State of the Union address targets college tuition

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President Barack Obama outlined an economic plan during his State of the Union Address on Jan. 24, which included a strategy that would affect tuition for University students.

“At a time when Americans owe more in tuition debt than credit card debt, this Congress needs to stop the interest rates on student loans from doubling in July,” said Obama during his televised speech.

The president took aim at colleges and universities, and pledged that if they can not stop or fix the rising cost of tuition, “the funding you get from taxpayers will go down.”

“I feel that our President really understands the problem with the raise in tuition around the nation,” said international relations and economics major Leonardo Curiel, who is the president of the FIU College Democrats. “He knows that it is to every state to decide where their money is going to be spent. He asked states to make higher education a priority when they decide on each state’s budget.”

The “Pay As You Earn” proposal of the Obama Administration will reduce monthly payments for more than one and a half million current college students and borrowers.

It will also allow about 1.6 million students the ability to cap their loan payments at 10 percent starting next year and permit an estimated 6 million students and recent college graduates to consolidate their loans.

“The Pay As You Earn,” is set to “reduce students’ loan interest rates and forgive the balance of their debt after 20 years of payments.”

Obama concluded his message of college tuition by saying “higher education can’t be a luxury – it’s an economic imperative that every family in America should be able to afford.”
Financial setbacks threaten availability of journals

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Academic journals, the basis for many student papers and reports, are being threatened by rising prices.

The University library system is struggling with a 3.5%-5% increase per year, which has been occurring over the last ten years.

In 2011, the University spent $2.2 million in journal packages, a price that is bound to increase in the coming fiscal year.

“This is a problem that affects the publishing industry at large, especially publishers of academic content, and the library/education community,” said Laura Probst, dean of libraries at the University. “The reasons for the problem are complex. But there are two primary drivers, consolidation of the publishing industry into a small number of very large publishers and the transition to a digital publishing environment.”

Another push for the increases is the independence of repositories on the University’s commercial publisher.

“It’s not just the library system at FIU. These price hikes affect libraries and education everywhere,” said Philip Bolton, an electronic thesaurus and dissertation coordinator at the University’s Graduate School. “Librarians are being forced to cancel subscriptions to important databases and library funding has shrunk in recent years in conjunction with the economic downturn.”

In order to address the increases, the University has begun to adopt strategies to lessen the effects on students and staff, among them are seeking additional funding.

The University provided new strategic initiative funding to the libraries each year. Probst said. “Without this funding, the libraries would need to cancel subscriptions to journals and our students and faculty would lose access to these critical resources.”

University students and faculty have access to over 10,000 journals, some of which are used several thousand times per year. “Academic journals are crucial to the country down the path to socialism, he gave the stage to Gingrich, who took the podium and addressed the audience.

Gingrich opened up by immediately shooting down remarks made by Obama during the State of the Union Address, claiming that if the President meant what he said, it would cripple the American economy, much like Peronism did in Argentina since the 1960s.

“There are also lessons to be learned from Latin America that are positive. Chile has had the most advanced social security programs in the world,” said Gingrich. “Latin America is central to our future,” Gingrich said, and went on to lay out what he would do in regards to the region if he were elected president.

The presidential hopeful wants to strengthen Northern Command, the division of the United States Military that oversees the majority of Latin America, and wants to shift Mexico from falling under the purview of Northern Command to Southern Command.

We need to take Mexico, that for some Neame reasons is currently under Northern Command and transfer it to Southern Command because nobody in Northern Command has a clue why they have Mexico and doesn’t work very well, said Gingrich. “In fact, Mexico is a part of Latin America and should be treated as part of Latin America.”

He went on to stir up the crowd by hitting points regarding Cuba.

“We need to take a very clear position. Over 50 years of dictatorship is more than enough…It’s never occurred to a single person in the White House to look south and to propose a Cuban Spring,” he said.

In dealing with Cuba, Gingrich promised to use any non-military tool that former President Ronald Reagan and former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher used against the Soviet Union.

Continuing down the list of Latin American enemies of the State, Gingrich brought up Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and acknowledged that he is “a growing problem.”

Gingrich began to wind down his speech with remarks on immigration, and how he only wants to allow immi- grants that want to legally become part of the country and who want to deport any and all known criminal offenders who currently hold illegal status in the United States.

He made no mention of the “dream Act. Gingrich closed his presentation by expressing his support for a “Cuba Libre.” He cited the Declaration of Independence as not only being an Ameri- can document, but a “docu- ment for the human race” and “ican document, but a “docu -
Panthers are hoping to avenge early loss at WKU

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Coming off one of the most disappointing losses of the season at home versus FAU, the Panthers are looking to bounce back at home against Western Kentucky on Jan. 28 at U.S. Century Bank Arena.

Coach Cindy Russo wants to emphasize the need of a presence down low, especially the last time that they faced Western Kentucky earlier in the season.

“It was a no show up game. We have to rebound,” Russo said. “We’re not going to win too many more games unless we rebound. The frustration level of us not being able to score is breaking them down.”

Those frustrations were abundant when the team struggled to be able to crash the boards against FAU. In their previous meeting with the Hilltoppers, the Panthers were also out rebounded 37-31. Junior guard Fanni Hultassa credits the loss to being an early game in the year.

“That was our first conference game, since then we’ve gotten a lot better,” Hultassa said. “We played zone against them last time. We are going to have to pressure them a lot more this time.”

In their first meeting, the Panthers were just 4-22 in the first half, shooting a mere 18.2 percent.

“We need to run our offense our way,” Hultassa said. “Which we didn’t do before.”

The Panthers only scored 11 points in the first half of the game against Kentucky on Dec. 11, which led to their 65-48 loss to the Hilltoppers.

After being on the road for the last week, the Panthers finally got a chance to rest this week. It is the only time that the Panthers will get a week of rest like this for the rest of the season. Junior guard Carmen Miloglav noticed that the road trips had been an issue for the team.

“It definitely affected us,” Miloglav said. “We were a little tired because of the trips and didn’t perform like we were suppose to do.”

Russo has also noticed that the defense has begun to get inside the paint and fight. The Hilltoppers will come to town with the best rebounding margin in the Sun Belt Conference (+7.7 per game).

“We’re not even going in there,” Russo said. “[Even] if we’re not scoring like we want to or the way they were before, we still have to win games.”

With the team struggling to find a solid rotation, Russo has been trying to find ways to keep the sticks, but it has not worked out as planned.

“We’ve tried to get more girls in the game and they aren’t doing that job either,” Russo said.

She also observed the emergence of another guard to add to the rotation she already utilizes in the games. “[Sasha Melnikova] single handily won that South Alabama game, but she’s just got to get use to things. She’s only played in four games so far.”

Melnikova has seen her minutes increase ever since she first saw playing time against Louisiana Monroe.

Swimming looks to continue hot streak at FGCU

The swimming and diving team has not had to travel out of Florida since Dec. 3.

The team was able to win two of the past four Swimmer of the Week awards, given to freshman Cayla Collins and junior Maegan Butler, respectively.

The Panthers will have one more meet against Florida Atlantic and Daytona State on Feb 4, before beginning the run to the SBC championship on Feb 22-25.

-WENDY TISSOT

SPORTS
www.fiusm.com
Friday, January 27, 2012
Panthers use week of rest to prepare for Hilltoppers

MEN’S BASKETBALL

Moore and Laffere out, Ellingson signs with VooDoo

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Not only will Mario Cristobal have to find a new offensive coordinator after Scott Satterfield left to go back to his alma mater Appalachian State, but he is also on the search for a few assistant coaches as well.

Greg Laffere, who was the assistant coach and worked with tight ends, is no longer with FIU. He helped in working with the offensive line, and in 2008 he helped improve the offense by almost 50 yards more per game in total offense.

FIU will look for a new director of Strength and Conditioning, coach since Roderrick Moore, who was in charge of conditioning both the men’s basketball team and football team, is no longer in the position. Moore is still listed on the FIU website, and his Twitter account still claims he is with FIU.

HILTON OUT FOR SENIOR BOWL

T.Y. Hilton should be preparing with the rest of the top seniors in the nation for the annual Senior Bowl on Jan. 28 in Mobile, Ala.

He would be the first Panther ever to play in the game. Instead, he will not be in attendance to nurse his still injured quad. This could also affect his NFL combined performance, which he will be held from Feb. 22-28.

FORMER PANther SIGNS WITH ARENA TEAM

Another former Panther, wide receiver Greg Ellingson, has signed with the Arena Football League’s New Orleans VooDoo. Ellingson signed with the Jacksonville Jaguars as an undrafted free agent last year before getting waived after the preseason.

The New Orleans VooDoo starts play on Mar. 18 at the Philadelphia Soul. Ellingson says that mentally he will be ready for that game, and physically he has been training ever since he got released.

“The arena league is predominately passing, which is really good for my situation to try and get some exposure and get people to know me out on the football field,” said Ellingson. “It’s 95 percent passing. Receivers, quarterbacks and it’s a much smaller field with the walls on the sides.”

Ellingson will be joining forces with former FIU offensive lineman Joe Alajajian, who according to Ellingson, helped make him a VooDoo.

“I’m happy really, just to be playing football. They gave me the opportunity and I get to go out there again and do what I love. I’m really grateful for it.”

Ellingson had 2,018 yards receiving in his fourth years with the Panthers, hauling in 14 touchdowns.

Ellingson hopes to shine in New Orleans in order to draw attention from other professional leagues, perhaps even in another country.

“It would help to do really well and it will get people to recognize me. And hopefully after the AFL season, more people will recognize me. Maybe in the CFL or NFL and I’ll get a chance to do that again.”

Former Panther Greg Ellingson has signed a deal to play in Arena Football.
**ARTS BEAT**

**Miami Film Festival puts spotlight on student films**

**STAFF WRITER**

With award season upon us, Miami joins the celebration of cinema, as Miami Dade College hosts the 29th Miami International Film Festival. With more than 100 films slated to screen, and over 75,000 guests expected, the festival is considered the pinnacle of film culture in Miami, encouraging creativity and fostering an artist community within the city.

MIFF showcases Ibero-American and international films, including films from Cuba, Spain, Israel, Argentina, Brazil, United Kingdom, China and many other countries. There are nine categories artists can enter their films into, most of which are noncompetitive.

Florida Focus is a category devoted to films made partially or entirely in Florida by filmmakers (directors or producers) who are residents of the state. MIFF is not only an opportunity for international filmmakers to make their mark, as the festival also provides young, local talent a chance to make a name for themselves in the industry.

The Festival offers a variety of jobs and internships to students in areas like event planning, marketing and outreach. Barbara Weitz, professor of English and film at the University, says "The film students spend a lot of their time viewing films and writing papers, but being involved with [actual] film people is a totally different experience. It's very hands-on; it's a great opportunity.

Additionally, last year, the Festival began Cinemadam, a short film competition for student filmmakers. Cinemadam continues this year with entries from Miami Dade College, University of Miami, Miami International University of Art and Design, and Saint Thomas University, even including our own. One winner will be selected from each school and from these the Cinemadam jury will select one overall winner. Additional awards will be given in other categories for Best Comedy, Director, Animation, and Technical Achievements, among others.

This year, five films were submitted by University students. Robert Colom, a junior majoring in anthropology, made his film while studying abroad in the Czech Republic.

Though the film has no dialogue, those who viewed it online felt the film was "full of symbolism and emotion." The film is an exploration of some of the Czech history we were introduced to on the trip. I wanted to create a comparison between the old history and the new," said Colom. Though initially reluctant to share his work with others and enter his film into the competition, Colom soon changed his mind.

"I felt it was important for people to see that it's not just the art schools [who make films], there is a movement here, too." The student films can be viewed online at http://miff.openfilm.com. Viewers also have a chance to help decide the winner by voting for their favorite films online. Voting will be open until Friday, Jan. 27. Finalists will be announced on Tuesday, Jan. 31, and the winners will be announced and screened on Monday, March 5, at The Tower Theater in Downtown Miami.

Cutting the Edge, another noncompetitive category, includes "provocative and stimulating feature-length visual experiences" which "test limits and take viewers to the extreme." The Knight Documentary Competition exhibits documentaries which explore social issues, diversity and cultural icons. The films tackle a wide range of issues and topics, from death and loss to comedy and...
The Beacon – Friday, January 27, 2012

First Game Jam hosted by Game Developers Guild

HOLLY MCCOACH
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Playing video games isn’t the solitary activity it once was. Within just the past decade, players across the globe have united thanks to the rapid growth of digital technology. With programs such as PlayStation Network and Xbox, gamers have the ability to communicate with one another instantly, through webcam and a connected microphone.

Whether it is to plan out digital warfare in the latest Call of Duty game or just to chat, people can socialize at a new level through video games.

This weekend in Miami, artists, musicians, engineers, designers, programmers, and even game enthusiasts have the chance to partake in a video game marathon that started in Europe just over a year ago known as the Global Game Jam. As gamers collaborate to produce a work in a short few days, each station in the world will be provided with live streaming to show their progress to the rest of the world.

With programs such as PlayStation Network and Xbox, gamers have the ability to communicate with one another instantly, through webcam and a connected microphone.

The Global Game Jam is not the only event gamer enthusiasts can look forward to this year. The Guild is planning to develop a local game jam that should be hosted sometime between Summer A and Summer B at the University. By the end of the summer, the collaboration of the Guild, the Miami Global Game Jam, and the local game jam would have been developed within a span of less than a year, any gamer’s or tech aficionado’s fantasy.

“We are looking [to support] what you do. We want you to go to the next step,” states Hernandez.

There is no competition here. Each Jam site’s goal is to generate entertainment for onlookers and the developers beyond the screens. Free of charge, anyone and everyone are welcome to attend this event held at the University. “We don’t want money. We don’t want [people] to feel like we are getting money out of this,” says Hernandez.

To spread the word and get support, Hernandez contacted the School of Music, the School of Engineering, and even Panther Dining. According to Hernandez, the hardest ordeal of the plan was finding a place to host the event, but thanks to support from the Collaborative Innovation Lab, the Jam has the ability to use a handful of rooms at the College of Engineering and Computing.

The Jam will provide computers to registered participants, speeches by guests from the game industry, and the ability for students and other interested guests to pass by and watch the entire process.

Registered guests are divided into teams based on level, and are separated into rooms to start creating their own unique game. Each person has a role, and together they work adamantly for two days to create a work of art.

As for the Guild, anyone who has an interest in joining is free to sign up. A lack of programming skills will not keep you out of the group; in fact, Hernandez encourages musicians and artists to join, due to the fact that the existing members are the ones that have an upper hand on programming.

One of the purposes of the Guild is to bring together students from different departments, such as computer engineering, architecture, music, and so forth. All these elements have to come together to create the escapist environment necessary for a good game, so many different kinds of experts are required.

“We are looking [to support] what you do. You come in, you produce, and you go to the next thing,” states Hernandez.

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“It’s a dream, but you sometimes you cannot afford to dream,” says Hernandez, who hopes to have the Guild grow bigger at the university, even after he graduates next year.

Where to see the Best Picture noms

AWARDS, PAGE 5

family’s fortune, and who has just found out that his comatose wife was cheating on him. While these issues weigh heavily on him, he must take responsibility for himself and for his two children when he has never had to confront anything in his life.

Despite Clooney’s impressive performance, Alexander Payne’s story is just plain weak. The writing is completely off-focus, and the subject matter is tackled without any and intrigue of the film.

Everything in “War Horse,” from the technical work, especially during war sequences, echoes Spielberg’s past works, and just point does it drag. The wide cast of characters, using it as a microcosm for the world at large, exposes the backstage dealings and negotiations of student politics.

This past Tuesday, MIFF announced the full list of the films to be screened. They included films like “Juan of the Dead,” a horror-comedy from Cuba about a man who begins a zombie-killing business; “Darling Companion,” a story about a woman (Diane Keaton) who loves her dog more than she loves her husband (Kevin Kline); and “Jeff Who Lives at Home,” written and directed by Dinner (Jared Harris), who loves his dog more than he loves his mother, played by Susan Sarandon.

The films will be shown from Friday, March 2 to Sunday, March 11 from 2:45 p.m. to 10:15 p.m. and until 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, March 3 and Friday, March 9. Tickets are on sale to the general public from Friday, Feb. 10 to Sunday, March 11.

Foreign films also to screen

The spread of consumerism. “The Student,” an Argentinian film from the Lexus Ibero-American Opera Prima Competition, examines the murky world of university politics, using it as a microcosm for the world at large, exposing the backstage dealings and negotiations of student politics.

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Gingrich’s non-motivational speech lacked details, support

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On Jan. 25, Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich visited our University to speak with students, alumni and the Miami community. After a 45 minute wait, he spoke for 25 minutes. During his campaign speech, he focused on President Barack Obama’s lack of attention on Latin American politics and the overload of attention on the Arab Spring.

He also reiterated his perspective on Obama’s poor performance over the past four years, but failed to present specific examples. His short presence and lofty comments left a bad impression on me.

Congressman Dan Burton introduced Newt Gingrich to the audience. During his introduction, Burton stated that “Gingrich is a great fighter for a free Cuba,” without providing specifics.

All throughout his speech, Gingrich was reassuring his Cuban fan base that as President, he would dedicate his time and energy to assuring that the Cuban dictatorship is out.

He said, “There will not be a succession to Castro. We will not allow a new future of dictators for Cuba.” Even though execution plans of removing Castro were not mentioned, the primarily Cuban audience ecstatically applauded.

According to Gingrich, President Obama has allocated too much of his time and available resources to the Arab Spring.

He said, “We spend more energy on Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan than we do in Latin America.” Gingrich disregarded the fact that the Arab Spring is a threat to American foreign policy and cannot be neglected.

Gingrich was trying to convince his audience that Obama’s foreign strategies are flawed, yet his reasons were insufficient and lacked details. A president’s role in managing foreign crisis is more to ensure that they are handled carefully and efficiently, and are not ignored or mishandled.

Providing a lofty list of to-dos without articulating how they will be done is characteristic of a campaign and insufficient to attract my vote. I expected more details from Gingrich who is very articulate than just a list of lofty ideas tailored to solicits short-lived applause.

Gingrich claimed that Obama is a socialist, however, he was unable to provide specific examples to support this claim. Regardless, the audience, which is filled with voters against socialism, were pleased and comforted to hear Gingrich’s opposition to socialism.

Gingrich’s non-motivational speech was discouraging. His foreign policy suggestions were ambitious, but unrealistic and flawed. Lacking in detail, his speech was meant more to create applause and not true audience engagement. Some of his ideals were naive, although, they seemed calculated. His overall presentation reassured me that I will not be voting for him.

Black Student Union considered for budget increase

The Black Student Union was granted a budget of $56,000 for the 2011-2012 fiscal year, of which they have so far spent $8,264.49, according to an audit report presented by Senator Carlos Rodriguez at the Student Government Council at the Modesto Maidique Campus’ Jan. 23 meeting.

ALEX SORONDO

For the Spring 2012 semester alone, their programming budget stood at $49,048.93. According to Senator Rodriguez, this isn’t enough.

“I think they should be given an extra $2,000 to $5,000 as sort of a cushion,” Rodriguez said after the meeting, handing over and reviewing an audit summary he defined as a “bare-bones generality,” promising a more comprehensive and up-to-date summary in the days to come.

He also pointed out that his report was filed in November, and that the numbers have since changed.

Upon seeing at first glance that the BSU is awarded what appears to be, in comparison to the funds of other student organizations, a substantial budget, and that only a fraction of that money was spent in the first semester, a budget cut seemed in order, if not inevitable. Consequently, I was baffled by Rodriguez’s request.

Senator Rodriguez assured us after the meeting that BSU has plans for spring programming that will, without question, spend the remainder of their budget and probably more. This isn’t exactly the case.

According to BSU President Jarron Johnson, the spring semester is indeed packed with BSU events, with near-daily music festival would be taking place that afternoon near the DM building on the Modesto Maidique Campus.

However, their self-appointed budget is $15,000 for the month of February, and while they have begun planning many of their events, few have been so meticulously mapped as to reveal their exact dollar amount. So, if they keep their expenses, as planned, under their $15,000 budget, BSU will still have $30,000 for March and April.

This, of course, can easily be spent with three or four big events, and one of the reasons for BSU’s considerable budget is the consistency with which they draw in large crowds, generating not only excitement but a good deal of ever- evaporating school spirit.

The thing is, if BSU could provide well-received activities with large turnouts throughout September, October, and November for less than $10,000, the same should be expected of them for March and April.

This prompts the question of whether an organization’s knack for prodigious frugality should warrant a lowering of their budget and subsequent realization of excess funds toward groups that need it.

Sometimes, yes, and if the figures I have been given by Senator Rodriguez and President Johnson are accurate, then BSU could survive with maybe a five percent budget cut.

At the same time, however, they do good work, generate school spirit and positive attention for the University, and therefore make the most of their money when they spend it. Given their track record for efficiency, the most prudent spending, they certainly should not get any more money than they already do.

SGC MMC Commentary is a feature that evaluates the student council’s performance. Look for it every Friday.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Explanation for Jan. 12 arrests from President Rosenberg

Dear students, faculty and staff:

I know that many of you have heard that two students and five individuals who are not students were arrested on Friday, Jan. 12 for disrupting school functions. One of the most distressing reasons for BSU’s considerable budget is the consistency with which they draw in large crowds. Generating not only excitement but a good deal of ever-evaporating school spirit.

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As a university dedicated to education and free speech, we have established guidelines that allow both of these essential activities to occur simultaneously.

Individuals and groups wishing to demonstrate on our campuses may do so in areas designated for this purpose and must follow university guidelines, including prior approval, when required. Please click here to review our guidelines on demonstrations.

On Thursday morning, we learned that an unscheduled art activity or in response to its editorials, send them to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124.

Have something on your mind? Send your thoughts in (500 word maximum) to neda.ghomeshi@fiusm.com or drop by our offices at either GC 210 or WUC 124.

President Rosenberg

Our university does not represent the views of The Beacon. Editorial Board. These views are separate from editorials and reflect individual perspectives of contributing writers and members of the University community.

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The Beacon – 7
www.fiusm.com Friday, January 27, 2012
Water meter forces cafeteria to temporarily close

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As lunch time approaches, hungry students at the cafeteria in Biscayne Bay Campus will have to rearrange their schedules today. The cafeteria will be closing at 2:30 p.m. instead of the usual 4:30 p.m. due to the replacement of the water meter.

The water meter is a fundamental instrument in water management, used primarily to accurately calculate the utility costs of the campus.

Small and usually located underground, the nondescript piece of equipment is not only important in measuring water consumption for billing purposes, but also for the purposes of conserving this important natural resource.

Water meters resemble the odometer of a car, and are composed of three parts: the sweep hand, flow indicator, and most importantly the register, which reveals, in cubic feet, how much water is being consumed.

According to Nicholas DiCiacco, Senior Director of Facilities at BBC, water meters can last up to 25 years, but must be replaced immediately when they become defective or stop working.

He believes that the last water meter was installed at FIU 15 years ago, and that the replacement is necessary as the meter has not been functioning for the past two weeks.

The replacement is not only vital in terms of correctly monitoring water use, but the register on the meter can reveal a leak or other problem, which could result in many gallons of wasted and unaccounted for water.

DiCiacco estimates that BBC’s monthly water consumption is, on average, 1,351,000 gallons of water, which costs them $3,500 per month.

The replacement of the defective meter will be done by officials from the City of North Miami, and DiCiacco assures hungry students and faculty that the job will be done as fast as possible and take around 40 minutes to replace the meter.

The water however, will have to be shut off for an hour, which is why the cafeteria will need to close.

While FIU has experienced issues with water and other utilities, particularly in MMC, the difficulty in closing the cafeteria and scheduling an appointment is what caused the replacement of the meter to be postponed for the past two weeks.

As Assistant Food Service Director Lorvin Ramirez, reveals that although cafeteria employees will have two hours taken off their salary, he understands the necessity of the replacement.

“Fridays are slow anyway. They wanted to do it during the week, but because of the high volume of customers we were able to push it to Friday,” Ramirez said.

Matthew Mielke, the Coordinator for Operations and Maintenance Services, stated that “Friday after 2:30 p.m. is the time we worked out with the representatives from the City of North Miami for their meter swap. The water should last less than an hour.”

He understands the inconvenience and promises that the job will be done as quickly and efficiently as possible.

“The intent is to have minimal disruption to food service in the Cafeteria and to other activities in Wolfe University Center,” Mielke said.

Seven students to be awarded at Jose Marti’s annual birthday celebration

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The line, “I cultivate neither nettles nor thorns, I cultivate a white rose,” from one of Jose Marti’s poems titled “I Cultivate a White Rose” represents the ideals of Marti, a leader of the Cuban independence movement from Spain, a poet and a journalist.

On Saturday Jan. 28, the 12th annual Jose Marti birthday celebration and scholarship awards distribution will take place between 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the Biscayne Bay Campus’ Wolfe University Center ballroom.

Reservations are required and the celebration is free. It will include a brunch of rice and beans, plantains, salad and a pig, to be the main dish, donated by Frank Peña, from the board of directors of the FIU Alumni Association. A performance will be made by the David Lawrence Upper Academy Spanish-Music Showcase. They will read poetry about Marti, sing and play instruments.

According to Jan Solomon, development officer at the Office of the Vice Provost, all the money they receive from donations goes to the University-wide Jose Marti scholarship.

The scholarship is merit based upon an application, an essay written and based upon the student’s academic performance with a grade point average of a 3.0 or higher. From BBC, the two scholarship recipients are Nadia Breyham and Santiago Cardona. From the Modesto Maidique Campus, the five recipients of the Badia Spices Jose Marti Scholarship are Joseph Montes De Oca, Juan Brizuela, Ashley Diaz, Ivan Jimenez, and Azrael Sarmiento.

The amount of the scholarship given to each student may change every year, according to Solomon. It depends upon the amount of donations received. The amount each student may receive ranges from $250 to $500. Solomon expects around 150 to 200 people to show up. Among the people present will be Steven Moll, BBC vice provost, and Raul Moncarz, vice provost emeritus.

Guest speakers are still being finalized for the event. Marti dedicated his life to Cuban Independence and believed in the ideals of freedom, good will and love.

“We want students to look to Marti as a role model for freedom of speech, human rights and self expression,” Solomon said.