means that Carroll has more opportunities to open up the passing game and turn it into an aerial assault. If the redshirt senior can keep this up, he is on pace to break his own record for passing yards in a season.

Not only has the passing attack proven itself this season. The ground game has found its two horses to carry the load. Perry and Kedrick Rhodes.

The tandem has combined for 834 yards and 11 touchdowns. It is almost as if we are seeing the past and future of the running back position at FIU battling it out each and every week to prove who is better.

Perry has laid the foun-

With a win on Oct. 18, the Golden Panthers would be tied for second in the conference along with the Red Wolves.

He is not the only threat on the ground though, as a new face for the Red Wolves, redshirt freshman running back Frankie Jackson, has carried the ball 40 times for 190 yards in only four games.

He had missed two straight games before last week due to a high ankle sprain. In fact, running backs Denik Lawson, Jermaine Robertson and Andre Smith all have over 20 touches this season along with Jackson, giving the Red Wolves a stable running backs.

The bigger threat this year for their offense, however, has been from the top three wide receivers, Dwayne Frampton (47 rec, 606 yards, 3 touchdowns), Josh Jarobe (30 rec, 413 yards, 2 touchdowns) and Taylor Stockemer (21 rec, 332 yards, 1 touchdown). Together, they have helped make ASU number one in passing yards on the season for the Sun Belt with 1,821.

“We can’t wait, it’s a great challenge for us and we’re just ready for the opportunity to run our coverage’s and play great defense against these great receivers,” said Cypress. “Against Frampton we just plan on playing off, playing press and mixing it up on different coverage’s. When we’re in, man we just got to keep our eyes on laundry and blanket Hilton, he will find holes and expose them quickly.

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him and stay disciplined.” The defense has been able to complement the offense’s success thus far by being the number one team in the conference in pass defense with opponents completing only 54 percent of their passes and causing eight interceptions.

Also, not one rusher has been able to go over the 100-yard mark against them either. Defensive end Brandon Joiner has been able to help disrupt opponents passing game by becoming an elite pass rusher for the Wolves.

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Darriet Perry (above, #28) is one of a few Golden Panthers who have broken record in FIU’s best start in program history. When the Golden Panthers have needed someone to step up under the gun, the junior has been right on
MEN’S BASKETBALL

Practice begins with season looming

MALCOLM SHIELDS
Staff Writer

With a month to go until their season opener against George Mason at the NIT Season Tip Off, the Golden Panthers took to the courts on Oct. 15 for their first official practice.

For most of the players, the beginning of practice was welcomed: “I’m excited. Basically the new season is a month away,” said freshman Gilles Dierickx.

The value of the offseason conditioning should play into the tempo of basketball that the Golden Panthers expect to play this season.

“The preseason was good,” said senior guard DeJuan Moore. “I just need to keep working, for any amount of playing time. I’m excited. Basically the new season is a month away.”

Dierickx’s main focus was to continue to prepare himself for any amount of playing time. “I just need to keep working, try to put on weight and work hard in practice.”

Added Size

The Golden Panthers were able to add size to their frontcourt with the addition of Dierickx. He spoke about how he has adjusted to the jump from the high school level to Division-I basketball and the work he has put in with the Golden Panthers and the strength and conditioning of coach Roderick Moore.

“It’s been going pretty well. The first couple of weeks they were hard,” Dierickx said. “Coach Moore really pushes us.”

Dierickx is only one of three underclassmen like sophomore Dominique Ferguson and Phil Moore, will most likely fill out the big man rotation.

“Added Size

The starting lineup for the Golden Panthers will have expanded opportunities to contribute for the Golden Panthers. Ferguson was a contributor last season, especially in the frontcourt for the Golden Panthers as he averaged 7.1 points per game and 4.8 rebounds per game in the 20 games he played in.

“I just try to keep it simple,” Ferguson said. “My role is to help us win as much as I can with anything I can do on the court.”

Last season, Taylor averaged 21 points per game and 7.3 points per game. In conference play, his scoring average jumped up to 8.4 points per game. This season, Taylor is expected to have more playing time at point guard next to Wright in the backcourt.

“We definitely expect leadership out of him,” Thomas said of Taylor. “We want him to set the offense and set the tone on defense.”

The starting lineup for the Golden Panthers will have some open slots to be filled. At this early stage of the season, coach Thomas wants his players to compete for any open spots that are available.

“Every position is open,” Thomas said. “We have no set rotation.”

More Chances

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Columns

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Dominique Ferguson [right] enters his second year with FIU.
Students promote environmental sustainability

SYLVIA SIMONI
Staff Writer

Like many other institutions, the University takes its environmental activism seriously. In previous Sustainability Committees, dedicated to green initiatives around campus, evolved into the Office of Sustainability in April of this year.

In 2007, former President Modesto Maidique signed the American Colleges and Universities Presidents Climate Commitment, which entailed the University’s plans to reduce its carbon footprint, according to Alexander Dutton, program assistant of the Office.

“Our goal is to eventually reach climate neutrality, meaning a zero carbon footprint, according to Alex Dutton. “We don’t know when this will happen; it will take a lot of work.”

Such work includes the inauguration of the University’s first annual Campus Sustainability Day, which is held during Energy Conservation Week. Students will be taught tips on how to conserve energy and save money.

On Oct. 19 at MMC, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., students will have the opportunity to visit eco-bar tables at the Graham Center, where they will be asked to participate in sustainability-based interactive activities and will be offered environmentally friendly products.

Dutton added, “In the Pit, we will be having an elliptical machine that will be hooked to an unmanned device, with the aim of powering it. We expect students to enjoy trying it out.”

“There will also be a table on vampire energy” in celebration of Halloween.

From 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., students and staff will be invited to attend the Green Jobs Panel Lunch and Learn at GC 140. The workshop will instill in its attendees knowledge about green jobs in the work force.

“We’re dedicated to educating students, faculty and staff on the policies and procedures of promoting a green lifestyle. We want to incor- porate in students the possibility of having a career that will help improve the environment.”

Students will also be able to browse the stands and buy organic produce at the weekly Farmer’s Market from noon to 3 p.m. near the main entrance of the Green Library.

In the evening, from 6 to 8 p.m., the celebration will end with the Home Energy Savings Workshop, which will be held at the Campus Support Complex in Room 1125.

Together with Dream in Green, a Miami-Dade County-affiliated program, the Office of Sustainability will inform residents on energy efficiency and conservation, and it will provide to homeowners with energy saving tools valued at over $100.

“Participants will receive a free energy savings toolkit valued at over $100,” states the Miami-Dade Feed back website. Seats are limited.

Campus Sustainability Day will conclude its events with the Eco Fair at BCC on Oct. 20. A chance to win prizes and other green-related activi- ties will be held at the Academic 2 building from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Student clubs affiliated with the event and with the Sustainability Office include Panthers Going Green, Garden Club, Farmers Market Consortium, the Student Government Association and Green Management Consulting Organization — among others.

The University’s efforts in reducing environmental awareness have been commended.

“I am glad that our committee has expanded into an office,” Dutton remarked. “FIU is required to report greenhouse emission inventories every two years. We hope to have projects planned with the focus of reducing our carbon footprint — these factors called for the need of a full-time office.”

According to Dutton, the website, the University is number one in energy efficiency in the Florida State University System, and it is also the first school to become an Arbor Day’s Foundation’s Tree Campus USA.

The Campus USA recognizes colleges and universities for promoting urban forest management and engaging the campus community in environmental stewardship.

“Most importantly, however, our establishment signs the Universi- ty’s growing exposure to global envi- ronmental issues. We want to ensure students and faculty maintain that understanding.”

COVER TO COVER

“Sarah’s Key” story of French oppression

In Paris, during 1942, approxi- mately 13,000 Jews were arrested and sent to so-called work camps — but not by German Nazis.

In the Pari- sian-Jewish community, the French police sent thousands to concen- tration camps, which eventu- ally took them to Auschwitz. The majority of the Jews killed due to the Velodrome d’Hiver roundup were women and children.

Tatiana De Rosnay’s novel, “Sarah’s Key,” tells the story of Sarah Starzyński, a French Jewish girl, and Julia Jarmond, the jour- nalist that uncovered the child’s horrific story.

De Rosnay’s book takes readers through the events of the little-discussed French occurrence, coded-name Operation Spring Breeze. The New York Times best-seller begins with the night that Sarah and her family were arrested. Told by her parents, they would be back home before she realized, Sarah locked her younger brother Michel in a secret cubbyhole in an attempt to protect him. She eventually escapes from Auschwitz, but does not make it back to Paris in time to save her brother.

Throughout the first half of the novel, De Rosnay switches between the story of Jarmond and Starzyński — and she kept my attention by doing so. The author also keeps her chapters short and sweet; each chapter was about three to four pages. By breaking up the story in this way, she keeps the reader captivated.

De Rosnay uses the approach of many drama television programs; she turns your attention away from the story of one character at moments that leave you dying, which causes you to continue turning the pages to find out what is in store.

People have been very accepting of who I am, whether it be students or teachers.
Javier Marco Ramirez
Juniors majoring in social work

“Most satisfying thing is when I see kids which come to us in a crisis and seeing them prog- ress to the point where they have a stable life with college and are participating actively to the point that they become leaders in their own right,” Ferrier said.

Youth Treasurer Alex Feses, a sophomore and English major, got involved with Pridelines when he was in high school. He later became treasurer of the youth council of the organization and created the Spirit Day Candle-light Vigil in remembrance of those who have been killed or committed suicide because of bullying.

“I myself faced homelessness at the age of 15 when I came out to my mom. She’s very reli- gious so it’s a daily struggle,” recounted Feses. “With Pride- lines, I have been able to help those who need it; I have met a lot of homeless youth who need a hot meal and a place to stay.”

Elvia Velez, the former director of the Health Care and Wellness Center in Biscayne Bay Campus, noted the importance of educating students on campus about health and sex.

“I used to go in the residence halls and talk about intimacy, sexuality in which students were encouraged to come and ask questions in an environment that...”
Thriller series “Homeland” potential television gold

Coming out day shines light on respect among students

Channel Surfing

Thriller series “Homeland” potential television gold

SARAH’S KEY, page 5

happens next.

Jarett stumbles upon the girl’s story while working on an article for the fictional American magazine she writes for, Seine Scenes. She finds out that Sarah eventually went back to the home where she left her brother, only to find his rotting body in the cupboard; she had held the key to his possession for weeks. To top off the intricate plot, Jarmond’s in-laws have been living in that very house for years.

De Rosny’s prose is merciless. “He was still, curled up, his face resting upon his hands. He had gone a horrible, green color.” The conclusion is tied up neatly. William, Sarah’s son, reveals to Julia that his mother killed herself because she was continuously haunted by the pain of Auschowitz and the memory of her brother. The story closes with the two of them crying together; they reflect the pain that has gone unrecognized for so long by so many – including the French.

Although all of the characters in the novel are fictional, the event discussed, now referred to as the roundup of Vel’ d’Hiv’, did take place in Paris in July 1942. The event occurred due to an alliance the French and Germans had at the time.

In any history or international relations class I have taken – the U.S.’s or al-Qaida’s. Which side the troop has currently

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MONDAY, OCT. 17
• Graduate Information Session
  Session – Online: 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Online
• Cover Letters & Writing for Business Workshop: 10 a.m., MACBC 232
• Meet Your Dean: 12:30 p.m., BBC WUC 223
• Yoga: 3:45 p.m., BBC Recreation Center

TUESDAY, OCT. 18
• Nature Preserve Volunteer Day: 8:11 a.m., FIU Nature Preserve
• Robert Kegan Interactive Workshop: 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., MACBC 232
• Tuesday Times Roundtable: Occupying Wall Street: 12:30-3:30 p.m., MACBC 232

WRITE TO CALENDAR@FIUSM.COM TO HAVE YOUR EVENT FEATURED!
Debit card charges, a possible hassle, but avoidable

We should begin considering alternative ways to make our purchases to avoid these tedious fees.

Hooking up now easier than ever

Brooklyn Middleton
Asst. Opinion Editor

The nervous, sweaty awkward hand-holding pre-勾up has been conveniently replaced by social media. A Tumblr post reblogged with a witty reply is the candlelight dinner of our time and a Facebook photo comment with a winking smiley face is the 2011 equivalent of a walk on the beach prior to someone making the first move. It may be sad for romantics, but social media makes it much easier to get laid. No need to talk about this poetically, though. It is simply in line with our modern culture of pejoratively, though. It is simply with the evolution of communication that is more conducive to abating feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Social media does not have to be seen negatively in regard to relationships so much as it should be viewed as inevitable.

This is false; the longevity of a relationship does not determine its ingenuity or impact. Furthermore, it is argued that online relationships can help to develop genuine relationships.

The flawed nature of her argument is two-fold. First, Dr. Lynn is assuming everyone who flirts on social media or is trying to get laid is trying to develop a “genuine” relationship. This is a subjective term open to many interpretations, but it can also mean that the relationship is in some way substandard or disingenuous.

According to Credit Unions Online, Paul B. Stull, senior vice president of strategy and branding at Arizona State Credit Union, reports an overall customer increase of 20 percent since Bank of America’s announcement. Stull said, “We have no plans to add a fee to our debit card.”

Nothing is finalized yet. In fact, Representatives Jason Chaffetz, a Utah Republican, and Bill Owens, a New York Democrat, plan to introduce a measure to repeal the rule required by the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act. Since most banks are only introducing this new rule to cover losses from the Dodd-Frank Act, if it is repealed, many of these recent positive changes may also be retracted.

As students, we are on limited budgets and are always trying to avoid fees. If banks decide to charge us for using our debit card, we have some options to avoid them.

“Debit with Neda” is an economics op-ed column that runs every other Monday.
NATHANIEL EDWARDS  
Contributing Writer

For the fourth consecutive year, the Biscayne Bay Campus will participate in the “All Nighter for the Poor” event, a nationwide occasion held to commemorate World Food Day. On Nov. 18, FIU will join colleges and universities around the nation to fight hunger and malnutrition.

According to the “All Nighter for the Poor” website, one in eight Haitian children die before the age of five, many of them dying from malnutrition. “All Nighter for the Poor” is the brainchild of “Food for the Poor,” the largest international relief and development organization in the United States. The organization has raised money to help the poor of the Caribbean and Latin America through sustainable projects for over 28 years.

With the money earned from the fundraiser, The Food for the Poor organization works with the Haitian community to build a pond with pangasius fish, which can provide a fishing village in Haiti with a self-sustaining source of food, jobs and income.

They also help build irrigation systems and water wells in Haiti. The event will be held in the Wolfe University Center Ballrooms. The opening ceremony begins at 6:30 p.m. and the event, which lasts all night, will end at 7 a.m.

Student Programming Council President, Catherine Vega, says that there will be a lot of activities that night for students to help raise money for Haiti.

The goal of the evening is to raise $5,000 to make a pangasius pond in Haiti to help the agriculture of the village it is built in.

Given the proper feeding and management, pangasius, a member of the catfish family, can grow to be between two to three pounds in five to six months time, which is why it was chosen since it grows fast and is much easier to maintain than other fish, such as tilapia.

“We will be providing a lot of fun activities, such as laser tag and kayaking, so we expect a lot of students to come out and join us,” Vega said.

Leading up to the event, student organizations throughout campus are collecting money to fundraise for the event by setting up collection jars within their respective departments, high traffic areas and any other department willing to assist with the fundraising.

All the activities at the All-Nighter program will be free, but a suggested $10 donation will be accepted. There will also be team competitions to raise money during the night.

There can be up to four people in a group, which can include any student, with some people in a group, which can include any student, with some people in a group. There will be accepted. There will also be team competitions to raise money during the night.

“I am proud and inspired to be running such an awesome organization,” Vega said.

University stays ‘Worlds Ahead’ with Diversity Day

STEPHANIE FELDMAN  
Contributing Writer

Every day at the University it seems like Diversity Day, with students from all corners of the globe walking through the hallways, talking in a myriad of languages and all with different cultural and religious backgrounds.

In response to the diverse student body, Student Government Association has set up an event to honor and engage in issues relating to the diversity of society and the University’s student body.

On Oct. 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., all students will be invited to a Diversity Fair made up of different councils, panel speakers and performers, all with one goal - to spread awareness and appreciation of diversity.

The event is being held at the Wolfe University Center’s Panther Square and is free to all students. It begins with a meeting of multicultural organizations and councils from throughout the University, followed by a poetry reading and performance by spoken word artist Jason Carney, an award winning poet who has been featured on HBO’s “Russell Simmons Def Poets.”

For the past ten years, the University has incorporated different themes for Diversity Day.

This year’s theme will be homosexuality, with a focus on the intersection of religion and homosexuality.

While past Diversity Days have focused on the subjects of race and self-identity, this year’s discussion panel will tackle a more controversial subject matter, specifically the role that religion plays in gay/lesbian acceptance in society, legal rights and gay marriage.

This theme is especially poignant since there continues to be an ongoing struggle in the LGBT community for legal rights and acceptance, especially from within their respective religious communities.

Craig Cunningham, assistant director of Campus Life, hopes that this event will help students “expand their knowledge of diversity issues.”

Cunningham, along with Ivy Siegal, coordinator for Campus Life, who is overseeing the event, believe that it is “important for students to be exposed to different ideas and beliefs” as well as engage in an open dialogue in order to “come together and understand and accept each other.”

Students, such as Eben Straton, a junior anthropology major, who hopes to attend this year’s Diversity Day sees the benefits that such an event can have.

“It helps remind us that diversity is what makes us special, there are things that all people have in common but without the things that make us different life would be boring,” said Straton. “It’s those differences that make us unique and special, and inspire those who feel out of place to see that diversity is all around, and that there is no mold for normal.”

UPCOMING EVENTS