Cristobal: “Best class in Sun Belt history”

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National Signing Day for college football is where a championship run could begin. It’s where the pieces that you have been assembling all throughout the year in recruiting become assembled into a finished product, ready to suit up for their schools.

“We’re going to find a way to get after the best guys we could possibly find regardless of the competition. We just no longer view ourselves as the little brother school,” head coach Mario Cristobal said.

At Miami Jackson Senior High, it was 5-foot-11, 185-pound wide receiver De’Andre Jasper who signed his letter of intent to become a Panther despite rampant rumors that Cristobal might leave the school just two days before.

“To his coach, Nigel Dunn, Cristobal staying not only says a lot about him, but even more about the program and the where it’s headed,” said Dunn. “The fact that he would turn those down to stay at FIU, and I still believe that FIU is a better situation because of the talent pool here and the fact that now you have a school in Miami that has their own stadium. I don’t think it was that bad of a deal to do that, I thought it was a smart move.

Jasper had 11 other schools that offered him scholarships. One of them ironically being Marshall, who played against FIU in the Beef ‘O’ Brady’s Bowl. Although Marshall may have come out on top in that game, it’s the Panthers who were able to come out on top on the recruiting trail.

“They winning the bowl game and beating FIU wasn’t really that big of a deal, because we have a new season coming up,” Jasper said. “I know we’re going to be strong this year, and I feel like this is a big program on the rise,” Jasper said.

He finished his senior season with 27 catches for 421 yards and seven touchdowns, ranked 12th in class 5A for Miami-Dade schools. He also made second team All-Dade for the Athlete position.

Adjancements made to shuttles and parking lots

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Bill Foster, executive director of the Department of Parking and Transportation, sat down with Student Media to talk about the Golden Panther Express’ status, new Panther mover routes, elimination of Panther Hall parking lot, the Parking Garage 6 site the Golden Panther Express’ status, new Department of Parking and Transportation, college football is where a championship run could begin. It’s where the pieces that you have been assembling all throughout the year in recruiting become assembled into a finished product, ready to suit up for their schools.

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Lack of PECO funds stalls campus building progress

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New science labs, parking garages and building projects are stalled as PECO funds are drying out.

Governor Rick Scott has asked schools, colleges and universities to give back up to $250 million unspent appropriations in an attempt to reallocate resources and save the PECO fund.

PECO, short for the Public Education Capital Outlay, consists of revenues from the collection of gross receipts tax on utilities, like electricity, and telephone landlines.

The primary source of financing for the program is through the sales of bonds through the money collected from the gross receipts tax. These revenues are now in decline.

School districts across Florida receive PECO funding to construct and expand new facilities, perform maintenance and to renovate and repair existing facilities.

PECO plays a crucial role for universities in Florida as it is the only guaranteed source of construction funding.

It is expected that for the next couple of years, little to no money will be available for major construction projects.

Concerned at the amount of the debt the state is facing, Scott had decided to veto many PECO construction projects.

This totals to about $250 million worth of projects.

For the 2010-2011 school year, FIU received $23,874,604 from the PECO fund.

The University Board of Trustees requested this money for the purposes provided in the proceeding chart.

The funding would be appropriated for equipment, funding and construction of these projects.

For the 2011-2012 school year, $7.6 million was requested ($1.6 million for utilities/infrastructure, $6 million for capital renewal/roof repair and $6 million for university buildings).

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Police in riot gear close down Occupy Miami site

Police wearing riot gear swept through the downtown location where Occupy Miami has been entrenched for more than since the fall, making at least one arrest.

The Miami Herald police on Tuesday night ejected protestors and tore down tents at their camp site. The operation was mostly peaceful.

The Herald reports six Occupy Miami protesters refused orders to leave. They stayed inside a barricade of plywood and old mattresses. Police detained the six briefly but they walked away when offered the opportunity.

Police say one protester was arrested after he refused to move when ordered. His name was not released.

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...
FIU maintains focus in recruiting tri-county area

Jeremy Smith (left) and Jeremiah McKinnon (right) both signed with FIU despite offers from BCS caliber programs.

Malcolm Shields Staff Writer malcolm.shields@fiusm.com

The mood after a close and controversial 66-64 game between FIU and Florida Atlantic on Jan. 21 could not have been any more polar opposite.

For the Owls, smiles and jokes filled the press room from Owls’ Raymond Taylor, Jordan McCoy and Greg Giangi. Winners in five of the last seven meetings, Florida Atlantic (9-12, 5-3 SBC) seems to be getting use to beating its rival from Miami.

“Fortunately, we have been on the winning end of a lot of these games,” Taylor said after the game on Jan. 21. “Hopefully if we keep this on, it’s not going to be a rival too much longer.”

For FIU (5-15, 2-6 SBC), shock, frustration and disbelief that a questionable foul call by the referee with 0.6 seconds remaining in the game propelled its rival to another victory. For the Panthers, they will get their second second opportunity to defeat the Owls on Feb. 4 in Boca Raton. For the Panthers, their last win at FAU Arena occurred in 2009, with a 58-53 decision.

CONTAINING MCCoy

Jordan McCoy appears to have saved his best offensive games for FIU. Last season, McCoy notched his career-high 19 points against the Panthers, his 18 points and 11 rebounds proved to be the difference as starting forward Kore White sat out most of the game due to a hamstring pull. At 6-foot-6, McCoy is an undersized forward, but his skill-set has given FIU problems.

“My best attribute is my quickness,” McCoy stated after the Jan. 21 meeting. “Against slower bigs, I just try to work in the inside position and use my strength to my advantage.”

In order to neutralize McCoy, who enters the matchup scoring less than five points per game on the season, the Panthers have to limit him from getting offensive rebounds and easy put-backs.

NO PLACE LIKE THE ROAD

Although the Panthers have a losing record on the road, according to head coach Isaiah Thomas, the team has played its best basketball on the road this season. “We give good effort,” Thomas said. “We play better on the road.” Four of the Panthers’ five victories on the season have come away from U.S. Century Bank Arena. At home, the Panthers have struggled, posting a 1-6 record. The Panthers have two remaining road games on the season, a trip to Arkansas against Arkansas-Little Rock followed by Arkansas South, playing the biggest game of the season on the road.

EYES TOWARDS MARCH

The Sun Belt Conference tournament is a month away. Currently the Panthers are in close proximity of obtaining the number seven seed in conference tournament. Instead of looking at the big picture, Thomas wants his team to focus on one practice a time in a final month of the regular season.

“Let’s just show up and keep trying to keep getting better,” Thomas said. He expressed to his team. “When you go to the conference tournament, everyone starts at zero and if we can get our confidence back, offensively, we can be a dangerous team in the tournament.”
FIU looks to take a bite out of the big apple in next meet

Shannon Copeland

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FIU’s Cross Country and Track and Field team has been dominating their track for their last two events (Jimmie Carnes and Gator Invites), and they’re in high spirits to continue on that momentum in the big apple.

The team will travel to New York to compete in the New Balance Collegiate Invitational on Feb. 3 and 4 p.m. at the Armory’s New Balance Track & Field Center. The Panthers will compete with over 130 teams this year.

“Considering that over 100 schools will be participating, this is a great opportunity for the athletes to show their talent, be successful and eventually do well at Conference and Nationals,” said head coach Eric Campbell.

He was very proud to speak about his athletes and their abilities, who according to Campbell, are top in the nation.

Not only was Campbell proud of the athletes, he also wants them to maintain their fitness.

“I want the team to stay healthy, remain injury-free and keep their fitness level high,” Campbell said.

Jasmine Gregoire (Throw), Marissa McEveen (Javelin, T’Keyah Dumoy (Sprints), Wilder Marcelin (Hurdles) and Christopher Lickfield (Throw) will highlight the team in the invite on Feb 3.

“The athletes are unbelievable, and our freshman from three years ago are picking up,” coach Campbell said in regards to their performance so far this season. “We are favorites to win.”

“Training is excellent and I’m hoping to get stronger,” said state record holder Benia Gregoire, who registered a throw of 22 meters (barely over 68 feet) at the Orange and Purple Winter Classics on Dec. 3.

Marissa McEveen, two-time All-Sun Belt performer was optimistic about her capabilities in the Long Jump.

“I hope to get the best results this year out of all competitions, as this will motivate me to achieve good results,” said McEveen, who walked away with a jump of 6.12 meters (just over 20 feet) at the Gator invite.

T’Keyah Dumoy was also optimistic about next Friday’s meet, saying, “I hope I hit the 23-minute mark,” in her 200-meters event. Dumoy clocked a time of 24.71 seconds at the Gator invite on Jan. 22.

At the Jimmy Carnes Invitational, Wilder Marcelin clocked a time of 7.42 in the hurdles, landing him in third place. “I want to improve [in the New Balance Invitational],” Marcelin said. With such positive responses from both coach Campbell and his athletes, the FIU Cross Country/Track and Field team is not just physically prepared but mentally as well.

He also expressed confidence in his selection of athletes.

“Seeing that only the elite will be participating, I expect them to do very well,” added Lickfield.

Jasper, Durante chose to stay home at FIU

Shawn Stevens/Tim Bazarr

SIGNING DAY, PAGE 1

Jasper will get a chance in practices to go against first team All-Dade defensive player, from Dr. Krop High. Jasper Durante made seven interceptions this year for Krop, four of them returned for touchdowns, all while recording 20 tackles.

In the beginning of the season, Durante says he had no scholarships or recruits asking him about his schools. At his official signing of the letter of intent to become a Panther, he had four Payday bars in front of him, to represent the four years he will be at FIU.

For Durante, he says he always wanted to go Florida State, but that it was FIU who gave him his first offer. Out of the four other schools that sent him offers (Florida Atlantic, Indiana, Georgia State and South Dakota), Durante visited FIU first on Jan. 6 and made his decision soon after.

“I chose FIU because that sealed up the plate first and I owe that in return,” said Durante. “I got all these big time responses from both coach Campbell and his athletes.

“I’m very excited and I don’t plan on red-shirt my freshman season,” said Durante. “I’m very excited and I don’t plan to red-shirt my freshman season,” Campbell said.

As a senior, Smith caught eight passes for 183 yards and three touchdowns and rushed for 230 yards on 25 carries with three additional touchdowns, including a spectacular performance against West Broward, in which he accrued 130 total yards with three touchdowns in a 42-0 win. Smith’s senior garnered him an Honorable Mention on the All-Broward County team.

When asked about what Cristobal’s decision to stay or go would have influenced his decision, Smith was emphatic about it: “It wasn’t gonna shake my decision, and I was gonna stay with FIU all along,” said Smith. “If he’d be up or the same, then I don’t see him as being a, but he decided to stay so all is well.”

Rico Albarracin

On National Signing Day, some highly touted recruits weigh their options in the state, but he’s one of the fastest in the state of Florida. Other than Louisville, Jean had offers from University of South Florida, Cincinnati, Kansas, Florida Atlantic, Purdue and Western Michigan.

As for his teammate in high school, Travers Copeland, who decided to choose West Virginia over FIU, Jean thought that they were going to be together down in Miami. “For a minute, I thought he was going. I guess he pulled a quickie and went to West Virginia.”

Copeland had his decision down to FIU, West Virginia and Rutgers as soon as last week, but eliminated Rutgers after head coach Greg Schiano decided to accept the head coaching job with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.
Miami Heat fans attend the basketball games for the “Heat experience,” but they might overlook an important member on the sidelines. He’s amongst the crowd, cheering for our team and encouraging fans. Miami Heat’s public address announcer and University alum, Michael Baiamonte, brings “the noise.”

Known as The Voice and as one of the most recognizable voices in the South Florida sports market, Baiamonte has stuck with the team through injuries and triple doubles. And he is excited for the great things the team is going to do this season.

“I’m always expecting great things for the Heat,” said Baiamonte. “I am looking forward to being a part of it — a very small, but very fun part of the home games.”

Regardless of how small of an impact Baiamonte believes he has on the game, his signature phrases like, “Stand up and make some noise,” were not the reaction he was used to hearing from people. His enthusiasm is contagious amongst the crowd, cheering for our Heat.

When I started at FIU, I didn’t have any idea whatsoever that I’d be where I am 30 years later

Michael Baiamonte

Baiamonte started sports announcing as a hobby until he scored his current gig as the official announcer for the Miami Heat. His nickname, The Voice, has had over two minutes’ worth of Spanish in the game. The best thing we could do was to keep it simple as possible for everybody, whether you speak Spanish or you don’t speak Spanish.

I said, “Well, why don’t we try ‘two minutes’.” It’s a very common call; everybody knows it in the game of basketball. Let’s do it in English and then I’ll repeat it in Spanish and we’ll see if people pick up on it.”

“That’s funny because, probably more often than The Voice now, people will come up to me and say, ‘You’re the Dos Minutos guy.’”

When asked how many nicknames he has had over the course of 21 years, Baiamonte laughed. “Yes, I have a few,” he responded. “Depending on what fan base you have, some might not be very nice. The Knicks fans, for example, may not have [nice names for me], but that’s okay.”

His nickname, The Voice, was actually bestowed on him while studying business and insurance business, he made himself to sports announcing, and was the first basketball announcer for the University of Miami. He announced on the side. His current gig as the official announcer for the Miami Heat.

His enthusiasm is contagious amongst the crowd, cheering for our Heat. In his best-selling 2011 novel, “11/22/63,” Stephen King explores the concept of time travel through Epping’s story. Throughout his book, King suggests that not one can change the past, but history can be slightly altered.

For example, Jake Epping faces every possible obstacle in his path to save not only Kennedy, but Dunning, sudden bad health, citizens determined to get in his past and the past itself, working to maintain “the order of the universe.”

The novel also fearlessly addresses the many conspiracy theories that have been created because of suspicion in the killing of JFK. In the book, Templeton states that he is 95 percent sure that Oswald did the deed. Jake Epping attempts to verify this information before going after the suspected murderer.

In his afterword, King writes that, “The thing is, I enjoy doing it,” said Baiamonte. “I am very, very, fortunate to work in South Florida. The South Florida community has been great to me as an announcer and it just feels right to be able to do something to help the community because they really support me.”

Without giving away more of the story, readers will be satisfied by the way Epping’s story, especially his love interest with Sadie, a woman he met when he traveled back into the 1960s, concludes. The ending manages to find the perfect balance of leaving the reader happy for Epping while not being predictable.

Overall, the novel is a stunning piece of investigative history work and is instructive. I learned much about the Kennedy and Oswald situation that I was never aware of but should have known.

It is a novel that should be saved for when the reader (and in many of our cases, busy college students and professionals) has time to learn.
Glenn Close, who has been delivering stunning performances for three decades, has taken a big risk with her latest role in the film, “Albert Nobbs.” Set in the late nineteenth century, the film focuses on Albert (Close), the reserved butler who works at the Morrison Hotel. Since the age of 14, Albert has kept a big secret: he is a woman under wraps.

With the hotel in need of renovations, Nobbs shares her bedroom with the house painter, Hubert Page (Janet McTeer), for a night. Unable to hide her disguise from him, Albert’s secret is revealed to Hubert, who reassures her that she has nothing to fear.

After years of saving money underneath the floorboards and a boost of confidence from Hubert, Albert’s dreams of opening up a tobacco shop and finding love begin to seem a little less impossible. “Albert Nobbs” has been something of a pet project for Glenn Close. Often-times, men pose as women for comedic purposes, but a woman portraying a man is rarely done.

Her performance as Albert does not command the screen as she tends to do in her film and television work. Instead, she adopts a subtle and meek personality that fits her character just right.

While Close does a decent job as Albert, Janet McTeer is the true scene-stealer. Her portrayal of the confident painter does a better job at grasping the audience’s attention than the lead actress’ portrayal of Albert. This may be attributed to the outgoing personality of Hubert.

Aside from these performances, the film leaves little else to care about. The supporting characters barely develop, if at all, and that doesn’t add much to Albert’s journey for an identity.

Mia Wasikowska has had better roles than the dull Helen, who is the object of Albert’s affection. The inclusion of Aaron Johnson is the most pointless of them all—he doesn’t serve to do much more than take off his shirt and look annoyed in most scenes.

The screenplay, co-written by Close and John Banville, doesn’t help the film much either. It doesn’t dive into the history of Albert and, with a character that has been willingly cross-dressing for decades, one wants to know the reasons behind this drastic choice.

Rodrigo Garcia, whose work on “Mother and Child” proves that he fits well in intimate tales of women, drops the ball on this one. His slow style just doesn’t work well with the film.

Many people, including the Academy Award voters, have hailed the performances of the actors, but the true stars of the film are the make-up artists who have earned a well-deserved nomination this year. Martial Corneville, Lynn Johnson and Matthew Mungle manage to give both Janet McTeer and Glenn Close enough masculine features to pass them as men. That is something that deserves recognition.

“Albert Nobbs” is currently in theaters and showing at AMC Sunset Place 24, Coral Gables Art Cinema, Paragon Grove 13, Regal South Beach Stadium 18, Frank Theaters Intra-coastal 8 and AMC Aventura 24.

Reel to Reel is a weekly movie review column. Juan Barquin is an intern for the Miami International Film Festival. Email at life@fiusm.com.
Senate rife with confusion during audit discussions

A n odd and perpetually disconcerting staple to attending and trying to keep up with a Student Government Council meeting at the Modesto Maidique Campus is the confusion and the way in which a conversation of ostensible coherence can go on without making any sense until, after a while, it becomes clear that the speakers only thought they were talking about the same thing, but in fact were discussing either two different things, or the same thing, but with two misconceptions of its function or purpose.

So went the discussion regarding the audits of student organizations at the SGC-MMC meeting held on Jan. 30. The audits, in which a student organization reports how much money it was given for the fiscal year, what it has spent so far and what it plans to spend, is, according to SGC-MMC President Sanjeev Udhnani, only a supplement to the process of determining how much money an organization will be given year-to-year. “The audits are a way of keeping an eye on what other organizations are spending,” Udhnani said, to make sure money is being spent on the projects for which it was allocated and “to spot any red flags early on.”

Last year, audits were not discussed with the Senate. So, with the Senate feeling left out, SGC-MMC President Alex Scordo, SGC-MMC Speaker of the Senate Donovan Dawson and Udhnani decided to bring the audits in for discussion on the Senate floor.

Discussion alone, though, meant only to inform on February’s budget deliberations, which will be carried out by the speakers, comptrollers, vice presidents and presidents of either campus and SGC-MMC Speaker Temporee Samir Patel.

In reviewing the budget and most of the fall expenses for Sorority and Fraternity Life, confusion stalled discussion. While Patel asserted, to seeded debate sparked by miscommunication, that fall audits were clearly a bad idea, Udhnani reassured the Senate of the audits’ value and necessity. Discussion appeared to be unfolding as though senators were being pressed to decide on the budgets right there, basing their decisions on the figures presented. The Senate seems now to be as assertive as it was in its best moments during the fall, but given the spectrum across which their respective duties are scattered, it seems the Senate leadership at each meeting takes on the role of mediator and disambiguator on the same page about every subject and task. Clearly, they aren’t, and I don’t think there would be any chance in giving the senators a quick summary of what they are being asked to do, or the manner in which they are expected to respond, to the docu-

Penmanship, a dying art despite supportive study

WASHINGTON, DC – (1/30/12) – Generation Opportunity, a rapidly growing organization with over two million Facebook fans that is mobilizing young adults across the nation through a strategy based on social media and ground operations, has conducted its latest grassroots tour through Florida to help mobilize the Sunshine State’s young adults.

This marks Generation Opportunity’s fourth trip to Florida in less than a year. Previous trips included visits to areas around Tampa, Coral Gables, and Miami to listen to and sign-up young people concerned about how the poor economy and lack of jobs are limiting their ability to find work, gain critical skills, and pursue their dreams.

“Young adults in Florida are very open with their views about how the country is headed in the wrong direction and how the poor economy and lack of jobs have already had a negative impact on their dreams, plans, and careers. In Florida, young adults are tired of having their lives headed in the wrong direction, and how the poor economy and lack of jobs are limiting their ability to find work, gain critical skills, and pursue their dreams.

“Generation Opportunity conducted a tour of college campuses in the Fort Lauderdale and Miami areas, which included stops at Broward College, the University of Miami, Florida International University, and Nova Southeastern University.

In addition, the grassroots team engaged young people at a variety of public events including a Miami Heat game at American Airlines Arena, the ING Miami Marathon, the Homestead Championship Rodeo, and a parade in Homestead, Florida.

Based on conversations with young professionals, college students and other young adults they listened to and spoke with, the Generation Opportunity team found that young adults in Florida are most concerned with the poor economy and lack of jobs, the increasing level of federal spending, national debt, and issues that impact American competitiveness.

In 2011, Generation Opportunity joined nearly 1,200 Hispanic leaders in Miami, Florida, as a participant in the 25th Annual Annual Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) National Convention and Business Expo, where young people also cited the lack of jobs and the mounting national debt as top concerns.

-Generation Opportunity, a non-profit, non-partisan 501(c)(4) organization that seeks to engage everyone from young adults, to early career professionals, college students, young mothers and fathers, construction workers, current service men and women, veterans, entreprenuers and all Americans who find themselves dissatisfied with the status quo and willing to create a better tomorrow-

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It is essential and inevitable for a digital society, such as ours, to advance. As societies move forward, it is also inevitable that certain skills are lost in time. As a digitally advancing society, penmanship is one skill that is noticeably on the verge of being forgotten, and not for the better.

Dr. Laura Dinehart, an assistant professor at the College of Education, believes otherwise.

Dr. Dinehart conducted research “to see if there was academic value to good penmanship,” a skill that is not only on the brink of being forgotten in our digital society, but also on the verge of having no academic value in Florida schools, seeing as it has even been considered to drop from the curriculum.

Much in favor of penmanship, however, Dr. Dinehart’s study of the handwriting skills of 1,100 second-grade students reported that “students with good penmanship tend to get better grades.”

In research funded by the Children’s Trust and soon to be published in the Journal of Early Childhood Education and Development, Dinehart reported that the link she made of those students’ “grades and academic scores back to the information gathered from them when they were still in pre-kindergarten” showed that “students who received good grades on fine motor writing tasks in pre-k had an average GPA of 3.02 in math and 2.84 in reading.”

Moreover, students who performed better “on the fine motor writing tasks in pre-k scored in the 59th percentile on the Reading SAT in second grade (just above average) and in the 62nd percentile on the Math SAT,” as opposed to students who performed poorly only scoring “in the 38th percentile…and in the 37th percentile,” respectively.

Since I am generally keen on preserving the skill of penmanship, these research findings only add more to my conviction that penmanship is an important skill. This is just the early beginnings of research on the importance of handwriting, but it is a good start for the advancement of penmanship.

For now, it appears as though the relationship between penmanship and academic achievement is simply a correlation without any direct indication of causation.

This should not be discouraging, however, because it is through this relationship that research can be further expanded to discover what it is between the two that causes direct success for students.

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Are you a member of a campus or University?

Jayne Gomez
Contributing Writer

Whether students see themselves as Biscayne Bay Campus students or as FIU students varies from situation to situation.

Some students identify themselves depending upon how many credits they take at each campus. Those who have only taken classes at BBC may tag themselves as “BBC students.”

According to the Office of Planning & Institutional Research, there were 19,196 student credit hours with a full time equivalent at Modesto Maidique Campus and 2,998 SCT-FTE at BBC in the 2010-2011 school year.

Janice Carrillo, junior journalism major, taking three credits at BBC and six online, considers herself a BBC student.

“This is the only campus that I’ve been to and I like the fact that there’s less people at BBC and the campus itself is very relaxing,” she said.

Izy Torres, a senior and journalism major taking six credits at BBC and nine at MMC, agreed.

“I classify myself as a BBC student in all aspects. The fact that after a class I can sit in front of the bay is amazing,” Torres said. “BBC is very relaxing and even though there aren’t too many people and there isn’t a large variety of food, I wouldn’t trade it for any other campus.”

Lauren Boyle, a junior and marketing major, splits her time evenly between the two campuses: three credits at BBC and three at MMC. She prefers the situation.

“I identify myself as an FIU student because even though I have taken a couple classes at BBC, I think this campus is extremely boring compared to [MMC],” Boyle said.

When it comes to campus specific positions in the University’s Student Government Association, applicants must take at least 50 percent of their courses at the campus at which they want to run for office. To be considered eligible for office at BBC’s Student Government Council, for example, a student must take half his or her course load at the campus.

SGA is divided into two governing councils for each campus, each one of which with three respective branches of government: executive, judicial, and executive.

The same 50 percent enrollment comes into play when SGA elections come around. Students can only vote on candidates from one of the two campuses, with their votes counting towards where they take the majority of their classes.

Yet when it comes to the majority of credits being taken online, according to Rafael Zapata, advisor to SGC-BBC, “it becomes a little bit trickier.” How to classify students taking courses at the campus at which they have never taken classes is a subject that seems very exciting to students themselves as only BBC or MMC students—they think of FIU as a whole.

Kevin Soler, a junior and journalism major, taking six credits at BBC and three at MMC, never considered the difference.

“To be honest, I have never thought about it. I don’t think it makes sense to classify myself according to a specific campus,” Soler said. “Even though I take most of my classes at BBC, I’m part of FIU and I’ll always feel like that.”

Leadership summit to assists students in developing professional traits

Nathaniel Edwards
Staff Writer

The ninth annual Student Leadership Summit is being held on Feb. 4 at the Biscayne Bay Campus in the Wolfe University Center.

This leadership conference will include both students from the Modesto Maidique Campus and BBC, and will allow students to gain skills and network through different activities.

There will be different breakout sessions students can go to throughout the day such as clarified values, healthy behaviors and satisfying lifestyles.

“I expect students to enhance their leadership skills and to have fun at the conference” said Sabrena O’Keefe, assistant director of the Women Center and Center for Leadership and Service at BBC.

O’Keefe is also looking forward to hearing from James Robilotta, this year’s keynote speaker.

“The key note speaker is really fun because his speech is practical and he also does improvisation comedy so I think he will keep the students energized throughout the day,” O’Keefe said.

There are a lot of students that seem very excited about the conference. Pham Tan Tam, a junior hospitality management major, shows enthusiasm as the conference approaches.

“Since I got here at FIU, I have only been involved in [Academy of Leaders] to help me with my leadership skills,” Tam said. “But to know that there are other such events like the leadership conference to help me improve is just great.”

Newcomers and past participants are also getting anxious for the conference.

“I attended for the first time last year, and this is the type of program that companies would pay thousands of dollars to send their employees to for leadership and we [students] get it for free so I think this conference is awesome and fun and I advise students [to] go” said Chrys-telle Edma, a sophomore public relations major.

Like previous conferences, high school students will also be part of this conference and participate in the day’s activities.

O’Keefe hopes that, as in previous conferences, the students have fun and learn from the staff and activities.

“[I think the students will be motivated to continue develop their skills to become the next leaders of the future],” O’Keefe said.