University focusing on expanding IT department

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Newly appointed Dr. S. Sitharama Iyengar, with support from the University and the School of Computing and Information Sciences, has been working to attract the best and brightest students and faculty in an effort to break into the country’s top 30 research institutions.

“I fell in love with this university, and it’s potential to be great,” said Iyengar, who completed his first semester at the University. “Prior to me being at FIU, I spent 20 years at LSU taking their Robotics Research Laboratory from obscurity into prominence to which it today enjoys a top 30 ranking. I feel that this department and FIU as a whole can compete with the likes of MIT, Cal Tech and Stanford.”

Recently, The Huffington Post noted FIU as a university “working hard to expand their allure to those wishing to get into IT fields, entrepreneurship in tech, etc,” after hosting the 2011 Venture Capital Conference. Aside from regular funding the school receives, it has procured external funding in excess of $3 million dollars from the Department of Energy, and National Science Foundation to name a few in an effort to develop cutting edge systems for the public and private sector to use. The Department has also developed a partnership with Citrix Systems, a leading developer in cloud based technologies, to bring world renowned Computer Scientists as part of their Distinguished Lecture Series, of which some are from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

When asked why the University is focusing its resources on information technology, Iyengar responded, “Computer Science and Information Sciences is like a heart, we sit in the center of the information world and connect every discipline to each other.”

When asked how CIS accomplishes this he gave a few examples.

“We’re playing to what we have right now,” said Iyengar. “BSU has produced volunteers for the MLK event next week. We want 1-2 buses more for students...We’re playing to what we have right now,” Udhnani said, “The event is only a week away, we funded what he had originally expected.”

According to Udhnani, 250-300 students went last year to participate in the parade and more are expected to come this year.

Buses will arrive on campus at 7:30 a.m., and leave at 9 a.m.

“A lot of students are going and this year we have a float to represent the FIU community.”

The event will be broadcast on television, and will be located along 54th street and 17th avenue. It is projected that between 5,000-8,000 people will attend the event next week. Jerron Jackson-Johnson, president of BSU, explained the contributions that the organization has made this year to the events that commemorate the legacy of MLK. It is an active contributor every year to the events to which some are from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

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Martin Luther King parade receives extra funds

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In honor of doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. FIU hosts a myriad of events to commemorate his work every year, and has been doing so for the past 21 years.

This year’s is expected to be one of the largest yet, having combined the efforts of Multicultural Programs and Services, the Black Student Union, the Student Government Association, Parking and Transportation and other groups around campus.

Last year, MPAS was able to ascertain donations for the purposes of providing buses for students to attend the event. This year, such was not the case.

Unable to get a hold of the donations necessary to fund the transportation, MPAS ultimately sought help from the SGA.

“We dipped into our discretionary fund,” said Sanjeev Udhnani, SGC-MMC vice president, “this is the third time this year; the discretionary fund is meant to fund services to students. This was something important, as was sending Body and Soul to London, and giving money to Hope for Children of the World this summer.”

SGA put forward $1,400 from the discretionary account that will go towards providing two buses and three drivers for the MLK event next week.

“We want 1-2 buses more for students. MPAS would like to see more buses. We’re playing to what we have right now,” Udhnani said. “The event is only a week away, we funded what he had originally expected.”

According to Udhnani, 250-300 students went last year to participate in the parade and more are expected to come this year.

Buses will arrive on campus at 7:30 a.m., and leave at 9 a.m.

“A lot of students are going and wearing their organization and club t-shirts,” Udhnani said, “unlike last year where we had a caravan of convertibles, this year we have a float to represent the FIU community.”

The event will be broadcast on television, and will be located along 54th street and 17th avenue. It is projected that between 5,000-8,000 people will attend the event next week. Jerron Jackson-Johnson, president of BSU, explained the contributions that the organization has made this year to the events sponsored by MPAS.

“BSU has produced volunteers for the various events as well as financial contributions,” he said, “There are ushers and volunteers that will be helping out with the breakfast, day of service, parade, youth forum and peace walk and MLK dinner. BSU has planned the MLK Dinner.
Celebration continues to recognize King

MLK, PAGE 1
that will be co-sponsored by Campus Life and Resi-
dential Life."
This year there are a few new events for the MLK
events.
These include a movie night on January 17th,
We know that our contributions ... are
another way for us to
do so, but it does not
stop there.

Jackson Jackson-Johnson, President
Block Student Union

MLK Law Night about the murder of Emmett Till on
January 23rd and a Forum on January 25th.
“The MLK Breakfast will hold about 570 students, the
Day of Service will have about 250 students from FIU, Parade will have about
2400 students, and the MLK Dinner will have about 170 in attendance.”

Professor develops department

science didn’t really seem to
care much for possible
outcomes and that way
sought the solution as a
method of searching for
the meaning of the
problem.

The content was not
detailed as there was
no need to go into
more depth here. The
search for the right

 solution was

focusing in computer

400 research papers he
believes in “exploring and
tuturing every student
creative talent and point
their effort in the
future and, if the
provisions the University’s
organizations make avail-
able for students to access
higher education.

JACKO-JOHN
another elaborated, “Infor-
mation for the events can
be found on the website,
mps.fiu.edu. Donations are
accepted for the MLK
Scholarshps that the Office of Multicultural Programs and
Services gives.”

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

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Allen packs a scoring punch in Panthers backcourt

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FIU set to begin competing in NCAA level by spring of 2013

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SAND VOLLEYBALL

MUNGA EKETEBI ousted as head coach after four losing seasons

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Sports

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

PORTS
Allen, PAGE 3

to the college ranks and to nearby Central Michigan University. In his two seasons as a Chippewas, Allen struggled as his scoring average was less than 10 points per game in both seasons. Compounded with less playing time in his second season, Allen was granted to transfer from Central Michigan.

The transfer process was made easier for Allen when his former assistant coach at Central Michigan, William Eddie, was named an assistant at FIU. The man who hired Eddie was none other than Detroit Pistons legend and current FIU head coach Isiah Thomas.

“They came to a camp that I was playing in a scrimmage and coach Thomas came down and I was sitting there watching me. I think that was the hardest that I have ever played in my life,” a chuckling Allen said. “I just wanted to show how many skills I had.”

Allen’s skills also included his knack for stealing the basketball.

“He is very active. He is one of the leaders in steals in the country,” coach Thomas said of Allen’s defensive abilities. Not only does Allen’s 42 steals lead the Panthers, but he is ranked third in Division I basketball in individual steals this season.

His hard work paid off as Allen was given a scholarship to begin play at FIU in the 2010-2011 season. During his transfer year in 2009, Allen put in the work to learn coach Thomas’ offensive and defensive philosophy.

In this, his final season at FIU, Allen is posting some of his best numbers in his college career. His points per game, rebounds and assists are all up from previous seasons. This season has also included a dramatic game-winner against Coastal Carolina and being voted team captain.

“It’s a great honor. I just try to lead by example and [try] helping the younger [players],” Allen said of his captainship. As Allen comes down the stretch of his college career, he wants to leave his mark on FIU basketball. “I leave it all on the floor and I play every game like it is my last.”

Allen ranks second in the Sun Belt in free throw shooting percentage (92.5), only missing four foul shots all season.
Develop awareness by studying religion

KENNETH DYCHES
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Some professors can teach a student more about themselves than they can about their subject. Erin Weston, professor of religious studies, is one of those people.

“We live in a diverse world, and students will come into contact with people who have vastly different world views than they have,” said Weston. “We have many world-class scholars in our department who can help you explore these various perspectives.”

Weston, a former student and current adjunct professor in the Department of Religious Studies, feels passionate and excited about a role she does here at the University. Last semester she taught a course titled Sects and Cults online, and is now teaching Magics and Religions during the Spring semester.

“I have been doing some research on the Sama Daima religion, as well as Neo-Shamanism in the States. My research tends to focus on the syncretism that occurs during cultural contact. I am also highly interested in the visual and artistic manifestations of these ideas as they occur in popular culture,” Weston said. “I am also highly interested in how syncretism that occurs during cultural contact. I am also highly interested in the syncretism that occurs during cultural contact. I am also highly interested in how syncretism that occurs during cultural contact. I am also highly interested in

wholesale major does not seem at all relevant to culture or religion. One may consider religious studies to be a field for only the devout or the intellectual. Not so, Weston said. I tend to believe that anything that will increase your understanding of the world will also help increase your enjoyment of life. Frankly, I study it because I think it’s fascinating. Of course there are many practical benefits, too. A student in any field or business that is at all international will benefit from this knowledge. Why not give yourself that extra edge?” she said.

According to Weston, students who seek to be “Worlds Ahead,” religion could be that important “extra edge” in a well-rounded education.

“Ultimately, I am interested in people and culture, and I don’t think you can understand a group of people without understanding their basic religious and cultural assumptions,” Weston added.

Be that as it may, there are students who undoubtedly seek a deeper spiritual fulfillment as they participate in these courses.

As students begin to develop their understanding of the world, many naturally develop religious and spiritual questions. Weston suggests that they discuss them with a mentor who can help them explore these various perspectives.

Inner city kid turned violinist

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Alumns Kev Marcus credits his musical beginnings to the desk job he had at the Green Library while he was an undergrad.

“As Black Violin was being created, I was just starting to mess around with the production of music. There was a music lab on the fifth floor (of the library), I was working at the info desk on the second floor, so I would spend hours on the fifth floor producing music. FLU gave me that outlet,” said Marcus.

Since graduating in 2003 with a bachelor’s in music, Marcus has become an accomplished musician and producer.

The violinist’s lengthy resume with his partner Wil B. in their group Black Violin includes performing with Alicia Keys, touring with Mike Shinoda of Linkin Park and a contract to perform at the Super Bowl tailgate later this year. Black Violin fuses hip-hop and classical music to create a totally unique sound. The South Florida natives will be performing at the Miramar Cultural Center on Saturday, Jan. 14 at 8 p.m.

Q: Where did the inspiration for Black Violin come from?
A: [My partner Wil and I] grew up in tough neighborhoods in Ft. Lauderdale, and we weren’t afforded a lot of opportunities. But one of our opportunities was playing music and interpreting music in [a] public magnet school. Coming from a hard background, we listened to Biggie, Busta Rhymes or Jay-Z and then headed to second period orchestra class. It was almost fate. We were hip-hop enough and classical enough to make this work. We were young inner city black kids who studied the violin and took it seriously.

Q: How did you two meet?
A: We met as band partners at Dillard High School in Ft. Lauderdale, and we were in the same orchestra class.

Q: How do you describe your style?
A: I would say we’re hip-hop meets classical. That alone sounds crazy, imagining going to iTunes and seeing hip-hop and classical. That’s our sound — and it works. Because people like hip-hop, you’ll like us, and if you like classical, you’ll like us, but you don’t need to like both to have to like us. That’s the cool thing.

We have a little funk in there, and we play a lot of jazz. And we play classical instruments in a classical way. A little bit of jazz, funk, reggae — there’s something for everybody.

Q: You have worked with a number of very talented musicians. Who did you have the most honor to work with?
A: First was Alicia Keys. We did the Billboard Awards with her in 2003, and we were playing a hard rock vein with her live in front of millions of viewers. Now, she’s a full of fame — but she was really hot at the time. I’ve just honed up to be a woman of her career in any way, shape or form. I gained valuable experience from playing with Alicia. The second person was Mike Marcus.

“Tinker” not enough substance for spy film fans

LIKE THE action-packed James Bond films you might know them, the Black Violin, “Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy,” is the sort of movie that will appeal to the interest of any espionage fan.

Based on John le Carre’s 1974 novel of the same name, the film stars Gary Oldman as George Smiley, a recently retired intelligence officer. Smiley is enlisted to investigate and expose a mole in the Circus, the highest rank of the Secret Intelligence Service.

Along with the help of Peter Guillan (Benecict Cumberbatch), Smiley must look into the lives of all four members of the Circus, each nicknamed by the previous chief control (John Hurt) before his passing. These code names, used in order to relay information about the identity of the spy, are Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Poorman, and Beggarman.

Having previously directed the stunning film “Let the Right One In,” Alfredson reminds audiences that he still knows how to make something absolutely gorgeous. Working with Hoyte van Hoytema, director of photography, he creates an entrancing image of England in the 1970s that fits perfectly with the film’s dark mystique.

Art direction, especially set design, is particularly notable, especially when contained in smaller locations such as the brilliant orange, smoke-filled room where the Circus congregate for many discussions. The music for the film, composed by Alberto Iglesias, is used ever so subtly throughout.

It is never distracting and adds to the mood that has been set, fitting right into performances and filling right into the events taking place around them. However, the two most noticeable performances are those of Oldman and Cumberbatch. Oldman, who never ceases to amaze regardless of the role, dives into the character of Smiley without hesitation. His clever and soft-spoken performance as Smiley manages to be commanding without taking away from anyone else. Cumberbatch, who is best known for his work in “Sher- lock,” stands out due to his ability to take on any role he is given. He portrays the character’s naivete without compromising his intelligence and ability to hold his own against his superiors.

Unfortunately, looks and performance — while extremely beneficial — do not make a great film on their own. One of this production’s biggest problems is pacing, which is quite uneven within the film’s span of two hours. “Tinker, Tailor” is a slow burner, lingering on silent gazes or stares fairly often and taking...
I love the brief winters we have in South Florida because I get to break out the boots and blazers that have been lurking in the back of my closet for months. For most of the year, I live in shorts and tank tops, but for a few weeks (or months, if we are lucky) I can wear layers and pretend like I live in the northeast.

I see two types of sartorial reactions by students when cooler temperatures hit: half throw on peacoats and scarves leftover from a vacation to New York City, and the other half are still wearing shorts and flip-flops. The solution to this confusion about weather-appropriate and stylish clothing is to still continue to wear cooler months is transitional dressing.

A few months ago, I noticed on thestreetreportalist.com a tag called transitional dressing. Girls in New York and Paris were wearing shorts with blazers or a heavy sweater with a minidress. It sounds like it would look ridiculous, but it looks totally appropriate for the beginning of fall, which is blowing to the temperatures we have down south.

The key is to integrate winter-friendly items into your summer wardrobe so you can wear them all year-round. As far as clothing goes, a few pieces that I would recommend are a blazer or light jacket, a leather jacket and an oversized sweater or cardigan. Blazers are excellent transitional pieces. Throw one over a button down and jeans and you are sure to stay cozy through the sometimes bone-chilling mornings. During the cooler days and summer, blazers work well with breezy minidresses or a tank top and shorts.

An oversized sweater in a neutral color would look great in the winter with bright skinny jeans and boots, but is also appropriate in the spring with a miniskirt and sandals. A leather jacket could be thrown over a summery maxidress or a tee and shorts. As far as shoes go, go a pair of leather knee-high boots and a flowy mid-length dress looks effortless. A lot of these combinations depend on mixing and matching textures. Do not be afraid to clash; a masculine black leather jacket looks great with a floral top or lace dress. Structured and unstructured works very well, too, like a long flowing dress and a blazer with sharp, architectural lines.

Making sure you know your proportions well is important. Short boots do not work with every length; try to avoid them with short dresses and skirts. Unless your legs are unbelievably long, you will most likely end up shortening yourself. Instead, wear long boots with shorter bottoms to elongate your legs.

What to wear when the weather is down to 70 degrees without going overboard

**What is your dream collaboration?** You know what would be crazy? Stevie Wonder _______ Lady Gaga because she’s crazy. That would be an insane collaboration. I like Lady Gaga because she’s so humble and chill and cool people. Stevie is number one, though, because of his music. Stevie has many credit cards. Email: extra@erdaogun@fiusm.com

**What are you working on now?** Right now, we’re working on so much. We have a great last six years, and we’re looking to grow — to be bigger and better than last year. We have an album coming out called “Classically Trained.” It’s challenging to the ear but in a good way.

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Apathy, miscalculation shuts down party system plan

The fact that it was tabled and not pursued out of an eagerness to compete with larger schools is a surprising and mature move.

The value of a college education has diminished, ceasing to be the advantage it once was and becoming a prerequisite for even the slightest chance of success.

In the past, a typical entry-level position would require only a college degree. Today, the same position requires years of experience upon graduation, and additional skills such as multilingualism or advanced computer knowledge that the average student may not have known were necessary.

These posted positions are intimidating for most students because they have been disilluisioned that their degree was the only thing necessary for them to land a job upon graduation, and upon being rejected after the unfelt time, realize the mistakes of being unaware too late.

Being a public relations major, I have done research in positions that would be available to me upon graduation. Such an example of an entry-level position in that field would be a communications editor. Several job listings posted for that position on Monster.com asked for one to two years of professional experience.

This is an example of how imperative it is to be prepared and qualified once you enter the job market. Students should take advantage of the freedom and assistance available to them while in college.

The University offers career services that introduces students to important aspects of the professional world, offer networking opportunities and provide consultations with those already employed in various industries.

Many departments and organizations within the school also have similar internships with internships that students should take advantage of to get a head start in their careers. It is imperative that students plan ahead for their futures.

The college experience simply cannot consist of merely going to class if the end goal is to make oneself employable.

The chances of finding a job right away after college are slim, and unemployment does not show any signs of decreasing anytime soon. It is up to students to be more proactive in their education, take advantage of the opportunities offered to them by the University and use the freedom that they currently have to groom themselves professionally before it is gone.
New law to give citizens the right to be heard at meetings

BILL KACZOR
Associated Press

Florida’s citizens would get the right to be heard on public issues, not just be seen, at meetings of local government and state executive branch bodies under a bill that cleared a Senate subcommittee Wednesday.

The measure (SB 206) was filed in response to a pair of appellate court rulings that noted Florida’s open government “sunshine law” requires officials to meet in public but does not give citizens a right to speak at those meetings.

The legislation filed by Sen. Joe Negron would give the public that right with certain limitations.

“We’re a country founded by revolutionaries,” said the Stuart Republican. “Guess what, if you’re serving on a board or you’re representing the voters you’re going to have to hear from the voters and sometimes it won’t be pleasant. And if you can’t handle it then do something else with your time.”

The bill would still let governmental bodies set time limits on public comment. They also could limit comment to representatives of large groups or factions rather than give everyone a chance to be heard. They also would set procedures citizens must follow to give notice of their intent to speak.

Purely ministerial and quasi-judicial actions that affect an individual’s rights would be exempt. So would emergency situations affecting public health, welfare or safety.

The bill was heard by the Rule’s Committee’s subcommittee on ethics and elections. Negron promised he would ask the full Rules Committee, which gets the bill next, to remove a provision that would nullify any actions taken in violation of the public comment requirement.

League of Cities legislative counsel Kraig Conn said that local officials have over the bill because they were worried about unintentional violations. Officials could still face up to 60 days in jail and a $500 fine for knowingly violating the measure.

Conn also urged lawmakers to make it clear governmental bodies could set other reasonable restrictions besides those cited in the bill, but Negron rejected that proposal.

Local officials are afraid that courts would rule against local policies, such as those restricting placards and allowing for the removal of unruly citizens, Conn said.

“The League is afraid of the bill’s provisions, and to fight for what they want,” Anderson said.

The bill would apply to state government, but does not give citizens a right to be heard on matters handled by the executive branch bodies under a law “requiring officials to meet in public but does not give citizens a right to be heard on public matters.”

The Florida Supreme Court ruled on Feb. 12 that the Full Rules Committee rejected a bill by Sen. Alan Baker last year that would have given the public right to be heard on the subjects handled by the legislative branch of state government.

Negron’s legislation would give the public right to be heard on both state and local governmental business.

Sen. Gary Farmer, D-Orlando, asked Sen. Negron in a question that was not taken with his bill.

Conn said Negron also was bringing technical issues to the panel’s attention and that the league did not oppose the bill.

Negron promised he would ask the committee on ethics and elections.

Rule’s Committee subcommittee district, had violated the sunshine law by refusing to let them speak at a public meeting.

The Florida Supreme Court subsequently refused to consider the citizens’ appeal. In October, the 5th District Court of Appeal made a similar ruling in a case involving the St. Johns Water Management District.

Negron acknowledged those cases are the exception and said most governmental bodies do allow public participation.

A similar bill (HB 355) has been filed in the House but has not yet been heard in committee. The Legislature began its 60-day session on Tuesday.